



Reagan takes the reins A THATCHER IN THE WHITE HOUSE!



"What's wrong with bankruptcy?" was Ronald Reagan's first response to news that the Carter government had bailed out the flagging Chrysler Corporation at huge expense last year.

Reagan subsequently toned down his public position on Chrysler.

But the new President has ridden to office on a platform of policies strikingly similar to the monetarist theories which have led the Thatcher government to lay waste whole areas of British industry, driving unemployment over the 2½ million mark.

When Thatcher travels to the USA to congratulate Reagan on his election victory over a discredited and disastrous Jimmy Carter, she will hail the success of a campaign based on pledges of:

- *three successive annual cuts of 10% in Federal income tax;
- *tax concessions to industry and a wholesale scrapping of health, safety and environmental regulations;
- *a major increase in military spending;
- *a cut in public and social service spending;
- *lowering the minimum wage to persuade employers to hire unemployed youth at rock bottom rates.

Virtually all of these policies have in one way or another been implemented by Thatcher in Britain—with catastrophic results for the working class.

If Reagan attempts a similar package of policies in a US economy already teetering on the edge of recession, it seems certain that he will push it decisively over the edge as well.

Breathing space

The first casualty of his monetarist schemas could be the Chrysler Corporation, now clinging onto life only by the skin of its teeth.

A \$400 million government-backed loan last week offered the firm a breathing space before imposing a shutdown.

But the terms agreed to by Chrysler's bankers—in which

\$1,068 million of debts was wiped out in exchange for a mere \$150 million in cash and \$500 million in worthless shares—make it clear there will be no more bank loans for a corporation that is regarded as already bankrupt.

The most generous concession was made by the United Auto Workers' union bureaucracy, who handed over a 2-year wage freeze on behalf of their 180,000 members in Chrysler—worth a staggering \$783 million.

But the dying firm still owes \$1.2 billion to the government—on which it is legally bound to pay interest, and which it must repay in two years' time: it owes a further \$1.1 billion around the world; and it lost a cool \$1.8 billion last year.

For Reagan to bail out this sinking ship would amount to a major and embarrassing retreat from his declared policy: but for him to allow Chrysler to go under would immediately add another 500,000 to the unemployment queues of the USA.

Spending cuts

Whatever he decides the US economy as a whole will certainly feel the impact of the massive spending cuts Reagan will need to impose to finance his planned tax cuts.

This in turn will further add to the downturn in the world economy.

But the main threat posed before the working masses of the world centres on Reagan's commitment to massively increased military spending.

After the traumatic overthrow of US-backed dictatorships in Iran and Nicaragua, Reagan, along with top military chiefs and sections of the US capitalist class, is determined to use force if necessary to prevent further such setbacks for imperialist control.

He has proposed the stationing of US troops in the Sinai desert to help prop up both the Zionist state of Israel and Sadat's puppet regime in Egypt, and a "get tough" policy against revolutionary struggles in the Caribbean.

An early test of this will be



Unemployed queue for benefits in Michigan



New Secretary of State General Haig (right)

his attitude towards open US intervention in El Salvador (see back page).

His military policy will build on the foundations of Carter's huge war budgets in the last two years. Carter's outgoing budget provides for an unprecedented peacetime allocation of \$200 billion—which Reagan is committed to increase.

Carter's plan includes:

- *Increased pay for the armed forces.
- *More cash for new strategic

nuclear weapons.

- *Improved sea and airlift capacity for use in Europe and elsewhere.

- *More cash towards the planned Rapid Deployment Force.

This represents a major increase in an already lethal arsenal of nuclear and conventional forces deployed against the workers of the world.

In this respect, Reagan is of course ten times more dangerous than Thatcher on an

international level.

Both in theory remain in office as a menace to humanity until 1984: only mass mobilisation of the workers' movement can stop them.

While the main obstacle to such a mobilisation in Britain remains the Labour and trade union bureaucracy in the USA the political task of organising and mobilising the working class

starts from a point where there is not even a mass workers' party in existence.

The fight for the political independence of the American working class, the building of a US Labour Party and the establishment of a programme for mass struggle for socialism in the USA are the tasks ahead for Marxists in the fight to stop Reagan.

Capitalist crisis behind

W. African 'anarchy'

The capitalist media have described the political events that have occurred in West Africa recently as a mindless and random procession of coups, civil wars, mass murders and mass starvations.

The last period has seen the overthrow of the regimes in the Central African Republic, Liberia, and Upper Volta; the ousting of Cabral from the government of Guinea Bissau, the war of the Sahroui people led by the Polisario Front against Moroccan occupation; and the Libyan invasion of Chad followed by a massive military response into the area by France.

But the prevailing anarchy which the capitalists portray with racist insinuation as the product of backward peoples, is in fact the anarchy born out of decaying capitalism and its neo-colonial system.

These political events occur out of the economic anarchy which drives the oppressed masses into struggle against puppet governments and weak neo-colonial states.

Imperialism during the colonial period chained the productive capacity of West Africa to the profiteering and plundering of monopoly capital, and enslaved the masses to a system of cash crop and mineral production geared to profit and not the workers needs.

This system is incapable of

providing sufficient for the workers and peasants to prevent famine and endemic disease.

Having created the mechanism with which to drain the wealth from West Africa, the colonialists were to make a strategic retreat when confronted by the growth of the anti-colonial struggle.

Besides leaving the repressive apparatus of the state to their agents, the colonial masters took the precaution of subdividing the area into a

large number of tiny states in order to facilitate political control for their agents and also to further ensure the continued dependence of their agents upon imperialist loans and investment.

In this situation of turmoil and anarchy, opportunities now exist for adventurists like Gaddafi to exploit for their own ends.

Moreover because the imperialist nations deliberately weakened the neo-colonial regimes in

the past to maintain their dependence they are now being inexorably forced to make more and more open military interventions to prop up these regimes under conditions considerably less favourable than twenty years ago.

The current clash of interests between the French imperialists and Colonel Gaddafi of Libya has been imposed on the civil war in Chad that has raged for many years.

Though the international imperialist press squeals with indignation at Gaddafi for climbing into their backyard, it should not be presumed that Gaddafi's motives are pure.

He is cynically using the struggles of Arab and African workers to prop up the unstable basis of his own regime, by using his apparent confrontations with imperialism to bolster his image, and as a pretext to crack down on internal opposition.

His is a dangerous game of disguising his dependence on imperialism with anti-imperialist rhetoric, and one that is incapable of advancing the mass anti-imperialist struggle one step.

Yet while Gaddafi has no answer for the West African masses, there is no way forward within the existing system.

Based on deformed relations of production and totally dominated by imperialism, capitalism in West Africa is unable to grant even the most elementary democratic or material demands with the result that even partial struggles challenge capitalist profitability.

Only the independent mobilisation of the working class in their own organisations and around their own class interests

is capable of giving direction and leadership to all the oppressed layers in West Africa, and confronting the conscious imperialist strategy of national division by which some of the states serve simply as labour reservoirs.

The workers of West Africa are already effectively united by the system of migrant labour and the international nature of capitalist production; the task remains to give political form to this internationalisation by uniting with their own class brothers and sisters around their common interests.

In particular the French working class must be mobilised to combat Giscard's military offensive against the oppressed masses of West Africa, and against Gaddafi's regime.

*French troops out of Africa!

*Imperialist hands off Libya!

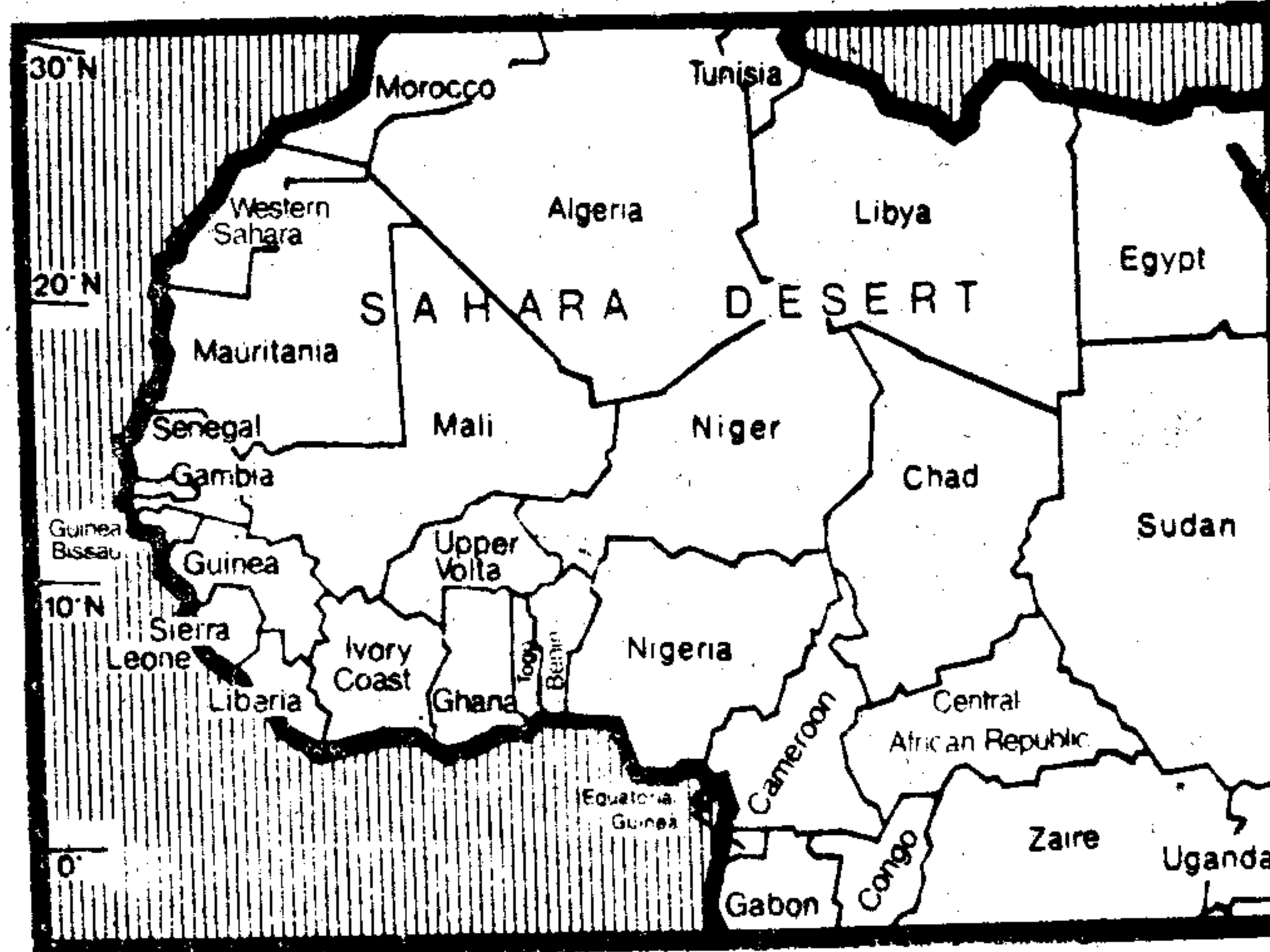
*For a workers and peasants government in Chad!

*Build a revolutionary leadership for the workers of West Africa!

*For a socialist united states of Western Africa!

NEXT WEEK

Jim Benson examines the background to the civil war in Chad.



Gaddafi

TURKISH JUNTA SEEKS CASH

"Having Turkey as an ally is an expensive process." This cry of anguish from the Financial Times reflects the problems facing imperialism in its attempts to prop up the shattered Turkish economy.

Since the New Year the Turkish military junta has been seeking to reschedule over \$3 billion of loans secured during 1979 from imperialist central banks, as well as seeking fresh funds from the private capital markets.

For there has been a marked reluctance on the part of the private market to risk any capital in Turkey.

The imperialist governments, principally the US and West Germany, have instructed their central banks to lend to Turkey not because of any expected return on the money advanced, but because of Turkey's strategic position on the Eastern flank of NATO.

Turkey's position is central to imperialist strategy in connection with both the Middle East and the USSR.

But a simple merchant

banker cannot entertain such grandiose ideas. The iron laws of profit and loss must determine investment decisions, and the prospects in Turkey for capital are not yet certain.

The military junta are here caught in a dilemma. For in trying to bring about the conditions for profitable foreign investment, they have to resort to measures which do away with the minimum norms of bourgeois democracy.

In the nine months before the coup 7.8 million days were lost in strikes—over six times the number for any previous year, and mostly in the engineering sector.

This activity of the working class, combined with inflation and mass unemployment made Turkey a highly unfavourable country to invest in.

The generals have posed as arbitrators between the workers and capitalists, but inevitably they have come down on the side whose interests they are there to protect—the capitalists.

And more and more it will be clear that it is not Turkish capitalists they will obey but imperialism itself.

For while General Evren and

his colleagues present their balancing act as a continuation of the tradition of Mustapha Kemal, that is of relative independence, their open subservience to imperialist interests cuts across this ideology.

It is precisely for pointing this out that the editors of Cumhuriyet, a Turkish daily paper, were detained.

Similarly, the Governor of the Turkish central bank, Ismail Aydinoglu, was dismissed for expressing dissent with the monetarist policies of the junta.

These policies are the continuation of the economic package that Demirel agreed with the IMF.

Aydnoglu, who was appointed by former RPP Prime Minister Ecevit, has been replaced by a banker more in tune with the economic policy instituted by the Demirel government.

These policies include opening the way for foreign investment. A new Foreign Investment Promotion Department under the personal supervision of the Prime Minister now processes in ten days applications that used to take seven years!

Nevertheless Deputy Prime Minister Turgut Ozal, in his meeting with private bankers in London, did not get an immediately favourable reply.

And when he travelled on to Bonn immediately afterwards his claim to further aid from central banks irritated the West German government.

This government, aware of both the 'human rights' offensive against the USSR and of the million Turks in West Germany, cannot be seen to rush too eagerly to the aid of military dictatorships.

To overcome these legal niceties, General Evren has announced the reassembly of Parliament in the Autumn. However, the old 'discredited' politicians will be excluded!

In trying to achieve the General's dream of politics without politicians, the junta will hope to create a body which both satisfies the sensitivity of imperialism to such an overtly repressive regime within NATO's 'free world' and also allows some room for disagreements within the Turkish bourgeoisie.

What the Bonapartist junta

must ensure is that this Parliament operates within strict limits, those limits being imposed by the pressing need to eliminate the independence of the Turkish working class.

It is this task, the defeat of the Turkish working class, that still faces the Generals. For the moment the ruling class in Turkey has chosen the military to carry out the task, repressing the fascists of the Nationalist Action Party, and seeking to take over the NAP's support.

But should the attempts of the junta to discipline the working class by smashing the independent unions fail, then the fascists remain an organisation to be used as a last resort.

Whereas Turkey, the fascist leader, remains on trial, some of the second line leaders of the NAP have been freed.

This contrasts with the continued detention of over 2,000 leaders of the independent trade union organisation DISK. Should these unionists be put on trial a major confrontation between the junta and the working class could arise.

In these conditions the need for solidarity from the British working class is clear. For this

purpose the Turkey Solidarity Campaign was founded.

The TSC was active before the coup, aware of the fascist threat, and the inevitability of military intervention, and today it is trying to organise effective action in solidarity with the working class in Turkey, faced as it is with Thatcherite policies administered by military dictatorship.

All those who can should support the rally of the TSC to be held at the Conway Hall, London, on January 29.

Included among the speakers will be a member of the executive of the NUJ, a speaker from the CPGB, from the Association of Kurdish Students Abroad, and from the Committee for the Defence of Democratic Rights in Turkey.

For more details of the activities and programme of the Turkey Solidarity Campaign write to TSC, BM Box 5965, London WC1N 3XX.

War in El Salvador

FROM BACK PAGE

airpower of the junta for a period.

It is precisely this sector that the imperialists are quickly reinforcing—for they remember the extraordinary effectiveness of Somoza's planes in pinning down the FLSN in indiscriminate bombing which produced such horrific carnage in Nicaragua.

It was apparent over the weekend that the army, the barbarous Policia de Hacienda and Guardia Nacional, as well as some 1,000 ex-members of Somoza's National Guard were able to regain certain territory and open vital roads: but this does not indicate a massive counter-attack so much as tactical withdrawal by the guerrillas, anxious not to over-extend their forces simply for the defence of territory.

Moreover, the initial offensive clearly had a deep-seated impact on the divided and insecure military apparatus.

Several units mutinied and the 'liberal' wing under Colonel Majano may yet swing the balance by throwing in his lot with the FMLN.

While it succeeded in stopping all public transport, the general strike called to coincide with the offensive did not close down all production.

This was largely due to the fact that, as in August, the military had taken pre-emptive action in the cities.

San Salvador remains under the control of the dictatorship but large sectors are either deserted or have effectively been turned into an armed camp. It is evident that the urban insurrection has yet to take place as we go to press.

The balance of military forces is precarious: a fact the Pentagon clearly appreciates as it begins to ferry in material to buoy up the bankrupt junta of ultra-rightist colonels and self-serving Christian Democrat

demagogues.

There is now no semblance of the 'reformist' regime established in the coup of October 1979; last week's readjustment saw the appointment to commanding positions of officers who provided the mainstay of the previous Romero dictatorship and presided over the genocide which cost 10,000 lives in 1980. This war will be extraordinarily cruel.

Yet neither the FMLN nor the FDR are Marxist-Leninist, as Socialist Press has pointed out at great length.

FDR leader Guillermo Ungo, personal buddy of Brandt and Callaghan, stated last week 'this will not be a socialist government... but democratic, nationalist and anti-oligarchic.'

It is not for nothing that the FDR enjoys the support not only of the Second International, Mexico and West Germany but also from a widely-publicised dissent docu-

ment emanating from a perceptive group of CIA-Department of State and National Security Council personnel.

The grave international consequences of the Salvadorean civil war are clear.

In Guatemala, a series of carefully-timed guerrilla raids have played a critical role in diverting the dictatorship's troops from the build-up on the Salvadorean border.

And on a wider level, Isvestia has published an early condemnation of the US.

The spectre of another Vietnam will haunt Reagan from his first day in office: El Salvador has become a bloody microcosm of the global imperialist crisis.

It is for this reason that the international campaign against the rapidly escalating US military intervention and for the overthrow of the dictatorship must be strengthened.



Scene from the fighting

THE REAL LESSONS OF THE 1930s

First of an occasional series by
Colin Morrow.

The slogan "No Return to the 30s" has gained general, popular currency throughout the labour movement in the past few years.

It came as an immediate response to the break up of the post-war 'boom'—those years when the illusion of a steady expansion of capitalism, full employment and rising living standards seemed to some to throw into question the Marxist analysis of capitalism as a bankrupt, crisis-ridden system.

Now, with the unquestioned re-emergence of this underlying tendency to crisis and the rapid development of conditions of world-wide slump, it is natural for the labour movement to look back to the crisis which wracked pre-war capitalism.

Profitability

As unemployment rises, factories, shipyards, mills and mines close, and the capitalist class moves again to bolster profitability by driving up exploitation in order to attempt to make the working class pay for the crisis of their anarchic capitalist system, so the trade union and Labour leaders troop out, one by one, to lament the horrors of the 'great depression'.

Even the right wing Labourites can sing this song. So, at Blackpool, Jim Callaghan [who had launched the attack on jobs, wages and services] duly rose, straight faced, to announce in his sternest voice, "This movement will not tolerate a return to the conditions of the 1930s."

But what these labour movement wisecracks consistently fail to point out—and indeed cannot point out—is that what still has to be abandoned, let alone not returned to, is the politics of the 1930s!

It was precisely the politics of the then trade union and Labour leaders which led to the defeat of the General Strike.

These same politics led to the retreat before the employers' offensive in the reactionary Monde-Turner talks of 1927.



Stalin (left) with Bukharin, Kamenev and Zinoviev

The same politics led to the splitting of the Labour Party in 1931 when MacDonald put defence of capitalism before the interests of the working class.

And it was these retreats and betrayals that paved the way for the defeats and misery of the 1930s and the Second World War.

How could the present reformist leaders be expected to resolve this political problem when the root of the problem is to build a leadership to combat their political ideas?

Their politics of seeking gradual reforms within the system refuse to recognise the need to begin at all times from the independent economic and political interests of the working class.

They seek through electoralism and other diversions to avoid mobilising workers to challenge for state power.

Such leaders must always find themselves lining up with the ruling bourgeois class against the working class.

In practice the politics of reformism, then and now, are the politics of defeat, flow from and draw their parasitic strength from those defeats.

Socialist Press has, on many occasions, drawn on the lessons from this period for workers in terms of the counter-revolutionary, anti-working class role of reformism.

But equally important to an understanding of this period are the lessons to be learned about the degeneration of the Third [Communist] International under Joseph Stalin and the counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism in the crisis of the 1930s.

This is of particular importance because the Comintern, resting on the credentials earned

by Lenin and the Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution, still presented itself in the 1930s as a revolutionary alternative to reformist social democracy.

But under Stalin's leadership it had become, in reality, a major factor in the preparation of the defeats suffered by the working class on a world-wide scale from the mid-1970s onwards.

Nationalist 'theory'

In Germany, in Spain and throughout Europe the working class was to pay bitterly for the counter-revolutionary policies of Stalinism.

It is, therefore, to the nature of the betrayals carried out by the Comintern that this article will address itself.

The Comintern under Stalin began not from the actual development and requirement of the class struggle on an international scale.

Nor did it start from the struggle to break the isolation of the Soviet Union through the extension of the revolution to advanced capitalist countries.

Rather it began its analysis from Stalin's conception of building "Socialism in one Country".

This nationalist 'theory' which is central to Stalinism, was first introduced in 1924. It became official Soviet policy in 1926 as Stalin began his drive to remove oppositionists from the Soviet Communist Party.

Trotsky, the leader of the Left Opposition, was to constantly point to the close inter-relation which existed between Stalin's internal requirements and policies in Russia and those carried out by the International.

Opportunist

In 1925-28, for instance, there was a marked rightward turn by the Comintern. It directed the Communist Party in Britain towards an opportunist relationship with Labour and TUC bureaucrats in the Anglo-Russian Committee.

And in China the Communist Party was subordinated to the bourgeois nationalist Kuo Min Tang of Chiang Kai Shek.

In each case the results were disastrous—the effective muzzling of the British CP in the TUC sell-out of the 1926 General Strike, and a wholesale slaughter of Chinese Com-

munist by Chiang in 1926-7.

The whole turn towards opportunist deals was simply an extension of Stalin's domestic policy. Within the Soviet Union he and the new Kremlin bureaucracy had sought to develop an alliance with the rich peasantry (Kulaks) and other conservative forces.

But in 1928 the Kulaks threatened to withhold food supplies and even began to challenge the nationalised economy within the USSR, Stalin was forced into panic measures—brutal forced collectivisation of Kulak land imposed at gunpoint under the slogan "liquidate the Kulaks as a class."

All of a sudden, five-year plans for the crash development of industry were drawn up. This lurch in domestic policy also found its reflection in the international orientation of the CPSU and the Comintern—the ultra-leftist policy of "Third Period" Stalinism.

According to Stalin's new 'theory' post war capitalism had passed through three periods.

The first period had been one of capitalist crisis and revolutionary upsurge, 1917-1924.

The second period had been one of capitalist stability (1925-1928); but this had now been succeeded by the "third period"—the period of crises and imminent proletarian revolution.

'Twin' of fascism

As an element of this assessment of the world situation, moreover, the social democrats, who had been uncritically wooed in the period from 1925-27 were suddenly written out of the workers movement entirely and cast in the role of a 'twin' to fascism.

Thus, Robin Palme-Dutt, the British CP theoretician could announce:

"This is the lesson of the episode of 'Social Democracy' (correctly, Social Imperialism, and later Social Fascism) in working class history, an episode which is beginning to draw to its close, as the workers increasingly awaken from reformist illusions, through the experience of fascism."

As Trotsky pointed out continuously at this time, the whole of Stalin's analysis was based on a completely erroneous understanding of the movement of the class struggle.

As early as 1930 Trotsky was to write in "The Turn of the Communist International and Germany":

"The ninth plenum of the ECCI, the Sixth Congress and particularly the tenth plenum, adopted a course towards an abrupt and direct revolutionary rise (the third period) which was absolutely excluded at the time by the objective situation existing after the great defeats in Britain and China, the weakening of the Communist Parties throughout the world, and particularly under the commercial and industrial boom, which embraced a series of the most important capitalist countries. The tactical turn in the Communist International begun in February 1928 was therefore directly contrary to the actual turn of the historic road."

This of course was because the bureaucracy still attempting to consolidate its political control over the world's first workers' state was itself acting from a standpoint directly contrary to the interests of the Soviet and international working class.

Next week's article will examine how this rendered the Stalinists incapable of offering a lead to the German proletariat in the face of the fascist menace.

Unionise the YOPs!

£23.50 per week (minus travel), no canteen facilities, fines for 'misbehaviour' and a wage increase frozen by the government.

These are just some of the 'perks' of the so-called 'Youth Opportunities' Programmes (YOPs), organised and escalated by this government to cut down unemployment figures.

Even this argument, whispered by some unions, is sour. The real reason for the scheme and its escalation is the exploitation of working class youth on the dole, in a situation deliberately created by the Tories—600,000 youth unemployed.

The roots of the YOPs scheme doesn't stop there, though. You may well say, looking at these and many more conditions, that what they need is a union.

Well, let's look back to 1979. The TUC (yes! the TUC!) produced a pamphlet entitled 'Could you become a steward for the young?'

Did this mean that they wanted stewards to go and organise youth against this exploitation?

No, what the TUC were actually doing was asking existing trade union members to supervise the running of the slave labour YOPs factories and schemes.

The TUC still claims to have some say in these schemes, and it claims to be against "the programme being used by unscrupulous sponsors."

Well if the TUC opened its eyes they would find lots of these 'unscrupulous sponsors', not unlike the one in Leicester who fines workers £2-£20 for

'offences' such as 'looking at supervisors', or 'wanton destruction of machinery'.

In the last 1½ years he has cut down his wages bill by more than three-quarters. The problem for the TUC is that the workers (as usual) are way ahead of them.

In Leicester they have organised into the TGWU against the lousy pay and conditions.

In Knowsley they have organised into the local GMWU and are holding a one-day protest strike with wide labour movement support.

The time has come to realise that the YOPs schemes are nothing more than the super-exploitation of working class youth.

All of the YOPs schemes have to be unionised and given a lead in fighting the government. It is essential that these isolated sections of workers are brought into the fight to bring down the Tory government.

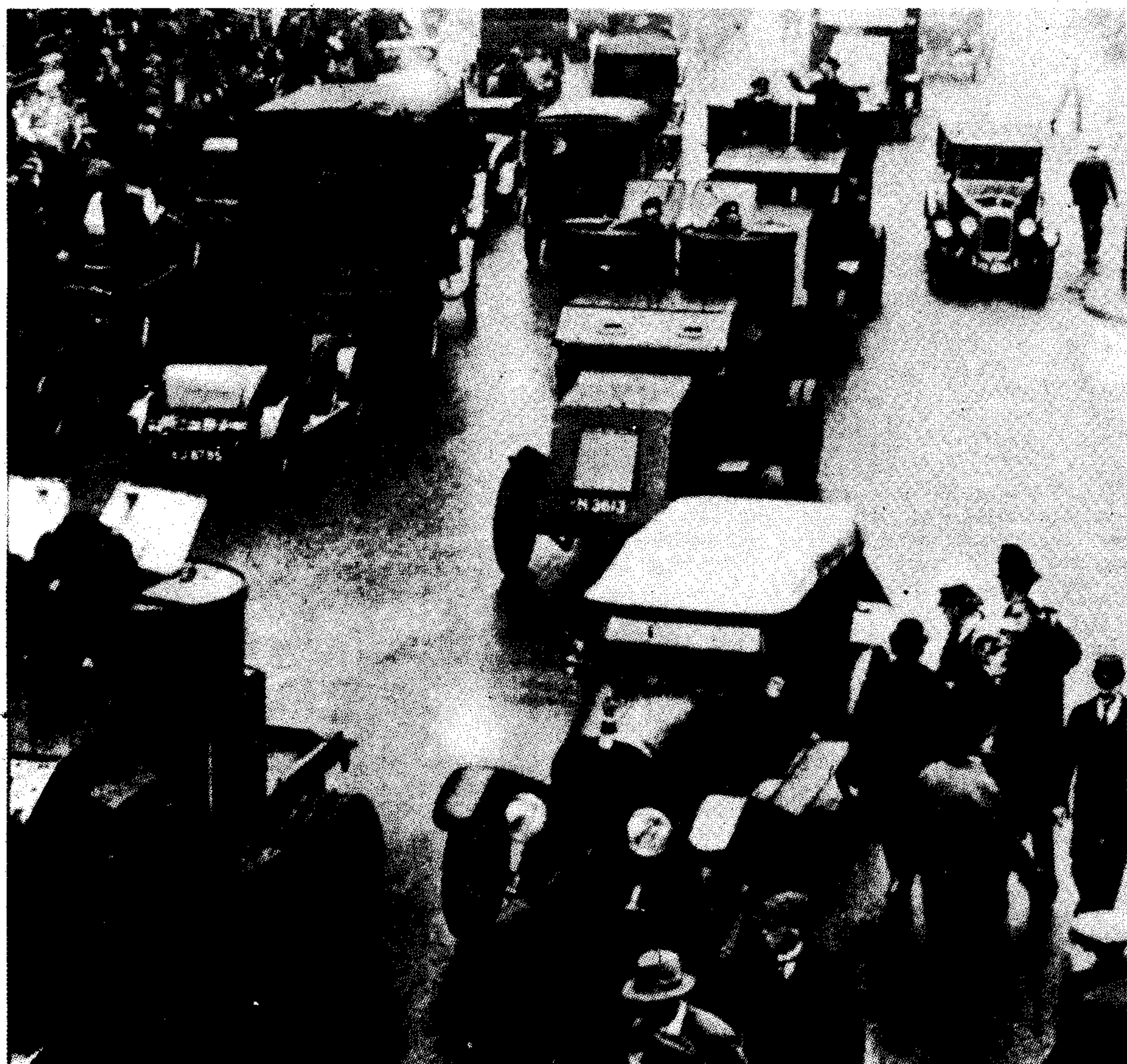
The unions must fight for and organise:

*Immediate wage increase on all YOPs schemes backdated to November 1980. Protected by a sliding scale of wages in line with prices and inflation.

*An immediate independent trade union enquiry into the dealings of YOPs and a review of wages and conditions.

*That a programme of useful public works such as housing, council work, etc, be initiated, under workers control, and the unemployed employed on them at full union rates.

*That the TUC gives a lead in the immediate defeat of this Tory government, through general strike action.



British General Strike, 1926

The politics of childcare

First part of a series of articles by Ann McKinley looking at the history and political background to the fight for childcare facilities.

FRANCE

Pre-school education is just over 200 years old. It began in Alsace in Eastern France where a Strasbourg graduate, Jean-Frederic Oberlin, a Protestant minister, in 1767 provided a village school.

Fifty children attended aged between 1 or 3 to 12 and 13 and attention was given to play and exercise as well as education.

Three women—Madame Oberlin, Sarah Bonzot and Louise Schepples—helped Oberlin create the first nursery schools in Europe.

Oberlin's schools, although achieving an international reputation, were not imitated in other parts of France.

Private philanthropy flickered only like patches across Napoleonic Europe.

Small schools or care centres appeared in Paris, Germany and England, and what started in Alsace was taken from Paris to London and by a quirk of history, re-exported from London back to Paris in 1825.

Madame de Pastoret opened an "asile" or refuge for children (mainly under 3) of working mothers in Paris in 1800.

It is considered by historians that Robert Owen's work for young children at New Lanark, and the Westminster infant 'asylums' in London, were inspired by the discussion that went on in Britain after reading of Madame de Pastoret in Maria Edgeworth's novel 'Madame de Fleury'.

Social need

The first asile was to become the foundation stone of a whole system of pre-primary school education—built in response to social need—the disease, starvation and dangers of the streets for children.

The Salles d'Asiles were charitable institutions in France in 1827 and were not officially recognised until 1837. Gradually council and communal authorities accepted the duty of funding them. There were 102 in France by 1836.

A manual of 1851 reminded teachers that the children were working class members of society:

"Let nothing be lacking for their health but nothing added which could be termed a luxury, or even an extra comfort, in the care of children whose whole life will be spent in conditions of privation".

Liberal reformers who held the future of early childhood education in their hands were forced to want 'better times' to put their ideas into practice—these included Rudolf, Virchau, Eduard Seguin, Frokel, and Victor Hugo.

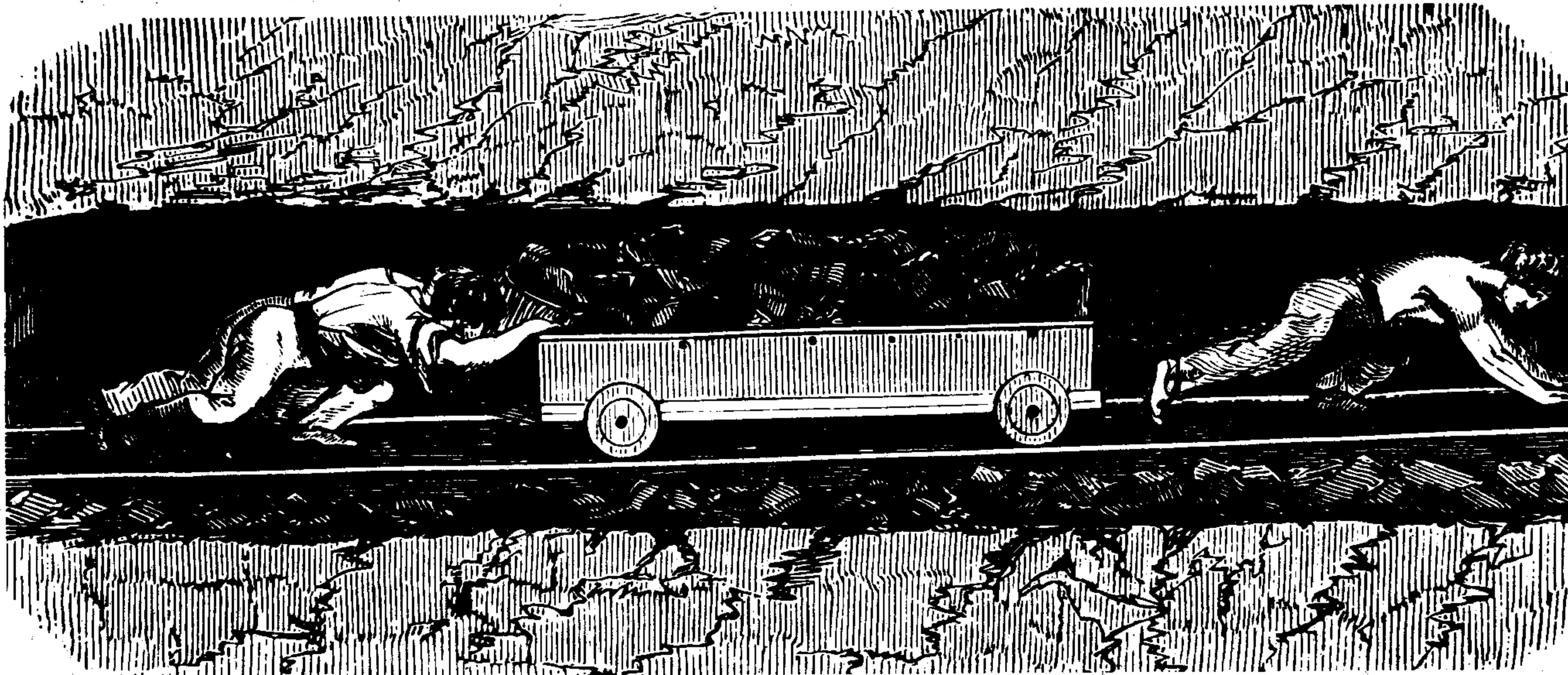
In the century after Oberlin the general view accepted in France was that local authorities were responsible for the care and education of the young.

Pauline Kergomard influenced the reconstruction of the Salles d'Asiles. The new style 'maternelles' were to be free, voluntary, secular and mixed, and were to be created at the expense of the municipal or parish councils.

Ministerial instructions in 1881 stated that local councils should bear expenses of buildings, equipment, etc and the government assumed responsibility for teachers' salaries and how the centres were run.

GERMANY

In Germany, Frobel expanded existing theories of infants learning spontaneously through play. His experience in 1830 of observing the growth and development of a friend's child led to his book "Summary of the Story of a Child's Development



Children at work in mines 1842



Home conditions in East London 1871

During the First Period of Life".

This is one of the first studies of early child development and Frobel opened a school for them in 1837. He formed a joint stock company to manage the kindergarten project, but his last years were clouded by opposition from the authorities and severe financial problems.

BRITAIN

Robert Owen, a self-made capitalist, used his money as a means to improve society.

His plans for his 'New Institution' at New Lanark, Scotland, included a playground area for children where they could go before they were old enough to enter the school in the middle.

Robert Owen founded the first infant school based on freedom, fresh air and play.

It is interesting to note that a century and a half later, after two imperialist wars and radical social change, capitalism has been unable to provide Owenite schools for the majority of the under fives.

AMERICA

Frobel sent plans for a kindergarten to his brother-in-

law in Philadelphia: but Frobel died before he received a reply. It was immigrant sympathisers that opened a kindergarten in Wisconsin for German speaking children in 1855.

Elizabeth Peabody of Boston took up the cause in 1860 and 115 local associations were formed across the country. By the 1880s the San Francisco Association alone was able to support 41 kindergartens.

It was economic recession



Sylvia Pankhurst: opposed war and fought for nursery provision

and opposition that cut back the advance. Boston closed the public kindergarten on the grounds that the city could not afford it. Private benefactors also closed their purses to the cause when times were bad.

But in St. Louis William T. Harris incorporated the kindergartens into the public school system of St. Louis and it weathered the financial storms in which many kindergartens disappeared in the United States.

Interlinked

A closer look at Britain during the 1800s shows how the concern of infant mortality, the industrial revolution and the need for a healthy future workforce for capitalism was interlinked with social reforms and 'child care' in that period.

Respectable middle class children were looked after for the first decade by a nurse and governess.

The middle class nursery was a dream world of fairy tales and dolls completely divorced from the austerity and discomfort of the Victorian days.

Working class children were less fortunate. They spent their days on the streets, in factories,

in dark mines or sweeping chimneys. Children as a labour force were a cheap investment and realised high profits for employers.

The employment of children, although prohibited by the Factories Act in 1819, was still carried out by thrifty employers throughout the 19th century. Part time child labour was not made illegal until 100 years later!

Social conscience stirred reformers and liberal pioneers to fight for education for the 'lower orders' at public expense. This was despite opposition from Lord Londonderry and James Graham, conservative opponents of expenditure on children. Their philosophy was simply: exploitation yes; expenditure no!

The landowners and capitalists feared that education for the poorer classes would mean them becoming permanently discontent with their role in life.

There was a clear connection between mothers going to work and high infant mortality. Children were left in the care of very young children of seven years old or elderly women.

Babies were given 'pap' as their diet—bread softened and mashed in warm water and dosed with laudanum (opium)

to keep them quiet.

In response to these conditions, charitable campaigns grew. By 1870 the movement towards early education was in full swing. Some 25% of 3-5 year old children in England and Wales were at school.

The proportion rose to 29% ten years later and 43% in 1900.

The school entrance age of 5 years old was established in 1870 and Shaftesbury tried to unsuccessfully lower the age to 4 on the basis:

"of using educational discipline as a means of protecting children from the poverty or greed of their own parents."

But it was the greed of the capitalists that children needed to be protected from!

Some employers had begun to realise that babies were required not only for the maintenance of the Empire but to continue production.

Women were seen as both the producers of the future labour force, but also as a labour reserve—to be summoned to the factories (as in wartime) or sacked (as in times of high unemployment) when economic crisis is rife.

Mortality

Concern at the rate of infant mortality from the capitalist class point of view was aptly expressed in the terminology of commodities and assets in this quote from C.T. Ewart in 1910:

"If men represent the income to be used and spent freely by each succeeding generation, women must be considered as capital to be spent sparingly in the present and to be husbanded carefully for the future and for the welfare of the race."

The propaganda on the importance of child health with its bias towards motherhood did provoke action and legislation—but it also created attitudes about the relations between child, family, and state.

It helped consolidate the view of the "mother's role" as child-rearer and homekeeper.

This served the interests of industry and empire by ensuring that children—the next generation of workers and soldiers (assuming they were men!) would be raised at a *minimum* cost to the state.

It also set up ideological barriers to married women's work outside the home, while at the same time leaving them available as a reserve labour force for emergency use.

Kindergartens were therefore limited to the fee paying middle classes.

But in 1910 the McMillan sisters fought battles for the slum children and set up a clinic in Deptford which later became a nursery school.

Social reforms were used as a bulwark against socialism during the years of industrial militancy before the first imperialist war.

Lloyd George and Beveridge visited Germany and were conscious of the 'success' of Bismark's authoritarian imperialist administration and this resulted in a form of state national insurance for Britain.

War work

Money was of course found and found quickly to establish day nurseries for the working mothers needed for war work.

The Ministry of Munitions gave a 75% grant to local education boards plus a 7d allowance per day for the attendance of each child. However the mother also had to contribute!

After the war, the Fisher Act of 1918, Section 19, stated that local education authorities were empowered to supply or aid the supply of nursery schools and classes for children over two and under five.

But with the end of the war, the return of men to the labour market and an economic crisis, attitudes and propaganda rapidly changed.

Continued next week

Labour Party in turmoil

'GANG OF 3' Special Conference

SET TO GO

When will they go? That is the only real question hanging over the future careers of Labour's "Gang of Three" as they contemplate when to stage their split from the workers' movement.

Will they break from the Labour Party in the immediate aftermath of Saturday's Special Conference—at which they are virtually certain to see an electoral college system adopted which concedes a degree of trade union participation in the election of the Party leader? They have repeatedly said that they could not accept such a situation.

Or will they bide their time—until March, maybe?

They may even hold fire until after some of their councillor co-thinkers have been re-elected to local government positions on a fraudulent "Labour" platform in May.

They are being pressed by Roy Jenkins—now casting round for a soft chair in British politics after years of living off the fat of the EEC—to come out of the closet and proclaim the existence of a "new" Social Democratic (i.e. capitalist) party.

Secret discussions

At the same time they are being wooed by the Liberal Party, whose leader David Steel is engaged in secret discussions with a group of Labour reactionaries.

The Liberals are keen to win over the disaffected Labourites before Easter—presumably in the hopes of exploiting their questionable electoral support in the local government elections.

With David Owen stating more clearly than ever that the Gang would not accept any form of electoral college, and Shirley Williams already committed against ever running for election on a Labour platform unless certain 'left' policies are discarded, the split is looming.

With the Gang will go a handful of extreme right wing MPs who realise they are unlikely to be re-elected by their local parties, or who object to the increasing drive towards accountability within the Labour Party.

They realise that the Party membership is pressing for more not less left wing policies—and they cannot hope to stem this tide.

It is possible that the split will enlist the support of Frank Chapple, leader of the 420,000-strong EETPU, who is already regarded as a political pariah in the labour movement.

Disaffiliate

Chapple has apparently declared that "if Shirley Williams and others leave there is nothing to stay for." He has talked of balloting the EETPU, proposing disaffiliation from the Labour Party.

While Chapple may feel confident that he has sufficiently muzzled class consciousness to



Chapple

force this through within the WWTPU, it is doubtful if any other union bureaucrats will embark on such a chancey venture.

The right wing splitters in the Labour Party know that they cannot hope to take with them the financial and political support of the workers' movement.

The moves towards a "Centre Party" rest therefore on the ability of Jenkins and co. to enlist the "block votes" of sections of capitalists, small businessmen and the prosperous middle class—in the form of cash support and media coverage for their anti-socialist views.

Behind the unlikely banner of an USDAW resolution, advocates of democratic reforms to the Labour Party are marshalling their forces for a complex battle next Saturday.

USDAW—long an unquestioned stronghold of the right wing within the Party—has tabled a motion to the Special Conference calling for an electoral college to be established for the election of the Party leader on the basis of 30% to the PLP, 30% to the CLPs and 40% to the trade unions.

Amid a baffling series of marginally different alternative proposals, this resolution, carrying the backing of USDAW's 429,000 votes, fits the criterion of awarding the least possible influence to the Parliamentary Labour Party while standing a real chance of success in the delicately balanced voting.

Yet the resolution is such a dramatic change from previous USDAW positions that there remains the possibility that it could be withdrawn, and the union's votes thrown in behind the more orthodox right wing policy of allotting 50% of the votes to the PLP.

Mathematics

So complicated are the mathematics involved that AUEW leaders are to consider on Tuesday whether or not to allow their delegation a more flexible mandate.

At present there is the possibility that by rigidly casting their votes against any resolution which falls short of allotting 90% of the votes to the PLP, the AUEW could unwittingly wind up creating conditions for the Labour NEC's proposal—a one-third, one-third, one-third split—to secure a majority.

More enlightened reaction-

aries are seeking a mandate to support any college offering a majority of votes to the PLP.

At present it appears that—including the AUEW—there are some 2.7 million trade union and CLP votes committed to opposing democratic reforms within the Party.

The task on Saturday will therefore be to marshal the maximum support behind the resolution which offers least concessions to the PLP while standing a chance of commanding a majority in the conference.

But one thing is plain: while Saturday's Conference itself promises to be little more than a complex day of constitutional tinkering, the democratisation of the Party in the next period will have profound political implications—not least of which will be ensuring the belated departure of Williams, Owen, Rodgers and several of the crypto-Tory right wing.



Rodgers

Coventry Labour raises rents

In the face of growing working class hostility to Heseltine's housing policies the pernicious role of Coventry Labour Council was highlighted particularly sharply at last week's council meeting.

After offering long drawn-out apologies on the issue of raising council rents by 26% and expressing keenness to "balance the books" in line with Heseltine's directives, the majority on the council voted to implement a new round of cuts.

In doing so, the Labour Council has not only flouted the Coventry Labour Party's policy of opposition to rent increases, but also plan to implement them in February, well before the Tories' own set date of 1 April.

Agents

These Labour councillors thus not only serve to perpetuate the rule of the Tories but also act as their agents in directly and prematurely implementing anti-working class measures.

The increases were opposed by a group of twelve 'rebel' councillors, ten of whom had previously voted against the increase in school meals prices, thus maintaining their principled stand against the cuts.

While actively supporting the twelve and taking up a fight inside the Labour Party and the trade unions to force all councillors to be made accountable to Labour Party policy, it is vital to develop a working class movement in total opposition to the rate and rent increases.

Already the Coventry Federation of Tenants are proposing a rent strike to resist the increases.

A housing 'week of action' has also been planned in early February.

Last week NALGO adopted a no rent/rate increase position.

Tenants must organise local rent strikes and draw in the organised strength of the trade union movement.

Responsibility

The left councillors must further their stand and take on the responsibility to act by organising local meetings on estates, petitions and lobbies of GMCs, Labour Group meetings, etc., demanding they refuse to compensate for Heseltine's proposals.

It is vital to call on the rebel Labour councillors to adopt a policy of:

*Direct action in the form of rent and rate strikes to oppose any attempt to make the working class pay for Tory policies.

*No sale of council houses.

*Open the books of the local authorities to elected trade union committees to show who profits from local government spending, and expose the banks who cream off interest charges.

*To work with local anti-cuts committees and tenants associations to build local support.

*Support the Lambeth week of action against government attacks on local authority spending.



Goodbye to the labour movement: Williams and Owen

Camden councillors face left opposition

Graham Shurety looks at the campaign of Camden Labour Left

Before Christmas Camden Council's Labour leadership was sent reeling by Heseltine's announcement that Camden was to receive nil grant in next year's rate support grant.

Roy Shaw, leader of the Labour Group on the council spelt out the impact of this on Camden's finances at the Camden Labour Party Conference on Saturday 10 January.

On top of last November's supplementary rate of 6p in the pound, and last year's 34% increase in rates, rates in Camden would now have to be jacked up another 56.4%!

Moratorium

This calculation actually excludes the effect of Heseltine's moratorium on council house building and his new controls on capital expenditure.

Shaw proposed that on top of the 56.4% rate rise, 600 plus jobs should go through "voluntary" redundancy within the direct labour department and that the estates modernisation programme (which provide work for the 600) should be ended immediately.

These moves would amount to the destruction of the DLO in Camden. Shaw claimed this

was needed to help "sell" the rates package by demonstrating to the rate payer that the council were acting responsibly!

This policy of open cuts has shattered the illusion built up by Shaw and the right wing that it was possible to weather the Tory storm by the 'good housekeeping policy of repeated rate rises and 'marginal savings' to protect services.

Opposition

It has led to a growing opposition within the Labour Party, forcing rank and file members to reassess the confrontation policy of "no rate rises; no rent rises; no cuts" advocated by Socialist Press supporters and other individual militants within the Party.

The fight for this policy has been strengthened by the setting up of the Camden Labour Left.

This organisation has drawn together 50 Labour Party members, across the three constituency Parties that make up Camden, to discuss the political way forward against the Tories and against those in the Labour leadership who seem hellbent on doing Heseltine's work for him.

Model resolution

It made clear its intention to become a fighting organisation at the Camden Labour Party Conference on 10 January. In the build up to the conference, the Camden Labour Left successfully moved a model resolution in five branches which among other things called

on the council to "re-affirm a platform of no cuts and no redundancies", to support Camden NALGO's decision not to sell council houses and to support the policies of the Local Government in Crisis Conference of November 1 1980.

In addition the resolution declared that:

"Conference accepts that under Tory legislation it is impossible for councils to defend working class living standards, jobs and homes, without running into local government deficit and potential penalties. Only an active local labour movement can defend councillors from these threats.

To permit such a movement Labour councillors must work together with CLPs, trade unions and council tenants' associations to organise opposition to the Tory government.

Any individual councillor who is not prepared to face this battle should resign to be replaced by those who will."

Although the motion was defeated 32-27, the narrowness of the vote (last year a similar motion only got 3 votes) and the success in getting it debated and passed in five wards establishes the Camden Labour Left as a serious force in the local Labour Party.

The small left caucus of councillors which includes Ken Livingstone, is forced to orientate to this movement.

Significantly, four councillors voted for the CLL motion, with Livingstone declaring his unequivocal support for it.

Despite the doubt many members may have held towards

the overall strategy of the CLL they were determined to oppose the individual cuts proposed by the right wing.

Councillors Shaw, Bethal, and Mills, the leading hawks in the Labour group received a drubbing in the afternoon session of the conference.

Their proposals for job cuts were overwhelmingly defeated.

The alternative put forward by left winger Fletcher to continue with the Estates Modernisation Programme to reduce the DLO workforce by natural wastage over four years, won the support of the conference.

This follows a similar victory at a Labour group meeting before Christmas where Shaw and Mills threatened to resign.

An emergency Labour group meeting on January 5 to rediscuss the matter failed to make a decision, as did the Labour group meeting on January 13.

Both these meetings were lobbied by workers and tenants from Camden. On January 13, the 300-strong lobby occupied the council chamber demanding to be present for the Labour group vote on the DLO.

Crisis point

Camden has now reached a crisis point. The Labour group is in a stalemate over how to respond to Heseltine's policies.

The left councillors so far have successfully blocked major cuts, but have no overall strategy of their own to offer.

If Shaw's proposals continue to be obstructed, Camden tenants can look forward to a 70-80% rate increase in April.

Lambeth conference from back page

no action!
The recall conference indicated how thoroughly such tactics have been applied by union leaders.

And it showed also that those sections of workers who try to break this vicious circle face the prospect of being ignored and isolated by leaders determined to wage no fight against the Tories.

In the health service, for example, the Longworth Hospital occupation in Oxfordshire is the only work-in currently underway against a hospital closure—yet, as speaker Anne Marie Sweeney pointed out to the conference, it took COHSE three weeks to declare it official and the 250,000 strong union has still not provided the slightest material support or national campaign to back or extend the action.

It is in these conditions that Knight and the Lambeth Labour Group have begun to argue that they must retreat before the Tory offensive in order to "buy time" to build a mass movement.

"We have come to listen to advice", he told the conference, "but we intend to stay in control in Lambeth—not to

hand over to anyone, to Heseltine, the Tories or the bankers."

Knight and those who supported him argued that there had been little sign of action in the labour movement against the cuts.

If Lambeth took a stand, they said, and refused to increase the rates, it faced the prospect of isolation from mass support, bankruptcy and a Tory government commissioner being brought in to impose draconian cuts.

This, they argued, would pave the way for far worse cuts.

Far better to accept huge rate increases under a Labour council than allow the Tories in, they argued.

An interesting facet of the conference was that this classic reformist line—the very pretext used by the last Labour government as an excuse for implementing Tory policies—was vigorously defended by members of the self-styled Trotskyist Workers Revolutionary Party.

The WRP marshalled their supporters to speak and vote against every proposal for serious action to defeat the



The Longworth occupation

Tories. They condemned those who called on Lambeth council to take a stand against rate and rent increases and demand trade union support as "kamikaze pilots" and advocates of another "charge of the Light Brigade."

Instead the WRP offered workers the futile prospect of an alliance with Tory rate-

payers' groups and small businessmen in "community councils". What such mythical bodies might achieve other than persuading workers that a fight is impossible was not explained to the conference.

But it was quite clear that the WRP had emerged from dormancy to play the role usually filled by the Communist Party in such conferences—chief apologists for Knight's retreat and for the bureaucrats seeking to avoid a fight.

This line emerged in total contrast to the militancy and defiance of the Lambeth trade unionists who have taken a lead in the fight for a week of action against the cuts, beginning on February 2.

"Heseltine can put who he likes in to run Lambeth. If we don't work with them they can't do anything," argued one delegate from the TGWU 1/763 (Direct Labour) branch.

Disappointment

Lambeth Trades Council tabled a resolution—which was carried by the conference—calling on Labour councils to adopt

a policy of no rent or rate increases to compensate for Heseltine's cut in the rate support grant.

Other Lambeth trade unionists expressed disappointment at the lack of national support for their action, but made it clear that they were still prepared to give a lead to mass struggles.

And the fact that Lambeth Labour Group itself is far from unanimous on rate increases or avoiding confrontation from the Tories was made clear by speeches on the floor of the conference and at a lunchtime fringe meeting organised by Lambeth Labour Left.

From Coventry, too, and from Manchester came reports of struggles by a growing minority of Labour councillors, Labour activists and trade unionists for the policy of 'no cuts; no rent increases; no rate increases' against Labour councils that are obediently carrying out Heseltine's cuts.

From neighbouring Wandsworth came a report of the struggle by the NALGO branch against the 700 redundancies planned by the Tory council.

Impact

And the impact of Tory policies in practice was shown by delegates who described the "hiving off" of refuse collection to private enterprise by Southend council.

Among the resolutions put forward for debate was one from the Labour Party Young Socialists, spelling out in some detail the necessity for Labour Councils to reject any attempt to "balance the books" in line with Heseltine's demands, and to force a confrontation with the Tory government, the courts and the bankers.

This motion was narrowly defeated. Passed, however, was a resolution calling for support for the Lambeth week of action on February 2-6 as "the first of a series of similar actions".

Also passed, by a majority of 37 votes, was a resolution from the Leicester 5/287 TGWU branch which called for:

*widest possible circulation of the policies adopted at the November 1 conference to Labour Party bodies—in particular stressing opposition to rate and rent rises to compensate for Tory cuts;

*regional conferences to discuss direct action to oppose rent and rate increases and trade union action against cuts and closures;

A further resolution from Southwark NALGO calling for Labour councils and NALGO branches to defy the law and block the sale of council houses was also carried, as was a CPSA branch resolution calling for nationwide support to Lambeth in a fight against rate and rent increases, and for a lobby of the Labour Party special conference to demand the NEC take up such a policy.

A Greater London Association of Trades Councils resolution supporting the TUC week of action and calling for a Labour mobilisation in the GLC elections was also carried—but four WRP-sponsored resolutions opposing action and calling instead for cross-class "Community Councils" were defeated, along with a UCATT Regional Committee motion suggesting that the Lambeth week of action is "a tactical error".

The task now confronting those wishing to put the Lambeth conference policies into practice remains a hard one.

But only in the struggle for policies that defend at all times the independent interests of the working class can a united movement be mobilised to bring down the Tories.

Scots jobs protests

The Scottish Central Region Campaign Against Unemployment demonstration in Stirling on Saturday February 7 is finding growing support in the area.

Last week, Stirling District Council's policy resources committee decided that the Council should give support to the demonstration.

The Labour Party control the Council, on the casting vote of the convenor.

The Council will help in practical ways. They are giving a free let of the hall in which the rally will be held, they are allowing the campaign to hold a public collection in the streets of Stirling on the day of the demonstration; and they will display posters in all council premises, including halls and rent offices, advertising the demonstration.

This week sees the start of door to door leafletting, a poster campaign, leafletting unemployment offices and factories.

It has been confirmed that Neil Kinnock MP and Hugh Wyper, Scottish TGWU Regional Secretary and a member of the STUC General Council, will be speaking at the rally.

Following the Liverpool November 29 demonstration the Labour Party is organising a Scottish demonstration against unemployment on Saturday 21 February in Glasgow.

The STUC and the TUC are presently mobilising in support of this initiative.

The assembly point on 21 February will be Blythswood Square, at 11 a.m., proceeding to Queens Park, Glasgow.

The speakers will include Michael Foot, Tony Benn, Clive Jenkins and Jimmy Milne, STUC General Secretary.

NUS leaders 'amazed' by strike

By Geoff Williams

"I am just amazed at the response", said National Union of Seamen General Secretary Jim Slater on Friday 16 January. "The problem is going to be to get them back at the end."

And militant NUS members who spoke to me are increasingly convinced that is just how the union leaders see it.

Holding back

Wary of a big confrontation with the bosses and the Tories, they are deliberately holding back the fight.

Slater says the union will call off the action if the bosses agreed to go to arbitration at

ACAS. But an NUS branch meeting in Cardiff on Monday 19 January told the union leaders that the rank and file wanted no reliance at all on ACAS.

As we went to press 39 ships were stopped by NUS action in foreign ports and 83 in British ports. 145 foreign-going vessels and 52 in home waters were affected by overtime bans and other limited action.

A national meeting of branch officials decided last Monday to continue the dispute with lightning 24 or 48 hour stoppages on ferries.

But ferry workers, the biggest section of the National Union of Seamen's 30,000 membership, are not being brought out on all-out strike.

Foreign going NUS members are not striking at all, but only refusing to sail once their ships dock.

The guerrilla action has halted the sailings of British flag vessels, but other flags are still operating.

The bosses have stepped up the conflict from their side. The Western Shipping Company used scabs to sail two ships from Cardiff.

In Hull 14 crew of the Baltic Valiant have been sacked. The union has now called on all trade unionists to refuse to handle all ships belonging to the Baltic Valiant owners, the United Baltic Corporation.

But NUS branches in many ports have elected disputes committees to organise the action locally, and some of these are linking up. A national framework is needed to coordinate the disputes committees by making sure the branch officials—who are all appointed full timers—don't dominate the running of the dispute.

Nationally organised, the disputes committees can stop every port in the country. And that's the way to win the claim for 25% more on the £64 basic rate and better overtime pay.

Pickets to stop anything going in or out of the ports would hit the bosses hard and quickly. Support could be won from dockers and lorry drivers.

That way, the shipowners could rapidly be brought to their knees. And this could provide a breakthrough for the whole labour movement on the wages front.

FUND

Our readers are already beginning to respond to our appeal in last week's Socialist Press to help us restore the cuts that we have been forced to make.

In Yorkshire, readers are coming forward to offer a regular payment by bankers order to help us overcome the financial difficulties that inflation has given rise to.

It is precisely the regular payment of extra sums of money like this that can help us with the first stage in restoring the cuts—our plan to ensure that the issues which appear without the Red Youth or Woman Worker supplements are twelve page issues instead of the ten-page issues that we have been forced to cut back to.

This will mean that every issue each week carries 12 pages.

Once we have achieved this we can then begin to consider how to run the Red Youth and Woman

Worker papers as completely separate papers, giving Socialist Press those vital extra four pages that the supplements at present take up.

We would like therefore to urge all our readers to consider joining those in Yorkshire who have agreed to make out a bankers order.

Write to us for a bankers order form or collect one from your own bank and make it payable to the Workers Socialist League, Co-operative Bank, Northampton Branch, PO Box 34, 47/49 St. Giles Street, Northampton NN1 1JQ. The clearing code is 08-90-73 and the account number is 5023090153.

We are also glad to receive donations to our fund which should be sent to:

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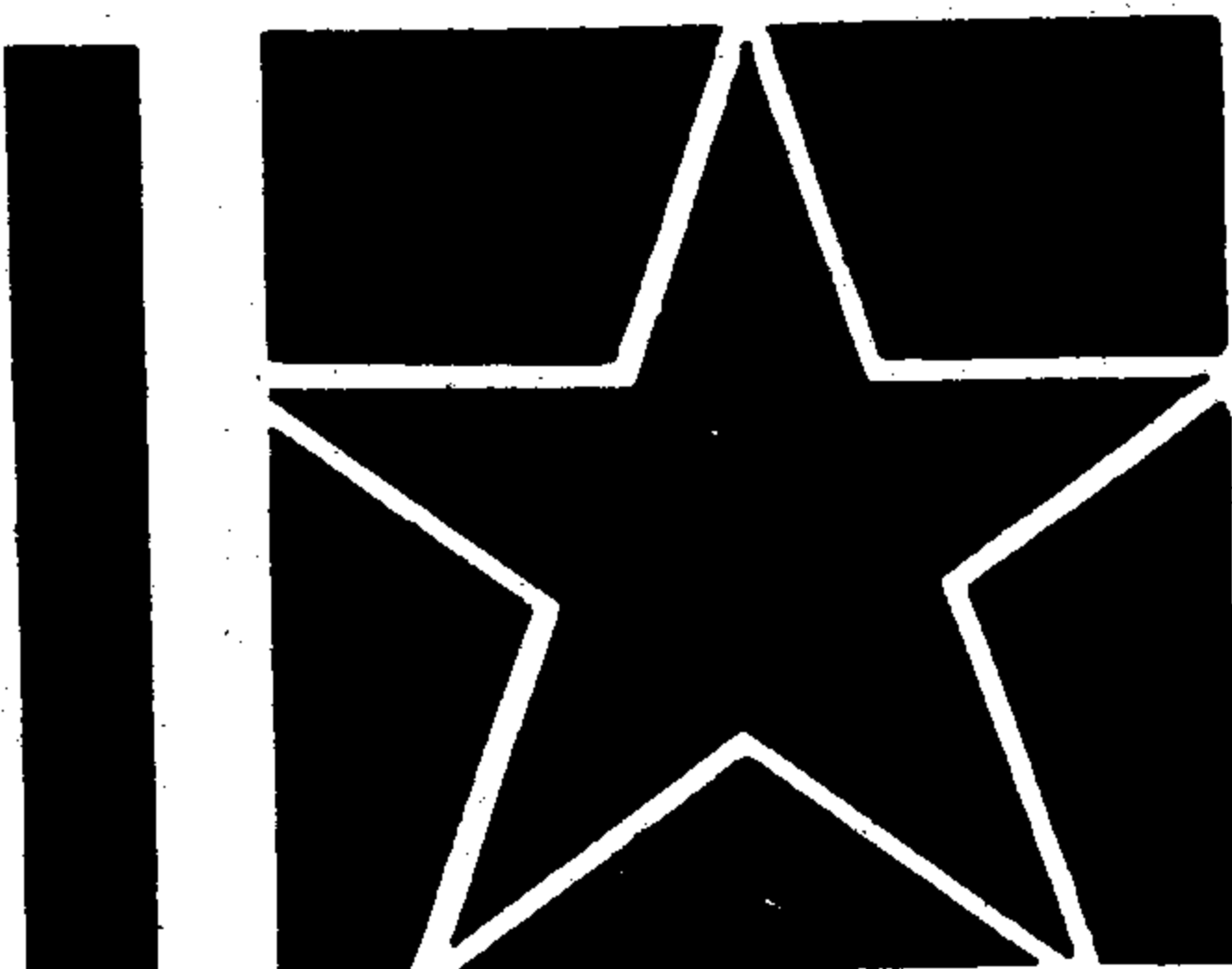


Longbridge: new sell-out

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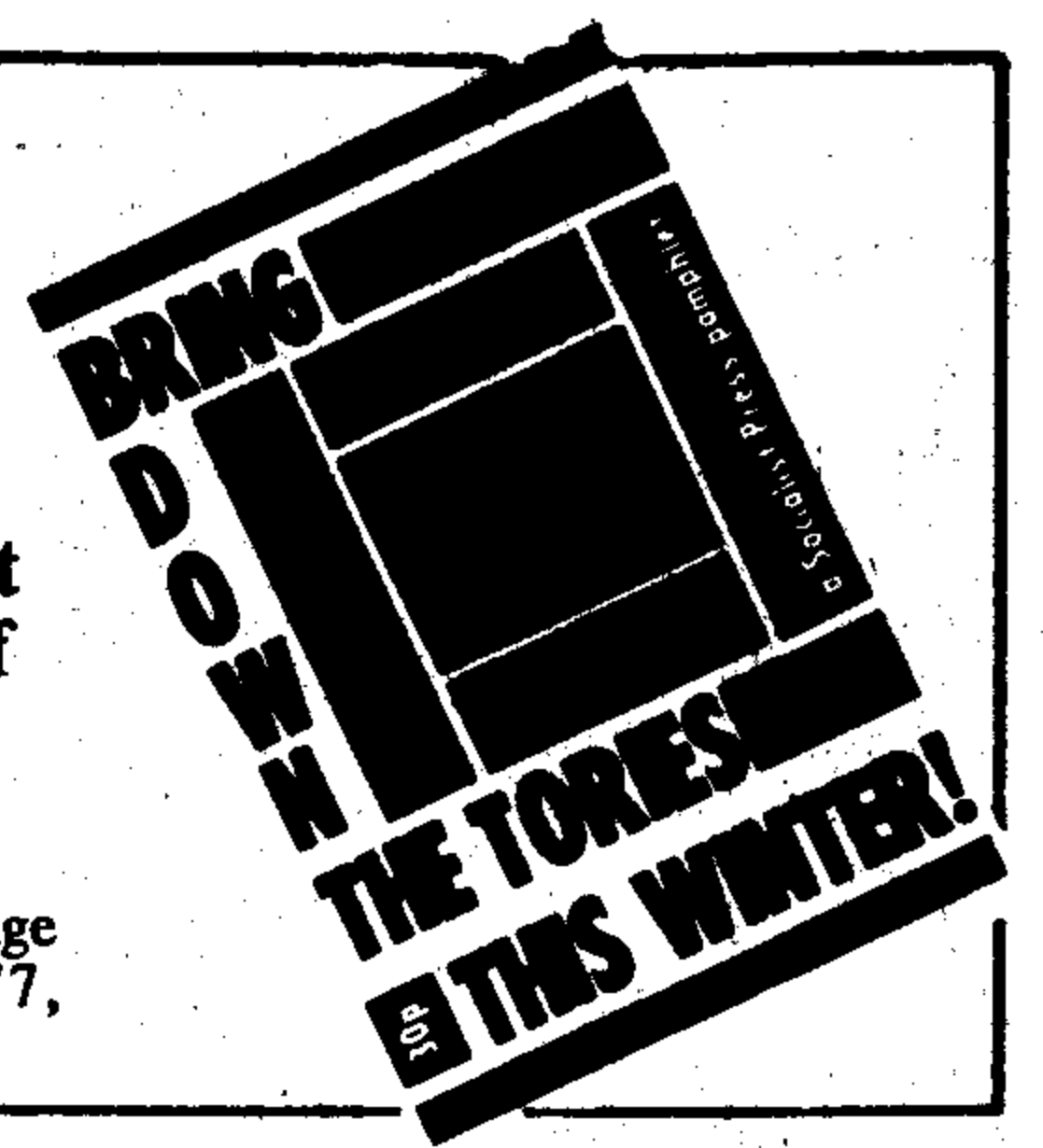
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Recall conference highlights problems ACTION NOT WORDS KEY TO CUTS FIGHT

"Can you build a mass movement out of retreats? Can you build out of weakness and compromise?"

This question, sharply posed by TGWU delegate Alan Thornett, summed up the central theme of discussion at the recall conference 'Local Government in Crisis' last week-

end. At the end of the day a majority of delegates voted for resolutions embracing the answer strongly advocated by Thornett.

"The only way to build a mass movement is to stand and fight—to give leadership. There is no other way to mobilise a movement behind you ...

"At the last conference, Ted Knight said 'we don't want any more defeats like Clay Cross'. But more Clay Crosses are exactly what we do need today. That was an important stand against the Tories.

But today we don't just want one Clay Cross, we want 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 Clay Crosses! But that won't happen until someone is prepared to stand and fight and give a lead."

The retreat which Thornett—and other floor speakers—were attacking was the decision by Lambeth Labour Group (which had convened the initial conference on November 1 and been seen as the front runner in opposing the cuts) to back down from a policy of 'no cuts no rate increases'.

Raise rates

Instead they have raised a 20% supplementary rate and are expected to raise rates again in April—affecting thousands of council tenants in Lambeth.

Such a policy, defended by Lambeth council leader Ted Knight as a necessary means of buying time to build a movement against the Tories, was sharply criticised by many floor speakers—and eventually rejected by the recall conference.

As many delegates repeatedly pointed out, the strength of the 800-strong November 1 conference had been that it offered workers a fighting policy to defend jobs, services and living standards and build a mass movement against the Tory government.

Voted down

It had specifically called upon Labour councils to adopt a policy of:

"no rent rises or supplementary rate increases this financial year, and no rent or rate rises to compensate for government cuts."

And it warned that its call for united mass action "should not mean unions, CLPs or Labour Councils using the inactivity of others to justify implementing or accepting cuts."

The November conference also voted down a series of amendments tabled by the NUPE National Executive, and adopted instead a policy of fighting for industrial action to stop the cuts and to defend any councillors penalised for taking a stand against the government.

But the much smaller January 17 recall conference reflected many of the political and practical problems in fighting the cuts.

It showed first and foremost that the adoption of even correct resolutions by conferences is nowhere near enough to defeat the Tory offensive.

It was also significantly smaller and less broadly representative than the November 1 conference.

This was due in part to organisational problems: partly also to a political retreat by Labour groups who have since November begun to implement cuts; and partly a boycott by layers of trade unionists turning their backs on any real fight against the Tories.

NUPE, for example, was conspicuous by its absence from the recall conference, after sending national officer Ron Keating to present amendments last November.

But the influence of the defeatist policies peddled by NUPE's leadership was unmistakably present as it became clear that nowhere in the country is this 700,000-strong manual union leading the slightest fight to defend jobs or services.

Key role

The NUPE leadership, for all its occasional 'left' rhetoric, is thus playing a key role in per-

petuating the self-fulfilling prophecy so beloved of all labour movement bureaucrats.

They call no action because, they claim, there is no mass support; but with nothing to rally around, workers see no perspective for a struggle; the longer this situation lasts the more jobs and conditions are lost without the slightest resistance—and the more demoralised workers become.

This demoralisation and the lack of struggles is then in turn quoted as the reason for calling

Cont'd page 7

HESLIN STILL OUT

ALMOST two years to the day since Ted Heslin was expelled from Oxford City Labour Party for selling Socialist Press the right wing are still refusing to allow him in—even though the NEC has now twice reinstated him!

A 90-strong GC meeting on Monday night voted by a substantial majority once again to defy the NEC instruction to reinstate Heslin—and invite an NEC speaker to the next meeting.



Ted Knight (left) on Lambeth anti-cuts protest

National Front —a tiny Front!

The fascist National Front managed to cobble together a measly 100 or so desperate supporters for a march through Birmingham city centre on Sunday 18 January.

The police, as usual, had extensively prepared to protect the march which had as its slogans "British jobs for British workers" and "Support the police, jail black rioters".

A counter-mobilisation of a few hundred anti-fascists assembled in the area determined to stop the Front from marching and would have easily done so if it had not been for the police who cleared the route and arrested at least ten anti-fascists.

If more anti-fascists had turned out the fascist march

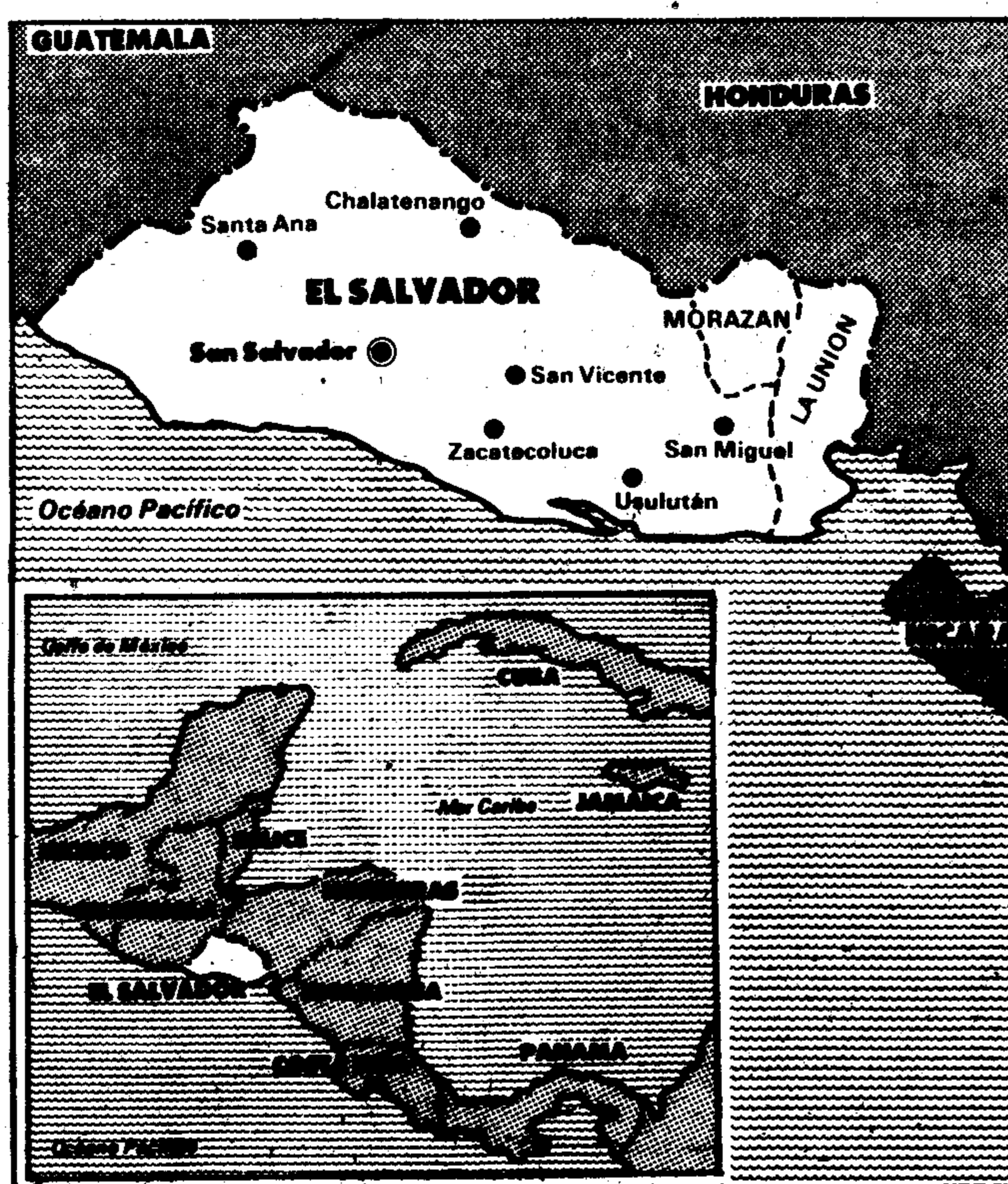
could have been stopped from going through Birmingham streets.

In the event all that could be done was to hound the NF along the route and infuriate their members with shouts of "The National Front is a tiny little Front—Smash the National Front".

The previous day about 1500 people failed to stop a march of 40 so-called 'New National Front' members in Sandwell because the time of the fascist march was switched from the afternoon to the morning.

But with the massive unemployment in the Midlands which the NF and other fascist groups seek to exploit, it is more important than ever that all Nazi marches are stopped by massive labour movement resistance.

WAR IN EL SALVADOR



Last week's 'final offensive' by the combined forces of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front finally brought the Salvadorean civil war to the front pages of the bourgeois press and puts the taking of power by the revolutionary forces on the agenda.

Within three days Washington had denounced Soviet, Cuban and Nicaraguan intervention, reviewed arms supplies (including six helicopter gunships) and increased the number of military 'advisers'—all in the name of "protecting human rights" or, as President Jose Napoleon Duarte would have it, 'exporting democracy'.

Ramifications

The fighting is taking place on a national scale, in semi-formal encounters, and its political ramifications abroad are already substantial.

The timing of the offensive had long been common-knowledge since the Frente Demo-

cratico Revolucionario, the coalition of political forces in opposition, had openly declared that it wanted to present Reagan with a 'fait accompli'.

Build-up

The build-up of forces, particularly along the inaccessible border with Honduras, had been taking place for several weeks, and there can be little doubt that the guerrillas have been receiving steady supplies of modern weapons.

Two earlier probing attacks one in Morazan province in November and the other in the south of Chalatenango after Christmas had the basis for the

Moreover, an advance attack on the major military airport of Ilopango neutralised the vital

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