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Lynch used as Tory scape-goat

Within the howls of rage and anguish from the British ruling class, which has itself never shrunk from perpetrating the most horrific blood-baths in the name of preserving its domination over oppressed peoples, is a recognition of the political weakness of imperialism.

The Irish war of liberation has gathered strength alongside national struggles on a world scale—from the Basques in Spain to the Sahrawi people in the Sahara; from the Kurds in Turkey and Iran, to the black masses of Zimbabwe.

It has also grown up alongside a developing militancy within the Irish working class in the 26 counties, and a gathering economic crisis for the sectarian six county statelet.

It is this international context, along with the fact that there is little additional scope to crack down further on the nationalist population in the occupied North, that has forced Thatcher's government to turn now towards Lynch's servile capitalist regime in the South.

Lynch has until now obediently jumped to every crack of the Whitehall whip. Repressive laws against anti-imperialist movements are as vicious and comprehensive as those in the North.

One third of both the police and the army of the "Free State" are concentrated in the border area.

And in the wake of last week's IRA actions RUC forensic scientists and interrogators have been in the 26 counties, working hand in glove with their colleagues in the Gardaí.

But the Tories must know that for Lynch to extend this extensive tactic collaboration into a public agreement to allow "hot pursuit" raids on the South by British troops of the wholesale extradition of supposed republican "suspects" would create a major political crisis in the South, in which Lynch would finger himself as the imperialist puppet that he is.

For Thatcher to bring Lynch to Downing Street and demand these kind of concessions is little more than an attempt to foist the blame onto him for the continuing violence and bloodshed in the North that is the inevitable result of British imperialist oppression.

For workers, however, the lesson is clear: the task is not simply to replace British rule in the North with a Lynch-style bourgeois nationalist regime: it is to overthrow the capitalist state machinery North and South, nationalise the capitalist holdings and the banks, and establish an Irish workers' republic in which the democratic rights of minorities could be guaranteed.

In any war, people get killed.

And behind the lies, bluff and bluster of British press and media propaganda, behind the contemptible "bi-partisan" agreement between Labour and Tory politicians on the need to maintain the military occupation of the six counties of Ireland, a real, full scale WAR is going on.

The war is between the armed might of the British imperialist army, seeking through unstinting use of the boot, the bullet and the truncheon to preserve the centuries-old domination of the Irish people by the British ruling class; and those Irish men and women courageous enough to take action and take up arms in the struggle for national liberation and an end to foreign oppression.

Defeat

We are not neutral in this war. As socialists, as resolute opponents of British capitalism at home and abroad, we stand unashamedly for the defeat of the British army in Ireland, for the immediate withdrawal of troops, for the right of the Irish people to self determination, and for the building of a revolutionary leadership that can establish a united Irish workers' republic.

While the capitalist press sheds cynical crocodile tears over the assassination of former imperialist chief Lord Mountbatten and the successful IRA ambush of the British army patrol at Warrenpoint, the mass media stand adamant in their defence of the policy of military occupation and imperialist rule that remains the root cause of the war.

While condemning what they term the "crimes" of the IRA they remain deliberately blind to the crimes committed with full 'legal' sanction by the real terrorists in Ireland—the armed forces, the RUC and the other appendages of the British state machinery.

Occupation

15,000 uniformed soldiers stalk the streets of the six counties—the equivalent of an occupying army of 500,000 in Britain.

They are backed up by a huge network of spies and informants and by unknown numbers of undercover SAS assassination squads.

They have almost unlimited rights to stop, search, interrogate, torture, jail, maim and kill

anyone they suspect of opposing imperialist rule.

Their loyal assistants are the sectarian thugs of the RUC, whose vicious torture of suspected republican sympathisers has been condemned by a series of international bodies including Amnesty International and scandalised even the Carter regime in the USA.

Behind the RUC stands a system of prolonged "remand" for republicans which amounts to internment without trial, the rigged no-jury Diplock Courts and jails in which convicted anti-imperialist fighters are branded not as prisoners of war but as common criminals.

Terror gangs

And as if this were not enough, the Loyalist UDR and a

spectrum of legal and illegal Loyalist paramilitary groups function freely with the connivance of the RUC, murdering and terrorising the Catholic population in the six counties.

Crimes

All these crimes go unremarked in the media, under the heading of "keeping the peace". Yet as soon as anti-imperialist forces take action to strike back at the occupying forces, their agents, or their figureheads such as Mountbatten, the full wrath of the mass media is brought to bear against them.

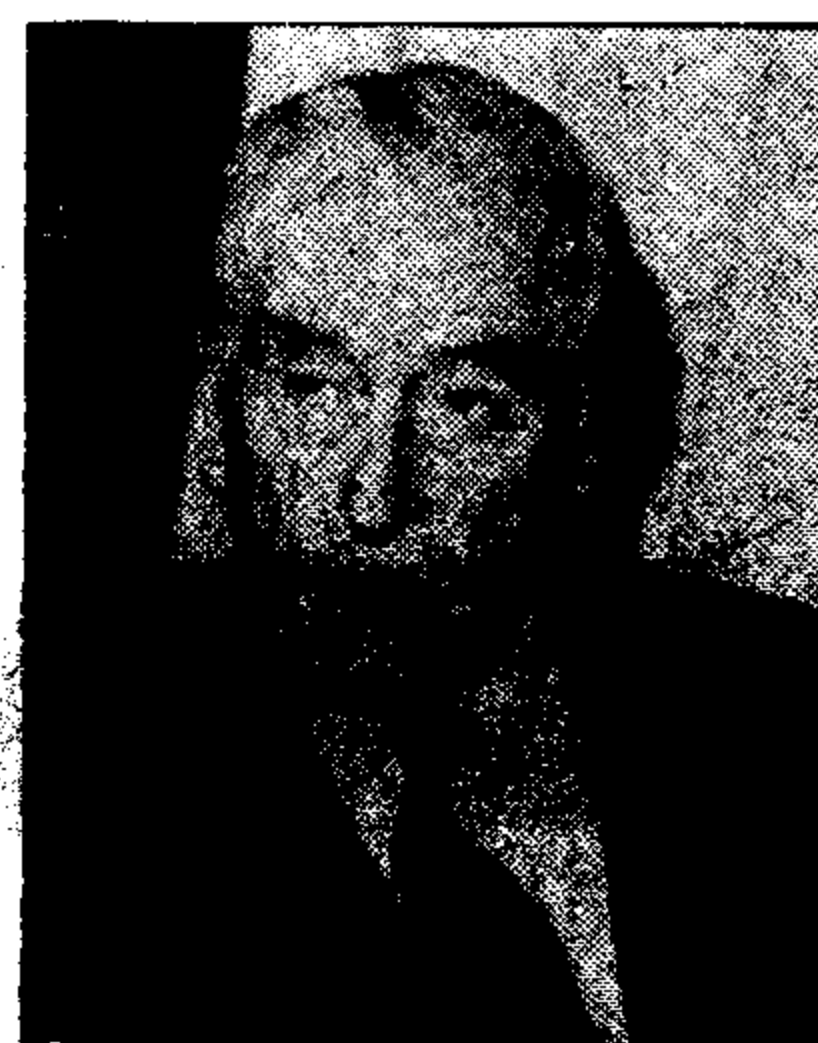
The Workers Socialist League does not advocate the kind of strategy adopted by the IRA. In particular we question

the purpose and effect of assassinating prominent individuals, particularly when such a strategy is so clearly a substitute for any serious attempts by the IRA to mobilise the mass of the Irish working class on both sides of the border in the struggle against British imperialism and the puppet Lynch regime.

But as socialists we defend absolutely the right of the IRA and other anti-imperialist forces to conduct all forms of struggle—including armed struggle—against the British oppressors.

Force withdrawal

The task of the British workers movement in this struggle is to take up the fight in every way possible to force the withdrawal of the British army



Mountbatten

BRITISH ARMY OF OPPRESSION OUT OF IRELAND!

from Ireland.

This means a political fight for the removal of the present leaders of the trade union and Labour movement, who slavishly support the bloody actions of their own capitalist class in the six counties, as avidly as they support wage cutting and spending cuts at home.

Union branches

Every union branch, every Labour Party must be called upon to declare itself and fight for a policy of:

*Immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

*Self determination for the Irish people.

*Restore Prisoner of War status to the republican and socialist prisoners in the 'H' Blocks of Long Kesh and Armagh jail.

*Black supplies to the army in Ireland!

*Kick out the Callaghan-Mason clique!

The thousands of workers and youth who marched in London on August 12 behind the Troops Out Now banner showed that there is a growing awareness of the need for British workers to support their Irish brothers and sisters.

It is important that the fight for a principled policy on Ireland is taken forward in the labour movement as part of a struggle to build a new, revolutionary leadership in the working class.



INTERNATIONAL

Videla admits 25,000 murders

The dictatorship of General Jorge Videla will shortly pass legislation that effectively confirms the death of the 25,000 'disappeared' (desaparecidos) of Argentina.

General Albano Harguindeguy, minister of the interior since the coup of March 1976 and chief of police before that, introduced the bill in the face of the "international campaign of calumny" against the Videla regime and after the security forces had closed down all human rights organisations in Buenos Aires.

This remarkable measure will enable a person "to be considered dead if he or she has disappeared..." and allows

relations to collect social security payments, pensions and administer wills without production of a death certificate.

In short it amounts to an open admission that the dictatorship has murdered if not all, then the vast majority of the thousands of political prisoners taken since the 1976 overthrow of the government of Isabel Peron.

Pinochet

Even Chilean butcher Pinochet has never felt able to make such an admission, judicial or otherwise, of the crimes of the Chilean regime and, indeed, in terms of sheer numbers these have been surpassed by Videla and his repugnant cronies.

It was the 'honourable', 'moderate' and 'mediating'

Jorge himself who remarked to a Spanish general during the visit of King Juan Carlos to Argentina that the best way to get rid of "subversive riff-raff" was to toss them from aeroplanes into the sea.

This was no gruesome wish; it has become one of the most infamous methods of the military of 'executing' prisoners and the waters of the River Plate bear sad testimony to this fact.

The announcement of the new law coincides with an all-time low in relations between Buenos Aires and Washington over the issue of human rights.

The US embassy has been instructed to investigate the existence of concentration camps and there remains little possibility at the moment that military aid will be restored.

No doubt, as the Argentine Airforce Chief recently pronounced, this is little more than a "passing squall" for it operates in contradiction to the fundamental requirements of the imperialist power.

It has, however, produced an important development in the increasing links between the Videla regime and the Soviet Union.

Apologies

When a Swedish film showing the plight of political detainees in Argentina was screened recently in Moscow the Argentine official delegation walked out, later to receive profuse apologies for the unfortunate incident from the Stalinist bureaucrats.

More important is the signing of a military agreement between the two countries which will probably include arms sales and direct financial aid to the butchers of the Argentine people.

The counter-revolutionary character of Stalinism has never been a simple theoretical proposition; its credentials have been inked in the blood of workers and now the workers of Argentina join the victims of this black history.



Videla

Desperate Khomeini steps up war on Kurds

Kurds

The Ayatollah Khomeini has fixed on the region of Kurdistan as the battleground for the struggles to determine the immediate course of the revolutionary process still unfolding in Iran.

True to his history of adopting implacable positions, Khomeini overruled the provisional agreements reached between Kurdish leaders and representatives of the bourgeois cabinet and Islamic Revolutionary Council.

His demands for a campaign to crush utterly the Kurdish rebellion do not spring from the perverted principles of religious bigotry.

This line has been dictated

by the supreme principle of self-preservation for Khomeini and his reactionary regime.

In their negotiations with the Kurdish Democratic Party, the Ayatollah Taleghani and Bazargan's emissaries were dominated by the fear that the Iranian regime would be unable to crush the rising of the Kurds by force.

The KDP claims 10,000 armed and committed militants, who have already shown their

for refusing to obey the orders of their new Supreme Commander in Qom.

If such methods do not achieve discipline in a victorious army, then Khomeini has declared his readiness to organise mass civil war by mobilising all the most backward and reactionary elements in the regions of Iran under his control, and despatching them to Kurdistan as the "people's answer" to the Kurds' demands.

Violent

In this latest and most violent phase of reaction, the religious leaders have been able to count on the solid backing of US imperialism.

Comforted by the deals with imperialism which continue to feed the profits of the international bourgeoisie and alarmed by the prospect of a revolutionary proletarian alternative to Khomeini's barbarism, Carter has offered arms, equipment and moral support to the Revolutionary Council.

As the crisis in Kurdistan intensified, Khomeini's appointed prime minister Bazargan once again offered his resignation.

Impotence

Increasingly marginalised and irrelevant, Bazargan and his 'government' had been reduced to figures of farcical impotence.

The prime minister's resignation acknowledged the reality of a situation where power did not lie with the cabinet and its ranks of bureaucrats, but had its centre with Khomeini's Revolutionary Council in Qom and extended across Iran through the force of the army and the parallel apparatus of Islamic militias and tribunals.

OUR DEMANDS:-

*No surrender of arms to Khomeini's guards! Disband Khomeini's army—Build workers' militias against Islamic reaction and threats of imperialist restoration.

*Lift the ban on demonstrations! For full freedom of political organisation and demonstration—End state censorship of the press!

*For the rights of self-determination and separation of the Kurdish people and all other national minorities.

*For free elections with universal suffrage to a genuine constituent assembly.

*Defend the workers' committees! For the building of elected soviets!

*For the right to strike and form free trade unions.

*No secret trials, no secret police! Release all those political prisoners not linked with the Shah's dictatorship!

*Against sexual oppression! For full legal rights and social equality for all women and homosexual men.

*For the building of a revolutionary party, Iranian section of a reconstructed Fourth International!



Workers confront Carter in St. Louis

A special report from 'Labor News', paper of the Socialist League (DC) in the USA.

President Carter's trip down the Mississippi on a luxury cruise steamboat was clearly an attempt to avoid the angry US working class by hobnobbing with the boat's wealthy passengers and visiting "traditional" Americans in the small rural towns along the way.

But for all his invoking of the Christian religion and his praise for the "protestant work ethic and the virtues of America" "free enterprise" etc Carter can't turn the clock back on history and return to the heyday of cheap energy and low prices.

Anger

So when Carter arrived in St. Louis at 9 a.m. on Friday 24 August he was forced to face some of the anger of the working class.

Despite his workday arrival, hundreds of trade unionists and unemployed turned up to protest and shout anti-Carter slogans right under his nose.

About 50 supporters of the Homer G. Phillips Hospital carried signs protesting the recent closing of the hospital by Democrat Mayor Conway.

While Conway welcomed Carter they called for his removal.

They pointed out that "Miss Lillian" Carter had said in 1976 that the hospital would stay open if "Jimmy" was elected.

Now Conway has just used 300 riot police to remove the remaining patients from Homer G. and arrest 20 demonstrators blocking the gates!

Trade unionists

Also protesting Carter's policies was a group of about 200 trade unionists.

This group was responding to a newspaper add and a call from the Machinist Union Districts 9 and 837.

They protested against Carter's energy policy because "he neglects to say the windfall he wants to tax was created by him when he began phasing out controls."

They demanded that Congress reinstate price controls but neglected to call for the nationalisation of oil companies—a policy which was recently advocated by even the conservative AFL-CIO Executive Board.

The fact that leaders of the machinists and United Auto Workers in St. Louis felt compelled to call a protest against the visit of a Democratic Party President clearly reflects the rank and file pressure they are experiencing from members suffering under 13% inflation while 7% wage increase guide-

lines remain in force.

Nevertheless they kept to the vain hope of reforming the capitalist Democratic Party by calling on the President to "come back to the Democratic Party and the voters who elected you."

Meanwhile other labour leaders were shaking Carter's hand at a reception at the Hilton.

Teamster vice-president Harold Gibbons was quoted as telling a reporter "don't sell this

guy short" and AFT President Evelyn Balle called him "a good Christian man".

What unites these open traitors with the leaders of the Machinists (who favour Kennedy for the 1980 elections) and with the Stalinists who dominate the "Ad Hoc Committee to save Homer G. Phillips" is unshakable faith in the capitalist Democratic party and refusal to fight for an independent political party of the working class.



Protestors block entrance to Homer G. Phillips Hospital

ability to inflict serious damage on Khomeini's army.

At the same time, there are reports of thousands of Kurds moving from Turkey into Iran to take up the struggle for their national rights.

Taleghani negotiated a ceasefire on the basis of proposals to halt the army's advance towards Mahabad, remove the Islamic militia of the Pasderan from Kurdistan, and end the executions of militants with the recall to Tehran of the Ayatollah Khomeini's hangman.

Discussions

Such a deal could have provided the basis for future discussions between the Tehran-Qom government and the Kurds' bourgeois nationalist leaders.

Khomeini's rejection of this compromise was based on a more gloomy assessment than that of the 'liberal' Taleghani.

Khomeini recognises the precarious balance of his authority and the immense potential of opposition latent in the working class, which could be roused to struggle in unity for its class interests by the struggles for self-determination of the oppressed national minorities in Iran.

Undermine

Any concessions to the forces of opposition would have the effect of further undermining the stability of Khomeini's power. Only an all-out drive to dictatorship can succeed in shoring up the basis of his government.

That deadly knowledge has forced Khomeini to step up the offensive against the Kurds, even when the danger of mutiny is rising within the army he inherited from the Shah.

Rank and file soldiers and officers have already been killed

SOLIDARITY WITH ZIMBABWE LIBERATION STRUGGLE
Picket London Conference at Lancaster House. Monday September 10, 9am - 10 am, and 5pm - 6.30pm.
MARCH
from Lancaster House to Central Halls for rally at 7.30pm.



INTERNATIONAL

Berlinguer conjures up ghost of traitors past

Enrico Berlinguer, demonstratively losing the support of the living has invoked the dead in support of his rotten policy of "historic compromise" with the capitalist class.

Berlinguer, general secretary of the Italian Communist Party, was writing in the party's weekly journal *Rinascita* ("Rebirth") on the fifteenth anniversary of the death of previous CP general secretary Palmiro Togliatti.

Agent

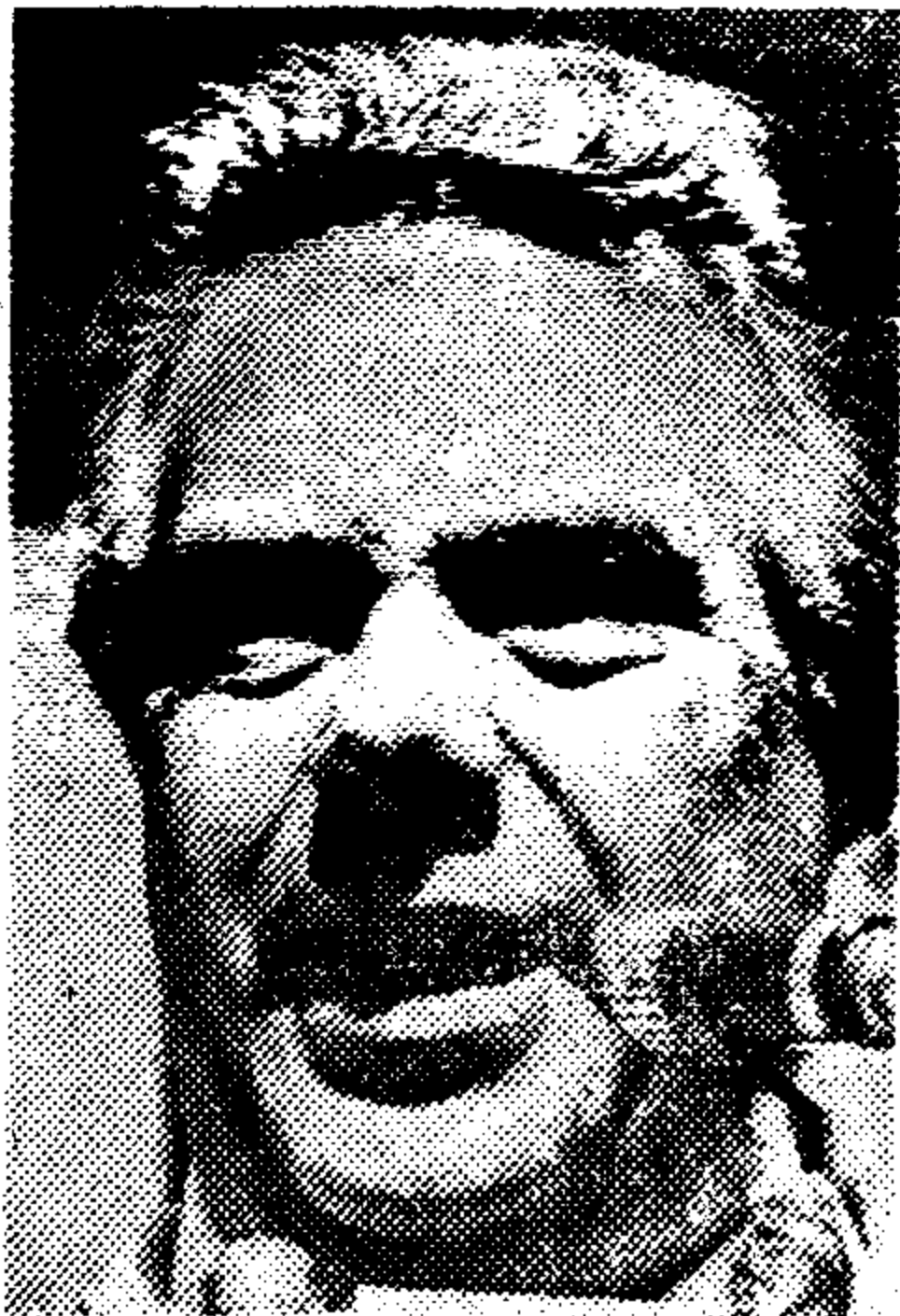
Togliatti, (under the name of Ercoli) was one of Stalin's principal agents in Spain in the 1930s, charged with persecuting Trotskyists and preserving the Spanish CP's popular front alliance with the bourgeoisie.

After World War II Togliatti returned to Italy from his Moscow exile to play (like Thorez in France) a

key role in putting into effect Stalin's counter-revolutionary agreement to divide the world into "peaceful existing" spheres of influence with the imperialists.

This policy involved the sabotage of the revolutionary possibilities which existed in France, Greece and Italy.

Togliatti himself supervised the literal and political disarmament of the Italian working class and then took



Radical Party leader Pannella

its largest party, the CP, into a class collaborationist government with the Christian Democrats.

This lasted from 1946 to 1948 when the Stalinists were summarily thrown out of the government as the imperialist Cold War offensive gathered momentum.

"Opposition"

By then Togliatti had played his part in the reimposition of capitalist authority on the Italian working class.

He could from then on play a new role as a focus of fake "opposition" to the Christian Democrats during Italy's much-vaunted capitalist economic "miracle" of the 1950s and early 1960s.

It is entirely appropriate that Togliatti has left his name to the most important symbol to date of the Soviet Union's economic collaboration with capitalism—the giant car plant set up by Fiat (owned by the Agnelli family and Colonel Gaddafi's Libya) in Togliattigrad.

It is also entirely appropriate that Berlinguer today should harp back to Togliatti's role and positions.

Berlinguer quotes in his *Rinascita* article from an article written in 1946 in which Togliatti justifies his policy of compromise between the two "great wings" of the anti-fascist resistance in Italy—"progressive" and "conservative".

Togliatti's book *Lectures on Fascism* is one of the classic statements of Stalinism's reactionary policy of popular frontist alliance in which workers' parties are subordinated to supposedly "progressive" capitalist parties.

Authority

Berlinguer is now trying to use the ghost of Togliatti for two purposes.

First to invoke the authority of the dead leader to uphold his policy of class compromise in the face of growing opposition from communist workers in Italy.

Second, to remind the Christian Democrats that

Young Italian workers—not convinced by Berlinguer's line



what they now describe "unthinkable"—the presence of Communist ministers in a Christian Democratic-led government—once *did* take place and, (by implication), the Communists were then loyal to the capitalist class.

Desperate

This delve into the past represents a desperate effort on the part of Berlinguer to escape from the irreconcilable contradictions of the latest turn of policy he has now been forced into—that of "opposition" to the new government of Cossiga (his cousin).

Cossiga's government—which nobody expects to last long—comprises the Christian Democrats along with the small Liberal and Social Democratic parties.

This ragbag government won a parliamentary vote of confidence in August against the votes of the CP—but only thanks to the abstentions of the Socialist Party (with about 10% of MPs) and the Republican Party.

Undermine

The Socialist leaders rightly see Berlinguer's new offensive in favour of the historic compromise as an attempt to undermine the growing influence which the small Socialist Party is gaining at the expense of the CP.

The main contentious issue at the forthcoming Christian Democratic congress will be *which* offer of collaboration from the two main workers' parties should be accepted as a priority.

So while opportunism may cause fissures in the Christian Democratic party, it leaves the Italian working class with no independent lead.

Yet workers now face a new offensive of the capitalist class which is so desperate to resolve its economic crisis.

Sliding scale

One of Cossiga's first aims parallels a policy of the Thatcher government and highlights the importance of the struggle for a true sliding scale of wages under workers' control.

Most Italian wage contracts contain a limited but significant sliding scale (escalation) clause which the capitalists have for years been trying to destroy.

Cossiga is now proposing that the index on which the

present sliding scale is based should in future *exclude* the price of energy (which is, of course, rising faster than other prices, and forcing other prices up).

This is the latest proposal in the overall programme of "austerity" to which the Christian Democrats are committed.

Although the trade unions are at present opposing any monkeying with the sliding scale, the Stalinist leaders have for the last two years made the policy of "austerity" their own.

Austerity

In his latest articles Berlinguer reaffirms to the bourgeoisie his devotion to austerity but aware of the workers' hostility, at the same time attempts the impossible—to give it a working class content!

In the *Rinascita* articles he writes:

"An advance to socialism in freedom and democracy needs not only a political and social alliance of the motive forces of the revolutionary process but demands a clear definition of the terms of the compromise which the "renewing" social bloc offers to the other components of society to win their approval or at least their neutrality."

So this nuance on the historic compromise means that:

"Our discourse on austerity was not limited to posing the need for better distributive justice but proposed and proposes a new economic policy which previsions an intervention of the working class in the process of accumulation itself."

Gymnastics

Despite Berlinguer's gymnastics, the circle will not be squared. Neither his position nor that of the Cossiga government can be maintained for long.

Attention is now focussed on the congress of the Christian Democrats. If they fail to agree some new formula for coalition then the next government crisis can be expected to precipitate new elections.

Meanwhile the force which is the real pressure on Christian Democrats, Stalinists and reformists alike—the Italian working class—is showing new signs (a wave of strikes in transport and elsewhere) that it is not prepared much longer to hold back its pressuring demands in the interests of capitalist stability.

Respite for Burnham

The 'socialist' government of Guyana has gained a breathing-space in its mounting conflict with the militant struggles of the working class.

Deals with imperialism's IMF had forced Prime Minister Forbes Burnham to impose a wage freeze in the public sector which heavily dominates the economy.

This provoked the recent major wave of strikes which has now fallen back. Workers in the bauxite industry returned to work two weeks ago after a month on strike.

They were later followed by other unions who had taken solidarity action, and finally the Guyana Agricultural Workers Union called off the strike by its 20,000 members last Wednesday.

Threats from the government against the strikers reached a pitch when Burnham addressed the convention of the ruling People's National Congress to attack 'reactionary and political zealots' (the left opposition and its mass of working class supporters), and to declare that political strikes would be met with 'legitimate political sanctions' (state repression).



SAHARA VICTORY

THE Polisario Front is continuing to press ahead with its military campaign inside Morocco.

In the third of their recent attacks on the southern garrison town of Lebouirate, the Saharawi guerrillas claim to have captured substantial quantities of vehicles and equipment, and to have killed 800 Moroccan troops before being driven back after one day of occupation.

CHAD TRUCE

A temporary halt to the civil war in Chad has been achieved by the tireless diplomatic efforts of the Nigerian military regime.

At a recent meeting in Lagos a ceasefire was agreed between 11 parties, representing different fractions of the FROLINAT liberation front, of the state armed forces and other groups.

The conference also succeeded in piecing together a new fragile government, and unanimously demanded an end to the continued presence of French imperialist troops in Chad.

But the rivalries of opportunist ambition are only thinly veiled by this facade of unity.

They will undoubtedly interact with the forces of economic crisis and the unfolding class struggle in the whole region to bring about the collapse of this highly unstable coalition.

Forecasts agree: a slump is coming

For anyone who still doubts it, the Tory slump is officially on.

Three major forecasting bodies—the London Business School, the Department of Allied Economics and the National Institute of Economic and Social Research have added

their voices to the "frighteningly bad" predictions spoken of by Chancellor Geoffrey Howe and the warnings of the OECD.

They all agree that British capitalism faces static economic growth, mounting unemployment and a prolonged deficit on the balance of payments. The latest published figures

from the NIESR forecast inflation at 17% by the end of the year, and a worsening trade situation as British manufacturers are hit by the still rising pound and the slump world-wide.

Unemployment is predicted to rise to 1.6 million by 1980. This will be given an added

boost by the cash crisis that is looming for many British manufacturing firms.

The rising value of sterling is reducing the prices of commodities produced by overseas competitors both in the home market and abroad.

But the high British interest rates which sustain the rise in sterling are to remain in force indefinitely according to Prime Minister Thatcher.

This raises the cost of borrowing finance from the banks, and puts a real squeeze on the profits of productive industry.

Overcapacity

While interest rates remain high, available markets are static or shrinking—resulting in the under-utilisation of plant and equipment—making it difficult to repay existing loans, let alone expand production.

This overcapacity is undoubtedly a factor behind the reported plans by Michael Edwards to slash back the British Leyland workforce in a new round of closures and redundancies.

Productivity

And it also stands behind the new open Tory campaign designed to persuade workers that no pay increases at all should be conceded without corresponding increases in productivity.

In the current situation of economic stagnation every productivity increase must result in redundancies and further rationalisation of industry.

To accept in any way at all that workers should trim their demands to accommodate to the economic crisis faced by the employers means in this period

in effect to accept the inevitability of mass unemployment and falling living standards.

Alternative

But there is an alternative: the crisis stems not from a lack of raw materials, or productive forces or from any lack of demand for finished commodities of all kinds.

The crisis stems from the inability of capitalism to develop the productive forces or utilise the available material resources for the satisfaction of human need.

The answer is to mobilise the potentially invincible strength of the working class in the struggle for the overthrow and expropriation of capitalism and the establishment of a planned socialist economy in which need, not profit, dictates the shape and pace of development.



PRESS GANG



When the ruling class is hurt—really hurt—it has an ugly anger peculiar to wounded bullies and outraged tyrants.

The blowing up of Lord Mountbatten and the destruction of 18 Paras at Warrenpoint has stung the British rulers into a frenzy.

For two years they have been assuring the British public that the IRA was in retreat. Now they themselves have been thrown on their heels.

It is in that light that workers should regard the tirades that have screamed across the pages of the capitalist press for the past week.

Newspaper headlines are carved out at editorial meetings of politically conscious lieutenants whose horizons are defined by rich pay packets, eighty thousand pound houses, tax deductible cars and expense account living.

If the headlines seem to be spontaneous outbursts of anger, then they are carefully calculated to give that effect.

The editorial executives take to themselves the role of portraying a national cross class response to events. In doing so they cannot but make their posturing ridiculous.

Even the wording is too similar to have been arrived at separately. "Bastards" appeared on the front page of the *Daily Express*, the *Star*, the *Scottish Daily Express* (supposedly separately edited) and on the inside page of the *Sun*.

All the gutter press gave over a quarter of the entire newspaper on the day following Mountbatten's death, to denunciations of the IRA and hymns of praise for this 'patriot'.

The *Daily Telegraph* had the best part of seven broadsheet pages covered with reports and tributes.

(The obituaries are of course ready-written—sitting in filing cabinets complete with superlatives waiting only for the time and place of death to be filled in).

Turning the pages of these papers, workers can only have become less and less convinced by the page after page of myth building, sensing that the press was protesting too much.

Mountbatten was a sworn enemy of the working class through and through.

Former head of the defence staff, head of imperialism in India, and according to the Crossman diaries, a one-time flirter with a military takeover in Britain.

But: "One of the greatest Englishmen of our time... he represented and inspired the best in all of us... one of the greatest Englishmen of the 20th century... a peaceful old man at the close of an honourable life... one of the country's most distinguished 'Service-statesmen'" were just a sample of the front page epithets.

Yet behind this brave posturing, behind the banner headlines and the daring language what policy did the voice of the ruling class have to put forward?

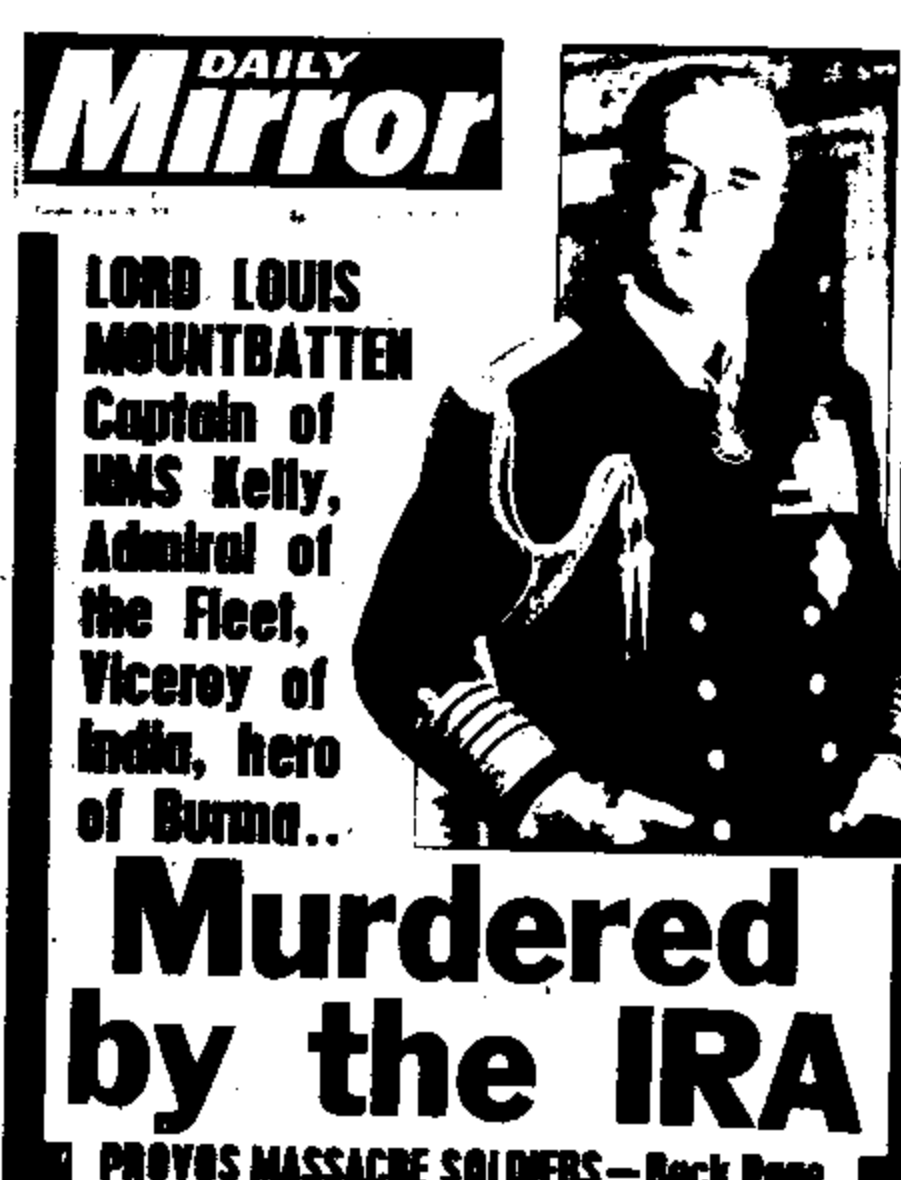
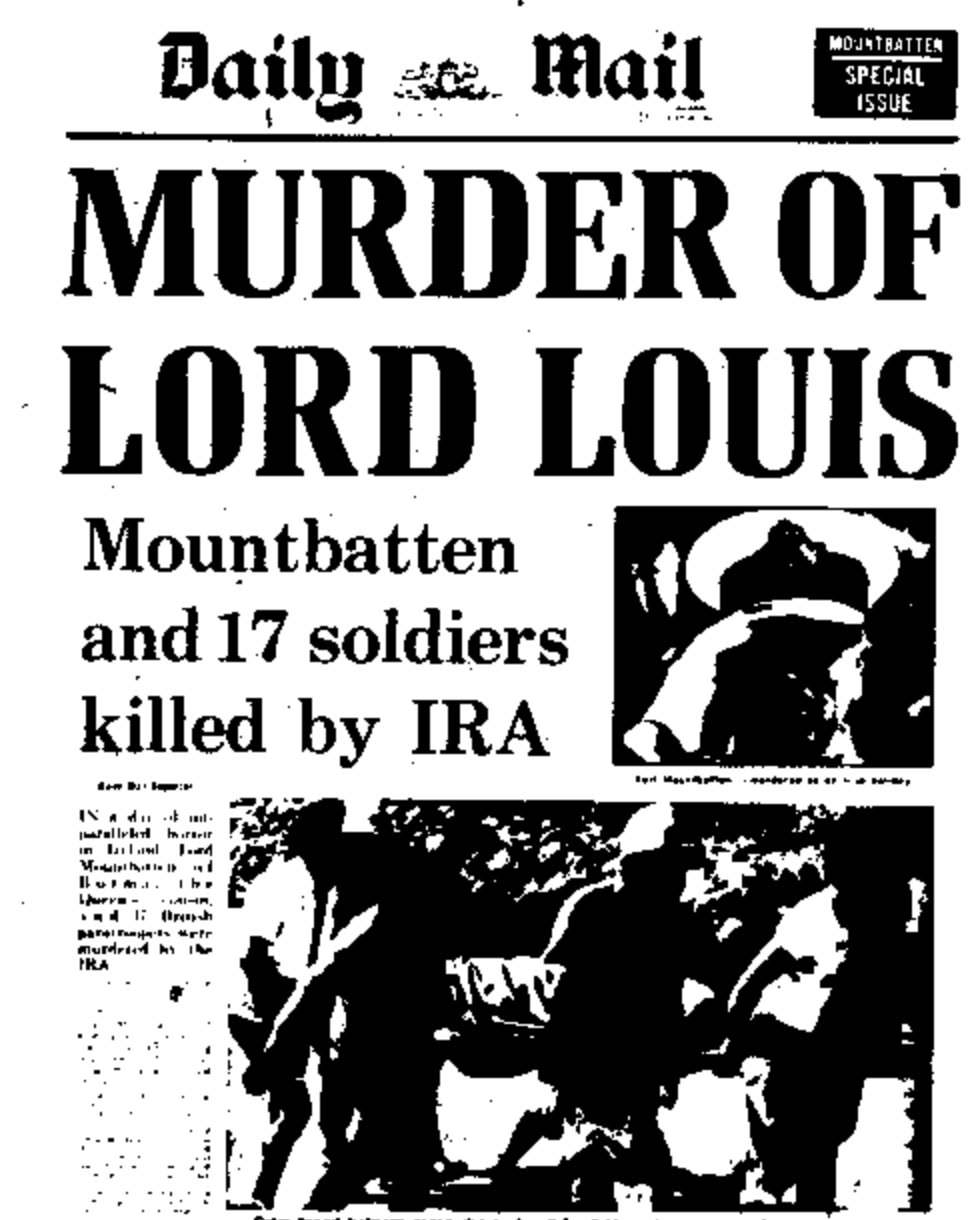
The richness of the language was perhaps designed to obscure the poverty of their strategy.

Even in the terms of British imperialism the press was unable to put forward a single coherent policy which looked likely to advance their cause.

Symbolic

Not yet ready to call for a pogrom, the press is reduced in the end to pictures of Thatcher in the uniform of the Paras, sight seeing the scene of the successful IRA operation against the occupying army.

That symbolic dressing up should tell workers all they need to know about whose army they are supposed to be mourning.



Only strikes can reinstate 28

Journalists from provincial newspapers, meeting in Birmingham on Saturday 8 September to draw up this year's wage claim will do so under the shadow of their sacked colleagues at Nottingham.

More than seven months after the end of the provincial journalists' strike the leaderships of the NUJ and the NGA have yet to introduce any action likely to win back the jobs of the sacked members or to gain recognition for the NGA and SLADE.

This has prepared the ground for a major diversion at the Digbeth pay meeting, with a motion—backed by the NEC—declaring that the Newspaper Society (employers federation) is not a fit body with which to negotiate!

If carried this would mean that the NUJ would put in no national wage claim—in 'protest' against the Nottingham management.

This would abandon to the charitable wishes of the employers the majority of small provincial weekly chapels around the country.

The motion is supported by fake lefts who want to make a gesture over Nottingham and who also see it as a way of avoiding any decision over fighting on wages this year.

In fact reinstatement and recognition at Nottingham can only be won through strike action by NGA and NUJ members throughout the provincial press—as the 600 or so trade unionists who supported the mass picket at Nottingham last Saturday are well aware.

As a WSL leaflet put into the march said:

"How the unions respond to the Nottingham Evening Post management attack is an acid test of how they will respond to the legal attacks the Tories are now drafting and the attacks

which have already been made by Lord Denning and other judges."

The NUJ Executive has called out the handful of members working at the Long Eaton Advertiser—a small weekly recently bought by the Post management.

Lead action

This is a correct step but can only be justified if the executive is prepared to lead action to win recognition and reinstatement.

Only now, four months after the annual conference, have chapels been circulated asking them whether they want to support the conference policy for a one-day strike.

NGA leaders Les Dixon and Tony Dubbins trotted out their

stock speech on anti-union managements at Saturday's demonstration while not once mentioning any possibility of NGA strike action.

On wages, delegates to the NUJ's Digbeth conference would be well advised to study the Oxford motion for rises to match the rise in the cost of living, a £10 across the board rise and for regular increases next year to protect wages against inflation.

Such a policy—linked to NUJ committees to assess the effects of inflation on our members—could unite the membership around a clear claim based in the need to protect living standards.



Once more a massive police presence thwarted the efforts of the 600 pickets at Nottingham on September 1

TUC heavy squad prepares to stifle debate

Last year's TUC Congress was chiefly memorable as the orchestrated send off for the General Election bandwagon—which in the end Callaghan refused to set rolling.

But its paeans of praise for the right wing Labour government and dark warnings of the dangers of a Tory return were only the thin public facade that covered the frantic efforts by AUEW leaders to beat back unofficial strike action by Leyland toolroom workers.

Prelude

Terry Duffy's ignominious failure in his bid to browbeat the toolmakers back to work proved to be what every TUC bureaucrat feared: the prelude to a rushing onward tide of pay

battles, beginning with Fords but quickly spreading to other sections of private industry and into the public sector.

A similar kind of fear now plainly haunts the TUC leaders in the run-up to this year's Congress.

Wave of anger

They sense that their hold over the membership is threatened by the wave of anger building up as Tory inflation, Tory spending cuts, Tory sackings and Tory anti-union laws fuel working class militancy.

Though a deft combination of spluttering left wing speeches and a complete absence of tangible policies to fight the cuts has so far prevented the outbreak of major struggles in the public sector, union bureaucrats recognise how fragile is their control.

The strongarm work behind the scenes this year has therefore been directed towards suppressing any resolutions that offer a hint of positive direction in the struggle against the Tories or the Labour traitors.

Socialist Worker has revealed how a top level gang of TUC bureaucrats—Len Murray, ACTT leader Sapper and TGWU deputy leader Harry Urwin—last week got together to ensure that two resolutions and an amendment calling on the TUC to break off talks with the Tories were removed from the Congress agenda.

They had no problem persuading UCATT General Secretary Les Woods or CPSA Deputy General Secretary Alastair Graham to drop the resolution and amendment put forward by their unions.

But they had more of a problem with the motion from

the Bakers Union.

Whether or not with the tacit consent of the union leadership, they singled out a Manchester branch secretary, Paul Kennedy, for their third degree treatment—and, despite the fact that he has no authority over union resolutions to the TUC, finally bludgeoned him into agreeing to the withdrawal of the motion.

The result is that—unless there is unexpected opposition from the floor—there will be *no* motion even proposing an end to talks with the Tories.

"Vigorous"

The vague TUC talk of "vigorous" campaigns in this context means precisely nothing at all.

But the TUC heavy gang has also been using its muscle against ASLEF in a bid to get

the union to drop its motion calling on the next Labour government to carry out Labour Party policies—declaring that it is wrong to "interfere in politics."

Empty moves

The last thing the bureaucracy wants is to open up any discussion on the role of the last Labour government or—heaven forbid!—of the tasks of a Labour government returned after the defeat of the Tories.

Murray and co. will also jump with both feet on the motion from the Furniture workers (FTATU) calling for "mass demonstrations" against the Tories, and empty moves by health workers to call for an £80 minimum wage.

As *Guardian* reporter Keith Harper shrewdly pointed out: 'because they [the TUC] do

not want trouble, they are pulling hard to stop the rank and file from being inflamed too soon.

"Everything has therefore been done in advance to produce a critical but not excitable Congress."

There could scarcely be a bigger contrast between the privileged, reactionary conservatism of the union leadership and the increasingly dire plight of the working class facing the full brunt of mass unemployment plummeting living standards and speed up on the shop floor.

It is from the real struggles on the shop floor that a new leadership must be developed and trained to challenge and remove the union bureaucrats who have no intention of mounting any fight for the removal of the Tory government.

Fight the cuts— with Labour Weekly?

While fat cat Callaghan has been away on holiday, the Transport House mice have begun timidly to play with policies that he has explicitly denounced.

Callaghan is on record as denouncing in advance any attempt by the unions to use industrial action to halt the implementation of Tory government policies.

But in an unusually daring editorial *Labour Weekly*, the Party's house-journal, comes perilously close to calling for precisely such action.

Pull no punches

Pointing to the savage impact of the Tory cuts and resolutely ignoring its own record of craven support for the Labour government's cuts, the article stresses that:

"The only way to fight back is to organise a campaign against the cuts that brings in all the trade unions affiliated to the TUC, and which will pull no punches.[!]

"A political campaign alone will not be enough. By the time the next Labour government is elected, and the Tories are thrown out of office, most of the damage will have been done.

"The trade union movement has to act now to protect the public services. And inevitably that must mean the threat of industrial action."

"Threats"

Yet while even *Labour Weekly* is talking of "threats" of industrial action against the cuts, there is no hint whatever that Labour 'lefts' or union leaders have any intention of launching any campaign for the removal of the right wing leaders who *oppose* any form of action against the Tories.

In this way, in the style perfected by its "youth" stable-mates *Left* and *Militant*, *Labour Weekly* uses a blather of left talk to mask its acceptance of the continued dominance of the right wing.

How Labour's Manifesto was born

How did the Labour Party wind up saddled with its extreme right wing election manifesto?

If the party's head of research, Geoff Bish, is to be believed it was the outcome not of the complete absence of socialist leadership but of a poor organisational set-up.

The draft of the manifesto was produced by Callaghan's clique at 10 Downing Street, and not revealed to Labour Party officials until two days after the government fell in Parliament last March.

The draft, admits Bish, was "appalling":

"Not only did it ignore entire chapters of party policy; it overturned and ignored many of the agreements which had been laboriously hammered out within the NEC-Cabinet working groups."

(*Labour Weekly*, 31 August)

Buckled down

But within a short space of time every supposed "left" opponent of Callaghan had buckled down under this ultimatum and effectively accepted his wholesale abandonment of party policy:

"The No. 10 draft became, in effect, the basis for discussion."

While conceding that there has been a long standing "divergence of views" between the

Labour Party and Labour in government, Bish draws not a political but an utterly bankrupt organisational conclusion.

"The real lesson is that the NEC and the parliamentary leadership must learn to work together—to jointly determine policy and strategy, whether in or out of office."

On the contrary, the real lesson is that, whatever the organisational machinery, unless an alternative leadership shows itself ready and able to stand and fight for the *removal* of the right wing Callaghan-Healey clique, then Callaghan's anti-working class politics will inevitably rule the roost in the Labour Party.

A resolution to this year's Party conference from Thanet East CLP offers a first step towards such a fight, declaring no confidence in Callaghan and for his resignation as Party leader.

By their attitude to this resolution Labour Party members can gauge the real position of 'left' talking MPs and conference delegates—who must wherever possible be mandated to vote in favour of it.

*Bish's article and other material on Labour's 1979 election fiasco are contained in a new book *What Went Wrong?*, edited by Ken Coates, published by Spokesman Books, paperback £2.95.



Murray—lashing out at 'Trotskyist boot-boys' in 1976

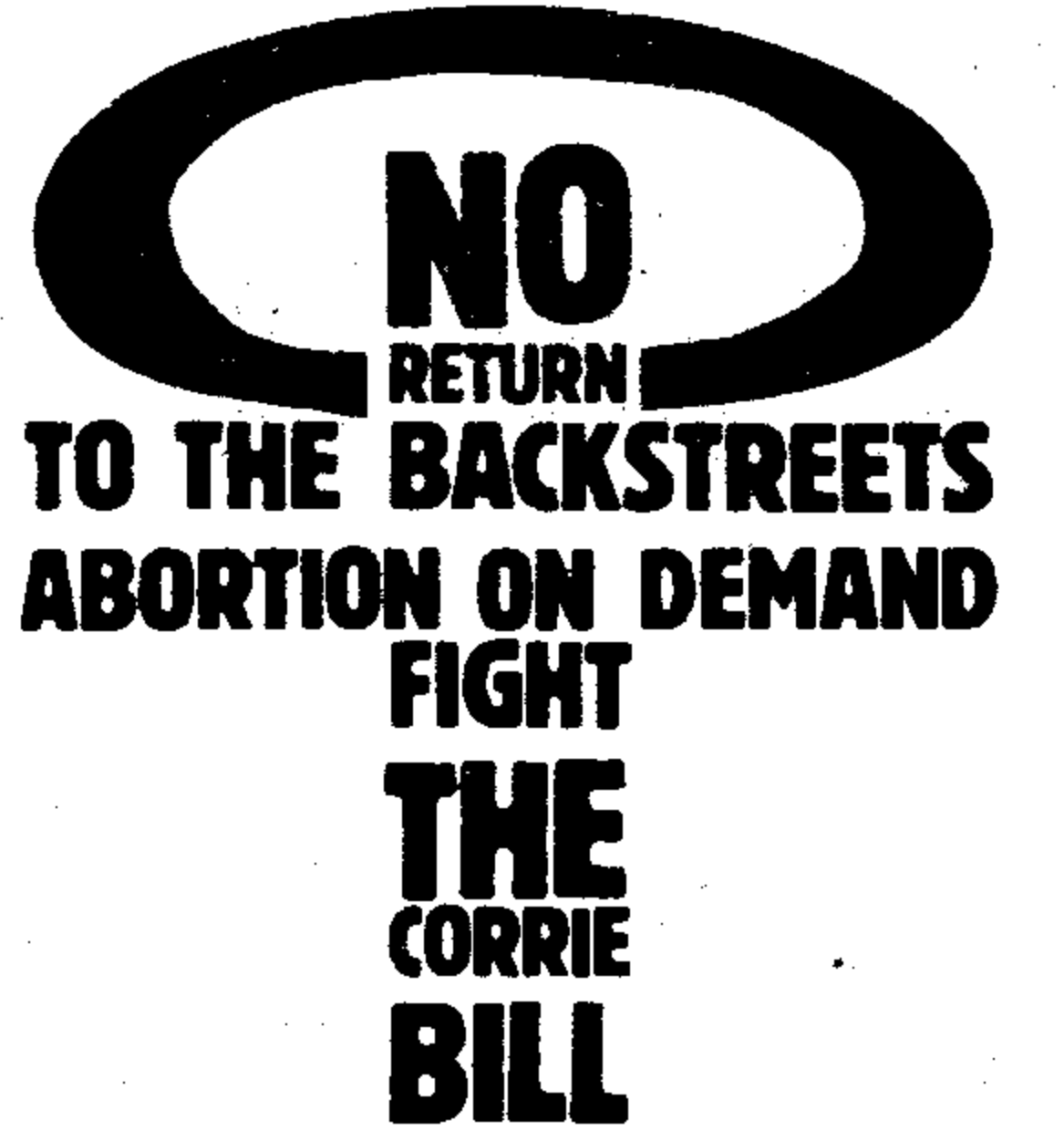
CLP moves against Corrie Bill

Oxford City Labour Party has taken an important initiative in the fight against James Corrie's reactionary anti-abortion bill.

An emergency resolution from the CLP to the Labour Party Conference:

"demands that all Labour Party MPs act upon the 1977 conference policy supporting free abortion on request and the 1979 Labour Women's Conference calling on the labour movement to oppose any restriction on the 1967 Abortion Act, and mandates them to vote against the Corrie Bill on its Third Reading."

Other CLPs should mandate delegates to the conference to support this important resolution, and take up



the fight for the removal of those MPs and delegates that tacitly or openly assist the passage of Corrie's mediaeval attack on women's rights.

At the same time union branches and Labour Parties must mobilise maximum delegations on the TUC's national demonstration against the Corrie Bill on Sunday October 28.

Assemble Speakers Corner 11.30 a.m. March at 12.30 to Trafalgar Square for rally

'Conspiracy' frame-up

'Conspiracy to corrupt public morals' is the charge to be brought against four men at Bow Street Magistrates Court this week.

The prosecution is based on an article in the journal 'Understanding Paedophilia', and contact ads in the newsletter of the Paedophile Information Exchange (PIE).

Like the other conspiracy laws, this piece of legislation is a masterpiece of broad vengeance.

'Public morals' are not of course defined in any way, while there is no need for the prosecution to prove any intention to 'corrupt', nor to prove the existence of any organised subversive plan of 'conspiracy'.

As in the similar trial of IT ('International Times') some

years ago for its homosexual contact ads, such charges are basically used as an elaborate means to impose censorship.

This case flows from the vicious and widespread witch-hunt launched last year through the media against paedophiles who advocate greater freedom for sexual relations between children and adults.

Like the prosecution of *Gay News* last year for criminal blasphemy, this case represents a clear attack on basic democratic rights. Socialists must defend the right of paedophiles to organise openly and publish literature.

But more is involved here than simply democratic rights. The PIE trials reveal once again the bourgeoisie's twin fears of homosexuality and child sexuality.

So long as coercion and violence are not involved, we must reject absolutely the right of the state to restrict the free expression of human sexuality.

Just as we demand an end to all state legislation and discrimination against homosexuality, so we deny the claims of the bourgeoisie that youth and children are incapable and debarred from voluntary sexual expression.

An Action and Defence Committee has been set up to advance the case of the four PIE members, and this committee is already organising pickets of the courts which should be supported by all those determined to end bourgeois oppression of sexuality and to defend democratic rights against the state and other forces of reaction.



Callaghan

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

USFI perplexed by wars between workers' state

This is the fifth of a series of articles about the major political and theoretical crisis in the 'United' Secretariat of the Fourth International exposed by the recent wars in South East Asia. The main sources which have been referred to in the articles are the following:

Fred Feldman, "Behind Fall of Pol Pot Regime", *Militant* Jan. 19 1979, reprinted in *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, Jan. 22 1979.

Fred Feldman, "Socialist Revolution in Vietnam", *International Socialist Review*, April 1979, reprinted in *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, April 9, 1979.

Steve Clark, "Imperialism vs. Workers of the World", *Militant* March 23 1979, also reprinted in *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, April 9, 1979.

Ernest Mandel, "Behind Differences on Military Conflicts in Southeast Asia" *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, April 9 1979.

Steve Clark, Fred Feldman, Gus Horowitz and Mary-Alice Waters, "War and Revolution in Indochina—What Policy for Revolutionists?", *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor* July 16 1979.

estimation and at worst to a complete denial of the objective counter-revolutionary nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The programme of the Fourth International, the programme for which Trotskyists continue to struggle against the two world forces of counter-revolution—imperialism and Stalinism—is based on the idea that the crisis of humanity expresses itself in a crisis of working class leadership on a world scale.

This is another way of saying that there exists a formidable material force which stands as an obstacle to the revolutionary overthrowing of the rotten ripe capitalist system by the working class. That obstacle is the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Parasitic

The bureaucracy derives its material strength from living parasitically on the blood of the working class and its organisations. The centre of that parasitic power is in the states where capitalism has been abolished and which are ruled by the Stalinist bureaucracy which denies the workers all political independence.

The bureaucracy holds back the struggle against imperialism as a whole by making compromises with it.

This collaboration with the class enemy is necessary for the Stalinist bureaucracy because its political and material privileges are inimical to workers democracy just as they parasitically depend on workers organisations.

The survival of the bureaucracy as a privileged caste, therefore, depends on its ability successfully to balance between imperialism and the working class. That means that when the bureaucracy has initiated progressive measures, such as the expropriation of capitalist property in the deformed workers states, it has done so in the context of an overall policy which is profoundly counter-revolutionary.

So for instance social overturns were carried out by Stalin in Eastern Europe at the end of World War Two. But they were part of the same settlement with imperialism which included the betrayal by Stalin of the revolutionary possibilities in France, Italy, Greece, the restoration of imperialist rule in Algeria and Vietnam and so on.

Gains reversed

The role of the Stalinist bureaucracy has been to reverse historical gains which have been made by the working class, and so to prolong the rule of an exploitative system in its death agony.

It is only by understanding the nature of the enormous counter-

revolutionary force represented by the Stalinist bureaucracy that it will be possible to defeat it.

The tradition of Trotskyism has insisted that the bureaucracy cannot be understood and defeated either by regarding it as a force which will always move in a revolutionary direction under sufficient pressure from the masses, or by regarding it as simply a part of imperialism with no relation to the working class.

Its balancing role explains its weaknesses and the reason why it cannot be considered permanent. But its balancing role between the workers movement and imperialism is also its strength as a counter-revolutionary force, which has been capable of existing and growing in power for a period of over half a century.

The actions of the bureaucracy and the contradictions between different sections of it must be understood by revolutionaries as one of the major forces influencing the struggle between the oppressing and oppressed classes on a world scale.



Chinese soldiers waiting to be sent to fight in Vietnam

The American SWP's view of the world, to emerge in the recent articles on Indochina, is roughly as follows: the world is a struggle between imperialism on the one hand and the oppressed and exploited masses on the other.

There are the only two material interests involved. So in this two-sided war all participants—whatever their subjective position or intentions—must be on one side or the other.

This gross oversimplification emerges most clearly when it comes to dealing with the Stalinist bureaucracy.

It admits only two possible positions on the Stalinist bureaucracy: an ultra-leftist one (the bureaucracy is simply part of imperialism), or an adaptationist one (the bureaucracy is, despite itself, on the side of the masses).

Dissolved

Within the SWP's scheme of the world the Stalinist bureaucracy as a counter-revolutionary material force of immense strength, independent of, though in collaboration with, imperialism simply dissolves.

This schema is developed more concretely in the article by four leading SWP members—Clark, Feldman, Horowitz and Waters (henceforward ref-

erred to collectively as CFHW) — (*Intercontinental Press/Inprecor* July 16, '79)

According to CFHW, there are six 'facts' of the world situation which their approach alone is able to explain. We will comment briefly on each in turn. (ICP, July 16, 1979 p.710).

First "the imperialists were hostile to the 1975-78 developments in Vietnam". But they do not mention the fact that the imperialists were also hostile to events in Kampuchea.

Omission

This omission links to the second point that "the imperialists were able to carry out a rapprochement with Pol Pot". The impression is falsely created by CFHW that such a rapprochement (which was extremely limited in its extent) was a feature of the whole of the Pol Pot regime whereas in fact it was partly the result of a sudden desperate switch of line by Pol Pot in 1978.

In any case, if CFHW hope to suggest (as it appears they do) that any rapprochement of a bureaucracy with imperialism proves that their state is capitalist then they will have to explain the meaning of the rapprochements which every Stalinist bureaucracy has made time and time again with imperialism.

Third, CFHW say "the imperialists backed Peking's invasion of Vietnam". That is, to say the least, a slight

of hand. The imperialists in fact publicly opposed Peking's invasion.

Of course, it is right to say that they did not oppose it very vehemently, less than they opposed the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea.

It is plausible that in his visit to Washington just before the invasion Deng Xiaoping assured himself that there would be no serious US objection to his proposed invasion.

And it is true that in the middle of the invasion the US imperialists signed new, more far reaching, economic agreements with the Beijing (Peking) bureaucracy.

But all of this falls far short of CFHW's bald assertion that "the imperialists supported Peking."

Welcomed

The last three points made by CFHW are related. They say that "the workers and peasants of Kampuchea welcomed the Vietnamese action in toppling Pol Pot", that the workers and peasants of Vietnam "rallied to the defence of their state in the above conflicts" and that "there was disenchantment and ... signs of opposition in China to the invasion of Vietnam". (*Ibid* p. 710).

Only on the third of these points is there any evidence to back up CFHW's contention. The other two conform to their wishes—and the propaganda put out by the Hanoi bureaucracy and its puppet

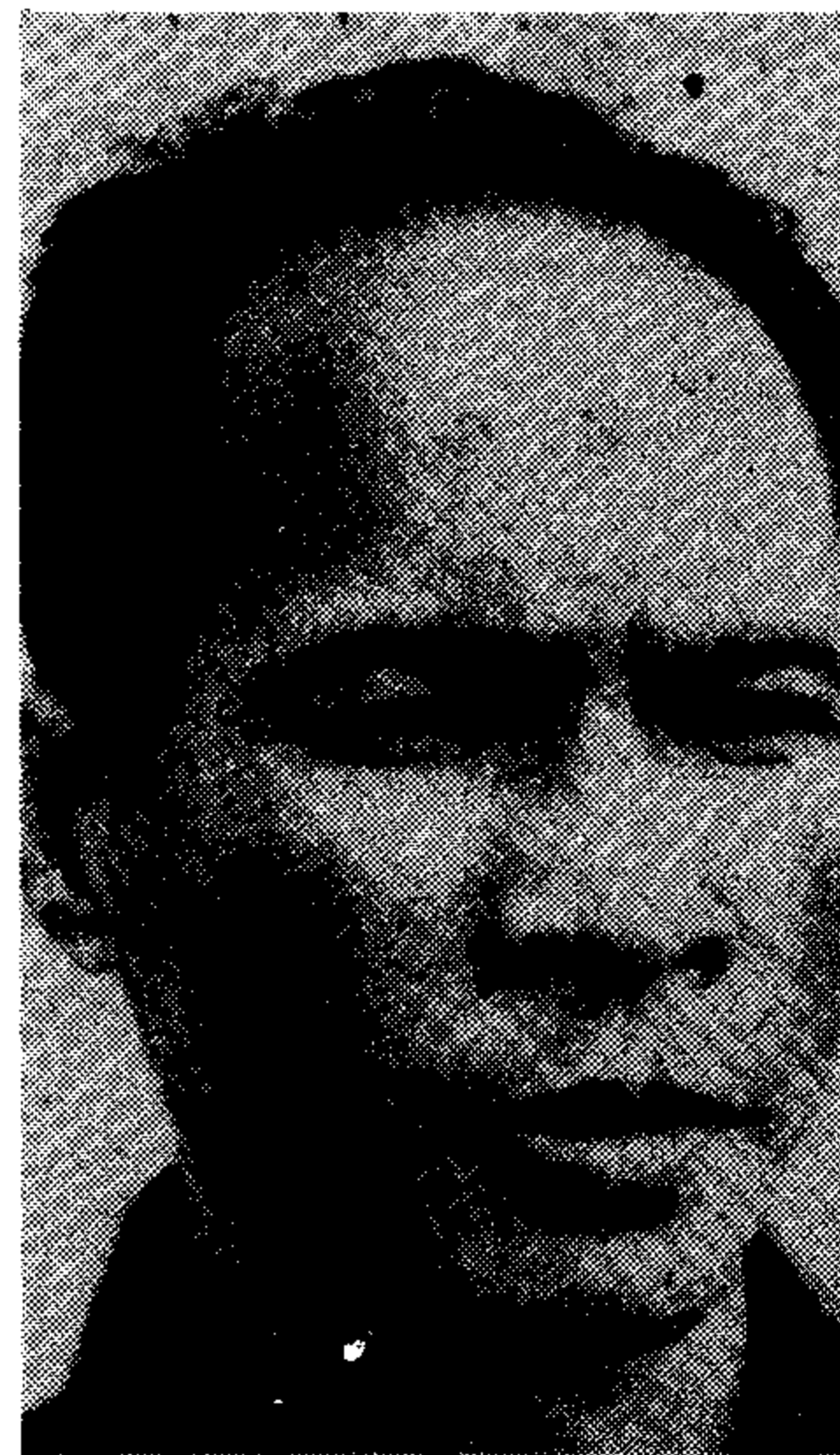
the Heng Samrin regime in Kampuchea.

So we see that of the six 'facts' about the world which only CFHW are supposedly able to explain, five are either wishful thinking without evidence, or with very selective evidence.

So it is fraudulent to say that there are six "facts" to be explained. Because the "facts" are carefully doctored in advance so that only the theory advocated by the SWP's leaders can seem to provide an explanation.

Dishonest

Beneath such dishonest methods and the specific failures of the SWP's argument runs a current of thought which is much more serious and amounts at best to a severe under-



Heng Samrin



Khmer Rouge soldiers captured

It is quite correct to say that the current weakness of imperialism makes physical interventions around the world more difficult to undertake and so means that it attempts more and more to intervene by exploiting inter-bureaucratic conflicts.

But that in no way is equivalent to saying that the bureaucracies in alliance with imperialism cease to be Stalinist bureaucracies and become in effect part of imperialism, which is what CFHW and the SWP in its resolution in effect say happened to the Chinese and Kampuchean bureaucracies in relation to the Indochinese wars.

Nor does it mean that a bureaucracy which is forced

By
Henry
Phillips



Cambodian refugees flee from Vietnamese invaders into neighbouring Thailand

S to resist the pressures of imperialism thereby becomes, in spite of itself, part of the movement of the oppressed classes, which is what the SWP in effect say happened to the Vietnamese bureaucracy.

So CFHW characterise the war as one "with the Kampuchean masses and the Vietnamese workers' state on one side; and the Pol Pot gang, Bangkok, Washington and Peking on the other" (ICP, July 16 1979, p.728). But, what about the Pham Van Dong gang?

Blemish

To CFHW that was just a slightly unfortunate blemish on the scene which does no more than illustrate that wishes and reality do not always exactly correspond. "Certainly," they say, "it would have been better if the opposition to the Pol Pot regime inside Kampuchea had been better organised. Certainly it would have been better if the Kampuchean masses had had a revolutionary leadership capable of doing the job themselves."

"And certainly it would have been better if Hanoi had been guided by a revol-

of the Indochinese wars, therefore, they say that:

"The castes were not acting as independent historical agents. They were responding to pressures and initiatives from the two major contending class forces—the imperialists and the world working class." (ICP, July 16 1979, p.713).

What is the main pressure to which the bureaucracy responds? According to CFHW, it is the working class in the workers states:

"The most important obstacle to the castes is the working class of their own countries. However silenced and politically atomised, the workers are still the ruling class in the workers' states . . ."

"Stalinist rule is rigid but also fragile. Thus, castes must always weigh the risk of open political opposition from their own working class if they take military action against the international interests of the working class . . ."

"The working class in the

power of Stalinism.

If the bureaucracy responds so much to its fear of the working class then how do the SWP leaders explain that after more than 50 years of Stalinist rule in the Soviet Union the working class remains in their words "silenced and politically atomised"?

This denial of the political power of the Stalinist bureaucracy goes hand in hand with a blithe, idealistic optimism about the certainty of victory for the working class.

Leadership

They are silent on the major condition for this victory to take place—the construction of a revolutionary Marxist leadership.

In relation to wars between workers states CFHW sum up their position in these words:

"The bureaucratic castes are not the major actors on the world stage. The decisive historical force for humanity's future is the working class.

"The workers can and will (our emphasis) prevent the bureaucratic castes from making war as they would like, just as they must eventually wipe capitalism from the face of the earth."

"Yes, the rise of world revolution will cause the bureaucratic castes to try to lash out; but wars between workers states will become less likely with each new victory in the class struggle on a world scale, because the working class, which is the ruling class in the workers states, will become stronger."

(ICP, July 16 1979, emphasis in original except where noted).

CFHW are saying here not only that the working class is becoming stronger, but that its victory is guaranteed unconditionally by some kind of historical predestination and in no way depends on the conscious intervention of revolutionary leadership.

It is some "natural" and inexorable process of "the rise of world revolution" and not the intervention of revolutionaries which will guarantee victory.

Process

This relates to the SWP's (as well as the USFI majority's) implicit view of "permanent revolution" as a process which "unfolds" rather than as the political theoretical basis of a conscious revolutionary strategy, which we discussed in the previous article in this series. (See *Socialist Press*, August 29 1979).

The whole position is an abandonment of Marx's position that "Men make their own history"; of Lenin's lifelong struggle for the revolutionary party; of

Trotsky's emphasis on the political counter-revolution represented by Stalinism and the need to combat and destroy the parasitic bureaucracy.

Ruled out

CFHW say that the workers will win, with no conditions. Defeat is ruled out.

Moreover, they imply that the workers will win through the construction of deformed workers states because in those states the working class "is the ruling class".

But what does it mean to say "the working class is the ruling class" in the deformed and degenerated workers states?

It is a "ruling class" which exercises none of the functions exercised by ruling classes in history.

This "ruling class" has fewer political rights than does the working class in many capitalist countries where it is not the ruling class.

CFHW do not explain this contradiction; they scarcely consider it worth mentioning. Their position here is a more global version of their view of the social overturn in Vietnam (critically analysed in the fourth of these articles in *Socialist Press*, August 29 1979)—that the creation of a deformed workers state is an unambiguously progressive development.

That despite its intentions the Stalinist bureaucracy must play a historically progressive role and its rule is in effect a stage on the road to full socialist revolution.

Centuries

Once again it is a position which echoes that of Michel Pablo in 1952 when he foresaw the development of "centuries of deformed workers states".

For the SWP leaders today, as for Pablo in 1952, that would not be the best possible world (revolutionary leadership would be better) but it represents, nonetheless, an unambiguous step forward.

The direction of the SWP leaders' analysis, therefore, is towards the liquidation of the Trotskyist programme of unremitting struggle for the independence of the working class against the Stalinist bureaucracy.

We must now examine the answers which are being presented by both sides in the USFI dispute to the questions which are the newest and in some ways most challenging and urgent of all those raised by the events in South East Asia:

Why have wars taken place between workers states, what are the consequences of those wars and will they extend?

If so, are they a threat to the property relations which have been established in the countries we know as deformed workers states?

In the case of Vietnam and Kampuchea, the SWP avoids the need to answer the first of these questions.

Its resolution and the articles by its leading members assert, falsely, as we have argued, that Kampuchea was not a workers' state and so what has to be explained at least in the case of the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea is not a war between workers' states but a war between a workers' state and a capitalist state.

Spearhead

They go on to argue that the capitalist state in question was being used as a spearhead of attack against workers' property by the imperialists and the carrying out of war by Hanoi was an act of self-defence by the Vietnamese revolution against imperialist attack.

This argument has, for the SWP, the added virtue that it can be presented within the framework of what they argue is the orthodox Marxist analysis of the nature of deformed workers' states, that they are not expansionist and will go to war only to defend the property relations established against imperialist assault on them.

And, therefore, that the only source of war in the world remains imperialism—in particular inter-imperialist rivalries and imperialism's desire to restore capitalism in the workers' states.

The SWP's argument must be disputed on many scores.

In the first place, we have already disputed the analysis that Kampuchea was a capitalist state as well as the extent to which it can be placed in the imperialist camp.

Second, we have

explained something which the SWP chooses to ignore completely—the way in which hostility between the Cambodian and Vietnamese bureaucracy had developed for many years prior to the defeat of US imperialism in 1975.

This was a rivalry for which the Vietnamese bureaucracy must bear a considerable amount of responsibility and which undoubtedly helped to contribute to the permanent state of tension and hostility between the two countries after 1975.

Denial of this element in the prelude to the war between Vietnam and Kampuchea is, of course, part of the SWP's whitewashing of the Vietnamese leadership.

To back up its argument that the Vietnamese invasion was a defence against imperialism it is also necessary for the SWP to deny another theoretically possible reason for the invasion—a threat of political revolution in Kampuchea which might also pose a political threat to the Hanoi bureaucracy.

CFHW assure us that this had nothing to do with the invasion.

But they choose to keep us in ignorance of the reports coming from Kampuchea before the invasion of uprisings against the Pol Pot regime not from the right and of the purges which took place at the top of the KCP which might have indicated pressure against the Pol Pot leadership from sections of the rank and file and the masses.

It is impossible to say with any certainty that this was one of the motives which affected the Hanoi bureaucracy.

But it is necessary to face the question honestly instead of covering it up as the SWP leaders do.

Continued next week



by Vietnamese forces

revolutionary Marxist rather than a Stalinist leadership." (ICP, July 16, 1979, p.710 (our emphasis)).

The implication of this astounding passage is that the difference between Stalinist and revolutionary Marxist leadership is merely one of quantity. Stalinist leadership can be good; revolutionary Marxist leadership would be better.

But the SWP leaders abandon the Trotskyist lesson of the massive counter-revolutionary obstacle created by the Stalinist bureaucracy by denying to it any independent role, by making it into an insubstantial feather which simply moves according to the play of the wind of class struggle. In discussing the origins

workers states is a formidable check on the ability of the castes to simply act as they like in the world arena." (ICP, July 16 1979, p.714).

We do not wish to say the rule of the bureaucracy in the Stalinist states is permanent or invincible. Nor to deny the ever-present and growing danger to bureaucratic rule of the hostility of the working class.

But we consider that the emphasis on the relationship between the working class and the Stalinist bureaucracy placed by the SWP leaders in this passage amounts to an abandonment of the Trotskyist position on the nature and counter-revolutionary



Sihanouk in London

July 15 saw the founding conference of the Workers Party, a new organisation formed by forces recently expelled from Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party.

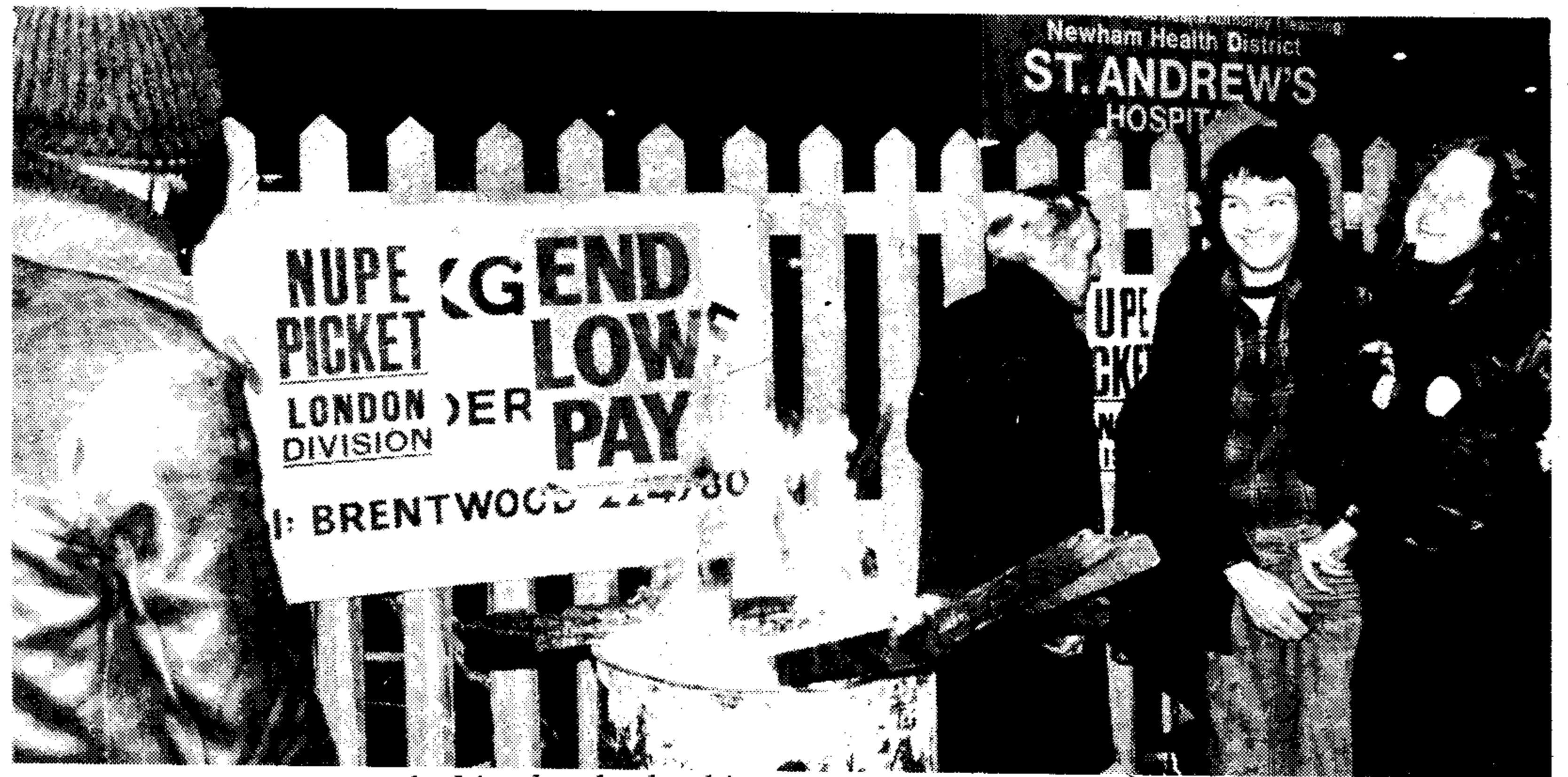
The founders of the Workers Party had raised differences with Healy's opportunist and degenerate alliance with the Middle Eastern despotisms of Libya and Iraq, as well as the WRP's assessment of last winter's strike wave in Britain. As usual in the WRP such differences were met with bureaucratic repression.

Along with two political documents, the Workers Party has now published five issues of its *Bulletin*.

Number 5 was produced to coincide with the WSL's summer school and contains articles attacking our positions.

This article is the first part of a reply to the points raised in that *Bulletin* and focusses on programme and practice; the second part will take up the Workers Party's views on organisational questions and on the Fourth International.

PHOTO: Carlos Augusto, IFL



Public sector strikers last winter: militancy was not lacking but leadership was

Although the Workers Party Group like the WSL has come out of the WRP, and echoes some of our criticisms of its leaders, it has not been formed in the same way; nor has it broken from the basic political conceptions of the Healy movement on questions of programme and practice.

A serious discussion with these comrades is important, however. This is because they still represent, however much they themselves deny, some of the strengths as well as many of the weaknesses of the Healyite movement.

Also, the issues they raise involve a discussion which was never possible before within the WRP.

Unlike the Workers Party founders, the forces that formed the WSL struggled initially within the WRP to raise our differences and fight for the maximum possible internal discussion to correct the wrong positions of the Party.

Understanding

We produced two major discussion documents—only one of which was eventually selectively circulated by Healy. We argued for our rights as a minority both under the then WRP constitution and in line with the traditions of the Trotskyist and Bolshevik movement.

After the Healy leadership cracked down and expelled us, we lobbied WRP aggregate meetings and the WRP Conference from which we were excluded.

We even fought right through the rigged WRP 'appeals' machinery against our expulsions.

In the process of this struggle we were able to further deepen our understanding of how profound was our split with the Healy movement and to develop our critique of the WRP's false method in the practice of party-building.

The three leading members of the Workers Party, on the other hand, carried out no such fight against Healy.

They were expelled from the WRP only after they had themselves resigned. They had produced no written critique of the WRP's programme and practice, and only conducted a brief fight within its ranks.

Limited basis

As a result their break with Healy has taken place only on the most limited basis, and no real analysis has been developed of Healy's attitude to practice and programme.

Furthermore, unlike the founders of the WSL, the Workers Party leaders emerged with no roots in the organised working class.

It had been precisely the necessity for our leading members to fight on a clear programme day in and day out in the workers' movement that had at first focussed our attention clearly, on the false method of the WRP and its abandonment of the demands of the Transitional Programme.

Yet the Workers Party, though it has subsequently recruited workers, emerged from simply an abstract critique of Healy's most obvious false positions in the most general terms. It has yet to grasp the meaning of the fight for programme in general and the significance of the Transitional Programme in particular, in the struggle to construct a revolutionary party.

Workers Party: yet to break from Healyism

By
Tony
Richardson



Healy

OUR HISTORY

Indeed although the Workers Party leaders were prominent in the WRP during our expulsions from the WRP in December 1974, they show little grasp of the events that led up to the expulsions or the real issues involved.

In common with this attitude to most historical questions, the Workers Party take little interest in examining details—which in fact prove to be of considerable importance.

The first criticisms we raised against the line of the WRP focussed on Healy's notion in 1974 that the collapse of capitalism in Britain and on a world scale, was imminent, and that it was therefore simply a question of a "countdown to dictatorship".

Abandonment

This alarmist and totally one-sided analysis of the mounting economic crisis of capitalism was not even carried through consistently: there was no WRP call, for instance, for the formation of workers' militias or any other preparation against the predicted "police/military dictatorship".

Instead it led simply to the total abandonment of any serious day to day trade union work conducted by the WRP—and of any demands on which such work could be based.

After all, if the whole system stands on the verge of collapse, then socialist revolution must be the only solution. Any demand short of the immediate expropriation of capitalism is therefore inadequate, and the sole task of revolutionaries is to build an organisation to carry this out.

Mass recruitment

The WRP on this basis embarked on the most frenzied and ill-conceived mass recruitment campaigns.

Hundreds of workers, youth and passers-by were signed up on the spot, in the streets, in lifts, in traffic jams, and enrolled on the most minimal basis "members" of the "mass revolutionary party". This reached its peak of absurdity in the two election campaigns run by the WRP in 1974.

Why were we the first to detect what was wrong with all this? Because unlike the petty bourgeois elements of the WRP the Cowley members recognised that in recruiting members that are then required to carry out a fight for Party

policy in the class struggle, a considerable measure of political agreement is essential.

And in also coming into contact with large sections of workers outside the narrow circles of the WRP, the Cowley members were forced to attempt to argue for the WRP's policies—and recognise how distant these were from the reality of the class struggle.

Isolated

Far from developing workers and mobilising action against the attacks of the bourgeoisie, the WRP's predictions of "military coups" and abstract calls for the "nationalisation of the basic industries" simply isolated the Party from the working class.

And when we turned to compare this approach with that in Trotsky's *Transitional Programme*, we found that Trotsky's method was indeed entirely different.

We stressed the necessity for revolutionaries to find "a bridge between present demands and the socialist programme of the revolution".

We emphasised the need for patient work in the trade unions, in which Marxists stand "in the front line trenches" even in the course of struggles for the 'modest material interests' of the workers.



Trotsky

"Only on the basis of such work within the trade unions is successful struggle possible against the reformists, including those of the Stalinist bureaucracy". (Transitional Programme).

For Trotsky, then, govern-

mental demands were completely related to demands on jobs, wages and democratic rights. Each had to be presented in the form of a "bridge" over which the working class could advance, in struggle, beyond its daily, trade union consciousness, to a grasp of the need for socialist revolution.

Healy, however, had abandoned this living conception of struggle for leadership. Instead the term 'leadership' was, reduced by the WRP to an abstraction divorced from the day to day class struggle.

This was highlighted after our expulsions when Tom White, the one remaining WRP member in Cowley, was allowed by the WRP to enter the class collaborationist "workers' participation" committees in the plant. He was further encouraged by Healy to stab in the back the struggle by the 'Cowley 9 Defence Campaign' against victimisation by the TGWU bureaucracy of leading militants in the plant—including himself!

Facts wrong

Have the Workers Party grasped the way in which Healy's method departs from that of Trotsky and the Transitional Programme?

Apparently not. They attack us for example, for not ceaselessly employing Healy's abstract slogan of "Bring down the Labour government", which they uncritically support.

Even in this they get their facts wrong:

"When former WRP central committee member Alan Thornett and his supporters adopted clearly wrong positions by arguing against a struggle to bring down the Wilson-Callaghan administration, an open debate within the party was suppressed". (WP document *The Revolutionary Party P5*).

We did not argue against the slogan in 1974—for the good reason that it had not then been adopted by the WRP! It was not adopted as a position until 1975—when the expulsion of the Cowley cadre and loss of many more workers had further widened the WRP's isolation from the real struggles and political level of the working class.

On the other hand, from the very outset *Socialist Press* has attacked those bureaucrats in the trade union and labour movement who argued that workers should hold back on their struggles in order to "save the Labour Government".

In taking up the struggle to expose 'left' social democracy through the tactic of placing demands on the 'lefts' we have always spelled out the demand that Labour MPs should be called upon to vote and campaign against Wilson-Callaghan's attacks on the working class—even if this meant bringing down the Labour government.

The Workers Party leaders however have no real experience of the struggle for programme in the working class.

They fail to grasp that in the fight revolutionaries inevitably confront not simply the open right wing but the treachery of those 'left' bureaucrats who pose as militant defenders of the working class but pull back in practice from any struggle against the TUC or Labour leadership.

It is crucial to expose these forces in action to those layers of workers that look to them for leadership.

The Workers Party accuse us of separating "the economic from the political".

Yet they do not see that it is only in reality through the struggle for transitional demands and not simply through the shouting of abstract governmental slogans, that the link between day to day struggles on jobs and wages and the strategic necessity to overthrow capitalism can be brought home to the working class.

Practical struggle

Because a slogan calls for "bringing down" a government does not make it necessarily more "political" than a slogan



Thornett

that seeks to mobilise the kind of mass action that actually can bring down governments.

The answer lies not in the ritualistic use of a form of words, but in the practical struggle by revolutionaries against the bureaucratic leaders of the workers' movement.

Arrogance

It is ironic that the Workers Party, who have yet to lead any struggles anywhere in the working class, have the arrogance to attack the WSL (who throughout last winter's pay battles struggled for the building of councils of action and the generalisation of strike action) for what they call our:

"unwillingness to understand and intervene in that movement as the struggle for power in embryo."

Yet embodied in this abstract concept of the "struggle for power" is the basis of the Workers Party's effective abandonment of the transitional demands and the method of the Transitional Programme—a facet of their politics that so clearly echoes Healy.

The Workers Party actually claim that today's class struggle poses different political tasks from those confronted in the Transitional Programme, which, they say:

"was in fact written to meet a completely different world situation, where the working class had suffered defeat after defeat."

Now they declare, things are all changed because:

"The revolutionary tide is now flowing so strongly in favour of the working class."

Yet Trotsky in 1938 was at pains to stress the revolutionary movements of the working class: his focus, however, contrary to that of the Workers Party, was on its crisis of leadership:

"The multi-millioned masses again and again enter the road of revolution. But each time they are blocked by their own conservative bureaucratic machines."

"The Spanish proletariat has made a series of heroic attempts since April 1931 to take power in its hands and guide the fate of society. However its own parties (Social Democrats, Stalinists, Anarchists, POUM, etc)—each in its own way acted as a brake and thus prepared Franco's triumphs."

"In France the great wave of sit-down strikes, particularly during June 1936, revealed the wholehearted readiness of the proletariat to overthrow the capitalist system."

Far from simply revelling in this militancy of the proletariat, Trotsky stresses the dangers posed by its treacherous leadership.

This central question remains unchanged today!

The post-war Trotskyist movement has been unable in any country to place itself at the head of the masses or to carry through the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism.

Must be broken

The workers' movement remains therefore politically dominated by counter-revolutionary Stalinism, reformism and even petty-bourgeois nationalism. This hold can and must be broken.

It is not and has never been true, as Royston Bull fondly believes, that:

"the working class is surging forwards towards an embryonic revolutionary consciousness, thirsting for a revolutionary party to lead it and brushing aside contemptuously the old sectarian and opportunist crap which would see it tied down to

defeat after defeat or unprincipled sell-out after sell-out."

Such a messianic notion of the role of the revolutionary party is totally divorced from the reality in which revolutionaries in each country have to fight in practice for the building of Marxist parties, in conflict with the existing trade union and spontaneous consciousness of the working class, and in conflict with opposing political tendencies that appear to offer easy shortcuts to revolution.

Untrue

It is quite simply untrue, despite the document issued during the election that the programme of the Workers Party is close to becoming the immediate demands of the working class.

Including, presumably such obligatory incantations as the 'nationalisation without compensation under workers control of all financial, agricultural, and commercial capital apart from small family-run business and farms.'

It is very easy to proclaim in ringing tones, as we find the same document that 'If a revolutionary party cannot organise independently and carry into practice its own programme, then it cannot develop revolutionary theory and tactics or develop leadership and authority.'



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Callaghan

The more serious question is how a few dozen people can counterpose themselves to the rest of the working class, declaring themselves to be the revolutionary party and expecting the masses to follow automatically.

Rejection

And this goes together with the explicit rejection of any conception of finding a bridge between the daily struggle of the masses and the objective necessity to develop these towards the struggle for power.

A few months of harsh practical experiences in the class struggle will soon deflate the Workers Party's bluff arrogance. We hope the resulting disillusionment will not lead to its obvious end in pessimism and cynicism.

Five years of practical struggle on our programme and perspective in the working class has convinced us that the only way to accumulate a serious Marxist cadre capable of mobilising workers in struggle is not by simply proclaiming ourselves as the revolutionary party but through the fight in practice, day in day out in the workers movement for a system of transitional demands—the approach put forward by Trotsky for the small forces of the early Fourth International.

Inflict defeats

Our fight in Cowley is living proof that such patient work even by a small number of members can actually inflict defeats on the reformist and Stalinist bureaucracy by winning broad and solid support within the working class.

Elsewhere in the labour movement, too, our method of struggle has been shown to attract the most serious and determined class fighters, and to offer the only consistent political challenge to the bureaucracy.

We must hope that the Workers Party comrades are not so firmly attached to the abstract propagandist method of Healy that they will remain blind to these strengths and to the gains that can and must be made through such work if a Trotskyist party is to be built in Britain as part of a reconstructed Fourth International.

MASS ACTION, NOT STATE BANS TO FIGHT FASCISM

According to the Surrealist Andre Breton, co-author with Trotsky of the 'Manifesto for an Independent Revolutionary Art', there is a great deal to be learned from what he termed 'objective chance'.

Basically, this is a series of coincidences which combine to point in a particular direction.

Reading 'Support the Leicester 87' you couldn't help but agree with him.

Here we have a stunning coincidence of dates which ought properly to have large, red ANL arrows affixed saying "This way out—please adjust your politics."

On April 21 thousands of anti-racists mobilised in Leicester in an attempt to prevent the National Front's St. George's Day march. The ANL, enjoying the brief luxury of a leftward lurch in order to cover the SWP's embarrassment after the stitch up with the police at Winchester, dropped their plans for a timid counter-march and proceeded to pelt the NF with stones in lieu of any struggle to actually mobilise the strength of the labour movement.

'Victory'

The SWP immediately declared this a victory in the spirit of Lewisham and a return to the real struggle. As we pointed out at the time, however, this was merely the other side of their opportunist coin in entering the ANL popular front. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that on July 21 they decided to boycott the demonstration called in support of the 87 anti-racists charged following the April 21 events, declaring it an 'ultra-left' diversion.

The next step hardly required an Agatha Christie to complete the plot, and duly, on August 21, the ANL rump of SWP/IMG found themselves lined up behind 'Support the Leicester 87', an account of the Leicester events so politically compromised and confused that it deserves sympathetic reviews in *Newline* and *Morning Star*.

Clearly, talking of 21sts, the SWP have come of age as the tame houseboys of liberal protest.

Repudiation

The original purpose of the pamphlet was, according to the Defence Committee, to take the important lessons of Leicester out to the widest possible audience in the labour movement and mobilise concrete support for the Leicester 87.

So much for theory. In practice, what we have instead is a repudiation of every lesson learned by anti-racists and anti-fascists over the past 50 years and a barely concealed attack on the politics upon which the 'No platform' mobilisation on



Fascists march under state protection through Leicester

April 21 and the subsequent July 21 demonstration were called.

If anything can be dredged from this verbal swamp it can only be as testimony to the total political bankruptcy of the authors.

Rubbish

The pamphlet begins with two quotations.* One is from Leicester's Chief Constable, the other from that well known anti-racist activist Arthur Latham MP who states, "Mr. Rees (yes! the ex-minister of torture himself) should tell chief constables that British soldiers did not fight two world wars so that Nazis could march in Britain."

This xenophobic rubbish is printed without comment or criticism and sets the tone for the whole document.

Essentially, the authors take to task 'the authorities empowered to ban the Nazi demonstration' for not having considered the costs to the public in terms of inconvenience and damaged race relations before coming to their decision to allow the march.

In support of this reactionary argument stolen from the handbook of Stalinist popular frontism they draw our attention in a section headed 'The Costs' to the fact that "city centre traders found that their trade for the day had fallen by at least two-thirds of its usual figure", that "people were subjected to the inconvenience of traffic delays" and that "25 policemen needed hospital treatment". The lesson from all this, no doubt, is that the authorities should be less thoughtless in future.

Whining apology

This whining apology for politics is completely at odds with the principled position put forward by the Leicester Anti-Racist Committee in calling for the April 21 mobilisation.

Having consistently opposed the use of state bans they raised the demand 'No Platform for Fascists'.

As Trotsky pointed out in 1938: "Workers cannot let the

repressive fist of the bourgeois state substitute for the struggle that they must wage through their own organisations."

To do so is merely to give the state the means with which to repress the labour movement. That is why Leicester's anti-racists turned to the labour movement on April 21 for support.

For the woolly liberals of the ANL, however, petrified by the return of a right wing racist Tory government, there is nothing wrong in bleating about state bans.

For them, the state is not "the form in which the individuals of the ruling class assert their common interests as Marx claimed, but rather some impartial god-like referee dispensing judgements of Solomon on the conduct of the class struggle."

Thus, the authors claim, with their usual mole-like perception, that the actions of the police at both Leicester and Southall could not have been predicted.

No confusion

This nonsense, written seven years after the death of Kevin Gately, a year after the savage attacks by the SPG on the Grunwick pickets and in a situation of continued harassment of black youth under the SUS laws and Irish workers under the "Prevention of Terrorism" Act would be better placed in a collection of modern fairy tales.

As the Defence Committee leaflet drawn up largely by WSL supporters for the July 21 demonstration correctly stated:

"The massive police mobilisation on the 21st was a planned provocation."

There is, as the leaflet pointed out, no real confusion about the role of the police.

"The police and the SPG are increasingly no more than a paramilitary force used for smashing strikes and breaking up labour movement demonstrations."

For thousands of black youth, Irish militants, picketing strikers and anti-fascists this is a political fact of life.

But for the authors of 'Support the Leicester 87' this ABC remains unlearned. The

class struggle might just as well be on another planet!

Thus, their objection to the National Front is presented not in class terms but on the grounds that the NF prefer 'violence to democracy'.

By elevating 'democracy' to the status of the bastion of all freedoms they inevitably embark on that same slippery track which took the popular frontists in Spain to their destruction at the hands of Franco and the Spanish ruling class.

No such qualms

As James Burnham, an American Trotskyist in the 1930s, pointed out in a pamphlet entitled 'The People's Front—The New Betrayal', published in 1937:

"A programme for the defence of capitalist democracy represents merely the extension of one type of bourgeois ideology into the ranks of the working class."

By separating the world into violent fascists and peace loving democrats the anti-Marxist chameleons of the ANL actually line themselves up with Callaghan and Healey in prostrating themselves before the reactionary Thatcher government's 'democratic' right to rule.

Revolutionaries have no such qualms about bourgeois democracy. As Burnham, in the same article pointed out:

"The basic conflict in modern—capitalist—society is the conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. There is no basic conflict between bourgeois democracy and fascism."

Fascism is the mailed fist of capitalism.

Disarm

To confuse the nature of the state under capitalism, as the authors of 'Support the Leicester 87' consistently do, serves only to disarm the labour movement and open it to immediate danger at the hands of the state.

It was precisely this understanding which Trotsky fought for against the Stalinist theory of the popular front. As he said, "Only adventurers with no thought other than for the

A guest reviewer looks at "Support the Leicester 87" to be published by the Leicester April 21 Defence Committee later this month.

needs of the moment would fail to heed such a danger." But so infatuated are the ANL protesters with the surface illusions of bourgeois society that they totally fail to recognise this.

Instead, everything is sacrificed in a desperate pursuit of that myth of the Tory media, 'public opinion'.

The vital class questions raised by the growth of fascist groupings throughout Europe are abandoned in favour of page after page or moral indignation.

For this reason, while anti-racists are gaoled, the authors decline to make any attempt to draw out the class nature of the courts which are imposing such vicious sentences.

'Unfairness'

Despite the jailings of the Pentonville 5, the Shrewsbury 2 and the attacks on Irish militants through the PTA the pamphlet is at pains to confine its comments to the 'unfairness' of the sentences handed out.

"Our cause here is not to question the operation of the magistrates court system," the authors cheerfully proclaim, "but to expose the way in which these courts are being used to make scapegoats of anti-racists".

And what is the key to this? No, it is not the fact that the courts are part of the repressive apparatus of the state... the fault lies, they suggest, with the 'attitudes of the magistrates', and the 'dubious prosecution evidence' supplied by the police.

Presumably, if the police evidence was truthful in their eyes and the magistrates judged 'fairly' on the evidence presented these liberal dogooders would have no objections.

One might ask precisely how these buffoons would go about mounting a defence for those members of the Irish liberation forces who *actually do* resort to armed struggle against the British State.

The final logic of this position hardly needs spelling out.

Having abandoned the class perspective which guided the April 21 mobilisation and led the organisers of the July 21 demonstration in their leaflet to attack "naked class justice" in Leicester the authors of 'Support the Leicester 87' end with a plea for "all those who support the cause of anti-Nazism and justice" (sic) to join their campaign. No prizes for guessing whose 'justice' they are talking about.

Helpless

As a consequence of its crushing inadequacies the pamphlet may well become vital reading matter for all those seeking a revolutionary perspective for the fight against fascism.

Here, laid bare, is the real politics of the motley assembly of organisations which make up the ANL.

Unprincipled, uncomprehending and unarmed they stand helpless before a Tory government not imbued with their touching naivety.

In a future article we will review a further account of the Leicester events produced by the minority on the April 21 Defence Committee and discuss the way forward for anti-racists.

Immediately, however, all anti-racists and ANL supporters should demand to know: Where do the IMG and SWP stand on the question of state bans? Where does the ANL stand on the question of 'No Platform'?

*The authors have belatedly withdrawn this quotation from Latham, perhaps because it was a little too blatant



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Rees

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

GEC WORKERS DIG IN ON PAY

The strike by GEC/English Electric workers at the Liverpool plant is now reaching a critical stage.

After five weeks, the members of the TGWU, AUEW, EETPU and Sheet Metal Workers Union are still solid in their efforts to regain living standards, and are picketing 12 hours a day on a rota.

Indeed the convenors have still not recovered from the shock they received when the members overwhelmingly voted for a strike despite the weakness of the claim for "a substantial increase".

It is clear that the convenors have been looking for an escape right from the start of the strike and are having to be kicked up the backside by the membership every inch of the way.

Indeed the spirit of determination exhibited by

the members is quite staggering and has revealed the steady erosion of patience at the decline in real wages since the last strike several years ago.

The wave of redundancies that has hit the plant has been met with no resistance whatsoever from the reformist leadership.

And wages have likewise been allowed to slip in the name of "company viability".

Axed

Indeed the domestic appliance division has been completely axed and the remaining switchgear and fuse-gear divisions are all that remains.

Now the company are claiming that one of these is a "loss maker".

The failure of the leadership to question company claims of "loss-making" and "non-viability" reveals the

need for a new leadership.

This should then demand proof of such company propaganda by demanding that the company *open the books* of the company including also the books of suppliers and bankers to the scrutiny of elected trade union committees.

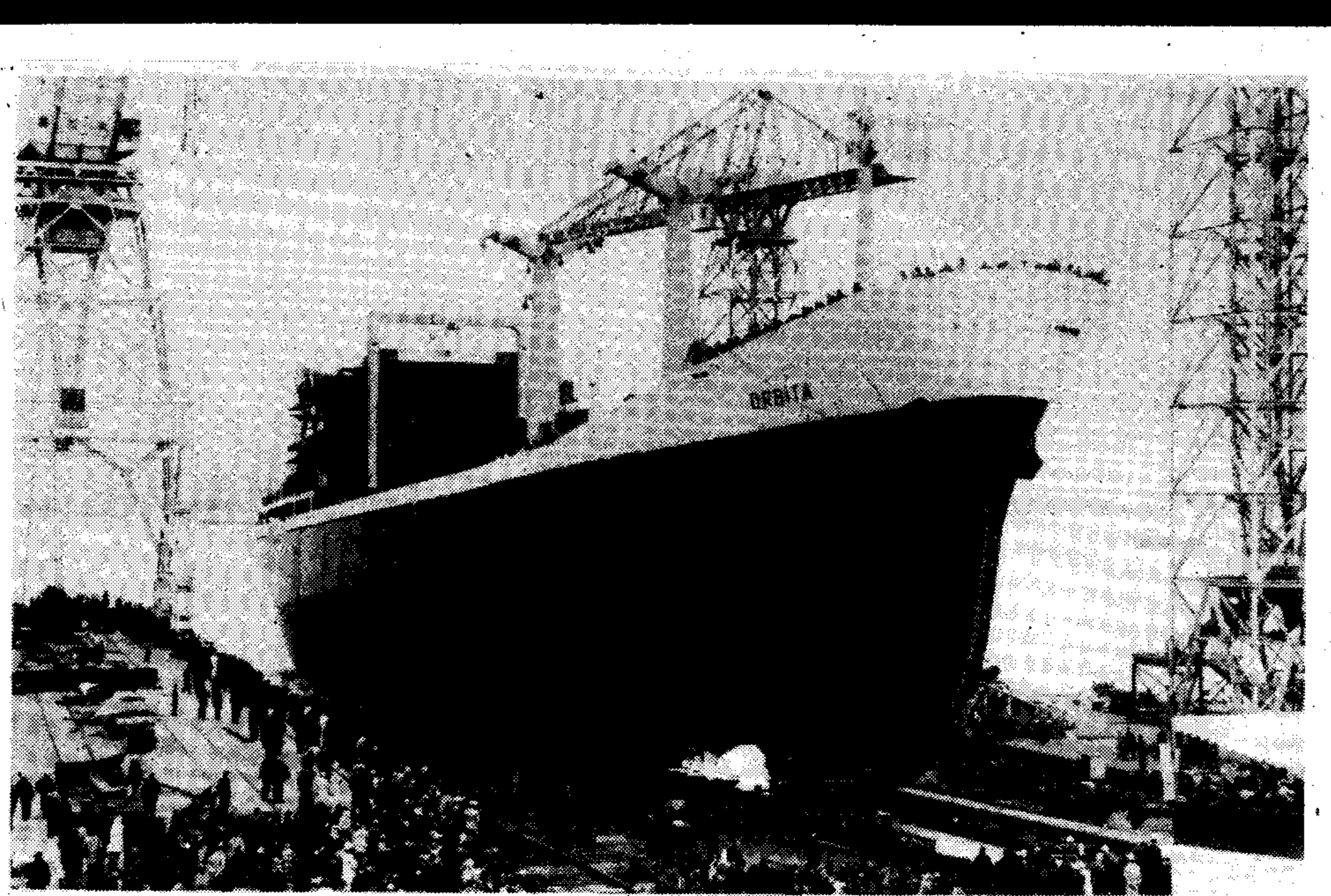
This would then reveal the need to *nationalise* this huge monopoly combine along with all the blood-sucking suppliers and bankers, which create the "non-viability" through their profiteering.

Local 'left' MP Eric Heffer should be required to wage a fight at the coming Labour Party conference to mobilise support for the resolution tabled by Thanet East CLP calling for a vote of no confidence in and the resignation of Callaghan, who has declared his opposition to any fight to *bring down* the wage-cutting Tory government.

Council of action

To strengthen and extend their struggle the English Electric stewards' committee should call a local delegate meeting of all labour movement bodies to set up a council of action.

Such a body would provide the means to support and extend all struggles against the employers in defence of jobs and against the policies of the Tory government and prepare action to bring it down.



Ship launched at Cammel Laird

Shipyard jobs sell-out looms

The recently announced redundancies of a thousand jobs at Cammel Lairds on Merseyside has produced dubious, empty noises of resistance from the bankrupt reformist and Stalinist leadership.

The local Boilermakers' official, Stalinist Barry Williams, guardedly told the press that:

"We will fight all the way to ensure that none of the men at Birkenhead lose their jobs through enforced redundancy."

The clear and conscious implication is that *voluntary* redundancies are perfectly alright!

In making this defeatist statement, Williams is not alone.

Echoed

He echoed the words of John Chalmers, Boilermakers' leader and senior Confed official.

Speaking at the conference in Newcastle called by the Confed on Thursday 23 August, Chalmers declared that:



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Chalmers

"Not one man leaves the yards... There will be no compulsory redundancies of any kind anywhere."

A British Shipbuilders spokesman correctly assessing the embryonic sell-out was reported to have concluded from this that, after the conference:

"They (British Shipbuilders) had not changed their plans. The redundancies could still go ahead but redundancies could be carried out on a voluntary basis."

However, in a document presented to the stewards at Lairds on the same day as the Newcastle conference,

British Shipbuilders stated that it was "highly unlikely" that the required number of men from the Birkenhead yard would volunteer for redundancy.

This is because British Shipbuilders stated there are no other shipyards within travelling distance and the issue of forced redundancy notices was therefore necessary.

The situation is further complicated at Lairds by the current strike of 150 fitters who are in dispute over the number of men accompanying ships on sea trials.

They are preventing ships being put through these trials and, therefore, delivered until agreement has been reached.

* Williams took time out from his plans to worm in voluntary redundancy at Cammel Laird to speak as an honoured guest from the opening platform of the SWP's 'Right to Work' march last Saturday. His speech received enthusiastic support from assembled SWP members.

JOIN OUR FIGHT AGAINST TORIES!

Returned to office after five years of Labour betrayals, the Tory government has immediately begun wielding a sharpened axe on jobs, conditions and social services. Trade Union rights face imminent legal attack. Prices are already beginning to rocket upwards.

Plum sectors of state industry will be handed to the Tories' profiteering big business backers; and the pay rises to police and armed forces mark only the prelude to increased state violence against pickets and anti-fascists, and an intensified army crack-down in the occupied North of Ireland.

The Callaghan-Healey leadership has made it clear that it will oppose any perspective other than settling down and meekly accepting five years of Tory devastation.

And, though they have once more dusted off their near-forgotten "socialist" speeches, Labour's "left-wing" MPs have continued to duck away from any fight to remove Callaghan.

TUC leaders, too, have set out to establish a basis for collaboration with Thatcher and the Tory cabinet, paralleling their anti-working class alliance with Wilson and then Callaghan.

But the working class has experienced and overcome such betrayals before—to topple Heath's union-bashing government in 1974, and smash through Callaghan's reactionary Phase 4 of wage controls in a series of monumental pay battles last winter.

These experiences are not dead. They point to the way that jobs, social services and hard-won union rights can be defended against renewed Tory attacks.

But a principled, revolutionary leadership is needed if the Labour traitors, the TUC collaborators and their hangers-on in the Communist Party are to be exposed and pushed aside, and the mass struggles mobilised that can defeat and remove the Tory government.

Such a leadership must fight day in and day out for a programme of *transitional demands* which, starting from today's conditions and today's consciousness within the working class, lead workers to grasp the necessity for socialist revolution.

And in taking up democratic demands—such as an end to racial and sexual discrimination, it must show the crucial role that must be played by the working class as the only consistently revolutionary class capable of leading the struggle for the emancipation of mankind.

And it must fight on an *international* basis—mobilising solidarity for anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggles—whether in Ireland, in Southern Africa or elsewhere throughout the world, and drawing strength and political lessons from revolutionary upheavals such as that which ousted the hated Shah in Iran.

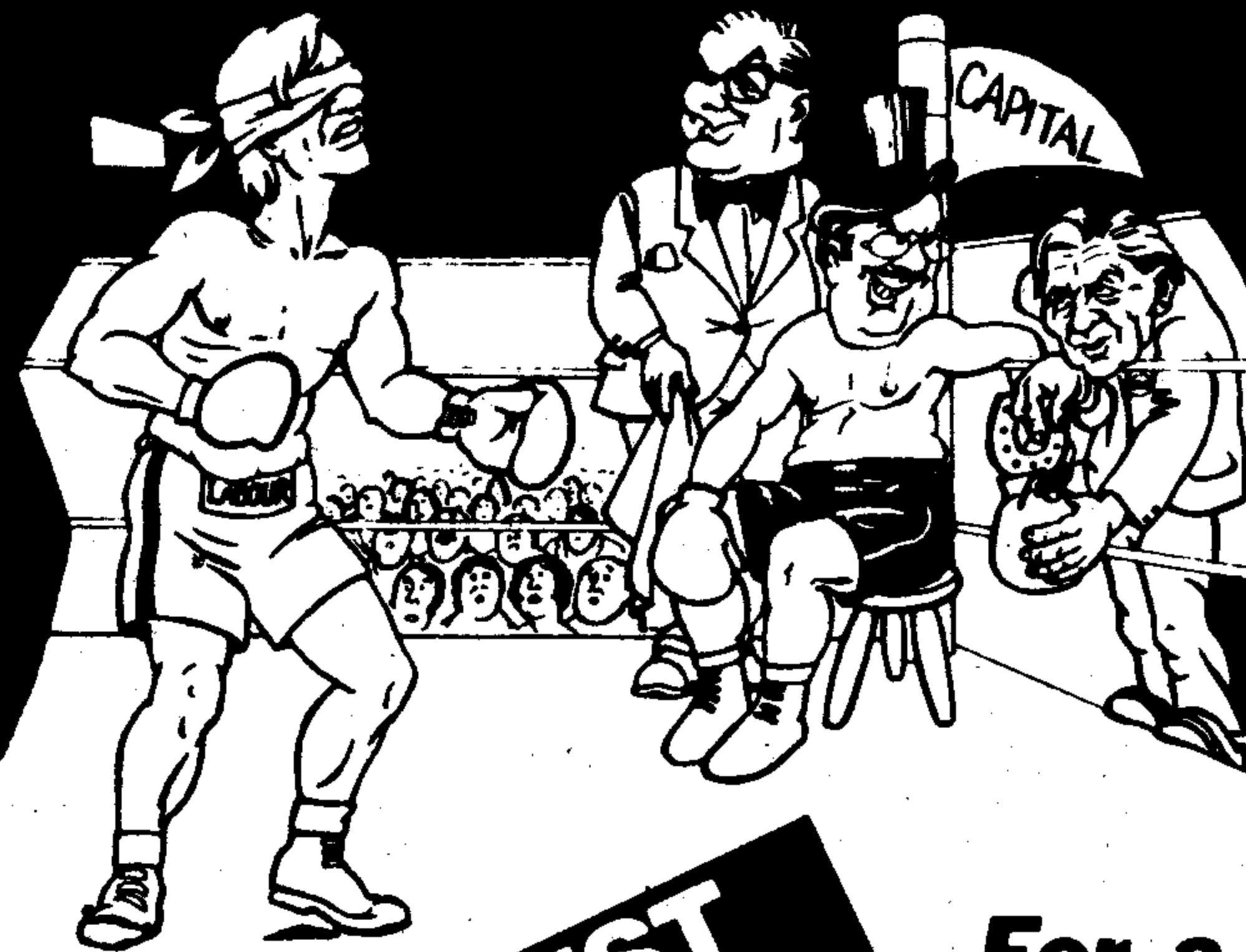
This means fighting for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International.

This method of approach, rejecting any descent to simple trade union militancy, or concessions to any wing of the labour bureaucracy, is the method fought for by the Workers Socialist League.

The next period will see major class struggles in Britain. A principled, Marxist leadership is essential. Our movement though strong in programme remains small in numbers.

JOIN US and take forward the struggle for socialism!

DON'T GO INTO THE FIGHT BLINDFOLD!



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Right wing and press foment

Cowley 'revolt'

The main Cowley BL plants, along with a few others nationally scabbed on the national engineering strike called for last Monday and Tuesday by the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions.

These decisions have been used to try to attack an action which generally remained solid. It is therefore worth examining some of the factors which contributed to this development, particularly in plants such as the Cowley Assembly Plant which usually takes a militant stand.

The Assembly Plant leadership faced problems from the first Monday one-day strike when the right-wing leadership of the Body Plant across the road, a part of the same complex and slightly larger than the Assembly Plant, allowed the plant to work normally whilst the Assembly Plant was 98% out.

Supporting management

The Body Plant leadership argued that they wanted nothing to do with the Confed because the Confed executive was fully supporting BL management in railroading through its highly unpopular new five-grade wage structure which downgraded the production workers—the vast majority—from grade one to grade three.

The Assembly Plant stewards whilst sharing these sentiments on the grading issue, argued that this issue could not be allowed to in any way undermine the full support which must be given to a dispute which had become a major official confrontation with the Tory government and the leading and most reactionary group of employers in Britain.

No ban

They proposed a one-day strike with no overtime ban in solidarity with other BL plants. They were voted down on this proposal and an alternative motion proposing support for the overtime ban as well as the token strike was carried overwhelmingly.

Although the mass meeting had only taken a decision on the second Monday the solidarity of that day made it difficult for the Body Plant leadership to sabotage the third Monday's action.

The leadership made a call

for action on the third Monday and both plants remained solid.

Last week in the run up to the first of the new two day actions two events took place on Wednesday morning.

In the Assembly Plant the Convenors met the shop stewards and issued to them instructions for the two day action and made picketing arrangements to ensure the solidarity of the plant.

In the Body Plant however—the TGWU sub-committee met and decided to issue no instructions for the Monday and Tuesday, but to leave it to the individual.

This is recognised as their way of saying that they opposed the strike.

Right wing plan

In the Assembly Plant the right wing then set in motion a well organised plan directed against the convenor Bob Fryer.

The press were on the gates at 12.45, 30 minutes before stoppages began in the North Works demanding a mass meeting and a vote on the strike.

North Works production workers marched into the South Works tracks and brought them to a halt.

Led by supporters of the previous convenor, extreme right winger Reg Parsons, about 2,000 production workers converged on Bob Fryer's office which was defended by a number of stewards and militants.

Mass meeting

Windows were smashed and doors kicked in during more than one hour of violence at the end of which the convenors agreed to address a mass

meeting later in the afternoon.

At the meeting Bob Fryer told them that the unions had issued an instruction and that they would be out on Monday and Tuesday. He was not empowered to take a vote and no vote would be taken.

The right wing then addressed the meeting and took a vote and the meeting voted to work on Monday and Tuesday.

On Thursday, therefore, Bob Fryer was faced with a very difficult situation. The overtime ban was called off in almost every section and it was clear that the action had collapsed.

It was also clear that the right wing were determined to

take full advantage of the situation they had created by consolidating the backlash into a hardened anti-Fryer, anti-strike feeling.

Secret ballot

They were well aware that Bob Fryer is the only convenor in BL who has to stand for election in December by a secret ballot—a ballot organised by a hostile bureaucracy and in front of a hostile press.

They saw this as their chance.

If the plant was closed on Monday and Tuesday by the action of a minority of stewards

Convenors reject Confed plan

The bureaucracy of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions received a shock when all their carefully planned manoeuvres were defeated by a BL senior stewards meeting last Thursday.

The Confed put a resolution, with the agreement of the BL National Joint Negotiating Committee, that accepted the company's imposition of their contentious grading structure.

The right of the company unilaterally to decide the grading would be accepted, with the addition of an appeals procedure that was completely weighted in favour of the company's position.*

The resolution passed by the Senior Stewards by a 4-1 majority rejected the company's

right to do this and laid out a series of steps that would be taken if they did.

These steps included using the plants' own procedure, and then giving five days' strike notice.

Longbridge

It was this latter that was put forward by the Stalinists who at Longbridge have held back workers who wanted to strike by saying they should wait till the back pay is in their hands and in the meantime use the procedure.

This was moved at a Longbridge stewards' meeting last Tuesday and passed overwhelmingly.

Nevertheless the most important question is that the Senior Stewards' vote has cleared the way for workers to take action. Some plants are already on

the new grading structure and individuals have received notification of their grade.

This is the case at Longbridge and Swindon but not Cowley where the Assembly Plant stewards have received a list of gradings but the Body Plant has received nothing.

At the moment most plants seem to be waiting for the first to act. Some sectional stoppages have taken place at Swindon but the leadership were holding back for the Senior Stewards' meeting.

Weaken

This holding back must end. The use of procedure and other devices will only help to weaken the feeling.

Sections who know their grade and disagree with it must strike and call for support from others.

resist any further improvements, improvements which are badly needed if we are going to establish realistic wages.

"We as shop stewards have done our best to carry out our union's instructions, but now, taking into account the views of the majority of members, we feel we have done all we can in that regard. For this reason, and in order to maintain the unity of our organisation in order to face other problems which we have within BL, the TGWU on this plant will not engage in any further action on this matter."

The strike has been led into difficult conditions by the leadership of the Confed. They have followed the same doctrine of limited action which was so disastrous in the public sector last winter.

They refuse an all-out strike because they are not prepared to politically confront the government, yet they know an all-out strike would be more acceptable to members and that it would win.

Inundated

Duffy admits to being inundated with demands for an all-out strike—including demands from the Cowley car plants—but he refuses to budge.

In the Cowley Assembly Plant the leadership faced these problems of leadership in common with workers in the rest of the industry.

They also faced particular problems within BL, not least the decision of management to move in, in the middle of this dispute, to force in their new wage structure.

The decision to pull back once the action was lost and not hand over to the right wing was a difficult decision to take but it was a correct one.

Situation

He called an emergency stewards meeting and explained the whole situation to them.

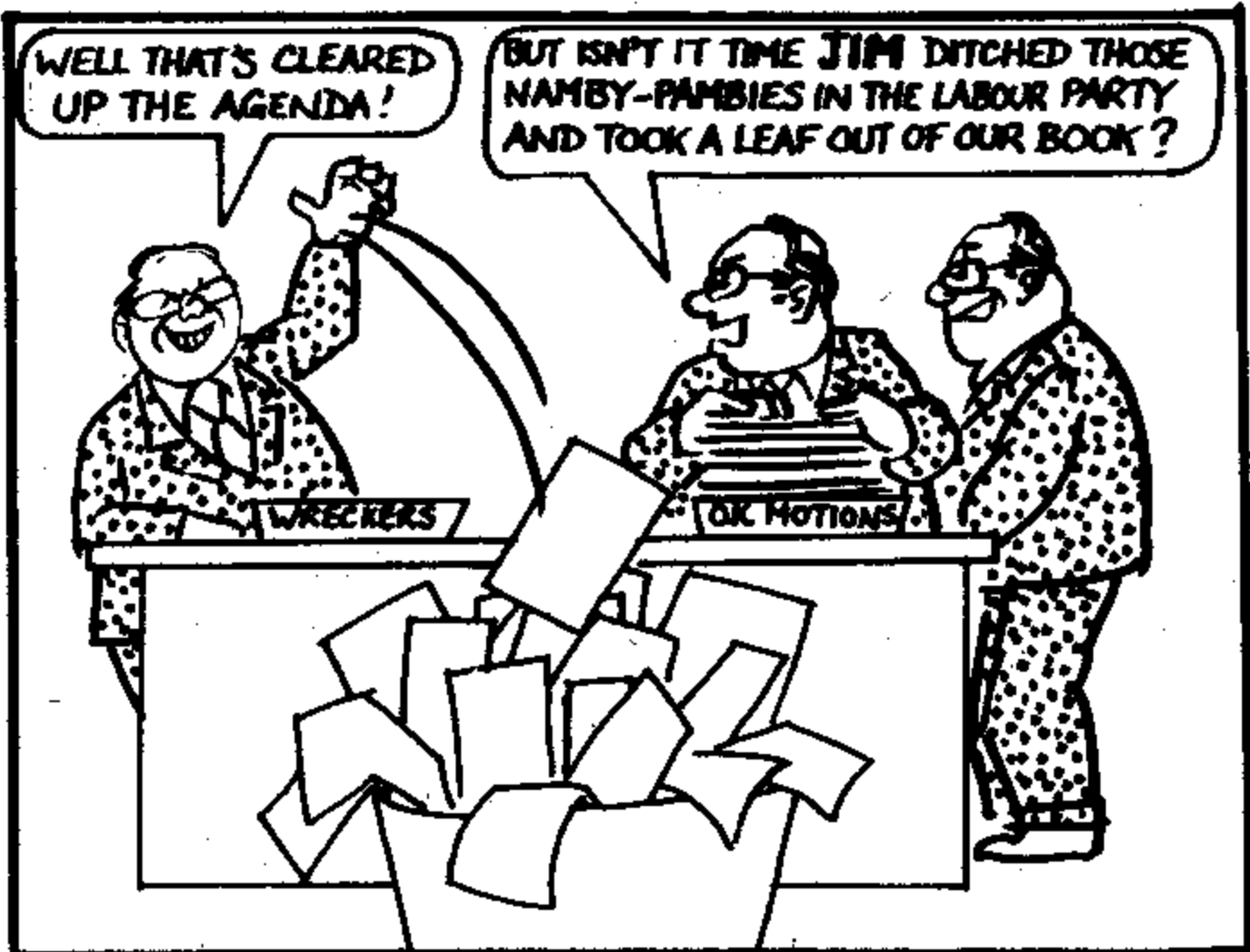
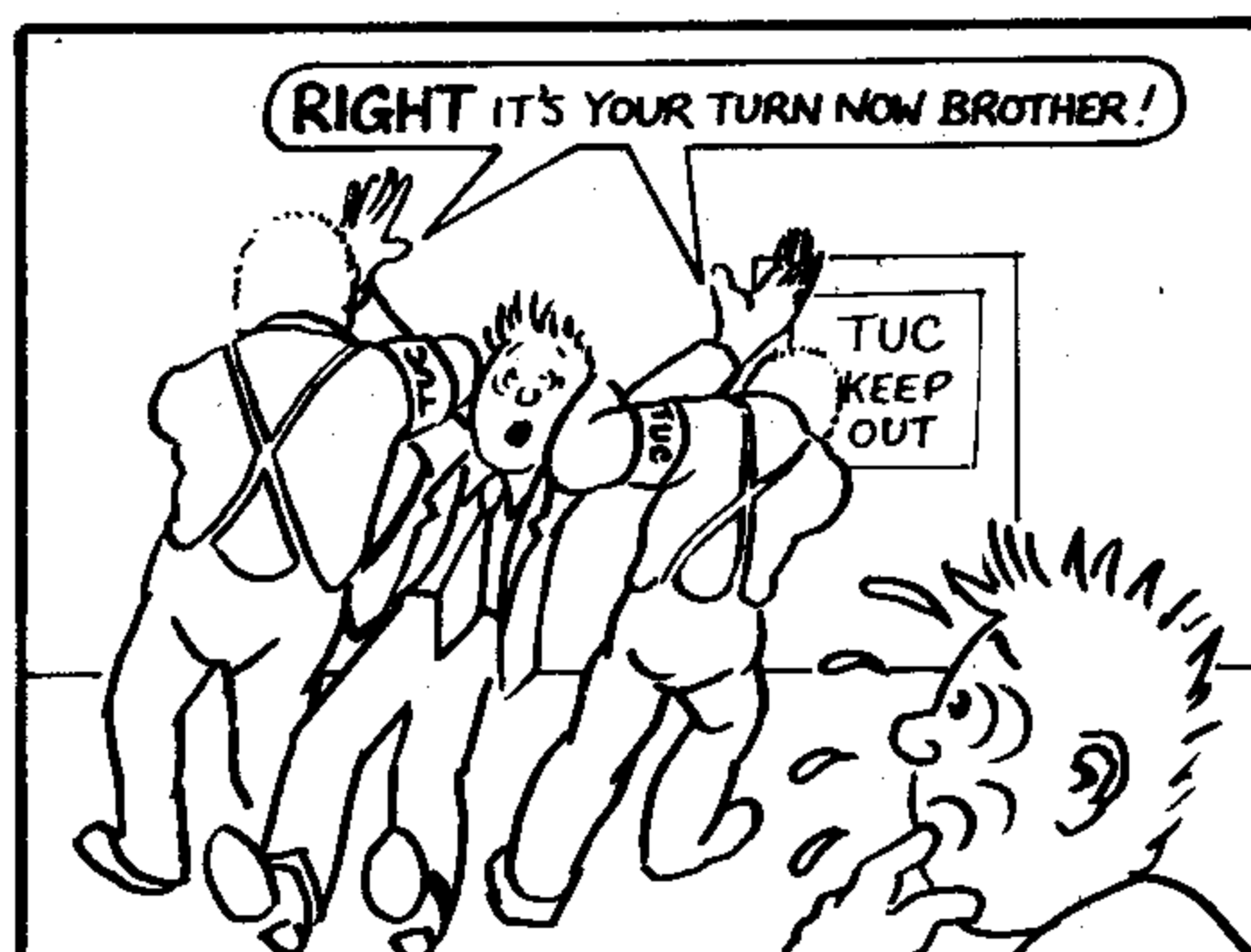
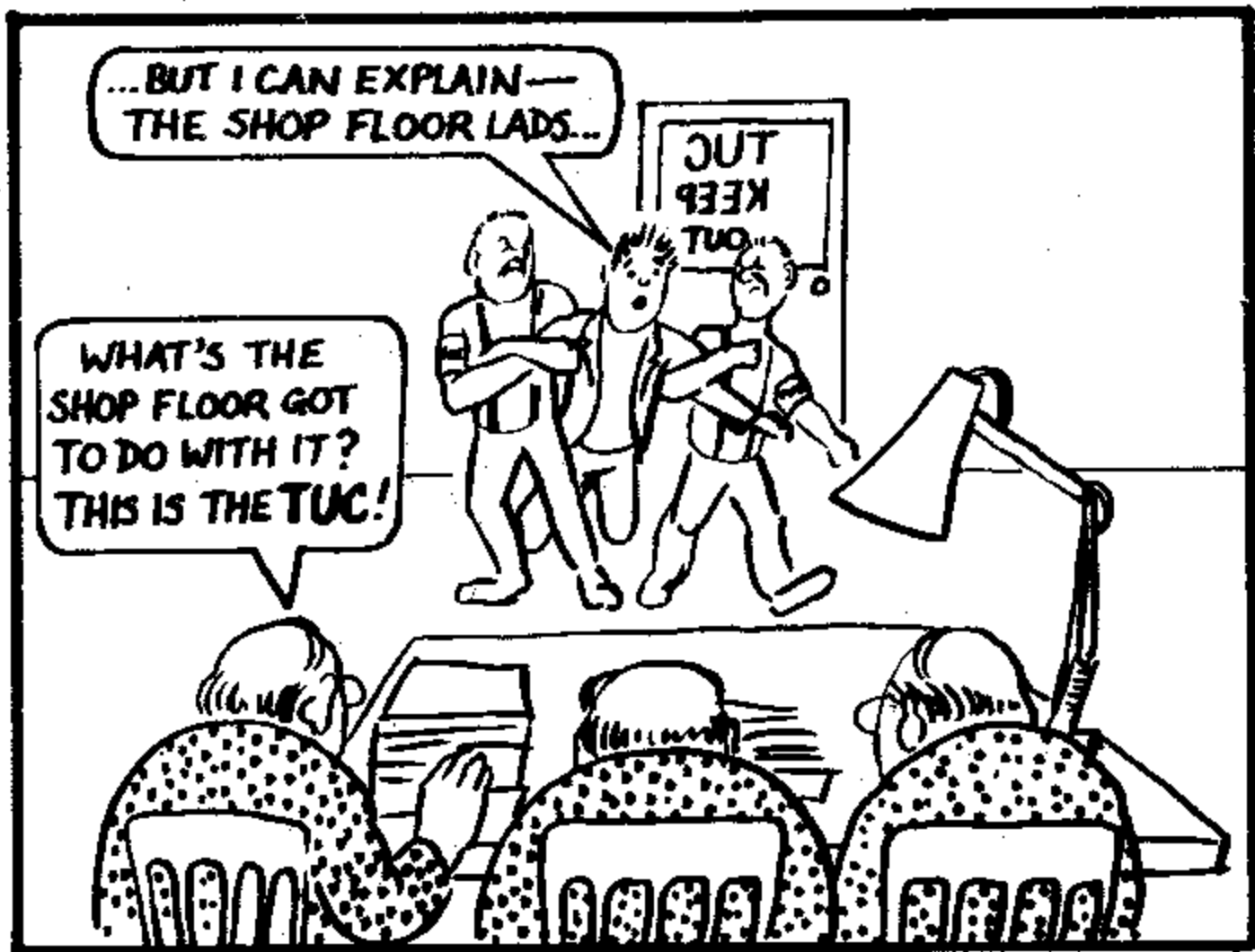
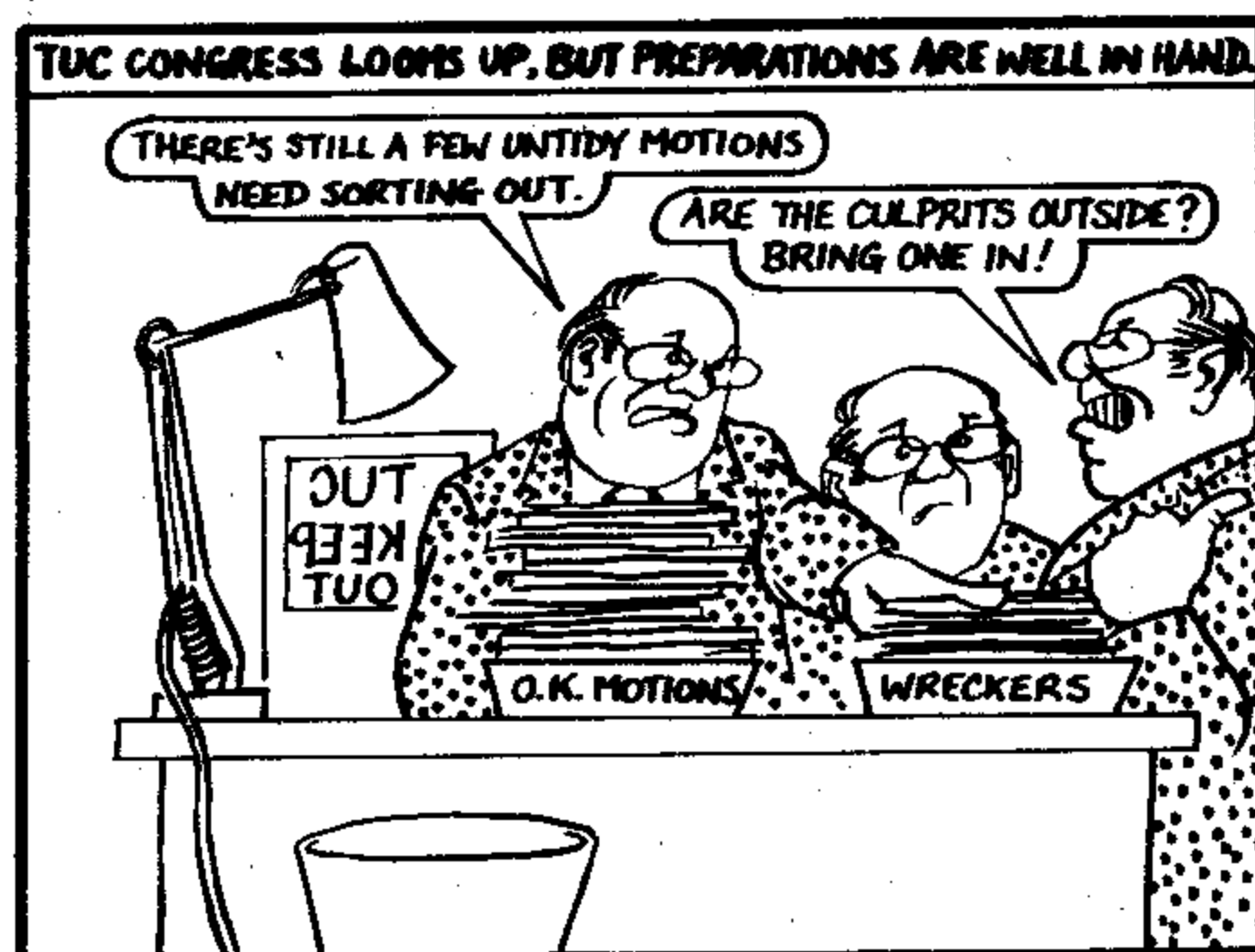
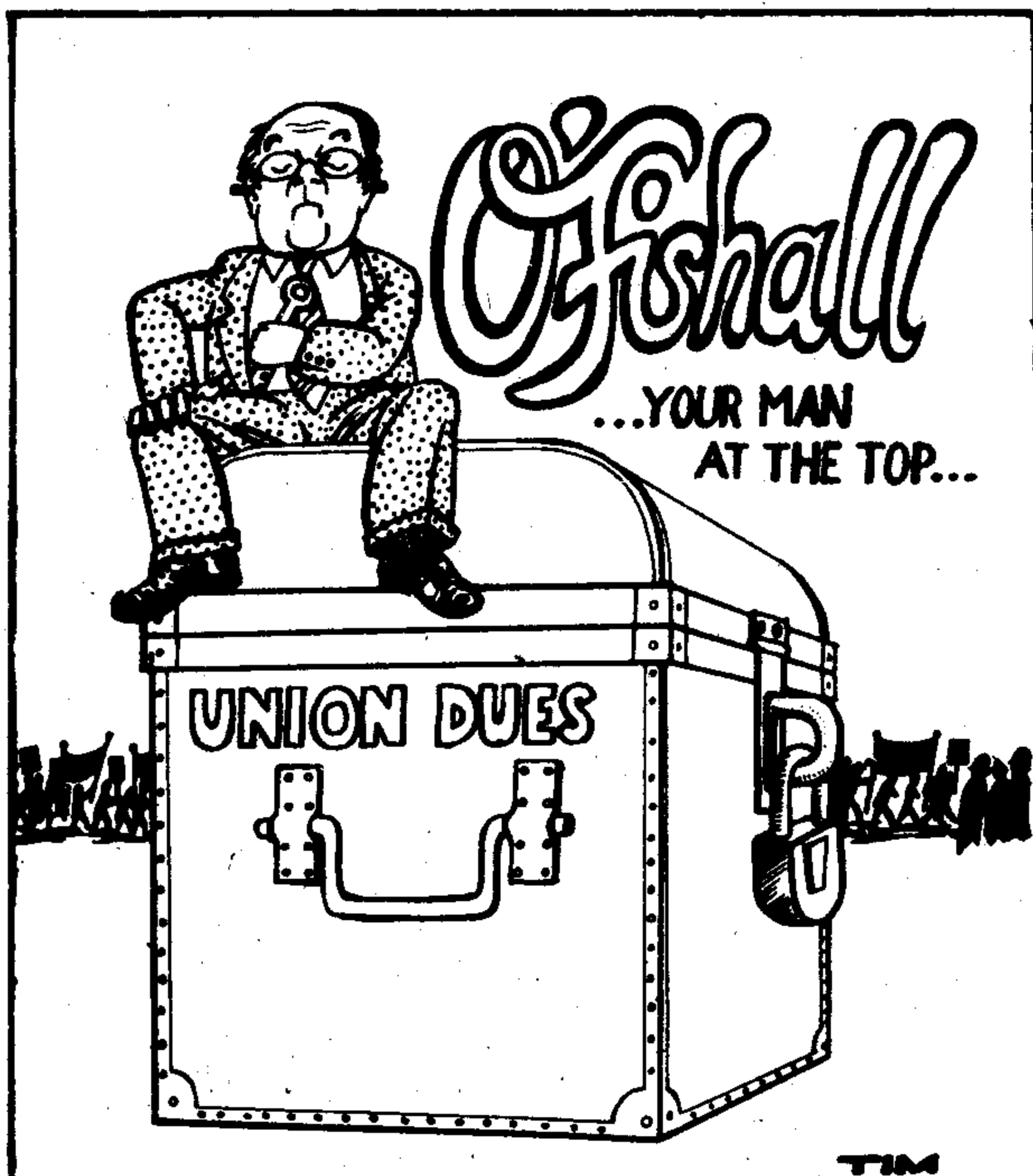
He then made a statement saying the following:

"Having fully supported the call from our union to support the Confed one day strikes and overtime ban for the past three weeks we want to record our appreciation to members and stewards who have responded to these actions, which were designed to achieve shorter hours, longer holidays and higher wage rates.

"The events of the last few days, however, within this plant, have demonstrated to us that the majority of the membership are not prepared to support the intensified action now called for in support of the claim.

"It is tragic that the action has been rejected in this plant in the way that it has. Unfortunately it has to be recognised that the resistance to the strike call will not do our members on this plant any good but will jeopardise our wages and conditions in the future. This is an important point and should not be forgotten.

"... But we also had to recognise that abandoning any further action in the plant would severely weaken the trade unions claim at national level and would harden the employers' determination to



SOCIALIST PRESS



Socialists sentenced to death

Engineers fight on—but leaders limit action

Confed leaders last week stepped up the partial actions called in support of this year's pay claim, calling for two-day strikes throughout the engineering industry each week on an indefinite basis.

While this is undoubtedly an indication of the growing wages militancy among engineering workers, it falls far short of the all-out indefinite strike action demanded by increasing numbers of shop stewards—some of whom angrily lobbied



Duffy

the Confed meeting in Blackpool on Saturday.

Winning support for repeated two-day strikes poses all of the problems of calling an all-out strike—and the Confed has done nothing to prepare the membership for action. But the impact of such stoppages on the employers amounts to little more than self-imposed short-time working.

In the present period of slump in the engineering industry this gives the employers the hope that they can merely sit out the strikes while frustration and demoralisation take their



Birmingham engineers: mass rally called for all-out strike

toll of the militancy on the shop floor.

Nevertheless AUEW President Terry Duffy and other Confed leaders who have set out to limit and constrict the action taken must be increasingly nervous as they observe the continued overwhelming support for the actions they have called.

Handful

With only a tiny handful of exceptions, nearly two million engineering workers have heeded the strike call again this week, and frantic efforts by the press and employers to create the impression of a massive shop floor "revolt" have fizzled out ignominiously.

Even the most optimistic employers had only hoped for 250,000 workers to clock in on Monday: but it is clear that the

actual figure was nowhere near this number.

With the exception of a few Leyland plants, mainly in the Oxford area (see p.11) the strike was virtually solid.

In BL's giant Longbridge plant, the much-vaunted anti-union revolt collapsed with only a couple of hundred would-be scabs turning up to face reinforced picket lines.

This response carries an unmistakable message which the Confed leaders are determined to ignore: were an all-out strike called, the full claim could be won and a major defeat inflicted on the Engineering Employers Federation, a backbone of the Thatcher government.

Union branches and stewards committees must demand their leaders move now from two day protests to all-out indefinite action.

Talbot fight on

Workers at both of the Chrysler/Talbot plants in Coventry are standing firm in their nine week struggle for a living wage against the new Peugeot management.

Delegations of stewards have been visiting other factories in all the main industrial areas, seeking financial support to supplement the puny levels of official strike pay awarded by both AUEW and TGWU.

Militants recognise that the struggle—sparked off by a management pay offer of only 5½% to Ryton workers—is a decisive test of strength with

Peugeot, whose anti-union record on the shop floor in France is second to none.

But still there is no sign that, for all the talk of support from Moss Evans, any serious steps have been taken with docks stewards to black the import of strikebreaking supplies of French-made Alpines.

TGWU branches in particular, in supporting the Talbot struggle, should demand of union leaders that this blacking begin at once.

*Donations to W. Brooks, Talbot Strike Fund, Transport House, Short Street, Coventry CV1 2LS.

Vauxhall walk out

Thousands of angry Vauxhall workers at Ellesmere Port walked out last week in an immediate strike in protest at the company's pay offer.

The offer—variously described as 17½% and 13½%—was way below the 25% claim submitted by the unions.

But more important in galvanising opposition were the stringent conditions attached to the offer—including penalty clauses far more wide-reaching

than any presently in force in the motor industry.

One provision included granting management the right to fill the jobs of workers involved in sectional stoppages!

In fighting for an adequate increase and against all penalty clauses Vauxhall workers deserve and must call for the fullest support from workers throughout industry, where other employers are sizing up the outcome of the Vauxhall struggle before making their offers.

Civil Servants must strike to stop cuts

Civil Service jobs have been cut by 3% by the implementation of a 3 month ban on recruitment in all government departments.

This month the government will be announcing details of further cuts between 10, 15 and 20%.

These cuts will mean the loss of at least 150,000 jobs and will involve the "hiving off" of profitable sections of the public sector to private industry.

The biggest cuts will be made in the Departments of Transport, Environment, Industry, Trade, Education and Science and Energy.

Inland Revenue

There will also be a loss of 2,700 jobs in the Inland Revenue.

The Department of Environment's Hydraulics Research Station will be sold to private industry.

In the Department of Employment and the Department of Health and Social Security cuts will be made by

doing away with whole functions of the state.

This will include the chopping of several major social security benefits.

One option that has been suggested is that the present waiting period of three days at the start of a Sickness Benefit claim be extended to six weeks.

Sick pay

This would take away responsibility got paying sickness benefit for this period from the state and transfer it to the employer.

The Secretary of State for Social Services, Patrick Jenkin, has issued stringent guidelines on the cuts to DHSS officials.

He says: "We must cut out functions and take altogether wherever we can" and "change radically the Department's approach to the NHS, to local authorities and to other external bodies."

In the DHSS, the Postal Review system, which was a means of monitoring the financial and welfare needs of supplementary benefit claimants including pensioners, single

parents and the disabled, has already been scrapped.

This has resulted in a loss of 1100 jobs in DHSS local offices.

200 of these have been re-deployed on fraud and abuse work.

If the proposed cuts in DHSS are allowed to be implemented, we will see the total collapse of an already inadequate and understaffed Social Security system.

Inadequate

The civil service unions must carry out a fight to defeat these attacks on the welfare state.

The CPSA's Cuts Campaign programme of action consists of a ban on overtime, a ban on temporary promotion and substitution, on person, one job and a ban on casual staff.

These policies are completely inadequate to defend civil service jobs and the public services.

CPSA and SCPS members must demand that their leadership organise all out indefinite strike action to stop the cuts and defend the hard-won rights and services needed by the working class.

WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE LEEDS

Public meeting
The Engineers' Strike:
The Way Forward'
Monday September 10
8.00 p.m.
Room A, Leeds Trades Club, 21 Saville Mount

WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE OXFORD

Public meeting
How to fight the cuts'
Thursday September 6
8.00 p.m.
OCCR, Princes St.
Cowley Road

FUND

With some of the pledges for the August Monthly Fund still finding their way to the office we are assured of this month's total of £600, with £595.54 already in hand.

But as we have already pointed out, the impact of inflation on our costs has forced us to raise the monthly target to £750 starting this month.

If we are to achieve this target we will have to make an immediate effort to go out and persuade readers and supporters to give more money to the fund and at the same time find new sources of income. This drive to raise the extra money has got to start now if we are to have a chance of raising the new target by the end of the month.

All donations should be sent to:

Socialist Press Monthly Fund
31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

13 members of the Iranian HKS (Socialist Workers Party) are currently undergoing a re-trial in Tehran having been originally sentenced to death by the Islamic regime.

The arrest, trial and savage sentence on these socialists, whose "crimes" consisted of vigorously defending the democratic rights of women and oppressed nationalities in Iran in defiance of the Khomeini-Bazargan government, has produced a flood of protest telegrams and pickets of Iranian embassies around the world.

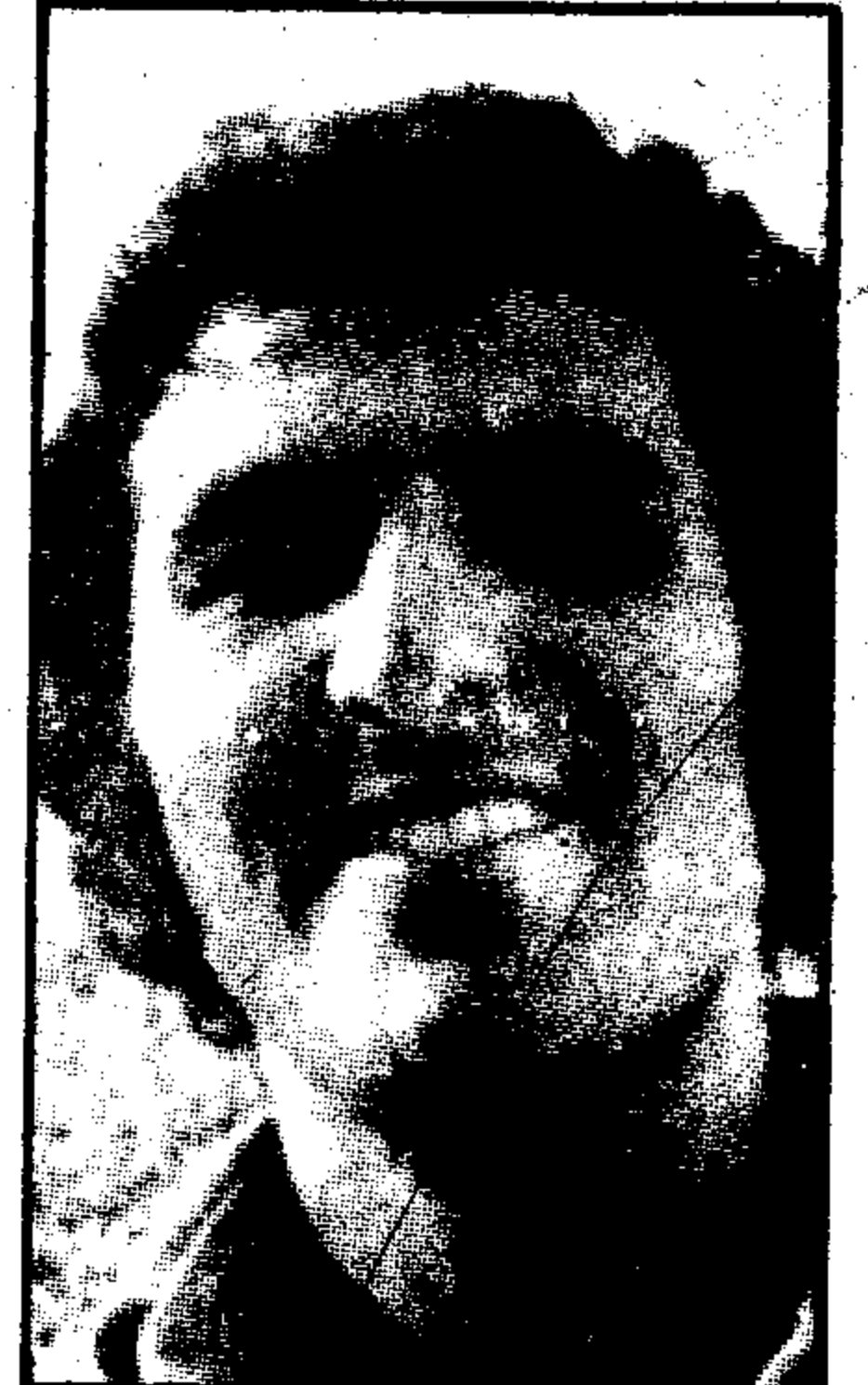
These protests seem to have had an impact on the regime. On Monday Iran's Foreign Minister went onto Tehran radio to proclaim the Islamic Revolutionary Council's condemnation of the disruption of the embassies by "enemies of the Iranian revolution".

No intention

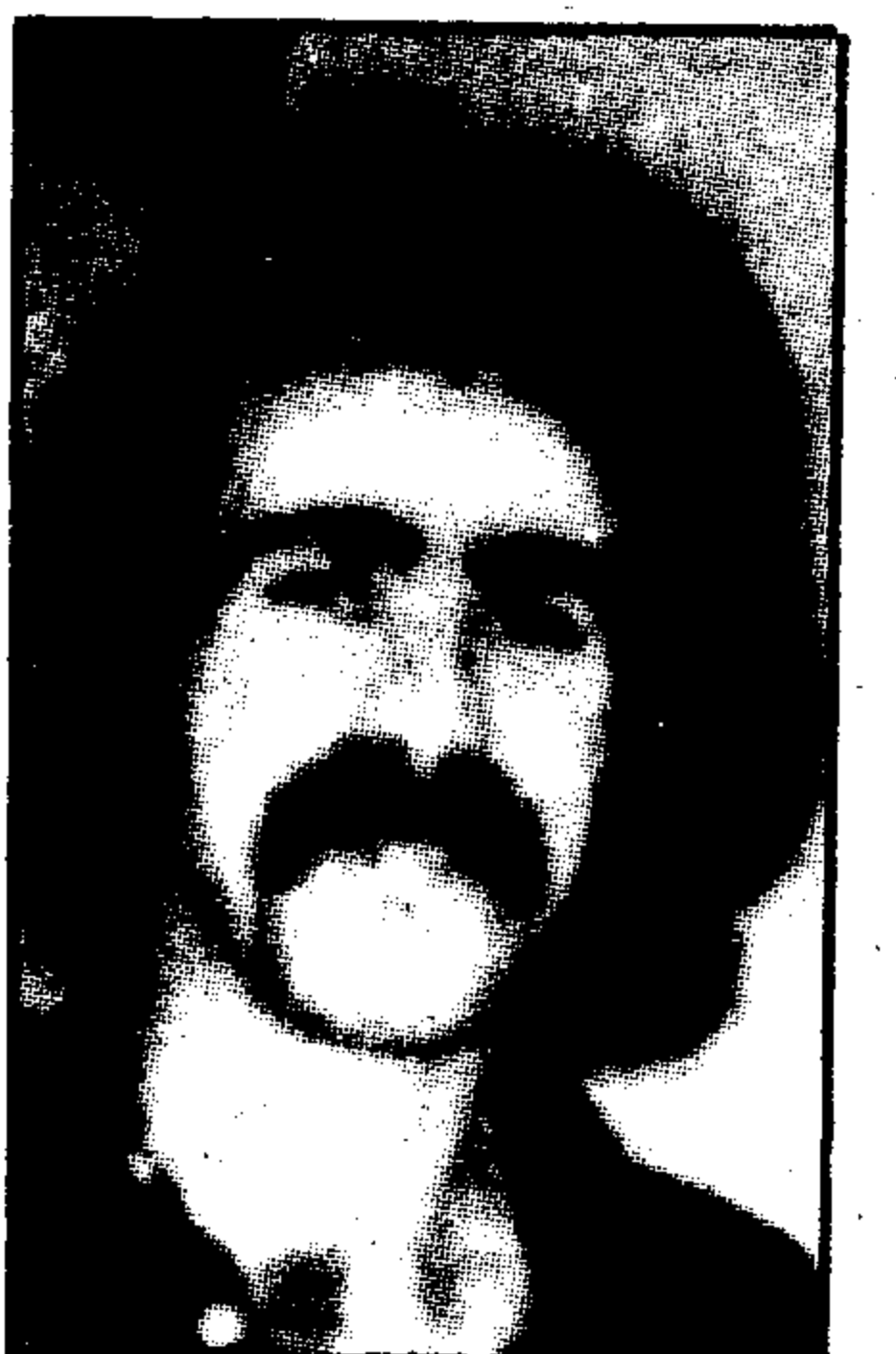
But he went on to declare that the regime 'never had any intention' of executing the HKS prisoners. Their trial is now going on, he said, and the protests should cease.

It must be clear to all, however, that the lives of these socialists hangs on a thread—that of the solidarity of socialists and the labour movement internationally.

Trade unionists and Labour Party members should urgently press for their branches to send



Hamid Shahrabi



Mustafa Gorgzadeh

telegrams to the Iranian embassy demanding that the regime:

*Immediately release the HKS prisoners.

*End the murderous persecution of prostitutes and Iranian gays.

*End the military offensive against and oppression of the Kurdish, Arab and other national minorities in Iran.

In London a public meeting sponsored by the Committee for Democratic Rights in Iran has been called in Central Halls, Westminster on Friday at 7.30p.m. to be addressed by HKS member Hojabr Khosravi, Shirko Abid of the Association of Kurdish Students Abroad, Fred Halliday, and others.

A demonstration has also been called for Saturday by the AKSA, which will leave Speakers Corner at 1.00 p.m. and march to the Iraqi and Iranian embassies.