

SOCIALIST PRESS



Weekly paper of the Workers Socialist League * No. 106 * 28 June, 1978 * 15p

IRELAND TROOPS OUT NOW Back page

EPLF interview p.3
Garners conference report p.11
Leyland round up p.4

London docks, steel, Singers UNION

LEADERS WON'T FIGHT CLOSURES



Steelworkers march against closure in 1975



Steel union leader Sirs: no fight

While plans were finalised last week for the axeing of 4,600 jobs, union leaders uttered no more than a feeble whimper of protest.

1,600 jobs are under the axe at the Shelton steelworks in Stoke, where the blast furnaces have been closed and the British Steel Corporation are only waiting to conclude compensation arrangements.

And plans were revealed for an £8 million government backed investment plan at the giant Singer sewing machine factory in Clydebank—bringing a loss of 3,000 jobs out of the present 5,000 workforce.

Meanwhile in what could be the biggest blow of all an announcement is expected this week on the proposals for rationalisation of

London docks, where management are hoping to get the green light from the Lib-Lab government to shut down the Upper Docks—the India, Millwall and Royals, with an immediate loss of 4,000 jobs and an estimated loss of a further 20,000 related jobs in the area.

Empty talk

These closures and sackings have followed hard on the heels of the shut down of Leyland's 3,000-strong Triumph plant at Speke on Merseyside.

And all this takes place at a time when Labour leaders are claiming that the economic crisis is all but over!

In each case trade union officials and their hangers-on within the shop stewards movement have done nothing more than head off any moves to prepare a

serious fight against the planned sackings, and talk emptily of their "deep concern" at mounting levels of unemployment.

At Shelton, steel union bureaucrats—themselves sucked into increasingly open collaboration with BSC management through "participation"—left plant stewards alone to fight the closure threat.

The powerful response they obtained—from nearly all the unions on the plant, and from dockers at Immingham who voted for solidarity blacking action—showed that if any national lead had been given, a major fight could have been taken up against BSC's savage rationalisation plans.

Bitter harvest

At the Singer plant workers are reaping a bitter harvest from the misleadership given by AUEW convenor John MacFadyen, who last year bemoaned the company's failure to invest in Clydebank.

Now the real meaning of capitalist investment in this period of slump has been revealed in an £8 million scheme that will slash nearly 3,000 jobs in this high unemployment area.

But neither MacFadyen nor Scottish AUEW Executive member Gavin Laird have taken steps to fight this cutback. Laird declared that "The unions will behave logically and not emotionally". Unfortunately Laird's "logic", like that of his fellow officials, is the logic of seeking piecemeal reforms from capitalism in crisis.

London dockers, too, face a similar bankruptcy of leadership in the struggle to prevent the closure of the Upper Docks.

Rather than declare that the TGWU will mobilise its 500,000 strong membership in the London Region and its entire national docks membership to defend these jobs, officials have already offered to make concessions on demarcation and on dockers' hard won working conditions.

No preparation

Steelworkers everywhere, Singer workers and dockworkers must learn the bitter lesson of the Speke closure, where hot air and empty rhetoric on the 'evils of unemployment' and the need to fight the shutdown were used by officials and stewards for months on end.

They made not the slightest preparation for occupation of the plant or a fight to open the books of the employer to expose their plans for increased exploitation of the whole workforce in Leyland.

As an international monopoly, Singers makes huge profits. The demand must be for work-sharing among the whole workforce at no loss of pay.

Expropriation

If the management choose to sack thousands of workers, the fight must be for the expropriation of that management, without compensation, under the management of an elected workers' committee.

And this fight must centre on occupation of the

Clydebank factory and the election of a committee to open Singers' books.

British Steel is supposedly a 'nationalised' company—but one in which the purse strings are in fact held by the privately owned suppliers, the big manufacturers, and the banks.

The fight to defend jobs in BSC must set out to expose this hidden exploitation and establish the case for complete nationalisation of major industry and the banks.

On the docks, too, the demand for nationalisation of the National Ports Council which last year netted a cool surplus of £41 million must be a central part of the fight to defend jobs in London's Upper Docks.

Confusion

But instead of putting forward a programme for strike action and occupation on these demands and genuinely fight unemployment as it arises, TUC spokesmen have thrown up a barrage of confusion.

On the one hand they have called increasingly for import controls to prevent goods made by "foreign" workers being sold in Britain and supposedly 'save jobs'.

This reactionary, nationalist policy, which creates the illusion that workers in this country have a 'common interest' with the British capitalist class, is a conscious diversion from action against the employer to save jobs.

In fact the capitalist attacks on jobs are proceed-

ing on an international level: throughout Europe steel jobs are being cut back, bringing strikes in Belgium; containerisation has brought a wholesale attack on dock jobs; and everywhere new technology is being used to replace jobs.

On the other hand there is the growing bureaucratic talk of the 35-hour week as a "cure" to unemployment.

For many TUC officials this is also seen as an alternative way of heading off major wage claims after the expiry of Phase 3 of wage control.

This is why so many right wing advocates of wage control have jumped into the 35-hour week bandwagon—led by Jack Jones, Hugh Scanlon, David Basnett, Tom Jackson and Geoffrey Drain.

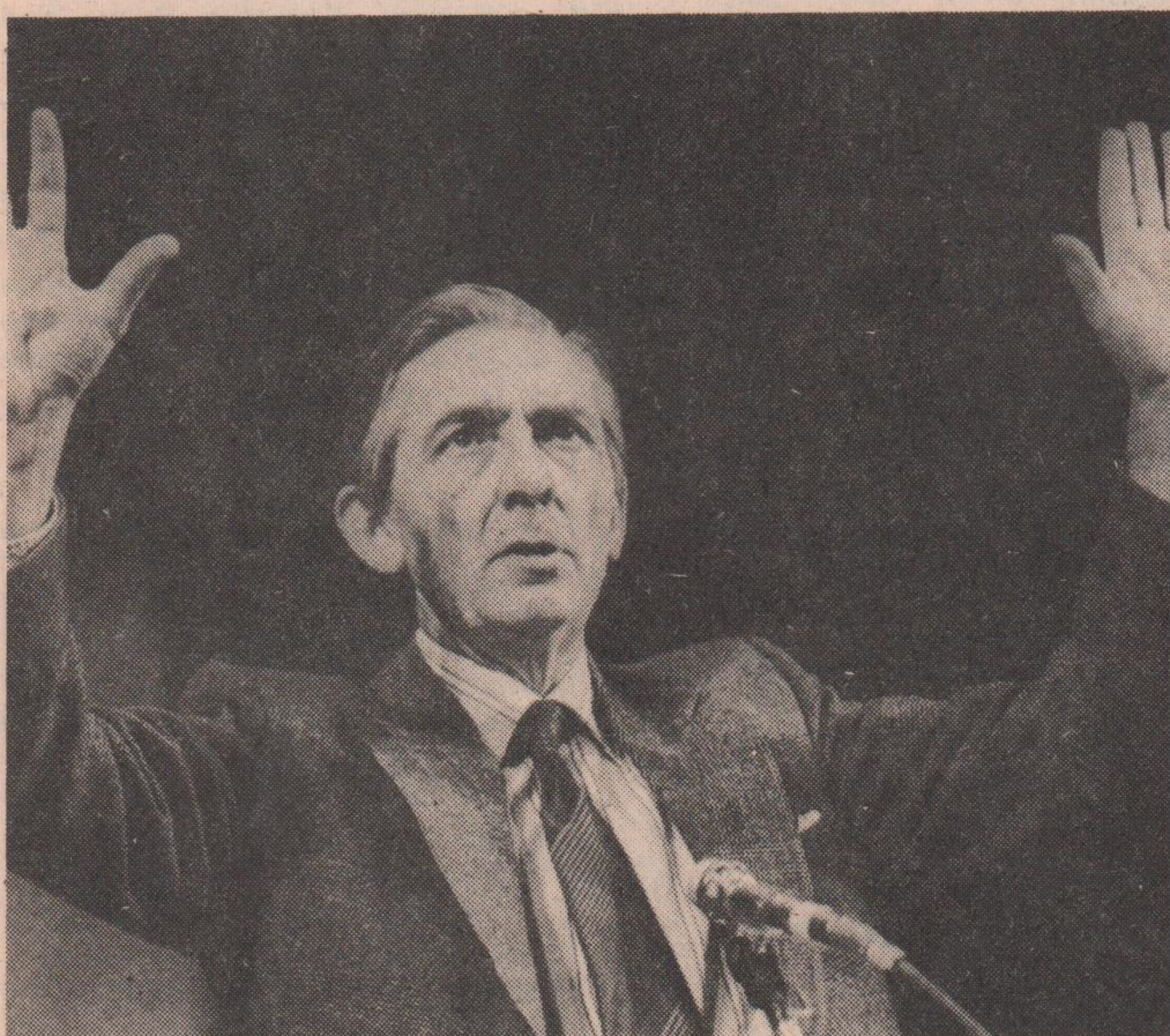
Yet these same TUC officials stand as the main obstacle to struggles to defend jobs, wages and working conditions against attacks by the employers.

Workers in all industries must beware this fraudulent use of the legitimate 35 hour week demand.

The defence of jobs will come not through the rhetoric and arm-waving of TUC officials but through strike action, occupation and the fight for nationalisation.

This calls for the building of a revolutionary leadership in the workers' movement, prepared to challenge the bureaucracy and fight for demands to defend the independent interests of the working class.

The Workers Socialist League is fighting to build that leadership.



Len Murray: using 35 hr. week demand to divert from pay

PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report



NASTY SHOCK TO PERU

DICTATORS

Under conditions of massive repression against the workers' movement, the Peruvian "Constituent Assembly" elections finally took place after two weeks' delay on June 18.

Although the right wing parties won an overall majority in the Assembly, which is supposed to draw up a constitution for a return to civilian government, the results were a nasty shock to Peru's military dictators.

Miscalculation

The elections begin to look like a massive miscalculation on the part of the regime.

The two leading parties were the right wing nationalists APRA (led by the veteran bourgeois nationalist Haya de la Torre) and the even further right Christian Popular Party.

They got respectively 36% and 27% of the vote and of the 100 seats in the assembly.

The other bourgeois element in the assembly is

the so-called People's Revolutionary Party—the remnants of the supporters of the early "radical" years of the military regime under the deposed President Velasco Alvarado.

This group of opportunists (some of whose leaders were nonetheless arrested during the campaign) got what it will no doubt consider a disappointing 7%.

This was a little more than the other former supporter of the Velasco regime, the Communist Party, which received only 5% despite its significant role in the main trade union federation, the CGTP, and in the general strike in May.

Restricted

But the most striking result was that achieved by the FOCEP (the Workers, Peasants, Students and People's Front).

With its leaders deported and the vote restricted by

repression and the electoral law which barred all but the officially literate—FOCEP gained nearly 12% and is therefore the largest grouping apart from the two main bourgeois parties.

Alliance

The third, Popular Action, boycotted the elections.

The FOCEP was an electoral alliance of far left groups including two which claim to be Trotskyist—the USFI affiliated Workers' Socialist Party (PST), one of whose leaders, Hugo Blanco, was last week released from jail in Argentina and allowed to go to Sweden; and the Marxist Revolutionary Workers' Party (POMR), politically allied to the French OCI, whose secretary general, Ricardo Napuri, was one of those arrested and deported to Argentinian jails before the

elections.

The remarkable success of the FOCEP—especially in the slums around the main cities—must be a severe warning to the regime.

Although the generals can do a political deal with the right wing majority parties in the assembly, it cannot possibly control the process of transfer to civilian rule as it wanted to.

First it faces a difficult choice about whether to restore legal rights to the elected left candidates.

Enhance prestige

If it does so, it will enormously enhance the prestige of leaders who have supported major and threatening mobilisations against the government.

If it does not, it will reveal once and for all the farcical nature of its "democratic" plans.

Yet the regime's need to find some way of control-



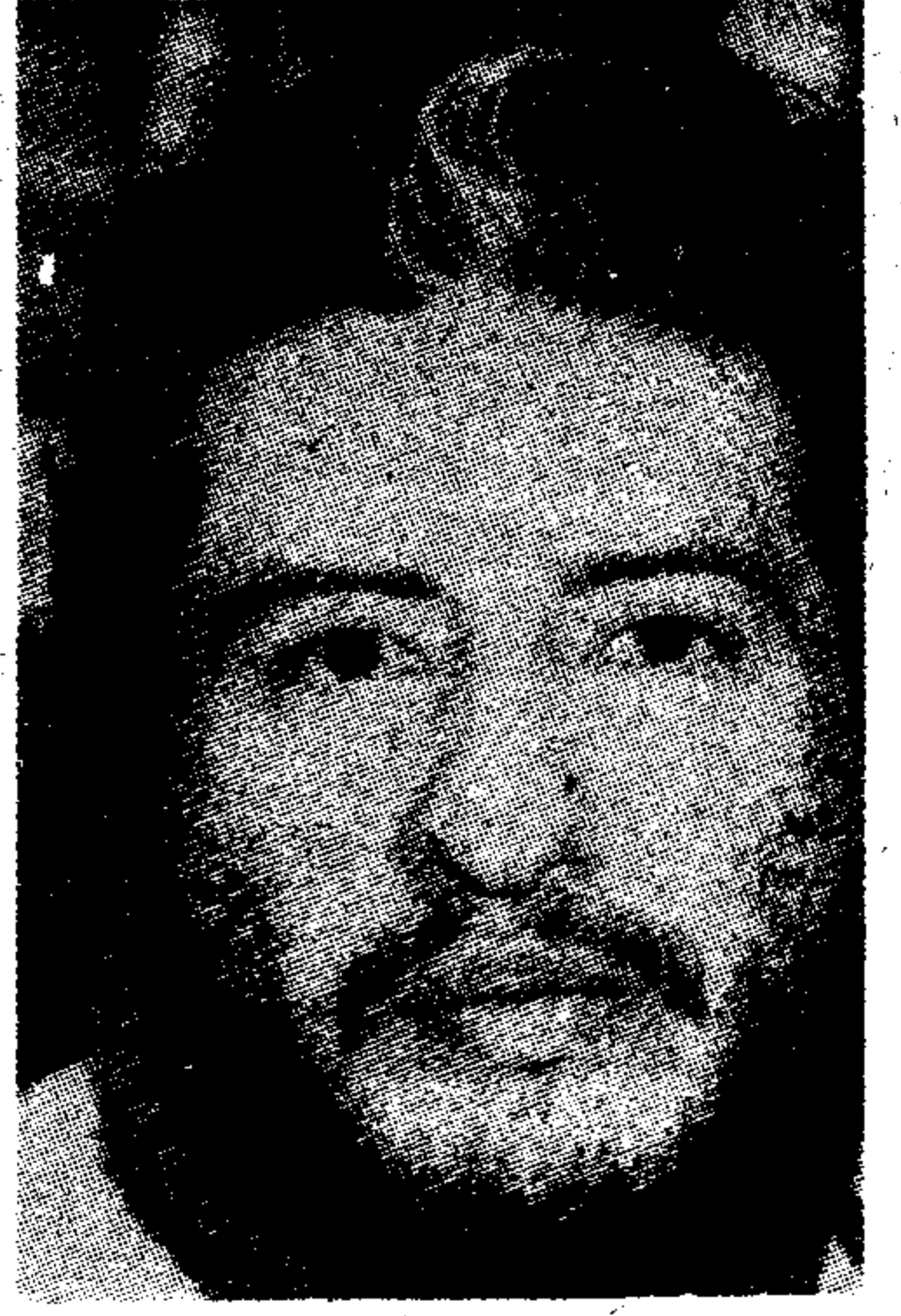
Ricardo Napuri

ling or placating the mass movement has never been more urgent.

Last week the Finance Minister announced that Peru's foreign debts had now risen to \$8 billion and he admitted that real income levels were less than two-thirds of their level five years ago and that less than half the population were in "adequate employment".

In these circumstances it is very unlikely that the regime will do anything but attempt to step up its repression.

As part of this it will no doubt regard its unshapely creation, the "Constituent



Hugo Blanco

Assembly", as easily expendable.

The Peruvian workers and peasants can expect nothing but further terror and repression from this government.

They must prepare for a renewed struggle for real democratic rights and for the restoration and improvement of their sub-human economic conditions.

The election results show, if nothing else, that a sizeable section of the masses are beginning to prepare for such a struggle.

And this now places a heavy responsibility on those they are looking to as new leaders.

Unless a decisive break is made from the politics of the 'United' Secretariat of the Fourth International and the OCRFI, the danger is that the "Trotskyist" representatives now elected will resort to opportunist manoeuvres in place of a consistent struggle for the political independence of the working class.

Wave of pay strikes grips France

While the French government sends its troops to defend imperialist interests in Africa, the force of the bourgeois state is now being turned against the struggles of workers within France itself.

The Maritime Police is enforcing a ban on all mass meetings within the naval dockyards, and imposing a lock out in some areas.

The 60,000 strikers in the naval yards and munitions factories are demanding parity

with engineers working in the state sector in Paris.

Wave of strikes

But this massive action is only part of an enormous wave of strikes for higher wages, improved conditions, and in defence of jobs.

In the last fortnight strikes have erupted in the ironmines, steelmills, textile industry, furniture industry, and many other sectors.

Further action is threatened on the railways and in the docks.



8,000 workers from the Brest arsenal march in protest

In every case workers are demanding wage increases far beyond the limits of the Barre plan, and many strikes have moved to the level of occupation—as in the Renault car factories, and the plants of Moulinex (domestic appliances).

But although the occupation at the Flins plant of Renault was ended by the riot police, in other areas the state has held back from using its legal powers in this way.

Despite the demands of employers, the French govern-

ment clearly fears direct confrontation with the militant strength of the working class that is being expressed in these actions.

CORRECTION

WE REGRET that a typographical error in last week's page 3 article on China caused some confusion. The final paragraph should have read:

"The Sino-Soviet split does pose a major threat to the struggle of the world working class, and makes more urgent the task of the Trotskyist movement to build a revolutionary leadership in China and the other degenerate workers' states for the political overthrow of the reactionary Stalinist bureaucracy and the defence of the progressive nationalised property relations."

ERITREA

BECAUSE we have devoted the whole of page 3 in this issue to the exclusive interview with an EPLF spokesman and news on developments in Eritrea, our background series of articles on the history of that struggle will continue next week.

Also in next week's Socialist Press: France May-June 1968; French Popular Front (Part 2) Make sure of your copy!

Economic and political crisis grows in Germany

The hopes of Western imperialism that West Germany will provide a firm basis for rectifying the international economic crisis of capitalism is starry-eyed, to say the least.

Fervent preparations are now being made for the summit meeting on July 16/17, where, it is hoped, Schmidt will agree to expand German growth.

But all is far from healthy in the German economy. Inflation has been kept to 3%, but the growth target of 3% is unlikely to be achieved, especially in the wake of lost production due to the massive engineering strikes and lockout in March and April.

Unemployment, at the lowest level for 4 years, is still nearly 1 million.

And the recent failures of the SPD's coalition parties, the liberal FDP, threatens the continuance of the Schmidt regime.

In recent elections in

Hamburg and Lower Saxony the FDP was virtually annihilated, in favour of the SPD in the former case, the CDU in the latter.

Part of the opposition came from the so-called 'green' ecological parties of young radicals. Some 25% of younger age groups abstained altogether.

The resignation of Maihof, FDP Interior Minister, on May 6th, following the publication of the report of the Schleyer kidnap, heightened the crisis of the FDP and of the coalition.

He had been attacked from both sides, from the left for his responsibility for widening repression, from the right for failing to eradicate 'terrorism'.

Even the dormant SPD 'lefts' were forced, two years ago, to protest at the practice of border police making a record of those in possession of left-wing literature.

More recently he has been blamed for the spectacular 'liberation' from the West Berlin

Moabit remand prison, of Till Meyer, by 5 commando women.

Now the FDP is internally split over whether to ally with the CDU, the SPD, or not at all.

Meanwhile, it offers no clear independent identity.

If it loses again at the forthcoming elections in Hessen, the government will effectively grind to a halt. For with a two-thirds majority in the upper chamber every decision by the Bundestag can be overturned.

A more serious threat to the economic security of the Federal Republic comes in the increasing strains in the cosy co-operation achieved between union leaders and employers since the war.

The strike wave earlier this year was a shock. But the recent DGB conference (equivalent body to the TUC) also voted under a section on youth unemployment, for a 35-hour week and for nationalisation of key industries, banks and insurance companies.

In brief

Italy

Italian and Yugoslav dockers have started an immediate, indefinite boycott of all ships flying the Chilean flag.

This was taken "in solidarity with the hundreds of democratic Chileans who have been on hunger strike to protest against the fascist regime of Pinochet and to have news of the thousands of prisoners who for some time have been missing in the hands of the political police".

Palestine

Sabri Khalil Bann, leader of the Baghdad (Iraq) section of the PLO has attacked the "capitalist policies" of Yasser Arafat which, he says, have placed the movement in "the iron grip of the Arab regimes". He said the first priority was the struggle against the Israelis in Palestine and then the "reactionary regimes" in Syria, Jordan, and the Lebanon.

Portugal

Soares' Socialist Party and the Communist Party have last week passed by their joint vote, a Bill through Parliament which according to a Reuter report "provides for prison terms of from two to eight years for leaders of organisations promoting fascism or violence against democratic institutions or national unity".

Angola

ON WHAT the Portuguese regard as a 'historic occasion' reconciliation has been pledged between President Neto of Angola and President Eanes of Portugal at a meeting in Guinea Bissau on June 24/25.

The meeting has been engineered by top level US intervention in Luanda.

Vance and Young hope to regain influence in Angola, where 20,000 Cuban troops are still stationed and where Soviet personnel now command the air force and navy.

INTERNATIONAL

Cuban support continues for genocide plan

The number of Cuban troops in Asmara the besieged capital of Eritrea has risen from 2,500 to 4,000 since February.

In spite of reports of a Cuban withdrawal from Ethiopian plans for the genocide of the Eritrean masses, Fidel Castro has continued to make statements which express his clear support for the Ethiopian military dictatorship and his opposition to the national rights of the Eritreans.

That was one of the points made by Amdemicael Kahasai, member of the Central Committee of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) at a press conference in London last week.

The EPLF, he said, had no evidence to confirm the recent statements about Cuban and South Yemeni withdrawals, which apparently emanated from the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF).

Kahasai speculated that the ELF may be involved in some behind-the-scenes

manoeuvres with the Cubans and that might explain their making unfounded statements—but he had no firm evidence of that.

In general, at present, he said, the EPLF and the ELF were each allowed to operate freely in the area controlled by the other.

And recent joint military and propaganda agreements were, with some delay, being put into operation.

Kahasai warned that an all-out Ethiopian attack was imminent.

Tens of thousands of

troops were massing on the borders. And the bombing raids against the liberated areas had increased four-fold since the beginning of the year.

Cuban soldiers and engineers are now engaged in building new airfields.

The Derg, he stated, had received \$1,200 million in military aid from the USSR in the last year.

60% of the Ethiopian state budget went on financing the war.

As part of the Eritrean war, Ethiopia was carrying out mass executions in



EPLF guerrillas

Asmara and Ethiopia of Eritrean men between the ages of 16 and 40.

The Eritrean national struggle, he said, was receiving political and material support from a variety of sources.

Relations were good with the Palestine and Oman liberation movements.

Some Arab states were

assisting, including once again Libya which for a time supported the Derg when it claimed to be seeking a peaceful solution.

After the press conference, Amdemicael Kahasai gave an exclusive interview to our *Socialist Press* reporter which we reprint below.

'There is no sense in getting rid of one exploiting system to create another'

Why was the EPLF formed?

It came together in 1970 after the repression and physical liquidation of the democratic elements in the ELF escalated at the end of 1969.

It was physically impossible to conduct the struggle within the ELF and so the EPLF was formed in 1970.

And in June 1970 the first congress, if we can call it a congress—the first meeting of the EPLF was held.

What today are the main political differences between the ELF and the EPLF?

Historically it is related to the development of the struggle, the nature of the leadership which was composed of elements from the national bourgeoisie who didn't have any analysis of the Eritrean situation and failed in the mobilisation of and estimating the level of consciousness of the masses.

Instead they divided the Eritrean people and the leadership was using sheer violence against all elements who tried to correct this line.

You have a military and limited political alliance with the ELF today. But how do you characterise it politically?

The ELF is in a phase of



Amdemicael Kahasai

evolution because new elements are joining the ELF—elements opposed to the reactionary line of the ELF.

And certain lines and theories of the ELF are being repeatedly exposed.

For instance, their economic programme and their political line which maintains that the petty-bourgeoisie is the most conscious force in third world countries like Eritrea, that the working class is weak and it is only the petty bourgeoisie that can lead the revolution. This theory is being exposed.

EPLF Spokesman

They openly maintain that we are in a phase of national liberation struggle and you shouldn't conduct social revolution at this phase of the struggle.

We maintain that we must carry on social revolution along with the liberation struggle.

Their programme on land seizure and so on is a reformist one.

They say land tenure in Eritrea should be democratised but do not advocate that there should be a fundamental change in the relations of production.

It's still in a phase of evolution. The leadership is very much dominated by elements who want the establishment of a bourgeois nationalist stage in Eritrea.

And you oppose this?
For us there is no sense in getting rid of one exploiting system to create another exploiting system.

We maintain that we must create a new order in which peasants and workers along with other oppressed sections of our society would assume power and that all the benefits of the economy should go to this majority.

So in the creation of certain services like hospitals and so on one can see the difference.

What are the main practical changes in the liberated areas under EPLF control?

From the day of its creation the EPLF has mainly concentrated its efforts in the mobilisation, organisation and politicisation and arming of the masses and laying the basis for people's democratic power in Eritrea.

In this effort it has been able to wipe out illiteracy 100% from within its own ranks, done quite a lot of literacy work within the masses.

It has conducted systematic political education within the armed and unarmed masses and has brought about fundamental changes in the economy where the EPLF strives to change the feudal relations of production in the Eritrean countryside.

Could you say more in detail about these changes, about the struggle against feudalism?

In Eritrea more than 80%

of the people depend on agriculture and so the main effort has been concentrated to change this.

We have different types of land tenure in Eritrea, types of feudal tenure. The effort of the EPLF was to create cells in every village. These cells are composed of the poor and middle peasants.

Through them we conducted political education. We have armed the most conscious elements out of this and through this and the creation of people's assemblies in villages we have brought about land reform and we are encouraging the creation of cooperatives in the liberated villages.

Now various cooperative shops—people's shops—have been created. In the political field we have seen a big participation as well as the people's militia.

The power lies now in the hands of the poor and middle peasants.

For the first time in the history of the Eritrean people women are actively participating in the people's assemblies and the people's militia.

The equality of women is

not only guaranteed in the programme of the EPLF but they are actively participating in all fields of the struggle—in production in the political and military work.

What is the relationship between the role of the peasantry and that of the working class in the liberation movement?

Of course, the working class in Eritrea had a very militant role in the struggle, starting in 1941.

During the federation (1952-62) the dock workers in alliance with the petty bourgeoisie and students and so on played a major role.

The role of the peasants, due to the low level of political consciousness was very minimal in the first stages of the struggle—this also due to the negligence on the part of the ELF in mobilising and raising their level of political consciousness.

Now the EPLF has been able to mobilise the peasants in the national liberation struggle and a very close alliance of the workers and the peasants has been created.

We have set up a cadre school within the EPLF and over 80% of those who participate in this cadre school are of

peasant and worker origin.

Within the EPLF at the different levels there is this alliance which is dominating the central committee itself.

Finally, what support for your struggle do you look for from the working class movement in Britain and Western Europe?

The EPLF identifies its struggle as an integral, inseparable part of the world-wide revolutionary movement.

It is the duty of all in this struggle to help each other. For us the best form of solidarity to the Eritrean people is that the workers in the capitalist countries should intensify the class struggle in their respective countries.

But also we need political support to the Eritrean struggle, propaganda work to extend knowledge of the struggle and whatever material, humanitarian support is possible like medicines and clothes.

Our arms are mostly captured from the Ethiopian colonialists.

In general we work on the basis of self-reliance but we do not minimise the role of outside support.



Bomb damage in Eritrean capital Asmara



Eritrean youth: EPLF has wiped out illiteracy within its own ranks.

PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL

Joint committee set up to 'investigate' BL stewards

A FAR reaching step has been taken at the British Leyland Longbridge complex which allows management and trade union bureaucrats to intensify their attack on militant shop stewards.

A full meeting of shop stewards at the plant voted almost unanimously to support a joint union/man-

agement inquiry into the activities of two stewards from whom management withdrew recognition last week.

Their decision to set up such an inquiry goes far beyond even the technique used by TGWU bureaucrats in Cowley where victimisations have been carried out by internal union inquiries.

Even now, nine Cowley stewards are under threat of expulsion and loss of office through such an inquiry.

Now management are to have a direct say in the running and in the outcome of such "inquiries", which have never been more than kangaroo courts.

This means extending the principle of the collaborationist 'participation' committees with Leyland to take in the new role of victimising militant shop stewards.

Such a decision sets the

scene for a new round of attacks on those shop stewards who fight to defend the independent interests of their members.

The Longbridge stewards meeting was called when management withdrew recognition from two shop stewards early last week.

The stewards representing the engine testers on the Mini assembly track in CAB 1 had been involved in a strike in defence of an agreement.

The testers returned to work and management with-

drew recognition from them as shop stewards.

No strike action has taken place in their defence.

Works convenor and Communist Party member Derek Robinson pressed for the grievance procedure to be used, and argued against a dispute.

Stark warning

At the stewards meeting the TGWU full time officials told the stewards that it is only the union who can take away the credentials of

stewards. This is true. But there is no point in having credentials if the company don't recognise them and no action is organised to force recognition.

It is a stark warning to Longbridge workers when a body as dangerous as a joint management/union inquiry into stewards can be endorsed by over 400 stewards with no significant opposition at all.

It rams home the point that if the offensive against the shop stewards movement in Leyland by both management and trade union bureaucrats is to be halted an alternative leadership must be built within Longbridge which is prepared to fight both the full time union officials and the domination of the Communist Party exercised through Robinson.



TGWU Region 5 Secretary Brian Mathers

The continued refusal of TGWU officials at Regional or national level to call an inquiry into admitted ballot-rigging by Regional officer Alan Law (see last week's 'Socialist Press'), has once again highlighted the complete contempt for democracy shown by the TGWU's army of well-heeled, appointed officials.

But this is not the first time that 'Socialist Press', almost alone among the papers of the left, has campaigned against ballot abuses within the TGWU. On February 11, 1976 we carried the following account of a ballot held in Leyland's Cowley Body Plant:

1976 - CALLS FOR AN INQUIRY SUPPRESSED

From Socialist Press No. 27;

There is only one conclusion that can be drawn from the manoeuvres of the Region 5 bureaucracy of the Transport and General Workers Union to block an enquiry into the December ballot for regional and national positions.

This is that the non-elected full time union bureaucracy of the TGWU treats the democratic rights of members within the TGWU with complete contempt.

It emerges, for instance, that within the TGWU there is not a single rule which provides for disciplinary action of any kind to be taken against a branch, district or regional officer who violates the rules of elections or rigs a union ballot.

The sole action within union rules which could flow even from conclusive proof of corruption and ballot rigging is that the particular branch result be declared invalid!

Documented evidence

Not only that, but there is no procedure whatever for complaints or queries by branches or individuals in relation to ballots to be dealt with.

This is what has left the Region 5 Committee free to ignore complaints and demands for an enquiry from branches representing over 5,000 together with documented evidence which shows conclusively that anything over 5,000 votes in the publicly announced December ballot figures can not be accounted for.

Two of the major Oxford cars branches, the 5/293 (BL Assembly Plant) Branch, with 3,500 members, and the 5/55 Branch, with 1,500 members, lodged demands for an enquiry into the election in which the extreme right wing slate supported by the Oxford District Committee returned huge and completely unsubstantiated votes in the Regional ballot for General Executive Council, Regional Committee and National Committee positions.

Blatant

Most blatant of these results was the 6,134 votes claimed for Jack Addams, the unknown right winger the Oxford District put forward for Regional Committee as an automotive group candidate. Addams comes from the tiny MG factory at Abingdon, where he has less than 100 TGWU members. In the Cowley Assembly Plant 5/293 Branch he won only

167 out of 3,500 possible votes. The 5/55 Branch cast none of its 1,500 votes (having decided not to participate in the ballot).

This meant that Addams' votes had to come either from the 6,500 members in the Cowley Body Plant or from Coventry, the other main area covered by the election.

Continuous pressure

All the available Coventry votes can be seen to have been cast for Coventry candidates in the election, while a major branch in that area, the 5/920, with 6,000 members, also did not vote at all.

In other words, to amass 6,134 votes, Addams would have needed upwards of 5,000 votes from the Cowley Body Plant. But it can be shown conclusively that only a few hundred workers in the Body Plant voted at all in the election!

And, despite continuous pressure from stewards, the leadership of the Body Plant (5/60) Branch will not reveal the voting figures from that factory ballot.

Discrepancy

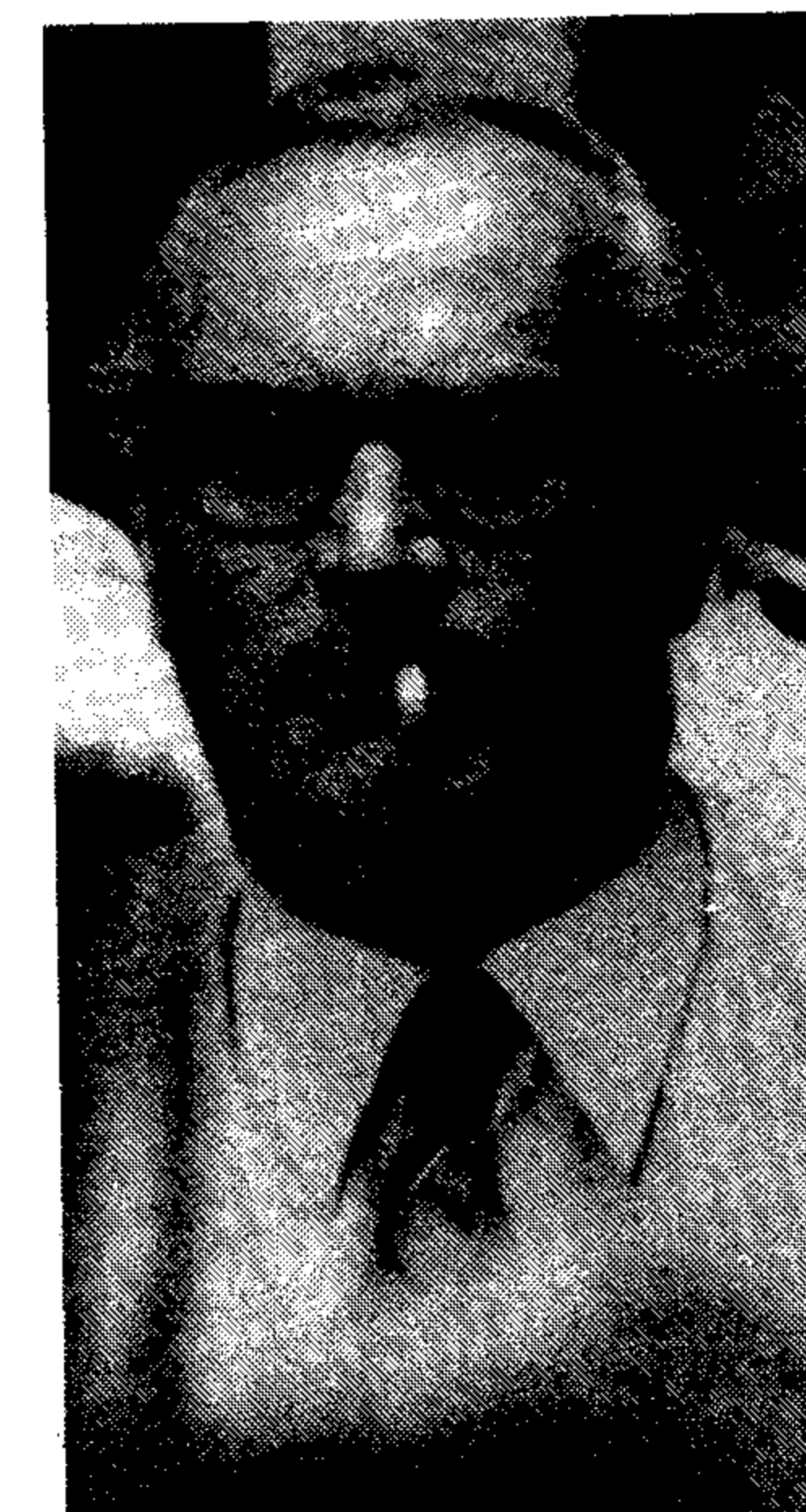
The case is similar for the other two positions, in which Body Plant convenor Bill Roche was elected to GEC with 11,442 votes, and Assembly Plant convenor Reg Parsons polled 6,700 votes coming second in the election for National Committee.

There is a discrepancy in each case of something like 5,000-5,500 votes between published results and possible votes cast.

And in each case the 5/60 Branch leadership refuse to answer questions or give figures. And now the intervention of Region 5 bureaucracy has given them full protection from any further enquiry.

The manoeuvre was simple. The Regional Committee after receiving the Branch complaints opened a "preliminary investigation".

This "investigation" took the form of summoning the two scrutineers from the 5/60 Branch to Regional Office. None of those who had lodged complaints was interviewed or given any opportunity to present further evidence.



Bill Roche

As a result of their "investigation" the Regional Committee decided that a "minor technical infringement" had taken place, declared the results null and void, and called for a re-run of the entire election.

Having declared the results null and void they cleared the way to destroying any remaining evidence of the Body Plant voting figures!

What was the "minor technical infringement"? It was destruction of the evidence! It turned out that the ballot papers needed for the enquiry had been destroyed after one month instead of the three months asked for in the Regional Committee circular.

Yet even this "minor infringement" means it would appear that the ballot papers were destroyed after the first complaint and demand for an enquiry was lodged by the 5/55 Branch!

For the bureaucracy the unanswered question of the December ballot are now a thing of the past.

They do not intend to start an investigation which could raise serious questions as to the role of the extreme right wing

5/60 Branch leadership and serve to further discredit them in the town.

But most workers in the Cowley Body Plant are in no doubt on the question. They know only a handful voted in the last election, and why the leadership refuse to declare the results.

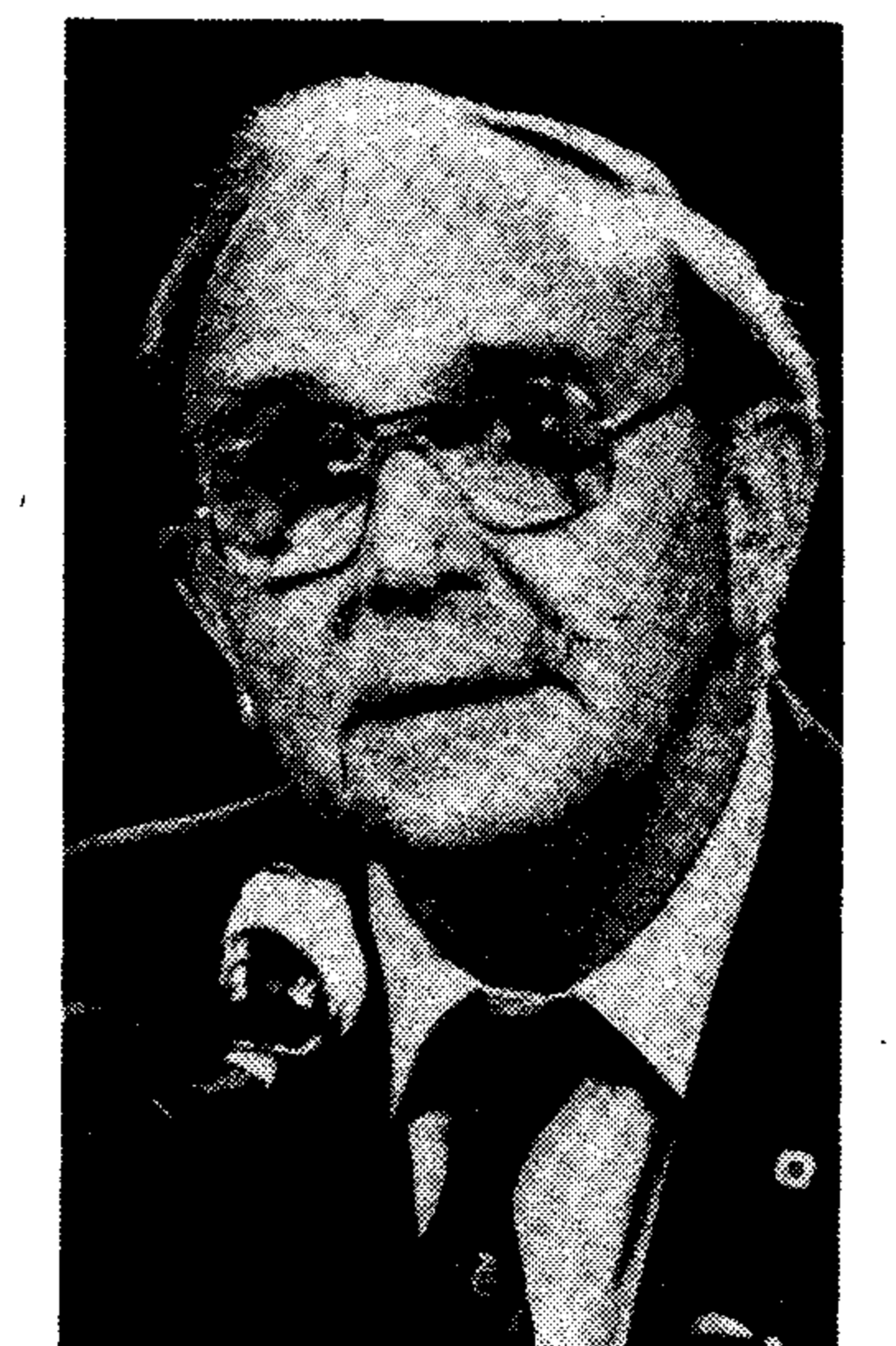
If the bureaucracy can evade an enquiry and exonerate a branch leadership simply by declaring a result invalid and rebalotting, is there any way forward?

This is a particularly sharp issue when we remember that none of the full-time TGWU District and Regional Officers is elected, and none answerable to anyone other than the General Secretary Jack Jones who in practice carries the power of the union's elected General Executive (and who himself, once elected, "shall hold office during the pleasure of the union").

The biggest union in the country thus has a rule book which is wide open to the most flagrant breaches of democratic procedure by its officials.

In instances where ballots do take place, workers must press in every way for the election of rank and file branch members as scrutineers, and for voting figures and procedures to be open for inspection at any time to members of the branch.

New rules providing for the automatic removal from all office of a scrutineer or branch officer who is party to a dishonest election must be brought forward along with demands that all full time officials of the union be subject to regular election and recall by the membership.



Jack Jones

Cowley 9 -new bulletin

The Cowley 9 Defence Campaign, fighting for the dropping of the disciplinary charges against nine TGWU militants in BL Cars Cowley Assembly Plant, this week issued its second Bulletin to supporters and sponsors.

Drawing attention to the acute danger of underestimating Regional officials' determination to proceed with the charges, the Bulletin points out that the TGWU Region 5 Committee is due to consider the Cowley 9 inquiry at its meeting on July 12.

"If the recommendations of expulsion from the union and banning from all office are carried out, the 9 Cowley stewards could find themselves victimised two days before the annual two weeks holiday shutdown".

The Bulletin gives an up-to-date picture of the attempts by AUEW member John Power and ASTMS member Keith Dancy to interfere in this internal TGWU inquiry by using their positions as President and Secretary of Oxford Trades Council in order to raise complaints against some of the Cowley 9. It

points out that:

"The 'evidence'—two secret letters written by the Trades Council Secretary—had never been seen by Trades Council delegates, let alone discussed!"

And the Bulletin also includes evidence of the connivance between TGWU District Secretary David Buckle and Leyland management, who prepared and submitted to Buckle an eighteen-page dossier on elected Deputy Convenor Alan Thornett—who, as one of the Cowley 9, is threatened with expulsion from the union.

Brief accounts of the Alan Law ballot-rigging affair and a report of the near-unanimous vote by all 170 TGWU Assembly Plant stewards to support the Cowley 9 highlight the contempt shown by Regional officials for the views and democratic rights of the membership.

And, calling a meeting of TGWU campaign supporters for Wednesday July 12 at 7.30pm in the Digbeth Institute, Birmingham, the Bulletin calls for an intensification of the campaign to force the dropping of the trumped up charges against the Cowley 9.

'Labour cares' claims Callaghan

A new glimpse at the cynical line to be followed in the Labour leaders' election campaign was given in a speech last weekend by Prime Minister Callaghan.

Attacking the Tories as "the most profligate party this country has ever seen", Callaghan launched into a defence of spending cuts.

Then with calculated deception he swung into breast-beating glorification of the "benefits" the Lib-Lab government has supposedly heaped on to pensioners, housewives and disabled mothers:

"I believe we can justifiably

claim: Yes, Labour cares. Labour does care".

Brushing aside the historic cut in workers living standards inflicted during the last four years by Labour leaders "caring" for capitalist profitability, and the mass unemployment which has brought misery to millions of workers and youth, Callaghan went on to boast of:

"... Care and compassion for those in need, the unique bonds [!] of family life, qualities that are nearly always found in the home: the quality of integrity, service before self, fair play".

For millions of working women, 'family life' is certainly

a "bond"—that by preventing the socialisation of domestic labour ties them hand and foot to the most vicious oppression and exploitation in the home.

And as the income to each home declines relative to the cost of living, and the social services are cut back, forcing the burden of health care and care for the elderly onto the backs of individual families, Callaghan's speech cynically gloats that Labour policy is to:

"strengthen the family as the place where our children learn to practice consideration for their fellow human beings".

"That is the sort of socialism I believe in, the sort of socialism that has its base in individual

moral values".

The sort of socialism that socialists believe in has its base in the liberation of working men and women from the oppression and exploitation inflicted on them by crisis-ridden capitalism.

But to do this the working class must first divert itself of reactionary reformist leaders like Callaghan and his coalitionist cabinet colleagues, and take steps to construct a revolutionary party based on a programme of demands that lead from today's struggle to the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, the smashing of the capitalist state and the dictatorship of the proletariat.



Private firms plunder 'nationalised' industries

Further evidence continues to emerge to prove the massive plunder of the nationalised industries carried out by private suppliers.

Two weeks ago came the shamefaced announcement by the Post Office that it had been "overcharged" by £9 million on contracts for telephone cables over an 11 year period.

But perhaps more interesting was the fact that the four cable-making monopolies concerned—BICC, Pirelli General, Standard Telephones and Cables, and Telephone Cables—were finally forced to admit to

the overcharging only after a Post Office commissioned investigation of their accounts.

Embargo

At first the Companies refused to allow the Post Office access to their books.

It took a Post Office embargo on external contracts for cables to force them to change their minds and allow investigation of contracts worth a colossal £450 million.

It turned out that not only did the cable-makers extract huge and (even by capitalist standards) excessive profits from the nationalised Post Office, but that they also operated an illegal price-fixing deal between them to ensure that these margins were maintained.

But while Post Office managers in this instance used sanctions to force these firms to open their books, union leaders have taken no such action. Nobody knows how many other firms are "overcharging" the Post Office.

Killing

Meanwhile as BL Cars chairman Michael Edwardes continues to use the acute financial crisis of the company as a lever with which he hopes to force through further speed-up under the guise of an 'incentives' scheme, figures from the privately-owned component firms indicate that they are making a killing on the backs of Leyland workers.

A survey has shown that the top ten UK motor component groups hit an average profit margin on sales of 8.2% in the past year. Some went as high as 12.2%. Without the "state-owned" BL Cars these margins would be substantially hit.

Manipulated

And though some of the figures for foreign-based component firms appeared lower, it is likely that in many instances these figures are manipulated to dodge tax.

As the *Financial Times* pointed out, (with a frankness not seen during the Chrysler rescue operation three years ago):

growing fat on "fair" profit levels, while workers in the nationalised industries, like other workers, face declining living standards under wage control, and the effects of public spending cuts?

Open the books

Is this kind of backstairs exploitation the reality behind the crisis of British Leyland or British Steel Corporation's alleged "losses" of £500 million? What share of this is creamed off by the banks?

The case for a fight by elected trade union committees to open the books of private and nationalised industry and show the need for nationalisation of the private sector, without compensation, under workers' management is inescapable.

Only in this way can steps be taken towards a planned socialist economy.

Lining wallets

How many other private suppliers are lining their wallets through high-priced Post Office, Health Service or British Rail contracts? How many more are

ANL-unity of the graveyard

"Rock around the clock—preferably with a Tory" was the message which came from the inaugural meeting of the Anti Nazi League at Winsford last week.

This pathetic 'solution' to deal with emerging fascism was supported by the Socialist Workers Party, the Communist Party and one WRP supporter who seconded the motion to set up the branch.

Almost immediately the meeting started, WSL members were accused by the SWP speaker of 'disruption' for bringing "politics into it", presumably thereby sowing seeds of discontent.

Indeed the SWP speaker thought this was precisely

why the Nazis seized power in Germany: "The German people just couldn't agree", he said.

At the beginning of the meeting the chairman read out a letter from the local Conservative Party rejecting an invitation to join the ANL on the grounds that they (the Tories) were against the "curtailment of the freedom" of the NF to speak and to organise themselves—indeed had the Tories thought about it they might have reminded the Stalinists that this was their joint position at the recent NUS conference.

WSL members wanted to know why Sid Bidwell left Labour MP and a leading spokesman for the ANL could equate being against the racialism of the NF and yet be a supporter of the notorious Parliamentary Select Committee Report on Race and Immigration which even forced fellow Labour MPs to describe it as a "gift to the NF".

The contradiction of having Labour MPs who voted for Labour cabinet policies which produced the conditions for fascism to grow and yet could sign the ANL founding statement was not resolved.

The ANL is an organisation whose lack of principled politics will certainly lead them to a unity—a unity of the graveyard.



Bidwell



Thatcher—leading advocate of the values of the family

PHOTO: Mark Risher

PRESS GANG

Faceless shadows

The Tory Party have just recruited one George Ward, managing director of a little known film processing business in North London, to their approved list of possible Parliamentary candidates.

This Mr. Ward—who has apparently gained some recent experience in handling trade unions—has, says the *Daily Telegraph*, all the necessary qualifications for the job, although he is at present without a constituency.

Marcus Fox, Tory vice chairman in charge of candidates, told the paper: He conveyed to us his very strong beliefs in the things the Conservatives stand for".

Mr Ward himself said: "I believe that some of my recent experiences are relevant to finding a proper relationship between the trade union movement and the rest of the nation".

Very good. Excellent. Just what the nation needs, a "proper relationship".

Judging from this article it looks as if Mr. Ward could join the immortals.

Certainly the *Telegraph* is anxious that those who rise to the top of the Tory tree are given their true place in history.

Last week the paper launched a new series assessing the many statesmen in the ranks of that great party, with an editorial which asked, rather rudely, "Is Mrs. Thatcher's Shadow Cabinet a bunch of faceless nonentities?"

Apparently the answer is no.

"These pieces emphatically deny that Mrs. Thatcher is encompassed by mediocrity", says the paper.

The first to be assessed is a Sir Geoffrey Howe, who is said to resemble Baldwin in his "modest reasonableness".

He has apparently a reputation as Mogadon man because he puts people to sleep but, says the *Telegraph* this is unfair.

market, (which if adopted says the *Telegraph*, would have avoided the embarrassment of the Robert Relf case).

The only other assessment so far has been of Sir Keith Joseph who is said to have sustained the Tory Party's association of "intellectuality (!) with mental instability".

This possible future chancellor is described thus: "He will treat the questioner—no matter how nihilistic, mean minded or uninterested in genuine discussion he or she may be—as an earnest seeker after truth, just like himself.

Courteously, he will explain that capitalism is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition of freedom. After which the world will go on his way with everyone believing what they did before".

So this Mr. Ward is certainly heading for exalted company. We should surely give thanks to those trade union leaders who allowed him to pick up his valuable qualifications.

LESSONS FROM THE FRENCH POPULAR FRONT

In this first part of a series on the lessons of the Popular Front governments of the 1930s Pru Chamberlayne looks at the conditions which led to the establishment of the Popular Front government in France in 1936

The 1930's are an extremely important period for the workers' movement today to study. First came the defeat of the strongest section of the European working class by Hitler in Germany.

This was at least in part caused by the 'third period' politics of the Stalinist parties, which, from 1928 to 1934, refused to work with other workers' organisations against fascism.

But then followed a new right wing form of betrayal, whereby the social democratic and Stalinist parties robbed the working class of its independence by forming 'Popular Fronts' with bourgeois parties, in a 'democratic alliance' against fascism.

Historic betrayals

The parallels with today are striking, not just in the 'historic compromise' in Italy and the 'unity of the left' in France, but also in the Popular Frontist approach of the Anti-Nazi League and the IMG-initiated Committees Against Racism and Fascism.

The next few articles are designed to give readers some understanding of the historic betrayals in France and Spain in the 1930's, and also of the difficulties encountered by the small Trotskyist sections in swimming against the tide at that time, trying to chart out a revolutionary course and build a new International in the Bolshevik tradition.

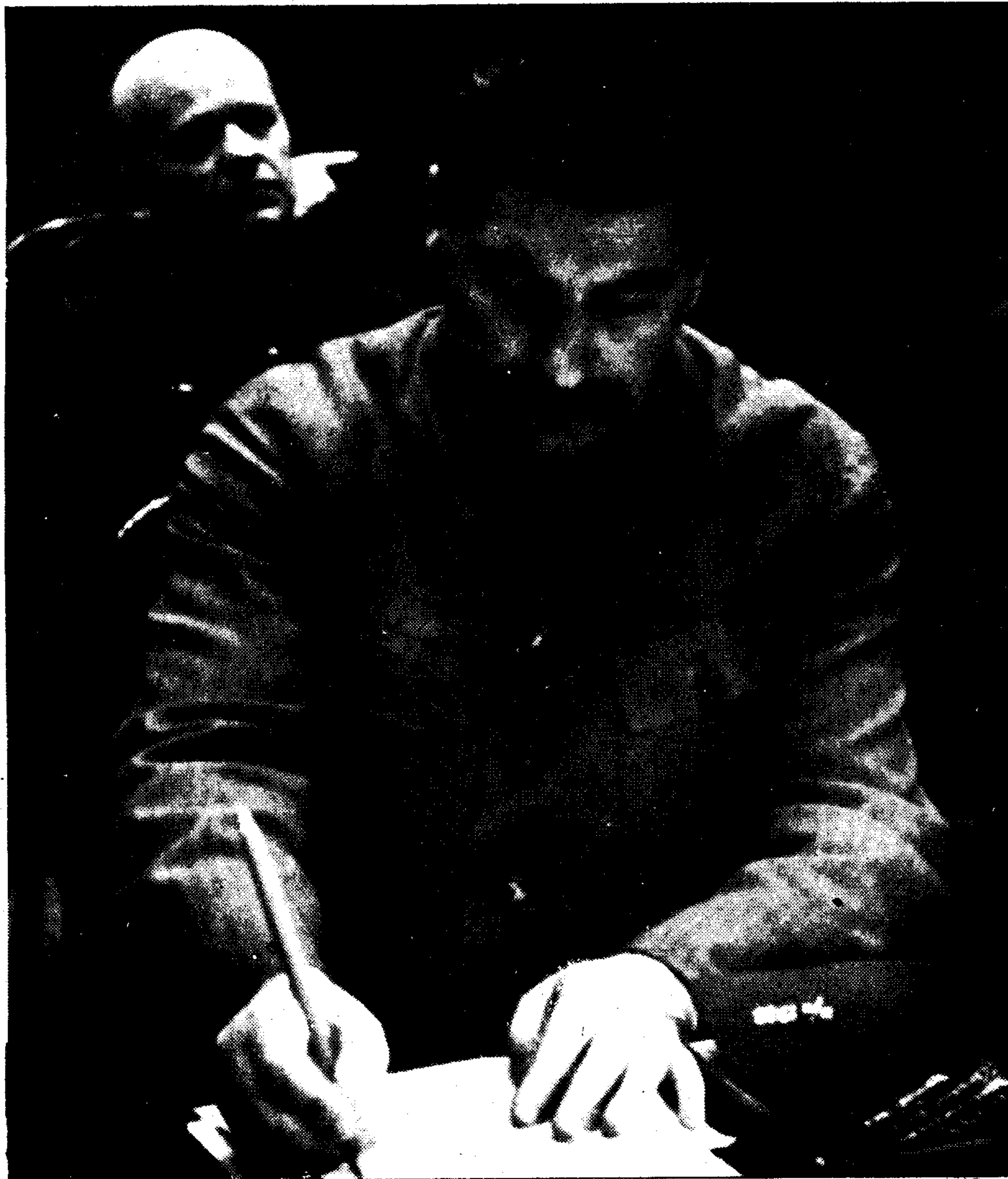
Demonstrations

They also aim to show the background to Trotsky's important writings, *Whither France, Crisis in the French Section and The Spanish Revolution*.

The articles on France deal first with the birth of the Popular Front from February 1934 to the elections in May 1936, and secondly with the period of Popular Front government from May 1936 until November 1938.

The events of February 1934 saw the two great classes in France poised against each other.

On February 6 a political coup organised jointly by Fascist, Bonapartist and



Stalin signs a death warrant during the Moscow Trials

Royalist forces overthrew Daladier, the centre-Radical President, replacing him with the right wing Doumergue, while fascists burned buses in celebration.

The working class responded with one day strikes and, despite a police ban, massive turnouts on demonstrations called by the CP on February 9 and by the Socialists (SFIO) on February 10. Fifteen thousand marched at Vincennes, 100,000 at Marseilles.

Ominously similar

The preconditions for fascism looked ominously similar to Germany.

The economic crisis, which had set in later than in the other main imperialist countries, and which reached its sharpest point in 1932, reduced living standards by 35% between 1930-35. Even by 1938 production levels were only 75% of their 1929 levels.

Bourgeois political rule was also in crisis.

Repeated scandals surrounded the centre Radical government of Daladier, elected in 1932. And since those elections fascist groups had been developing fast.

United front

On the other hand that very defeat in Germany decisively altered the political situation in Europe.

Determined to fend off further such attacks, the French working class was demanding that its organisations form a united front.

It had in any case responded militantly to the employers' offensive of rationalisation and lock out, particularly in the huge miners' and textile workers' strikes in 1931.

Even in April 1934 the leadership of both the main workers' parties the Socialists and the CP, although divided on the

issue, were firmly opposed to forming a united front.

Stalinist leader Thorez, writing in *L'Humanite* said it would be a great error and contrary to the Leninist view of social democracy as the main moral support of the bourgeoisie.

Meanwhile fascist attacks continued and some leading workers' representatives were murdered.

Suddenly on May 31, the CP put out a call to the SFIO for joint action. Within a month an agreement for 'organic unity' had been made and Thorez, previously sectarian and dogmatically ultra left, began to make patriotic speeches.

Liquidation

Doriot, another CP leading member even went so far as to propose the liquidation of the CP, by fusing the Socialists and CP in a single United Proletarian Party.

The perspective of the CP in the united front was not however to give the revolutionary lead in action that was necessary to defeat fascism.

Rather, it was for minimal demands on the grounds that the situation was non-revolutionary and that 'extremism' would frighten away large sections of the petty bourgeoisie.

Formal alliance

But the betrayals of the united front were minor compared with the much greater ones of the Popular Front, the actual tying of the proletariat to the policies of the bourgeoisie through formal alliances.

The Popular Front was formally declared on June 1935, accompanied by massive demonstrations, in which the 'Marseillaise' alternated with the 'International'.

But already in October 1934 the CP had begun making overtures to the Radical Socialists, a bourgeois party.

And in the municipal elections in May 1935, Socialists, Communists and Radicals, made an electoral pact, agreeing to stand down in the second round for each others best placed candidates.

Comintern

The decision to make this fundamental turn to class collaboration a hundred and eighty degrees different from the 'social fascist' phase from 1928-34, came not from a struggle in the French CP, or from local considerations but from the dictate of the Comintern.

Having allowed Hitler to come to power Stalin was now extremely concerned to defend the USSR from fascist invasion.

Rather than appealing to the European proletariat his solution was to make alliances with the European bourgeoisie.

In May 1935 the Stalin-Laval five year mutual assistance pact was announced. Stalinists have always argued, and continue to do so, that the pact was necessary to defend the USSR against Hitler.

Amenable

It illustrates well the counter-revolutionary effects of the policy of 'socialism in one country'.

For if the Stalin-Laval pact was to mean anything, the French working class must remain amenable to Laval, and the French CP must be seen to be ensuring that.

And so throughout the pre-revolutionary summer and autumn of 1935 the CP refused to mobilise the working class against Laval's hated 'decree-law' austerity measures, police repression, limitations on the freedom of the press, laws attacking workers' defence organisations, or to act against French militarism and savage colonial policies.

In August when violent strikes, riots and mutinies broke out in Brest, Le Havre Toulon and Limoges in protest against yet another round of public spending cuts, the CP, having insisted on the 'non-revolutionary' character of the period was acutely embarrassed.

The strikes were so militant that five workers were shot and hundreds injured before they could be brought to an end.

Dissolution

In December both Thorez and Blum openly supported Laval's call for the dissolution of all armed groups, including the groups of armed workers who were the only force actively and courageously fighting fascists.

Throughout the autumn Laval was kept in power only by the vote of the Radical Party, with whom the CP was in alliance.

When Laval was finally forced to retire in January



Hitler's victory



In 1933 changed the conditions for fighting fascism in France

It was the responsibility of the revolutionary party to provide a lead.

'One should not think that the radicalisation of the masses will proceed by itself, automatically. The working class waits for the initiative on the part of its organisation'.

Even over workers militias Trotsky said,

'There will be scorn—the first steps too will be inexperienced and maladroit. But the initiative must necessarily come from above. The party can and must provide the initial cadres'.

Valuable lessons

The French Trotskyist section, La Ligue Communiste (LC), was too small to influence the course of events significantly.

Nevertheless a study of their attempts to stand out against the great weight of betrayal of the Social Democrats and Stalinists, to launch themselves into the struggles of the working class rather than remaining an intellectual sect, and the fight against centrism within their ranks make valuable lessons for Trotskyists today.

In many respects the

formed by trade unionists, members of co-ops and sports clubs and youth, and repeatedly in 1933 they urged workers to force the Socialists to take power and called for a 'bloc against the government of exploiters'.

They hammered home the parallels with Germany and attacked *L'Humanite* and *Le Populaire*, the CP and SFIO papers, for failing to lead any action against the fascist upsurge.

Soviets

The leaflets they handed out in the February events of 1934 called for workers militias and:

'Instead of municipal councils build workers' soviets, instead of the bourgeois parliament, build a workers' parliament'.

In May 1934 they put out '10 Commandments' which included calls on urban and agricultural workers to organise together, for 'no commercial secrets', for worker and peasant control over production, for workers to oppose their own committees to the rotten parliament and concluded 'all this poses the necessity of taking power, don't forget it!

on the decomposition of reformism, was in an unstable and transitory state.

Many of its militant members must be seeking the road of revolution. The centrism of the CP, deriving from the decomposition of Bolshevism, he considered more obdurate.

Trotsky's idea met sharp opposition in the LC, and the vote was only carried by 66 to 41. Pierre Naville thought there would be nothing to draw out and said he would rather leave and Pierre Frank considered the policy 'treacherous'.

These leaders were the very members, who, once in the SFIO, succumbed most rapidly to centrism, and refused to leave the following summer.

The youth however, were prepared to make a short sharp entry, 'banner unfurled'.

Entry tactic

In September the LC joined the SFIO as the Groupe Bolshevik-Leniniste (GBL), and in fact this entry tactic, which became known as the 'French turn', was highly successful.

Within a year their membership had grown to 300. The youth, the

This would carry out united action to create people's militias, put a general strike on the agenda of each section and organise meetings between socialist and communist branches (rayons) to prepare united action.

The main slogan of *La Verite*, which was kept as an independent paper within the SFIO, was for people's militias.

Programme

The local groups they had been instrumental in forming, *Toujours Pret Pour Servir* (TPPS—Always Ready to Serve) made considerable impact at the fascist anniversary rally of the 1934 February coup.

By 1935 the CP and SP were calling for Popular Front committees. The GBL took this up and said they should be immediately established, but on the following programme: an immediate amnesty; 40 hour week without loss of salary and unemployment pay; workers' control over production, an end to commercial secrets, an inventory of the wealth of big business; nationalisation of big industry and of banks, easy credit for peasants and

1936 it was in spite of rather than because of the Stalinists.

Another consequence of the Popular Front was the CP's orientation to the 'middle ground', the petty bourgeoisie, on whom the Popular Front centred—'anyone who wishes to join in order to defend republican liberties and the peace'.

Soon the CP was concentrating on recruiting to its own ranks the middle classes, peasants, intellectuals and civil servants.

In the spring a formal appeal was made to the Catholics 'for a reconciliation of the people of France! Clearly the characteristics of Euro-communism are not just recent phenomena.

Trotsky's guidance to the French section in this period was particularly useful, given that he had experienced first hand both the 1905 and the 1917 revolution in Russia.

Popular front

His most famous writings on France were directed against the betrayals of the Popular Front.

He was in fact living in France between August 1933 and his deportation in July 1934, and *Whither France* and *Once Again Whither France* were written in November 1934 and March 1935 respectively.

They put forward the policies necessary to defeat fascism, explain why the CP minimal programme would lead to the destruction of the workers' movement and explain the content and consequences of the Popular Front.

Urgency

They are written with a great sense of urgency, a full recognition of the dangers surrounding the working class, but also of the revolutionary mood of workers which is being diverted and thwarted.

Trotsky assesses both the

objective economic situation and the workers' state of consciousness in an opposite way from the CP.

He begins with the stark fact that the intensity of the crisis means that bourgeois democracy cannot continue, that there remain only two roads, socialism or fascism. And whereas the Stalinists emphasised the 'fear' of the middle layers and the relative quiescence of the working class, Trotsky maintained that both were eager for action, that the period was pre-revolutionary—'as revolutionary as can be, granted the non-revolutionary policies of the working class parties'.

It was precisely the activity of the fascists that attracted the petty-bourgeoisie.

Strategy

They were looking for desperate solutions to their predicament and fast losing faith in the established democratic parties.

Workers too would rapidly become demoralised by weak leadership.

There are two main pillars to the strategy he puts forward—the need for 'a political offensive (a struggle for power)' and an 'active defence army (militias)'.

Echo

A revolutionary offensive under the slogan 'the conquest of power', and the name of socialism, 'will awaken an echo so powerful as to exceed the most optimistic expectations'.

Given the depth of the crisis, the employers could only be forced to concede anything if they were faced with the danger of losing everything.

But the Stalinists' insistence on minimal demands were a self fulfilling prophecy:

'The masses make hardly any response to appeals for strikes on economic grounds. The masses wait for and demand other more efficacious methods'.



Popular Front leaders in 1936

problems remain the same.

Numbering about sixty members the LC ran a regular newspaper, *La Verite*, and a theoretical journal, *Lutte Des Classes*.

Throughout this period 1933-36 the LC called for direct united front action against fascist attacks and centred on the need for a seizure of power. In 1933 they were calling for workers' militias to be

The problem facing the Trotskyist movement at this time was how to break out of its small, mainly intellectual petty bourgeois base.

Decomposition

Trotsky's proposal, made in the summer of 1934, was that they should enter the SFIO. He argued that the centrism of the SFIO, based

Jeunesse Socialiste Revolutionnaire (JSR) with their paper *Revolution*, made particularly big gains, especially in the area of the Seine Federation.

The main orientation of the GBL was to left sections in the SFIO and chiefly to *Bataille Socialiste*, led by Marcel Pivert, to whom they proposed forming a committee for revolutionary socialist action.

small businessmen, political rights for soldiers, the abolition of the two year military service, cutting of the war budget; the arrest of fascist leaders, organisation of workers' militias and arming of the proletariat.

Continued next week

IN REVIEW

Des Warren defends his real jailers

PAT LALLY reviews *SHREWSBURY, Whose Conspiracy? The need for an enquiry*, a pamphlet by Des Warren. 10p.

The jailing of Des Warren and other building workers as a result of the 'Shrewsbury 23' trials in 1973 was part of the all-round attack on trade union rights which has marked the present decade in this country.

They were victims of a carefully engineered and deliberately executed plan by the then Tory Government aimed at the right to picket and centring on the use of the antiquated Conspiracy Law.

It was not until several months following the end of the 12-week strike, an important aspect of which was the highly effective use of flying pickets against scab labour, that moves were made to bring the charges.

In the interim, Home Secretary Robert Carr had told the Tory Party conference in October that the attention of Chief Con-

stabes should be drawn to the "provision of the law" and what further action could be taken "to defeat such violence and intimidation in industrial disputes".

In January 1973 a whole battery of charges, 214 in all, were brought against 31 of the pickets. The six leaders faced a total of no less than 92 charges, predominantly unlawful assembly, affray and conspiracy.

Upheld

Although found not guilty of the other offences, which anyway carried maximum sentences of 3 months, the conspiracy charges were upheld allowing massively heavier sentences—Des Warren jailed for 3 years, Eric Tomlinson 2 years and others 9 and 6 months.

In jail, Warren courageously fought against the corruption of and constant harassment and intimidation by the prison authorities. Appeals to newly-elected Labour Home Secretary

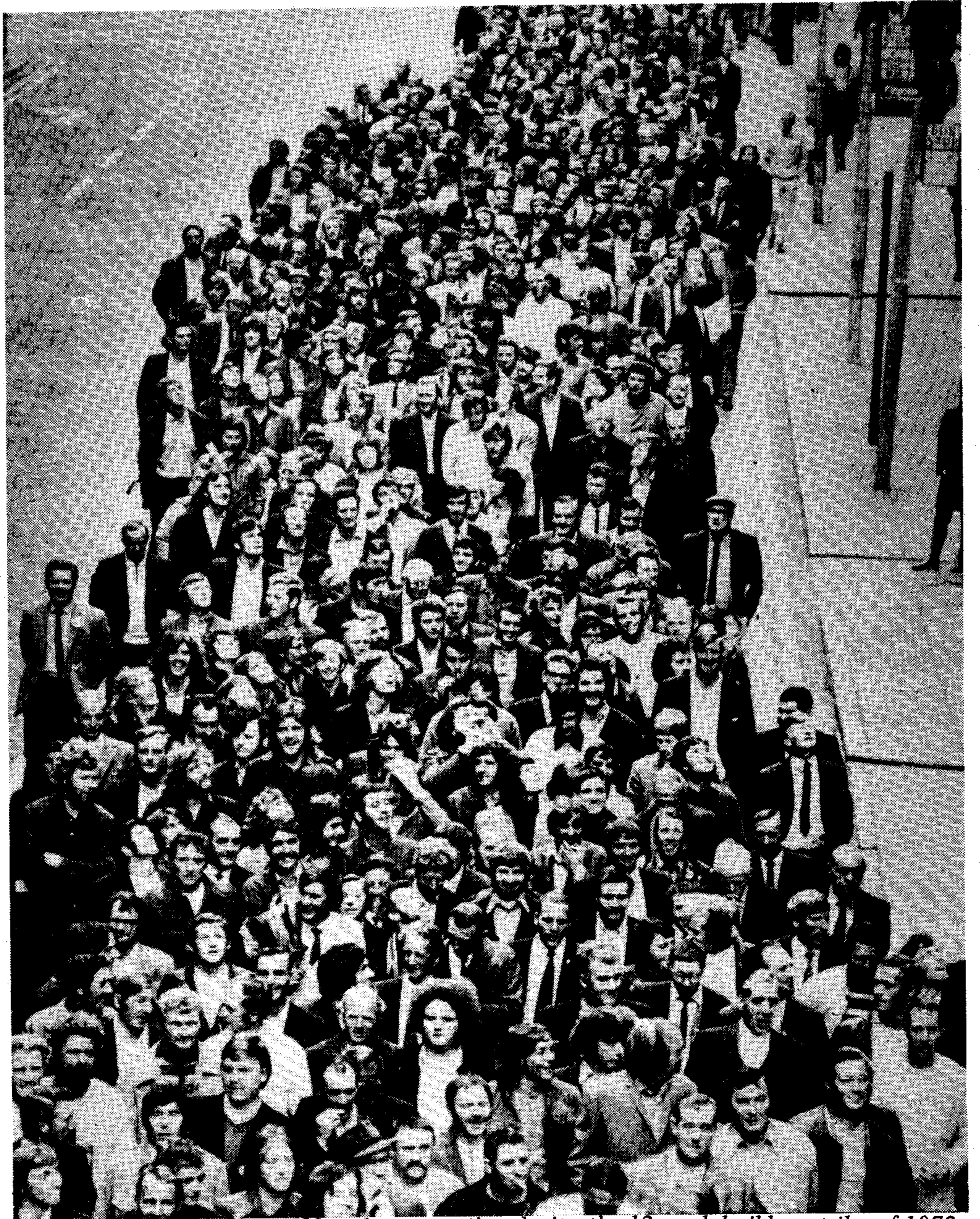
Roy Jenkins were systematically ignored.

But how was it that Warren, imprisoned in the wake of such important victories for the working class as the 1972 miners' strike, the freeing by mass action of the Pentonville 5 dockers in defiance of the Industrial Relations Act and Heath's defeat by the miners in early 1974, was nevertheless forced to serve practically the whole of his sentence?

Despite drawing telling and repeated connections between the successive Tory and Labour governments, the treacherous role of the trade union leaders, themselves moving to the right in harmony with the Labour government, is not only not taken up, but criticism of them is contemptuously dismissed as 'nonsense'.

Foreshadowed

But if Warren's critical and perceptive gaze were to examine the record of the trade union bureaucracy he



Mass demonstration during the 12-week builders strike of 1972

would see how the deliberate restriction to protest gestures of the campaign by the TUC for his release foreshadowed their subsequent role in Grunwicks and their acceptance of scabbing by the government troops in breaking the firemen's strike.

And, within that, he

would do well to look at the part played by his own organisation, the Communist Party, in consistently covering up for these betrayals.

Real conspiracy

It may be, judging by his letter in a recent issue of the

Morning Star, sharply attacking in strong class terms that paper's shabby review of his pamphlet, that this may yet happen.

As this pamphlet makes clear, the real conspiracy was between the employers, the police, judiciary and an assortment of government ministers and state officials with the eager assistance of an hysterical media and press campaign.

Parliamentary

In putting forward detailed material linking these forces, Warren powerfully demonstrates that the trial was a frame-up from start to finish, the decision to prosecute a political decision and so makes a strong case for a full enquiry into the whole affair.

But instead of demanding such an investigation be taken up independently within the labour movement by elected committees drawn from the rank and file, the call is made for a parliamentary enquiry. In other words, by the same Labour MPs, 'left' and right, who accepted his continued imprisonment with hardly a murmur.

It is no wonder George Smith, extreme right-wing leader of UCATT, Warren's union, is quoted as being fully in support of such a demand.

Vivid picture

Despite this crucial weakness, Warren draws a vivid picture of his struggle—"My prison experiences have provided me with an insight into the real nature of capitalism and some of its institutions. It is two faced: I have experienced both. Its public or 'democratic' face and its private or dictatorial face.

"The Shrewsbury frame-up was no more, nor less, than a demonstration of the fact that capitalism if required, will unhesitatingly use ruthless methods of suppression to protect its future."

Such sentiments deserve better conclusions.

Something of a record

Winston Smart reviews the record "Lazy Fascist" by Phantom on the Cool Ghoul record label

It's not every day of the week that we receive records for review at the *Socialist Press* office.

So when Cool Ghoul records sent us a copy of their first single—an anti-fascist reggae number called "Lazy Fascist" by "progressive" band Phantom—the *Socialist Press* reggae freak soon had the record on the turntable.

Musically the record is a fairly accurate recreation of the reggae sound by a white group. The hook line of the tune is pinched from a track by Bob Marley called "Crazy Baldhead" on the "Rastaman Vibration" album.

But the importance Cool Ghoul claim for the record is its uncompromisingly anti-fascist message.

Powerful tool

Among the sheafs of publicity material accompanying the disc—much of which is devoted to hammering home the point that the record is being suppressed by the media—is the claim that "music can be a powerful tool for fighting racism and fascism".

This is undoubtedly the case and the work of various

punk and reggae bands—not to mention Tom Robinson—has so far given us only a glimpse of the power that such music has in this struggle.

But the reason for this is the failure of such groups to realise that putting forward a general anti-fascist message is, in itself, not adequate.

Propaganda

The fight against racism and fascism cannot be conducted solely or even predominantly at the level of argument and propaganda.

Fascism gains a hearing amongst workers whose living standards, jobs and social services have been attacked by the Lib-Lab coalition.

They gain a hearing amongst sections of the petty bourgeoisie whose security of income is threatened by the economic crisis of the capitalist system and the way in which the big monopolies are prepared to sacrifice the "small fry" to ensure their own survival.

Real culprits

In such a situation the finger has to be pointed at the real culprits—today the right wing Labour and trade

union leaders who have created the material conditions for the growth of fascism.

And the alternative—a fight for socialist policies and for workers defence squads to protect the immigrant population and the labour movement against the fascists has to be posed.

To do this in a popular form, including punk and reggae music, is certainly not beyond the capabilities of many of the more talented groups on the music scene today.

And it needn't involve setting *Socialist Press* articles on workers self defence to music!

Geriatric

Certainly the excitement generated by the music of the New Wave and reggae bands as opposed to the geriatric left-overs of the 1960s—the Stones, Who, ELP, Yes, etc—will ensure a wide audience amongst increasingly radicalised layers of youth.

The main obstacle preventing these groups from posing concretely the way forward remains the political confusion in the minds of the groups themselves and this is nowhere more obvious than in the Phantom record.



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Not so lazy policemen arresting a black youth at an anti-fascist demonstration in Wolverhampton.

The words "fascist" and "racist" are used interchangeably in the record which immediately obscures the real nature of fascism.

They even sing the line "If this song offends you then you're a fascist too!"

They sound as if they enjoy throwing out the epithet fascist at anyone they take objection to so it becomes merely a term of abuse rather than a political characterisation.

And why fascists should be described as "lazy" is hard to imagine.

Far stronger in terms of impact is the other side of the record, an instrumental dub version of "Lazy Fascist" in which certain key phrases from the lyrics are introduced with echo and reverb to great effect.

We are clearly in a period when an increasing number

of records have a political content.

At present the majority of these records, released by the commercial record companies, tend to be characterised by a confused political message, often pessimistic in character, dwelling for example on the strength of reaction.

"Lazy Fascist" is the first overtly political record to be produced independently of the major record companies, allowing greater freedom of political content.

It remains to be seen whether this development will lead to the recording of records which are at the same time musically strong and contain a political message that can develop the struggles of youth against the oppression of capitalism.



Hua

Rifts between bureaucrats open doors to imperialists

One third of the world's population live in countries where capitalism has been destroyed.

Were the economic and political resources collectively controlled by these countries to be devoted to the assistance of socialist revolution on a world scale then the days of imperialism could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

The parasitic bureaucratic castes who rule the "socialist" countries, however, even when they were politically united in the monolith which Stalin erected, used the strength they controlled not to aid the revolution but to enforce the bureaucratic counter revolution.

Collaborated

In place of a consistent attack against imperialism those bureaucracies have compromised and collaborated with imperialism, though there have been many disputes over how the world is to be divided between them.

To that reactionary collaboration has been added a new element—disputes and competition between the bureaucracies of the workers' states which have had the function of further aiding imperialism.

Most notably in recent years the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy has developed a foreign policy explicitly based on a position that the USSR in the main enemy, set upon world domination, and so alliances are to be cultivated with the enemies of the Soviet Union, wherever they may be.

In practice that has led to grotesque flattery of the most reactionary imperialist forces.

Nixon was feted in Peking, Margaret Thatcher is praised for her anti-Soviet cold war speeches.

The European Economic Community was welcomed as a counterweight to Soviet ambitions in Europe, and so on.

'Social fascists'

Just as Stalin in the 'Third Period' years 1928-33 branded social democrats as 'social fascists', more dangerous than the *real* fascists, so the Chinese bureaucracy in attacking the USSR as 'social imperialist', have thereby decided that the *actual* imperialist nations are a lesser evil!

In its policies towards the backward and semi-colonial countries the Chinese bureaucracy has often sought to displace or preempt Soviet economic

influence (for instance by giving aid to the "progressive" governments of Tanzania, Zambia and Sri Lanka).

But more recently the emphasis has been a backing up any regime or movement opposed to the Soviet Union and its allies, regardless of its internal regime or its relations with imperialism.

Backed junta

So, as in the 1960's and early 1970's, China backed the Pakistan military dictators against India. More recently it has backed the Chilean junta of Pinochet, UNITA (also supported by South Africa and the US) against the MPLA in and the corrupt, pro-imperialist General Mobutu in Zaire.

The Chinese diplomatic offensive in Africa has been quieter than that of the USSR, not to mention the

Huang gave his blessing to the "Pan-African Security Force" which was planned by the imperialists in their meeting in Paris earlier in the month and already put into operation by the despatch of Moroccan and other troops to Zaire.

This has highlighted what seems to be a new stage into which China's counter-revolutionary international policy is entering — a stage of more or less open alliance with imperialism on a world scale against the Soviet Union and its allies.

This is not only reflected in the actions and words of the Chinese bureaucrats.

The recent espousal by the British Chief of Staff, Sir Ian Cameron, while he was in Peking, of a "Sino-Western alliance" against the "common enemy" has been followed by the liberalisation of sales of US arms to China.

Several moves have been made in the last few days

ses Peking of ambitions for world domination and compares its aims to those of Nazi Germany.

At the same time the Cuban party newspaper, *Granma*, has launched a series of virulently anti-Chinese editorials in which the Chinese are accused of joining a 'dirty marriage' with imperialism, and of 'marauding NATO arsenals'.

Never mentioned

Granma condemns the formation of alliances with countries like France which send troops to support Mobutu in Zaire or to repress the Polisario Front in Western Sahara.

As is characteristic of Cuba's statements about imperialist powers, the repression by the French bourgeois government of its own working class is, of course, never mentioned!

Nor, needless to say, is the aid given by the

North Vietnam, especially those from the Soviet Union.

And as soon as the peace treaties were signed China insisted that American B-52 bombers should be maintained in Thailand.

These aspects of the Cuban attack have reflected the rapidly worsening relations between China and Vietnam over the question of refugees.

"Renegades"

All these disputes among the Stalinists are long standing ones, even if they have sharpened in recent weeks.

But there has been also a rapid intensification of a newer dispute — between the Chinese bureaucracy and its long-standing allies, the Albanians.

Since last year Albania has made more and more public criticism of the "three worlds" theory invented by the Chinese leadership.

Two weeks ago the president of the Union of Albanian women, Vito Kapo, referred to those who held the "anti Marxist and counter-revolutionary three worlds theory" as "traitors and renegades of Marxism-Leninism".

She accused the Chinese leaders (without naming them) of "calling for conciliation and collaboration with American imperialism, with the bourgeoisies of other imperialists and with all sorts of reactionary cliques".

Diatribes

Political Bureau member, Hysui Kapo, said that the Chinese three worlds theory is "in the service of imperialism and modern revisionism" (the Albanian name for the positions of the Soviet Union).

It is reported that part of the Chinese response to this diatribe is to withdraw Chinese technical assistants from Albania and even to break economic contracts.

In a further pointed snub to Albania, Chairman Hua has announced plans to visit Romania and Yugoslavia but *not* Albania in the autumn of this year, as part of Peking's anti-Soviet strategy.

Although Albania maintains its public hostility to Soviet "modern revisionism", it can hardly be an accident that it has chosen to join the swelling anti-Chinese chorus.

If Albania's economic links with China have been cut, then, as the most economically backward of the European workers' states, it will almost certainly be seeking economic aid from the USSR or to make its own separate deal with

imperialism.

The Ceausescu leadership in Albania's neighbour Romania, is itself moving rapidly towards a separate economic deal with imperialism and a complete separation from Comecon, the economic treaty between East European workers' states.

He has protested against more power over the smaller states.

Thus in all these ways, the potential of the planned economy is wasted not only through the internal bureaucratic rule in the workers' states but through the mutual hostility of rival national cliques of bureaucrats.

The squabbles involving the USSR, Romania, Cuba, Vietnam, Cambodia, China and Albania are not differences of principle.

Opportunist

They are the opportunist quarrels of bureaucracies, all of whom are counter-revolutionary but each of whom wishes to do a deal with imperialism in their own way.

As Trotskyists we uncompromisingly defend all these states against imperialism.

But we also recognise that the opportunist rivalries of their leaders undermine the strength of the planned, nationalised economy, weaken the possibility of socialism and strengthen the forces and the confidence of imperialism.

The mobilisation of the power of the non-capitalist states in the interests of the revolution will depend on the overthrow of these opportunist bureaucracies through political revolution under the leadership of an authentically proletarian party.

Such a party must combine unconditional defence of the progressive property relations in those countries with a programme of democratic and transitional demands, leading towards the construction of workers' councils independent of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Leadership

Through such workers' councils the full strength of the working class in the non-capitalist states can be mobilized under Trotskyist leadership for the political overthrow of the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy.

The establishment in this way of a regime dedicated to the international overthrow of capitalism is the only long-term guarantee of the security of the workers' states and progress towards socialism.



Chinese soldiers inspect German tank

imperialists; but it has still been very determined.

In 1974 the Chinese signed 19 co-operation agreements with African governments. There were 20 in 1975, 29 in 1976 and 32 last year.

During the recent uprising in Shaba provinces of Zaire, who should turn up in the midst of the crisis in Kinshasa and Lumumbashi than the Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua.

Besides giving moral and material support to Mobutu,

to step up arms sales to China from NATO including last week's effort by the British Defence Ministry at Aldershot to flog them some inflatable full-scale rubber models of Russian tanks — at £3000 apiece — for target practice.

These developments have produced very sharp reactions in the Stalinist world.

In its latest article on China *Pravda* the Soviet party newspaper drops all pretence of a willingness to negotiate differences, accu-

Soviet government to reactionary pro-imperialist regimes around the world.

Chinese role

The sharpest part of the new Cuban attack — much fiercer and more detailed than any previous one — concerns the Chinese role in Vietnam.

The Chinese, according to *Granma*, during the blockade of 1972, placed every possible obstacle to the movement of supplies to



US troops retreat from South Vietnam—Cubans claim Chinese blocked supplies to North Vietnam.



Nursery fight aims at labour movement

FBU conference recalled

Seeking a way out of the problems caused by their own failure to press last winter's firemen's strike to a successful conclusion, the FBU leaders have been forced to announce the recall of its delegate conference in a few week's time.

Terry Parry and the FBU Executive are acutely embarrassed by the local authorities' refusal to back down on plans to slash manning levels as part of the agreed introduction of the 42-hour week by November.

Arbitration

Right wingers also failed to win a vote to go to arbitration rather than consult the membership.

Management negotiators have been rubbing the FBU leaders' noses into the mess caused by their own refusal to fight the TUC betrayal of the pay strike.

They have declared that they will only withdraw plans for a three-shift system with the 42-hour week, and allow a continuation of the present two-shift system, if all their other demands for cutbacks are conceded by the FBU.

These include:

*Full acceptance of the job-evaluation study contained in the National Joint Council booklet "The Qualified Fireman's Job". This means incorporating as regular duties many jobs at present negotiated locally.

*The right of local authorities to introduce the "day manning" system—relying on firemen in tied housing next to fire stations—without any negotiations with the union. This could mean a two-thirds cut in manning in some stations.

Cut costs

*Variable manning and 'nucleus manning' are also proposed, to cut costs and prevent the introduction of the 42 hour week bringing an increase in jobs in the fire service.

*A new preface to be inserted into the NJC grey book on conditions of service as follows:

"Neither side of the NJC shall unilaterally impose or continue any restrictions on the

full operation of national agreements. Disputes which cannot be resolved at local level after the exhaustion of any local machinery shall be referred to the NJC and no local action will be taken by either side, pending the outcome of national consideration".

Block action

This would block local action by militant FBU areas, and leave members at the mercy of Executive level negotiations.

*A cut in the manning levels on appliances from the current level of five on the first appliance to the fire or road accident and four on subsequent appliances.

This is a straight decision to risk lives to save cash.

FBU members must ensure these demands are rejected in full, and the 42-hour week introduced.



At the highpoint of the Oxford Nursery occupation

After nearly six weeks of occupation of the South Oxford nursery class, and a further seven weeks of running a 'Nursery in Exile' as a focus for the fight against the cuts, the Oxford Nursery Campaign has

decided to close the class and concentrate efforts on the struggle within the unions and the Labour Party.

At a meeting last week it was agreed that simply to continue the class, staffed by volunteer labour, would amount to doing the job which should properly be done and financed by the Council.

The fight against the cuts in Oxford has certainly been sharpened enormously by the action around the nursery, which also provided a national focus for discussion on the fight for occupations against the cuts at a rally three weeks ago.

Action central

In a statement issued to the press announcing the closure of the class and the continuation of the fight the Campaign stresses the fact that:

"The key to victory in fighting the cuts is action, not just token support. The history of our campaign so far points to the absolute centrality of occupation and strike action in defence of nurseries, schools, hospitals and the social services generally".

It is this message, linked to the demand for the opening of the books of the social services to elected trade union committees, to expose the

profiteering and waste involved in a state system serviced and milked by private companies and the banks, that will be rammed home in the labour movement as the campaign goes on.

NAPO: Sellout on pay must be fought

Branch meetings of the National Association of Probation Officers are to be asked in the next week or so to ratify an agreement on pay reached by the union's Joint Negotiating Committee and management.

NAPO was committed to seek a 14% rise—but as yet no details of the recommended settlement have been released. It seems certain that the deal will not exceed the Lib-Lab government's 10% pay limit.

However steps are to be taken to abolish the single salary scale—which in the past has compelled NAPO members seeking improved salaries to go for promotion to senior grades.

This change of policy was bitterly opposed by right wing elements in the NAPO NEC and by chairman Maurice Brogden, but carried at the union's recent Annual General Meeting.

So too were a series of motions condemning the bureaucratic dictatorship by Brogden and the NEC and opening the door to wider discussion of trade union and political issues.

These moves by NAPO members to assert control over their leaders must be followed up by the construction of a leadership prepared to struggle against wage control for the improvement of pay and conditions.

HOSPITAL WORKERS HIT BACK AT CUTS

The frustration and anger of hospital workers at the deterioration of their working conditions is shown by the rash of actions staged in hospitals this week:

*The work to rule by EETPU workers claiming £8.50 per week to reach parity with the private sector as agreed in 1972 has affected 100 hospitals throughout the week.

Panic

At the Royal Free, one of London's largest hospitals, the management panicked at the effectiveness of the action and on Thursday virtually closed the hospital.

Admissions were stopped, emergency operating theatres closed, casualty closed and many patients moved to other hospitals in an attempt to reduce their numbers from 800 to 500.

*All six unions at Great

Ormond Street hospital have threatened strike action on Monday unless police searches of staff, started recently after a series of thefts, are called off.

The workers object to the flagrantly racist behaviour of the police in mainly picking on and harassing black workers.

*A walk out by 60 cleaners at West London Hospital after their wage packets had been docked by 10% was supported by other workers including boilermen.

The management had conducted an experiment in abolishing clocking on, which NUPE members reckoned proved the system to be unnecessary.

The dispute broke out when management tried to restore it. If the one remaining scab boilerman had gone on strike the hospital would have closed

completely.

*In Greenwich the strike by nurses against the introduction of a new lower grade of nursing staff has continued.

The work to rule by electricians has swiftly brought a new pay offer, on the basis of which Peter Adams, EETPU officer, has called a national delegate conference of 500 shop stewards on Monday.

He has not disclosed what the offer is, not surprisingly, if rumours about it are true.

These indicate that it will be 10% plus an incentive scheme which is already operating in some areas and which will certainly involve a loss of jobs.

The fact that many EETPU workers already on the scheme would not benefit at all would make it highly divisive, and by staying safely within the pay guidelines it would do nothing

to beat the paycode policy.

Yet the readiness of hospital workers to take action shows their determination to strike a decisive blow against the rundown of hospital services resulting from the Callaghan-Healey cuts.

These latest struggles indicate unmistakably that it is impossible to defeat one aspect of the attacks of the Lib-Lab government in isolation from the others.

The struggle against wage control must continue hand in hand with the fight to stop and reverse the cuts.

This is the fight which hospital union leaders must be forced to take up, and which the pressure of their members is making it more and more difficult for them to avoid.

SOCIALIST PRESS ★

5 issues £1.10
10 issues £2.20
25 issues £5.50
50 issues £10.00

I would like to receive ... issues. I enclose the sum of £.....

Name

Address

Send to: Socialist Press, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

Subscribe!

WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

Summer School

"The Reconstruction of the Fourth International"

July 23 to July 30, 1978

Open to WSL members and supporters

For details write to WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

INTERNASYONAL
Turkish language magazine published by the Workers Socialist League
Number 6. 20p plus 15p p&p
From: WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

Workers Socialist League

The Workers Socialist League is a Trotskyist organisation fighting to construct a principled revolutionary leadership in the working class in Britain and internationally and for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International on the basis of the Transitional Programme.

The WSL fights at every step against the existing leaders of the trade unions and the Labour Party—now firmly harnessed to the bourgeois politicians of the Liberal Party in an unspoken coalition arrangement.

Against their policies of class collaboration we put forward instead a programme which points to the independent class interests of the working class, its need to organise independently to overthrow capitalism, destroy its repressive state machinery and establish a socialist planned economy.

Only in this way can workers resolve today's problems of tumbling living standards, mass unemployment, slashed social services, racial, national and sexual oppression.

For more details on the WSL and its work, fill in the form below.

Name

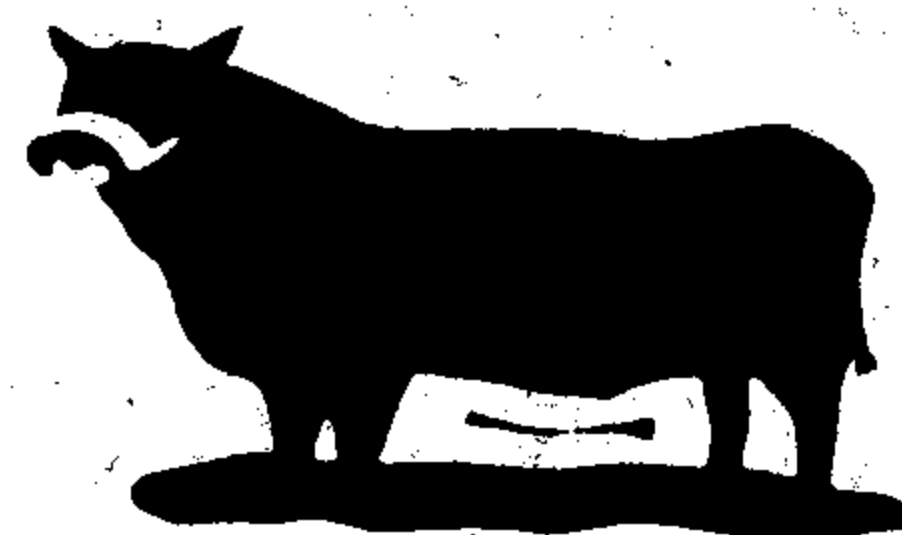
Address

Trade Union/Occupation

Send to: WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Garner's conference



unites 'left' and right

There must be a constant struggle against the 'left' and right division of labour within the TGWU bureaucracy if the 21-week Garner's strike for recognition is to be successful.

That was the unmistakable lesson from the 220 strong delegate conference on the strike held last Thursday in Transport House.

Reconvened as a decision of the initial conference on April 13, where a succession of 'left' TGWU officials, most prominently Eric Rechnitz of the Regional Committee and Brian Nicholson from the Executive Council, had pledged themselves to a fight to the finish, the meeting brought scenes of anti-bureaucratic feeling unfamiliar, if not unknown, to the TGWU leaders' shrine in Smith Square.

Absent

With Rechnitz and Nicholson both eloquently absent, it was not possible to settle matters with all of those who during the ensuing two months have expected the strikers to exist on a diet of rhetoric.

But in that category, those who did turn up were left in no doubt that the strike is far from finished despite their efforts.

The conference itself provided an almost classic line-up of political tendencies active in the workers' movement with the Stalinists of the Communist Party prominent in their usual role of shielding the right wing.

Conscious force

The conference also saw the growing emergence of a conscious force within the strike leadership fighting to turn to the mobilisation of the working class and not to allow the bureaucrats for one minute to get off the hook by left phrases or vague promises which will not be carried out.

The statement from the strike committee chairman presented to the conference contained many important points arising from the experience of the strike and the discussions of the committee but avoided centring on the TGWU leadership's sabotage and put forward

the strike committee policies only in a watered down form.

On funds, the document called on "the Regional Committee to institute a voluntary levy on all members in Region 1".

Some big factories in Region 1 like Fords and Vauxhalls had already been approached, but similar efforts should be made in branches, workplaces and other unions.

The report ended lamely with a call for a day of action though only with a poster parade.

Those who were 'randomly selected' from the speakers slips in the first part of the meeting were of two types.

Irrelevance

Firstly there were the ultra-lefts including at least two WRP supporters, who called variously for general strike action to bring down the government, a national delegate conference to deal with all attacks on democracy, and other vague demands of mindboggling irrelevance.

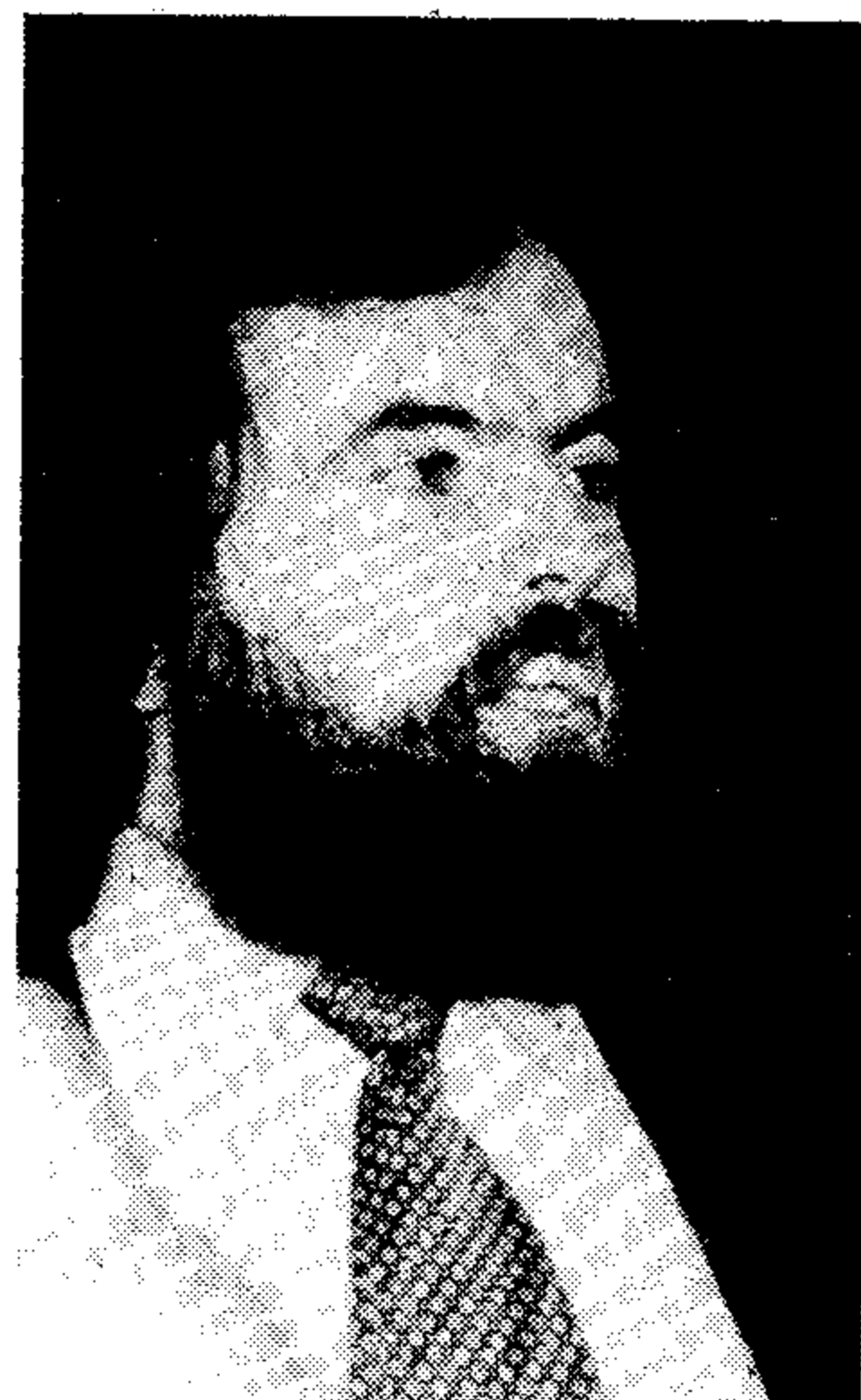
Secondly there were some speakers who called in various ways for the strike to be stepped up.

Thus Chris Wright of Westminster Trades Council wanted to build up the mass picket to 20,000 to block the West End.

Richard Davis, also from that Trades Council and active on the support committee, spoke of the need to extend blacking.

Previous strikes

Frank Dowling of ASTMS Region 15 brought the conference alive for the first time by referring to previous strikes in the catering industry directed against Trust Houses Forte and in particular to the role of the TGWU leadership.



Dromey

This firm had been blacked by his union with the greatest of difficulty, and then they discovered that the TGWU rest home at Eastbourne was serviced by a THF subsidiary!

Dowling doubted, he said, the will of the TGWU leaders to win this strike.

As if to confirm this, the newly appointed Regional Secretary of the TGWU, Les Shorter, then arrived to speak.

His speech which drew an angry response from the majority of delegates, provided the turning point of the conference.

'Left' credentials

Shorter began by trying to establish his 'left' credentials with a favourable reference to the *Morning Star*.

He went on to say that he didn't intend to criticise the trade union leaders, but instead criticised the members, whom he said he had been trying to get to picket with limited success.

In fact, Shorter, along with his fellow Regional officials has studiously avoided any appeal to the union's 500,000 London membership.

The scant TGWU delegations to conferences, picket lines and demonstrations show that beyond any doubt.

As if to justify his inaction and in open defiance of the strike committee's policies, he went on to say that it would be best to avoid confrontations, and



Durkin

anyway pickets of one or two could be better than larger turn-outs!

This statement justifiably enraged many people in the audience, a number of whom had been arrested in the fight back against management and police harassment.

When Shorter went on to say that he intended to meet the police about 'the agreement to limit the picket to six' there were shouts from all sides that no agreement had been or should be made along these lines.

By this time when 'Judas' was one of the milder epithets being shouted at Shorter, and with full-time official George Abrahams calling for the meeting to be closed, strike committee chairman Habib Rahman was forced to intervene in the meeting to defend Shorter and to say that he wanted to hear what the leaders would do to help them.

Entirely consistent

Rahman's intervention, though no doubt a surprise to the many who have acclaimed him for his 'rousing' speeches at various gatherings over the last five months, was in fact entirely consistent with his role within the strike leadership.

Together with other 'lefts' around the strike, he has continually covered up for the right wing though passing in public for the strike's militant face.

On this occasion he was drawn out into the open for the first time and though successful in diverting the growing hostility away from Shorter it was done only at the expense of showing his real position in relation to the right wing.

Manuel Blanco, another member of the strike committee, spoke after Shorter and drew the warmest applause of the evening.

In a strong contribution he sharply distanced himself from Rahman, saying he did not agree that the TGWU leaders were doing enough, and emphasised the strike committee policies of mass picketing, extended blacking and a union organised regional levy.

He called for the day of action on 22 July to be accompanied by mass picketing and strike action throughout the TGWU Region 1 hotel and catering membership.

Chairman Alvaro Miranda would not allow these proposals to be voted on in the conference.

Tom Durkin of the Brent Trades Council performed his usual role of trying to pull the conference away from this by windy rhetoric.

In his best Grunwick tradition, he congratulated the strikers, called on them to be 'bold', and asked for 'more money' and 'bigger pickets' to win the strike.

Everyone could agree with promises like these, which have been made and broken every day of this 21 week strike.

Durkin's colleague Jack Dromey also confined himself to moral exhortations and to telling us that 'we can't write off the leaders of the trade union movement', and then putting forward nothing whatever to win the strike.

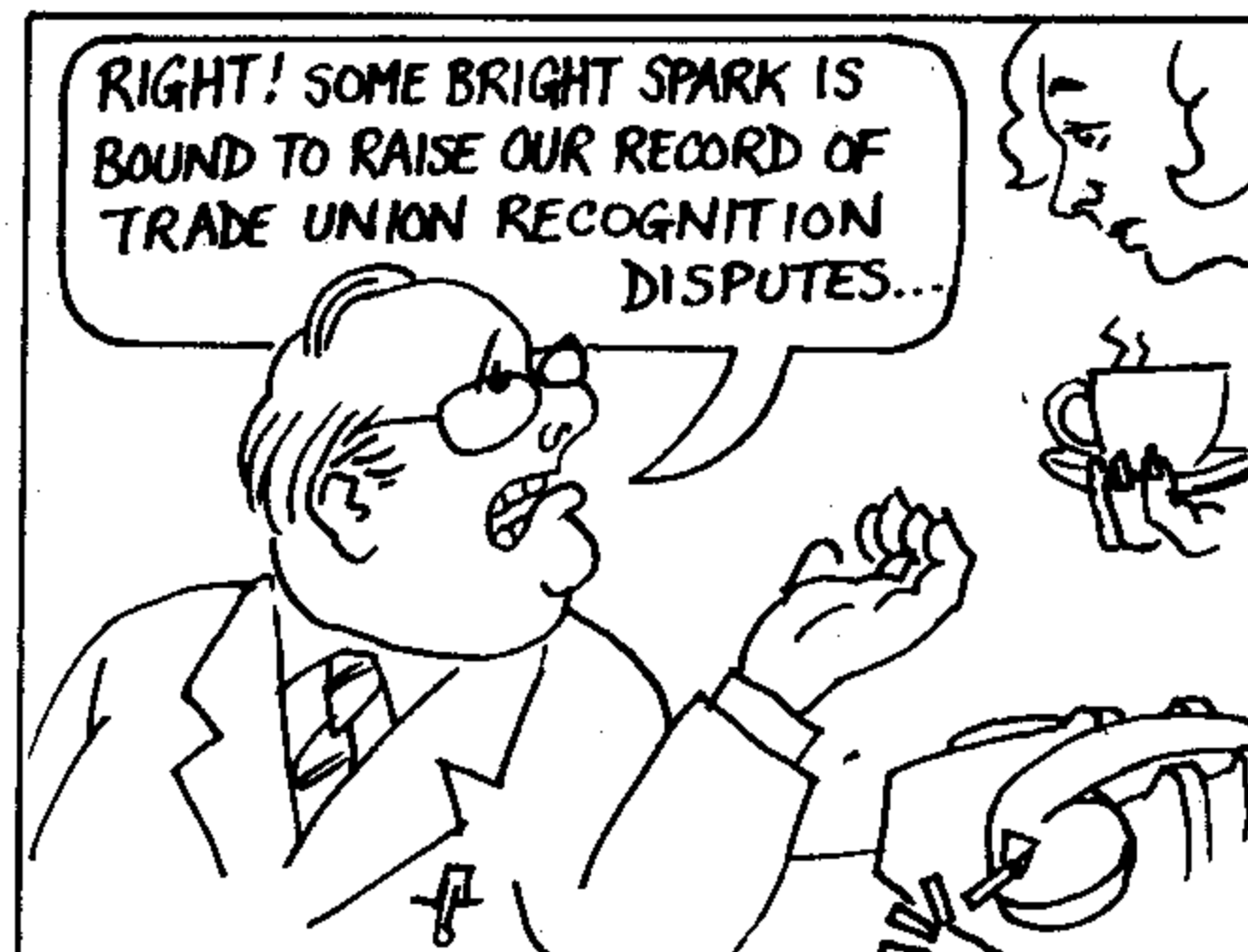
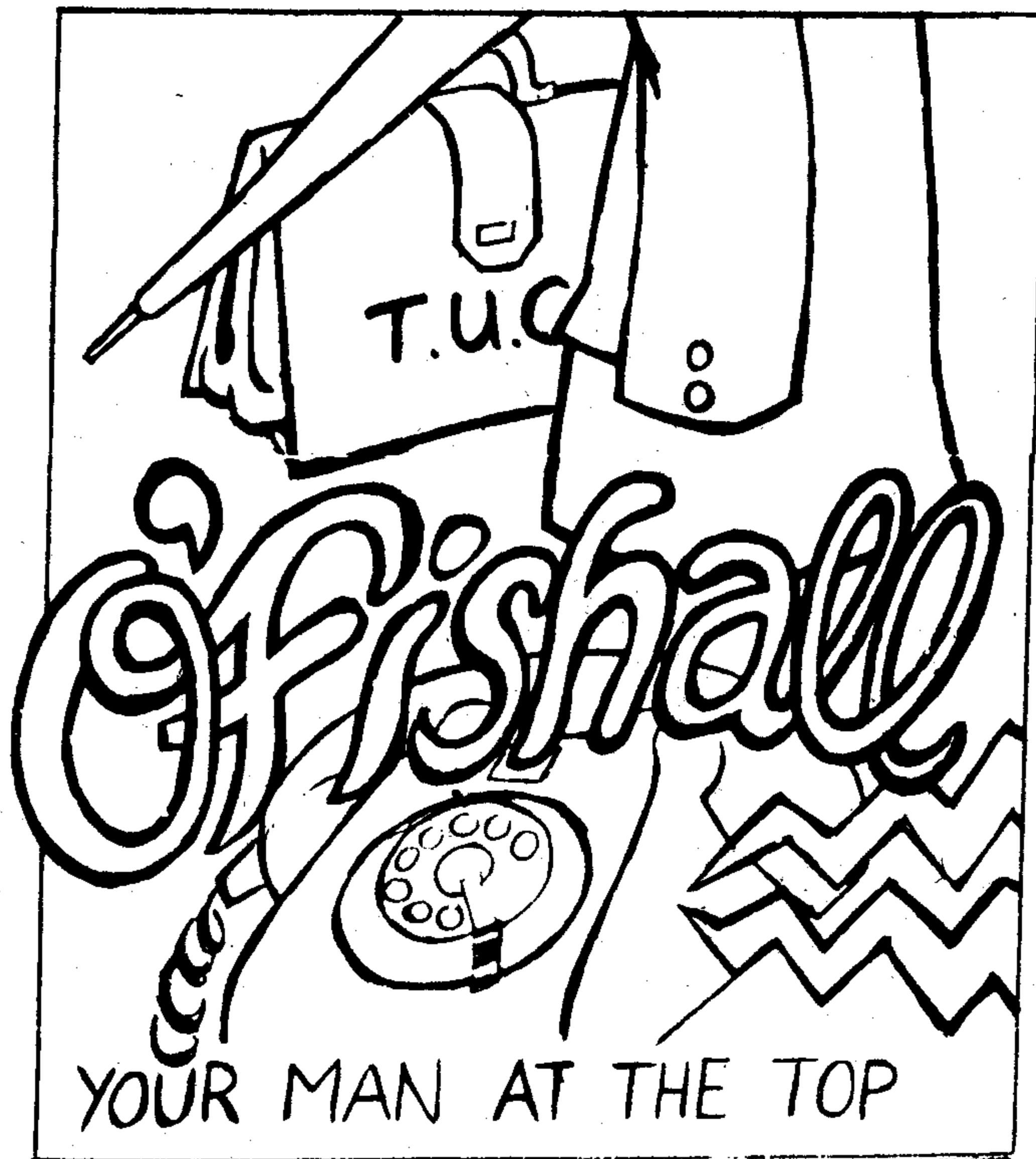
Dromey was in complete harmony with Shorter in ignoring the strike committee's calls for mass picketing and the levy, taking away all the fire on the leaders of the union and instead calling simply for more effort from the strikers and their supporters.

Confirming the danger of Dromey's line, ASTMS delegate Colin Kenny got up in the dying minutes of the conference to ask Shorter if he would fight on the Regional Committee for a levy. Appropriately, Shorter refused to commit himself even to argue in favour of it.

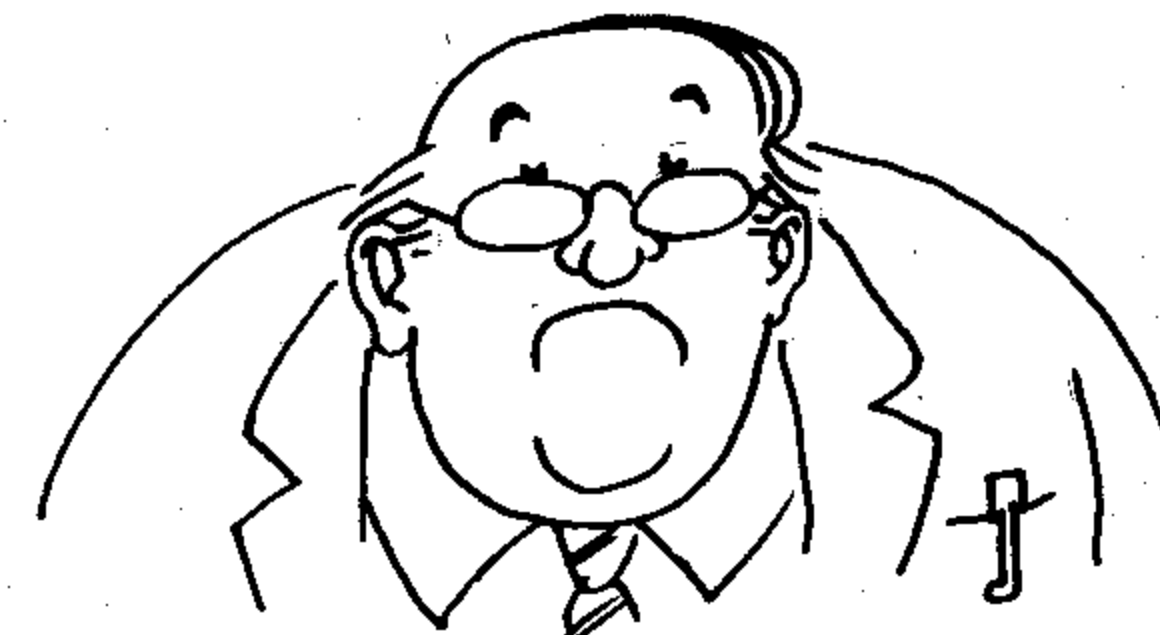


PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL

Garner's pickets: Shorter argues one or two better than many



FOR EXAMPLE... 3 TRUST HOUSE FORTÉ HOTELS, DESOUTTERS, CLARIDGE'S - AND GRUNWICKS, OF COURSE...



SOCIALIST PRESS ★

Leaflets burnt
but ANL sticks
to pacifist line

ZANU refutes 'murder' smear

The Zimbabwe African National Union, the organisation led by Robert Mugabe, and the main organisation continuing the guerrilla war against Ian Smith and his black stooges, has issued a statement in relation to the massacre of the twelve British missionaries at Vumba, near Rhodesia's Mozambique border.

They make it clear that they had nothing to do with the massacre and accuse the notorious Selous Scouts section of Smith's Rhodesian army.

They say this was done to divert attention from the raid into Mozambique by the Rhodesian army last week in which 17 black refugees and 2 Belgians working for the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation were killed.

The statement went on to say that on an average 20 civilians were being killed every day by the Rhodesian army and in one incident in Chanamora over 100 were killed.

ZANU say they have maintained excellent working relations with the missionaries.

Considering that every capitalist paper has not just accused ZANU but presented the case as though it was admitted, it is no wonder that the ZANU statement has gone unreported.

The murders, and the way that they have been reported in the capitalist press are quite clearly part of an attempt to force the so-called "internal settlement" on the Rhodesian blacks and to isolate the guerrilla movement.

FUND

Another good week for the Special Fund with £100.11 arriving including Winsford £10; Oxford £33.11; Liverpool £15; Sheffield £15; Central London £5.00.

Our total now stands at £1729.51 and with a little over a month to go to the end of the fund we must stand a good chance of going well over the top.

By how much we do so depends on you.

All donations to the Fund should be sent to:
WSL Special Fund
31, Dartmouth Park Hill
London NW5 1HR



Labourites supervise Irish torture-official!

While both the European Commission for Human Rights and Amnesty International have found proved the allegations of torture of detainees in Northern Ireland, Labour Minister Roy Mason has refused to shift from policies of barbaric repression to prop up imperialist interests.

Mason's contemptible retort about "self inflicted injuries" mirrors the South African police claim of "suicide" by black detainees from the top of police buildings.

Acquiescence

Mason has had the full acquiescence of Labour Party "lefts" and the Southern Ireland bourgeoisie in organising the massive police state repression in Ulster: totalitarian surveillance of all Catholic homes; systematic torture of suspects by plain-clothed interrogators at Castlereagh RUC barracks; the physical attacks on the legal Provisional Sinn Fein; and the closest collusion between roving bands of plain clothes SAS murderers and the Loyalist paramilitary squads.

The Labour government is responsible for the anti-working class so-called "Prevention of Terrorism" Act, and for the repeal of prisoner of war status from detainees.

But all these measures have not, and will not break the will of the anti-imperialist movement.

On April 27 this year, at 4 am, 50 individuals from the Catholic community were arrested by 300 heavily armed RUC men

backed by a large force of British troops.

However, only three days later a protest demonstration of 10,000 marched through Andersonstown.

In 'H' Block of Long Kesh concentration camp, 330 republican and socialist prisoners are demanding political recognition by refusing to wear prison uniforms which their present "criminal" status demands.

They are being held naked except for a blanket ("on the blanket") without heating, letters, visits or reading matter; while their women comrades at Armagh are held in solitary confinement for pressing the same demand.

80% of these prisoners are being held on the strength of a statement without further evidence, extracted by torture, and sentenced by one judge without recourse to a jury.

Reality hidden

Predictably, the ever-servile bourgeois press prevents any real reportage of such issues so that the reality of capitalist repression is hidden from the British working class who will face the same methods in the escalating struggle.

As Trotsky wrote in the Transitional Programme:

"Democratic slogans, transitional demands and the problem of the socialist revolution are not divided into separate historical epochs in this struggle, but stem directly from one another".

In *Permanent Revolution* he writes:

"With regard to countries with a belated bourgeois development especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving democracy and national emancipation is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses".

The Workers Socialist League recognises its clear revolutionary obligations to support the national struggle against British imperialism, while fighting within it for the leading role of the organised working class around a socialist pro-

gramme culminating in the overthrow of capitalism North and South and the establishment of a workers republic.

Imperialist oppression of Ireland must be fought inside all organisations of the labour movement. The Prisoners' Aid Committee has called a national rally on Sunday 9 July at 2.30pm at Speakers Corner, Hyde Park.

The WSL urges all labour movement bodies to mobilise maximum support to this march around the demands:

*Prisoner of war status for Republican and socialist prisoners as guaranteed by the Geneva Convention!

*Troops out now!

*Self determination for the Irish people!



Imperialist troops in action

As news emerged of yet another murder of a Bengali by white youth in East London and the burning of the Anti Nazi League's London headquarters by National Front supporters, the bankruptcy of the ANL's pacifist campaign of pure propaganda has been once more exposed.

ANL leaders and sponsors—who range from the self-styled "revolutionaries" of the Socialist Workers Party, through bishops, actresses, Liberal politicians and football managers to Labour 'lefts' and now the Communist Party—have concentrated on "fighting" the NF thugs through leaflets, posters and badges.

But the fascists have refused to be bound by such restrictions and 50,000 ANL leaflets were destroyed in the fire on Friday which did an estimated £20,000 worth of damage.

Labour movement meetings have also been attacked—the latest being a Labour Party meeting in Ashton-under-Lyme, broken up by NF thugs on Friday.

In many other areas physical attacks by racists and fascists on black workers have been stepped up.

Defence squads

Yet the ANL, tailing its most bourgeois supporters, still refuses to put out a call for the building of workers defence squads to put an end to fascist violence.

The only policy that can defeat the latest NF attacks is a call to every workplace, factory, working class estate and immigrant community to unite in forming defence squads trained to combat the fascists.

If the ANL or any other organisation would fight for such a policy then the Workers Socialist League would fight alongside it.

Indeed, if Peter Hain and the rest were even once willing to use their TV time to put out a call for the building of defence squads this would be a step forward.

The Workers Socialist League appeals to all those who support the policy of workers defence squads to discuss with us and to raise it inside their organisations. The fight must begin now!

Workers Socialist League

Public meeting

"Trade union democracy and the fight for revolutionary leadership"

Sunday 2 July at 7.30

Wheatsheaf Hotel
Delamere St.
Winsford

OUT NOW!

The first edition of *Red Youth*, the monthly paper of the Socialist Youth League (in political sympathy with the WSL).

Available from SYL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London, NW5 1HR for 5p plus 7p p&p (for individual copies) or £1.44 for a year's subscription.

(Regular *Socialist Press* subscribers need only send 60p).

In our front-page article on TGWU ballot rigging last week we inadvertently referred to National Committee and General Executive Council positions as 'national officers' of the Union. They are of course lay, not full time positions.