



# DEFY NEW ANTI-UNION JUDGEMENT

## Stand firm on picketing

Last Friday's court injunction to prevent TGWU lorry drivers' steward Reginald Fall from picketing a food factory represents a fresh legal attack on the rights of the trade union movement.

The judgement, following a writ issued by management at United Biscuits, reveals yet again the reality of the "freedom of speech" and "justice" boasted about by British capitalist politicians.

Weeks of vicious anti-picket witch-hunting in the Tory-owned press and mass media had set out to provoke violent attacks on lorry drivers' picket lines. One Scottish picket had already been killed by a scab lorry.

The hysteria was stoked up further by Prime Minister Callaghan—defended by Len Murray—boasting his willingness to cross any picket line.

### Frightened

Meanwhile, frightened TGWU leaders, wielding Moss Evans' picketing code, applied all of their energies to sapping the strength of rank and file strike committees that had shown beyond doubt the immense power of the working class.

Then United Biscuits chief Hector Laing, a political advisor to Margaret Thatcher, moved in with a lawsuit against Reg Fall



PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

Transport drivers picket at Willesden, North London

for supposed "secondary picketing"—though the law defines no such category.

Granting the injunction, Mr Justice Ackner made absolutely clear the political nature of his judgement and the state's fear of the organised working class.

Echoing an earlier statement by Labour Attorney General Sam Silkin, he arbitrarily declared that the picketing in question was "too remote" from the lorry drivers' dispute to be legal.

"There must be a presumption that parliament does not intend to legislate to bring about its own destruction", he proclaimed.

Here is the essence of the matter.

The power of the working class in its struggle for basic rights and living standards stands in conflict with the state apparatus that preserves crisis-ridden capitalism.

The system of law is one means for the employers to limit workers' power; but this is no more than a thin veneer beneath which lies the real threat that the ruling class may use brute force in the form of army or police intervention to enforce its requirements—with or without the law.

Under the Callaghan government both these forms of attack have been used against trade unionists. At Grunwick, Labour ministers unleashed the savage violence of the police Special

Patrol Group against picket lines; and in the occupied six counties of Ireland full scale military repression is in force to preserve British rule.

But, at the same time, legal actions taken against the UPW and the NUJ have struck heavy blows against the right of unions to apply solidarity blacking, setting dangerous precedents.

At each attack union officials have retreated without a fight.

Even while last week's court case was in progress, TGWU officials were frantically working to undermine the power of lorry drivers' strike committees and urging their members to scab on their own union's official strike.

### Back-door deal

The Garners strike in London has also seen a back-door deal between TGWU officials and police to restrict picket lines to a maximum of six-strong.

And no action has been called by the TGWU to protest at the killing of Scottish picket

Bob Watson.

Under the acute tensions of today's political crisis, no trade union leader is prepared to give the necessary firm answer to this offensive against picketing.

### Pentonville Five

Workers should not forget that it was only after hundreds of thousands of workers stopped work in a massive spontaneous strike movement that TUC leaders called any action to defend the Pentonville dockers jailed by the Tories in 1972.

Now, with a Labour government in power, these same union leaders have no intention of lifting a finger.

We say that this latest court judgement in favour of the employing class must be defied.

Picket lines must be restored where necessary, maintained and strengthened in every area under the control of strike committees, to force haulage bosses to concede the full claim.

An all-out strike must be called in the public sector, backed up by full-scale picket-

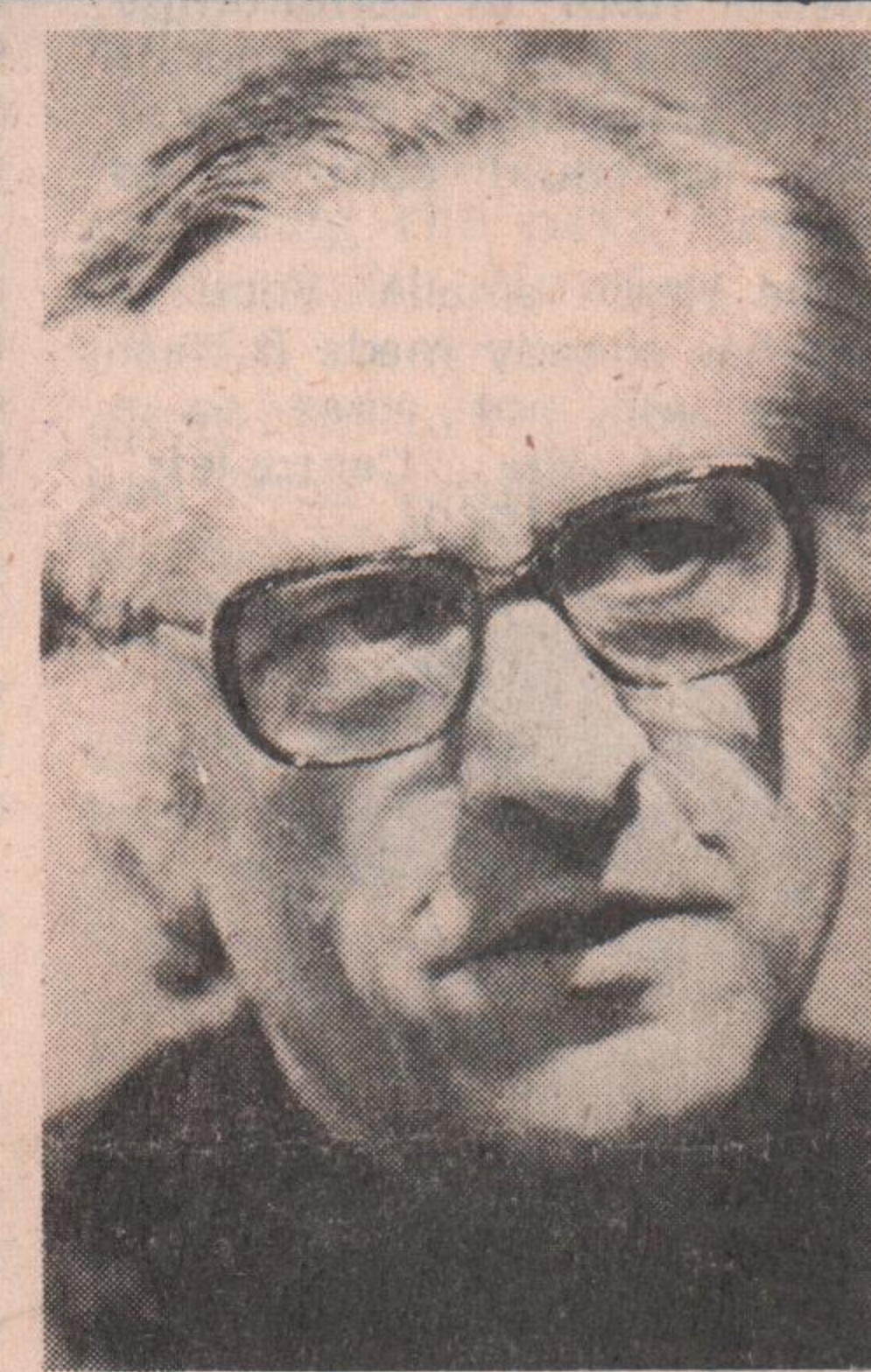


PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL

Attorney General Silkin

ing.

And the fight within the trade unions and Labour Party to force the removal of the scab Callaghan-Healey leadership must be taken forward.

A recall Labour Party conference must be demanded, at which the strikebreaking Callaghan cabinet can be removed and a manifesto of socialist policies fought for in preparation for the 1979 General Election.

And a new, revolutionary leadership, prepared to defend the interests of the working class against all attacks, must be constructed.

# Officials fight without enthusiasm: ALL OUT FOR £60!

Public sector leaders proved to have detonated an incendiary bomb with their official Day of Action on 22 January.

As district officials of NUPE, COHSE, GMWU and the TGWU toured their areas trying to damp down the flames, rank and file workers were implementing action.

Lightning strikes have taken place in many hospitals; several London boroughs' dustmen have launched all-out strikes; and in the North-east waste incinerators have been closed indefinitely.

Throughout the country members meeting to decide on action are being advised by their leaders to calm things down, hold back and institute virtually meaningless work to rules.

"Working without enthusiasm" is no way to win a serious battle for a £60 minimum wage—although it does accurately reflect the wishes and practice

of the union leaders.

The most serious blow to the strategy of the compromisers has come from water workers who rejected a 14% offer (which was backed by the GMWU) and pledged all out strike action.

NUPE members, voting as we went to press, were also expected to reject.

Behind the scenes talks between the public sector bureaucracy and the government are concentrating on increasing the public sector offer fractionally (probably to 8%) coupled with extra work and job loss through productivity deals and pushed through under cover of one or several "inquiries" and comparability studies.

Such a deal would be backed up with threats of further cuts if the pay policy is broken.

All public sector workers must understand that their leadership has already abandoned the £60/35 hour week claim and that the very limits of its ambition is what Fisher

called the "going rate" of 14-15%.

Water workers have correctly rejected any such conception, and the mass of public sector workers recognise that £60 is itself a modest enough demand and a minimum target.

There is no secret to winning the full claim. All out strike action throughout the public sector—in opposition to union officials, the press, and the government is the only way it can be done. All other "tactics" and policies are inadequate.

To hold such action, public sector workers—particularly in the health service—must take responsibility for and control of any emergency cover to be provided.

Strike committees elected by the membership and responsible to them must form the backbone of the strike and can counter the massive propaganda campaign run against them by the press.

Such strike committees will also form the nucleus of a

future fight against the next round of cuts which are already threatened.

Strike committees must link with each other and with other striking workers and delegates from the local labour movement to form councils of action—drawing in organised workers and unorganised sections of the working class.

Councils of action form a body which can better confront the political questions raised by the strike and challenge the forces of the state which will be used against it.

We stand for wage rises and public sector spending to be fully protected against inflation. The working class must not take responsibility for or carry the cost of the crisis.

We fight for policies leading to the overthrow of capitalism and the removal of those union leaders who sabotage workers' struggles in order to uphold it.

Interviews pp.4-5



PHOTO: Ian Mackintosh, IFL

# New government crisis in Italy

Italy has entered its 38th governmental crisis since the Stalinists joined the bourgeois Christian Democrats in reconstructing the capitalist state at the end of World War II.

The latest crisis, like its immediate predecessors, was provoked by a shift of tactics by the Communist Party under its General Secretary Enrico Berlinguer.

Last week the CP decided to withdraw from the parliamentary majority of five parties which has upheld Giulio Andreotti's reactionary Christian Democratic government since last April.

The new situation means probably that Andreotti will be asked to search for some adjusted form of compromise between the Christian Democrats and the Stalinists on the basis of which he could continue to govern.

The much smaller Socialist Party has already made it clear that it will not agree to a renewal of the "Centre-left" formula of the 1960s.



Berlinguer

This would technically give Andreotti a government majority; but the Socialists refuse to take the rap for the reactionary anti-working class policies of the government while the CP enjoys the luxury of "opposition".

This seems all the more true when there is growing evidence that the Socialist Party is rapidly gaining potential electoral advantage at the expense of the CP.

In last year's local elections the SP gained votes at the expense of both the CP and the Christian Democrats.

But more dramatically, last week reports leaked out of Brussels that an opinion poll ordered by the Common Market Commission showed that, for the European elections at least, the Socialists would overtake the CP (with 24% compared with 22% for the CP).

It can be assumed that the Berlinguer leadership is anxious to avoid an electoral catastrophe of these proportions in national elections.

So its policy in the present

crisis is likely to be one of drawn-out negotiations with Andreotti to find a new formula involving a new coalition without CP ministers rather than provoke new elections.

Berlinguer is no longer pressing for CP ministers since he knows this is unacceptable to the majority of the Christian Democrats.

So he is almost certainly looking for a new second-grade "historic compromise" like the one which broke up last week but established on the basis of a symbolic retreat on some minor question by Andreotti.

This may not be too difficult to achieve since the CP has prepared the way for a new unprincipled collaborationist agreement with the capitalists, by restricting its sometimes fiery words of criticism almost exclusively to administrative trivia.

It objects to Andreotti's decision to enter the European Monetary System without consultation in advance with the Stalinist leaders; it objects to the methods of appointing the top bureaucrats of nationalised industries by Christian Democratic nepotism; it would like to have a share of the nepotistic spoils.

But Berlinguer has scrupulously avoided any principled political or class criticism of Andreotti's anti-working class policies.

He has, of course, assiduously tried to play his appointed historical role of ramming these policies down the throats of the workers.



Italian workers demonstrate their would-be substitutes in the reformist Socialist Party.

The underlying cause of Italy's new crisis is that the CP leaders can no longer perform that role to the satisfaction of the capitalist class.

The Stalinist leaders' advice to the workers to accept Andreotti's wage control plans in the "national interest" is being less and less heeded.

Workers have been demonstrating their determination to fight for better wages and against unemployment—despite the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Last week, the trade union bureaucracy called a two-hour national strike in protest against the murder of a Stalinist shop steward who had previously helped the police to identify and arrest an alleged member of the Red Brigades.

But while the bureaucracy remains anxious to divert the organised strength of the workers away from class interests and towards defence of the capitalist state and its institutions, they are nonethe-

less being forced to support some wage struggles for fear of losing more workers to the "autonomous unions".

These have been gaining strength in relation to the old Stalinist, reformist and catholic unions.

It is this erosion of the base of the Stalinist trade union and political organisations which explains why the Berlinguer leadership has been obliged once more to put on the mask of opposition.

But this kind of opposition is no more than a manoeuvre of a Stalinist leadership rapidly running out of ability to be effective in its role as policeman for the bourgeoisie.

## Crushed

If the Italian working class is to be able successfully to resist the growing offensive of an economically and politically weak and desperate bourgeoisie, the existing Stalinist leadership must be crushed, along with

## New leadership

That requires the building of a new Trotskyist leadership basing itself on a programme which must include:

\*Uncompromising struggle to defend and advance the material interests of the working class.

\*The fight in the labour movement to force the workers' parties and organisations to break off all collaboration with the capitalists.

\*The defence of democratic rights and of anticapitalist "terrorists" from the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state.

\*The struggle for a workers' government in Italy.

The present growing crisis of the bourgeois state and the Stalinist leadership raise unprecedented possibilities for the building of such a new revolutionary leadership.

# Bolivia: workers march

A "march against fascism" on January 18 in La Paz turned out to be the largest mass demonstration which has occurred in Bolivia since the military coup d'état by General Banzer in 1971.

Tens of thousands of workers, peasants and



Pereda

students responded to the call of the COB (Bolivia's main union federation) onto the streets of the capital; and in other cities a one-day general strike call was widely followed.

The politics of this march, however show up the treacherous nature of the leadership of the present "opposition" in Bolivia.

Bolivia at present is ruled by a military junta led by General David Padilla who seized power in a coup in November from General Pereda.

## Abortive elections

Pereda had taken power from Banzer last July during the counting of the abortive presidential elections in which he (the official army candidate) had failed to rig the ballot with enough efficiency.

Padilla came to power saying that he would guarantee new free elections in August 1979.

He was welcomed as a "democrat" by the petty bourgeois nationalist, reformist and Stalinist leaders of Bolivia's masses.

It is clear, however this "democrat" announced that he would keep the mines in the hands of the state, occupied since the major strikes of 1977 and that the trade union leaders would be allowed to be candidates in the promised elections.

## Austerity measures

At the same time his government announced a series of anti-working class

austerity measures involving massive price increases; and he reshuffled his cabinet to shift it clearly even further to the right.

## Rumoured coup

But the COB's "march against fascism" was in no way directed against this reactionary butcher.

Its slogans were designed for the most part to defend him and his dictatorship against a rumoured impending counter-coup by Banzer.

The COB's main slogan was reportedly "No to a right wing coup—freedom and democratisation, stop the fascist subversion", though it also called for withdrawal of troops from the mines.

The abject reformist leadership of the COB is therefore prepared to trust bourgeois generals, who have amply proved their reactionary nature in practice, to guarantee democracy and workers' rights.

In this they parallel the two nationalist opportunists who will be leading candidates if presidential elections do take place.

## Programme

They are Walter Paz Estenssoro and Hernán Siles Zúñiga—both of them former presidents during the period of office of the MNR (National Revolutionary Movement) from 1952 to 1964.

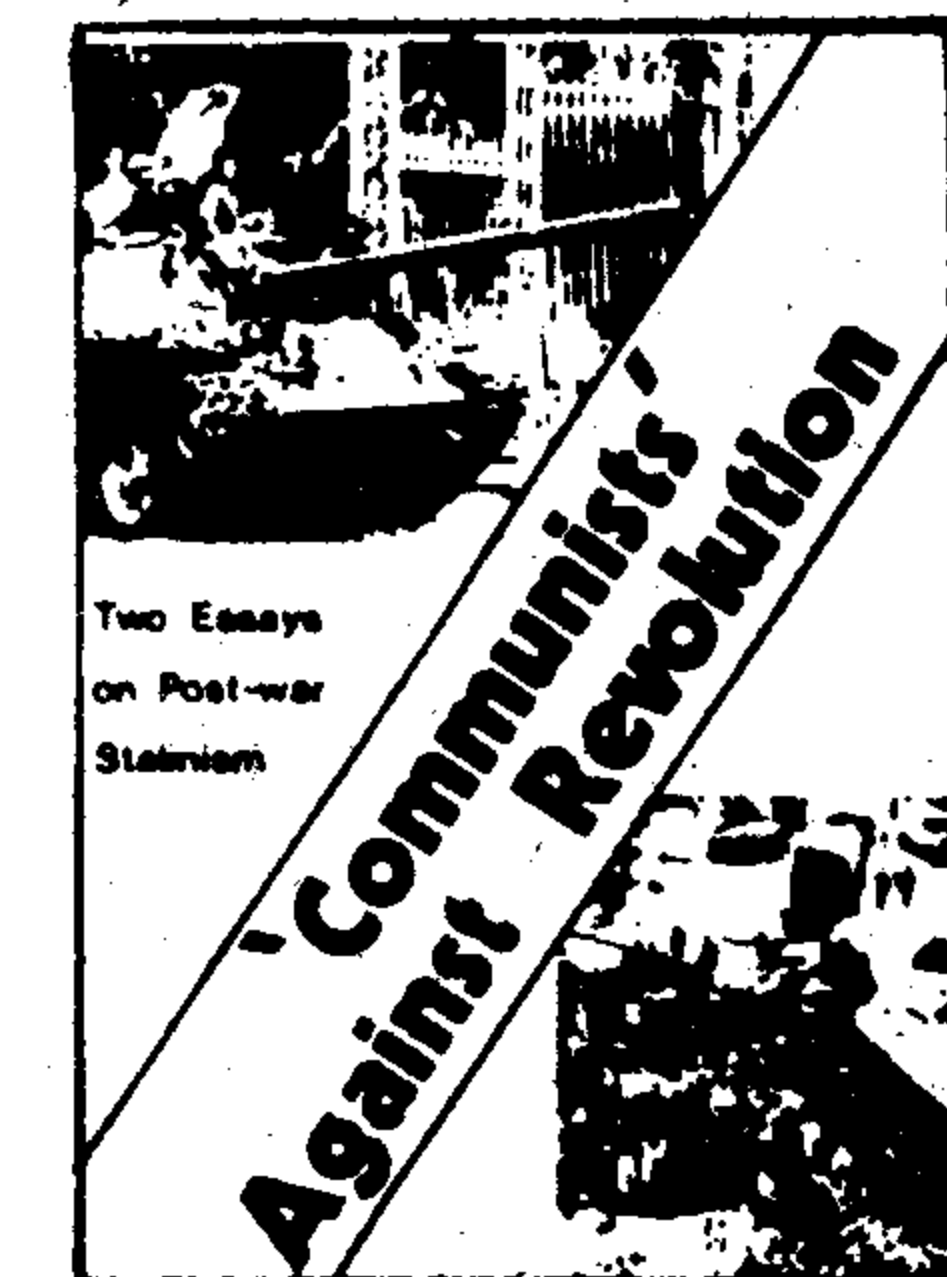
Paz Estenssoro is reportedly hoping to fight with the support of the Christian Democrats and certain

sections of the so-called Left Revolutionary Front.

And Siles can probably count on the support of the Guevarist MIR and of the CP which he had in last year's elections.

Only under an authentic Trotskyist leadership can the enormously powerful workers' movement in Bolivia develop an independent programme to unite behind it the oppressed peasants and the students to rid Bolivia once and for all of the curse of military dictatorship and begin to build socialism.

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'Communists' Against Revolution' containing the well-known 'Theory of Structural Assassination' by Tom Wainwright is the book on post-war Stalinism that Mandel and Healy would not publish or discuss.

Make sure you get your copy - available at £1.75 plus 20p p&p from:

WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

# New round in Sahara war

"Our forces have developed a genuine army which, if need be, is now capable of imposing a military solution to the conflict by forcing the armies of occupation to evacuate our country".

This recent statement expresses the new-found confidence of the Polisario Front in their war against Moroccan and Mauritanian aggression.

On the 16 and 17 January the battle of Lem Sail took place to the north-east of El Aïoun, capital of the Western Sahara. An ambush by the Polisario wiped out a Moroccan transport column defended by armoured cars.

In addition to the destruction of equipment, the Polisario took 20 Moroccans prisoner.

This engagement was the most serious to date in the current 'Houari Boumediene offensive' being launched by the Front.

## Convoys

Already the Moroccan forces which occupy the north of Western Sahara are unable to travel except in heavily armed convoys.

The attacks of the Polisario have continued well into the south of Morocco itself.

The Polisario's victory at Lem Sail showed once again how ineffective has been the reorganisation of the Moroccan army, undertaken by the French imperialists after its setbacks and defeats in late 1977.

But the Polisario's warning of its growing strength was not directed at King Hassan II of Morocco alone, but was also intended for the ears of the military dictatorship in Mauritania.

When Ould Daddah's regime was overthrown last July, the Polisario declared a truce with the new government to allow them time to withdraw from the war.

The truce has not yet been broken on either side within Mauritania nor within the southern sector of the Western Sahara occupied by the Mauritanian army.

## Need peace

But the military government led by Ould Salek has not yet been able to achieve the compromise it so desperately needs.

Before they can salvage the shipwrecked economy, the colonels need peace in the Sahara—but a peace that does not antagonise their powerful northern neighbours in Morocco.

Although the troops of the Moroccan state are reported to be withdrawing from Mauritania as requested, one false step by Ould Salek's government could bring them back, and in even greater numbers.

Now that the Polisario Front has declared its mounting impatience with the vacillations of the Mauritanian leaders, the day of reckoning for these military dictators is dawning unavoidably on the horizon.

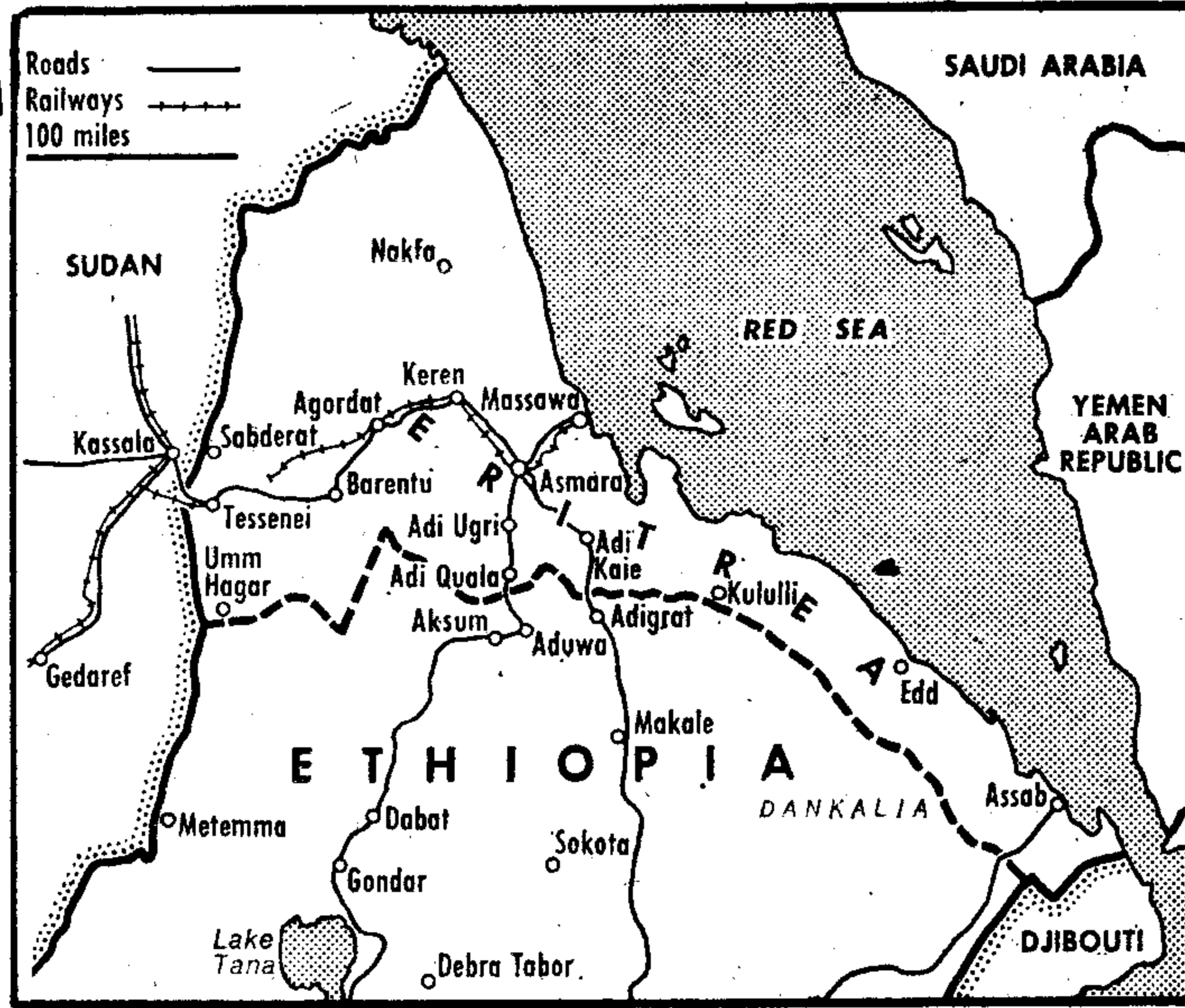
# Hansen dead



Socialist Press has just learned of the death in the USA of Joseph Hansen. Hansen, at one time a secretary to Leon Trotsky, was for many years a leading member of the US Socialist Workers Party.

While we are unable to carry in this issue an extensive analysis of Hansen's work, we are currently preparing a full length article which will appear shortly.

# ERITREAN FIGHTERS STAND FIRM AGAINST STALINIST BARRAGE



EPLF demonstration through liberated Keren last May Day

'The USSR has consistently supported the proposal that Eritrea should be granted independence . . . We base our argument on the fact that all peoples have a right to self-determination and national independence.'

Thus spake the representative of the USSR at the United Nations in 1950.

Last year two Soviet generals commanded the forces which swept into Eritrea from neighbouring Ethiopia.

### Dictatorship

They aimed to subjugate Eritrea to the military dictatorship of the Derg, by crushing into the ground the struggles of the Eritrean people for national liberation.

The annals of Stalinism are filled with the record of crimes that the Kremlin bureaucrats have committed against the international working-class and the oppressed masses of the world.

But even in such company, few betrayals have been so naked and vicious as this latest outrage.

In 1950 the Soviet ambassador proclaimed that:

'the United Nations must take a decision which will satisfy the longing of the Eritrean people for independence and freedom from national oppression.'

Today to 'satisfy' that longing, the Soviet leaders send their tanks, helicopters, bomber jets and military advisors to Col. Mengistu and the butchers of the counter-revolutionary Derg.

Acting under direct instructions from the Kremlin, Castro and the Cuban bureaucracy—the 'left' face of world Stalinism—send troops to strengthen and train the armies of the Ethiopian military dictatorship.

The main target of this massive military machinery is now the people of Eritrea.

But this counter-revolutionary war has not been ended with the swift and brutal success desired (and expected) by the forces of reaction.

The Eritrean people have not been defeated—the war has barely begun.

Last year's offensive was not the first launched by the Derg, but all their previous moves had proved futile.

Far from advancing, the occupation armies were continually driven back and hemmed in.

While the Eritrean Liberation Front held its positions, the Eritrean Popular Liberation Army of the EPLF made spectacular advances through 1977 and the early months of 1978.

### Liberated

The EPLA liberated far larger areas of rural Eritrea, and above all seized control of a large number of important towns.

This wave of success culminated in July 1977 with the liberation of Keren, the third city of Eritrea and a base of crucial strategic importance in conventional warfare.

By June 1978, the position of the Ethiopian forces was extremely vulnerable.

The Derg controlled only Asmara and Massawa—the

capital and the major port of Eritrea. Both cities were under constant and heavy siege, with fighting in the outer areas.

The vital road linking them was in the hands of the liberation forces for long periods, when the Ethiopian army could supply Asmara only from the air.

Using Massawa as a base, Soviet warships bombarded coastal areas while MIG jets strafed villages and camps.

Flying in Cuban advisors, the Derg tried to break out of Asmara with the colossal army it built up in the city.

But all these attempts failed, and a new strategy had to be devised.

### Problems

The war in Eritrea was far from the least of the Derg's problems, but the others were numerous and serious enough in themselves.

The frontiers of the Ethiopian state were

established at the turn of the century, as the invading imperialists from Britain, Italy and France met the armies of Menelik who was then expanding his feudal empire.

### Nationalities

As the rule of the Ethiopian empire passed from Menelik's successor, Haile Selassie, to the Derg, the many oppressed nationalities within its borders continued and strengthened their struggles for self-determination.

Above all, the Somalis in the Ogaden rose in a major insurrection, which was crushed only with the use of Cuban troops and Soviet military strategists.

At the same time the Derg came under growing pressure from a working-class whose militancy had not been stamped out by all the atrocities of the 'Red Terror'.

Louder and louder



EPLA women's militia

demands were raised for wage increases to keep pace with the headlong inflation of the war economy.

In these conditions of gathering siege, the Ethiopian military dictators fixed on the necessity of destroying the struggles of the Eritrean people.

They reckoned on a swift military victory to secure them access to the Red Sea ports, to consolidate their territorial base, and to allow them to turn their attention to the slow crescendo of opposition within Ethiopia.

The Derg was guided in all these decisions by the Stalinist bureaucracies who had established for themselves a comfortable place as the power behind the throne. All three aims fell squarely in line with the African ambitions of the Kremlin and Havana bureaucracies.

The Derg bragged that the 'glad tidings of victory over the Eritrean secessionists' would be broadcast on September 12 1978 at the celebrations to mark the fourth anniversary of its dictatorship.

But the Stalinists and bourgeois nationalists who gathered for this witches' sabbath were fed on empty lies and the stale reports of hollow victories. The Derg's offensive had fundered.

In June of last year an Ethiopian army of 80,000 troops massed in Tigre on the border with Eritrea. Their commanders were two Soviet generals—one, Petrov, had earlier directed the war in the Ogaden.

At this time the Cuban troops were involved in containing armed resistance in other areas of Ethiopia, especially in the Ogaden where the West Somali Liberation Front had reorganised to wage guerrilla warfare.

Ranged against the Derg's army were the forces of the Eritrean Popular Liberation Front, the Eritrean Liberation Front and the smaller Tigrai Popular Liberation Front.

The strategy of the invaders was to smash through these defences and link up with a second army planned to break through the siege of Asmara.

The united forces would then mop up any localised resistance and spread their control over the whole country.

This scheme turned out very differently in practice. The EPLF launched a number of successful attacks on the waiting army, causing heavy losses and forcing a delay in the Ethiopian advance.

Even when the Derg's army was finally able to move into action, they made no progress until after a month of intense fighting.

Then they were able to break through the positions of the ELF, seizing towns and major strategic positions.

This move left the EPLF forces engaged on the southern front in a position of isolation, facing the danger of immediate encirclement.

They were forced to make a tactical retreat by withdrawing from the southern front and from the towns of Dekemhare, Segneiti and Digsia.

Still controlling the countryside, they switched to a phase of guerrilla warfare in this area and by this means seriously hampered

the Ethiopian advance and prevented the opening of routes vital to the invading army.

Further north around Asmara, the Derg was preparing the next blow in its assault. No less than 60,000 troops were assembled in the city, which had been converted into an arsenal of advanced military equipment.

On August 12, the first attack began on the northern front but was driven back in disorder. This was followed by an attack on the western front, which ended in the battle of Adi-Yacob.

Again the Ethiopians were driven back by a counter-attack in which the EPLF captured large quantities of arms and a tank.

Repeated attempts to break out of Asmara followed these failures, until August 23 when the Derg and its Soviet advisers abandoned the northern front and concentrated all their efforts on the west.

Here they were able to break through lines held by the ELF, and moved to seize the road to Keren, hoping to divide the EPLF forces and capture the city.

On August 28, the EPLF counter-attacked at Mekerca. The Ethiopians bombarded the field with explosives and napalm, but for all their superior numbers and equipment they were defeated decisively.

### Heavy losses

The EPLF inflicted heavy losses on the enemy forces, and captured not only large quantities of heavy artillery, but also tanks and four armoured vehicles.

The first phase of the Derg's offensive had ended in humiliating defeat.

Despite the significant advances in the border area, which had effectively knocked out the ELF in the short-term, Keren remained firmly in the hands of the EPLF and the Asmara-Massawa road had not been re-opened.

Armed to the teeth, Asmara remained a citadel of formidable strength.

But it was a citadel still under siege, where the Derg and the Kremlin's generals were forced to sit and devise new means of wiping the struggles of the Eritrean people off the face of the earth.

Continued next week



Liberation forces on captured Soviet tank

# Public sector - spread the

## FIGHTING FOR STRIKE ACTION AMONG NURSES

The *Daily Mirror* reported your call for all-out strike action when the platform was taken over at Central Hall. What happened on the day of action?

Well, the mass mobilisation on January 22 ended up in the march to Westminster. The hall was packed and it was a very militant atmosphere.

The workers there had followed their leaders' call and now they wanted leadership—they wanted to know what to do next.

They didn't get the answer to that one did they?

Of course not. The leaders refused to hear speakers from the floor—an ambulance man from Thanet wanted to speak and the crowd was chanting

'let him speak', but the bureaucrats rejected this call.

They presented the day of action as if that was it—as if it was the end of the campaign rather than the beginning.

Not a single one even called for more strike action.

They kept talking about 'inquiries' into low pay and telling the workers how badly paid they are—as if they didn't know.

Was the platform actually seized?

People started to move towards the platform and I was one of them.

The bureaucrats tried to finish the meeting with a "thank you very much for coming" and people were incensed by this

Gillian Brear, a staff nurse at Westminster Hospital talks to *Socialist Press*.



Almost inaudible above heckling—Basnett

kind of treatment.

I got up towards the platform and I was helped over the bannister.

Somebody shoved the microphone in my hand—the *Daily Mirror* was not telling the truth when it said I seized it.

Anyway the bureaucrats switched off the thing before I could use it. It was very confused but people were chanting 'let the nurse speak'.

I shouted as loud as I could that one-day protests could not win our claim and that only all-out strike action could set us on the road to victory. I thought that was the most important thing.

As a militant nurse working in NUPE, what problems have you faced in the period up to 22 January?

It was a hard fight to mobilise for the day of action. I went round five hospitals talking to nurses individually.

Many are afraid to act because of fear of victimisation—nurses are always in a very precarious position.

Their jobs depend on ward reports from Sisters.

The key problem is unionisation—the fight to show that the so-called 'professional organisation' can do nothing for nurses

—that's the RCN, the Royal College of Nursing.

You see, nursing officers have even intimidated nurses for attending union branch meetings—never mind striking!

What does the RCN do on pay?

Well, the best example was last year. They said that the fact that we only got the government's 10% was a 'victory'!

They said it was a victory of 'professionalism' over industrialism.

Anyway we managed to get a small group out on the day of action—it's a question of breaking down the fear of victimisation.

How are these problems going to be overcome?

By further recruitment into NUPE and genuine trade unions as a first step.

But the problems only start there. The present leadership of the unions can't offer any serious perspective to nurses, they couldn't even be trusted to wage a proper fight against victimisation.

When nurses join the rest of the working class in the unions they have to be brought to see the need to build new leadership.

At Central Halls you called for all-out strike action; why do you attach such importance to this policy—who else calls for it?

It's so important because the union leaders are afraid of the massive mobilisation of the working class.

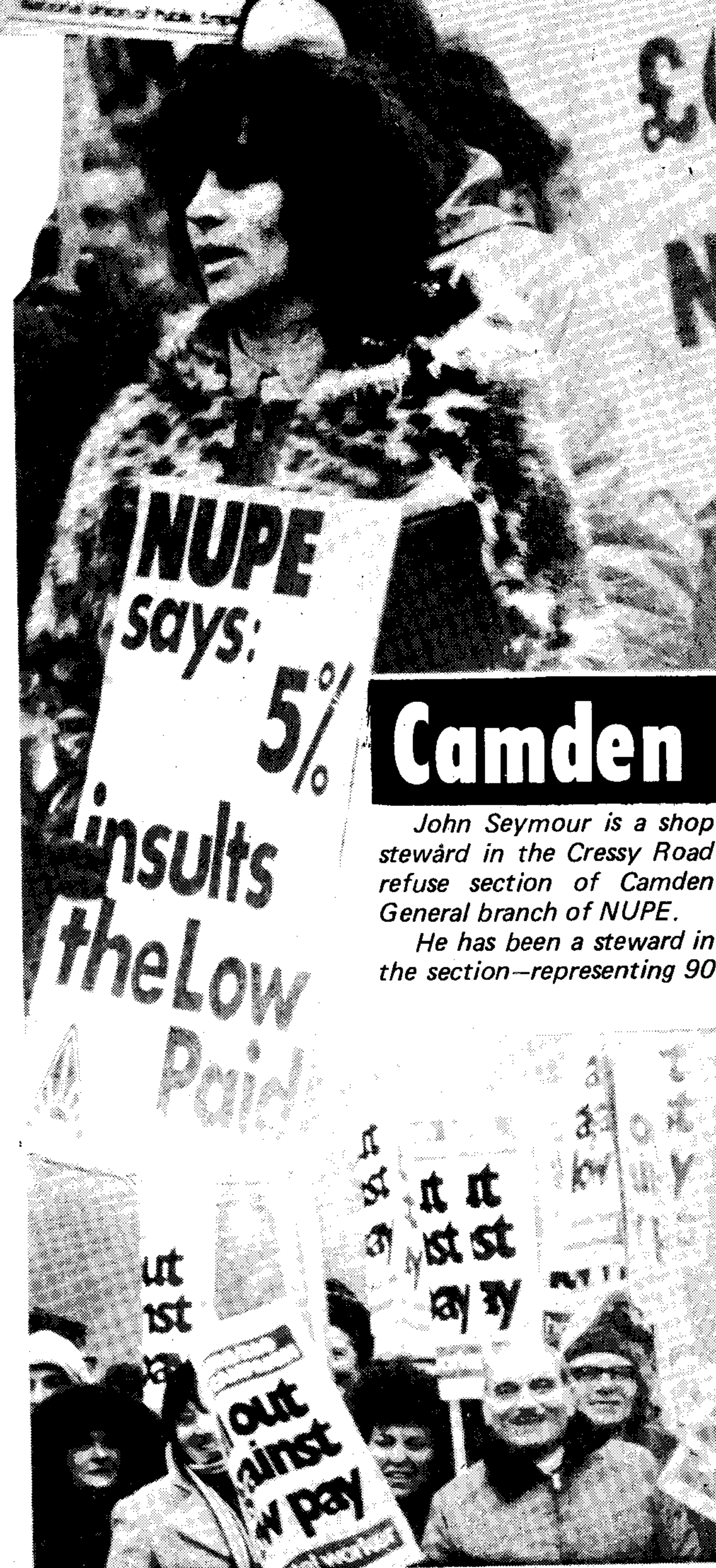
And fighting for it has been hard. Just before the day of action other groups started to talk about it! *Hospital Worker*, supported by the Socialist Workers Party, put out a leaflet.

But that was when it was clear to everybody that large sections of workers were already prepared to take such action.

It's not enough just to follow along. It's necessary to organise, prepare and give clear leadership in advance.

And for months before 22 January the only paper in the labour movement putting forward this policy was the *Socialist Press*.

the Low Paid



### Camden

John Seymour is a shop steward in the Cressy Road refuse section of Camden General branch of NUPE.

He has been a steward in the section—representing 90



Gillian Brear

# Drivers confront scabs, the press and officials

Socialist Press: What stage has the dispute reached?

The Regions are considering the RHA's 13% offer. Our claim for £65 would be 22%. But we're not interested in percentages—we want the flat £65.

Some firms are going back and waiting to see what we get. Tate and Lyle have gone back—but they asked us to maintain a picket on their gates!

We see the £65 as a safeguard against the future. There is likely to be a decision on the tachograph next month.

That will cut our overtime by 3-4 hours a day, so our £65 would merely be a guarantee of 5 hours' overtime. We do much more than that now.

The conditions of the tanker drivers are much better than us. They are paid for nights out, whereas we have to stay in digs—and you should see them! They are horrible conditions.

The tanker drivers also get bonuses for all sorts of things, even though most of their work is local.

Those Colchester scabs who were quoting £140 a

Last Tuesday Pru Chamberlayne spoke to ten TGWU pickets outside East London's Stratford container base.

week must have been running through the night and breaking the law throughout.

Those screaming to go back to work are nothing but scabs—many of them real cowboys.

SP: What about coverage of your dispute in the press?

The only coverage to get near the truth was Nossiter from the Washington Post on World in Action.

He demanded the figures on all these stories of animal cannibalism and starvation. Of course there weren't any.

He interviewed the CBI, and then went to the supermarkets to see, and found great crates of what they said they were short of!

SP: What effect has the TGWU Code of Picketing had?

At first we didn't think it would be any different. We had been doing it anyway, allowing through medicines, post and firms carry-

ing their own goods.

But now we're getting too soft. You get all sorts coming in, in anything they can find, often with no licences.

Mind you, the boys inside won't deal with non-

union men. But, suddenly, they've all got union cards!

That's Green Lane (TGWU London Regional Office) for you!

And we've had several requests for dispensation from the freightliners, who

are now doing a lot of work that the RHA used to do.

That was a telex from Green Lane just now, asking would we let them through because they are NUR and not involved in the dispute.

We said they had to go to

the Strike Committee. But, even so, more and more is coming through.

SP: How does the Strike Committee work?

There's just one Committee for the whole of London—with about 200 representatives altogether.

We have 2-3 stewards, but we never see them all week. As for Headquarters, they just sit up there in their offices—we haven't seen them since the dispute began.

No meetings

We don't have report back meetings with the stewards—we just hear things on the picket line.

The trouble is we're not organised. We haven't been on strike since 1926, and we don't know about these things.

And the lorry driver is very individualistic—because he works alone.



PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, JFL

Picket line at Tilbury docks

# strikes and build a new leadership

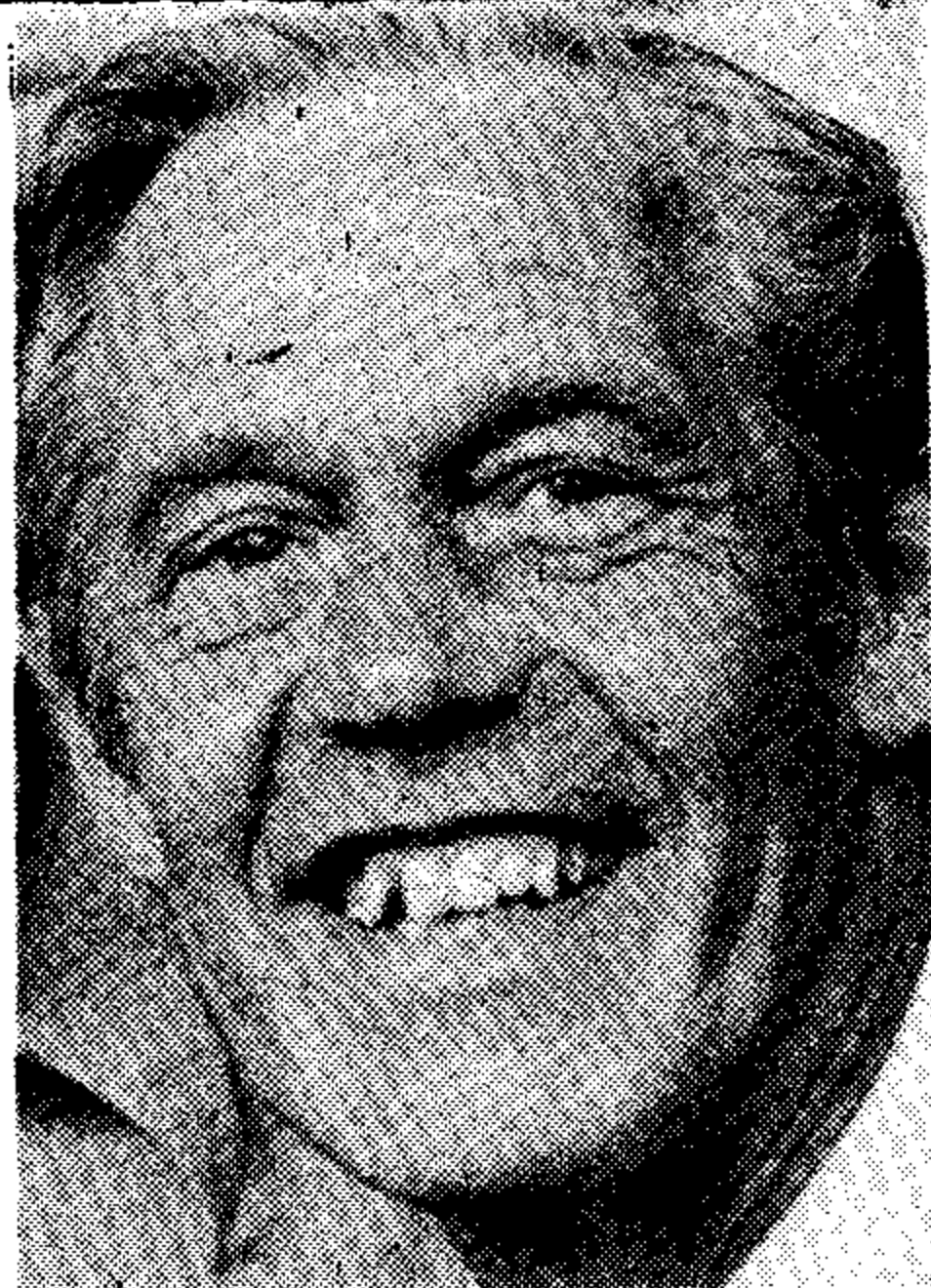
## Ambulance drivers defy convenors

The following report is written by a WSL member who works in the London Ambulance Service and belongs to NUPE.

Last Monday's strike was the strongest and most united action ever taken by ambulance drivers in London, especially as we had a complete strike with no emergency cover, acting against the instructions of the Executive of NUPE, the London convenors committee and mass stewards committee.

The convenors were involved in many conferences, with frequent press interviews, in the week leading up to the 22nd.

We all knew that it was only a matter of time before they backed down, and the capitula-



Fisher—smiles but no action actually happened on the Sunday—the day before the strike.

At a meeting on Sunday morning between the convenors the NUPE full-time officer Bob Jones, and David Ennals, the convenors decided to recommend that the strike should not be total—as previously agreed—but that emergency cover should be maintained on a voluntary basis.

What happened next showed the anger of the rank and file ambulancemen and women at being sold out at the last minute by their leaders.

Emergency meetings were held at some stations on the Sunday evening, where the plea to maintain emergency cover was strongly rejected.

At Camden station in North London the vote was unanimous and they almost pledged to begin striking from midnight

that night!

The following morning this militancy grew with station after station voting for all out strike.

By about 10.30 am half of the stations in London had come out, and by the afternoon the stoppage was complete with the exception of two or three small stations out of 70 where crews continued to work.

It was touch and go whether the strike would continue on the next day.

Although it was only planned to have a one-day stoppage, management almost provoked a continuation of the strike by threatening a lock-out if we were to continue with the second phase of the action—the non-answering of emergency telephones.

Although this was an obvious management bluff, the convenors again backed down and recommended that we should resume normal working—arguing that we had 'made our point' and should wait for the next offer.

We must fight for national all-out strike action for the full claim, and we must fight the army scabbing by running a skeleton emergency service under the control of elected strike committees—to be withdrawn at the first sign of scabbing from any source.

This way the blame for any suffering caused to patients can be clearly laid at the door of the real culprits—the Callaghan government and the state.

# DEFEND DAVE STEVENS!

David Stevens, treasurer of the Wolverhampton Anti-Racist Committee and a local Labour Party member is being tried in early February at Stafford Crown Court on a number of charges, including four counts of assaulting police.

Stevens was arrested in Wolverhampton on March 11 last year when a march organised by the Anti-Racist Committee was attacked by one man near the town library.

The police took advantage of this incident to wade in and arrest Stevens, who is well known to them as an organiser of the anti-racist movement in the town, and was the Anti-Racist Committee official responsible for liaison with the police on the route taken by the march.

Wolverhampton police are notorious for their harassment of the immigrant population.

In two recent cases involv-

ing Asian youth defending themselves from attacks by white racist youth in the town centre, only the Asians were charged and all received heavy fines or borstal sentences.

Stevens' trial is likely to start on February 7, though the date is not yet certain.

The Wolverhampton Anti-Racist Committee is organising a picket of the first day of the trial.

The picket's effectiveness will be limited, however, by the fact that in the ten months which have elapsed since the arrest, the local labour movement—with the exception of a few individuals and the Birmingham and Wolverhampton Trades Councils—is only now being approached for support.

The only way David Stevens can be defended is by mobilising the labour movement onto the picket during his trial.

Details can be obtained from Wolverhampton Polytechnic Students Union, telephone Wolverhampton 20327.



Anti-racist march in Wolverhampton

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

## call for strike action

workers—since 1977, and has been active in fighting for the public sector pay claim since October of last year.

What do you see as the main issues in the public sector pay claim now?

The main issue is to achieve maximum solidarity among all sections in public sector unions under the banner of all-out strike action.

Why do you emphasise all out strike action as opposed to the selective action called for by the leadership?

I don't believe that the leadership can be trusted; firstly because throughout November up to now Fisher has refused to take up the fight for our pay claim alongside the Ford workers, bakery workers and recently the lorry drivers.

He similarly refused to take up the fight alongside the firemen last year, despite his left speeches.

Secondly the leadership favour selective action.

The whole trouble with selective action is that while the leadership have all control over negotiations they will make it seem that the winning of the strike lies in the hands of the local branches.

So when their strategy fails Fisher and Co. will simply point to the membership and say 'you lost it'.

What would you say to those several sections that have already come out on indefinite strike action?

They must take up a fight to spread the strike among all the other sections in their unions, and press the union leadership to actually call official all out strike action.

What steps have you taken in your branch along these lines?

Last October I put a resolution through my NUPE branch—which has 2,000 members including dustmen, highways, sewerage workers, caretakers and home helps—calling on the Executive Committee to put out a call for all-out strike action from November 4.

This was passed by a big majority. Obviously since then Fisher has put off negotiations for as long as he could.

But now rank and file pressure has increased, overtaking his calls for selective action.

I was able recently to put another resolution through our shop stewards' committee calling for all-out action from January 22.

It was also at that stewards' meeting that I was delegated to attend a NUPE rally at Conway Hall on 11 January organised by the London Divisional Council of NUPE.

I put a resolution calling on the rally to demand that the leadership call for all out action from 22 January.

This was effectively smothered by the bureaucrats on the platform.

It seemed to me now that the way forward was to put pressure on the London Divisional Council, a body made up of lay representatives from all the different sections in London—to put out an official call for all-out strike action.

On the Thursday after the rally I put a resolution through my section pledging to take all-out strike action for the full claim from the moment the Divisional Council made an official call.

This was all the more important at this time, since we had heard that Southwark dustmen had actually started indefinite action. The resolution was passed almost unanimously.

Another comrade in NUPE and myself took this resolution down to the home of the chair-

man of the Divisional Council, and asked him to convene an emergency meeting of the Council.

We argued that the LDC had a responsibility not just to back those isolated sections in several boroughs that were already out, but to give an official lead.

Although further obstacles were put in our way by Harry Barker, the full-time Divisional Officer, on the following Wednesday I got the same resolution through a full branch stewards' committee, which was by now strongly in favour of all out action.

Now they had no choice but to call a Divisional Council meeting.

When is this meeting going to take place?

The meeting is called for Thursday February 1, and we are building for a strong lobby.

If this Council does put out a call for official action, I think it will alter the whole balance of the campaign, pull out a lot more sections and give us a much better chance of winning the full claim.

How has the Workers Socialist League helped you in this fight?

Since I have been a member of the WSL I've taken part in many struggles, which they have intervened in—such as the current strike at Garners.

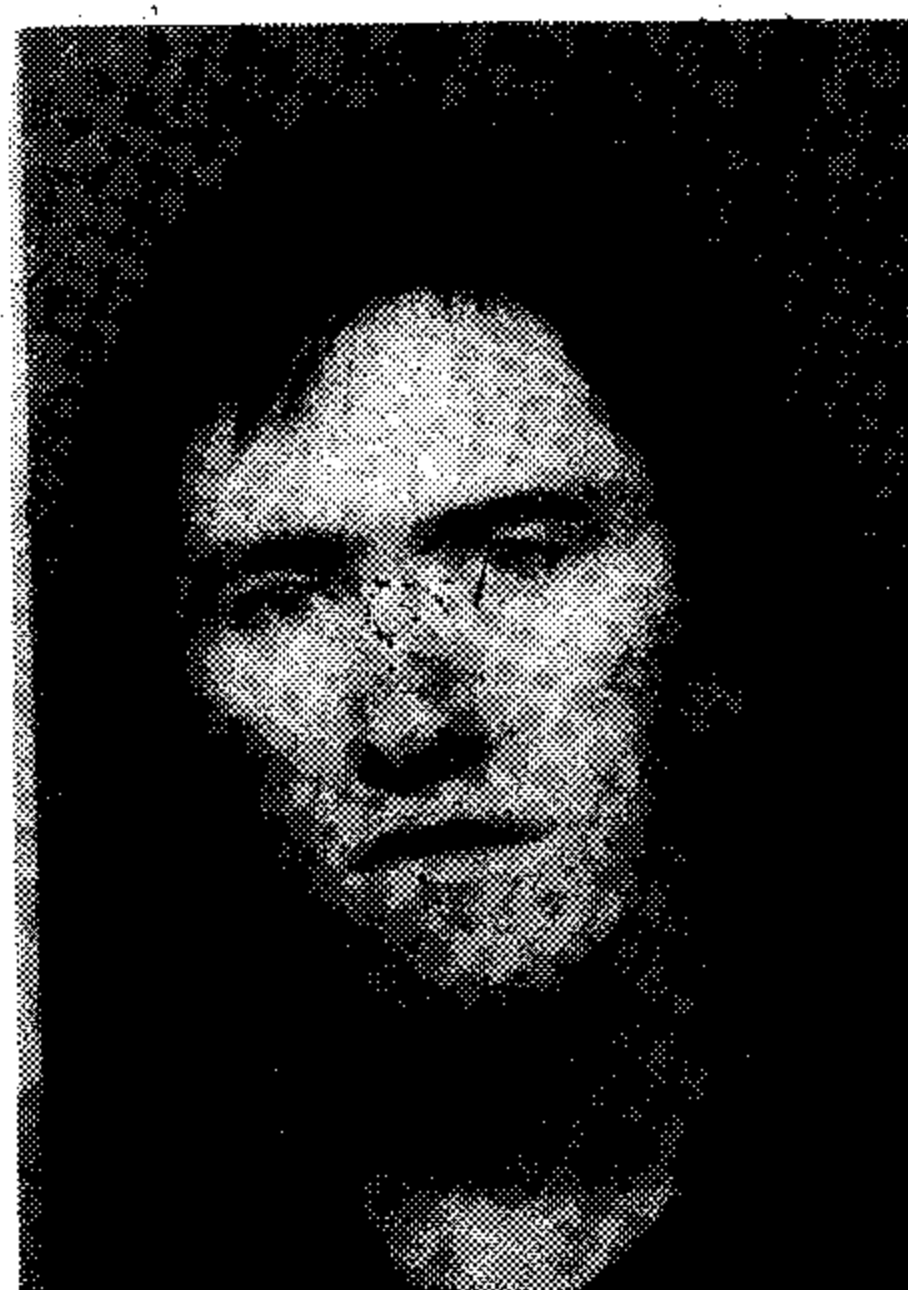
I've drawn strength and political understanding from these experiences which have helped to make the issues more clear-cut in fighting for the pay claim.

I've become well aware that militancy is not enough—I realised this especially with the defeat of the Grunwick strike.

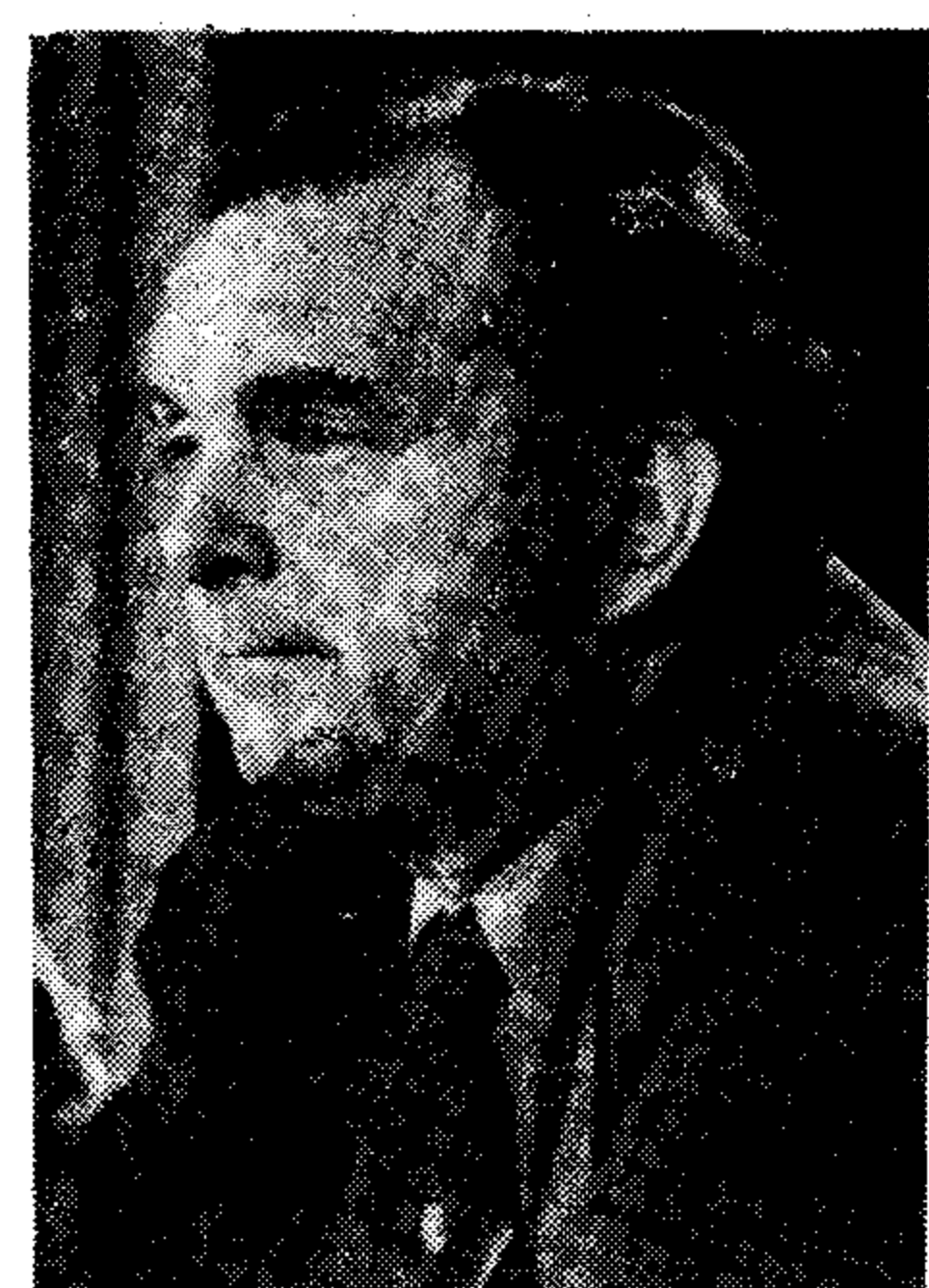
What is needed is a clear programme in fighting against the bureaucracy—both the hardened right and the deceptive left-talkers.

The WSL has such a programme.

I urge all militants in NUPE who are looking for political leadership to think seriously about joining the WSL.



John Seymour



Picketing official Kitson

SP: Why don't you lobby the Strike Committee and demand that they stop granting so many dispensations?

Oh, you just get lost in the hierarchy up there. But if it goes on getting worse we might have to put on blanket pickets.

We will do that if necessary—with 200 of us blocking right across the gate.

They have set a monster loose and they can't control it.

ASLEF aren't here today but they've been picketing too, against coaches being used to take the channel ferry passengers.

We are having a big effect. The docks are empty—its all being directed to Amsterdam or lying off.

# PRESS GANG



If Wilson was listening when Callaghan made his great speech to the nation on how to cross picket lines he must have squirmed with envy.

Callaghan did not quite achieve the status of hero but he did achieve front page bouquets in every single national newspaper.

The real heroes in the pages of the press were such stuff as Patrick Chesterman, the consultant surgeon who turned away trade union members from treatment.

The press chided him for over enthusiasm and for including, among those he turned away, some who might not have approved of strikes.

### Patriotic

The *Telegraph* said: "Mr. Chesterman's mild and brief little tantrum was dictated not by a wish for higher wages but by patriotic anger."

More heroes—40 of them—were found in Derby in the form of lorry drivers who were demanding a return to work and invaded the district committee

office, with the press in attendance and refused to hold a meeting with the TGWU officials if the Press were excluded.

In short it has been a week when the unrelenting hysterical witch-hunts against the working class have continued undiminished.

### Express

As so often the prize must go to the *Daily Express* who headlined an interview with one of the cancer patients discharged from Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital "What Right Have They Got to Play God with my Life?"

The copy was no more subtle. It began: "Alex Scott took a pill yesterday to get his breath for an attack on the hospital pickets who prevented him having heart surgery. "What right have they," he asked, "to play God with my life?"

"Mr. Scott's face reflected the misery suffered by 120 patients sent home from Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital because strikers were blocking vital supplies."

Mr. Scott was indeed

sent home. NUPE strike leaders protested that union members had continued to work with the cancer patients, but the patients had been sent home by management as a provocation. This was ignored by the Press.

As the witch-hunts continued, the *Evening News* announced it was intending to throw 580 workers out of their jobs, including 22 journalists earmarked for compulsory redundancy.

Immediately the NUJ chapel stopped work and went into a mandatory meeting which stopped production of the paper.

In one action the massive contradiction in the role that national journalists play was revealed.

The jobs of the journalists on the *Evening News*, along with the print workers, should of course be defended.

But it is time that the working class began to exercise some direct pressure against those journalists, who though part of the trade union movement, offer no resistance to the role they play in defending the capitalists.



Young Palestinians wave banner of resistance to Zionist and imperialist oppression

# VICTIMS OF ZIONIST COLONIAL EXPANSION

Socialist Press has time and again stressed the fact that an end to the national oppression of the dispossessed Palestinian people, and the unity of Arab and Jewish workers in a secular Palestine, can only be brought about by the destruction of the reactionary Zionist state of Israel.

Last year's brutal Zionist invasion of South Lebanon served to point the finger once more at the savage racialism and imperialist nature of the Zionist regime, which acts as the main obstacle to the liberation of the entire Middle East.

barbarism of the invasion proved a severe embarrassment to even the regime's most servile apologists, the more everyday economic exploitation and police/military repression of the Palestinian and Arab population in the occupied territories is largely ignored.

The following article — by a guest Palestinian writer — helps expose the real plight of these people. As such, it underlines the necessity for the building of a Trotskyist leadership to advance the struggle for the Palestinian national revolution and for social revolution throughout the countries of the Middle East.



Military rule and repression in occupied Palestine

Through the thirty years which followed the establishment of the State of Israel, the main policy of its Zionist leadership has been to occupy more lands of the neighbouring Arab countries.

Within one year of its establishment on 15 May 1948, Israel occupied 6.7 thousand square kilometres from the area designated by the UN resolution as a part of the proposed Arab Palestinian State at that time.

In June 1967, more land was occupied by Israel, after it launched its new aggression, known as the "six day war".

The West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and Sinai were occupied—an area of 68,500 square km.

This is equivalent to more than four times the area Israel had been offered by the 1947 UN "Partition Resolution" (14,100 sq. km), and three times more than the Israeli area before 1967 (20,800 sq. km).

### "Greater Israel"

The Israeli government started from the very beginning of its occupation to "invest" in the Arab occupied territories, and to make the necessary changes in this land, considering it as part of the so-called "greater Israel", by the Zionist leadership.

This annexation policy expressed itself in further intensification of the "colonisation" of the occupied Arab lands—establishing Jewish military settlements claimed to be for "defence and security" purposes, alongside civilian settlements for settling the new immigrants.

Between June, 1967 and October 1973, fifty settlements were set up in the occupied territories.

This number went up to seventy by the end of 1976, half of them in the West Bank and Gaza.

### Confiscated

Now there are 92 such settlements, inhabited by 10,000 settlers.

All these settlements were built up on public lands and on land confiscated from its Arab owners.

This annexation policy became more aggressive and more dangerous after Begin's coalition government assumed office in May 1977.

The new government continued the policy of "colonisation" in the occupied territories by...

The Zionist leaders say that these Jewish settlements are the front line of defence of the borders of the "Jewish State".

### Not maps

Golda Meir, the late ex-prime-minister, and other leaders of her Labour Party, have also repeatedly announced that:

"The borders of Israel are defined by the actual presence of the Israeli settlements, and not according to the maps".

But Begin's government went even beyond that, when it announced:

"Israel has the right to establish in the occupied Arab territories, because



Zionist troops guard new these territories are part of the historical Israeli land".

The establishment of this large network of Jewish settlements in the occupied Arab territories shows clearly that the policy of Tel-Aviv is to create a new situation which would make total annexation easier.

At the same time the economic policy of the Israeli government in these territories confirms that the plan is for total annexation.

Israeli economic policy is designed to create suitable socio-economic conditions for annexation—what is called "economic complementarity".

The "committee of economic coordination in the administered areas" was set up as a tool to implement that policy.

### "Common market"

The first step towards "economic complementarity" was the setting up of a "common market" between the occupied territories and Israel.

The main aim of this has been to expand commerce



with the more developed areas in the West Bank and the higher populated areas in Gaza Strip.

The Israeli government encourages the export of Israeli products to these territories; at the same time it has restricted imports from Jordan and other countries.

#### Israeli imports

According to the Israeli official statistics, Israeli products went up from 75.5% of total imports of the West Bank and Gaza in 1968, to 89.2% in 1974.

Imports from Jordan fell during the same period from 7.7% to 1.4% of the total.

the extent of the dependency of these territories on the Israeli economy.

Israel for instance exports its industrial products, such as textiles and electric equipment, to these territories, in addition to some food products, such as wheat, sugar and rice, which before 1967 were imported from Jordan and other countries.

In exchange, these territories export to Israel the raw agricultural products demanded for its food and light industries, and some seasonal fruits for consumption in Israel.

Hence, the West Bank is a market for Israeli manufactures and a supplier of

The Israeli government keeps for itself the right to control the prices and movements of exports and imports, so as to maximise the benefit of selling goods to Jordan and to make profit from taxes and customs duties.

Therefore the "open bridges" policy, like the "common market", reveals the colonial character of the West Bank.

#### Smuggling

The West Bank is not only directly exploited economically, but used as a channel for smuggling Israeli products on to the markets of the neighbouring Arab countries.

Another of the main features in the "economic complementarity" policy is the absorption of the labour force from these territories into Israel.

In the past, Israeli leaders always refused to employ Arab workers in compliance with its policy of maintaining the "purity of Jewish society".

This went to the extent of preventing Palestinian Arabs from working in their own country.

#### Cheap labour

This policy, however, was changed after June 1967, when the Israeli auth-

and service sectors of industry.

In other words, they are concentrated in the sections where there is no great need for skilled labour.

The percentage of the Arab workers in these sectors reaches 40% or more.

These facts show clearly that the colonial exploitation of the Arab workers in the occupied territories has become a major source of surplus value for the Israeli capitalist economy.

Israel has also gained benefits from exploiting the natural resources of the occupied territories.

Until October 1975, when Israel returned the oil field Abu Dees (Sinai) to Egypt, Israel had been extracting 5 million tons of oil annually, which satisfied a large share of its needs.

#### Oil fields

After 1975, with the help of the USA, the Israelis discovered a new oil field in the south of Sinai, which is enough to satisfy 40% of its needs.

Natural gas has also been found in the north of Sinai, near the new Israeli settlements.

This must be one of the main reasons behind the Israeli refusal to hand over the area to the Egyptians.

American journalist K.

geois researchers they focus on the "positive" sides of the Israeli economic policy in these territories.

But what are the real effects of the "complementarity policy" on the economic structure of the occupied territories?

Tel-Aviv's attempts to strengthen its position in these territories oblige it to make some efforts to develop certain branches of the economy with the objective of establishing profitable investments and of training a small part of the labour force.

#### Negative results

The Israeli authorities train a minimum number of the workers—those it needs for the future development of some of the production sectors in the occupied territories.

But the main effects of the "complementarity policy", which has changed radically the basic socio-economic structure of the occupied territories, are deeply negative.

Agriculture has become more and more dependent on the Israeli market, from which it is also forced to buy much of its needed supplies.

At the same time "economic complementarity" has been the main obstacle to any development of the industrial sector in the West Bank and Gaza.

The main feature of industry in these territories has remained unchanged.

#### Stunted industry

Tiny industrial firms, processing agricultural products, and employing less than 10 workers, have continued to be almost the only form of industry in these territories.

The occupation authorities allow and sometimes even encourage that sort of industry.

It cannot compete with the Israeli industry in the Israeli market, but it can be complementary to some Israeli industries by providing materials for building, clothes, textiles and furniture.

"Contracting" is one of the means by which Israeli investors gain profits.

#### Profitable

They usually make profitable agreements through which the small capitalists in the occupied territories send them certain goods they need.

So Israeli capital indirectly exploits the cheap labour force.

According to Ma'ariv—the Israeli newspaper—in 1970 there were 65 firms in the occupied territories producing for Israeli contractors. Their total production was worth around I.L.2.9 million.

Another cruel consequence of the policy of the occupation authorities has

been the transfer of 250,000 Palestinian Arabs from permanent employment to become casual labourers, thus depriving them of a basic right.

#### Less than minimum

Many who found no employment were forced to migrate to the Arab neighbouring countries. Those with jobs in the occupied territories are "protected" in theory by Israeli minimum wage laws.

But in practice they receive on average less than 60% of the "minimum". In addition, the Israeli authorities deny them the right to set up trade unions, and provide no social rights, such as health care or social security.

Furthermore Arab workers also suffer from appalling living conditions.

According to even the Israeli papers, whole families including children are living in the stables of Jewish farmers.

#### Locked up

The Arab workers from the occupied territories are not allowed to stay during the night in the Jewish-populated areas.

That is why many Israeli employers keep the Arab workers locked up on their premises so that they are not noticed by the police.

In all these ways the Israeli government annexation policy has intensified the political and economic exploitation of the Arabs in the occupied territories.

The policy is one of brutal colonial oppression,



Settlements

By 1975-77, 91.1% of the imports of the West Bank and Gaza Strip were coming from Israel, while 60% of the production of these territories was exported to Israel.

Having "linked" the local market in the West Bank and Gaza to the Israeli market, the Israeli regime set about associating the economic development of the territories directly with development of the Israeli economy.

#### Forced to change

The Arab peasants in West Bank and Gaza were forced to shift their agricultural production to beet-root, tobacco and cotton in order to satisfy the industrial needs of the Israeli market.

The Israeli agricultural companies buy these agricultural products from the Arab peasants at lower prices than they buy from Jewish peasants.

The colonial character of the commercial exchange between Israel and the occupied territories shows

cheap agricultural raw materials.

Israel also uses the West Bank as a "bridge" to export its products to Jordan and other countries.

The so-called "open bridges" policy serves Israeli aims by allowing the Israeli authorities to transfer goods and people from the West Bank to Jordan.

According to the official statistics, exports from the West Bank to Jordan rose between 1968 and 1976 from I.L.53.6 million to I.L.453 million.

#### Control of prices

In more recent years, that increase has continued.

orities made a "concession" to the needs of Israeli employers by allowing them to exploit the cheap labour force in the West Bank and Gaza.

According to official statistics, the number of Arab workers from the occupied territories working in Israel went up from five thousand in 1968 to 68,700 in 1974.

In 1975-77, the figures kept increasing at the same rate.

These figures mean that Arab labour now represents around 35% of the labour force of the Israeli economy.

Arab workers work mainly in the agricultural, building, road construction

Blouis has written:

"Whatever the Israeli rulers say about their demands in the negotiation process, about the modifications in the borders for "security reasons", the main and real aim for the Israeli capitalists is: the oil, land and the cheap labour force.

"That is the only interpretation for the Israeli government practices in the Arab occupied territories."

The pro-Israeli newspapers and many reporters and researchers from US and the imperialist countries in general try to hide the facts and motives behind the Israeli policy in the occupied territories.

Along with Israeli bour-



Palestinian youth fight back.

utilising all the traditional methods of repression historically used by colonial regimes, including violence, to keep the current system unchanged.

According to the plans of the Zionist leaders in Israel, this policy should lead to the complete absorption of the occupied Arab land into the Zionist state.



Imperialist chief Carter with his two Middle East allies.

# BUILD COUNCILS OF ACTION!

## Lesson of strike committees

"How are the different demands and forms of struggle to be harmonised, even if only within the limits of one city? History has already answered this question: through *soviets*. These will unite the representatives of all the fighting groups. For this purpose, no one has yet proposed a different form of organisation; indeed it would hardly be possible to think up a better one. Soviets are not limited to an *a priori* party programme. They throw open their door to all the exploited. Through these doors pass representatives of all strata, drawn into the general current of the struggle. The organisation, broadening out together with the movement is renewed again and again in its womb. All political currents of the proletariat can struggle for leadership of the soviets on the basis of the widest democracy. The slogan of *soviets*, therefore, crowns the programme of transitional demands".

Transitional Programme P.28 (Folrose Ed.)

The lorry drivers' strike has brought the employers another vivid glimpse of the potential power of the organised working class.

Though TGWU officials are now labouring might and main to tame the struggles of their own members, Tory politicians, the press and the media ring out continuously with abuse aimed against the power of the lorry drivers' strike committees and picketing in general.

One Tory MP last week in Parliament even likened the strike committees to the soviets that sprang up in the struggles prior to the October 1917 Revolution in Russia. His attack contained more than a germ of truth.

### Spontaneous

The soviets were committees of workers spontaneously created in the struggle against Tsarism and capitalism.

They drew together representatives of every militant section of workers—trade union bodies, political parties, unemployed representatives, even delegates from meetings of unorganised workers.

They were joined by delegates from committees of rank and file soldiers,

Soviets were thus all-embracing bodies representing the toiling masses—and provided an arena for political debate and discussion.

In this respect they were far more developed than the lorry drivers' committees.

But they were also bodies that, as they grew, and were given revolutionary leadership, began firmly to assert the control of the working class over society—and emerged as a rival authority, a rival power to that of the capitalist state.

In this sense when we look at the power of the lorry drivers' pickets and the challenge that they represent to the power of the capitalist class, we can see a connection to those Russian soviets.

### Unite struggles

And when there are simultaneous struggles taking place in the public sector unions, on the railways and elsewhere, the obvious necessary step is to unite these struggles and link them to the local labour movement as a whole through the formation of soviet-type bodies—*councils of action*.

Such councils of action were formed on a widespread basis in the 1926 General Strike.

Since the 1926 General Strike there have been few occasions where an upsurge of working class militancy seemed to offer the possibility of going beyond the limits of trade union struggle to the point of directly confronting government.

The degeneration of the British Communist Party has meant that that the revolutionary strategy implicit in the call for councils of action has now become the property not of a mass party but of the limited forces adhering to the Trotskyist programme.

### Correct conditions

The demand for councils of action, however, even if advanced by small forces, can under the correct conditions, win substantial support from militant trade unionists, Labour Party members and other working class organisations.

Such was the case in the mass struggles against the Heath government in the summer of 1972.



Haulage drivers' picket line in Manchester



Police escort scab driver in 1926 General Strike

The working class had shown from the very outset its willingness to fight—the Tories—who had been elected to office in the wake of the treacherous Wilson governments of 1964-70.

Huge demonstrations and protest actions had taken place against the hated Industrial Relations Bill, though at each point the TUC leaders, backed up by the Communist Party, fought to confine these actions to peaceful protests aimed at "changing the line" of the Tories rather than bringing them down.

### Miners' strike

1972 saw a national miners strike force back the Tories hard line on pay.

But the implementation of the Industrial Relations Act against dock pickets attempting to prevent container firms using non-registered labour was the basis for the biggest single confrontation between the working class and the Tory government.

After the leaders had succeeded in holding back workers' anger at the levying of fines on the TGWU by the National Industrial Relations Court, five dockers were jailed in July for "contempt of court" when they continued to picket a

non-registered container firm. The response was immediate and enormous. Hundreds of thousands of workers in almost every section of industry stopped work.

Dockers, print workers, engineers and thousands more joined huge demonstrations to Pentonville jail where the five were being held—without the slightest official lead from the union bureaucracy.

The TUC leaders were so alarmed at the dimensions of the mass movement that they were pressed into tentatively calling for a one-day general strike.

Despite the fact that it was the height of the holiday shut down period in industry, resolutions from union bodies were flooding in to show that with or without this call a general strike movement was on the way.

### Councils of action

It was under these conditions that the Trotskyists of the Socialist Labour League took up the call for the formation of councils of action to offer an arena within the growing mass struggle within which revolutionaries could fight for the acceptance of their programme.

Yet it was not until the confrontation was past its peak

that such demands began to bear fruit, and councils of action were set up in several areas where the SLL had trade union strength—in particular in Oxford, in Lambeth, and in North London.

In Oxford the initial resolution for a council of action was passed by the local Coafed, and subsequently endorsed by the Trades Council, as well as a number of car workers shop stewards committees and union branches.

### Delegates

The inaugural meeting at Transport House, Oxford drew over 60 delegates from 40 labour movement organisations including the Confed, the Morris Motors Joint Shop Stewards Committee, British Leyland Service Joint Shop Stewards, the two biggest TGWU branches in the town, several AUEW branches, the Communist Party, Labour Party Young Socialists, the SLL and other political groups.

After a battle with the Stalinists it adopted a policy of fighting for the removal of the Tory government.

But the conditions for such a body to establish itself at the head of a growing mass movement were no longer present.



Oxford Council of Action supporting hospital ancillary workers strike

was confirmed by the rapid growth and implications of the Leyland toolroom strike, which in March 1977 led to the brink of a national engineering strike against Leyland's sacking threat.

These events brought the downfall of the Labour government and the emergence of the Lib-Lab coalition, since when every key wages battle in defiance of government pay limits has implicitly included a threat to the very life of the government.

This was particularly true of the firemen's strike. As the 48,000 firemen went out, one million local authority workers were still pressing their claim for a 30% pay increase, and 250,000 miners were pursuing their demand for a £135 a week wage.

The fight to mobilise these workers on their pay claims alongside the firemen was essential if the pay policy was to be defeated in the public sector.

But the official leaders of both sections were dedicated to preventing such united action.

The Workers Socialist League, therefore, combined the demand that these leaders call action with agitation on a local level for councils of action to be established, bringing together firemen and delegates from other union branches in order to broaden the action and mobilise these other sections.

While in Sheffield the Stalinist-led AUEW District Committee was able to ignore a demand by shop stewards for such a council of action, in North London a council of action was established, embracing the firemen, the Trades Council and the local Labour Party.

The predominance of Stalinist influence on this committee, combined with the FBU bureaucrats' moves to wind up the strike meant however, that the Camden Council of Action was relegated to the status of a strike support committee.

The Transitional Programme points out:

"Soviets can arise only at the time when the mass movement enters an openly revolutionary stage".

We cannot artificially create councils of action at a point where major class battles are not in process, and we do not seek to do so.

But we retain the conviction that the formulation of such bodies is an essential step in the struggle of the working class for power.

The lorry drivers' strike has shown how local councils of action could emerge as an organised base of workers' power, controlling the movement of essential supplies, organising supporting action for isolated sections of workers in struggle, and challenging the betrayals and manoeuvres of trade union officials.

As Trotsky writes:

"From the first moment of their appearance, the soviets, acting as a pivot around which millions of toilers are united in their struggle against the exploiters, become competitors and opponents of local authorities and then of the central government... Two regimes, the bourgeois and the proletarian, are irreconcilably opposed to each other. Conflict between them is inevitable... In the case of victory, the power of the Soviets, that is the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist reconstruction of society, will arise."

In preparing for such a level of struggle we must continue to spell out the need for councils of action, alongside our programme of demands on jobs, wages, workers' control and nationalisation.

This long-term perspective



# Is there room for socialists in the Labour Party?



At its January meeting the General Committee of the Oxford City Labour Party voted by the narrowest possible margin (37-35) to expel Ted Heslin, an Executive Committee member and delegate from Blackwells TGWU/ACTSS branch, from the Labour Party.

The charge against Heslin was that he was a supporter of the WSL and that he sold Socialist Press.

## Ambiguous

The right wing, under the leadership of arch witch-hunter John Power (President of Oxford Trades Council and City Labour Party Trade Union Liaison Officer), brought the charges under an ambiguous clause in Labour Party standing orders which is designed to exclude political organisations with separate branches and programme from affiliating to the Labour Party.

For all the right wing's attempts to reduce the expulsion to an organisational matter, the political character of the moves

against Ted Heslin were clearly spelt out by his supporters on the GC.

The bureaucracy in the Oxford trade union movement and the Labour Party has taken a hammering recently and a witch-hunt is always the final recourse of the isolated bureaucrats.

*Socialist Press* has reported last year's TGWU moves against the Cowley 9; the situation in the Oxford Labour Party is closely bound up with the victimisations within the TGWU and Trades Council.

Last October and November the GC voted to refuse membership applications from Dr. Ken Williamson and Peter McIntyre on the grounds that they were supporters of the WSL.

The initial objections were made by John Power and Tony Williamson a reactionary worker-priest and Chairman of the TGWU 5/60 branch in British Ley-

land's Cowley Body Plant.

Despite the fact that more than one third of the G.C. voted against the witch-hunters to accept Ken Williamson and Peter McIntyre into membership, Power pursued the charges against Heslin, and has now split the Oxford Labour Party down the middle.



Power

As a Labour Party member, Ted Heslin has a 2½ year record of fighting for the kind of consistent socialist policies advocated by *Socialist Press*.

He has been a delegate to the G.C., a member of the Executive Committee and Chairman of the Anti-Racism Committee.

Recently a resolution from his union branch calling for an end to wage control and the removal of the Callaghan/Healey leadership provoked a bitter debate and drew a clear line between those who perceive the crisis of leadership in the labour movement and those fakers and talkers who are not prepared to carry out any fight for a socialist programme.

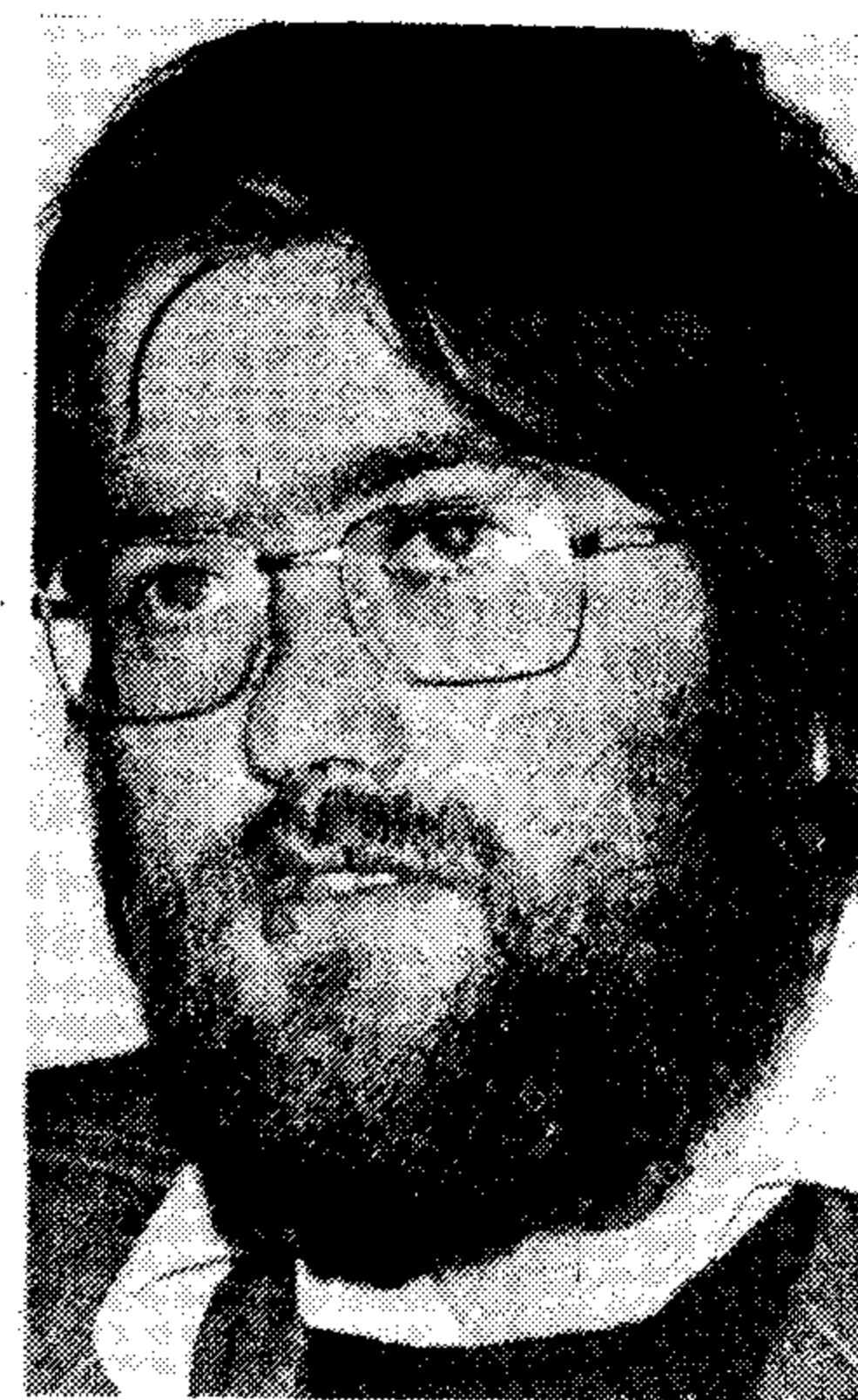
## Dilemma

The fight against Ted Heslin's expulsion, and for the admission of socialists into the Labour Party, raises the dilemma now confronting all Labour Party members.

The very right wingers who are now driving militant socialists out of the party are at the same time the most outspoken and vigorous defenders of the Callaghan leadership's catastrophic course of scabbing, strike breaking, wage controls and other Tory policies which if not challenged are certain to cost Labour a defeat at the next General Election.

Why is it only the opponents of these right wing leaders who are hounded, witch-hunted and expelled from the Labour Party?

In Oxford, for instance, the Labour GC includes Lady McCarthy, right wing



Excluded—Peter McIntyre chairman of the Area Health Authority which is currently carrying through a savage programme of cuts in the health service.

Yet it is not McCarthy, but Dr. Ken Williamson, well-known as an active opponent of the cuts, who is excluded from the Labour Party!

Under these conditions no left winger or socialist—whether or not he/she at present supports the policies of *Socialist Press*—can consider himself safe from the threat of bureaucratic expulsion.

## More witch-hunts

Power and his cronies have already served notice that the witch-hunts will continue.

Meanwhile Ken Williamson, Peter McIntyre and Ted Heslin are to pursue their rights of appeal to the NEC.

It is time that all Labour Party militants turned their attentions to the real divisions within their party and took a firm stand on the right of socialists to

argue for their policies within its ranks.

The Party's National Executive holds a majority of Tribune MPs and delegates who proclaim themselves left wing socialists.

From their past record, these people have proved themselves unwilling to fight for the removal of their Party's scab leaders.

Where will they stand now on this move by the right wing to oust socialists and deny them the right to belong to the Labour Party?

It is no accident that the witch-hunt comes at a time of deepening crisis for the Labour Party as it moves ever further out of step with the recent developments within the working-class.



Healey

Only *Socialist Press*, paper of the Workers Socialist League has put forward a principled policy on which socialists within the Labour Party can struggle against the betrayals of their leadership.

It is for this reason that while the tame cats of the Militant group and other self-styled "opponents" of Callaghan are welcomed inside the Labour Party, *Socialist Press* supporters have come under repeated witch-hunting attacks.



More Labour Party rebels: Southwark Councillors Bob Smith and Jim Greening lead a march of about 250 in protest against a planned new Town Hall.

# Suspended for upholding socialist policies!

On 22 January six Labour Councillors were disciplined by the Labour Group on Newham Borough Council. Mark Hyde interviewed one of them, John Plant.

In his election campaign, Plant campaigned on a pro-

gramme publicised in *Socialist Press*, which contained a clear call for driving the right wing traitors out of their positions in the labour movement, and the building of a new leadership based on a socialist programme for the overthrow of capitalism.

they must sign a 'good behaviour' document agreeing to be bound by Labour Group decisions, before they can be readmitted to the Labour Group.

Ken Palmer and I have also been suspended for six months.

Why are you opposed to the building of the Civic Centre?

There are a number of questions involved. First the financial basis of it is negotiated secretly.

We understand now that it involves a trade union pension



NALGO leader Drain

fund holding a sixty year lease on the land.

Its far from clear that there is the need for the amount of new office space involved. The council leaders refuse to answer questions.

If there are going to be prestige projects of this kind in a borough with some of the worst housing problems in London—and this to be paid for through rates—then they must be openly discussed in the local labour movement. The use of the party whip silences this.

How do you see the importance of the social workers' claim?

It's bad that they have been forced into a position of putting in local claims.

The NALGO leadership never wanted local initiatives to be successful.

Their handling of the dispute shows nothing but attempts to sell out the action.

But the social workers were taking industrial action for local

negotiations and the Labour Councils had a responsibility to support this demand, which reflects the drive to the breaking of wage controls.

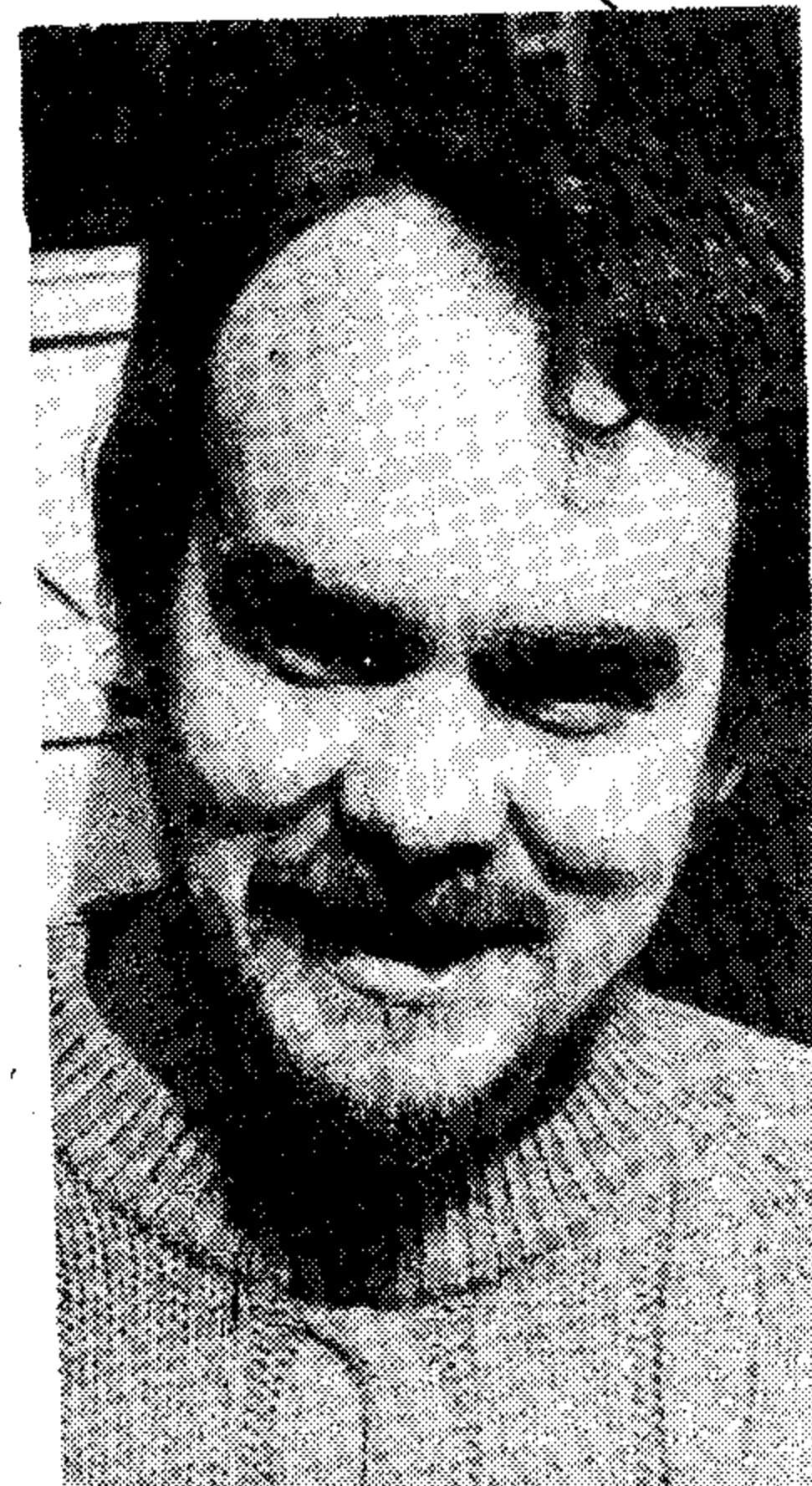
The cash must be made available to meet social needs. Healey, Shore, Callaghan, by imposing cash limits are doing the job that the IMF has told them to.

We must get rid of these servants of the capitalists in the Labour Party.

How will you fight your suspensions?

I won't sign 'good behaviour' documents. There will have to be a fight in Labour Party wards and GMCs and in the unions, to force our readmission without any pledges that we abandon a fight on a class position.

I don't have full political agreement with the other councillors disciplined, but it is possible to fight in defence of democratic rights in the labour movement.



Councillor Plant

Can well-intentioned individuals win this fight?

An individual can't do it. You need socialist opposition organised around policies that can bring down the leadership and build a new one.

*Socialist Press* can play a significant role in the creation of such an opposition.

Without a correct theory and programme there's no way forward.

Why have six councillors been disciplined?

Six of us voted contrary to a Labour Group decision in the council. The question was proceeding with a £14,000,000 project for a new 'Civic Centre'.

Also Ken Palmer and myself have been further disciplined for putting motions on the next council agenda attacking the Civic Centre decision and also calling on the council to meet the social workers' pay claim.

What action has been taken against the six?

They have been told that

PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report



# INDUSTRIAL NEWS

# NALGO sells out social workers



A clash on the Sandersons mass picket last October

A meeting of branch delegates from NALGO's local government group last week voted to accept a sell-out "settlement" formula in a bid to end the six month pay strike by social workers.

NALGO bureaucrats argue that the deal is the best that could be obtained—but took the precaution of putting it forward in a meeting where social workers were heavily outnumbered.

Out of the 300 branches represented only 110 had social worker members. And the final vote, not surprisingly was 2-1 for acceptance.

NALGO officials claimed that they will only tell social workers to return to work where progress is made on local negotiations—but there is no doubt that the vote will be used as a green light to stampede through a squalid sell-out of the original fight for local wage bargaining.



## Act now to win forgotten strike

Once again, this time due to the lorry drivers' strike, the TGWU's longest running dispute at Sandersons of Croft, near Skegness has been pushed into the background by the TGWU bureaucracy.

This strike—for reinstatement and for the most basic democratic right, to join a union—began on May 13, 1977 and is still as far away from a settlement as it was 20 months ago.

The TGWU leadership both locally and nationally have displayed time after time their treachery and cowardice in this dispute.

Their refusal to call for more mass pickets following the extremely successful one held last October, and their complete inactivity in fighting for the cutting off of all essential services to the plant is a betrayal and an insult to the courage shown by the strikers.

They have maintained a 24-hour, seven day a week picket on the factory these many months.

Ron Todd, the TGWU National Organiser, was supposed to meet the strike committee last week but up to the present time has made no contact with them.

### Duped

This complete disregard for the strikers comes after the TGWU officials Todd, Cairns and Cooper had been duped by Roy Sanderson, the plant's reactionary owner, into lifting the picket, enabling him to display his forlorn at the Smithfield Show.

This was agreed on the purely verbal understanding that Sanderson would negotiate the reinstatement of all the strikers and would also recognise the union.

But after management organised a demonstration by the scabs still working in the plant to oppose the reinstatement of strikers, (an occasion when by some strange coincidence TV cameras appeared on the scene), and also a manipulated ballot which also



PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL

Duped—Ron Todd

rejected the strikers, Sanderson backed off, breaking off the negotiations and leaving top TGWU officials with egg on their faces.

But even this insult has not drawn any form of positive action from Todd to screw the firm into submission.

### Solid

In comparison the strikers have remained solid and as determined as ever to see this struggle through to a victorious conclusion.

There is no doubt however, that they are totally disillusioned with the TGWU bureaucracy and it is clear that a further initiative must be taken if the strike is to be won.

The strike committee must surely now draw on the lessons to be learnt from the Grunwick defeat and ensure that they don't finish up the same way.

### Mass pickets

They themselves must call for mass pickets to be supported by all the trade union and labour movement.

They must also take up the call advocated by the WSL during the Grunwick dispute for a mass lobby of the TUC demanding the immediate implementation of the blacking of all essential services to Sandersons as the only way the strike can be won.

### Low pay

The social workers' dispute has its roots with their dissatisfaction at appallingly low rates of pay—low even in comparison with other local government workers.

This unrest came to a head at the 1977 National Conference which instructed full timers to abolish the existing national social workers pay scale, enabling branches to obtain local agreements.

Predictably the full timers did nothing to achieve these ends and it was left to the workers themselves who began in August 1978 with social workers in three branches striking over the local claims they had submitted.

To date dozens of branches have submitted claims and 2,600 social workers from 15 branches have taken all-out strike action with over 2,000 elsewhere taking other militant action.

This militancy forced the national bureaucracy into "joint" negotiations with the employers culminating in the proposed agreement forced through last week's meeting.

This "deal" is nothing short of pathetic. It offers a banded



NALGO hatchet man, Mike Blick.

structure effectively giving social workers an average 5-6% increase but with so many strings attached it looks like a puppeteer's nightmare.

The negotiators are basically selling this deal on the argument that if this struggle is not ended then NALGO will have nothing in the strike fund for future strikes!

This absurd "jam tomorrow" argument fails to explain how the employers will take NALGO seriously if we capitulate to them on this issue.

The negotiators claim that the social workers strike has little or no effect; but wherever

strikers attempted to mount effective pickets (particularly in London, where they prevented fuel supplies reaching other council offices), they were instructed to stop by the officials!

Perhaps the most disgusting aspect of this deal is that any settlement made will not be paid until July 1979—the date of NALGO's normal annual pay settlement.

Government officials have made it plain that money allocated to increase social work rates will be deducted from the maximum 5% proposed for all other local government office workers!

All NALGO members should be fighting this sell-out attempt and call for a continuation and escalation of the strike action to win:

- \*Locally conducted negotiations, no to national control.

- \*Local control of strike action.

- \*No to pay restraint and the 5% limit: for catching up pay increases protected against inflation through cost of living clauses.

- \*No to Whitley Councils and "Joint" consultation.

- \*Yes to properly constituted shop stewards systems.

# WSL We offer a lead!

Whichever way you look at the struggles and problems now facing the working class world-wide, one thing stands out above all—the need for a principled leadership capable of leading the struggle for state power and the establishment of a socialist society.

The Workers Socialist League is the only movement in Britain that fights patiently and relentlessly to build such a party, on the basis of the Trotskyist Transitional Programme.

We alone are the movement

that does not shrink from even head-on battles with the existing leaders of the working class — whether these be open right wingers, 'left' talking Labourites or Stalinists of the Communist Party.

Such a policy has made us no friends in the trade union and Labour bureaucracy, but has consistently offered the most powerful lead to workers in struggle.

Indeed the strength of our movement lies precisely in our rejection of any attempt to find "short cuts" around the necessary fight to construct a Marxist leadership in the working class.

In these battles we set out to prove to workers both in theory

and in practice the necessity for a new leadership and for a programme of transitional demands which, starting from today's problems and today's consciousness within the working class, lead workers in struggle to grasp the need for socialist revolution.

For this reason, though we are smaller than some self-styled 'revolutionary' groups, the WSL has featured in the forefront of pay struggles in British Leyland, in the fight against the sale of jobs by TUC leaders, in the struggle against the cuts, in unionisation struggles, and in the fight against bureaucratic dictatorship within the unions.

This method of approach — rejecting any descent to simple trade union militancy, and any form of concession to the counter-revolutionary reformist or Stalinist bureaucracy — is of course essential for the working class not only in Britain but

### internationally

In taking up international issues the WSL points out not only the obligation of British workers to support the Irish liberation struggle and revolutionary struggles such as those in Iran and Southern Africa, but also the necessity for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International as the organising centre of the world party of socialist revolution.

The WSL is not the biggest movement on the left in Britain nor is it the easiest to be a member of. But in its approach to both theory and practice it is the only really serious revolutionary movement.

**WHY NOT JOIN US? Fill in the form below for more details, or approach your local branch, who will gladly supply more information about our programme, policies, and perspectives.**

## More details

Send me more details of the Workers Socialist League.

Name .....

Address .....

Trade Union/occupation .....



# STALINISTS STAB The Great Train DAY OF ACTION Sell-out



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

On Saturday January 27 TGWU Region 1 Secretary and leading Stalinist Sid Staden, and his regional organiser Les Shorter, sat in the Garners Strike Committee rooms, whilst supporters of the strike mounted an anniversary picket on all Garners Restaurants, with 200 massed at Oxford Street at lunchtime, and 200 at Whitcombe Street in the evening.

How many delegations did the Regional Committee mobilise from its 1600 branches and half-a-million members? How many Regional Committee members turned up to support the anniversary of a bitter struggle for the basic democratic right, to join the TGWU? THE ANSWER IS OF COURSE—NONE!

The sole contribution of the whole Regional leadership came when Staden, Shorter and full-time catering officer Abrahams crawled out of the strike committee rooms and crept around the picket lines, hoping to find the strike collapsing through

lack of support, and intent on avoiding a confrontation with militant strike committee members and pickets.

This astounding act of treachery coming at the end of a long record of sabotage by Stalinist Staden, now implicates the whole regional leadership of the TGWU in a sharp move to the right.

In the context of a national press witch-hunt against the lorry drivers' strike, the Garners strike is now on the receiving end of the TGWU national leadership's cringing betrayal of the right to picket.

Staden with the Regional Committee's consent, has already agreed with the police to limit picketing to six.

Saturday showed that they are now unwilling even to make a token show of attendance as on previous Garners demonstrations.

The same stand was taken by Staden's fellow Stalinists Durkin and Stiller on GLATC, Dunn, chairman of SERTUC, and Gordon McLennan, General Secretary of the Communist Party (who has stood on the picket lines just long enough to have his photo taken).

Not one of these Stalinists

mobilised themselves—let alone delegations from the bodies they supposedly represent.

In contrast, there was a massive turn out by the forces of the state, who on Saturday protected Garners boss Margolis with a least 400 assorted police (twice as many as those picketing).

We warn the bureaucrats and time servers in the Region 1 leadership like Regional Committee members Nicholson, Rechnits, Kirby, Dorchester, O'Sullivan, Maher and Westermann and full timers Blamerhauzer and Cavanagh, that everyone implicated in the sabotage of this strike will emerge—win or lose—with a record.

We intend to fight alongside the strike committee to ensure that their record of betrayal and sabotage will stand as an indictment of class collaboration for all workers and especially those in the TGWU to see.

The strike committee must draw strength from the fact that Saturday's turnout, which included delegations mobilised by the WSL from Brighton, Oxford and Sheffield, was large enough to prevent Staden and Shorter using it as a pretext for calling the strike off.

The strike committee must now carry forward their fight against Margolis and their Regional leadership who capitulate all along the line to him, by campaigning for support within the TGWU for a national TGWU delegate conference, and a day of action on March 3.

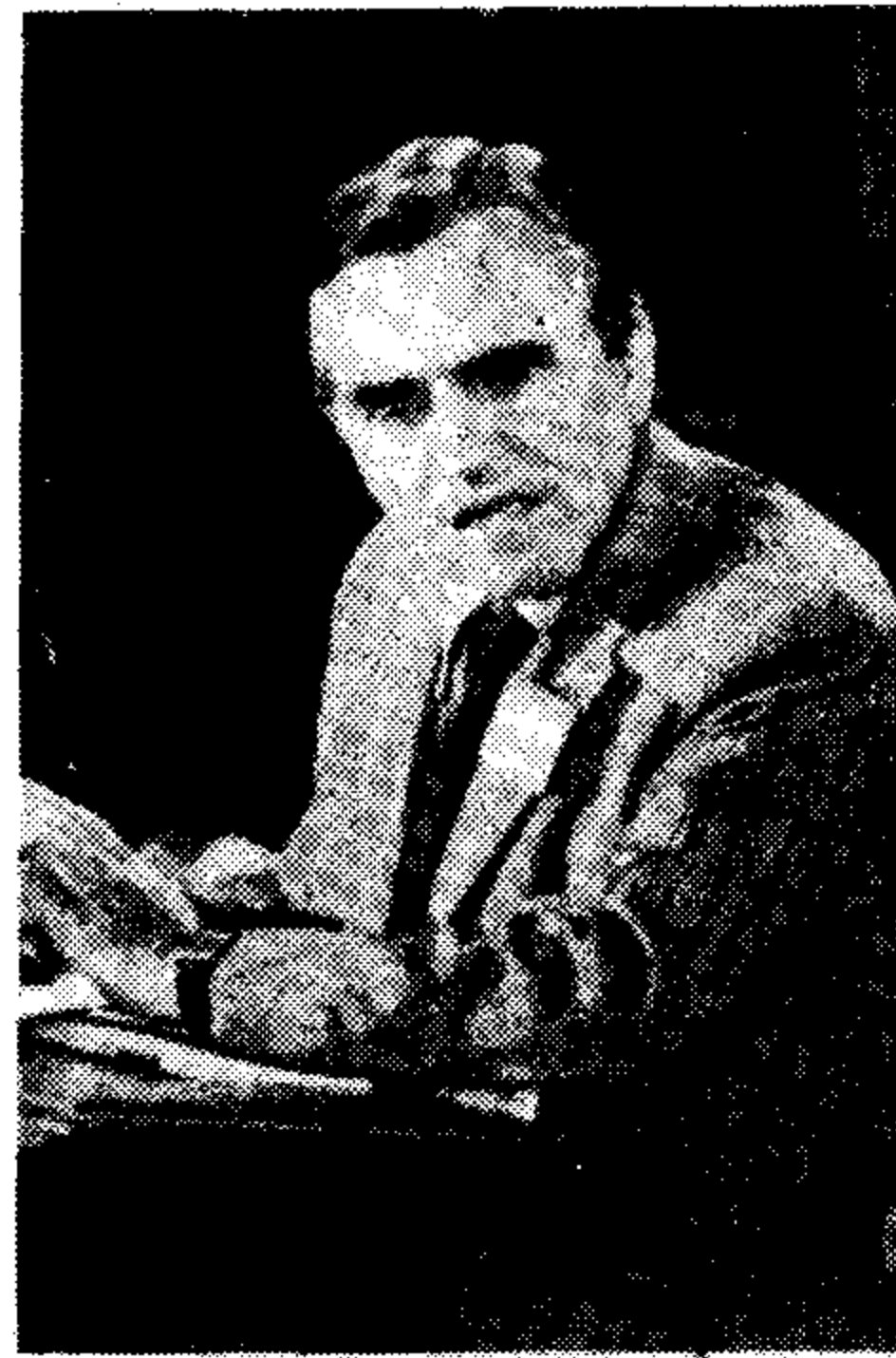
In this campaigning they will have the full support of the WSL and its supporters.

The decision of the ASLEF executive to call off their programme of one day strikes and to submit their claim for a 10% bonus payment to the tender mercies of Lord McCarthy must qualify as the most blatant betrayal of the year.

Both the major blue collar rail unions ASLEF and the NUR are supposed to be pressing wage claims of up to 20% for their members.

Instead they have concentrated on defusing the wages pressure by squabbling over a much smaller diversion.

The strikes were called, not over the pay claim, but over a



Sid Weighell

separate claim for a 10% bonus granted last year to guards on rural trains.

That claim had been one of the many side products of the union leadership's refusal to challenge the government wage controls.

It was Lord McCarthy's 'Railway Staff National Tribunal' which told ASLEF last year that only drivers of high speed trains would get the payments.

Now Ray Buckton, 'left'-talking general secretary of ASLEF, has invited this arch fixer for the Labour government to rule against his members once again!

This time however Lord McCarthy is likely to come up with draconian measures for axing jobs—British Rail wants 20,000 slashed.

Although the ASLEF action has been presented as foundering on ideological differences between ASLEF and the NUR in general and Buckton and Sid Weighell (NUR general secretary) in particular, nothing could be further from the truth.

Both these men have fully accepted massive job cuts and neither has any intention of fighting the real battle for all round increases on pay way outside the 5% limit.

### Clashes

They are using the 'gladiatorial' clashes between them to a common cause—diverting the members' militancy over wages up a blind siding.

### Buckton

Members of all three rail unions must demand that their executives call action now over the pay claim—action that unites railway workers instead of trying to divide them.

All-out strike action—not for one day but unlimited strikes—is the only way for the claims to be won.

### Councils of action

Members must also demand that their executives refuse to discuss the loss of any jobs.

One of the biggest nightmares facing Weighell—who wants no part in any action—is that the NUR has a policy of demanding this year an extra 20,000 jobs on the railways. This claim must also be ruthlessly pursued.

Strike committees must be set up which cut across union divisions and counter the officials' attempts to divide up the membership.

Rail workers called out on strike should link up with other workers to form councils of action to coordinate the struggles against government wage control.

## Officials hold back victory

The only problem for the striking haulage drivers continues to be their official leadership.

At a time when employers all over the country are collapsing by settling for the full £65 but without the 35 hour week, the TGWU is weakening the membership by negotiating different agreements in different areas.

### Turned down

In Northern Ireland the officials recommended acceptance of a £62.50 offer as what they called "the best that could be negotiated".

This was turned down by a mass meeting of the membership.

In Hull the officials negotiated a £64 settlement.

But worst of all was the decision by the stewards in the Bristol area to accept a union negotiated agreement to return

to work with no money! They have agreed to accept arbitration by a 3-man committee.

### Weighted

The committee—consisting of Frank Cousins, and RHA nominee Geoffrey Jones, and chaired by Industrial Society Director John Garnett—is so weighted in favour of the employers that the RHA is now talking of settling nationally for the figure it recommends.

After the Bristol decision, TGWU Regional Secretary Ron Nethercott said that these were: "the first group of workers to say that the nation matters, and I am proud of them."

### Shortage of parts

This attitude of many TGWU officials is shown by the events in Cowley this week where British Leyland production is stopped because

of a shortage of parts from Llanelli.

The company have been trying to get the Morris's transport department to do what Leyland drivers are doing at Longbridge and every other plant—cover the work of striking Welsh RHA members.

The stewards refused to do this—rejecting equivocal letters from the Welsh TGWU Regional Secretary George Wright.

But on Friday a letter arrived signed by both Wright and by the chairman of the Welsh central strike committee D. Driscoll.

This read:

"The policy of the Central Strike Committee of Region 4 (Wales) is that all 'own account' vehicles are allowed to carry all 'own account' loads including work normally carried by RHA firms still in dispute. This is to bring further pressure on the RHA firms to settle at £65 for 40 hours.

"Therefore based on the

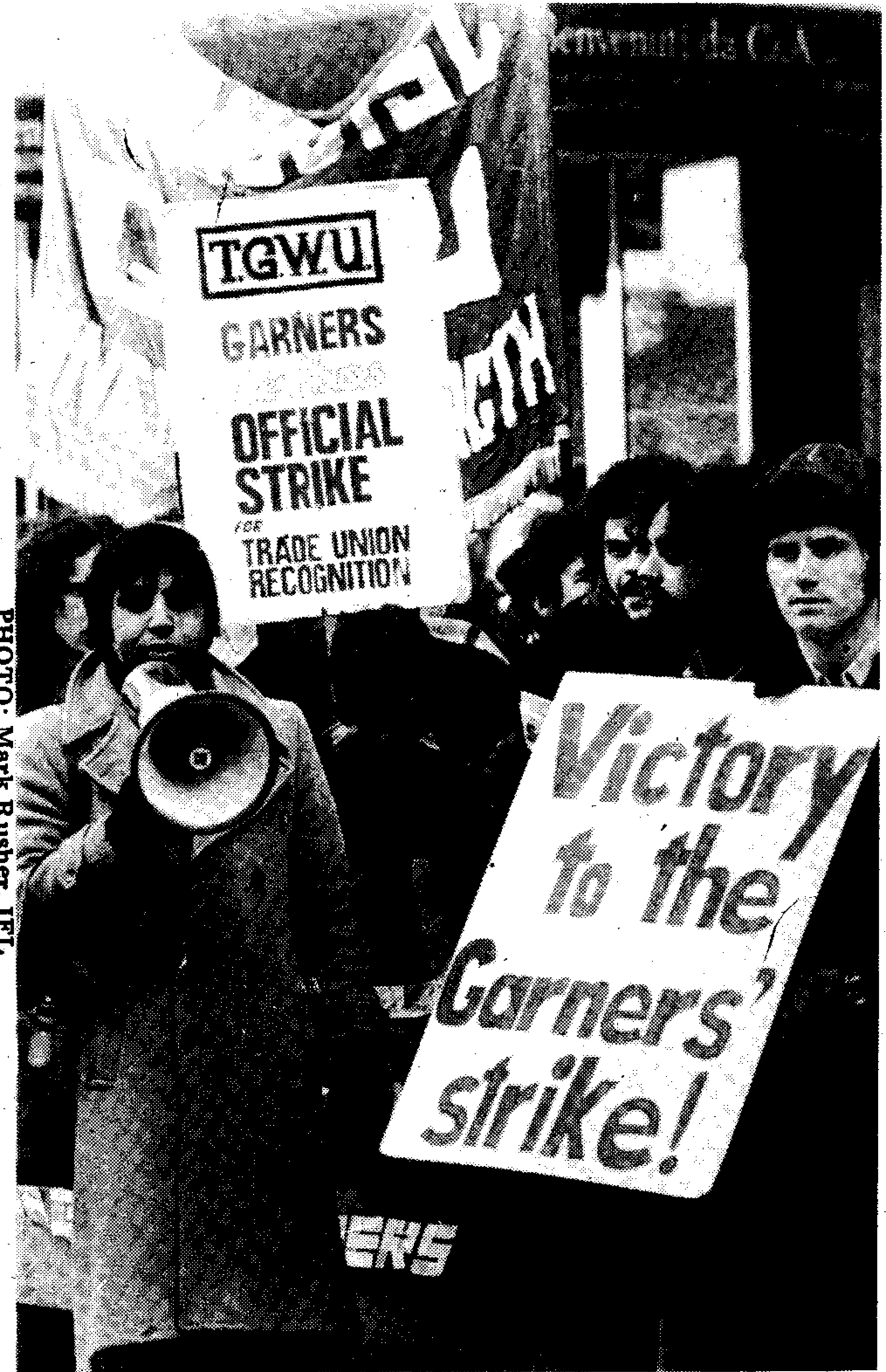
above policy British Leyland drivers and lorries can move between Wales and Cowley all loads including anything normally carried by the RHA firms still in dispute on the clear understanding that RHA firms that settle at £65 for 40 hours be immediately returned to their normal work."

After checking that the letter had been endorsed by the local strike committee in Llanelli, Cowley transport section stewards reluctantly agreed to authorise the movement of the material.

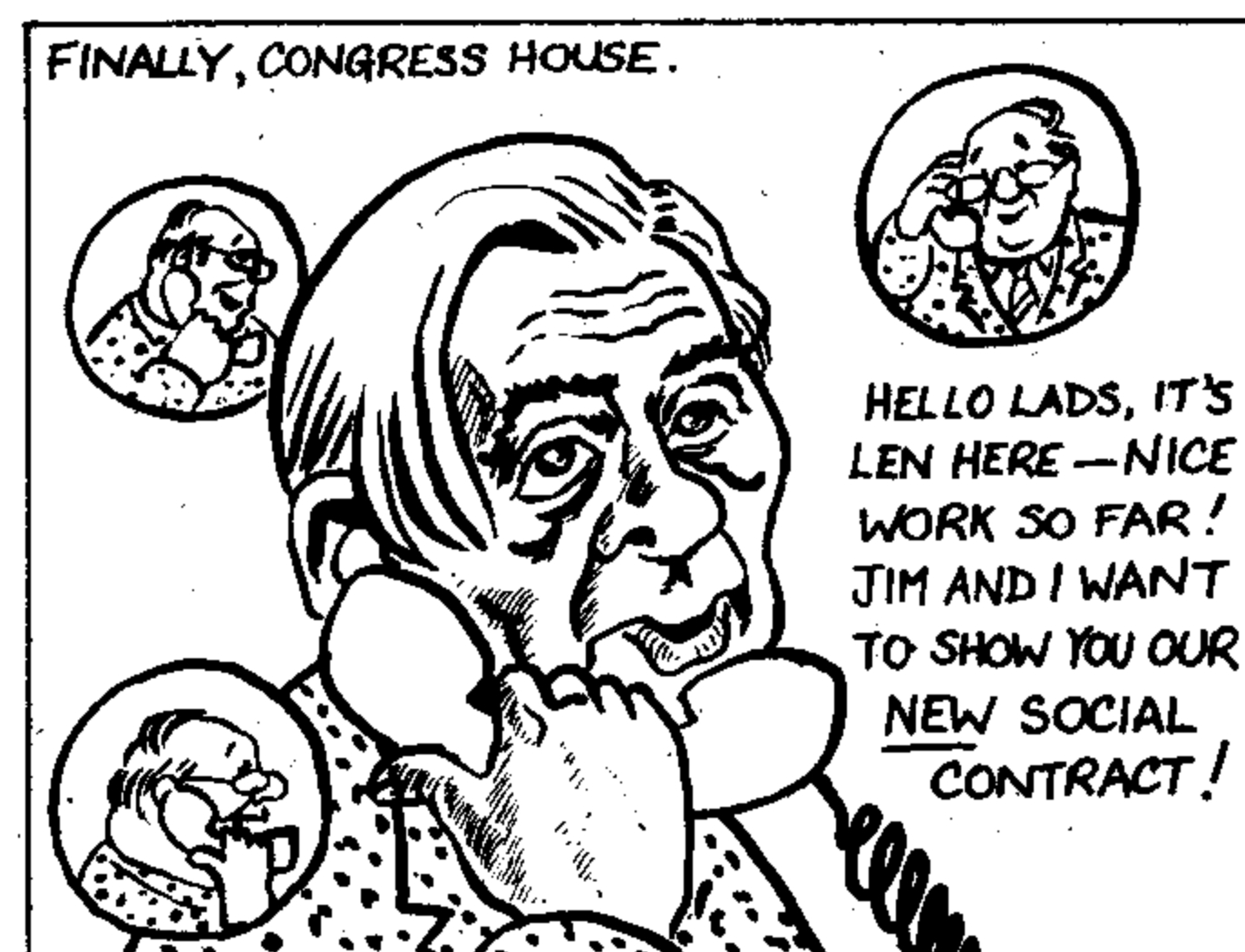
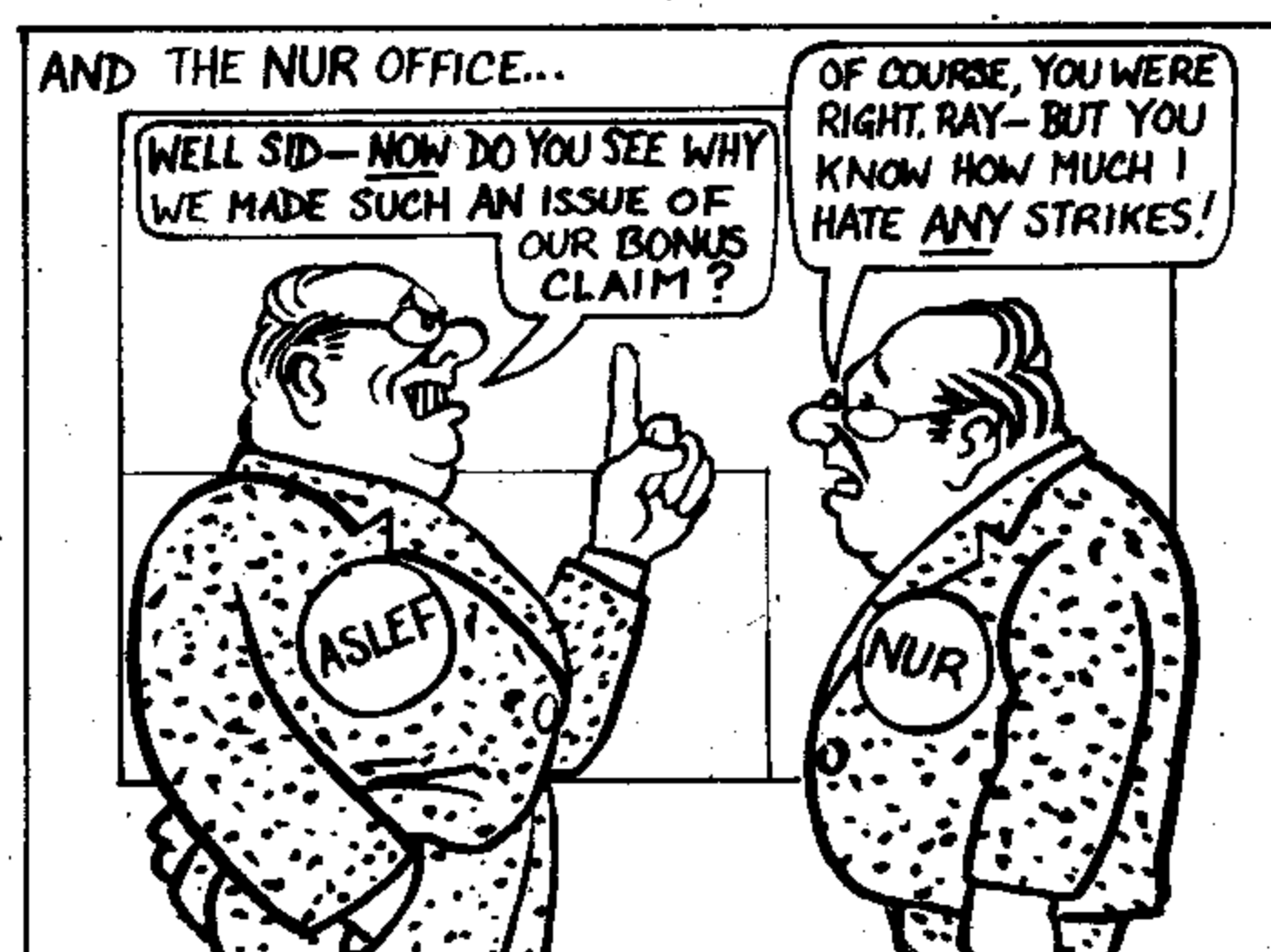
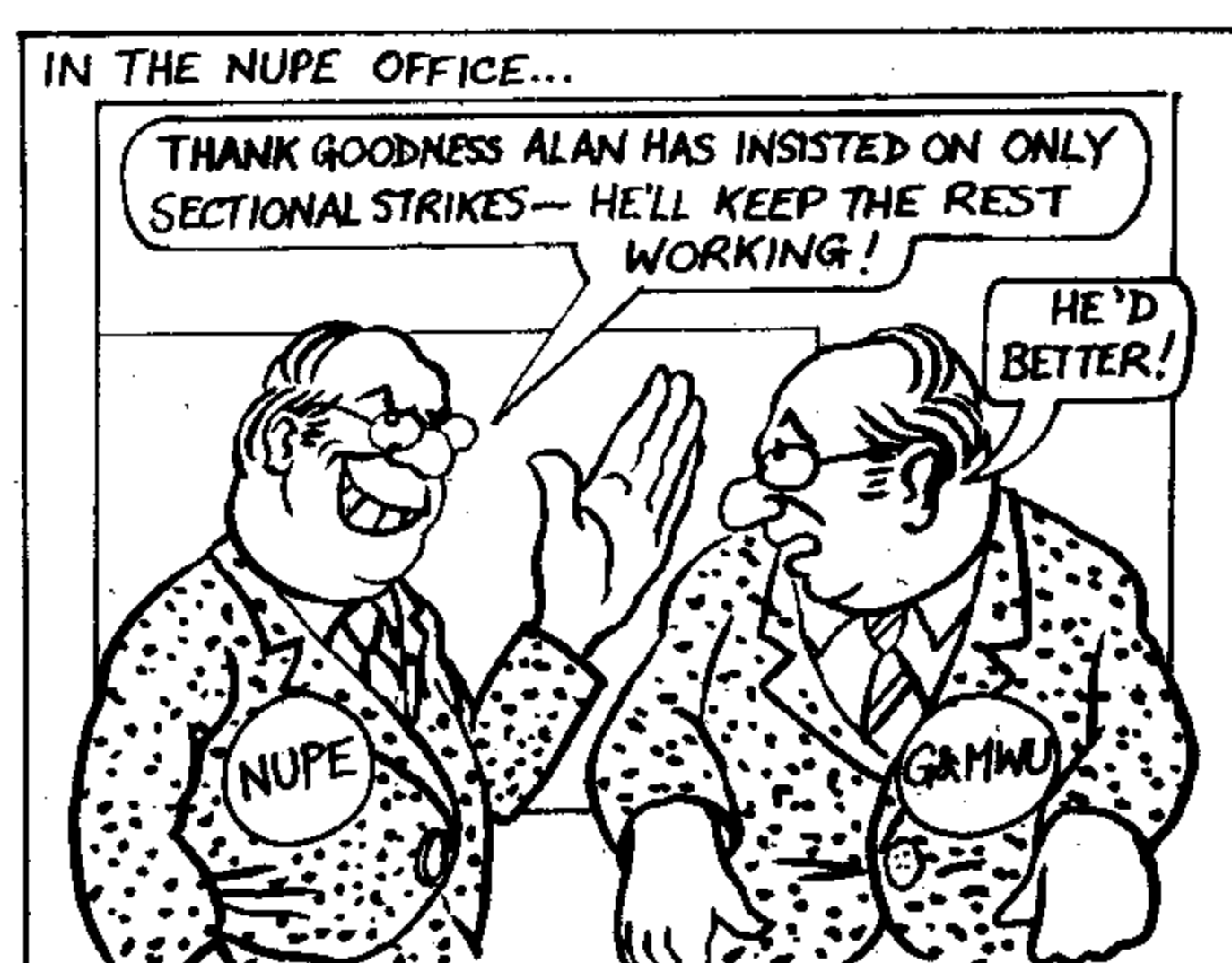
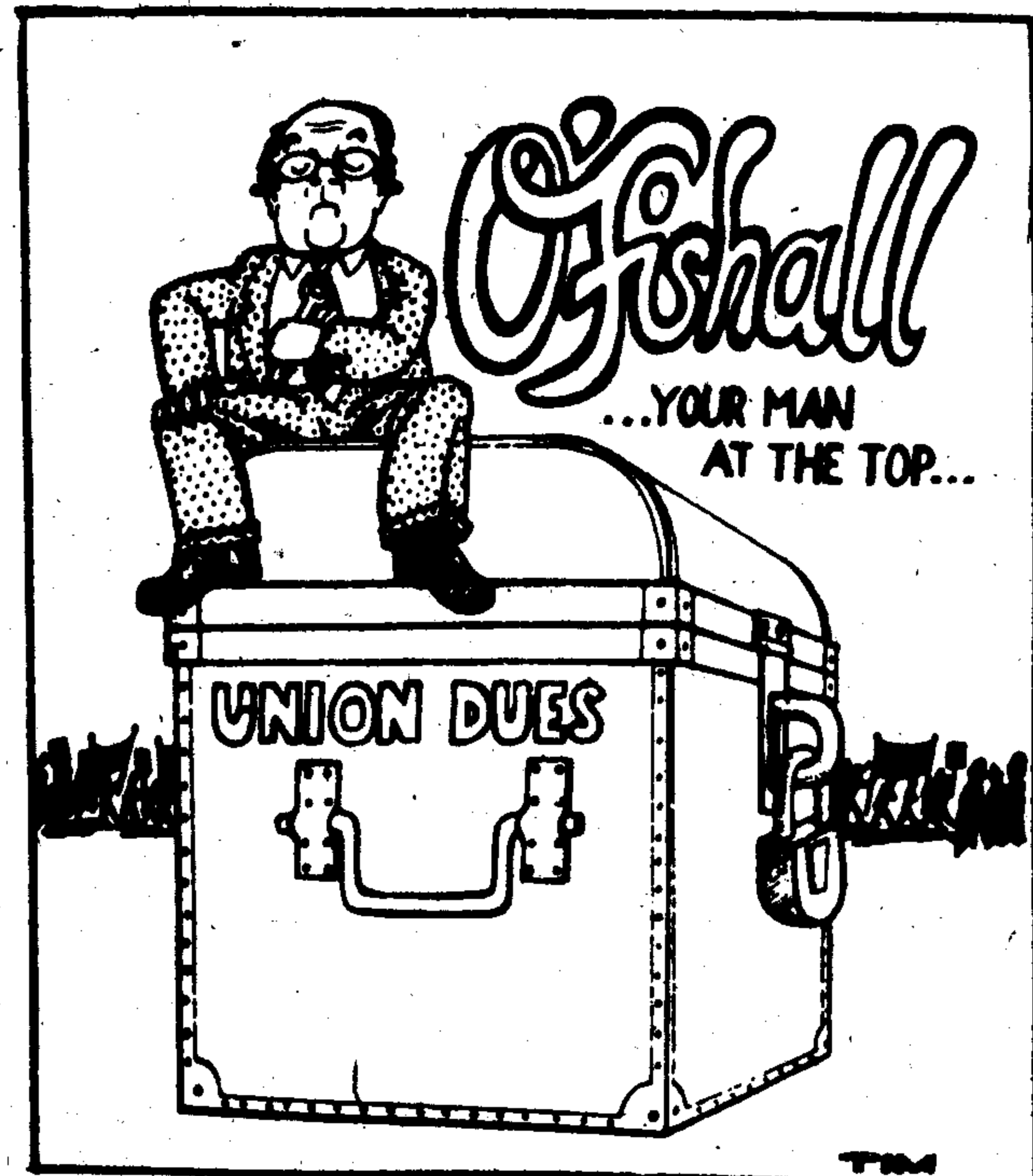
But before the convoy of vehicles reached the Welsh plants, an objection was raised by the local lorry drivers' strike committee in Oxford, who stated that the dispensation had not been cleared with them.

The vehicles turned around and returned to Cowley empty.

As we go to press it seems that the RHA have used the Bristol tribunal as a device to make a new offer of £64 — a settlement of over 20%.



Pickets on the Day of Action



# SOCIALIST PRESS



Police violence in Nottingham

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

## Carter changes horses in Iran crisis

As the Bakhtiar regime in Iran provokes new hostility every day through its repression and massacres, so the US imperialists and the Moscow Stalinists seem to have decided simultaneously that the best hope for counter-revolution in Iran is the "Islamic republic" of the Ayatollah Khomeini.

Carter's envoy (former Attorney-General Ramsay Clark) emerged from an audience with Khomeini "deeply impressed by the depth and nature and purpose of the movement in Iran" and with "the highest hopes that it will achieve social justice".

At the same time Radio Moscow came out in full support of the Ayatollah who was "returning home to lead the people's struggle for a new and independent Iran".

And the Tudeh Party (backed last week by the British Stalinist *Morning Star*) also abjectly declared its support for the Islamic republic, stating that Khomeini is "playing a totally progressive part in the development of Iran".



The Shah with Carter in the US

deal to get himself into power. Khomeini has evidently promised Bakhtiar a good job if he accepts the "Islamic republic", just as Bakhtiar has offered to compromise with Khomeini by resigning as Prime Minister

under the right conditions. Meanwhile the Iranian army continues to fight a losing battle against the mobilised masses who are reported to be carrying an increasing number of arms. The military have given a

number of indications of their support for the Shah-appointed Bakhtiar government and also of their pitiless cruelty—with hundreds shot dead or injured.

But they have still failed to gain much political control over the vast mass movement and in some of the demonstrations soldiers have deserted with their arms.

The events of the week provided alarming new evidence that the central problem of this movement which has demonstrated its vast revolutionary potential is that of leadership.

A state of emergency has been declared in the Army, and the airforce appears rife with mutiny. Airmen at Esfahan who refused to load bombs into planes have been executed; and at an airbase in South East Tehran lorry-loads of airmen have been placed under arrest for refusing the same order.

In some of the demonstrations in Tehran the most fundamentalist Islamic groups turned physically against "Marxists".

A bourgeois newspaper office was ransacked for allegedly using Marxist terminology and on some occasions "Marxist" demonstrators were verbally and physically attacked.

Such attacks have been made much easier by the years of treacherous opportunist support for the Shah by the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies.

"Marxism" and "Communism" have been converted by these Stalinist betrayals into synonyms for opportunism and repression.

That, of course, makes the tasks of an authentic revolutionary (Trotskyist) leadership so much more difficult but at the same time so much more urgent.

But there is no doubt that the conditions for such a leadership to build a strong party exist today in Iran.



## Police attack pickets

The first mass picket at Nottingham—where 28 journalists have been sacked for striking—saw an all out attack by police on 120 NUJ members.

Six NUJ members were arrested—including NUJ Vice President Jake Ecclestone—as van drivers were told by police to drive through the picket lines at high speed.

One policeman was injured after a van hit him, and one van driver was arrested.

As the pickets tried to stop *Nottingham Evening Post* vans leaving the numbers of police grew from 10 to 80.

The journalists lost their jobs for taking part in the strike and (as reported in *Socialist Press* 134) NUJ officials urged members nationally to return to work.

In the two weeks since the end of the strike the NUJ executive has revealed itself utterly bankrupt at producing a strategy to win back their jobs.

In Guildford negotiations won reinstatement for juniors victimised for taking part in the strike but employers are everywhere preparing to go on the offensive.

In Oxford, journalists have been told that the first member who repeats a refusal to cross a picket line will be sacked.

One member was sacked for refusing to cross NUPE picket lines on the first day back at work and was only reinstated after the chapel stopped work and went into mandatory session.

### Massacred

But the horse they are all backing is still in the starting gate, trying to negotiate his return with Bakhtiar and apparently unconcerned by how many of his followers are massacred while he attempts a



Bakhtiar

## DUNLOP: NO CALL TO OCCUPY

Workers in Dunlop's threatened Speke plant last Tuesday endorsed a joint six-point plan of supposed "action" to fight closure, outlined by TGWU General Executive Council chairman Stan Pemberton.

Among the proposals put to a mass meeting were the prevention of goods, materials or plant from leaving the site; the blacking of

all Dunlop goods at the docks; and a demand that local MPs fight to block NEB loans to Dunlop.

The bankruptcy of leadership at Speke was clear.

ASTMS convener Fred Christopher spinelessly argued against any action—such as "strikes"—which might be "provocative", while AUEW convener Arthur Todd suggested that new investment be diverted from Fort Dunlop in Birmingham to the Speke plant.

TGWU convener Charlie Parker echoed management's propaganda, calling for import controls against cheap East European tyres.

But nobody put forward the essential policy if workers are to prevent plant and goods from being removed: only a full-scale factory occupation can do this, and offer any serious prospect of saving the 2,400 threatened jobs at Dunlops.

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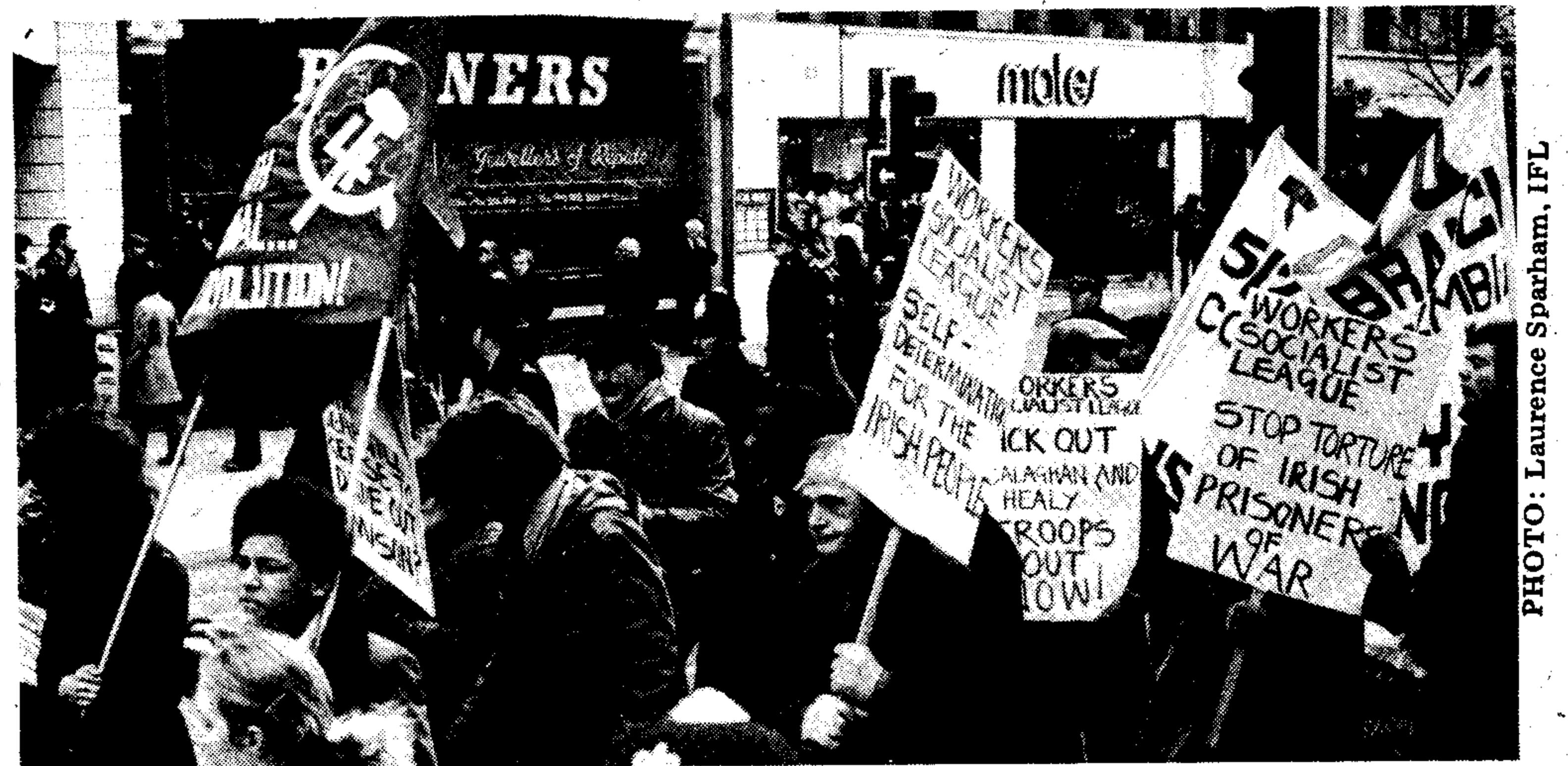
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## FUND

As we went to press we had received a total so far this month of £508.48 leaving us £91.52 to raise in two days.

Our thanks to a subscriber in Worcester who sent in £5. Do we have any other subscribers who can spare a few pounds, perhaps on a regular basis for our monthly fund?

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WSL supporters on the march

PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

## NF attacks march

Seven years after the premeditated murder of 13 unarmed Civil Rights demonstrators by the First Paratroop Regiment in Derry, "Bloody Sunday" was commemorated by a march from Speakers' Corner to a rally on the Embankment last Sunday.

As the marchers assembled they were suddenly attacked by a screaming mob of 50 or so fascists of the National

Front. Retaliation was swift and the fascists decisively dispatched, and the 1200 strong march led by the Provisional Sinn Fein banner wound its way through the West End.

Noticeably absent were the Stalinists of the CPGB and NCP and the Militant Group; and trade union banners were sparse.

The WSL contingent was strident in its demands, focussing on the need for the Yorkshire NUM to remove its sponsored MP,

Butcher Mason—a point later taken up by a Provisional Sinn Fein speaker at the terminal rally.

The police, who earlier had denied the marchers the right to use megaphones, later surprised the marchers by defending them against repeated fascist attacks.

At one point in Oxford Street, an attempted fascist assault was smashed by an unprecedented display of strong arm tactics of the police who arrested about 40 of them.