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## Labour Special Conference



Report  
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# ISLE OF GRAIN



No answer—Basnett

EETPU leader Chapple

# OFFICIAL SCABBING: THREAT TO ALL WORKERS!

Trade unionism is under threat—not so much from the employers as from trade union officials.

This became clear last week as John Baldwin, leader of the AUEW construction section, offered to send contingents of scabs anywhere in the country to break strikes by GMWU laggards. As he spoke, 25 black-legs were at work, doing the jobs of 27 victimised GMWU laggards on the Isle of Grain power station site.

Baldwin, who last Tuesday rode with EETPU official Eric Hammond and a coachload of building workers through an official GMWU mass picket on the site, poured scorn on threats of national supporting strike action:

"It would not be disastrous if all the laggards in construction went on strike. We would send our members through the picket lines and they would do the laggards' work wherever it became necessary".

### Delighted

Baldwin's determination to smash the laggards clearly delights employers throughout the construction industry.

Not only does it offer them the hope of slashing laggards' pay rates nearly in half; but the employers can see clearly that the brazen blacklegging of union leaders on this issue is simply a foretaste of the craven class collaboration they will offer in

the longer term.

As the *Sunday Times* has pointed out, a formidable alliance of capitalist firms that build power stations, chemical plants and oil refineries, together with the state firms and private monopolies that commission them, are determined to break the strength of the laggards.

"Managers hope that if they can break the laggards the rest of the workers will fall into line, like the 1,300 who were bussed through Tuesday's Grain picket line."

In other words the management scheme is to use AUEW and EETPU to break the GMWU—and then to step up the offensive on AUEW and EETPU members!

Nor is the danger restricted to largescale construction and building sites: the driving force

behind Baldwin's blacklegging has been the threats by the CEGB to shut down the Isle of Grain power station and the alleged national threat to construction jobs.

In words wearily familiar to workers in British Leyland, British Shipbuilders and the British Steel Corporation, all of whom have suffered the consequences of similar arguments, Baldwin claimed:

"I am fighting to save an industry and 35,000 members' jobs. It is my Waterloo. If I lose it, we have had it."

To "save an industry" to Baldwin and his fellow bureaucrats means to sacrifice members' wages, jobs, and now even the most elementary trade union principles, to preserve the profitability of private employers—in this case the vicious exploiters in the

construction monopolies.

Baldwin and Hammond have therefore nailed their colours to the employers' mast in the drive to cut laggards' pay; but the very same arguments could be used to justify the surrender of wage rates and jobs in any industry in a crisis-wracked British capitalism!

The GMWU leadership have pointed out that the Isle of Grain battle is a prelude to an all-out drive by construction bosses to hold down wage rates prior to the launching of a new programme of nuclear power stations.

### Cornered

But after allowing the bonus dispute to drag on for ten months they now find themselves cornered—by a militant

membership demanding that their rate of pay for a dangerous and skilled job be protected; and by an unholy alliance of management with rival union bureaucrats determined to cut back their wages and rejecting TUC compromise proposals.

### "Save jobs"

The reality is that in every other instance GMWU leaders themselves peddle Baldwin's line of sacrifice "to save jobs".

They are therefore incapable of spelling out to workers at the Grain site or elsewhere the enormous dangers that face the working class as a result of this organised scabbing.

Nevertheless they must be called upon to mobilise the full strength of all 6,500 laggards to force the CEGB to concede the

national agreement on laggards' bonuses, reinstate the 27 GMWU laggards, and drive the 25 scabs from the site.

Within the AUEW—particularly the construction section—and EETPU, militants must demand an immediate end to official blacklegging which threatens the very fabric of trade unionism, and fight for an alternative to a leadership that seeks to "protect jobs" by sacrificing the wages and conditions of trade union members.

The threat of sackings in the industry must be combatted by the fight for work sharing without loss of pay, and for the nationalisation of the construction monopolies without compensation under workers' management.

# Nurses: break from RCN! Fight for a living wage!

There's one law for the rich and the Tory establishment—and one for the poor.

And in case anyone missed this basic fact of life in the last



Thatcher

year of Thatcher government, the contrast between the lavish £80 per week increase handed out to doctors and dentists and the pitiful 14% increase for nurses—thousands of whom earn less than £80 per week—should make it crystal clear.

The £312 million cost of the doctors' 31% rise will itself bring a new round of cuts in the National Health Service as a result of the Tory cash limits.

This coincides with Thatcher's strategy for buying off the top professional layers in the public sector as a prelude to further cuts and closures in the basic service.

But when leaders of 450,000 nurses, incensed and embarrassed by the doctors' pay deal, last week called upon Thatcher to

lift the cash limits to make way for an improvement on their 14% offer, they got the cold shoulder.

Banking on the traditional spinelessness of the nurses' union leaders and on the fact that the pro-management Royal College of Nursing is constitutionally barred from calling industrial action, Thatcher made it clear that there was no way the 14% offer would be increased.

But feelings are running high among nurses—forced to work for a pittance in a crumbling Health Service beset by government attacks.

Union leaders have begun to suggest that a nurses' strike

Cont'd p.11, col. 6



Nurses on the march in 1973

# USA week by week

In the wake of the steel strike sell out in Britain the union leadership is busy feeding members to the dole queues and Thatcher is installing her Michael Edwardes clone in the management chair.

Meanwhile the international crisis of the steel industry is nowhere more apparent than in the USA.

Knocked from pillar to post by the anarchic whirlpool of market forces that capitalism lives and dies by, the American steel bosses no longer even pretend to be able to predict what is going to happen next.

Referring to the advice of Carter's industrial experts, Lewis Foy, boss of Bethlehem Steel (second largest in America) declared at the company AGM:

"It's just hogwash. They just don't know what's happening any more than anybody else on the street does."

Foy's remarks have to be seen in the context of the plight of his own company and, even more spectacularly, that of US Steel (the world's second largest steel corporation).

In 1978 US Steel made a \$94.6 million profit!

Now, however, the company is doing its bit for the red ink industry in no uncertain terms. In the last quarter of 1979 alone it lost \$561.7 million!

This is mirrored all along the line. At both Inland Steel and Wheeling-Pittsburgh profits have fallen by over 50%.

The latter has recently had to soak up Federal loan grants to the tune of \$63.5 million.

Republic Steel's profits have plummeted by a massive 84.6% while the most successful of the big companies has been Armco with a mere 21% drop in profit over the last twelve months.

The crisis in the US car manufacturing industry alone ensures that there is no upturn around the corner for steel.

Ford, for example, has never made an annual loss but was down \$164 million in the first quarter of this year.

The steel bosses have reacted in the only way they know how—plant closures, massive redundancies and wage offers well below half the current rate of inflation.

Steelworkers in the US are cursed, moreover, with the kind of leadership that almost makes Bill Sirs look good (almost!).

Official backing has been withheld from whatever rank-and-file action has emerged and the pay deal sewn up by the bureaucracy this year was little short of an outright wage cut.

The deal has a built-in cost of living clause—but one which only allows for a 10% rate of inflation—hopelessly behind the government's own fraudulent figure of 18.4%.

There wasn't even the improvement in index-linking allowed for in last year's squalid deal for car workers engineered by the United Autoworkers Union.

Steelworkers in the US, as in Britain, have not traditionally been among the most militant sections of the working class.

However the British steel strike showed how quickly workers learn in struggle and how effectively workers can organise to fight for their own independent interests.

The lessons of that have certainly not been lost on the international steel bosses and union bureaucrats.

The only way forward for US steelworkers is plant occupations and work-sharing on full pay to fight closures and sackings, these to be backed up with all-out strike action to roll back the employers' offensive.

# Botha threatens to use "full force of the state"

In the face of a wildfire spread of protest against racial oppression in South Africa, the capitalist apartheid state has suddenly stepped up its repression.

Two demonstrating school students were shot dead by police and others wounded outside Capetown.

Hundreds of arrests have taken place over the last two weeks.

The most publicised in the bourgeois press, of course, have been those of over 50 white and black priests who were charged under the Riotous Assemblies Act for demonstrating against the arrest of one of their number.

But the majority of the arrests have been of black, coloured and Asian militants in an effort by the racist authorities to decapitate the strength-



Botha

ening body of mass protest.

In several parts of the country, armed police have dis-

persed demonstrators much more violently and single-mindedly than at first when the

present wave of unrest began two months ago.

What has provoked this sharp repressive turn by the Botha regime is the way in which the unrest is not only extending rapidly among school and college students in the cities where they first erupted, but also involving other sections of the oppressed masses.

It is estimated that tens of thousands of students throughout the country are now taking strike and other forms of action.

According to the police, 46 schools in the Cape Peninsula and 24 in the Eastern Cape were being boycotted last week.

But similar actions were also reported from Johannesburg and Bloemfontein.

Several hundred of the students are among the arrested.

The new sectors of the masses involved in the upsurge are sections of the population in the "tribal homelands" and the urban working class.

In the homeland of Qwa Qwa 2,000 students and others joined in a demonstration which was violently broken up by the police. Pupils in other home-

lands also boycotted classes.

And in Durban 5,000 black textile workers went on strike in support of union recognition and higher wages.

Last Friday the regime used South Africa's Republic Day as a pretext for a massive show of armed force as tanks, armoured vehicles and soldiers passed menacingly through the streets of the main cities.

## Not confident

Botha threatened to use "the full force of the state" against anyone responsible for unrest.

It is not an empty threat, but nor is it a confident one. The upsurge of the workers and students is already, as in 1976, in Soweto, outside the control of the repressive forces of the capitalist apartheid state.

And Botha can see that each stepping up of the repression provokes not terror and demoralisation but the extension of protest and resistance.



# ARGENTINE UNIONS SPLIT AGAIN

The attempt to establish a united trade union leadership in Argentina which began after last year's general strike has failed, resulting in yet further division and abject confusion in an already sorely oppressed and weakened working class.

Two weeks ago the fragile Conduccion Unica de los Trabajadores Argentinos (CUTA) split into its component parts—the Comision Nacional de Trabajo (CNT) and the 'Group of 25'—over the nomination of delegates to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).

## Internal weakness

It is a reflection of the internal weakness and political bankruptcy of CUTA that this should be the issue to cause the schism—the ILO has always been a haven for high-flying labour bureaucrats eager to settle down for a chat with

capitalist technocrats in Geneva while the ICFTU's Pan-american organisation, ORIT, is an openly imperialist body to which the TUC remains affiliated.

The CUTA had always been illegal although the Videla dictatorship was forced into the tacit recognition that it represented the Argentine labour movement.

## Taken over

The majority of the leaders of the CNT are from unions formally 'intervened' by the military (offices taken over by soldiers and all effective independent activity proscribed within the union itself).

Consequently the CNT has always been closer to the regime and carried more weight with it than the 'Group of 25' which represents unions that are not intervened and which called last year's strike.

It was the CNT's upper hand in nominations to international bodies that caused the split.

The CNT may be openly attacked as being collaborationist, but the fact is that neither it nor the '25' nor the CUTA itself was capable of providing leader-

ship for the struggle of the Argentine proletariat against the welter of attacks unleashed by the dictatorship.

This, of course, had also been true of the now dissolved Confederation General de Trabajo (CGT) which had been the centre of union activity in Argentina for decades.

While the '25' has certainly been more militant than the CNT, it has preferred to force negotiations rather than fight for the overthrow of the dictatorship.

The CNT represents the more entrenched bureaucratic elements of Peronism, the '25' merely draws from its 'left' sector.

## Destruction

However, the immediate issue at stake is the defence of working class organisation, which the dictatorship threatens to destroy entirely.

Last year's labour code proposes government takeover of all union funds and facilities, reducing the existing bodies to corporate organs of the state.

# Dutch bosses hound immigrants

Throughout Western Europe the development of economic crisis and slump is creating a vast and growing volume of unemployment.

No section of workers is immune from the scourge of unemployment but one section of workers is everywhere suffering most—the immigrant workers.

Imported in their millions from countries like Spain, Italy, Turkey and Yugoslavia, immigrants in the years of the post-war boom came to occupy an important place in the labour force of several countries—especially West Germany, Holland, Switzerland and France.

Those workers were often badly paid, lived in appalling conditions, have been hounded by the police and have no rights of residence when not employed.

The capitalist class has used what they euphemistically term "guest workers" to cushion non-immigrant workers partially against the slump.

Immigrants have been first to be dismissed and are then repatriated and so involve no drain on the capitalist state's finances.

In Holland, often regarded as the most liberal of bourgeois states, a law has recently been passed which subjects immigrant workers to immediate expulsion from the country if they have not been continuously employed for two years in the same firm.

As a result of this law an estimated 20,000 workers are now fleeing from the police.

Over the last few weeks five hundred of them have sought refuge in churches which have been willing to shield them from the state.

## Embarassing

The right wing government of Christian worthies is now faced with the embarrassing decision as to whether to send its armed police into the holy

places in order to repress a section of the working class.

But why the question of the violation of sanctuary rather than the violation of elementary human rights should concern the Dutch bourgeois press is of course irrelevant to the working class.

It does, however, reveal a scandalous situation in which an oppressed section of workers is forced to look to priests for help against the capitalist state rather than to the bureaucratic leadership of the country's powerful trade unions.

# On their knees!

Scene: Cathedral of Notre Dame, Paris, Friday 30 May, 1980.

The *Te Deum* is being sung in the presence of His Holiness Pope John-Paul II.

Among the honoured guests at this glittering occasion dedicated to obscurantism and superstition are the leaders of the ruling class of France.

And also four specially invited guests: Maxime Gremetz (MP for the Somme), Lucien Villa (a Paris MP), along with Guy Schmans and Danielle Bidard (both Senators).

These four had graciously thanked the Archbishop of Paris for his invitation:

"We are particularly touched by this invitation", they wrote, "given the exceptional nature of the visit of Pope John-Paul to France."

Who are these four? Not prominent Christians, or intellectuals, or artists—but politicians.

And of what Party? Not the Gaullists, nor the Giscardians, or even the Socialist Party.

All of them are leading members of the French Communist Party!



# Why did Kremlin leaders decide to invade Afghanistan?

What determined the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was the crumbling of the pro-Russian government and the disintegration of its armed forces.

The actions of the Red Army were therefore a defensive act on the part of the USSR not only in relation to its southern borders, but to the whole of the region of the Persian Gulf and the Middle East.

In this region, the crumbling of pro-imperialist regimes and the inadequacies of nationalist governments have created an unstable context in which all kinds of strategic manoeuvres on the part of the imperialists are interwoven.

In this context the civil war in Afghanistan manifests the international class struggle and the conflict between capitalist reaction and the workers states.

Trotskyists are not neutral in this battle and we place ourselves in the camp of the unconditional defence of the USSR from the imperialists.

This position in no way implies support or justification for the bloody policies of the bureaucracy in Afghanistan and its total scorn for the national sentiments of the masses.

Intervening against the will of the exploited Afghans, the bureaucracy holds the main responsibility for the growth of reactionary resistance against the Soviet military invasion.

While raising this charge publicly, we Trotskyists refuse to participate in the imperialist campaign of condemning the invasion.

## The crumbling of the nationalist government.

The military coup of April 1978 which led to the PDPA and to a fraction of the army taking power with the backing of the Soviet bureaucracy was a reaction against the right wing and repressive turn imposed by the previous Daoud regime.

This turn was impelled by the Shah of Persia and the military government of Pakistan which formed the basis for imperialist domination in the region.

The coup coincided with the beginnings of the mass mobilisations in Iran which turned into the revolutionary uprising which led to the dismantling of the regime led by the Pahlavi emperor.

Although the government was based on Afghan Stalinism, the regime would have to be characterised as nationalist and petit bourgeois because it emerged in an alliance with the army and because its politics remained in the framework of the bourgeois state.

There was a purge of most of the high functionaries linked with Daoud but the middle and lower ranks of the administration remained untouched.

The Communist Party was in government not by the revolutionary action of the masses but as a result of a military plot.

Stalinism sought to save itself the process of revolution and execute it administratively without taking account of the evolution of the masses.



Brezhnev embraces Taraki

What is more, the Communist Party is a small organisation with scant roots among the peasantry which forms the overwhelming majority of the population.

It lacks a revolutionary programme for agriculture and raises no democratic banner for the national minorities.

Under these conditions it attempts to put into practice social transformations, that is to say, dictated by the state.

The PDPA government adopted a series of progressive measures which attempted to transform the feudal agricultural system.

Debts owed by the poor peasantry were cancelled (these were particularly severe after the 1971-72 droughts); land-holding was limited to between six and 60 hectares depending on the level of irrigation; confiscation and distribution of anything over this without compensation was legislated; buying and selling of land was forbidden and measures were taken against discrimination of women (the veil was abolished and dowries were reduced).

But from this starting point Afghanistan began, to paraphrase Marx, to suffer all the evils of revolution without gaining in revolutionary strength—because reaction was provoked without mobilising the exploited.

The Afghan peasantry did not respond to the initiatives of the nationalist government because it doubted its capacity to carry them out.

The CP and the military dictated from above measures which affected the power of landowners and the semi-feudal agricultural relations, but they were incapable of breaking the religious influence and the paternalism of the landowners over the peasantry.

Furthermore, the PDPA did not want to pursue the logic of the agrarian revolution and, in a desert-type country which has only 5% of irrigated land, it refused to nationalise either the water and seed supplies in the hands of the tribal chiefs, or the credit system.



Right wing rebels

Without such measures, parcels of land are worthless and maintain the dependence of the peasants on the feudal landowners.

Before the 'impasse' created by the opposition of the tribal chiefs, the inconsequence of the measures themselves and the apathy of the exploited, the PDPA resorted to the totalitarianism and terror of the regime which created the conditions for its collapse.

## The character of the invasion.

The invasion of the Russian troops responded to the civil war in Afghanistan being fought by the guerrillas directed by the feudal landowners whose objective was to break the process of social transformation.

Moreover, the Afghan war was the local expression of an international conflict between the bureaucracy and imperialism for control of a strategically

vital region.

Since English imperialism attempted to impose its presence on the Russian Gulf region in the last century, the need for the Yankees to dominate this region is now even more vital, with its oil fields, its borders with the USSR and its proximity to revolutionary Iran.

This is why imperialism started its crusade against the Soviet invasion, started its boycott of food supplies and of the Olympics and the breaking of commercial contracts.

However, the essence of Yankee reaction is to prepare a chauvinist climate within the USA while militarising the Indian Ocean and swiftly establishing military bases in Kenya, Oman and Somalia.

The Soviet invasion means the rejection of the principal of national self-determination. However, this is not in itself the main question but rather its relation to the class struggle worldwide.

Self determination today

We reprint below for the information of our readers the greater part of an article translated from the April 1 edition of *Politica Obrera*, publication of the *Politica Obrera* group of Argentina—a section of the Fourth Internationalist Tendency.

Much of the article presents an analysis and an approach similar to that of the Workers Socialist League and the Trotskyist International Liaison Committee.

But we stress two important differences: the WSL and the TILC, while not calling for a withdrawal of the Soviet troops—which we consider would create opportunities for imperialist intervention into Afghanistan—do condemn the Kremlin invasion, as an action that advances neither the revolutionary struggles of the masses nor the long term defence of the USSR. We do not agree with PO that such a condemnation is necessarily "pro-imperialist".

And the WSL and TILC have spelled out a number of basic elements of programme which we see as essential for the mobilisation of the Afghan masses in the fight for an independent, socialist Afghanistan based on the power of workers' and peasants' soviets. No such programme is elaborated in the PO article.

would mean the victory of imperialism, and from there national oppression.

Its defeat, on the other hand, will extend the area of the world revolution and to this extent helps the struggle for real national liberation.

The politics of the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy.

The Russian bureaucracy did not decide to invade Afghanistan in defence of the workers' state but precisely and consciously to preserve its caste interests.

From here flow the methods of their intervention which crush the most basic democratic aspirations of the masses and are directed towards smashing any independent movement and have the clear objective of discouraging the exploited from coming together and organising.

The result of this is to provoke the demoralisation of the proletariat of the Persian Gulf and the working class worldwide, to block the process towards the independence of workers with respect to Islam in Iran, reinforcing the yoke of the mullahs over the Afghan peasantry.

In sum, by its methods, an action conceived in defence of the USSR isolates it from the world proletariat and increases its vulnerability—but that is the politics of the bureaucracy.

The only true method for the defence of the workers states precisely because of this, is international revolution.

Instead of explaining the revolutionary character of the struggle in that area, the bureaucracy has invented a legalistic piece of pap to justify its intervention.

It mocks the world proletariat in order to strangle any manifestation of internationalism.

At present in Afghanistan its role is conservative and its only function is to ensure military order in the country. The Russian troops have not only not called for revolutionary insurrection but they have disassociated their presence in the country from the struggles of

the exploited in the Persian Gulf.

With authoritarian and repressive measures they scorn the will of the masses and step on their democratic aspirations. In this way the bureaucracy make communism appear as opposed to national aspirations—which is what holds the masses to Islam.

The bureaucracy consciously refuses to encourage a revolutionary factor of the first order in that region: the national struggles of the Baluchis and the Pushtans, who are found in an important area which stretches over Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan.

In 1973, the governments of the two latter countries unleashed a war against the Baluchis which cost more than 15,000 lives in their struggle for self determination.

Now the Kremlin bureaucracy and imperialism are plotting to place troops on the border supposedly to guarantee the neutrality of Afghanistan but in reality to drown the struggle of 15 million souls for their self-determination—a struggle which would bring an end to fascism in Pakistan and open the way for a free federation of peoples throughout the Persian Gulf.

Because of its politics, the bureaucracy is raising a wall between the USSR and the Muslim masses.

Declaring that their actions are directed towards the defence of the USSR, the hierarchy is really surrendering the oppressed of the Persian Gulf to the tribal chiefs and the intrigues of imperialism and in this way, instead of strengthening the social basis of the workers' states they undermine it.

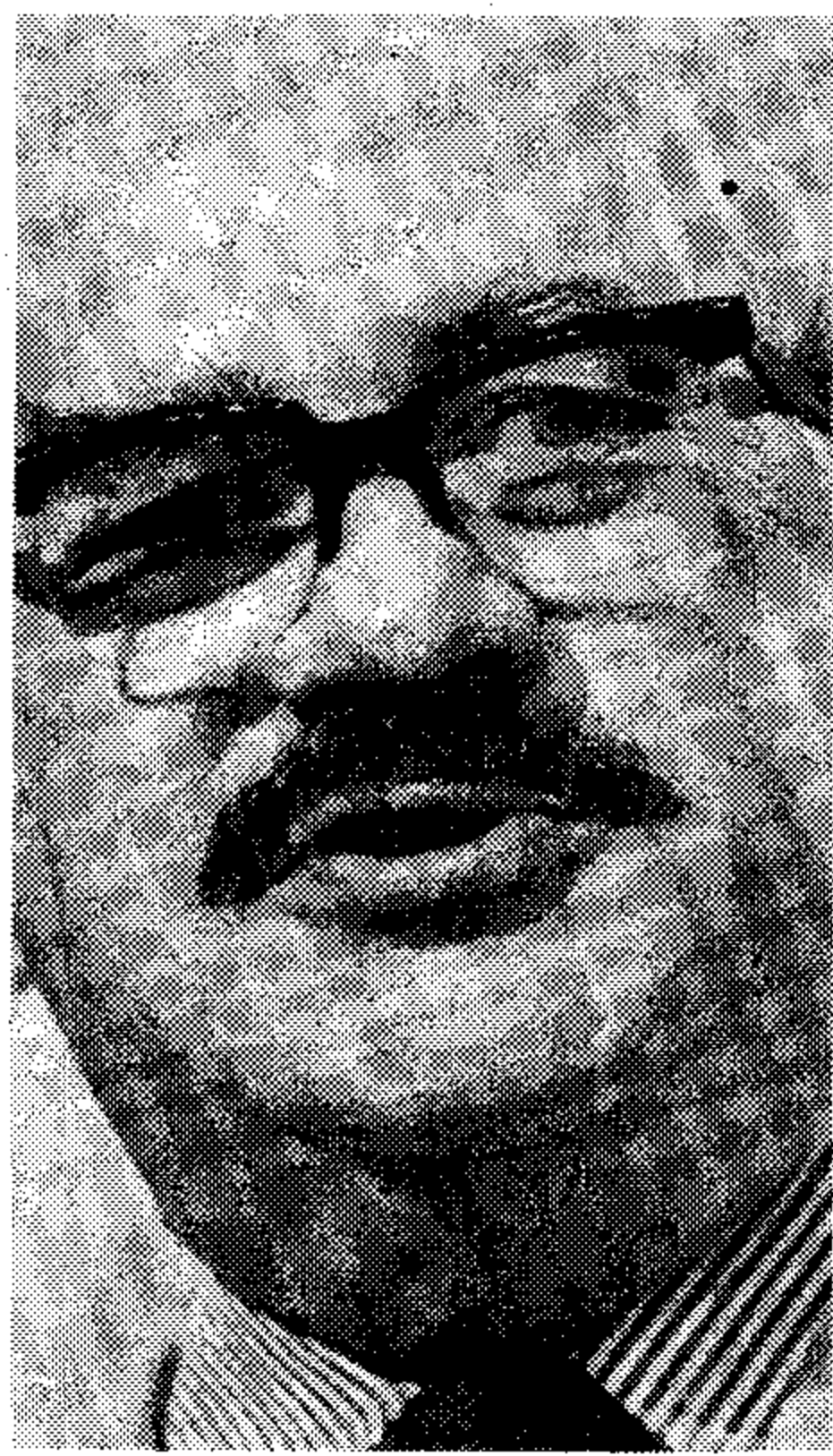
There are no substitutes for revolutionary methods to defend revolutionary gains against imperialism. As Trotskyists we do not condemn the invasion of Afghanistan by Russian troops (to do so would be pro-imperialist) but we do condemn its methods because they represent irreparable damage to the struggle for the survival of the workers' states.



Downed Soviet helicopter

# Tameside Trades Council fights TUC censors

The TUC General Council's recent decision to disaffiliate Tameside Trades Council over its anti-imperialist stand on Ireland is a fundamental attack on democracy within the labour movement.



Terry Parry

Just as successive British governments have used the Irish war to launch a general attack on basic rights, particularly through the Prevention of Terrorism Act, so now the Congress House bureaucrats follow suit in an attempt to gag all those in the trade union movement who speak out on the issue.

Len Murray has circulated all Trades Councils telling them that no initiatives can be undertaken on the Irish question without prior approval of the TUC.

## "Safe"

In other words, unless the proposals are 'safe' such as with the pro-imperialist "Better Life for All" campaign, and guaranteed not to deal with the real political issues concerning Britain's military occupation of the six counties, the TUC will rule them out of order!

As with Tameside, defiance will be met with expulsion.

But with a campaign now getting underway in defence of Tameside, demanding their reinstatement, the union leadership have a right to be nervous.

Already the TUC have been forced to instruct Trades

Councils to ignore all material sent out by Tameside claiming they have "placed themselves outside the official trade union movement".

And last Saturday's successful lobby of the Trades Councils Annual Conference by Tameside delegates and their supporters brought an encouraging response to their call for support.

In the conference itself the chairman, FBU General Secretary Terry Parry, refused to accept two emergency resolutions on the expulsion, one calling for Tameside to be given the right to put their case.

When it was eventually discussed under the TCJCC's report, several delegates protested at the TUC's decision.

## Confused

With most delegates confused over the real situation, they were swung behind support for the disaffiliation by a typical witch-hunting attack by Manchester CATC speaker Frances Dean.

It had been Dean and other prominent Communist Party members in the North West, who had forced the expulsion in the first place, with the

Stalinists giving the right wing a lesson in outrage and indignation against those who question Britain's 'democracy' by exposing the reality of its bloody imperialist repression.

Even so, the vote was only carried by 2-1, and subsequently many delegates (significantly including numbers of embarrassed CP rank and file members) signed a petition condemning the TUC's actions.

## Endorsed

The Tameside fight has already been endorsed by a growing list of trade union bodies—including the NUJ Annual Conference, Camden, Hyndburn, Andover and Battersea Trades Councils, one TGWU District Committee, five NUPE branches and two Labour CLPs.

Tameside Trades Council's labour movement conference on Ireland, which when originally convened, provoked hysterical condemnation not only from Len Murray and the CP but also the National Front, has now been recalled for next Saturday.

Again, fascists have threatened to break it up, with a declaration that a specially prepared squad of ex-army 'hit men' intend to destroy it.

The organisers are taking necessary measures to defend it from such attacks.

Messages of support from labour movement bodies should be forwarded to Tameside Trades Council Secretary Dave Hallsworth, 186 Kings Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire.



## Hull fascists' shotgun raid

Fascists in Hull have resorted to gun attacks to intimidate their opponents.

In the small hours of Tuesday May 27 two left wing book shops had their windows shattered by shot gun blasts.

One—Socialist Book—is operated by the Socialist Workers Party. Two adults and two children narrowly escaped serious injury in the attack.

## Arson

In the second one, linked to the Communist Party, a shot gun blast shattered a ¼-inch thick plate glass window.

The same shop had been the victim of an arson attack in March 1979.

The shotgun raids are by no means the first terrorist attack by fascists in Hull, who have many times tried to smash up events organised by working class political organisations and trade unions.

They are now obviously escalating violence in a bid to cash in on the sky-rocketing unemployment in the city—particularly amongst school leavers.

This vicious attack must be a warning to the labour movement.

If the fascists are not crushed, their campaign of arson, intimidation and violence against the labour movement will only intensify.

# Haughey bid to stem struggle

The southern Irish prime minister, Haughey, has good reason to feel aggrieved that ten year old allegations of gun running and financing the IRA have been resurrected.

The revived 'scandal' comes after he proved himself a worthy and in many ways more effective tool for British imperialism, than his predecessor, Lynch.

His talks with Mrs. Thatcher were a model of double talk, double think and devious obscurity.

It is not possible to say that Haughey has 'sold out' bourgeois nationalist ideals, because that would be to imply that it was legitimate to hold illusions in his performance.

He was elected partly on a revival of green nationalism and frustration at the lack of an end to the war in the north.

But he has spent the past year shrugging off his past connections with the Officials and lining up with the traditional southern bourgeois cry for an 'Irish dimension' to British government policy.

## Orange leaders

Haughey is aware that the British government is not in a position to offer even verbal concessions along this line. British policy is founded firmly on what will placate the largest proportion of Orange leaders in the North, and that excludes any assurances—of whatever nature—to the south.

The *Daily Telegraph* of all papers said:

"Mr. Haughey (whatever his past) is proving to be a man of parts. In some ways he may prove easier than his predecessors to do business with, and his political efficiency makes

his co-operation valuable.

"Again he has emphasised that he did not want to dictate to the people of the North and that Irish unity could only properly be achieved with their unfeigned consent."

Haughey is now caught in a nutcracker. He has already alienated nationalists in the south who looked to bourgeois governments to achieve something through negotiation.

## No rest

Yet as the current revival of accusations of helping the IRA shows (now augmented by similar attacks from his opposition in the South) he will not be allowed to rest as a bona fide opponent of the IRA.

Yet such attacks may not be entirely straightforward. The more Haughey's 'nationalism' is promoted, the more damaging is his intervention to the struggle

against British imperialism.

By kindling illusions in a negotiated settlement Haughey has fostered the illusion that the struggle is between one bourgeois government in the south of Ireland and another in Britain.

While we call for the immediate self-determination of the future of Ireland by all the Irish people, we also call for an Irish workers republic—which requires a struggle against Haughey and his capitalist government by the Irish working class.

The Provisional IRA, who carry the brunt of the anti-imperialist struggle in the north continue to fight a brave campaign against British rule and British army repression.

But the evolution of nationalism in the south is the best illustration of how it can offer no perspective for freeing the Irish working class from the rule of all bourgeois forces.



Haughey

# PRESS GANG



The parallel between the bureaucracy of the Soviet Union and the bureaucracy of the trade unions has often been made.

One of the parallels can be seen by the way in which the events on the Isle of Grain has opened up the whole trade union movement to attack.

Just as the international scabbing and betrayals of the Soviet bureaucracy actually make it more likely that the Soviet Union will be unable to defend itself effectively against attempts by imperialism to restore capitalism; so the betrayals and scabbing by the trade union bureaucracy jeopardise the very existence of the whole trade union movement on which they depend for their privileges and power.

That is why the press has made such a meal out of the mass picket at the Isle of Grain.

The spectacle of unions divided, and of official, organised scabbing has presented the gutter press with a heaven sent opportunity to portray the unions as being opposed to the interests of the working class.

The press is of course acting as the propaganda wing of the Tory party to smooth the path of its anti-union legislation.

That is why the *Daily Mail* sent reporters along with the trade union officials on the scab buses and chose to quote not the Tory front bench

condemning the picket, but AUEW official John Baldwin, saying:

"If this is modern trade unionism in Britain I want no part of it. Today we have seen its ugly and unacceptable face."

Press attacks on strikers and pickets have become so highly tuned that they are produced to a formula. Like Elizabethan or classical tragedies there are certain conventions that simply must appear in the witchhunt.

One is the poor dogged workers (scab) determinedly pursuing his desire to work (collaborate) despite trade union power (vacillation). In the Isle of Grain it was not however a question of finding a few individuals:

"The pickets failed miserably as more than 30 coaches and minibuses carrying around 1,200 bona fide trade unionists [!] rumbled past GMWU official picket lines."

A second convention is to praise and pity the poor hard pressed police as they 'neutrally' carry out their role of upholding law and order.

So at the Isle of Grain when one of the coaches broke down the impartial role of the police was to push-start it! The *Mail* remarks:

"This seemed to anger pickets more than ever, as they broke through the police cordon there were bodies sprawled all over the road."

Somewhere there must be found space to note that the strikers are determined to bring the word that *Mail* readers know and love crashing about their

ears. The *Mail* writes: "The Isle of Grain was the first real test of the power of the GMWU laggards to hold the industry to ransom."

But maybe the major flourish which every good witchhunt must contain is to find some women who can be held up against male strikers—to divide workers on sexual lines and to demonstrate a constant myth that women are 'naturally' more 'reasonable' (Tory) than men.

Under a headline "Wives who ran the gauntlet of hate" (whose wives?) the *Mail* said:

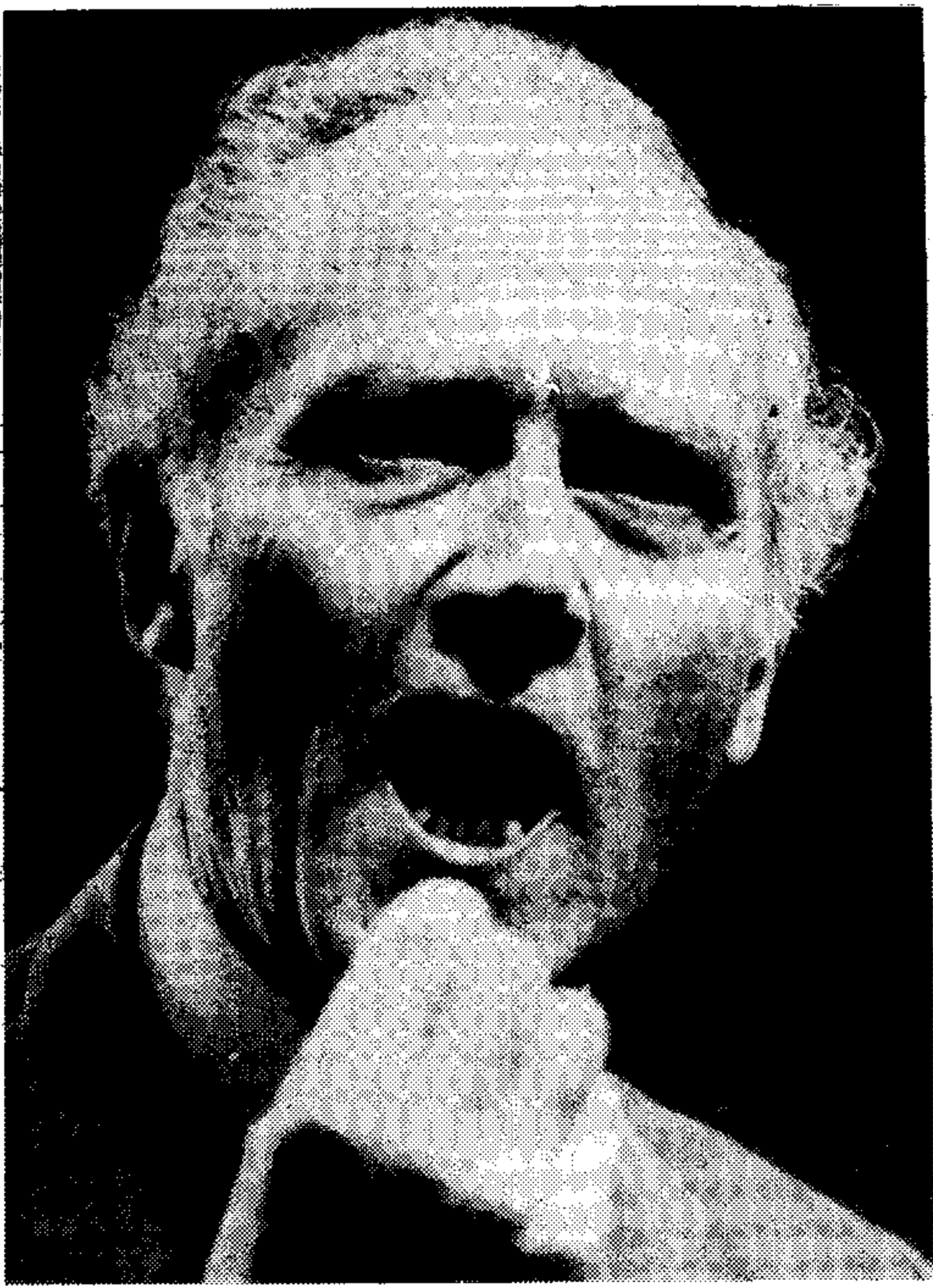
"Four brave women ran a terrifying gauntlet of jeering pickets as they drove the power station workers to their jobs."

The women, serve several uses for the bosses: they not only drive scabs through picket lines, but double up as "wives" in the headline and as "mothers" in the text.

The *Mail* shows the women pictured in a coach with a shattered window. (None of them were actually driving that coach, but why draw the line at a bit of poetic licence?)

The conventions are familiar, but as ever with press witchhunts, they are only powerful when allied to reaction within the workers movement.

It is not the press which has invented the scabbing at the Isle of Grain. Rather it is the AUEW EPTU, UCATT and the TGWU which have presented them with a witchhunt on a plate.



Basnett



Evans



Heffer

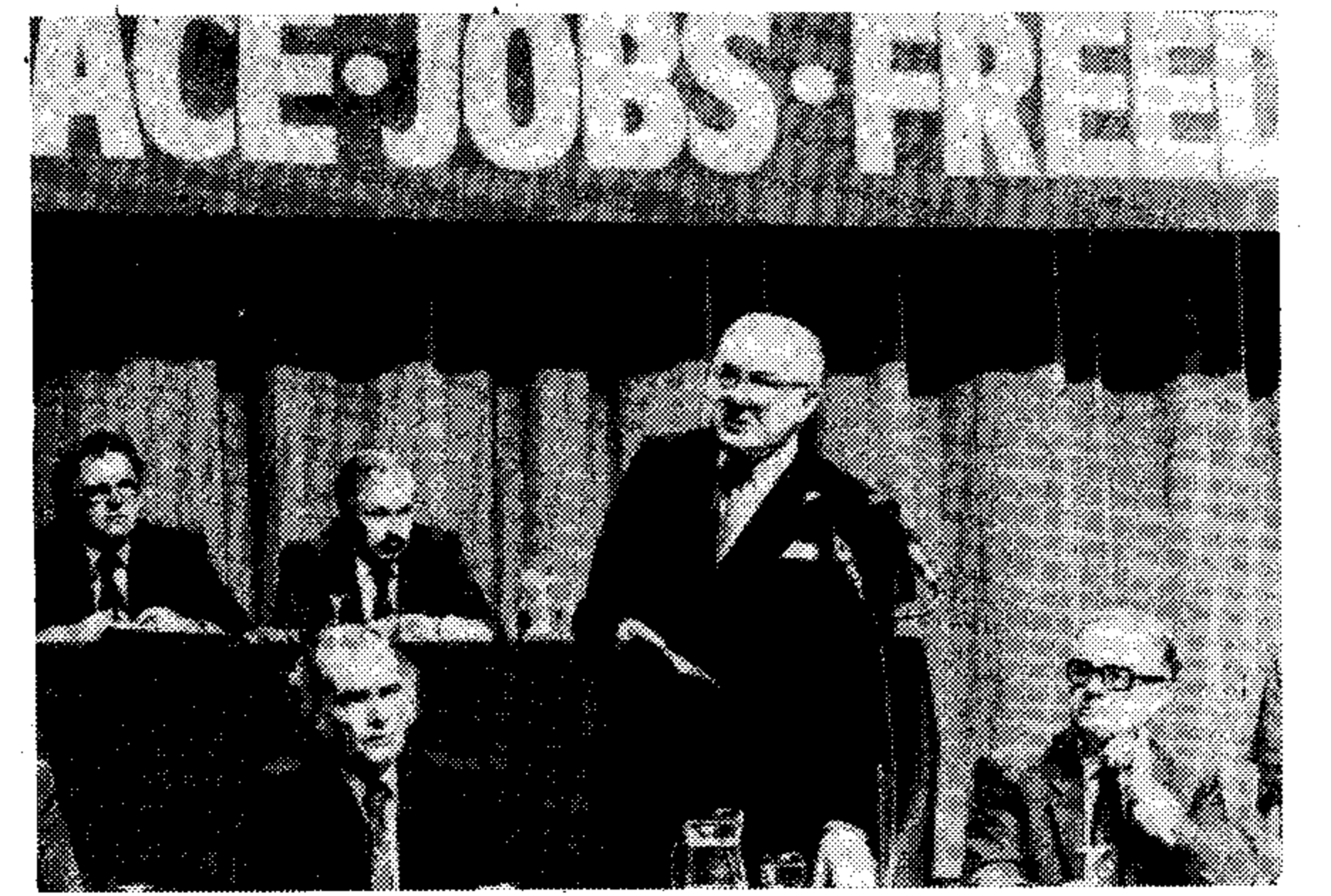


Benn

# Labour's Special Conference

## PASTING OVER THE CRACKS

By John Lister



The banners and pamphlets at the Labour Party Special Conference said "Peace, Jobs and Freedom": but they might just as well have read "Business as Usual".

As everyone was at pains to point out, there were no new

policies on offer; there was no new leadership on offer; there was not even much new in the way of rhetoric and arm-waving techniques.

Instead there was the time-honoured mixture of Callaghan and Healey, with the backing of a rotund and prosperous looking Joe Gormley, thumping the drum for wage controls—while

Eric Heffer, Joan Lestor and Tony Benn were wheeled out as decoys to lure in left wing elements that might otherwise lose patience with the Party and its policies and begin to look elsewhere.

With the exception of the crypto-Tory loony right wing of the Social Democratic Alliance—"Oppose the extremist NEC statement!"—and one floor speaker who bridled at the idea of renationalising hived-off industries without compensation—no right wingers bothered to attack the innocuous and largely vacuous phrases of the NEC statement.

AUEW spokesman Gerry Russel proudly announced the unanimous support of his union's right wing led National Committee for the document—a support that was universally echoed by leaders of other unions.

### Not far enough

And while numerous speakers—ranging from David Basnett to 'Militant' supporters—got up to say that the document "did not go far enough", there was not one that argued a thorough socialist critique of a statement that offers Labour activists neither a shred of concrete policy for today's struggles against the Tories nor so much as a whiff of a socialist policy for a returned Labour

government.

A few glimmers of light however did percolate through the rolling clouds of rhetoric.

### Bring down Tories

Lambeth Council leader Ted Knight attacked the document's failure to call for action to bring the Tory government down before the end of its term, and went on to stress that:

"I'm not interested in returning another Labour government of the same ilk as the last one..."

"It was not just 'some differences' but major differences we had with the last Labour government. They paved the way for the Tories."

A South Wales delegate pointed to the absence of "socialism" from the slogan "Peace, Jobs and Freedom" and argued that:

"When we talk about manifestoes, if we go on the same as last time there's no way I'll go tramping the streets of Monmouth trying to win support."

He singled out Moss Evans in attacking:

"our own trade unions doing a deal with the steel employers and selling us out—making politics a dirty word."

"Are we in business to uphold the capitalist system? Not bloody likely!"

But one Labour leader who makes no secret of being in business to uphold capitalism is David Owen. He incurred howls of anger as he argued the leadership's real line on nuclear weapons—to build them (at enormous expense) while going through the motions of "arms limitation" talks.

Others were more discreet. Clive Jenkins, dressed like a merchant banker and parading his usual battery of economic facts and figures, argued that by antagonising industrialists and even bankers, the Thatcher government was "self-ambushing" and would fall sooner rather than later from its own contradictions.

### Second hand

Such a perspective was clearly beguiling for union leaders determined to avoid action to bring down the government.

GMWU leader David Basnett—wearing what appeared to be a second-hand suit which he (and several other people) had slept in—went even further into cowardly contortions, with his

scheme to employ teams of solicitors and barristers for "Employment Bill evasion" along the lines of the bosses' practice of tax evasion!

But there was real anger from some speakers, reflecting the tensions within the party's rank and file under the Tory attack.

A woman delegate from Edinburgh complained that:

"People are looking to the Labour Party for leadership—and they are not getting it."

"They don't believe that Thatcher has to stay there for five years—and I don't believe she has to stay there for five years."

"24 local authorities have said they will not implement cuts. The NEC should support them—and the PLP! Labour councils are not elected to carry out Tory policies."

"We learned how to fight the cuts under a Labour government, but by God we needed the experience".

Three delegates drew strong applause when they forcefully complained about the Labour leadership's craven support for the "bipartisan" imperialist policy of military repression in Ireland, and contrasted the NEC statement's silence on this with its ready condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Other delegates won vocal support when they attacked the NATO alliance and Labour's links to US imperialism: and the conference seethed with hostility to the Common Market.

As right wingers prudently sat on their hands and allowed

the steam-letting exercise to run its course, platform 'lefts' Heffer and Benn diplomatically wound up morning and afternoon sessions in suitably tub-thumping style.

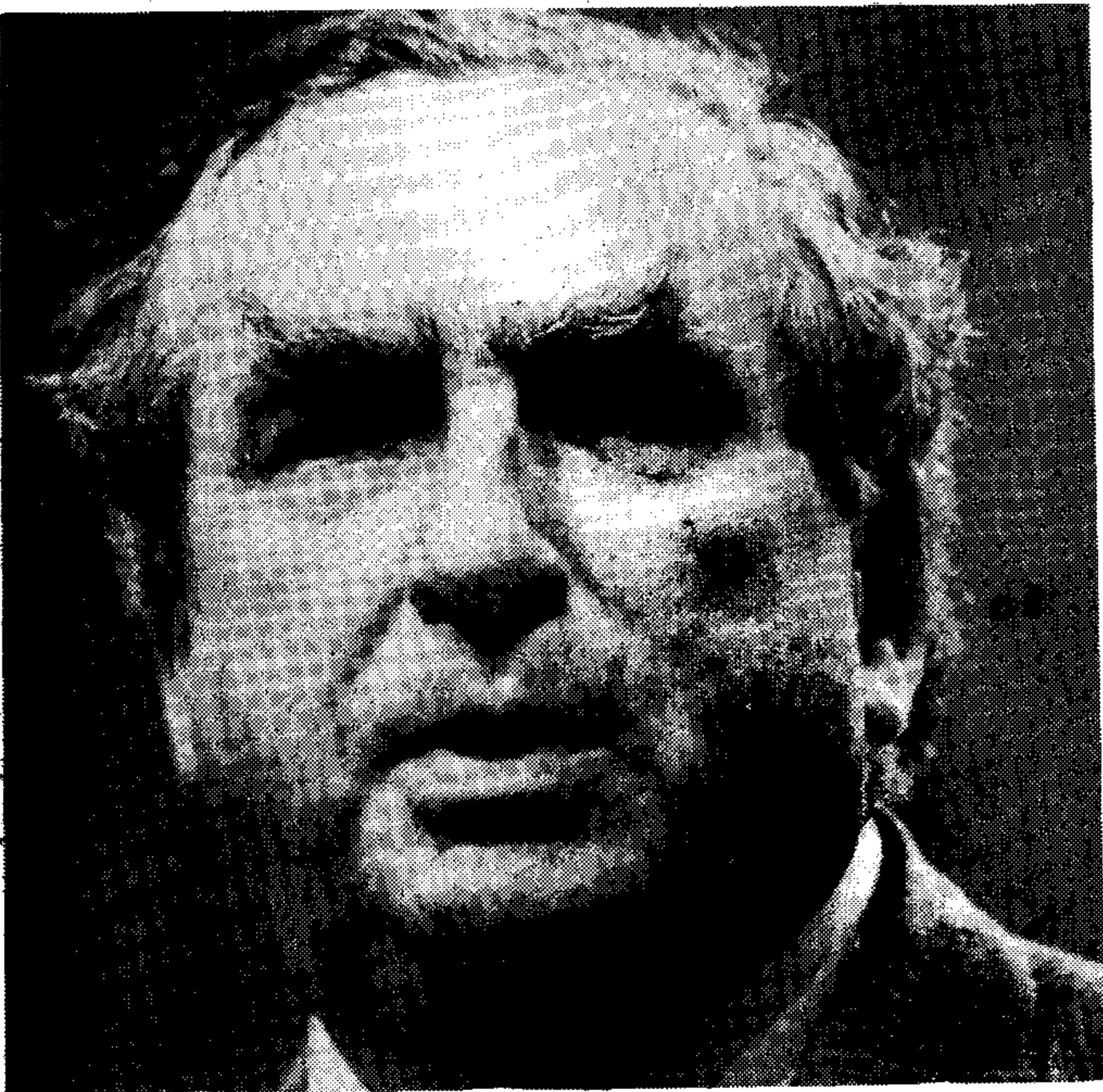
Heffer, endorsing the NEC statement as "a first class socialist document", most clearly spelled out the intended message of the conference:

"I'm not critical of what happened in the past: that's gone. I'm interested in what will happen in the future."

In the meantime, if Heffer and the NEC have their way, present struggles against Tory cuts and closures will be left to their own devices while the Thatcher government is treated to the occasional protest March 9-style demonstration and even a few May 14-style one-day stoppages.

Similarly Benn, in his rapturously received wind-up speech, stressed and restressed the central message that the NEC statement, while offering only the same old policies, did offer the basis for "unity" of the Party.

"Peace, Jobs, Freedom" indeed does mean business as usual in the Labour Party: Peace for Callaghan in the final few months before he retires and makes way for his chosen right wing successor; Jobs for David Owen, Neil Kinnock and the clique of opportunists and time servers in the Labour and TUC leadership; and Freedom for the Party leaders to continue to flout the demands, the adopted policies and the interests of its rank and file members.



Healey



Packed meeting of delegates in favour of party democracy



Callaghan with General Secretary Hayward

# WEST AFRICA: UNDER

# THE HEEL OF

By **Jim Farnham**

# FRENCH IMPERIALISM

French-speaking West Africa (a misnomer applying to the language of its colonisers and the agents they left behind) is made up of fourteen independent states and covers an area greater than the whole of Europe.

The backwardness of social and economic development and the grinding poverty experienced daily by most of the population of 70 million is the characteristic result of the direct intervention of imperialism into pre-capitalist economies.

The destruction of the precapitalist modes of production by military occupation and the penetration of monopoly capitalism did not free resources for more efficient production—as had been the case in Europe hundreds of years before when the growth of mercantile capitalism steadily overthrew feudal society.

### Profitable investment

Instead the new colonial economies were structured in order to serve those limited areas of production which were highly profitable for capitalist investment.

In order to create the conditions for profitable investment in mining, oil wells and certain agricultural crops, the rest of the region was stripped of its productive capacity and self-sufficiency and transformed into a supplier of cheap labour and cheap cash crops.

Forced at gunpoint to pay taxes in cash, the rural population had either to find employment or grow crops for cash.

At the same time local crafts and manufacturing were largely destroyed by the influx of the products of European mass industrial production.

Where once the indigenous population could produce the bare necessities of material existence for themselves, they were now dependent for those on a market wholly controlled by imperialism.

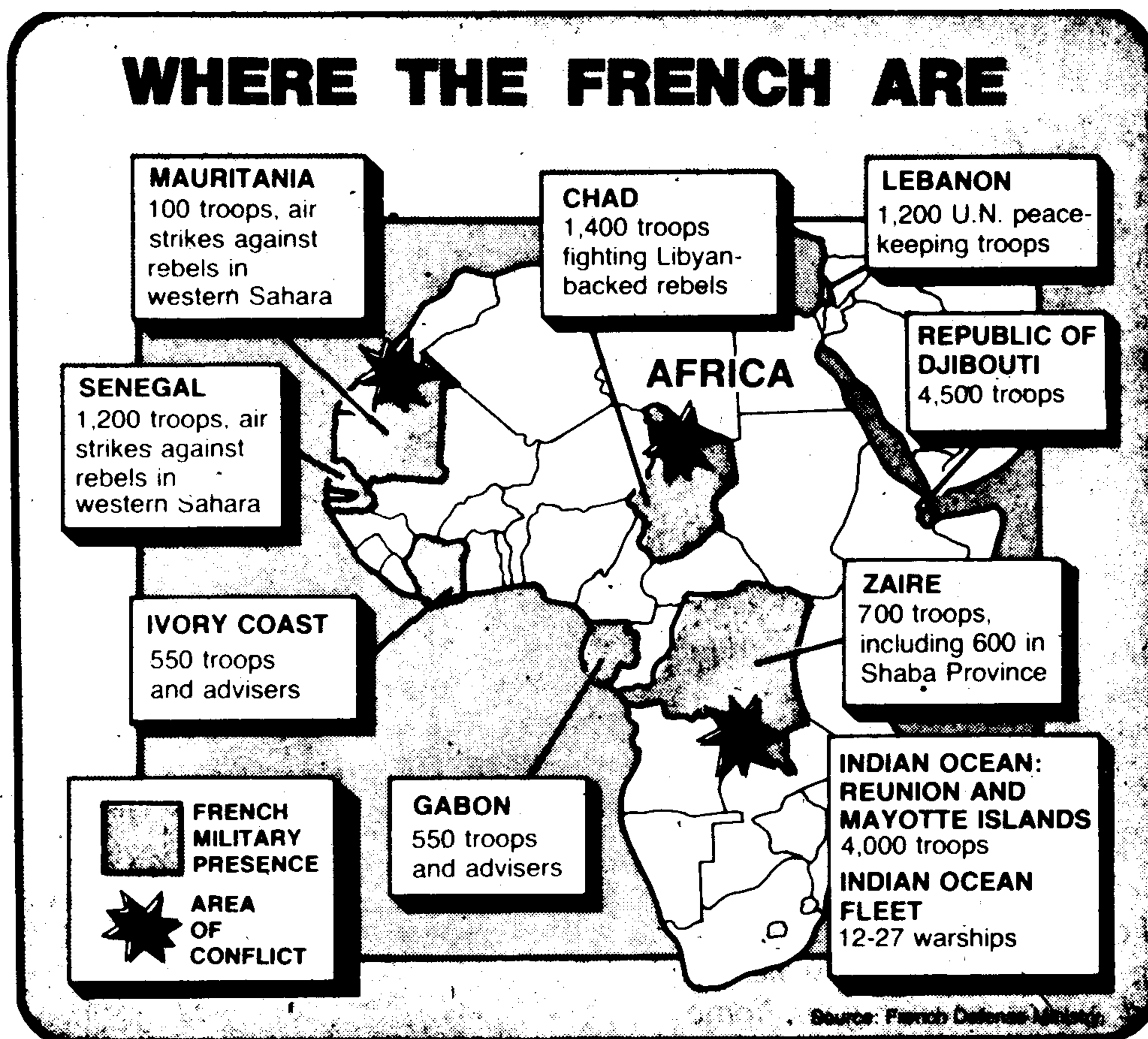
The existence of pockets of capital-intensive high technology in a sea of backwardness, lack of development and crushing poverty does not mean that capitalism has meant to develop in the region.

### Neo-colonial states

What it does mean is that capitalism in its highest stage, imperialism, has been able to create neo-colonial states purely for the realisation of profit, and that in these regions profitability is quite compatible with extremes of backwardness and poverty for the masses.

For this reason capitalism is quite unable to provide any solutions to the problems of rural poverty, lack of industrialisation, ethnic oppression and social backwardness.

The struggle in French Africa against capitalism is the struggle to release the enormous



productive capacity of the region.

Those who argue that the lack of development means that the bourgeois revolution is still to occur, that capitalism has yet to penetrate the rural areas etc., do not base themselves on any understanding of reality, but rather on the need to be able to argue that the petty-bourgeoisie is somehow the class with a progressive role to play.

### Multinationals

The fact is that the particularly uneven nature of the capitalist development which has occurred in the neo-colonial countries like those of French West Africa, has brought about an equally distorted formation of classes.

The great majority of the population lives and works in the rural areas, and many of the numerically small proletariat are migrant workers from the countryside, and often the nationals of neighbouring states.

The local ruling class is the creation of imperialism, acting more as agents of international capital rather than the owners of the means of production.

The marginally profitable remains left over by the multinationals leave room only for very few private entrepreneurs.

The inability of either a native bourgeoisie or of the working class to create their respective dictatorships alone in French West Africa, therefore gives the petty-bourgeois-administrators, army officers

etc—much greater political ground in which to pursue their own sectional interests.

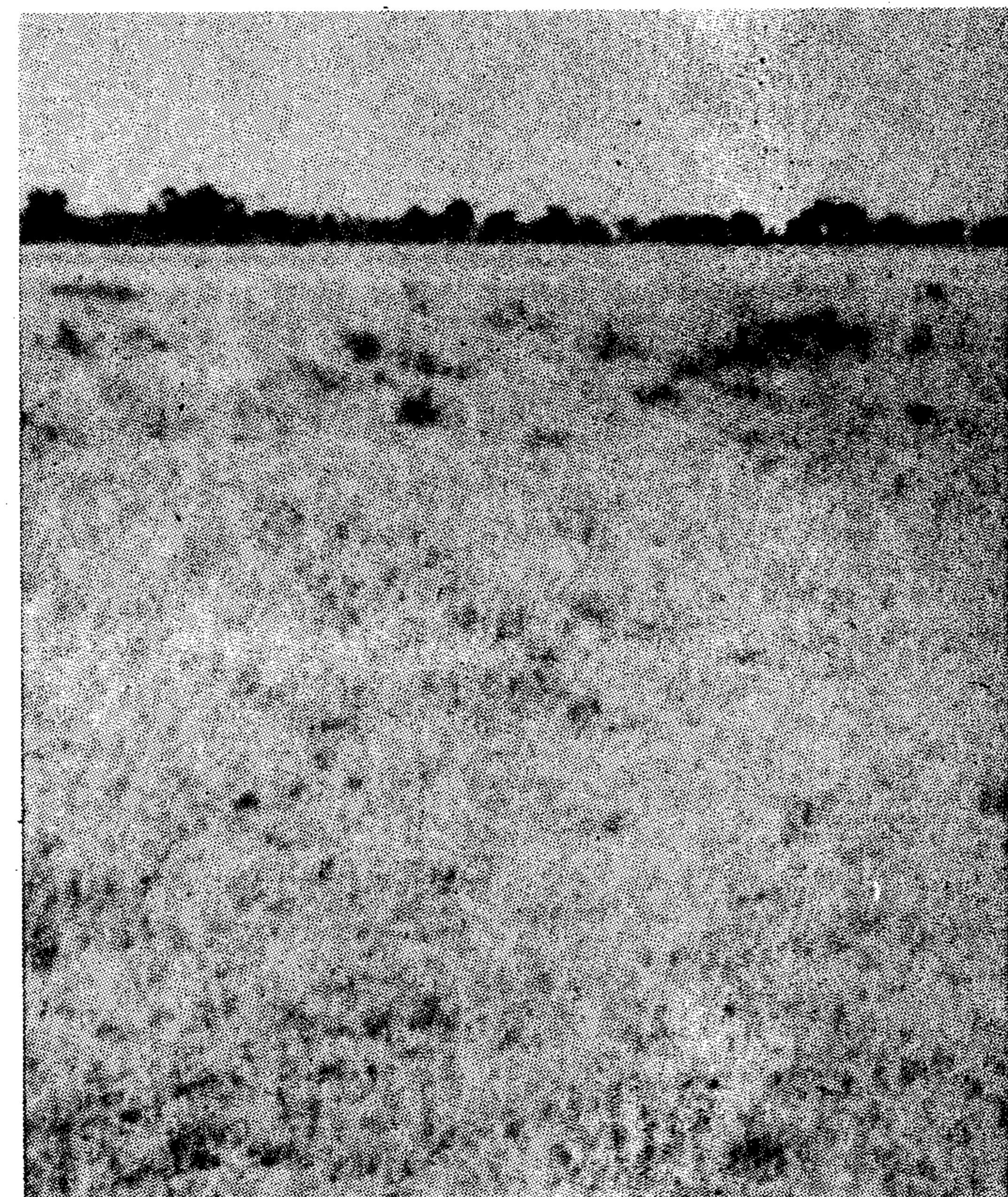
As an unstable stratum between the two main classes, they are ever poised to co-opt mass struggles in order to block any alliance of workers and poor peasants and crush any emergence of an independent working class leadership.

In moments of desperation the petty-bourgeoisie will even lead limited struggles against imperialism—but will use them purely to force imperialism to offer them better terms in their role as agents.

What are now the fourteen states of French West Africa were once the two colonies of French Equatorial Africa and



French imperialist troops in Zaire



Young woman in Senegal

French West Africa.

The aims of colonisation had been simply to keep competitors out and to force the inhabitants to provide the necessary infrastructure for the profitable exploitation of the region.

The French imperialists imposed taxation by military force, thereby forcing the peasants to provide wage labour and grow cash crops in order to pay.

With the taxes raised, the

colonisers created the state apparatus needed to maintain control, and the economic infrastructure sufficient for the export of primary goods like minerals, timber, cocoa and groundnuts and the import of manufactured goods that the peasantry were now unable to produce for themselves.

This infrastructure remains basically unchanged. The main difference is when the region was given 'independence' by France it was divided up into fourteen areas according to their economic function—and each of these areas was made into a separate independent state in order to facilitate political control by imperialism after independence.

The three major trading posts and their environs are now imperialism's bastions—Ivory Coast, Gabon and Senegal.

### Permanent garrisons

They are most closely linked with France, harbour permanent garrisons of French troops (a total of 3,000) and employ migrant labour from the other states. Thirty percent of the wage labourers of Ivory Coast are migrants.

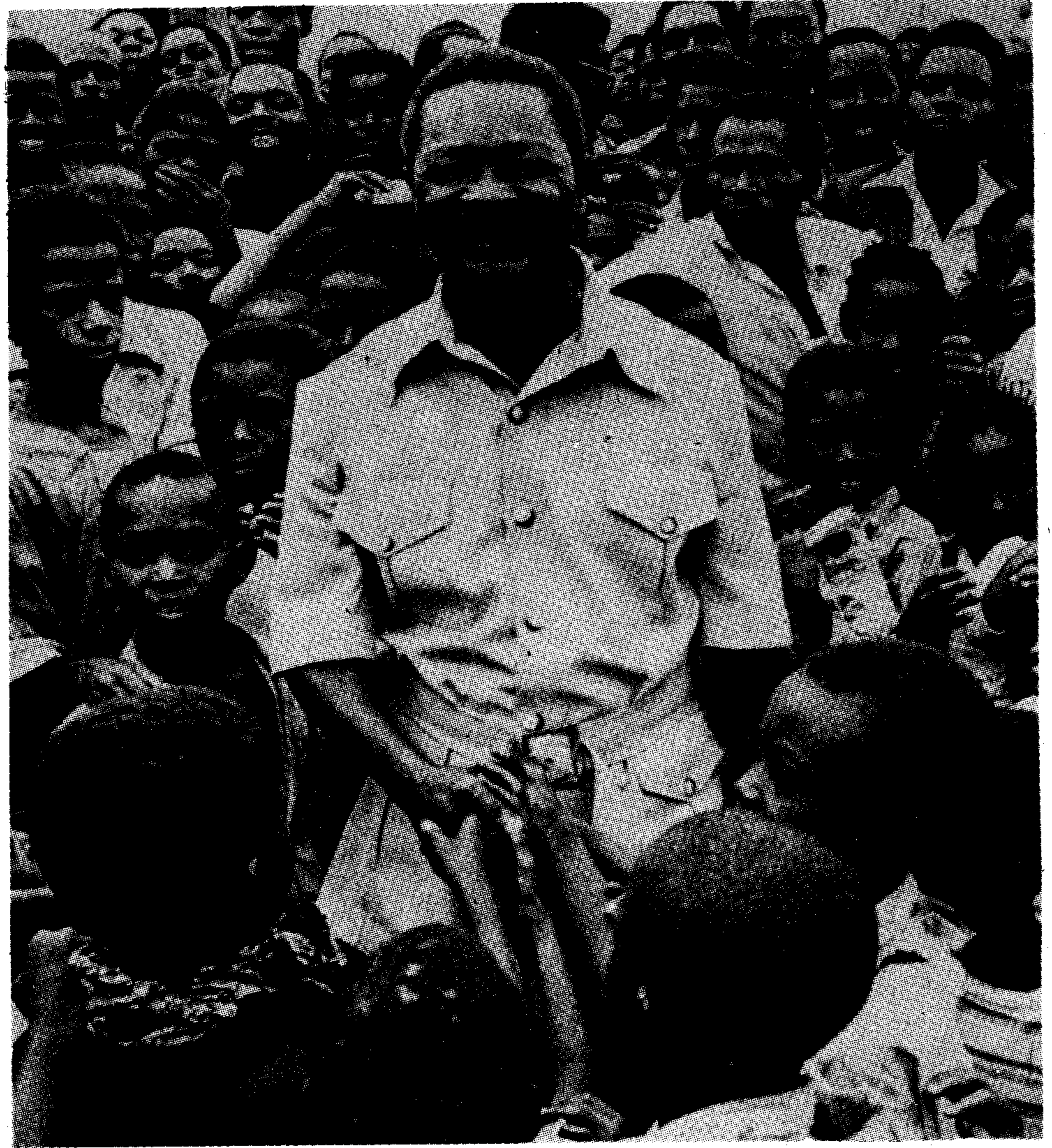
The states of Mali, Upper Volta, Niger and Chad which border on the Saharan desert are simple labour reserves which have been given the status of independent states to facilitate the political control of the working class.

It is among those states which accurately fit neither of these obvious categories that the greatest problems have been created for imperialism.

These states are based



French President Giscard



French protegee Bokassa



This regime took power in 1976 and faced an abortive coup attempt by right wing exiles supported by Moroccan and French mercenaries in 1977.

Throughout French West Africa the ruling class is weak and powerless to effect the necessary social and economic transformation of their countries that alone would strengthen them.

**Close links**

The worsening trade conditions that they now experience as part of the world capitalist recession forces these regimes to attempt closer regional co-operation through such organisations as OCAM (Commercial Organisation of Africa and Mauritius) and ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) and to at the same time to seek close links with imperialism through ACP/EEC consultative Assembly which meets in Lome (capital city of Togo) to regulate trade relationships with Europe.

While these regimes seek to force concessions from imperialism they must simultaneously seek closer links to ensure their own survival.

The contradictory pressures that this has placed upon ruling classes of several of the Francophone states have forced them to create 'left' regime to head off the development of mass anti-imperialist struggle.

**Petty bourgeois**

Workers and militants under conditions of extreme unevenness of capitalist development have especially to guard against those who disguise their petty-bourgeois class interests behind anti-imperialist rhetoric.

The petty-bourgeois agents of international capital try to consolidate their own interests through left-nationalist programmes of nationalisation and pseudo-communalisation of agriculture.

Such actions are not one step in the direction of socialism under workers control but are the only objective basis for the furtherance of the class interests of weak petty-bourgeois being squeezed between the dictates of imperialism and the growing demands of the oppressed masses.

The rapturous applause given to Castro in the United Nations last October as chairman of the 'non-aligned nations' was given by the representatives of the neo-colonial regimes for good reasons.

For it is *they*, and not the working class who stand to benefit from Stalinist foreign policy, as the Beninois and Congolese workers have already discovered.

In Upper Volta there is a

total wage labour force of 36,000 working inside the borders of the country, while many thousands more work in the neighbouring states where they are even more subject to arbitrary repression than in their own country.

In none of the fourteen states are organisations of the working class allowed to exist independently of the ruling party.

Official trade union leaders are appointed by the regimes, and militant action is viciously repressed.

In the guise of anti-imperialist campaigns of Africanisation ('authenticisation') the regimes whip up nationalist and ethnic prejudices to try and turn worker against worker, peasant against peasant.

With no rights to organise and restriction on their freedom of movement the agents of imperialism seek to keep the workers divided and unable to rise up with one voice against capitalist exploitation, repression and degradation.

**No such scruples**

While the workers are denied the right to organise across national boundaries the petty-bourgeoisie have no such scruples for themselves.

Organisations like ECOWAS are the mutual aid societies of the regimes, designed specifically to prop up ailing governments and maintain capitalist stability in the area.

Such organisations are also important for providing the cover for direct intervention by the imperialist nations.

Historically the most important of these organisations for the Francophone states has been OCAM for it provides a common currency used by most of the ex-French colonies and facilitates the use of the 17,000 French troops stationed in

Africa.

It is through OCAM that France has arranged her military interventions in Angola, Zaire, the Central African Republic and Chad in the last four years.

For the petty-bourgeoisie it is such co-operation that is the real meaning of Pan Africanism - namely the unity of imperialism's agents in the face of the struggle of the oppressed masses.

However it is only the oppressed, under the leadership of the working class, who can give real meaning to the genuine desire for African unity, by ending both national and ethnic oppression and the domination of imperialism.

**Self-determination**

It is the working class alone that can give the necessary leadership for the struggle to throw off the shackles of imperialism and give genuine rights of self-determination to all the national/ethnic groups of the area.

It is only the working class

who can lead the peasantry in the struggle to overthrow capitalist oppression.

Workers and militants therefore have to address themselves to the task of drawing in a peasantry living under diverse conditions into the struggle against the common enemy.

**International party**

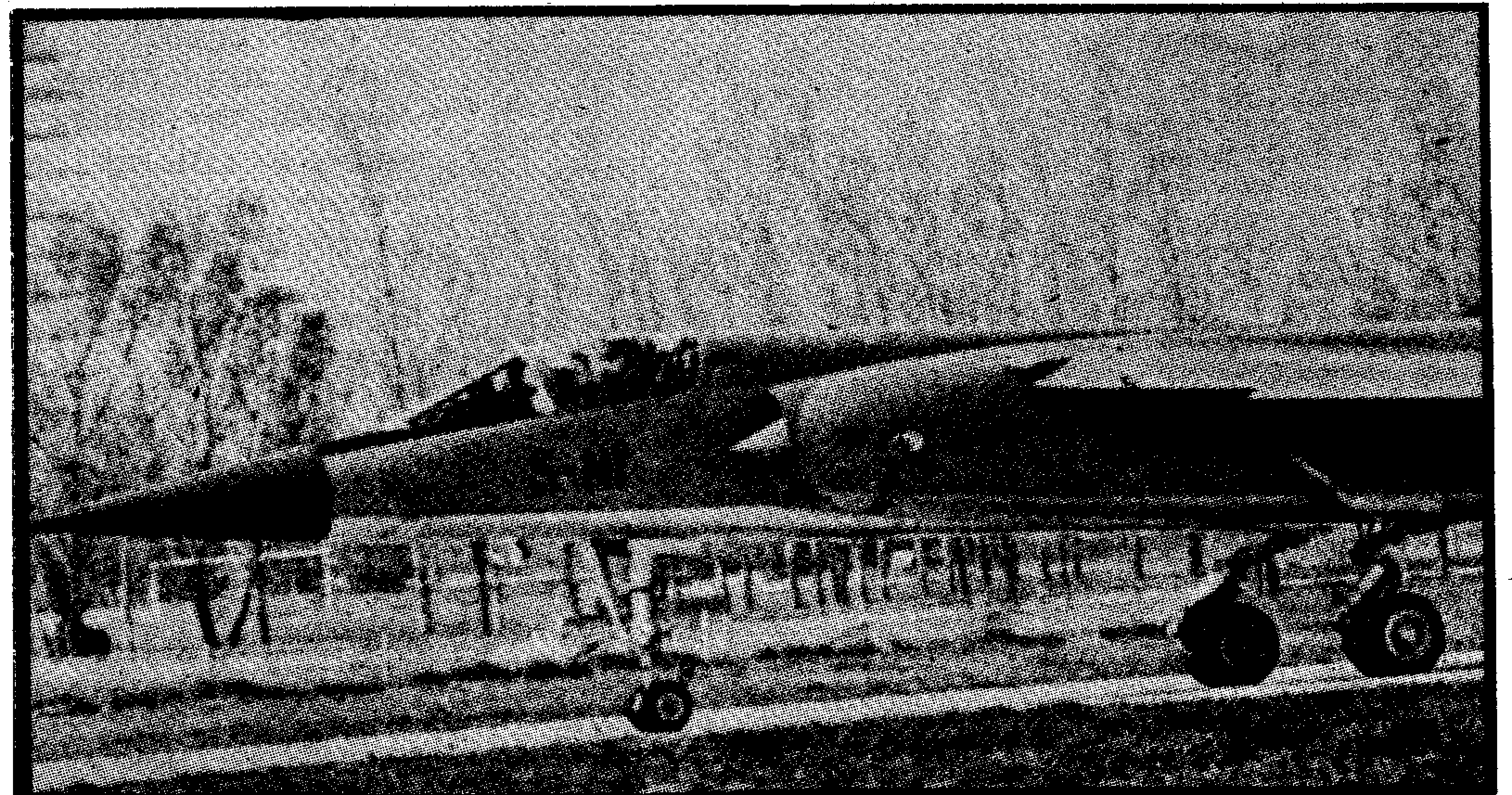
The need for an international workers' party in French West Africa is necessary at every stage of the struggle for the independent interests of the working class and the building of a socialist society.

The balkanisation of the region by imperialism cannot be allowed to stand in the way of unity of the oppressed masses.

The national proletariats, with their meagre resources and organisation must be welded into one mighty force capable of leading the peasantry, oppressed national groups, youth and students in order to deliver the death blow to imperialism and capitalist oppression in Africa.



Polisario guerrillas



French mirage jet

around the less 'prosperous' coastal commercial centres, or are inland states with mineral wealth.

The central African Republic has over a thousand French troops defending the puppet regime of President Dacko installed last year to suppress growing strikes and demonstrations against the former Bokassa regime.

**Political crisis**

Mauritania has had four changes of leadership in the last sixteen months - expressing the political crisis brought about by their defeat at the hands of the Polisario national liberation movement of the Sahroui people.

The Ahidjo regime of Cameroon has been severely threatened by a militant trade union movement which won massive wage increases after a general strike in 1976.

The regime has responded with vicious repression, and has taken around fifteen thousand political prisoners. Last November government troops murdered two hundred villagers in Ndole near the Chad border, who had revolted against local government officials.

In the coastal states of Guinea, Benin and the Congo, 'left' sections of the petty-bourgeoisie have seized power.

In Guinea, Sekou Toure based himself on trade union support to resist the more blatant aspects of the French neo-colonial solution.

De Gaulle responded by a total French withdrawal, even to the extent of destroying office equipment.

Sekou Toure, unable to back down because of his working class base, was forced to nationalise the foreign owned sections of the economy.

After half-hearted support from the Stalinists of the Soviet Union, Guinea re-opened links with France after 1975 and is now dependent upon French and Arab capital, with whom the state corporations are in partnership.

In the Congo, middle ranking officers seized power in 1969 in coalition with those sections of the petty-bourgeoisie excluded from the former government, and the Congolese Workers Party (PCT) presented an increasingly left face to the militant working class.

Now officially 'Marxist-Leninist', the regime has maintained itself despite a general strike in 1976 and endless clashes with workers and students.

The regime is closely tied economically to France and is strongly supported by Cuba which maintains three hundred troops in Brazzaville the capital, provides technical assistance and is at present educating five hundred students in Havana.

**Military junta**

As well as the internal opposition of the working class the Nguesso regime faces constant attempts to reestablish it economically by French imperialism and right wing exiles in the neighbouring states.

The people's republic of Benin is likewise 'Marxist-Leninist' and ruled by military junta.

# THE POETRY OF

By Terry  
Eagleton

# TROTSKYISM

Most people today think of the surrealists—if they think of them at all—as a bunch of freaky bohemian artists who painted moustaches on the Mona Lisa and wrote unintelligible poetry.

What is less often remembered is that, under their French leader Andre Breton, they formed the backbone of the Trotskyist opposition to French Stalinism during the 1920s and '30s. How is this strange paradox to be explained?

In 1916, at the heart of the first imperialist world war, an outrageous new movement was born in a small Zurich nightclub.

## Dadaism

Known as *Dadaism*—the name was chosen because it was meaningless—it launched a merciless assault on bourgeois culture, religion, politics and philosophy, breaking up concerts, staging street demonstrations, throwing exhibitions of 'shocking' art and scandalising the bourgeois adherents of 'high culture'.

Dadaism spread rapidly throughout Europe, and in Germany in particular was to merge with Marxist politics: a revolutionary declaration was published from Berlin over the unlikely signature of 'The Central Dada Council of World Revolution', and one of the founders of the Rhineland Communist Party was a leading Dadaist artist.

Infantile, anarchistic and iconoclastic, Dadaism was more a symptom of the exhaustion of bourgeois ideology brought about by the imperialist war than a constructive response to it.

By 1920 Dadaism was itself exhausted; but in 1924, with the publication in Paris of the *Surrealist Manifesto*, it was to give birth to a new movement of considerably greater political substance.

Surrealism sprang from a group of French artists—most notably, the poets Andre Breton and Louis Aragon—who believed

in the destruction of the 'culture' cherished by the bourgeoisie.

Uncompromisingly radical and bold, the surrealists denounced books, museums, concert halls and art exhibitions in the name of a theory of the creative imagination which would drive beyond the narrow confines of 'art' and contribute to the revolutionising of daily life itself.

Less an 'artistic movement' than a vanguard dedicated to the destruction of the barriers between 'art' and 'life', the surrealists flaunted their experimental poetry and painting in the face of a hostile bourgeoisie; they understood 'surrealism', not as an *escape* from reality, but as an *intensifying* of real awareness, a 'revolutionary' expansion of consciousness which would call the whole of bourgeois society into question.

'In revolutionary times', wrote Lenin, 'the limits of the possible increase a thousandfold'; and what the Bolsheviks tackled in the political sphere the surrealists attempted in the realm of everyday life.

## Internationalists

As dedicated internationalists, they spread throughout the 1920s and '30s until surrealist groups existed all the way from England to Egypt, Chile to Japan, Haiti to Yugoslavia.

By 1925, the French surrealists had moved close to the French Communist Party; and two years later their leaders announced their conversion to the PCF. Their sojourn within the party, was not, as might be predicted, a happy one.

Critical of its growing dogmatism and bureaucratisation, scornful of its brutal suppression of free discussion and of its



Trotsky talking with Andre Breton (left) and Diego Rivera

abysmally low level of theoretical development, Breton and his fellow-surrealists sided from the outset with the Trotskyist Left Opposition within the Soviet Union.

In a pamphlet entitled *Surrealism in the service of the Revolution*, they dedicated their art to the cause of international proletarian uprising; their poetry celebrated the virtues of iron revolutionary discipline and relentless struggle against bourgeois values.

For this they were to win the praise of Anatole Lunacharsky, first Soviet Minister of Culture, and a notably cultivated, cosmopolitan thinker.

From the PCF, however, they won little but suspicion,

sneering and distrust. A threat to both its political Stalinism and cultural philistinism, the surrealists stood firm by their revolutionary cultural programme and defence of traditional Bolshevism.

From the beginning, they had grasped the transformative potential of the Freudian theory of the unconscious. Determined to break down the barriers between art and politics, culture and everyday life, they also rejected any hard-and-fast division between social consciousness, and the explosive, unconscious forces which it repressed.

Their artistic aims were to give these unconscious forces a voice—to let them rip through the stable, sedate forms of bourgeois society and challenge its

one-dimensional vision.

Luis Bunuel, one of the greatest film directors of the period, was an avowed surrealist: his films exploited 'unconscious' imagery to remorselessly satirise bourgeois ideology, and in 1931 a showing of a Bunuel film in Paris was raided by fascist gangs.

'Today's authentic art', wrote Breton, 'goes hand in hand with revolutionary social activity. Like the latter, it leads to the confusion and destruction of capitalist society'.

Idealist though the surrealists' belief in the imagination may have been, it was more than the Stalinists could politically take.

In 1934, Breton was expelled from the Stalinist Association of Revolutionary

Writers and Artists for publishing a letter critical of a dreary Soviet film which celebrated the virtues of the nuclear family.

In the same year, Stalin was hatching his notorious dogma of 'socialist realism' in art, based on a naive, reactionary subordination of art to 'reality as it is'.

By 1935, as the PCF was swinging tamely into line behind the Popular Front sell-out of the working class to an alliance with "progressive" sections of the bourgeoisie, the break between Stalinists and surrealists became inevitable.

## Seizure of power

Just as floods of fellow-travelling artists and intellectuals were rushing into the French Communist Party, enamoured of its new brand of class collaboration, Breton and others sickened by this betrayal of Bolshevism, were on the way out.

In the French general strike of 1936, the surrealists called for a workers' militia and seizure of power, while the Stalinist leader, Maurice Thorez, made his infamous pronouncement that 'It is necessary to know how to end a strike'.

Complacent in their class collaboration, the PCF was able to dismiss the surrealists as no more than a 'degenerate', 'decadent' group of ultra-leftist bohemians.

In 1938, now free of the PCF, Breton travelled to Mexico, where he had an historic meeting with the exiled Leon Trotsky.

## Manifesto

Along with the Mexican artist Diego Rivera, the two men drafted out a manifesto calling for an International Federation of Independent Revolutionary Art, which soon developed sections in a number of countries.

It was in the same year that the Fourth International itself was founded; and this parallel between international revolution and international socialist culture is of striking significance.

After the second imperialist world war, during which Breton took refuge in the United States, surrealism lived on sporadically; but its main strength was clearly spent.

Some of the surrealists—Aragon in particular—had defected in the 1930s to Stalinism; Breton himself was to live on, still a convinced Trotskyist and active artist until 1966.

## Powerful fusion

The decline of surrealism goes hand in hand with the eclipse of proletarian revolution in the Cold War period; and it was not, of course, free from serious internal flaws.

Its demand for a 'poetry of the unconscious' was often naive; it thrived, artistically, in frenetic bursts of energy rather than as a planned strategy; and it contained more than its fair share of Romantic-anarchist elements.

On the other hand, surrealism represents one of the most powerful fusions of art and politics which the century has witnessed.

More than a century before its birth, the English revolutionary poet William Blake had written that 'the business of mankind is the arts, and all things in common'. Breton and the surrealists were the great inheritors of this belief, united as they were in agreement with Leon Trotsky's watchword: 'To conquer for all men the right not only to bread but to poetry'.

# Mt St Helens warnings ignored

By our Science Correspondent

After 123 years of slumber, the volcano Mt. St. Helens in Washington State erupted on May 18 with an explosion that blew a cubic mile of debris off the mountain and another cubic mile of ash into the stratosphere. The force of this eruption was nearly equivalent to a 50 megaton nuclear bomb.

Although warned for seven weeks before the eruption that danger was imminent people did not take this seriously and many entered the evacuated and restricted area around the volcano.

Now nearly 100 people are missing, and at least 40 are known to be dead.

In the aftermath of this catastrophe accusations of incompetence are being levelled at the state government both for not adequately preparing for the eruption and for mismanaging the rescue and relief operations.

## Earthquakes

Mount St. Helens began to erupt steam and ash on March 27 after a week of local earthquakes.

This was the first volcanic eruption in the United States since Mt. Lassen erupted in California during the First World War.

Immediately before this eruption earthquakes of magnitude 4 or greater were occurring every hour and the ground around the volcano was



Dark at mid-day in Yakima

constantly trembling.

But worse was to come. The enormous explosion of May 18 released a shock wave and winds which knocked down trees 12 miles away.

Later, the first of several pyroclastic flows (fiery avalanches of glowing volcanic materials and gas), surged down the slopes of the volcano, engulfing all in their path and flattening 50 square miles of the countryside.

The ash that has been erupted into the stratosphere may remain there for two or more years. Some has already fallen over the Eastern United States and the rest will be spread wherever the winds

disperse it.

But it does not pose any significant problem for the rest of the world.

Global temperatures may drop by a fraction of a degree because the ash in the stratosphere reflects the warming rays of the sun away from earth.

Very small quantities of ash may be noticed falling on the rest of the world. But, most noticeably, sunsets may improve because of the presence of the ash in the air.

Although this eruption was similar in size to that of Vesuvius which engulfed Pompeii in 79 AD it is small compared to the eruptions of Santorini, which destroyed the Minoan civilisation and gave rise

to the legend of Atlantis, and Krakatoa, which devastated much of coastal Indonesia and sent an enormous tidal wave around the world in 1883.

There is every indication that the eruption will go on through the summer and the final toll of devastation will not be known for some time.

## Not heeded

Accusations of incompetence in the handling of the disaster began when Governor Dixie Lee Ray declared a statewide state of emergency in Washington, evacuated people living on the flanks of the volcano and restricted access to the evacuated areas to scientists.

However, the warnings of the geologists were not heeded. Mount St. Helens became a tourist attraction—with sight-seers coming from all over the USA.

The state police were unable to stop curious visitors and residents angry at being forced to leave their homes from entering the restricted area to see what was happening.

The day before the major eruption 50 residents of the evacuated township of Toutle forced the Governor to let them into the area to inspect their damaged homes.

On the day of the eruption yet another group of Toutle residents were due to visit the danger zone.

After the eruption, rescue attempts were hampered: airborne rescuers could not com-

municate with those on the ground because their radios were tuned to different frequencies.

Because the official rescue teams seemed to be dragging their feet, frustrated friends and relatives of those missing breached the security cordon and searched the devastated area themselves—often digging in the cloying dust for hours searching pathetically for a trace of those they had lost.

85 miles south west of the volcano in Yakima, a town of 50,000 people, feverish attempts are being made to brush off the roofs the grey ash from the Volcano which fell like snow on the town.

## Several feet deep

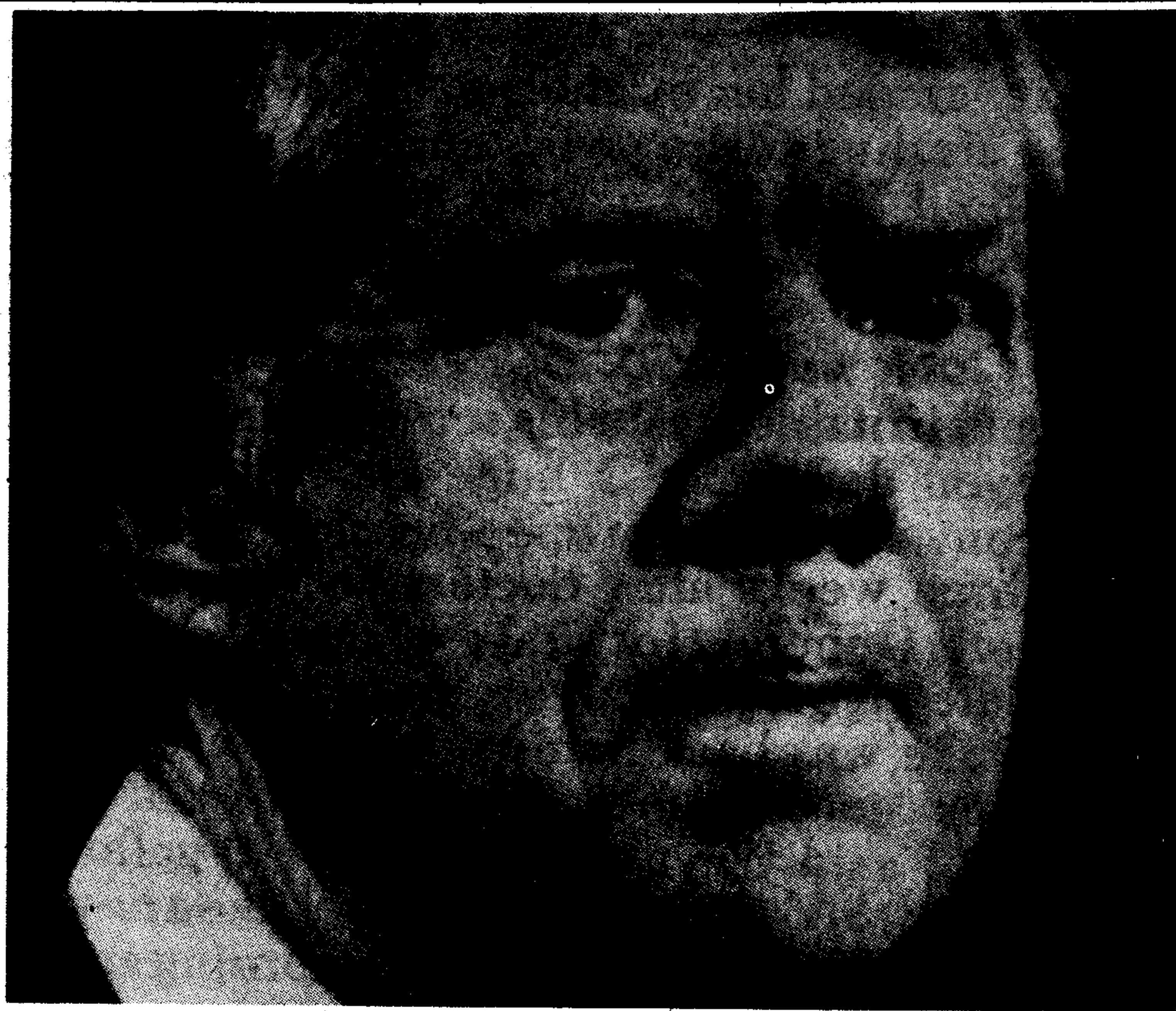
If it rains heavily before the roofs are cleared, the ash will turn to a concrete-like substance and crush buildings.

The ash has drifted into heaps several feet deep in the streets and it fills the air with a choking cloud of grey dust. Even here the emergency services seem inadequate.

As highlighted by the events of Mount St. Helens it is not the prediction of geological hazards that presents the real problem, but what is done with the prediction.

If the events there are a guide to what will happen should a large earthquake strike San Francisco or Los Angeles then there is grave cause for concern about the authorities' ability to cope.





Carter



Truman

# COLD WAR: PAST AND PRESENT

By Henry Phillips

The state of relations between the USSR and the imperialist countries has always been a fluctuating one—sometimes even from hour to hour. Needless to say, neither side has ever dropped the guard of suspicion and defensiveness which is characteristic of all international diplomacy.

Nonetheless there have been long periods which are clearly identifiable changes of climate in these relations.

Hence the almost simultaneous Japanese attack on the USA and the Nazi attack on the USSR in 1941 opened a period of close co-operation of the two sides as wartime allies and then, in the agreements to divide the world effected at the famous series of summit conferences in Tehran, Yalta and Potsdam, as mutually recognised joint arbiters of the political fate of virtually every country.

This alliance was, of course, an alliance of counter-revolutionary forces. It showed itself most potent and ruthless in the face of autonomous movements of the masses which pointed, as in Greece, in the direction of socialist revolution.

## Incompatible

The fluctuations in the relationship, however—most notably the development of the 'Cold War' from 1947 to the mid 1950s—cannot be understood without a realisation that imperialism and Stalinism are counter-revolutionary forces which rest on different social bases—the one on capitalist and the other on nationalised property forms—which are ultimately incompatible with one another.

Thus Stalinism and imperialism are at once united and opposed social forces.

And it is this contradiction which has expressed itself in the series of 'freezes' and 'thaws' of their relations in the post-war period.

But also this complex relationship is itself complicated by other elements; some old—such as the use of international postures to help resolve internal political problems in both the Stalinist and the imperialist states; and others new—such as the existence since the mid

1950s on either side of a power to unleash almost instant mutual destruction through nuclear warfare.

The Cold War of the late 1940s and early 1950s did not begin overnight. All its major elements were to be found in the policy of the imperialist allies during the war, especially the aggressive stance of Churchill towards the USSR.

## Basic harmony

On the surface, however, a basic harmony was maintained between the Stalinist and imperialist powers. The imperialists allowed Stalin, as agreed, to set up regimes (initially bourgeois ones) in Eastern Europe which were under Soviet guidance.

They looked on with particular satisfaction as, in doing so, Stalin acted ruthlessly against the independent movement of the masses.

In Greece and Iran Stalin dutifully betrayed the mass movement and allowed imperialism to secure its control. In Western Europe he used his influence with the mass CPs in Italy and France to ensure that the process of rebuilding the capitalist state should be successful.

In S.E. Asia the Vietnamese CP was the most enthusiastic force welcoming the post-war arrival of imperialist occupying armies.

And in the establishment of the United Nations in 1945 Stalin conceded just about every important point in dispute between the USSR and imperialism: for instance, he dropped his demand that each of the Socialist Republics of the USSR should have a seat.

Despite the political weakness of imperialism in Europe and in many parts of Asia, Stalin nonetheless made many of these specific concessions in recognition of the overall strength of the USA, which had emerged from the war economically more powerful than ever (the USSR had lost 42% of its industrial capacity and 20 million people) and with a monopoly of the atomic bomb.

## Monopoly

It was in fact the USA's measures to underline that monopoly and to maintain it which began the process of

hardening of hostile attitudes which developed into the Cold War.

Truman's decision to drop the two bombs (the only ones the US then possessed) on Japan in August 1945 was at least as much designed as a demonstration to Moscow as to Tokyo.

The rigorous embargo put on the distribution of all nuclear information in 1945 was one of a series of aggressive measures which the US took as the war came to an end.

Another was the sudden and unilateral abandonment of lend-lease economic aid, from which the Soviet Union was the main and most needy beneficiary.

These changes coincided with the death of Roosevelt and the accession of Truman to the US Presidency, a change which helped to bring a more right-wing, aggressively anti-communist layer into the centre of political power in the US, a trend later reinforced by the growth of McCarthyism and, in a more genteel way, the election of Eisenhower in 1952.

It was in 1947 that the decisive turns in imperialist policy came. The imperialists were by then confident that (with Stalin's unacknowledged help) the potentially revolutionary mobilisations of the working classes and oppressed masses had been defeated in Greece, Iran, and most important of all in Italy and France.

## Marshall Plan

And now the main fear was the prospect of the possible future growth of Soviet strategic strength.

In April and May of 1947—the revolutionary threat having been restrained by the Stalinists—the Italian and French bourgeoisies felt confident enough to expel the Communist ministers from their governments.

A month later, the US launched the Marshall Plan for European capitalist economic recovery. Economic aid was offered under the plan to the USSR and to the East European countries in its sphere of influence, but this was rightly seen by the Kremlin as an attempt by capitalism to re-penetrate the now heavily or completely nationalised economies and it was rejected in July 1947.

There followed a rapidly escalating series of measures by both sides which culminated in the creation of two armed alliances explicitly directed against each other.

In October 1947 Stalin founded the Cominform. And in February 1948 he gave the go-ahead to the proclamation of the North Korean Peoples Republic and for the coup which established a Stalinist regime in Czechoslovakia.

In March 1948 the imperialists signed the Brussels Pact which resulted in the formation of the anti-communist NATO alliance. In January 1949 Stalin founded Comecon (though the explicitly military Warsaw Pact did not follow until 1955).



In June 1948 the imperialists declared that they intended to abandon efforts to negotiate a solution to the German problem, and unilaterally went ahead with a monetary reform in the Western zones.

The Soviet reply, the Berlin blockade, was surprisingly broken by an imperialist airlift and was lifted in May 1949. But if Berlin was the first major confrontation of the Cold War, the biggest was to be the Korean War of 1950-51.

Although many of the actions taken by Stalin through this period of the Cold War were provocative, the main cause of the turn around in relations between Stalinism and imperial-

ism was an imperialist offensive against the USSR expressed in the 'Truman Doctrine' of 'containment'.

This was first enunciated as US policy in 1947 and then later brought to full fruition under Eisenhower and Dulles after 1952 with the creation of a ring of military alliances around the Soviet Union (NATO, CENTO, SEATO, etc).

The offensive was partly based on a realisation on the part of the imperialist powers that their military advantage which resulted from the atomic monopoly might prove to be short-lived.

In spite of the sometimes provocative defensive policies of the Kremlin in the face of this offensive, Stalin and his successors knew that the US nuclear monopoly left them with little alternative but to step down before any confrontation reached a final decisive stage.

## Relative strength

The imperialists correctly calculated that Stalin would not dare to use the only other weapon—potentially devastating—available to him: the mobilisation of the working class against capitalism.

So the Cold War was a period in which their counter-revolutionary common interests were recognised by both imperialism and Stalinism but in which imperialism offensively took advantage of its relative strength against Stalinism. It was based therefore on the relative strength of imperialism.

It was not long before this situation began to reverse itself. Whereas the death of Roosevelt had accelerated, though not determined, the imperialist Cold War offensive after 1945, the death of Stalin accelerated but did not determine the 'thaw' in the Cold War which began to emerge in the mid-1950s and which by 1958 was expressed in Khrushchev's policy of 'peaceful coexistence' and later the imperialist conception of detente.

What had really changed was the balance of military power. This was necessary to put the USSR back in a position of initiative in international relations and to allow the common counter-revolutionary interests of the two sides to express themselves once again in a warming of relations.

The reversal, or at least redressing, of the military balance was surprisingly rapid.

In the testing of the first atomic bomb the USA had a lead of 4 years over the USSR (1945-1949); in the explosion of the first thermonuclear device (hydrogen bomb) the lead was cut to nine months (1952-53).

And then in the development of missiles (and space satellites) the US lead was rapidly eliminated.

'Peaceful coexistence' and 'detente' between the rulers of two essentially antagonistic systems were of course marked by periods of sometimes quite sharp worsening in relations.

Such temporary 'freezes' occurred over the invasion of Hungary in 1956, over US policy in Syria in 1957, Iraq in July 1958 and China in September 1958.

The temperature went down even further with the construction of the Berlin wall in November 1958 and later with the failure of the Paris summit meeting of 1960, and reached a nadir with the Cuba missile crisis of October 1962. There were further conflicts after the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

But nothing, not even the decade-long American involvement in the Indo-Chinese war, reversed the growing move towards detente from the Stalinist bureaucracy and the increase in economic and cultural relations that, by the 1970s, brought the SALT agreements and the Helsinki and Belgrade conferences on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

In this context the provocative action of the USSR in invading Afghanistan in 1979/80 and the imperialist decision to use this as a pretext for the reversal of a whole series of aspects of detente is not easy to explain.

It might appear more probable that the continued evidence of powerful mass movements in various parts of the world would bring the two-counter-revolutionary forces into an even more powerful embrace, especially in view of the growing evidence of economic and political crisis in both imperialist and Stalinist regimes.

It is clear from the world situation that the explanation for the recent moves towards a new 'Cold War' lies not in any new mood of self-confidence among the imperialists (as in the case of the last Cold War) but rather in the marked relative weakening of imperialism in relation to Stalinism (though in the context of the weakening of both of them in relation to the movement of the workers and oppressed masses).

The economic crisis, and the disintegration of the ring of alliances with states bordering the USSR have led the imperialists to make a desperate attempt to build a new alliance with China, and to rebuild alliances with anti-communist states.

Whatever the difficulties, it seems clear that the US is determined to pull together its available supporters in a new and more aggressive "anti-Soviet" alignment designed primarily to curb the rise of revolutionary struggles.



## Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement

**AFTER THE STEEL AND BL STRIKES—NEW LEADERS NEEDED!**

**CONFERENCE**

Saturday 5 July at Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham.  
11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Credentials £1  
Write to G. Webster, 169, Barclay Rd., Warley, West Midlands.

# Morning Star falsifies events at NATFHE Conference

The 1980 conference of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE) was held against the background of cuts and redundancies and a failure on the part of the leadership to mount any effective fight back.

The clear aim of the bureaucracy was a conference swathed in anti-Tory rhetoric but which essentially left the NEC a free hand on specific action to be taken over the coming year. Jack Tyrell, the union's CP President, set the tone in his opening speech, for much of the work done by the Stalinists at the conference.

### "Dark clouds"

The *Morning Star* quotes Tyrell with regard to the threat of war, as describing "the dark clouds gathering on the international horizon." But the *Star* failed to mention his obviously conflicting statement condemning last



year's "senseless killing of Mountbatten" (the well-known blue blooded militarist)—a statement which was met with calls for Troops Out of Ireland from some delegates.

The main motion on cuts instructed the NEC: "to call on all local authorities not to carry through public expenditure cuts and to support those authorities that are already resisting cuts by all means possible including industrial action if necessary."

Frightened by talk of a broader movement than Clay Cross, and the need to be prepared to break the law in the future, the executive moved that the whole motion be remitted to the NEC. This would have prevented a vote at conference.

They were clearly shaken when remission was heavily defeated and the motion overwhelmingly passed. Branches must fight for the NEC to send national delegations to meet Labour groups and Councils to demand they overspend.

These delegations should be backed up by mass lobbies and a mandate for supporting strike action if needed. The Tory Under-secretary for Education MacFarlane, was

greeted by a mass walk out, leaving less than half the 450 delegates still in the hall.

Again, the *Morning Star* reported the walk out—but neglected to indicate that large numbers of CP members stayed in the hall!

The first day ended on a slightly better note for the NEC when they secured the deletion of the whole second part of a resolution on increased overseas students fees which called on the EC to support branches which let in students who had not paid increases and who refused cooperation with the Home Office or college management.

The NEC's main motion on salaries had attracted no less than 17 amendments. The "immediate merger of Lecturer 1 and Lecturer II scales" was first to be defeated.

"Reduction of pay differentials" followed with CP members who were not mandated by regions exercising their free vote against the amendment and in favour of large differentials in lecturers' pay.

Needless to say, there was no talk of how to deal with 20%

inflation.

Here a fight is needed for index linked payments throughout the year geared to a trade union cost of living index.

The second day ended with a standing ovation for the Scottish teachers' representative who requested support for striking EIS teachers. £350 was collected.

### Challenge

Monday's session opened amidst anger at the cost of Sunday night's Presidential Dinner and a challenge to debate a motion—previously ruled out of order—concerning the payment by the union of legal costs incurred by a member who had been sacked by his principal for "gross misconduct".

His crime involved refusing to attend an interview in the Principal's office. The Principal—an NEC member of the union at the time—was also a Broad Left supporter: this may explain why CP members voted against the inclusion of the motion on the order for debate.

The relationship between the CP and the NATFHE executive

was further cemented when the crucial question of Rule 25 was debated.

Rule 25 concerns the number of votes required in a branch before the NEC will support action taken. At present 50% of the total branch membership is required.

This means that all the right wing need to do is encourage apathy and non-attendance at meetings.

Both the NEC and the CP-led Broad Left opposed any significant change in this rule and the motions fell.

The substantial level of agreement between the Broad Left and the NEC is the result of years of CP influence on the executive including Tom Driver (for 9 years the General Secretary), a whole layer of Broad Left officials and Stan Broadbridge, the last General Secretary who was also a CP/Broad Left supporter.

One of the encouraging signs of the conference was the growing layer to the left of the CP, many of whom are poorly organised under the SWP's Rank and File banner but most of whom have a healthy distaste for Broad Left manoeuvres and who are struggling to give a lead locally in the fight against the cuts.

A programme is needed to give sharp political direction to this layer and the WSL will be working hard over the next year to develop such a fighting political perspective within NATFHE.

# JOIN THE WSL!

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 crackdown 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!

# L.A.C.

LEYLAND ACTION COMMITTEE

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# SOGAT must fight for sliding scale

Main interest at this year's SOGAT conference will be centred around resolutions from the North West area and the Midlands on the national basic wage.

General Secretary Bill Keys and the NEC this year capitulated to the employers' organisation, the BPIF, meekly accepting their 'final' offer of £75 with a 37½ hour week delayed until 1982.

This was after the SOGAT leadership had churned out reams of literature on the importance of fighting with the NGA and NATSOPA to win the joint united claim for £80 and 37½ hours in April this year.

As a result of Keys' betrayal the NGA was left to fight alone for the full claim, while SOGAT leaders issued instructions to their members to "work normally" during the NGA dispute.

Indeed Keys went further and attempted to ride on the backs of the NGA's possible success by claiming similar pro rata increases to avoid a large differential arising.

This position amounted to siding with the employers against fellow print workers—in a struggle which is still not finally resolved after five weeks of lockout and strike action.

Motions had to be submitted for the conference as early as last November.

At that point some thought that an £80 minimum basic would be adequate to the economic needs of the membership.

But since then constantly rising prices for basic commodities like food, fuel, housing and transport have taken their toll and it is clear that the £80

figure would in no way eliminate the excessive overtime working to maintain living standards during a period of high and increasing unemployment.

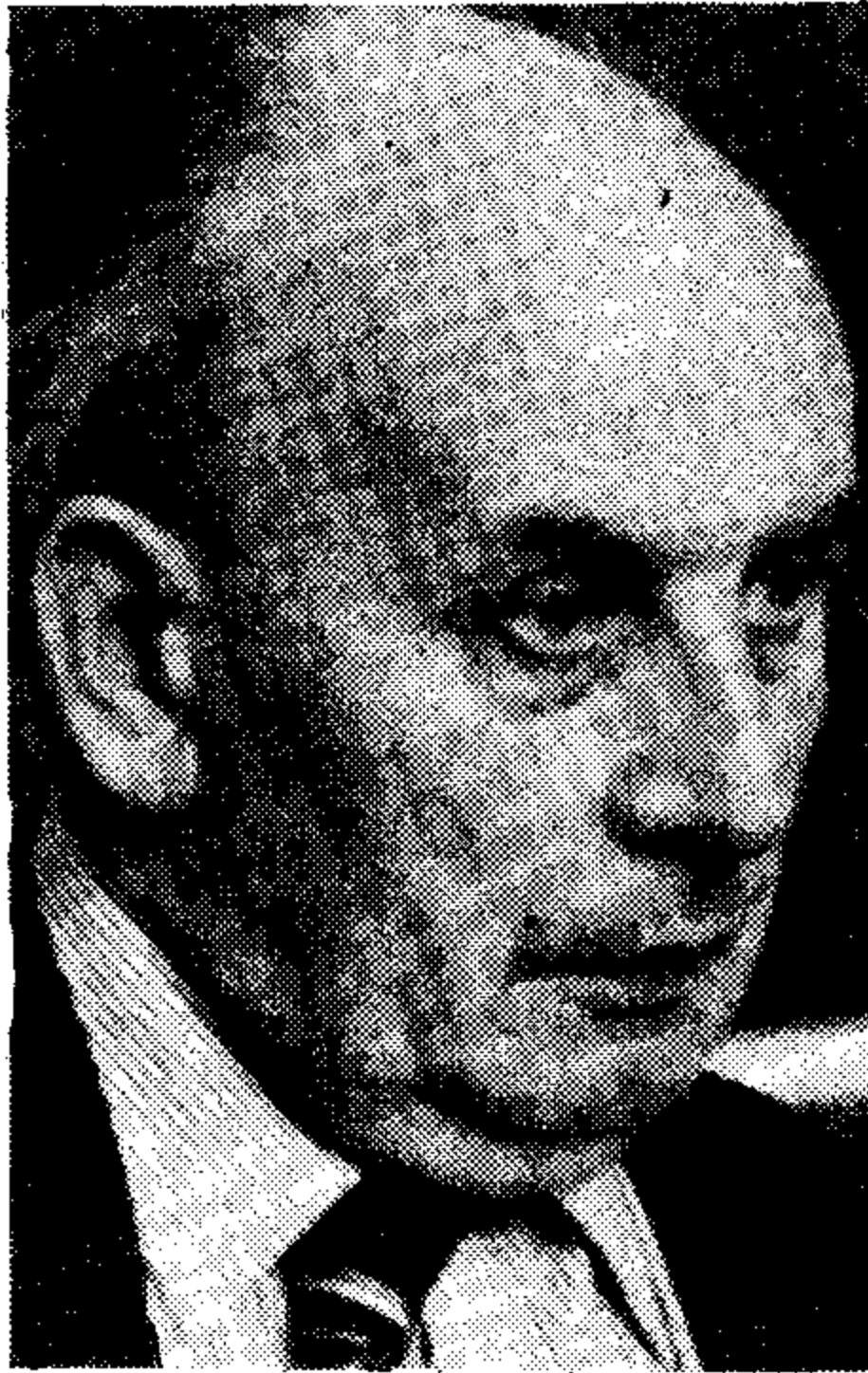
The North West's £80 demand and an amendment for £90 from the Midlands offer an opportunity to expose the miserable cowardly lack of fight shown by the NEC and Bill Keys.

As a leading member of the TUC General Council, Keys was also shamefully involved in the Lever Inquiry's sell out of the steel workers' 14-week strike in defence of jobs and living standards.

A resolution from the Oxford Branch calls for a sliding scale of wages to keep up with the high rate of inflation.

It calls for price rises to be monitored by the establishment of a committee representative of the SOGAT membership, with no reliance on the often distorted official price index.

But the motion has been



Keys

deliberately separated from the main motions on wages at number 335 on the agenda—and is to be found sandwiched between items of such immense importance as the Derby Draw and a nationalist complaint at the "dumping" of Russian Xmas cards on the British market!

The fight for the Oxford motion as union policy on wages must be a part of the fight to develop an active policy of struggle to defend jobs and living standards against the Tory attack.

## IPC FIGHT ON

NUJ members on IPC magazines are still suspended following a narrow majority vote for rejecting a deal which would have given them three quarters of the back pay in dispute.

The original claim for a bigger wage rise has become submerged in a dispute over whether the editors and journalists should be paid for the time they have officially been suspended.

IPC—which attacked the union after minimal action had been taken—is losing millions of pounds and stands to face disruptive action at Mirror Newspapers.

The chapels had continued going into work, though in many offices, phones, heating and post had been cut off.

They have made their main demand full back pay for the length of the suspension, which they refused to recognise. Members have not picketed or, until now, called for any supporting action.

A first offer of half the back pay plus an 18.5% rise was rejected and the company then offered three quarters of the back pay with negotiations over the rest once members had returned to work.

This was rejected by a narrow majority in chapel votes. The gap between the management offer on pay and the original claim is now very small.

But the chapels cannot afford to let a major dispute leave them worse off in the long run.

They should be demanding support from other magazine NUI members and strike action in Mirror Newspapers, not just on the back pay, but on their full claim.

# Llanwern jobs sold in ISTC deal

Following the agreement to 5,000 sackings at Port Talbot, leaders of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation have agreed to the axing of 3,600 jobs at the British Steel Corporation's Llanwern works.

The latest cutback will slash the workforce to just over 4,800 and cut production in half.

This squalid deal is part of a package of similar redundancy schemes being negotiated by ISTC leaders in the breathing space created by the postponement of their union conference. When the delegates eventual-

# Chix women reject sell-out

A heavy blow has been struck at the GMWU bureaucracy's attempt to force through a sell-out deal of the 8-month long union recognition strike at the Chix bubblegum factory in Slough.

A mass meeting of the remaining strikers last week threw out a 'compromise' settlement negotiated by union full-time official McMullen which would have left a majority of the sacked workers on the dole and did not even give a starting date for the 19 who had been "reinstated".

In a struggle where up till now the voice of the Asian women involved has been effectively drowned by the smooth talking McMullen and other GMWU bureaucrats, (who had the nerve to hail their agreement as a 'victory' at the union's conference a fortnight ago before the strikers had even had a chance to consider it), this decision to fight for full reinstatement must be followed up

by the stepping up of practical support from within the GMWU and other unions.

Too often in the past in similar strikes the union leaders' stranglehold has led to defeats, as with the Grunwick and Garners strikes—which also involved mainly immigrant workers.

The leadership's ploy in Chix has clearly been to organise only minimum assistance and let time and demoralisation create conditions for them to ditch the strikers' demands.

The picket line at the Slough factory is now back on and must be strengthened.

The ground lost by the bureaucracy's capitulation, which has allowed the employer to stockpile heavily depleted supplies, must be made up by renewed blacking of the plant and its supplying firms.

GMWU leader Basnett has been forced into threatening strikes in support of the Isle of Grain lagers. Similar demands should be made to assist this other crucial battle for basic union rights.

# NURSES

Continued from page 1

"might not be ruled out". And the pressure has even forced the RCN to contemplate changing its constitution to permit action short of strikes.

But the RCN—which still comprises a majority of organised nurses—has never pretended to be a trade union. As a "professional" body it has always been a tool of management, helping in practice to keep wages at rock bottom.

In the struggle for a living wage against the attacks of the Thatcher government and even in the struggle to defend their "profession" and the Health Service itself against the cuts, nurses need the strength of the labour movement and a genuine trade union.

Only if a fight—including strike action—is waged now can nurses' pay be maintained on a level which can prevent the further decline in staff and decay of the NHS.

Nurses must take the message—break from the RCN! Join a union and fight for action!

\*Stop the cuts! No to cash limits!

\*For a sliding scale of public service spending to keep pace with inflation.

\*Defend wages against inflation—for cost of living clauses in all agreements!

\*Bring down the Tories!



EIS rally in Glasgow

# EIS leaders back down on strikes

Despite a growing determination among Scottish teachers to press on with their struggle for an 18.6% wage claim, the leadership of the EIS has decided to "deescalate" the strikes in their third week.

This week there is to be only one day of strike action—on Tuesday.

In justification of this position, the Executive feebly maintains that strike action should be suspended during the negotiations on Wednesday and during the union's AGM at Stirling on Thursday.

Alan Armstrong, leading figure in the Rank and File teachers organisation has described this as the biggest betrayal in the history of the EIS—and it would be difficult to argue with that conclusion.

In the face of an obdurate management, the executive already signalled the retreat last week by ordering back to work the teachers at Braidhurst, the most militant school in Lanarkshire, which had gained support in the workers' movement locally.

The Executive are mortally afraid of the growing militancy and political awareness in the union ranks. Strike committees have sprung up everywhere and links have been established with the labour movement.

In the Springburn area of Glasgow last Thursday a meeting of over 50 parents, teachers and local trade unionists pledged support for the struggle.

This kind of momentum must not be lost. There must be the most determined pressure upon the Executive in the course of the AGM to press forward with the struggle right on into the summer holidays and beyond into the new session in August.

At the same time the fight must be taken up in the Labour Party to demand that the regional councillors especially those in Strathclyde agree to the teachers' demands.

## TROTSKYIST INTERNATIONAL LIAISON COMMITTEE

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\*THE FIGHT FOR A TROTSKYIST YOUTH MOVEMENT

\*RECONSTRUCT THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Evening meetings on additional topics, films and social events.

The school will be attended by delegations from the organisations affiliated to the TILC and members of the WSL. A special invitation is being extended to supporters of the WSL to take part in the discussion and learn more about the WSL and the TILC.

Details are available from any WSL branch or from: WSL, BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX.

Cost: £12 including accommodation for the eight days. A cheap meal will be provided at lunch time and there will be a pooled fare arrangement. Crèche facilities.

# SOCIALIST PRESS



Ted Heslin lobbying Judith Hart outside the NEC meeting

## Labour NEC votes to reinstate Ted Heslin

# KINNOCK CALLS FOR PURGE OF SOCIALISTS

The Labour Party's National Executive has voted to uphold the appeal against expulsion lodged by *Socialist Press* supporter Ted Heslin.

Heslin was expelled by the Oxford CLP in January 1979 for selling copies of *Socialist Press*.

### No secret

The right wingers who have pressed the expulsion have never made any secret of the fact that this was an attempt to crush Heslin's outspoken political fight for the removal of the Callaghan-Healey leadership and their supporters, and for a programme of socialist policies to meet the crisis.

But it has become increasingly clear that it is not only the right wing who feel uneasy at such policies being taken up within the Party.

And last week Heslin and others who lobbied the NEC meeting heard leading Tribune 'left' and shadow cabinet member Neil Kinnock spell out his reasons for wanting Heslin expelled.

Kinnock—one of the few NEC members to declare where he stands on the issue—revealed that he had always voted in favour of Heslin's expulsion.

In his view it was not sufficient simply to expel members of organisations who stood candidates against the Labour



Kinnock

Party in elections: the net had to be thrown wider.

The constitution should be altered to spell out who qualifies for membership and who does not.

Then expulsions could be carried out on purely political grounds—starting with *Socialist Press* supporters, but maybe even including *Militant* supporters as well!

### Heffer

Kinnock claimed that Eric Heffer shared his view that *Socialist Press* supporters should be expelled.

Needless to say Kinnock's readiness to draw lines which would exclude principled social-

ists from the Labour Party does not extend to a readiness to fight for the removal of Callaghan-Healey, nor to fight for the expulsion of the crypto-Tory right wing.

Indeed the NEC vote to uphold Heslin's appeal was accompanied by the upholding

of an appeal lodged by Roger Fox and Stephen Haseler of the reactionary Social Democratic Alliance—an organisation of crypto-Tories which urged its supporters not to vote for left wing Labour candidates in the last election, and has threatened to stand its own candidates in the next.

This twin reprieve was the outcome of a recommendation from the NEC's organisation sub-committee. Only Judith Hart opposed this attempt to equate the right wing with socialists, calling for the sub-committee report to be referred back, since she wanted Haseler and Fox expelled. Her proposal was defeated 13-5.

But the issue is far from resolved.

Kensington GMC has already informed the NEC that they have no intention of taking Haseler and Fox back into membership.

And the Hornsey GMC is in the throes of expelling SDA secretary Douglas Eden—and seem likely to take a similar stand should his appeal be similarly upheld.

But it is less clear what position will be taken by the Oxford GC in the Heslin case.

Although the GC voted 43-28 retrospectively to endorse the witch-hunting antics of chairman Bill Conboy—who wrote an unconstitutional letter on Heslin to the NEC—it is doubtful if all 43 right wingers would wish to defy an NEC instruction and thereby risk disaffiliation.

Meanwhile as Kinnock has stated and as the unity of 'left' and right at the weekend's Special Conference showed, Labour activists fighting for socialist policies must now combat not only the right wing leadership but an increasingly embarrassed and bankrupt body of Tribune 'lefts', who regard Trotskyists as a major threat to their carefully cultivated public image.

\*Kick out the Callaghan/Healey leadership!

\*Kick out Labour's crypto-Tories!

\*Reinstate Ted Heslin!

\*Fight for socialist policies!

## Korean army mops up

Students and workers involved in the recent armed uprising in Kwangju against the South Korean military dictatorship have been given until Saturday to surrender—or face court-martial if they are caught.

Some 200 or so are thought to have taken refuge in the countryside as the massive armed forces of General Chon Too-Hwan moved in to recapture the rebel city in which up to 200,000 armed workers and students had previously driven out police and army units.

In the neighbouring country areas the fugitives are likely to find sympathetic villagers: and in other towns including Chongju and the port of Mokpo demonstrations have continued in defiance of Chon's martial law clampdown—clear evidence that matters are far from resolved in Korea.

The country's vast and savagely exploited working class spurred on by unemployment and spiralling inflation, has been awakened in the recent struggles: and Chon's heavy-handed imposition of undisciplined military rule is more likely to entrench than eliminate political opposition.

But an unacknowledged prop for General Chon will remain the North Korean Stalinist regime, which throughout the recent struggles refused to give any assistance to the workers fighting the puppet government in the South.

As ever, the Stalinist bureaucracy of Kim Il Sung fears above all the revolutionary movement of Korean workers. It prefers to sit back and watch the brute repression of the South Korean military machine at work across the 38th parallel.



## SPG license to kill MURDER BY 'MISADVENTURE'!

The verdict of death by misadventure on Blair Peach, who was murdered by the police, should come as no surprise.

The inquest was intended from the start to be a vindication of the police and a condemnation of the anti-fascists who took to the streets of Southall against the National Front.

It was presided over by the West London Coroner, Dr. John Burton, who used his lengthy summing up to give the state's view of why police violence is justified.

As reported in *Socialist Press* last week, he said that nobody left on the streets of Southall that day could be regarded as innocent and that so long as police had a 'reasonable belief' that anyone he hit could have been a rioter, then they were cleared from all responsibility for death or injury.

When the question is employers' rights, or the rights of the forces of the state, all bourgeois courts are committed in advance.

It is for this reason that *Socialist Press* and the Workers Socialist League called from the beginning for a workers' inquiry into the death of Blair Peach.

We do not place any illusions or faith in the courts of the ruling class when what is in question is the machinery for upholding class rule.

That is not to say that the decision to press for an inquest with a jury was wrong. The inquest produced statements from the police that would never have been made to a workers' inquiry. (The police, of course, boycotted the inquiry called by the Southall Defence Campaign).

The inquest has shown beyond doubt that the police murdered Blair Peach, regardless of the verdict.

What was wrong was to imbue the inquest itself with any degree of credibility, and to fail to warn in advance that the inquest was an arm of the state and would defend it.

And a public inquiry would only repeat the inquest! In the unlikely event of one being conceded it would be used by

the state (as were the public inquiries into the murder of Kevin Gately and the Grunwick dispute) to defend the forces of the state and attack the left.

We call for the establishment of a workers' inquiry in order to counter-pose the labour movement to the state, and show the limits of 'left' Labourites and Stalinists in the labour movement.

It means placing demands on the likes of Jack Dromey, who is now conspicuous by his silence on the murder.

It means fighting for the inquiry results to be taken into the organisations of the working class and demanding that the unions, the Labour Party and the TUC themselves reach a verdict that the police murdered Blair Peach.

It means translating the demand for the disbanding of the SPG away from its liberal content of condemning one group of police "out of control" into a demand for the disbanding of the whole police force and into an attack on the state itself.

# FUND

Since our urgent appeal for money last week we have had a good response on the Special Fund with the total now nudging up towards the £2,000 mark at £1970.45. However, the news on the May Monthly Fund was not so good, with the fund closing at £594.90, well below our target of £750.

Every penny of that £750 is accounted for in terms of our spending so a shortfall of over £150 in a single month can only be a grave cause for concern.

We cannot allow this situation to continue any longer. We really must raise the full fund target every month.

It's quite a challenge and to meet it we need the help of our readers and supporters.

So, send us a financial donation to our funds and help us ensure that the political work of the WSL is not hampered by a shortage of money.

Our address is:

Socialist Press Fund, BM Box 5277  
London WC1V 6XX