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Navy scabs on pay fight

While Labour and TUC leaders put their signatures to a new document proposing wage controls "Into the Eighties", Royal Navy scabs demonstrated the real meaning of this policy as they moved in to break the blacking action by industrial civil servants in pursuit of their pay claim.

This action, echoing the massive army strikebreaking during the Firemen's pay strike, is a clear warning to the workers' movement.

Permanent wage control—with a 5% limit for Phase 4—has been spelled out by the right wing leaders as the central plank of Labour's election manifesto.

Break strikes

If Callaghan is re-elected, he will attempt to use this as a mandate for all-out action by the state to break any strikes against the new pay limit, which comes into force on Tuesday.

But the TUC leaders and Labour Party 'lefts' are using the pretext of the coming election to head off any struggle against the 5% limit and lend their support to the plan for permanent wage controls.

Even though postal workers' leader Tom Jackson was the only TUC General Council member to defend the 5% limit, and the

TUC PLANS ELECTION BLACKMAIL

TUC is now nominally opposed to the policy, these same leaders on Wednesday signed a joint statement agreeing that "each year there must be:

"a thorough discussion with the trade union movement so that there is a broad understanding in this as in the other areas of our national economic life".

But it was precisely such innocent sounding "discussions" and "broad understandings" that led to the TUC collaboration in the enforcement of every previous round of wage

controls, which have successively cut back the living standards of every section of workers in order to boost the profits of private industry.

The support for this vague form of words by six TUC bureaucrats threatens to tie millions of trade unionists in a permanent straightjacket in which the basic right of workers to bargain freely for wage increases is denied.

The TUC leaders are joined by "left" Labour MPs in winding up even the pretence of a fight against

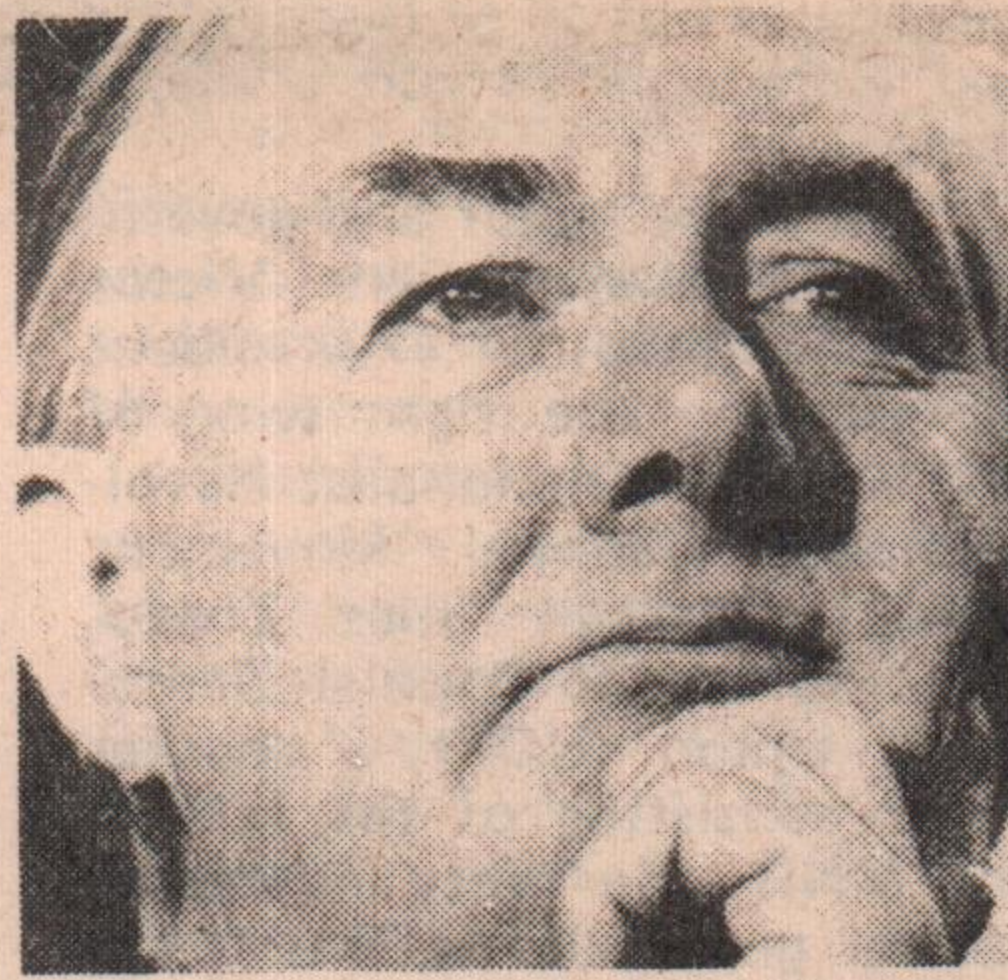


PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Callaghan this plan as the election looms nearer.

The handful of Tribune MPs who still profess to stand to the left of



PHOTO: Mark Rusher, IFL

Striking firemen—victims of army scabbing

Callaghan split on the question of whether to support the 5% pay policy—one section voting for the government "to prevent a Tory win" and another eight simply abstaining.

And not a single TUC leader has declared a willingness to lead action to break the 5% pay limit.

Rather than expose the betrayals of four years of Callaghan-Healey leadership and lead a campaign for their removal and for an alternative socialist programme, both "left" and right wing bureaucrats in TUC and Labour Party

unite to argue that a Tory government under Thatcher would be "worse".

Workers must decisively reject the attempt to blackmail them with the threat of a return of the Tories.

Heath was brought down by the workers' movement: Thatcher, too, if elected, could be defeated by an all-out mobilisation of the working class.

Betrayal

The only reason Thatcher stands a chance of being elected is because of mounting bitterness at the years of Labour betrayal.

The central issue for the workers' movement is to break from those Labour and TUC bureaucrats—"left" and right wing alike—who have carried out these betrayals, and to mobilise its independent strength in the struggle to regain and defend lost living standards around the demand for catching up pay increases linked to cost of living clauses to compensate for inflation.

Within the trade unions and the Labour Party the fight must be taken up for the removal of Callaghan and his cabinet of wage-cutters.

Reveal position

Those 'lefts' who claim to represent "socialist" policies must be forced in this way to reveal their real position—for or against the existing leadership.

In the course of such a fight, workers will begin to grasp the impossibility of resolving their problems through Parliamentary elections and spineless reformist leaders, and recognise the necessity to construct a revolutionary leadership in the trade unions to further their struggles against the attacks of the next government, whether it be headed by Thatcher or Callaghan.

New genocide danger in Eritrea

Huge dangers now confront the heroic guerrilla forces now fighting a 200,000-strong Ethiopian army offensive in Eritrea, in the North-east 'horn' of Africa.

Major military setbacks last week allowed the Stalinist-backed Ethiopian forces to capture the formerly liberated towns of Adi Quala and Tessenei, and put at risk a number of towns and areas previously held by the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF).

This weakens not only the ELF but also the rear positions of the larger Eritrean Popular Liberation Front (EPLF), which has so far succeeded in beating back Ethiopian attacks.

There seems little doubt that the crisis-racked Ethiopian regime headed by military

despot Mengistu Haile Mariam has staked everything on a speedy and brutal move to crush the 17-year struggle by the Eritrean people for their right to self-determination.

Such has been the tenacity of this protracted struggle that the bloodthirsty and unstable rulers in Addis Abbaba must realise that even if they were to conquer the territory they can only hope to "pacify" the Eritrean people through the most barbaric slaughter.

Stalinist allies

It is this factor which explains the reluctance of Mengistu's Stalinist allies—the USSR and Cuba—to be seen to be directly involved in the final military push into Eritrea, and reportedly seeking means of replacing Mengistu with a more pliable dictatorial leader who

might be amenable to a negotiated settlement with the Eritreans.

But the scandalous fact remains that Soviet and Cuban military aid is the major factor propping up Mengistu within Ethiopia, and facilitating his murderous attempt to repress the Eritrean people.

3,500 Cuban combat troops and piles of sophisticated Soviet weaponry, including tanks and heavy artillery have been flown in to back up Mengistu, while the Eritrean forces depend on arms captured in the course of their struggle.

A growing economic crisis and increasing chances of a major famine inside Ethiopia have combined with unrest in the ranks of the 200,000-strong peasant militia, who are angry at their starvation rates of pay.

And in the cities workers

and civil servants are pressing wage claims spurred on by spiralling inflation.

But sooner than allow any mobilisation of this mass hostility to Mengistu, who has already butchered thousands of left wing opponents, the Stalinist bureaucracies of Havana and Moscow prefer to provide material aid for his war against the Eritrean masses.

These points were forcibly made at a public meeting held in Oxford by the Workers Socialist League on the Eritrean revolution last week.

A 90-strong audience heard a report on the current struggles and passed the following resolution:

"This meeting declares its support for the right of the Eritrean people to self-determination, and its opposition to every attempt by the imperialist powers or the Ethiopian state



(with in particular the scandalous assistance of Soviet and Cuban troops) to deny this right.

We call on all workers, in this country and internationally (especially in Ethiopia and those states which support the present policies of the Ethiopian government), to campaign for the fullest active support for the struggles of the Eritrean people towards self-determination and to organise acts of concrete solidarity with these struggles".

A total of £55 was raised at the meeting and forwarded to the EPLF for arms and necessary supplies.

(See background, page 3)



INTERNATIONAL

French strikes warn Giscard

As inflation and unemployment continue their upward flight in France, the French working class continues its struggles against the onslaught of the capitalist crisis.

Last month workers surged forward in 235 strikes that were part of the action taken on nearly 1,000 claims.

Over 400 of these claims were demands for higher wages to compensate for inflation, nearly 200 were in opposition to threatened redundancies.

The role played by the force of the bourgeois state in these conflicts was emphasised at the Moulinex factory in Caen.

There, the movement for a return to work was completely reversed when hundreds of police arrived to remove and attack pickets.

At Flins, where riot police broke up the occupation, Renault management are proposing to sack 40 workers (almost all of them immigrants) in the press shop as part of their attempted victimisation throughout the company.

Although the main force of this wave of strikes and occupations is now spent temporarily, neither the effects of the crisis nor the militancy of workers has been reduced.

The capitalists hope to soften the crisis in the shipbuilding industry by enforcing 9,000 redundancies in the major yards.

6,000 workers at La Ciotat in southern France, (the second largest yard), demonstrated in protest on 12 July.

Such demonstrations give Giscard's government and the labour bureaucracy a clear warning of the opposition they will meet after the summer holiday period in their moves to rationalise capitalism and rescue profits.

NAMIBIA: A SELL-OUT SCHEME IS HATCHED

As we go to press the South African cabinet is meeting to decide acceptance or otherwise of the Western proposals for a solution to the conflict in Namibia. Every indication exists that they will accept the deal.

A UN "peace keeping" force will supervise the run down of South African troops from 20,000 to 1,500 over a period of 3 months, during which a ceasefire will be in operation.

Political prisoners will be released, all racist legislation will be repealed and electoral procedures will be established.

A four month election campaign will then be opened leading to the election of a Constituent Assembly which will draw up a constitution.

The imperialist plan allows for the continued presence of South African troops until after the elections; agrees to the restriction of SWAPO liberation forces to their bases; accepts the continued administration by South African appointed, controlled civil service and judiciary

Seven of South America's 14 countries either have held or are to hold what they call "general elections" this year.

And four of those are in countries ruled by military dictatorships which are falling apart under the pressure of the masses, and which are forced by their bourgeoisies (with prodding from the Carter administration) to try to divert the mass upsurge by introducing extremely limited forms of "democracy".

In the last six weeks elections have taken place in Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador.

Though the results of these were very different, there was one similarity between them—they all failed to bring the results which were desired by the military rulers.

Careful selection

In Ecuador they had in several ways made a careful selection of candidates before the presidential elections of July 19.

The ex-president, overthrown by the military, had been kept in exile.

The one candidate who was given a chance of winning—a capitalist demagogue called Bucaram—was disqualified through blatant trickery.

Subsequently the military rulers did everything they could to boost their selected candidate.

Everything, that is, short of rigging the poll—which they would certainly have done had it not been for the fact that the election occurred on the day that international reports in the bourgeois press showed that the Bolivian presidential elections had been completely rigged, thus sharply focusing attention on the Ecuador poll.

So the result, which the ruling generals failed to alter was that 77% of the voters in a high poll voted against the official candidate, Sixto Duran.

The winner was Jaime Roldos, the left-talking son-in-law of the disqualified candidate Bucaram.

Difficult

He got 31% of the vote, and so faces a run off in September against Sixto Duran.

But it now looks very difficult for the military-backed candidate to win against Roldos,

who will have support transferred from other 'liberal' bourgeois candidates and from the CP's popular front candidate who won 5% of the votes.

With the military junta now very short of political credibility, new possibilities open up between now and the presidential run-off—demands from the masses for the military regime to abdicate at once.

The alternative possibility is that of a new coup attempt by the thwarted generals.

In any event Ecuador has now certainly joined the increasing number of South American countries where military dictatorship is giving way to political instability.

The most dramatic of these changes, however, have been taking place in Bolivia and Peru.

Earlier this year Bolivian military dictator Hugo Banzer was forced by a series of workers' and students' mobilisations and hunger strikes, to allow political exiles to return, legal political activities to be renewed and, in an effort to stem the rising tide of mass protest, to call presidential and parliamentary elections for July 9.

The chosen military candidate in this election was not Banzer himself—who had lost all his political authority—but air force General Juan Pereda Asbun.

Obstacles

Numerous obstacles were placed in the way of the other candidates but all of them in the end were able to run a major campaign.

The three major anti-government candidates were Victor Paz Estenssoro, an ex-president representing the right wing of the bourgeois nationalist Revolutionary National Movement (MNR); Hernan Siles Zuazo, standing for the Popular Democratic Union (UDP), a popular front consisting of the left of the MNR, the petty bourgeois radical group the MIR and the Bolivian Communist Party; and Casiano Amurrio, a peasant leader who headed the ticket for the Revolutionary Left Front (FRI).

The FRI was composed of a Maoist group, the Revolutionary Workers' Party (part of the political remnants of Che Guevara's guerrilla army) and

and the immediate halt to armed struggle.

The only point of disagreement remaining is the future of the strategically important Port of Walvis Bay.

The South African government do not want to lose control of it, while the SWAPO leadership is insisting that it be controlled by Namibia.

While SWAPO leaders make noises about Walvis Bay, the actual effects of their capitulation in accepting the imperialist plan were beginning to tell.

Despite the propaganda postures adopted by SWAPO's leaders after they had capitulated, the South African authorities have been able to win significant successes in a campaign to register votes for elections under the imperialist plan.

They have been able to do this because with SWAPO's capitulation there are no forces within Namibia to provide the working masses with an alternative.

As Socialist Press has warned, any reliance on the front-line African states was doomed to failure.

Acting as agents of imperial-

ism, the SWAPO leadership and the front-line Presidents have connived with each other to produce the sell-out agreement behind the backs of the Namibian masses and despite opposition from militants within SWAPO.

Meanwhile the efforts of imperialism to secure a neo-colonial solution in Namibia have again forced it into a clear, open alliance with and reliance upon its key agent in the area—the South African State.

The EEC has declared its intention to 'limit' pressure on South Africa while the negotiations continue.

The greatest challenge to the struggle of the Namibian masses is now posed. A weakened imperialism is forced to rely increasingly on the treachery of the Stalinist and left nationalist regimes.

The SWAPO leadership has gone along with this treachery. As in Palestine, reliance on progressive bourgeois regimes and Stalinists is no way forward. Only an independent programme and support from the international working class can protect the Namibian masses.

Latin American dictators in crisis



Pereda



Banzer

the "Trotskyist" Workers Revolutionary Party (POR—Vanguardia Comunista).

Presumed winners

It seems from eye-witness reports that Pereda almost certainly lost, despite his privileged access to the media and army threats to the voters.

The presumed winners were Siles Zuazo in some areas, Amurrio in others.

But the official "results" nonetheless showed a clear "win" for Pereda right from the start of the laborious "counting".

The fraud was obvious to all the Bolivian masses and was denounced even by a party of visiting imperialist dignitaries, there to see fair play.

As the count wore on it became clear that the election, far from restoring political stability for the bourgeoisie, was threatening to provoke mass protest.

On July 19 the authorities suddenly decided to annul the election and call another "within six months".

Plotting coup

Pereda himself appealed to the electoral tribunal for the annulment.

At the same moment, however, he was plotting a new military coup with his friends, the air force Generals in Santa Cruz.

On the morning of July 21 Pereda and his gang seized Santa Cruz and other cities and called for Banzer to stand down.

When it was clear to Banzer he had lost all his political allies he agreed to hand over power to a junta of the three military

chiefs of staff who within a few hours ceded to Pereda and installed him as President.

So Bolivia which—before Banzer seized power in 1971—had roughly one President for each of its 130 years of existence as an independent nation, on July 21 had 5 Presidents in a single day!

It does not appear at present that Pereda's government can be strong, despite the fact that it survived a number of mass mobilisations against the coup and has arrested several hundred workers' and peasants' leaders.

The situation of the neighbouring generals in Peru is just as shaky.

They too found that the elections which they hoped would lull the mounting waves of opposition did just the opposite.

They now have a "Constituent Assembly" which is supposed to quietly draw up a constitution but which at present noisily wishes to govern.

It has become the scene of violent mass mobilisations to welcome the elected left wing delegates who after their deportation to Argentina have been allowed to return in a political amnesty.

The President of the Assembly at present is 83-old veteran Peruvian nationalist and populist Haya de la Torre whose APRA party has 37 of the 100 seats.

He, (along with the right wing Peoples Christian Party, with 25 seats), could well do a deal with the military government of Morales Bermudez—

but at present he looks much more like waiting to hold constitutional office for the first time in his long political career.

APRA is a party led by right wing nationalists, but due to its historical image and current demagoguery, received many votes from workers and peasants.

It will be difficult, therefore, for APRA to do a deal with a government which is now preparing to impose a new round of economic hardships on the masses in order to satisfy the imperialist International Monetary Fund and repay Peru's gigantic international state debt.

A huge responsibility now falls on the leaders of the FOCEP—the working class electoral bloc led by "Trotskyists" which won 12 out of the 100 seats.

3-month strike

They have used the assembly to publicise workers struggles including the three-month old strike by the teachers' union, SUTEP.

This strike, in support of demands for union recognition and a 100% wage increase, has become one of the most threatening "questions" facing the military regime because of the remarkable support which it has from the whole of the labour movement.

A one day general strike has been called in support of the teachers.

The mineworkers' federation will stage a national strike on August 2 in support of a full labour amnesty.

In all these mobilisations the demand "Down with the dictatorship!" is beginning to be heard and the Morales Bermudez regime must now be the most unstable dictatorship on the continent.



Mass turnout to welcome back Peruvian "Trotskyist" exile Hugo Blanco

Eritrea's historic liberation struggle

David Whitfield traces the history of the struggle of the Eritrean people for self-determination against both the imperialist powers and a succession of repressive regimes in Ethiopia, the latest of which is now backed up by military support from Cuba and the USSR.

Part Five

As the Eritrean people suffered increasing political and economical oppression at the hands of the Ethiopian feudal autocracy, so the masses began to turn to the Eritrean Liberation Front.

This produced major problems for the leadership of the ELF, for the workers and peasants began to raise demands to satisfy their needs.

Violent conflicts developed, as the bourgeois leadership sought by every possible means to restrain the popular movement within the confines of a political revolution, while this movement was pressing forward in the direction of social revolution.

This opposition reached crisis point in 1970, when the first of the major splits took place, nine years after the founding of the ELF.

The Eritrean Popular Liberation Front dates its origins from this time.

Obscure history

The leaderships of both the EPLF and of the ELF obscure the history of this period entirely, producing only hollow polemics and barren abuse.

The political character of the 1970 split (and the two further splits from the ELF in 1971) is thus far from clear.

What is certain is that two major forces were involved in the formation of the EPLF—on the one hand, elements proclaiming the necessity of mobilising the masses to win the revolution; and on the other, a grouping round Osman Sabbe.

An opportunist, who had failed to win control of the ELF, Sabbe looked for political assistance towards the petty bourgeois and feudal nationalist leaders of the Arab states.

His years of dominance in the EPLF rested on the basis of the arms supplies which he could draw on from these allies.

The groupings from the three splits came together in what they termed a 'united front' in 1971.

As the EPLF consolidated its forces, war developed between the two liberation fronts, and was to last for nearly three years, from February 1972 until late 1974.



Castro embraces Mengistu in Havana

Two factors were decisive in determining the ceasefire. Firstly, a certain radicalisation had taken place within the ELF; and these new layers were opposed to the internal war.

Secondly—and of course of more immediate significance—the emperor Haile Selassie had been overthrown in Ethiopia.

This seemed to create far more favourable conditions for the liberation struggle itself. But the struggles of the Ethiopian masses were beheaded by the military dictatorship of the Derg.

Negotiations

Within this counter-revolution, Col. Mengistu shot his way to power in a coup.

The EPLF and the ELF jointly proposed negotiations with the new rulers of Ethiopia, on the basis of recognition of the Eritreans' right to self-determination, and recognition of the two fronts as the sole representatives of the Eritrean people.

Mengistu rejected these con-

ditions as 'arrogant', and condemned the liberation armies as 'bandits'.

Massacred

The Derg made clear its determination to crush the Eritrean revolution, just as it had already massacred the leftists and working class militants within Ethiopia.

But the military dictators were not yet in a position to throw their full forces against the Eritreans.

The Derg turned its attention first to consolidating its repressive regime, and suppressing other national uprisings—above all, the revolt led by the Western Somali Liberation Front in the Ogaden.

During 1977, both the ELF and particularly the EPLF were able to make spectacular advances, until between them they controlled the whole of Eritrea outside the five main cities, where the Ethiopian forces were heavily besieged.

By this time the EPLF had undergone a major internal reorganisation.

Central to this process had been the expulsion in 1976 of Osman Sabbe and his narrow group of equally opportunist supporters.

Sabbe now formed the ELF-PRF (Eritrean Liberation Front-Popular Revolutionary Forces) which courts US imperialism and has its closest links with the feudal tyrants of Saudi Arabia, although its headquarters is in Iraq.

No base

This thoroughly reactionary organisation has virtually no base within Eritrea.

With the expulsion of Sabbe, the arms supplies from the Arab states were halted, and the EPLF was forced to rely on equipment captured from the Ethiopian forces.

But events of a major international significance had also developed in this period, and were to have a critical effect on the course of the Eritrean revolution.

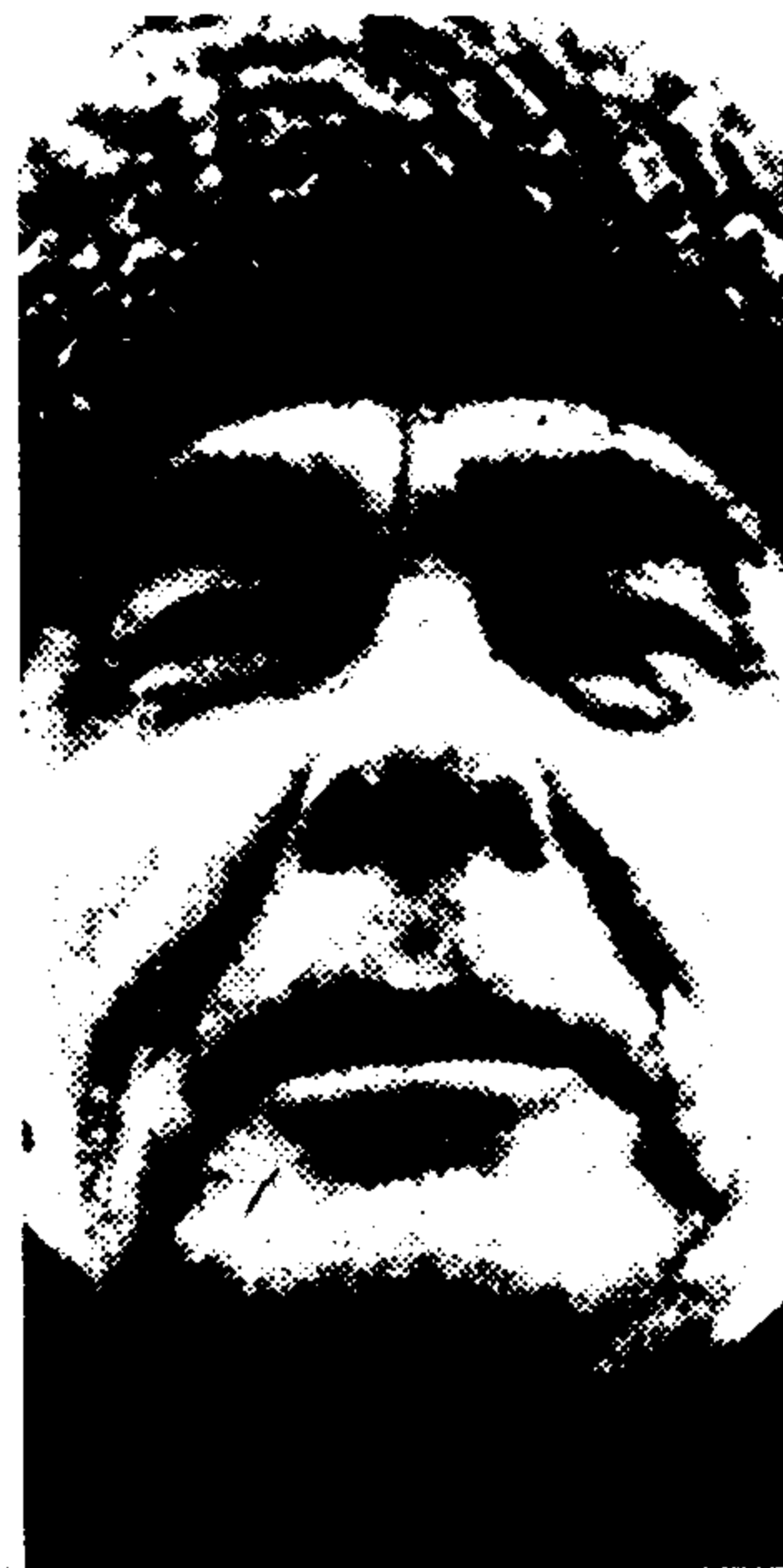
Under the leadership of Mengistu, the Derg threw its imperialist backers out of

Ethiopia, although the Zionist state of Israel still appears to be supplying the military dictatorship with arms.

The forces now called in to prop up the counter-revolutionary regime were the ruling Stalinist bureaucracies of the Soviet Union and Cuba, along with their petty bourgeois nationalist allies in the South Yemen.

In the past, all three had repeatedly declared their verbal support for the right of the Eritreans to self-determination, and had even contributed small amounts of material aid to the liberation struggles.

The international interests of the Kremlin now dictated that they entrench themselves on the opposite side of the battle-lines.



Brezhnev

Without Cuban troops and Soviet weapons, the Derg could never have carried through the brutal crushing of the revolt in the Ogaden.

There are conflicting reports as to the direct involvement of Cuban forces in the war against the EPLF and the ELF.

But it is quite obvious that the Ethiopian army could never have launched its present offensive, without the assistance of Cuban troops to suppress the renewed rising in the Ogaden,

smash the other revolts in the south of Ethiopia and attack the struggles of the Tigray Popular Liberation Front on the borders of Eritrea.

The present military advance of the Ethiopian state holds the threat of a major defeat and renewed colonial oppression for the Eritrean people.

It is vital that a campaign is taken up in the labour movement internationally to defend the struggles of the Eritrean people for their right to self-determination.

Criticisms

But within such a campaign it is equally our duty to advance our criticisms of the present leadership of the Eritrean masses and fight to develop a revolutionary socialist perspective and leadership for their struggles.

There is no independent proletarian party in Eritrea. The base for such a party would lie in the capital of Asmara and the ports of Massawa and Assab, all still occupied by the Ethiopian army.

Any moves by workers to organise in those cities will certainly have been suppressed with the ruthless efficiency of the Derg.

But neither the EPLF nor the ELF has a perspective of building such a party.

For all its Maoist rhetoric, the Eritrean Liberation Front is essentially a 'radical', petty bourgeois nationalist movement of the type seen in the MPLA of Angola.

Stalinism

The Eritrean Popular Liberation Front is a far more complex organisation.

Claiming to be "Marxist-Leninist", its rhetoric is indistinguishable from that of the ELF and it is soaked through with the ideology of Stalinism.

The EPLF advances an 11 point 'National Democratic Programme', which aims to establish a people's democratic state, and:

"to build a truly independent, self-reliant and mass-owned national economy that serves national development and social progress and advances along with the civilisation of progressive humanity so as to abolish all forms of exploitation and bring about prosperity for the masses of our people who have for centuries been denied humane existence".

For the EPLF, the 'national democratic revolution' must first be victorious, before the socialist revolution can begin. Linked with that, the EPLF does not give the leading role in revolutionary struggles to the proletariat—its leadership has either rejected or developed no understanding of the theory of permanent revolution.

But the Stalinist conceptions and strategy of the EPLF are not a simple question.

No links

For all its Maoist language and sympathisers, the EPLF has no links with the Chinese bureaucracy.

And far from being dependent on the Soviet bureaucracy the EPLF is a front line victim of the counter-revolutionary policies pursued by that bureaucracy to defend its own privileged interests and the balance of forces with imperialism.

Faced with Cuban troops and Soviet weapons the EPLF has been unable to analyse the contradictory role of Stalinism as it is being played out in Africa. (It has to be said that most organisations styling themselves "Trotskyist" have proved equally bankrupt in this, although only the Trotskyist analysis of Stalinism can provide this understanding).

Yet, while describing the USSR as a 'super-power', the EPLF has not turned to imperialism for aid but has issued a principled call for international solidarity, and appealed to the Cuban and South Yemeni troops not to attack the Eritrean revolution.

It is crucial that this line is developed, especially through a major turn to the working class within Ethiopia.

Ways must be found to approach the difficult task of agitation within the peasant militias of the Ethiopian army, and in the ranks of the Cuban and South Yemeni troops.



Mengistu



Somali leader Barre

But such work will be of little value unless it goes alongside the development of social revolution in Eritrea.

There is conflicting information from the liberated areas as to the developments that have taken place in establishing peasant and workers councils, reforming agriculture and restoring industrial production.

We are in no position at present to say definitively what role has been played by the EPLF in the Eritrean revolution and what role it will go on to play, although some of its strengths and more of its weaknesses are obvious.

But the workers and peasants of Eritrea must be made aware that if their leadership in the EPLF abolishes feudalism yet restores capitalist property relations, then their struggles will be set back and their revolution betrayed.

To prevent such an eventuality a Trotskyist party as part of a reconstructed Fourth International, must be built to uphold the programme for socialist revolution in Eritrea.

CONCLUDED



ELF guerrillas load a mortar

NO RATIONAL WAY OUT

Even while waiters cleared up the wine glasses and cigar ash after the Economic Summit meeting in Bonn, the capitalist crisis gave unmistakable signs that it cannot be wished away through the pious formulae of capitalist politicians.

By Tuesday of last week the US dollar had plummeted below the critical price of 200 yen.

By Friday a report by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development pointed to the prospects of a further "growth recession" and even higher unemployment.

And by the end of the week the weakness of the dollar and uncertainty on currencies in general had led to a new jump in the market price of gold to over \$200 per ounce.

Meanwhile within the United States itself Federal Reserve Board chairman William Miller, referring to the rising inflation rate, pointed to the dangers of a recession unless the present 11.7% annual inflation is brought under control.

The OECD report suggests that its gloomy predictions might not be fulfilled if the verbal pledges to expand the major capitalist economies that were made by the capitalist heads of state in Bonn were actually carried out.

But the latest turn in the crisis of US capitalism demonstrates that Carter is certainly in no position to implement his undertakings—which included the implementation of his hugely unpopular energy policy in a bid to cut that part of the US balance of payments deficit which is due to oil imports.

Price increases

The energy policy involves substantial increases in petrol and oil prices within the USA—prompting a massive round of increases in the prices of all commodities.

This in turn would further fuel the militancy on wages building up within the American working class in the wake of the miners strike.

And by raising costs and prices it would further weaken the position of US capitalism in its struggle to compete against Japanese and European capitalists for a share of the world market.

Although the fall in the value of the dollar means continuing instability throughout the world money market, US capitalists are not entirely dissatisfied with its fall against the Japanese yen.

They hope this fall will help them cut the level of Japanese imports into the USA and, by making it artificially cheaper to buy American goods assist their efforts to penetrate the Japanese and European markets.

There are already some signs that this is taking place—thus throwing into



Capitalist heads of state looking for a way out

question even the deliberately vague series of proposals for economic expansion drawn up at the Bonn summit, which all depended upon moves to stabilise the value of the dollar.

As the world-wide crisis of capitalism lurches from problem to problem it becomes more and more obvious that, as an anarchic,

contradictory system, capitalism cannot be stabilised by any "rational" or "co-operative" measures, or by summit meetings.

As any one national section of capitalists attempts to iron out its domestic problems, the measures taken rebound on other, rival groups of capitalists and serve only to intensify the crisis as a whole.

This is why the reality behind the smiles and vague phrases at the Bonn summit was the inescapable drive towards increasingly open trade war between the major capitalist powers, with each national bourgeoisie attempting to avoid confrontation with its working class at home by foisting off its problems onto its competitors.

Who benefits from state industry profits?

Benefitting from three years of increasing exploitation of their labour force, the major nationalised industries have been clocking up huge profit margins again this year.

Electricity showed a £133 million surplus. The Post Office managed to extract a record £367 million through its particular combination of sky-high prices and rock bottom wages.

And the gas industry made a cool £180 million—four times last year's profit.

Overcharging

But there is no reason for workers to celebrate these figures.

Firstly they indicate the level of overcharging carried out by these corporations—which are managed directly by the nominees of the capitalist class, and which function in the interests of British capitalism.

Secondly they demonstrate that wage controls, which have held down the pay of the hundreds of thousands of workers in these corporations simply maximise profits with no advantage whatever accruing to the working class.

Thirdly the profit figures which partly rest on the increased productivity of workers sold out by their union leaders will spur management to introduce further investment plans and new "productivity"



UPW leader Jackson: defends wage controls that jack up Post Office profits.

deals which will further cut back the workforce in these industries.

And finally the figures completely conceal an important issue: the exploitation of the "nationalised" industries by privately owned monopoly suppliers and the banks.

Each of these giant corporations uses a whole host of supplies from firms in the private sector that in many instances are able to cream off huge profits.

Only recently an investigation revealed scandalous overpricing and an illegal price-fixing cartel operated by the giant cable manufacturers who supplied the Post Office. Such a case is obviously only the tip of the iceberg in the public sector, where management is out of the hands of the workers and private suppliers are free to call the tune.

The trade union movement must insist that the

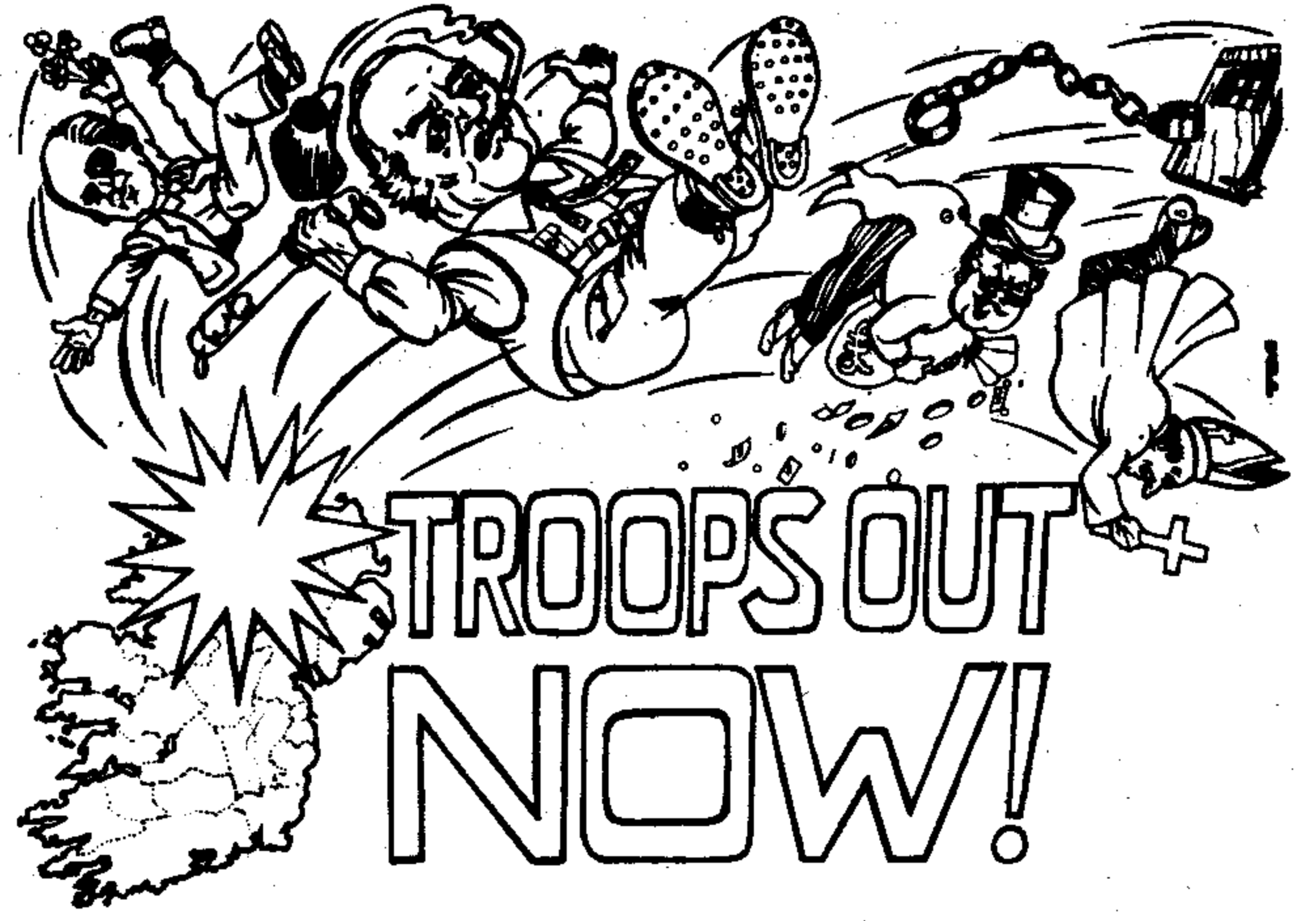
full trading records of each of the nationalised industries are opened up for inspection by elected trade union committees, and that this investigation reach out to examine the books of each private firm concerned, and the banks.

Nationalisation

The objective of such an investigation is not only to equip the workers in the nationalised industries to form committees of workers control and eventually remove the existing capitalist management, but also to launch a campaign for the nationalisation of the private suppliers and the banks without compensation, under workers' management.

Only when this step towards a planned, socialist economy has been taken, can the nationalised industries begin to function in the interests not of private profit but of social need.

IRELAND



Bank robberies no answer

The series of brilliantly planned armed robberies in the Irish Republic carried out by the Provisional IRA have reportedly drawn in around £1 million so far this year to supplement other forms of finance for the organisation.

But such actions cannot substitute for the IRA's lack of any clear political perspective in their continuing struggle against British imperialism.

Virtually the sole emphasis of the IRA's political agitation now centres on the heroic struggle of the 300 Republican and socialist prisoners in 'H' Block of the Long Kesh concentration camp.

They are continuing their refusal to wear prison clothing or do prison work in pursuance of their demand for the restoration of political prisoner status withdrawn from them by the British Labour government.

Savage tortures

This campaign has been combined with further efforts to expose the savage tortures and maltreatment of prisoners and "suspects" meted out by the British imperialist forces and the Royal Ulster Constabulary—now partly acknowledged in an Amnesty International Report.

Such struggles can play a valuable role in exposing the nature of imperialist repression, establishing the right of the Irish people to struggle for their self-determination against British military rule, and opening the way for further struggles for the release of all political prisoners and the withdrawal of British troops.

But in itself this campaign does not offer a road to the overthrow of British imperialist rule in the North of Ireland.

For this to be carried through, the mobilisation of the Irish working class is necessary, and not merely skilled and courageous military actions by IRA fighters.

The IRA however lacks any such perspective.

No demands

It puts forward no demands to lead the struggle beyond a united Ireland to pose the issue of a workers' republic.

The building of a Trotskyist party in Ireland to draw out these points is

essential.

Such a party would put forward a programme bringing together democratic and transitional demands centred on the independent interests of the Irish working class, and designed to secure:

*The right to a job and decent living standards.

*The right to a house and social services.

*Equal rights for all. An end to repressive legislation, discrimination on religious grounds and church restrictions on divorce, contraception and abortion.

*Down with colonial exploitation. Withdraw from the EEC. Imperialist troops out of Ireland. Expropriate all foreign capital, the major industries and the banks.

*Down with the bosses' governments green and orange.

*For a workers and farmers government in a united Ireland.

Responsibility

Such a programme if fought for within the Irish workers movement would at each point show the necessity to drive out British imperialism.

And in Britain the workers movement has the responsibility of assisting that anti-imperialist struggle with all the means at its disposal.

This means following up the recent national demonstration demanding POW status for Republican prisoners with a fight in every Labour Party and union branch for this demand, for the ousting of the bloodstained Callaghan-Healey leadership, and for the complete withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland to enable the Irish people to determine their own future.

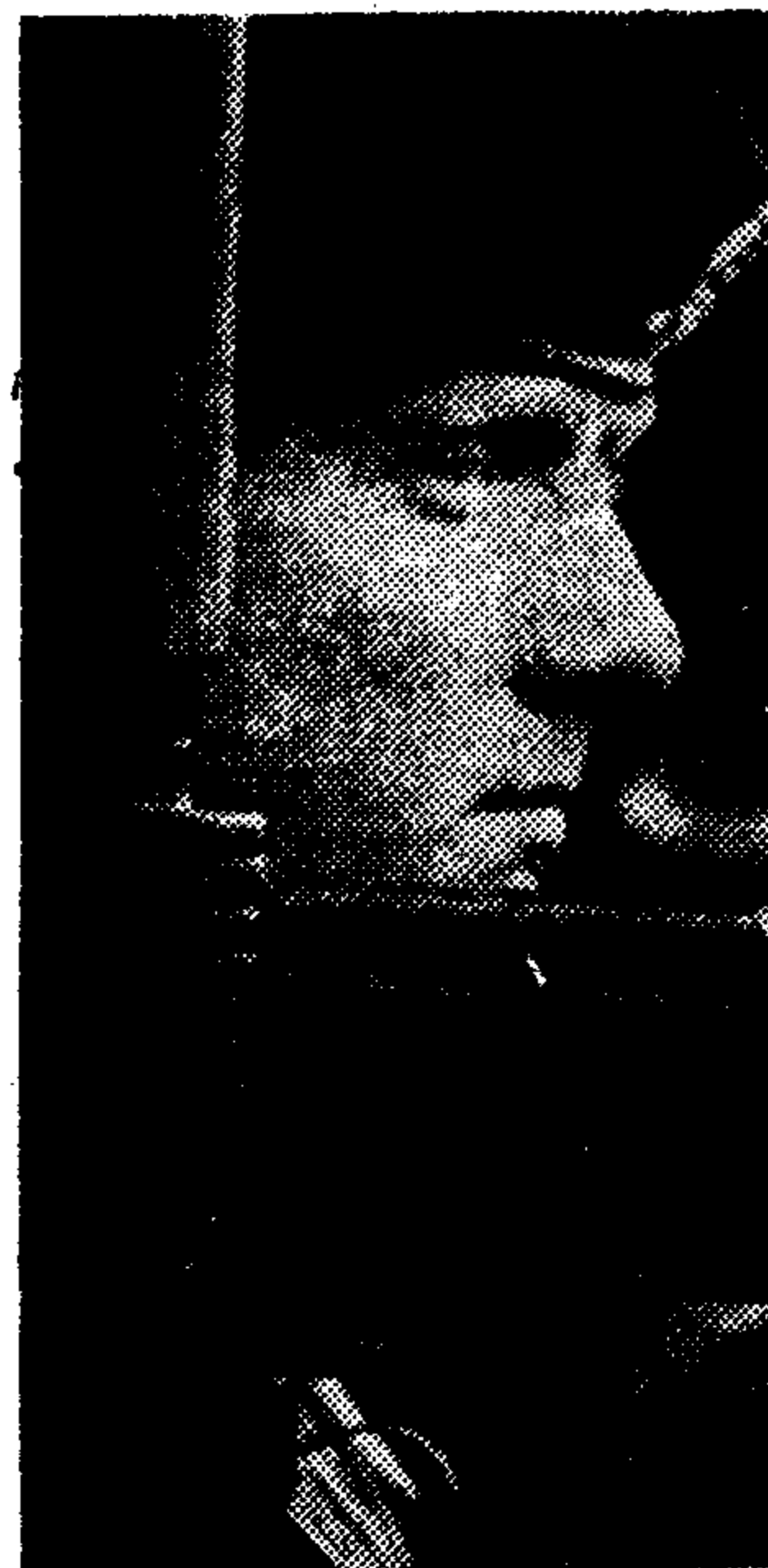


PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Fresh attack on rights in new 'secrets' law

"If there is any fault it is mine and mine alone", declared Labour Home Secretary Merlyn Rees in Parliament as he put forward a White Paper which abandoned Labour's manifesto pledge to legislate a Freedom of Information Act.

Rees' statement spells out the arrogant contempt shown by the Callaghan cabinet for the interests and democratic wishes of Labour Party members and the Labour movement, and the impossibility of achieving socialist policies under the existing right wing leaders.

New provisions

He unveiled a paper which proposed replacing the existing Section Two of the Official



Merlyn Rees

Secrets Act—which makes disclosure of any official information illegal unless specific authority has been granted—with new provisions that would limit the areas of secrecy to the "security", "intelligence", "defence" and international relations of the British capitalist state machine.

No reform

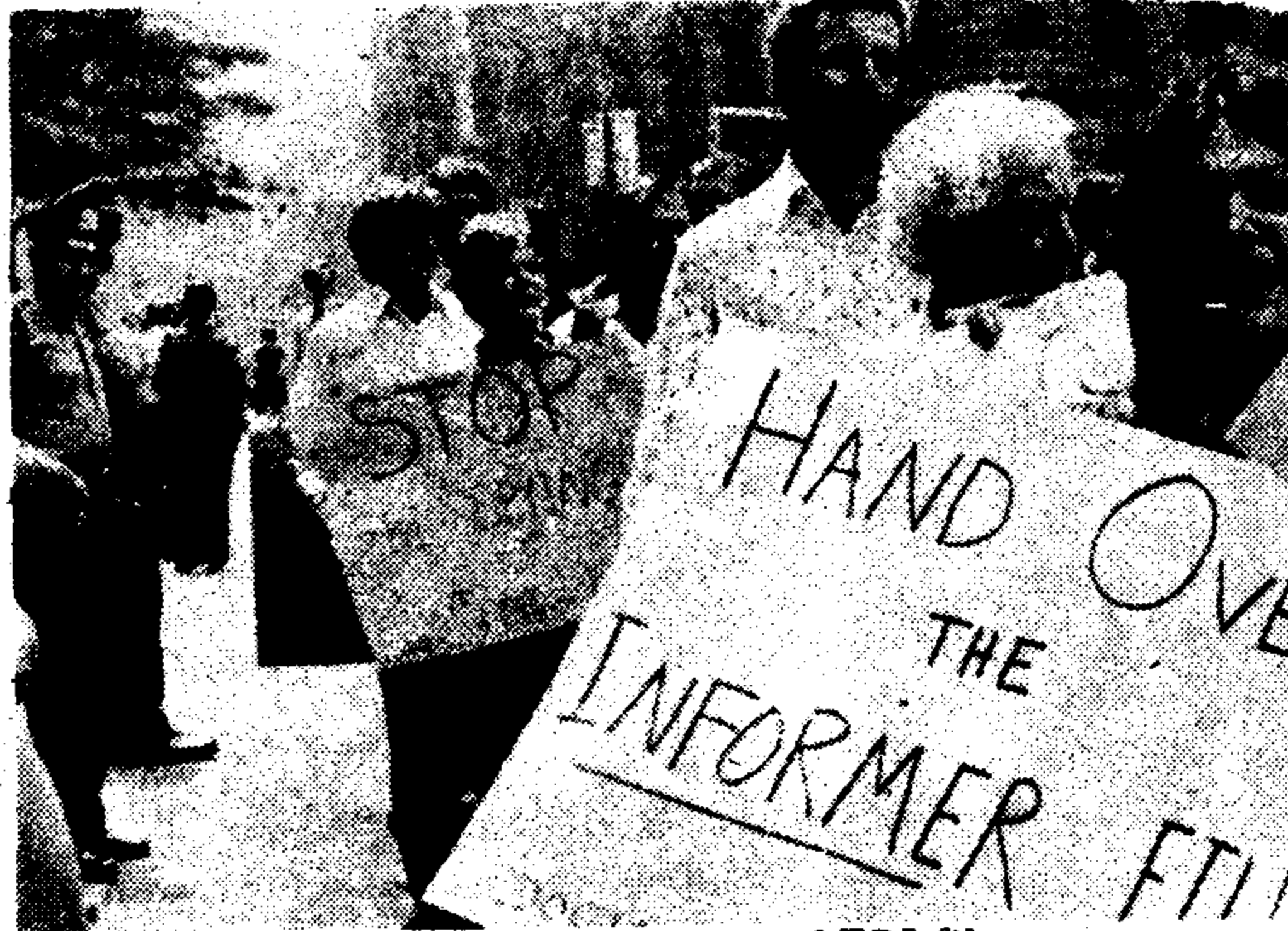
There is to be no reform of Section One of the Official Secrets Act, the so-called "spying" clause, under which journalists Crispin Aubrey and Duncan Campbell and ex-soldier John Berry are to stand trial in September, each threatened with a possible 14 years imprisonment.

This law lays down that it is an offence to receive or communicate any information that might be "directly or indirectly useful to an enemy".

The very vagueness of its formulation is designed to ensure that the law intimidates journalists or the organised workers movement from examining the workings of the armed forces and the police and intelligence units whose task is to preserve British capitalism.

Wall of silence

The massive expenditure on this repressive apparatus; the activities of the military; the spying by the state on the workers' movement; the whole network of powerful civil service and military chiefs who operate unelected and out of the control of any of the fraudulent "democratic" bodies that mask the real face of British capitalism, are all concealed behind a wall of enforced silence through the Official Secrets Act.



SWP demonstrators demand release of FBI files.

The Labour leaders who have so clearly shown their dedication to preserving British capitalism are equally determined to preserve this secrecy.

There seems little doubt that this decision by the Callaghan cabinet has been influenced by the huge problems that are now confronted by the FBI in the United States as a result of a \$40 million lawsuit against them conducted by the Pabloites of the Socialist Workers Party.

Such is the Freedom of Information legislation in the US that the SWP has been able to obtain a Supreme Court injunction to demand the US Attorney General Griffin Bell hand over FBI files on 18 informers who are among the 1,300 informers known to have been used by the FBI against socialists over the last sixteen years.

Bell, the top law enforcement officer in the US now stands in contempt of court for refusal to surrender these

files. He declared that:

"Such action would signal to other informants and potential informants that the United States would not or could not continue to honour the pledge of confidentiality which has been the cornerstone of its relationship with informants".

The British Labour leaders who now proudly preside over a repressive machinery far more shrouded in secrecy have no intention of allowing the workers movement to uncover the details of the measures prepared against it.

The decision to abandon the pledge of a Freedom of Information Act is part of the same plan as the victimisation of Aubrey, Berry and Campbell, whose sole "crime" was that they held a tape recorded two hour conversation together early in 1977 and had all been active in defence of deported ex-CIA agent Philip Agee.

None of the details of the conversation have ever been



PROTECTED SPECIES

A far-reaching plan to protect animals has been backed by Labour's National Executive.

Fish and game birds however, will not be joining the cattle, rabbits and giraffes galloping to vote Labour as a result of these proposals, since they have been consciously excluded from protection in the NEC proposals against other blood sports—none of which will in any case necessarily be included in the Party's manifesto.

They, together with the unprotected working class will continue to look with envy and hostility on the conditions of life and the consideration already afforded by the Labour leaders to the most protected, carefully cultivated, the most selfish, savage, voracious, destructive, widespread animal of all—the British capitalist!

published. And "expert" witness "Colonel B" refused even to confirm or deny whether any secret information had in fact been revealed during the discussion—yet all three men could go to jail for 14 years!

The reason is obviously the determination of the state to reinforce its intimidation of potential opponents and its repressive legislation in a period where the Tory leaders have been debating the prospects for using troops to smash picket lines in industrial disputes and the Labour leaders themselves have used the army and now the navy in scabbing operations.

The trial of Aubrey, Berry and Campbell is thus an issue that affects the whole workers movement.

The NUJ conference voted to prepare for one day strike action on the first day of the trial, and to campaign throughout the labour movement to force the dropping of the charges and the repeal of the Official Secrets Act—but as yet little preparation has been done.

In every area, Trades Councils, union branches and Labour Parties must take up the defence of these three victims of Labour betrayals.

In Oxford the local NUJ Branch, with joint sponsorship from the Trades Council, is preparing a public meeting on August 31 to spell out the issues to local workers and rally support for the defence of Aubrey, Berry and Campbell.

PRESS GANG

Softly, Softly

In a 'democracy', censorship of the press is not supposed to be carried out in public. It is considered a delicate act, denied officially, and only practiced between consenting adults.

It should therefore have been an easy enough task for the police to bring the BBC to heel. There was little more involved than one arm of the state—its police force—arranging with another—its public relations office—to be a little more delicate.

Instead of approaching the BBC discretely, instead of having a word in the ear of the director, who would have a word in the ear of the current affairs controller, who would have a word in the ear of someone else, who would put a muzzle on the TV cameras—instead of that time honoured method of keeping only those things in the public eye that the state wanted to be there—the police blundered.

A producer, seeking to make a film about missing persons, was told bluntly by the police that he would have to sign a contract giving the police the right to cut out any film of which it did not approve.

The directors and producers who have always been allowed to preserve the outward vestiges of free control, rebelled.

The *Guardian* took up the

story with the news that the Police Commissioner—Sir David McNee—was to lunch with the BBC's director general, Ian Trethowan. It was a bit late for romantic meetings over a candlelit table. The BBC executives were already well into their "freedom of the press" routines.

Desmond Wilcox, head of BBC TV's general features group declared:

"There is no way anybody at the BBC could sign such a document. We could not abrogate our editorial right. It would make co-operation between the organisations impossible".

Of course the BBC has found no difficulty in the past in "co-operating" with such "organisations" as the British Army in Northern Ireland by censoring news, cancelling programmes and trying to poison the minds of the British working class against their Irish brothers and sisters.

What is more, the *Guardian*—even in the act of showing good liberal disapproval over the police move—revealed that extensive collaboration between the police and BBC goes on every day.

"What is now likely to happen is that the often extensive talks between the two organisations which almost invariably precede documentary filming will become more specific in agreeing common

ground for what is sometimes nicely known as 'the rounded picture'.

"Although producers will be able to maintain their editorial independence and integrity, it will be within clear and pre-agreed guidelines indicating what is, and is not 'on'.

Later the *Guardian* reported that the lunch had been "affable and cordial".

The importance of a written contract was now played down and the BBC howls of indignation were quieted. Instead the police now said they were merely "seeking assurances from Mr. Trethowan on greater understanding and liaison between the two organisations" and McNee only wanted "to mention a need for producers who have often been found 'cavalier' by senior police officers, to stand by gentlemen's agreements on programme content."

Mr. Peter Nievens, police 'Director of Information' (a grand and honest title) made it clear that what he was demanding from the BBC he had already got from Fleet Street.

Or as the *Guardian* put it: "While newspapers in general had accepted what editorial responsibility was all about, it does not seem to apply in quite the same way at the BBC", said Mr. Nievens."

The opposition game

As TUC bureaucrats and Labour MPs, act out their charade of "opposition" to Healey's 5% pay limit, some seem even to be beginning to convince themselves that they are fighting in earnest.

This was what caused a curious division between two 'lefts' on the Labour Party NEC last week.

TGWU delegate Alex Kitson—who of course has no record of taking any action whatever against Phases 1, 2 or 3 of wage control—attempted to move an emergency resolution against the 5% limit.

But the NEC chairman, Tribune Joan Lester, ruled discussion of the motion out of order.

Irrelevant

She realised at once that if it had been carried the NEC would have found itself committed to a struggle against the policy that will clearly be the main plank of Callaghan's election manifesto. The fact that the policy itself has been sprung on the labour movement with no discussion, she clearly regarded as irrelevant.

Kitson however, had cast himself in the role of the great defender of free collective bargaining.

He moved a further resolution to remove Lester from the chair—which only fell by 13-8.

However, now this show of militancy is over we can expect Kitson to return to his more customary role of obstacle to the pay struggle.

In Parliament, too, the 'left' talkers were able to keep their



Kitson

heads. Eight Tribunes contented themselves with verbal denunciations of the Phase 4 plans—and then pulled back from voting against the policy in Parliament.

Instead, all 8 merely abstained, while the remainder of the Tribune Group voted in favour of Phase 4, ensuring, with Liberal help, that the plan was passed.

The refusal of the 'lefts' to lift a finger to oppose wage control or take up the slightest fight to remove the Callaghan-Healey leadership, an end to wage controls, restoration of social services cuts and socialist policies of nationalisation of major industry without compensation under workers management.

According to the *Financial Times*, Eric Heffer was challenged by Callaghan at a

Labour/TUC Liaison Committee meeting:

"Eric, you'll have to choose whether to support the Labour Party with me or without me."

Rather than snap up this golden opportunity to launch a popular struggle in the ranks of the Labour Party to fight for Callaghan's removal, Heffer as usual collapsed.

With "opposition" like Heffer, Callaghan need have no fears that he will win out on every reactionary proposal he wants inserted into Labour's manifesto, and every reform he wants deleted.

Diversion

Increasingly the experience of Labour in office shows unmistakably that the illusion that Labour 'lefts' in Parliament can defend workers' interests or in any way take up a principled fight against Callaghan is a dangerous diversion from the fight to build a revolutionary leadership in the workers movement.

Every serious demand put on the 'lefts' further exposes their inability to break from the right wing and their lack of any coherent socialist perspective.

This is why in this pre-election period constituency Labour Parties should step up such demands and in particular call on MPs and Labour candidates to launch a campaign for the removal of the Callaghan-Healey leadership, an end to wage controls, restoration of social services cuts and socialist policies of nationalisation of major industry without compensation under workers management.

SPANISH POPULAR FRONT: A ROADBLOCK TO REVOLUTION

PART TWO

The Spanish Popular Front with its amalgam of bourgeois and workers parties, though it ran totally counter to the interests of the working class and peasantry, nonetheless suited the interests of all its participants.

*the small group of liberal bourgeoisie anxious to prove that they still had a political role to play in defence of private property;

*the leaders of the mass workers' parties desperate to avoid being forced to lead a social revolution;

*the centrists of the POUM, unable to formulate an independent working class strategy and hence adapting to the weight of the workers' bureaucracy.

Events would show how this anti-fascist alliance in practice paved the way for fascism and how, as Trotsky said:

"contrary to its own intentions, the POUM proved to be, in the final analysis, the chief obstacle on the road to the creation of a revolutionary party."

Capitulation

It was clear in advance that the vast majority of the voters for the Popular Front would be supporters of the Socialist Party (PSOE).

But the workers' leaders underlined their abject programmatic capitulation to the bourgeois parties by also giving the bourgeois parties a majority of candidates on the Popular Front lists.

Of the 353 Popular Front candidates 194 (55%) were from the bourgeois republican parties.

The workers' leaders prepared in advance their alibi for not forming a government independent of the bourgeoisie—they guaranteed that they could not have a parliamentary majority.

Against all expectations the Popular Front as a whole won a clear majority in the general election of



Republican troops on their way to the front.

February 1936.

The Popular Front got 276 seats out of the total of 471.

Of these the republicans (including the Catalanian Esquerra) had 159, the PSOE 90, the Communist Party had 16 and there was one each for the POUM (Maurin) and the Syndicalist Party (Pestana).

The CEDA was the largest party of the right with 86 seats.

As soon as these results were announced, without waiting for word from the elected government, workers massed in tens of thousands outside the prisons until all political prisoners were released.

In the South tenants spontaneously stopped paying rent. And a strike wave began, which was not to subside until the revolution which followed the military revolt in July.

Powerlessness

For six months an exclusively bourgeois republican government, set up in the name of the Popular Front and supported in the Parliament (Cortes) by the PSOE, the Communist Party and the POUM, desperately tried on behalf of capital,

the church and the landowners, to control a growing revolutionary working class upsurge.

But the powerlessness of this regime became so evident that the dominant sections of the bourgeoisie decided that Popular Frontism of this variety could not stem the revolutionary tide and so turned increasingly towards authoritarian solutions.

Self defence

Fascist bands committed daily outrages against workers' lives and property. And, in response, the workers themselves began to organise self defence independently of the criminal inactivity of their own leaders.

A kind of civil war had already begun. Between the February elections and the military revolt in July an average of two people were killed and six wounded every day in street battles.

Major sections of the bourgeoisie supported the plot which produced the military rebellion of July 18, 1936.

In two-thirds of the country this rising was defeated by the instantaneous, massive and spontan-

eous revolutionary mobilisation of the working class and poor peasantry.

This mobilisation was as much against the bourgeois republican Popular Front government as it was against the fascist counter-revolution.

Independently of their national leaders, the workers' organisations everywhere disarmed the army, set up workers militias using captured arms, took over transport and supply, took over factories and offices.

All kinds of workers' committees were set up. The traditional courts were ignored and workers established new revolutionary forms of justice.

A situation of dual power existed. And until the prestige of the central government could be re-established only workers power remained as a bulwark against fascism.

The American Trotskyist journalist Felix Morrow saw the situation at first hand in September 1936:

"The ostensible justification of the People's Front was that it secured the aid of the republicans against counter-revolutionary fascism.

The People's Front, however, served the opposite function: it prevented the proletariat from tearing away from the republican politicians the petty-bourgeoisie who, in all victorious revolutions, throw in their lot with the proletariat when they see it determinedly striking out for a new and rich life under a new social order.

The People's Front subordinated both the petty-bourgeoisie and the proletarian masses to the treacherous leadership of the bourgeois politicians.

Only the dual power of the proletariat has so far prevented the victory of reaction."

But the Popular Front was preparing to destroy that dual power and so participate in the triumph of reaction.

To do so it brought out its last reserve weapon—the "left" socialist Largo Caballero.

On September 4, when the bourgeois republicans had acknowledged their political impotence, the Popular Front was reconstructed in another form.

The PSOE now became the centre of the coalition government in republican Spain.

"Spanish Lenin"

And it was led not by the right wing of the Socialists (led by Prieto and Negrin) but its left "revolutionary" wing, headed by Largo Caballero who became Prime Minister.

The task which the man whom *Pravda* had called the "Spanish Lenin" set himself was not to defend the social revolution which was taking place, but to begin to reverse the gains which the workers had made and to restore "order" and "normality."

He was a faithful servant of the Popular Front and the bourgeois order.

Caballero was probably the only political figure who could have reversed the revolution because of his "left" reputation.

He was assisted not only by the Communist Party which now (on Caballero's

insistence) entered the government but soon also by even the anarchists who in November 1936 supplied four ministers to the government.

This Popular Front, led now by "revolutionaries" set out to undo all the revolutionary gains made by the workers and to reassure "world opinion" (the imperialist democracies) that the Spanish republican government meant no harm to private property.

Workers' control in industry was ended, the revolutionary committees were disbanded, militias disarmed and so on.

Impression

The Anarchist Minister of Justice Garcia Oliver was later to try limply to justify his participation in the destruction of workers' committees.

"The international bourgeoisie refused to supply us with the arms we needed.

We had to give the impression that it was not the Revolutionary Committee that were in control but the legal government without which we would have nothing at all."

Caballero's counter-revolutionary treachery, however, though crucial in



'Left' social



Defeated Republican troops entering France in 1939

turning the revolutionary tide, was not sufficient to reverse it completely.

That was a task for the third form which the Popular Front government took—an alliance between the right wing of the PSOE and the Communist Party.

Isolated

Almost from the moment that Caballero took office the CP and the main leader of the PSOE right wing, Prieto, had plotted his removal and replacement as soon as his crucial role had been played.

It was not long before Caballero, having manifestly disappointed the expectations which large sections of the working class had had of him, became politically isolated.

In material terms his government came to depend more and more on aid from the Soviet Union.

The Soviet government, therefore, along with its agents on the spot—the Spanish CP and the growing number of GPU agents and political representatives of the Third International—came to acquire more and more weight.

Although Stalin had, to begin with, grudgingly acknowledged the necessary

role which Caballero had to play in the counter-revolution, the Soviet dictator nonetheless remained mistrustful of the "Spanish Lenin".

He genuinely feared that Caballero might be forced to carry out some of the red-blooded measures he had verbally advocated from 1934 to 1936.

In a famous letter Stalin warned Caballero that he should do nothing which would alienate the democratic bourgeoisie in Western Europe.

And in saying this he was thinking of his own plans for a clearer alliance with Britain and France.

Stalin wished to dispose of Caballero as soon as possible also as a result of the (relative) protection he gave to the anarchists (who entered his government) and more particularly the POUM, the "Trotskyists" who had begun to wage a propaganda campaign against the Moscow show-trials.

Trial of strength

In December as a result of pressure from the Catalan Stalinists, the PSUC, the POUM was expelled from the semi-autonomous government of Catalonia, the Generalitat.

This began a chain of events which was to culminate in the "May Days" in Barcelona when a spontaneous rising by workers followed by a series of provocations by the Generalitat government (a Popular Front coalition dominated by the bourgeois republicans and the Stalinist PSUC) forced a final trial of strength between the Generalitat on the one side and the revolutionary Barcelona proletariat on the other.

Repression

After several days of street-fighting, and largely as a result of the indecision and vacillation by the POUM and the CNT leaders the workers were decisively beaten and the excuse was taken to outlaw the POUM.

This finally enabled the Stalinists to unleash one of the most shameful of the many crimes which were undertaken in the name of the Popular Front and the fight against fascism—the systematic repression of the POUM and the anarchists.

Its best-known leader Andres Nin was kidnapped by Stalinist agents from the USSR, tortured and murdered.

Other leaders either escaped or were arrested and subjected to Stalin-style show-trials, being accused grotesquely of being "fascist agents".

As early as December 17 1936 an article in *Pravda* had gloated obscenely that:

"So far as Catalonia is concerned, the clearing up of the Trotskyist and the Anarcho-Syndicalist elements has already begun, and it will be carried out with the same energy as in the USSR".

Forced to resign

One of the GPU accomplices involved at this time in bloody acts against Trotskyists and centrists was today's "Eurocommunist" Santiago Carrillo.

Barcelona's May Days provoked the fall of Largo Caballero.

He was unable to control the rise of Stalinist power and was forced by the CP to resign as Premier.

The anarchists left the government with him.

Caballero was replaced by the CP's chosen successor, the Socialist Finance Minister, Juan Negrin, who was to remain Prime Minister until the final destruction of the Republic in 1939.

The initial strong-man of Negrin's government was Indalecio Prieto, Caballero's right-wing rival for the leadership of the Socialist Party.

Resigned

Prieto became Defence Minister in which post he, like Caballero before him, came into sharper and sharper conflict with his erstwhile allies, the CP, because he wished to prevent complete CP and Soviet control of the Republican Army.

When in April 1938 Prieto opposed a proposal of the CP ministers to increase the number of political commissars (nearly all of whom were CP members) in the Army, leading Stalinist Dolores Ibarruri ("La Passonaria") said that the acceptance of the proposal was a condition of the continuation of Soviet military aid.

Prieto resigned and went into political obscurity. His predecessor Caballero had by this time been removed by the Stalinists from the leadership of the UGT union federation and from every position in the labour movement.

By mid-1938 the Francoist armies were closing in on

the shrinking Republic. But the Stalinists had achieved their political objectives—the political and often physical destruction of the POUM, the anarchists, the left of the Socialist Party and indeed virtually the whole of the mass movement.

Determined

The vehicle through which this political carve-up was produced was the Popular Front—the class collaborationist electoral and then governmental alliance which in Spain was not originally the creation of the Stalinists of the Communist Party but which, following the line which the Comintern adopted in 1935, they made their own.

Within the Popular Front the Stalinists became the most determined and in the end the unrivalled component.

Their public excuse for the counter-revolutionary policies which they supported or initiated in the Popular Front was that the war against fascism had 'first' to be won before there could be talk of socialism.

In reality it was the opposite. The Popular Front and the Stalinists in particular pursued policies which sacrificed the winning of the war to the needs of the counter-revolution.

Starved of arms

Important fronts were starved of arms and materials by the Stalinist-dominated Popular Front government on the basis that the troops were led by Anarchist or other "revolutionary" forces.

In the months before the Civil War the Popular Front government, still consisting entirely of the bourgeois parties, had refused to arm the workers against the fascist threat.



Militia men patrol a Madrid street

Now at the direct instigation of the Communist Party, militias of the workers' organisations were disbanded and forcibly disarmed.

The formula "Military victory first, then social reform", was, as Trotsky said:

"... fatal for the Spanish revolution . . . Audacious social reforms represent the strongest weapon in the civil war and the fundamental condition for the victory over fascism".

But the leaders of the Popular Front showed at every turn that the suppression of the revolutionary proletariat and peasantry was more important to them than victory over fascism.

Once again Trotsky expresses this appalling fact graphically:

"The 'republican' military commanders were more concerned with crushing the social revolution than with scoring military victories.

The soldiers lost confidence in their commanders, the masses in the government; the peasants stepped aside; the workers became exhausted; defeat followed defeat; demoralisation grew apace.

All this was not difficult to foresee at the beginning of the civil war. By setting itself the task of rescuing the capitalist regime, the Popular Front doomed itself to military defeat.

By turning Bolshevism on its head, Stalin succeeded completely in fulfilling the role of gravedigger of the revolution".

Token gestures

The first way in which the Popular Front paved the way for fascism was that through it the workers' parties rejected the building of an independent working class programme in favour of tying the workers to a programme which above all else was designed to uphold bourgeois authority and property.

In doing so they denied the objective choice which lay before the Spanish working class—socialism or fascism.

The second way that the Popular Front prepared for fascism was a concrete result of the first.

Between February and July 1936, under the protection of the Popular Front government, the senior military officers of the state more or less openly plotted their violent counter-revolution. And the Popular Front leaders did virtually nothing to stop them.

Token gestures were taken against a few generals.

As the war of "democracy" against fascism continued, then all democratic rights and revolutionary gains within the republic were abolished.

Stalinist tyranny was established. By the end, for workers and peasants, there seemed nothing left worth defending.

Decades of terror

With the appropriate details changed the same conclusions can be made about the Popular Front in France from 1936 to 1938, or the Popular Unity in Chile between 1970 and 1973 or any other Popular Front.

In Spain, the conclusions are all the more bitter because of the long period of defeat which was ushered in for the Spanish working class.

As early as July 1936, a few days after the start of the Civil War, Trotsky predicted with terrible accuracy:

"By lulling the workers and peasants with parliamentary illusions, by paralysing their will to struggle, the Popular Front creates the favourable conditions for the victory of fascism.

The policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie must be paid for by the proletariat with years of new torments and sacrifice, if not by decades of fascist terror".

Objective

But while it is always the objective of the Popular Front to lull the working class and paralyse their will to struggle, not all Popular Fronts have led to such results as in Spain.

In writing on Spain and France, Trotsky reminds us that the first Popular Front was the coalition of Cadets, Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in Russia between February and October 1917.

There was only one reason why that regime did not in practice pave the way for fascism: it could not crush the successful revolutionary struggle waged by the proletariat under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party.

Model

The policy of the Bolsheviks in 1917 is a model today for the revolutionary socialist policy towards Popular Fronts as it was the model in Trotsky's mind in the 1930s.

The Bolsheviks refused to join the Popular Front.

They campaigned to break the Popular Front by calling for the dismissal of the capitalist ministers.

During the attempt at military counter-revolution by Kornilov, the Bolsheviks fought on the side of the Popular Front but they gave it no political confidence whatever.

They defended democracy against reaction, but with the weapons not of bourgeois democracy but of proletarian revolution.

And, behind the back of the Popular Front, they built up the organs of workers power which could replace the bourgeois order which the Popular Front defended.

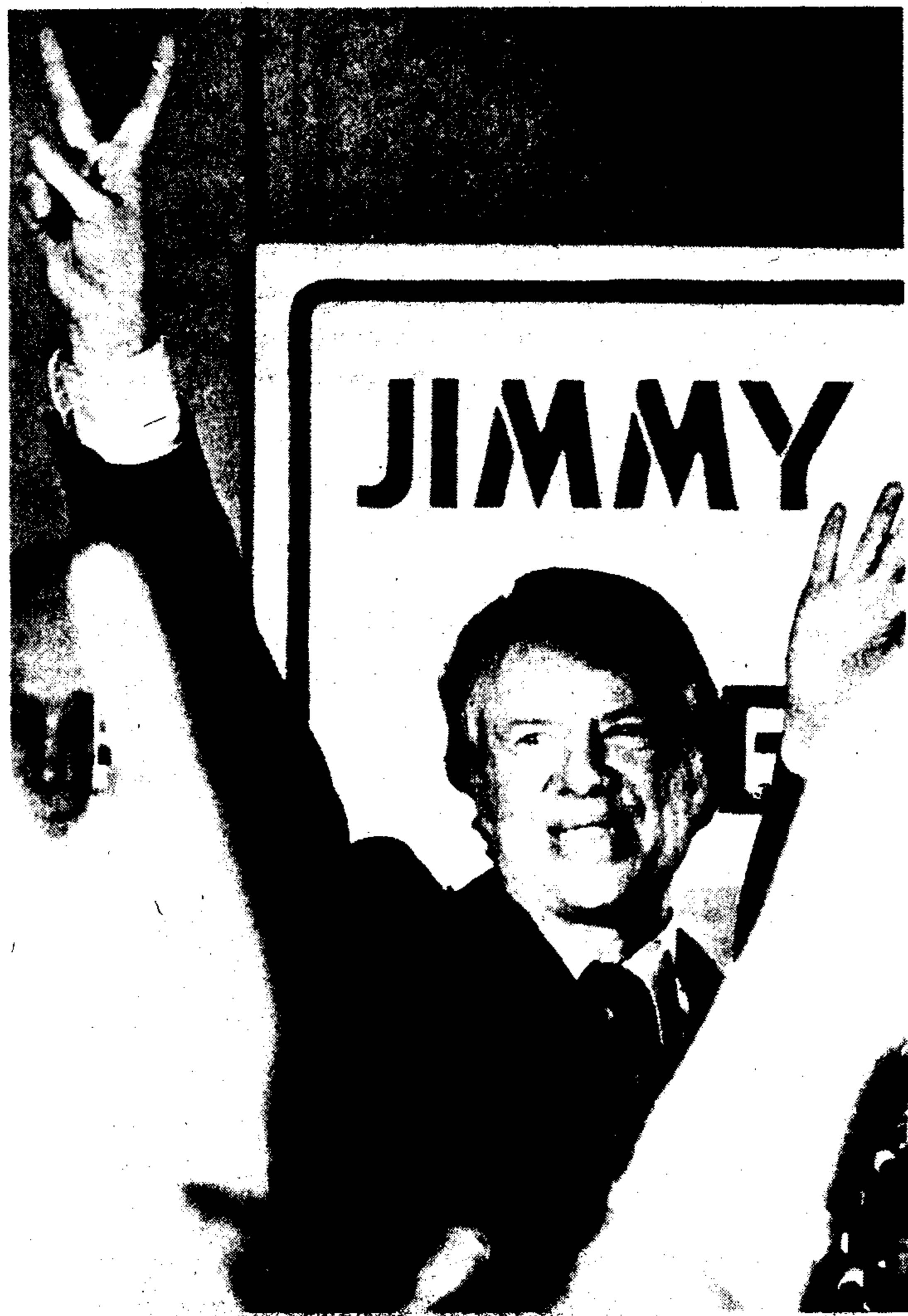
Through this non-sectarian but uncompromisingly proletarian policy they constructed the party which by leading the social revolution was capable of averting the disaster to which subsequent Popular Fronts have led.

By Enrique Alvares



Largo Caballero at the front

CARTER'S PUBLIC SECTOR CRACKDOWN



Carter

"This is an austere and lean budget—the cuts are deep", commented Gerry Brown, Democrat Governor of California, recently as he announced his budget plans for the coming year.

Part of his miserable package is a complete ban on wage increases for all state employees (they were due for a magnificent 2½% increase—about one third of the present rate of inflation).

Money allocated for abortion programmes is to be drastically chopped. Adult education courses, technical training schemes and summer school sessions (which had 500,000 enrolled) are threatened with shutdown.

Increases in welfare grants are to be blocked. The significance of all this for the American working class should not be underestimated.

'Rebellion'

Brown's excuse is the reactionary 'Jarvis-Gann initiative' which was passed by the Californian electorate on 7 June.

Now similar legislation is on the cards in most states as the right wing instigated 'taxpayers rebellion' is whipped up by the

media, big banks and corporations.

Jarvis and Gann are two small-time capitalists, on their own admission against trade unions and state education.

Collaboration

Their 'reform' of the tax system was presented as relieving the pressure on middle and working class homeowners, but in reality it is designed to boost the tax-savings of banks, corporations and all these in the higher income groups.

Now similar moves are being backed across the US by both Republicans and Democrats alike.

In California the right wing were able to count on the collaboration of the trade union bureaucracy in pushing through their attacks on the working class.

In San Francisco, Jack Crowley, President of the City's Labour Council, (the US equivalent of Trades Councils) supported the Mayor's declaration of a state of emergency which immediately nullified all union contracts agreed in the last 30 years!

In Sacramento, where massive lay-offs are threatened, the leaders of public service unions simply offered suggestions as to which jobs should be cut first.

In America and internationally nothing has



AFL-CIO leader Meany

changed since the American syndicalist Daniel De Leon described such bureaucrats as "the labour lieutenants of the capitalist class" more than seventy years ago.

Such betrayals must be set against the background of the international crisis of capitalism, a crisis which has produced soaring inflation and unemployment figures in the US.

Carter's leading economic advisers, Schultze and Strauss, have both admitted to a current inflation rate of 7.2%.

Trade deficit

Concealed within this are dramatic rises of 16-17% in the prices of basic foods.



'Left' opponent Balanoff

The Carter administration is also expecting a huge trade deficit this year of around \$40 billion.

Reaction

Nationally there are almost 6½ million unemployed. When broken down this statistic reveals a youth unemployment rate of over 17% (40% in New York), and a rate for black workers (12.5%) which is more than twice that for whites (5.5%).

Carter's reaction has been to attack wage claims, cut public spending, increase tax incentives for big business and sell off 300,000 ounces of gold per month, supposedly:

"... to re-establish stability for the dollar on the foreign exchange and bolster confidence at home".

In order to retain and augment America's dominant influence in the IMF Carter has to keep his own working class in check.

In order to achieve this he has at his disposal a whole battery of reactionary legislation and, most effective of all, a queue of collaborators and traitors in the leadership of the trade unions, all eager to prop up the interests of capital and imperialist exploitation.

Bureaucrats

The list of these bureaucrats starts at the top with hardened conscious employers' agents like George Meany (head of the

AFL-CIO confederation, Fitzsimmons (Teamsters Union), Miller (Mineworkers), McBride (Steelworkers) and Fraser (Auto Workers) and extends to the gaggle of sub-reformists and budding bureaucrats who constitute the official 'opposition' in the trade union movement.

At the last AFL-CIO conference Meany echoed Carter's attacks on postal workers' and Teamsters' wage claims and blamed workers in Russia, Japan and Europe for unemployment in the US.

He proposed massive tariff restrictions and import quotas as the only solution. He also engineered a 22% wage rise for himself!

Blustering

The lack of principled opposition was evident in the empty blustering of the empty blustering of Machinists Union leader Wimpinger and in the utter bankruptcy of the most voluble anti-Meanyite, Jim Balanoff (leader of 110,000 Chicago steelworkers).

The latter refused to carry out any fight at all, he simply packed up and left for home!

The union leaders are also backing Carter's anti-working class Labour Law Reform Bill.

This is an attempt by Carter to update the 1935 Wagner Law which saddled the trade union movement with a mass of major and minor restrictions. Carter's original

proposed Bill was bad enough, but it has since been pushed even further right by Congressional amendments.

Now even Carter says "it is much more inclined towards the employers' position than it was in its original form", but Meany recently took out an advertisement in *The Wall Street Journal* calling on the "wise and intelligent leaders of the American business world" to support the Bill!

'Revolution'

United Steelworkers President Lloyd McBride spelt out his class allegiances when he advised American capitalists to accept the Bill's proposals for speedier union recognition on the grounds that if they didn't "it could produce the same conditions that were largely responsible for the Great Depression... I would not be surprised if such conditions caused a revolution".

In other words, give the workers a few peanuts now and then and we'll be able to keep them down much more effectively.

Stage-managed

A recent example of a reformist attempt at independent opposition to such leaders was the conference called by the "All Unions Committee to Shorten the Work Week".

This was attended by a number of militants looking for a lead, but was effectively stage-managed by Douglas Fraser (President of the Auto Workers Union) through Frank Runnels (President of a large Cadillac UAW branch).

Runnels correctly illustrated the massive attacks on US workers through unemployment and speed-up since the war, but timidly declared that:

"It is not our intention to tell any union how their programme should operate".

Out of order

He gave an uncritical platform to Fraser, Democrats and assorted agents of capital. When a delegate



California State Governor Gerry Brown



Crisis in housing in New York City will be worsened by Carter cutbacks

challenged Fraser to explain why he negotiated overtime clauses into all UAW contracts. Runnels was quick to rule the question out of order.

Such leaders have presided over the post-war reconstruction of capitalism and all subsequent capitalist attempts to alleviate the deepening crisis at workers' expense.

Between 1953 and 1977 production in car, railroad, shipbuilding and aeroplane factories increased by 93% whilst the workforce dropped by 16%.

Downward spiral

In steel and other metal industries production rose by 53% and the workforce was cut by 19%.

In coal there was a 7% rise in production accompanied by a 55% cut in the workforce!

The case of New York City's downward spiral of the crisis of capital and the role of the union bureaucracy.

The estimated budget deficit for New York in 1979 stands at \$457 million.

This figure is quoted in the media with the proviso: "... and that is without allowing for wage increases for municipal employees".

Derisory 'deal'

It is not just the capitalist press that is fighting to block wage increases. In June, Victor Gotbaum (head of the New York section of the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees) engineered a derisory 'deal' with Mayor Koch.

For his 200,000 members Gotbaum secured two tiny 4% rises staggered

over 2 years. This means in reality a pay cut of over 10% after inflation after 3 years of total wage freeze!

This latest sell-out came at the end of a period in which municipal workers in New York had shown increasing signs of shaking off the combined 'we're all in this crisis together' line of their leaders and the City officials.

At the end of March, for example, New York State had to take out an injunction against bus and underground workers who were about to strike.

The last strike by transport workers was in 1966 and lasted for 12 days, bringing "economic disaster" to the city.

Union leaders in New York have given full support to unelected bodies like the Emergency Financial Control Board (EFCB) and the Municipal Assistance Corporation (MAC).

Decay

Gotbaum for example is on record as saying that he thinks the EFCB should be in control for another "10-15 years"!

The financial collapse of New York is mirrored by its appalling inner-city decay, a problem it shares with most large American cities.

To cope with this the Carter administration has fostered the growth of private voluntary bodies like "The Peoples Development Corporation" and "Adopt a Building".

Carter has also proffered the 'softest' of all 'soft' public works programmes—mainly designed to sop up a few of the chronically unemployed for short periods.

In such a situation Carter is looking to the force of

the state.

The army was alerted to deliver mail if postal workers press their 13% pay claim and demands for a 35-hour week and state troopers were out in force against the miners' strike.

These conditions of rising inflation, high unemployment, cuts in social services, deterioration in housing, and lack of principled alternative to the capitalist parties have inevitably led to the growth of extreme right and fascist groups.

Daily News eventually forcing the employer to back down. In St. Louis, thousands of workers mobilised to drive the Nazis off the streets.

In San Francisco dockers have blacked shipments of arms to the Chilean junta for nearly 2 months.

Several large unions are putting in wage demands of between 30-40% and railroad workers have already won in excess of 30%.

Unionisation and recognition struggles are numerous and often violent



Dollar continues its fall in the money markets

These groups, like the Nazis who paraded in Chicago recently also profit from the bourgeois liberal 'free speech' illusions of the middle class (the American Civil Liberties Union fought for the Nazis "rights" in the courts).

Labour Party

The first requirement for the labour movement in the US must be to break its links with the two main capitalist parties and move towards the formation of a Labour Party to represent the independent interests of the American working class.

There is continual evidence of the willingness of the workers to fight.

The recent historic struggle by the miners is the most significant evidence, but there are others.

For three days in New York last month thousands of workers picketed the

and bitter—like the 2 year battle at the Blue Diamond coal mine in Stearns, Kentucky.

The recent firemen's strike in Memphis led to a state of emergency and a court order to return to work after 3 days.

Such struggles will only be betrayed however under a leadership welded to capitalist parties.

*Scrap all anti-union legislation!

*For the nationalisation of all major industries without compensation and under elected committees for workers!

*For work sharing on full pay and a massive programme of public works to combat unemployment!

*For workers defence squads against the fascists!

*For a sliding scale of pay to cope with inflation!

*For a Labour Party to fight for socialist policies for the US working class!

IN REVIEW

An allegory on women's oppression

'Stepford Wives', directed by Bryan Forbes.

This is a brilliant film by Bryan Forbes on the oppression of women.

He picks for his vehicle small-town USA—a very wealthy small-town.

Into this town comes Joanna Eberhart (Katherine Ross) and her lawyer husband, Walter.

Very quickly the viewer is drawn into their relationship and specifically the conflicts within it.

In a quarrel early on we learn that they always do what the husband wants—though he always wants to make it look as if it's what she wants.

Deposit

He had carefully prepared even the move to Stepford, while ensuring that Joanna feels she made the decision. And, though she thinks she has chosen the particular house they buy, it turns out he had already paid a deposit on it!

This is the kind of relationship that Walter—and in Forbes' opinion all American men in this social grouping is looking for.

But Joanna rebels. She has desires of her own, and is not content to be an object.

Successful

The film shows her long-ing to be a professional photographer or to be in some way remembered in her own right and not as "Walter's wife".

Some of the best scenes show her attempts to get her work recognised—a fight which is eventually successful.

Meanwhile she notices that the majority of the women in the town are very strange. They are completely servile to their husbands and spend their whole day doing housework, gardening, or just ensuring that they look good.

This is revealed most sharply when Joanna and two other 'rebel' wives, who seem normal and have their own interests, get together a "consciousness raising" women's group.

She and the other two complain about their husbands: but all the others talk about baking cakes and the best flour to use.

Joanna discovers in the local library that some of these same women had been in a women's group in Stepford, and yet now are completely servile.

Hanging in the background to these developments is the mysterious men-only men's club which Walter has joined.

When one of the two 'rebel' wives goes away and returns completely changed and as servile as the others Joanna and her friend decide that something is

wrong.

They go to an ex-boy friend of Joanna's and ask him to test the town's water for drugs. But he only tries to pick her up.

Then her friend is also transformed and Joanna gets really frightened.

Escape

She goes to a woman psychiatrist outside the town, who is the only person to show her real sympathy.

She advises Joanna to grab her children and make her escape from Stepford.

But this is easier said than done. When she gets back she sees her children have gone—the sign, that she, too, is to be changed.

Joanna goes round to her friend's house to see if the children are there. In desperation she stabs her friend to see if she bleeds. She doesn't. She is a perfect mechanical model of a human being.

Joanna is caught and herself transformed. The man who supervises killing her and replacing her with a machine asks if she wouldn't like to reverse the situation and produce a perfect stud, who would rush to carry out her every wish.

The film concludes in the town's supermarket, with all the "women" doing their shopping, greeting each other, smiling and carrying on.

The strength of the presentation is in the way the specific husband/wife relationship continuously links in with the general theme.

Logical conclusion

The use of science fiction is effective and in no way cuts across the director's presentation of women's oppression. Rather it points to its logical conclusion.

The film does not, and does not attempt to show any way forward. The wealthy small town is not in any financial worries that some of this social stratum would normally have in this economic crisis.

The element of science fiction emphasises the unreality of the film. It cannot be compared with 'Westworld' and its sequel, which were science fiction films showing robots taking over the world.

'Stepford Wives', for all the classless nature of Forbes' ideas, is not set in the future. It uses science fiction to emphasise the continuing reality of women's oppression. It is a brilliant film.

By Tony Richardson



US Nazis on parade in Chicago

Vauxhall strikers stand firm

There is no end in sight for the month-long strike by transport drivers at Vauxhall's Ellesmere Port factory, who are demanding a tonnage allowance.

The strikers are continuing their determined and effective 24-hour picket.

No new offer

A meeting between Vauxhall management and TGWU national official Eric Bone led to no new offer being made, and Bone emerged threatening that the dispute could be made official.

Both District and Regional Committees of the TGWU have now recommended official backing which now depends on the General Executive Council.

Meanwhile 7,000 AUEW members not involved in the strike have been told they will be laid off if the strike is still on when they return from the holiday shutdown in three week's time.

Note to continue

The last mass meeting of the 3,000 TGWU members who are on strike in sympathy with the drivers voted to continue the action despite some bitterness at the prospect of remaining on strike for two weeks

prior to the holidays.

This bitterness was not eased by the announcement by deputy convenor Tony Woodley that appeals for support from transport drivers at Luton and Dunstable had been rejected.

At Luton the drivers are organised in the AUEW, and feel that they have no grievance with management, while at Dunstable the

drivers are still working on the original agreement, restricted to 22-ton loads.

Vauxhall management have refused to revert to this agreement in Ellesmere Port pending negotiations, and are clearly hoping to inflict a defeat on the transport drivers.

Delegation

The principled support for the drivers by the whole



Vauxhall drivers picket the Ellesmere Port plant

arriving from Belgium for assembly in Luton.

The failure of other plants and the AUEW at Ellesmere Port to support this strike has highlighted not only the weakness of the combine committee and the lack of a Joint Shop Stewards Committee at Ellesmere Port but a lack of principled political leadership in these sections.

Under conditions of wage control and all-round drive for speed-up by employers only the most determined sections of stewards are prepared to lead militant action on pay and conditions, while others run from any struggle that might encourage their members to press their own demands on pay and conditions.

Strike after bosses sack 239

The quiet village of Crow Edge near Penistone in Yorkshire is the scene of a very bitter dispute.

The issue erupted after a meeting of TGWU members held in working hours to discuss a pay claim.

239 workers were immediately sacked, (including one who had come in on his day off) and were sent home.

Events since then have moved rapidly in the factory, Hepworth Iron Company, and its subsidiary G.R. Stein.

Full reinstatement

All the TGWU members have been on strike ever since, although it took ten days for the local bureaucracy to make the strike official.

The men are demanding full reinstatement of the 239 with no break in service, which would hit pension rights.

It seems that management

have been preparing for this situation and are now intent on destroying the unions there as a prelude to redundancies.

The subsidiary, G.R. Stein has already approached ASTMS with proposals for substantial redundancies.

Sacked

At Hepworth, the ASTMS branch chairman, Ian Christopher has been sacked for refusing to scab on the strike.

Management refuses to discuss directly with the sacked men or strikers but has demanded through TGWU officials that eight TGWU members be barred from holding union office for five years, as a condition of full re-instatement. This has been flatly rejected.

Thwarted

Stockpiles of pipes had been built-up in preparation for the

dispute and this week a convoy of scab lorries, protected by police, was able to move pipes out of the factory.

The move, however, was thwarted by dockers who refuse to handle the goods.

Relations between police and pickets have deteriorated as a result and scuffles occurred.

Chief Superintendent Alan Robinson said it was the police's responsibility to help the firm continue its business.

The reaction of the men has been contradictory. They are clear that the aim is to break up the union.

Works convenor Barry Almond said:

"What has happened is that we have got organised. A few years ago there was no union here. But now we have got organised and they are frightened. The reason they have gone for these eight men is that they are the leaders".

There has been a fight for extended supporting strikes,

blacking and building the picket.

One of the problems in picketing is the size of the factory perimeter.

Management are in a position to build new gates as they need to and easily bring in scabs. A reinforced picket is essential.

Dangerous step

On the other hand, strikers took the dangerous step of suggesting that their credentials be suspended while an independent inquiry was convened.

This was rejected by management who want the full concessions.

An industrial tribunal failed to find in favour of the sacked ASTMS member.

The union bureaucracy are now placing the dispute in the hands of ACAS and have called for the strikes in the Midlands to be called off so that management will talk.

Meanwhile the strike at Crow Edge continues.

It is clear that so long as faith is placed in such "independent" bodies as ACAS, the dispute is in danger of being lost.

The determination of the strikers must be taken forward. They must demand that their TGWU officials withdraw from the ACAS hearing, that the strikes in the Midlands are re-started.

The union officials must be called on to win the dispute by calling supporting strike action and mobilising for a mass picket so that these convoys are stopped.

The blacking must be continued and extended.

Messages of support should be sent to Brother Terry Wright, Martin Nest Farm, Lower Common, Hepworth, Holmfirth, HD7 1TN.

Convenor Barry Almond (Barnsley 81000) will supply speakers at meetings.

WSL

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.

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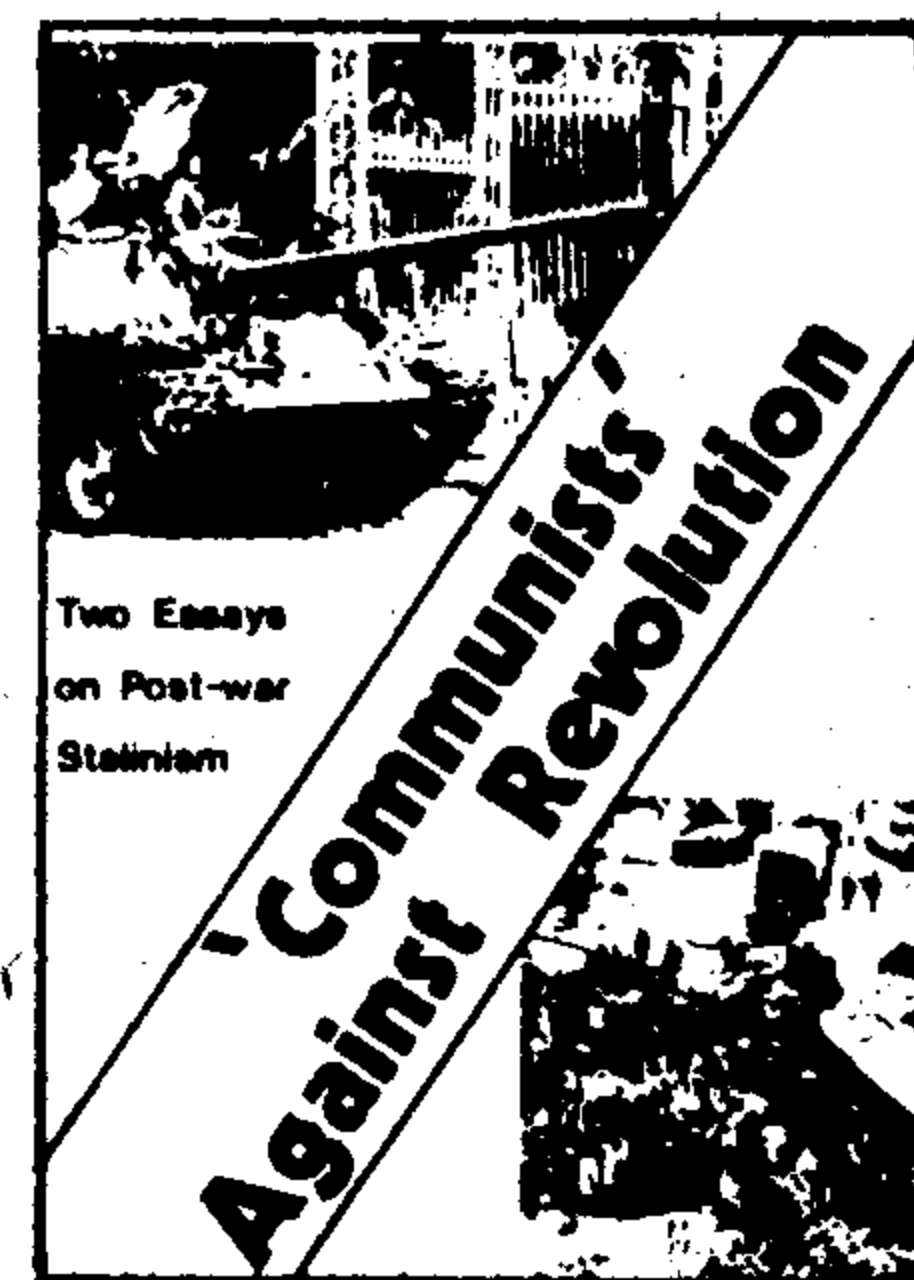
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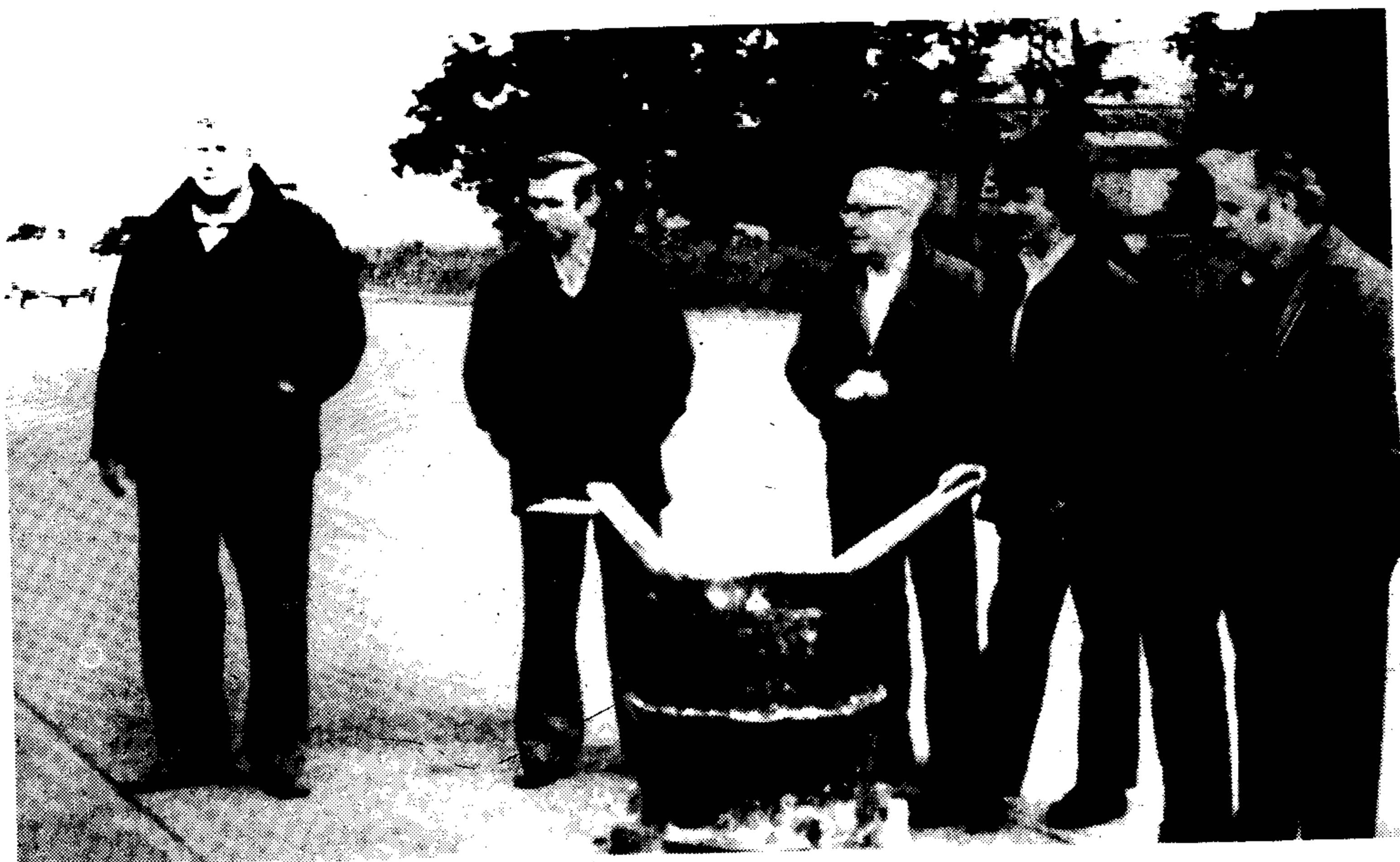
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Pickets outside Western Ship Repairers last week

Dockyard pickets fight on

Despite having taken the mistaken step of accepting their P45s, the 650 workers declared redundant at Western Ship Repairers on Merseyside have refused to accept the loss of their jobs.

They have decided to continue picketing the yard's gates to prevent maintenance men from carrying out essential work on the pumps which stop damage to the dock gates.

Burst open

As soon as these pumps break down, pressure builds up on the dock gates as the tide changes. This causes them to burst open causing thousands of pounds worth of damage.

Relying on this tactic to pressurise the company into re-employing them, the workers, who are now on the dole, are making a last ditch attempt to save their jobs after months and months of campaigning and lobbying up and down the country.

Last week, however, a group of management scabs managed to get in to carry out this vital maintenance work.

Members of the Workers Socialist League have argued that the only method of fighting this sabotage of their fight to save jobs is to occupy the yard.

But some pickets appeared to be under the illusion early last week that if they keep the picketing peaceful and avoid trouble with the police they could bring pressure to bear by appealing to the solidarity of the maintenance men.

This appeared to work until the company sent in the management scabs.

Low profile

The pickets are naturally wary of "breaking the law", particularly as the law of trespass could be used against any occupation.

So far the police have been keeping a low profile, but it is clear that if the men attempt to effectively picket the gates and use force to prevent management entering then the

police will be used to break the picket line as they did for months at Grunwick.

At the moment the men are receiving dole, but they are concerned about losing it if they occupy the yard.

A meeting on Monday 24 July, attended by 100 of the 650 sacked workers decided to set up an "action committee", but not to take the only action that can save this fight—occupation.

This fight has been led up blind alleys for too long and individuals will begin to drift away if decisive action is not taken immediately.

Open the books

All the concern about the law—which is the bosses' law—or "public opinion" or money must be put aside.

A WSL leaflet given out at the mass meeting on Monday in addition to calling for an occupation, also called for an elected committee to "open the books" and for nationalisation under workers management if the firm is proved not to be viable as a privately owned enterprise.

The only way to defend jobs is to fight for the nationalisation without compensation of the ship-repair industry and the fight for workers' management in the nationalised shipbuilding industry.

Maintain blacking on junta's engines

In granting an export license for the return of four aeroplane engines to Chile the Callaghan-Healey government has dealt a blow against the re-emergence of the workers' movement in that country.

Shortly before the 1973 coup the Allende government sent the engines to Rolls Royce, East Kilbride for repair.

After the coup, work on the engines was blacked. But in 1975 the AUEW

stewards at the plant to carry out a complete overhaul.

Though AUEW members followed this instruction, once the servicing was completed, the engines were then crated and placed in the factory yard, where they remain.

Recently the Chilean regime has secured a court order for the releasing of the engines and the excuse used by the government in leadership instructed shop granting the export license is that the courts can't be defied.

Shop stewards at Rolls Royce are adamant that these engines won't be moved and the TGWU leadership have correctly declared that their members won't transport them even if they are released.

Support for the blacking action must be raised in the trade unions and the Labour Party.

'Left' MPs who claim to oppose the Chilean junta must be forced to take up a campaign against the action of the government in granting the license.

SELL OUT FEARS AT GARNERS

Desperate proposals to defeat the 27-week old Garners strike have been emerging from beleaguered employer Margolis during the last week.

Conspicuous among these have been a call for a ballot of scabs and strikers put in the *Catering Times* by his stooge Bernard Henderson and even echoed by some of the strikers.

Despite denials from TGWU Regional Organiser Shorter that he knows anything of such a proposal, or would support it if he did, strikers scent the stench of sell-out now in the air.

The strength of the strike

itself is clear from the fact that the employer has been compelled to give up his previously rigid isolation from the media.

Everyone knows now that if the TGWU Regional leadership would lift a finger, the battle would be over in days.

There can be no doubt that the strike continues to hit Margolis and hit him hard.

He has had his son amongst others distributing thousands of £1 off a meal vouchers throughout the West End.

This desperate stunt to draw custom has failed miserably with reports from picket lines of customers actually handing over the vouchers to strikers when

they discovered there was a strike on.

On 27 July more pressure was put on Margolis when seven workers from the Oxford Street branch walked out over a squabble as how best to divide the spoils of their scabbing.

The fact that Margolis is still clinging on by his finger tips is entirely due to the trade union bureaucracy.

On Saturday night, a mass picket of 50 mobilised by the WSL at the Haymarket demonstrated both the vulnerability of the business to concerted picketing and the vulnerability of the police who have stepped up their policy of harassment and intimidation of the picket line.

Eight restaurants were picketed on Saturday night, drastically cutting Margolis' trade.

It has become clear that since the mauling that Regional Organiser Shorter suffered from the delegates at the re-call Garners Support Conference, the bureaucracy have taken the decision to kill this strike.

Financial levy

Over a month has passed since the conference endorsed strike committee policies of secondary blacking, a financial levy and building an effective picket on all restaurants.

Yet we understand from last Thursday's meeting between Shorter and the strike committee that the Regional bureaucracy are still refusing to circulate branches with the strike committee policy.

It is this abject betrayal by the trade union leadership which explains Margolis' arrogant public face over the past two weeks.

Margolis' mouthpiece, Henderson, has explained the company's proposals for a settlement:

"The peace formula is simple. There should immediately be another ballot—to ask all Garners' staff, and the strikers, whether or not they want trade union recognition."

We say that the strike committee has to come out and reject such treacherous proposals as a ballot.

Such a ballot would take the running of the strike out of the strike committee hands.

It would mean accepting as good coin the votes of scabs.

The strike committee should continue its fight to mobilise the rank and file of the TGWU to win this strike.

From the Regional Committee meeting this week it must demand:

*No secret talks with the employer!

*No return to work without full reinstatement and union recognition!

*Branches, within their trade groups, to picket all of Garners Steak Houses on every night of the week.

*Full scale blacking on Garners' suppliers!



1746

*London is lovely and lively so are
Londen is modi en vol leven zoals bij
Londres est belle et plein de vie ainsi que les
Londrés es muy hermoso y lleno de vida como son los
Londra è bella e piena di vita e così i
London ist schön und lebendig und so sind*

Garners Steak houses

£1 Gift Dining Voucher
WITH COMPLIMENTS OF THE WAMESCA AGENCY

Garners invitation to scab

Nursery campaign calls for action

A unanimous call for the Oxford Trades Council to support policies of occupation and indefinite strike action in defence of all educational, social and health services came from a public meeting called by the Trades Council and the Oxford City Nursery Campaign last week.

The public meeting followed a lobby of the County Council and a march through the town.

Over a hundred angry parents and trade unionists chanted demands to reopen the South Oxford Nursery which was occupied for six weeks after a long fight by the Oxford City Nursery Campaign against its closure.

This fight is still going on and the lobby, march and public meeting were an important step in the fight to mobilise the Trades Council into real action against cuts as opposed to token left talk.

The meeting was chaired by Gerry Casey (UPW) who attacked the record of Trades Council on the question of the cuts.

Casey, a leading figure in the fight to defend the old Trades Council from bureaucratic attack by the TUC, and a former Trades Council President spelt out the role of the fake left bureaucrats and Stalinists who actively assist attacks on the working class at every level.

He praised the continuing fight by the Nursery Campaign and the occupation of South Oxford Nursery as a model for all such struggles.

Opposed meeting

Ted Eames spoke on behalf of the campaign, underlining Casey's point by bringing out the fact that Eric Miller of NUPE (one of the unions most directly affected by the cuts) had opposed the calling of the public meeting by the Trades Council.

This was simply the latest in the line of obstructive tactics used by him and by NUPE official, Stalinist George Anderson.

Eames also brought out the effect of the nationally significant occupation on the recent decision by Shirley Williams to save the doomed South Oxford Middle School.

A lobby of the local Area Health Authority took place the same morning and one of the delegates from that lobby against proposed health cuts, Sue Lister (ASTMS), came to the meeting to bring out the latest stage of the fight in the health service.

She pointed out that one notable absentee from both lobbies and the meeting was the Acting Secretary of Trades Council, Pat Ward.

Ward is also chairman of the Health Services JTUC and chairman of the NUPE hospitals branch.

He had sent apologies to the AHA lobby, claiming that as Trades Council Secretary he had to go to the nursery meeting, but an extensive search failed to reveal the presence of this determined defender of the working class.

International

A surprise speaker from the floor was engineering worker Steve Zeltzer from California who emphasised the point about the international character of capitalism's attacks on the working class by detailing the public spending cuts now being

viciously implemented in the US.

All speakers emphasised the role of the Lib-Lab coalition in carrying through anti-socialist policies.

The meeting passed a unanimous resolution calling on Trades Council to adopt policies of occupation linked to indefinite strike action.



Ted Eames addresses an earlier nursery rally

SOCIALIST PRESS



SUN STRUCK

As we go to press there is no indication of which way talks have gone that are aimed at settling the pay dispute by journalists on the Sun, which has caused the loss of seven consecutive issues.

While the NUJ last week made the dispute official, it also took the dangerous step of involving ACAS officials in the

strike after all 220 editorial staff had been sacked for taking industrial action.

The journalists are seeking a way around the pay laws, demanding a productivity deal that does not involve an increase in working hours or a cut in jobs on top of their 10% Phase 3 increase.



Mathers under pressure at an earlier lobby

The weakness of the trumped-up charges being used by TGWU bureaucrats in their bid to victimise nine militants at Leyland's Cowley Assembly Plant was revealed at the meeting of the TGWU Region 5 Committee on July 19.

Lobbied by over 20 TGWU members from Cowley—despite the fact

that the meeting took place during the Leyland works holidays—Regional bureaucrats pulled back from implementing the request from the Finance and General Purposes Committee in the Oxford District for the expulsion of Alan Thornett from the union and a life ban on Frank Corti and Tom White holding union office.

But the Regional Committee—headed by Regional Secretary Brian Mathers—

TGWU RETREAT ON COWLEY 9: FORCE DROPPING OF ALL CHARGES!

did not take the decision requested by the 2,500 strong 5/293 Branch, and drop the charges raised against Thornett, Corti, White and six others.

Referred back

In a move that will prolong the affair to nearly a full year since the spurious allegations were first raised, the committee voted to refer the charges back to the Oxford District Committee to see whether they wished to proceed with them.

Behind this apparent climbdown remains the danger that the District Committee, headed by District Secretary David Buckle, might decide at its September meeting to revive the whole issue again, at a

time when there is likely to be a struggle taking place in defence of jobs in the Assembly Plant.

The ad-hoc Cowley 9 Defence Campaign has rallied the support of hundreds of leading TGWU members against the efforts of the bureaucracy to victimise what amounts to an entire elected leadership in the Assembly Plant (convenor, three elected deputy convenors and three leading stewards).

The Campaign is now urging that the fight proceed until such time as the charges are completely dropped.

This must be combined with the fight to force TGWU officials to take up the struggle for the recognition by Leyland manage-

ment of Alan Thornett, who was elected deputy convenor by shop floor ballot last December.

When this basic issue of defence of trade union rights in the factory came up on the agenda of the Region 5 Committee meeting, it resulted in a highly unusual split vote, with a body of opinion ready to ignore Thornett's Trotskyist politics and insist that the union fight for his recognition.

Significant

As the Third bulletin of the Defence Campaign points out:

"There is no doubt that this is a significant decision and represents a recognition by the Region of the weakness of the charges levelled.

"The campaign however cannot drop its guard. We must remain fully mobilised until all the charges are finally and officially withdrawn.

"The success of the Birmingham meeting on

July 12 and the successful lobby of the Regional Committee yesterday shows that this can be done."

And it goes on to show the link between this fight and others within the TGWU:

"In addition, the weight of the campaign must now be turned to those stewards who remain victimised. Alan Thornett must now be recognised by BL as deputy convenor of the Cowley Assembly Plant.

"The four Cowley stewards victimised since August 1976 must have their credentials restored.

"Moves being made against branches such as Banbury 5/104 must be halted. No action must be taken against the two Longbridge stewards currently facing inquiry."

Victory in this struggle will, in short, mark the major blow in the battle against the TGWU leadership and a step on the road to the building of an alternative leadership within the union.

£2535 and more to come

An impressive collection of £278.32 at the end of the Workers Socialist League Summer School has taken the total of the £2,000 Special Fund well over the target to £2535.09. And with over £150 in pledges still to be collected, we can be well satisfied with this achievement.

The Special Fund was launched to enable us to carry out a publishing programme. The first project, the publication of Tim Wohlforth's long-forgotten essay, "The Theory of Structural Assimilation" has now been published with a critical introduction by Adam Westoby in the book 'Communists' Against Revolution.

At the same time we have been able to establish Trotskyism Today as a regular quarterly journal of the Workers Socialist League, and there are more pamphlets to be published in coming months.

The target of £2,000 was an ambitious target, coming as it did shortly after a split with the sectarian supporters of the Spartacists.

The fact that we have raised so much more than the original target is a tribute to the dedication and determination of our members and supporters and readers of Socialist Press.

We would like to thank all those who have contributed so generously to the fund and at the same time remind them that our Monthly Fund (which we have continued to collect through the period of the Special Fund) has a target of £600 a month—money which we need to maintain the Socialist Press.

All donations to our Monthly Fund should be sent to:

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

Tactical retreat on docks sackings

In a cynical move to head off growing resistance by dockers, Transport Secretary William Rodgers is to announce a "reprieve" of London's threatened Upper Docks—at least until after the election.

Port of London Authority management wish to close the Upper Docks, claiming that they lose money which will total £16 million next year.

But Rodgers is expected to announce that the government will make at least £20 million available—£16 million to cover the deficit and a further sum to finance a gradual programme of redundancies.

At the same time the period of the new "stay of execution" will be marked by a series of intensified attacks on the conditions of work won by dockers over decades of struggle.

This strategy—designed to undermine dockers' mili-

tant determination to defend jobs and conditions—has the full connivance of union officials.

They have already agreed to ensure that their members accept what management refer to as an "improvement in working practices".

This will be monitored throughout the year—with the continual threat that government backing will be withdrawn and closure implemented if dockers resist forced speed-up.

Piecemeal

And at the same time union leaders have already accepted that the present 4,500 jobs in the Upper Docks will be whittled down piecemeal over the next period and they hope this will avoid the confrontation that sudden closure would bring.

The near certainty that docks shop stewards would have been pressed into calling strike action in the

run up to the next election stands as a major factor in the decision to hold back on this closure.

Opportunism

Similar electoral opportunism stood behind the decision of Health minister Ennals to "reprieve" the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital, while pressing ahead with plans for its closure and relocation in another hospital.

In each case workers must see the dangers that they face. Labour ministers are working in the closest collaboration with union bureaucrats to find the best way to head off resistance to their reactionary plans.

Dockers must demand the opening of the books of the PLA and the whole of the highly profitable National Ports Council to elected trade union committees.

Such an enquiry can be linked with an examination

of the profits made by the private shippers and hauliers that use the dock facilities and exploit dock workers.

It would point to the need for the nationalisation without compensation of the docks as a whole and a planned development of these facilities under workers management, in which available work would be shared, without loss of pay, between the entire workforce.

Red Youth

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