

# SOCIALIST PRESS



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# MASSSES RESIST KHOMMEINI'S DRIVE TO DICTATORSHIP

**Who will rule Iran? The answer to that historic question, which will affect the whole world, is now being decided in a vast social upheaval.**

Workers are attempting to defend and extend the gains they have made; every kind of opportunist politician trying to gain a political foothold; and the Islamic and bourgeois figures who have placed themselves at the head of the movement are now unleashing a wave of barbaric reaction in the name of "Islamic revolution".

The dominant figure of Islamic reaction remains the Ayatollah Khomeini.

## "Democracy"

He is in effect Head of State and patron of the Bazargan government which he has lambasted for its taste for "democracy and luxury".

Last week Khomeini issued a demagogic political appeal:

**"I only have one or two years to live: I call on you to keep up the struggle to establish a just Islamic republic.**

**We will not use the expression "democratic" which is a western word, we will simply say Islamic republic for we don't accept the western system.**

**... I call on those who favour it to come towards Islam, faith in which has destroyed the old regime.**

**In the referendum I will vote for my part for the Islamic republic."**

Some of the Khomeini Committees (many but not all of which the Ayatollah appears to control), are implementing a violent wave of repression of any forces organising for a 'No' vote in the proposed referendum on March 30.

Meanwhile, although some of these committees still continue to round up and execute members of the Shah's tyranny, their forces\* have become increasingly tied up in a murderous and reactionary campaign of "social purification" and "Islamisation".



Mass upheavals toppled the Shah

This involves savage attacks on women who refuse to accept Khomeini's directive to wear the traditional veil.

Thousands of women, however, in Tehran and Qom (sometimes protected by male left-wing students) have four times in the last five days joined huge demonstrations against the reactionary directive, shouting slogans such as "Down with the Khomeini dictatorship!"

## Violence

The repression is mounting in scope and violence.

Girls have been physically prevented from using sports facilities because of the "indecent" of their dress.

Shops have been prevented from selling contraceptive pills.

But the most savage attacks so far seem to have been reserved for homosexuals and alleged rapists, dozens of whom have been seized and shot dead by the Khomeini Committees.

The Bazargan cabinet, largely composed of capitalist politicians from the National Front, undoubtedly fears that this wave of black reaction and the resistance to it will be a threat to the re-establishment of

a stable capitalist regime.

They have timidly attempted to tone down the reactionary voice of the Islamic rules.

The Health Minister, for instance, has claimed that birth control and Islam are not completely inconsistent with each other.

But at the same time as toning down the socially reactionary tone of the Islamic zealots, they, like Khomeini, have unleashed torrents of abuse against "Marxists", virtually inviting the Islamic masses to exterminate them.

The fact remains that the government still has very little control over the situation.

Bazargan (who last week was on the point of resignation) bitterly complained at the weekend that "this country is ruled by revolutionary committees."

## Workers' committees

He was referring not only to the Khomeini Committees but also to many other armed factory and neighbourhood committees set up either by the "Marxist-Leninist" or Islamic guerrillas or in some cases by groups of workers independent of the main political formations.

These main guerrilla groups have been showing more clearly than ever the treacherous role they are destined to play in Iran.

At the beginning of last week the guerrillas, along with the Stalinist Tudeh party supported a million-strong rally in honour of the former bourgeois Premier Mossadeq who was overthrown by the Shah's CIA-backed coup in 1953.

## Bourgeois democratic

The rally was organised by the recently established National Democratic Front (NDF), led by Mossadeq's grandson Matine Daftary and a small group of bourgeois politicians who have recently left the National Front.

The bourgeois democratic programme of the NDF includes:

**"abolition of discrimination against women; abolition of laws limiting the rights of citizens; rights for the nations of Iran; total abolition of censorship; abolition of economic oppression."**

A split in the Islamic camp seemed to be indicated by the speech at the demonstration



Guerrilla forces hold suspected SAVAK agents: now a similar attack launched against gays

given by Ayatollah Kachani, who, adopting a "progressive" tone, declared that women should wear the veil "not literally but figuratively"!

The two guerrilla groups announced their support for Bazargan's capitalist government—provided it didn't repeat the errors made by Mossadeq in 1953.

## Disintegrated

But what Bazargan is doing, however, is conducting a desperate struggle to recreate a bourgeois state apparatus in circumstances where the army and police have disintegrated and real power has been assumed by various forms of armed committees of the masses.

All of these committees—those that are protecting the gains made by the oppressed masses and those that are being turned into instruments of an intolerant, barbarous and savage religious dictatorship—are a mortal threat to the central government.

So are the mass mobilisations of women, of left wing students and of the oppressed nationalities (in particular the Kurds, who have staged massive armed demonstrations in favour of autonomy).

The Bazargan government of self-proclaimed democrats, still dependent on Khomeini for their power, is fighting a battle to curb and destroy the power and democratic rights of the oppressed masses in Iran.

In this situation the working class and its allies cannot trust the Tudeh party and the "left wing" guerrillas who compromise with the "progressive" sections of the bourgeoisie and the Islamic hierarchy.

## Oppressed

It needs a leadership based on an independent programme for the working class and other oppressed classes and groups; which organisationally and politically defends the gains already secured, and which will fight to extend them in the struggle for a workers' and peasants' government and for

socialism in Iran.

**\*For full democratic rights in Iran!**

**\*Release all political prisoners not linked to the Shah's tyranny!**

**\*End the murders of and attacks on socialists, women, homosexuals!**

**\*For womens' and gay rights!**

**\*For workers', peasants' and soldiers' committees and militias completely independent of Khomeini and the bourgeoisie!**

**\*For national self-determination for the Kurdish, Azerbaijani and Baluchi peoples!**

**\*Down with the Khomeini-Bazargan regime! For free elections to a Constituent Assembly!**

**\*Expropriation of the oil industry and its operation under workers' management!**

**\*Revoke all international debts incurred by the Shah!**

**\*For complete dissolution of the repressive bourgeois state apparatus!**

**\*For trial and punishment by workers', peasants' and soldiers' courts of all agents of the Shah's tyranny!**



Bazargan



# INTERNATIONAL



Italian workers demonstrate

## WORKERS' RESISTANCE SMASHES STALINISTS' SQUALID COMPROMISE

**It now looks almost inevitable that the Italian political parties will have to face a general election more than two years earlier than it is due.**

For 3 years since the June 1976 general election, the Christian Democratic Party (Italy's catholic Tories) under Premier Andreotti have ruled Italy in various degrees of alliance with the Italian Communist Party.

First of all the CP abstained in parliamentary votes of confidence to keep Andreotti's reactionary bourgeois government in power.

Then one year ago it reached closer agreement with the arch-enemies of the working class and, along with the Socialist, Social Democratic and Republican parties became part of the "parliamentary majority" without actually having ministers in the government.

### Embrace

With each tighter squeeze of this unprincipled embrace—with the CP leaders increasingly taking public responsibility for wage cuts, public spending cuts, repression of democratic rights and pro-imperialist foreign policies—sections of the Stalinists' rank and file members began to revolt.

A survey carried out by a political research institute and published last week showed that already one fifth of the CP's rank and file membership (of some 1½ million) are completely opposed to the whole strategic orientation of Enrico Berlinguer and the Stalinist leaders—the so-called "historic compromise" with the capitalist class in the political shape of the Christian Democrats.

And the evidence is beginning to suggest that this fifth of outright opponents of the compromise have a much larger relative weight among the active members of the party—and the majority of members are inactive.

### Major threat

This is a major threat to the Berlinguer leadership. But so are those who have accepted the "historic compromise".

This has always been presented to them by the leadership not as the cringing endorsement of the Christian Democrats by a party with no share in the offices of state—such as has happened over the last 2½ years.

Rather, the "historic compromise" has been justified by its defence as an aggressive policy to force the hated Christian Democrats to concede a share of political power in the state, in particular ministers in the Cabinet and a "fair share" of offices in the bourgeois state bureaucracy and the nationalised industries.

Both sides, therefore, of Berlinguer's almost daily vacillation between insistent

demands for ministers in the government and demagogic declaration of "oppositions" reflect the pressure of the rank and file.

The CP leaders for this reason are now unable to return to the position that existed before they precipitated the present crisis.

The Christian Democrats however are unwilling to admit them into the government.

### Blame

And the opportunist Socialist Party is unwilling to join a government with the Christian Democrats without the CP.

This would concentrate all the blame for the government's savagely anti-working class policies on them.

The situation has all the elements of an impasse which can only result in general elections which are unlikely to solve the government crisis but will simply reflect the lack of options.

Socialist Party President Pertini has continued to search for every possibility of compromise, however minute.

Two weeks ago he asked Republican Party leader Ugo la Malfa to try to form a government.

This was the first time that a non-Christian Democratic politician had been designated Premier since the downfall of Mussolini.

That fact itself is a measure of the extent to which the Italian ruling class has lost any stable parliamentary governmental option either on the various post-war models or of any other feasible kind.

But, within a week of starting, even the subtle and flexible la Malfa had to give up the task of reconciling the Communist rank and file with the Christian Democratic leadership.

Now, in what must surely be a last attempt, President Pertini has returned to Italian capitalism's now very tarnished saviour Giulio Andreotti.

### Coalition

At the end of last week, as a final variation, Pertini tried simultaneously to designate not only a Christian Democratic Prime Minister but also a Republican (la Malfa again) and a Social Democrat deputy premier (Saragat), thus insisting that the only possible new government will have to be a formal coalition.

At first sight this looked like

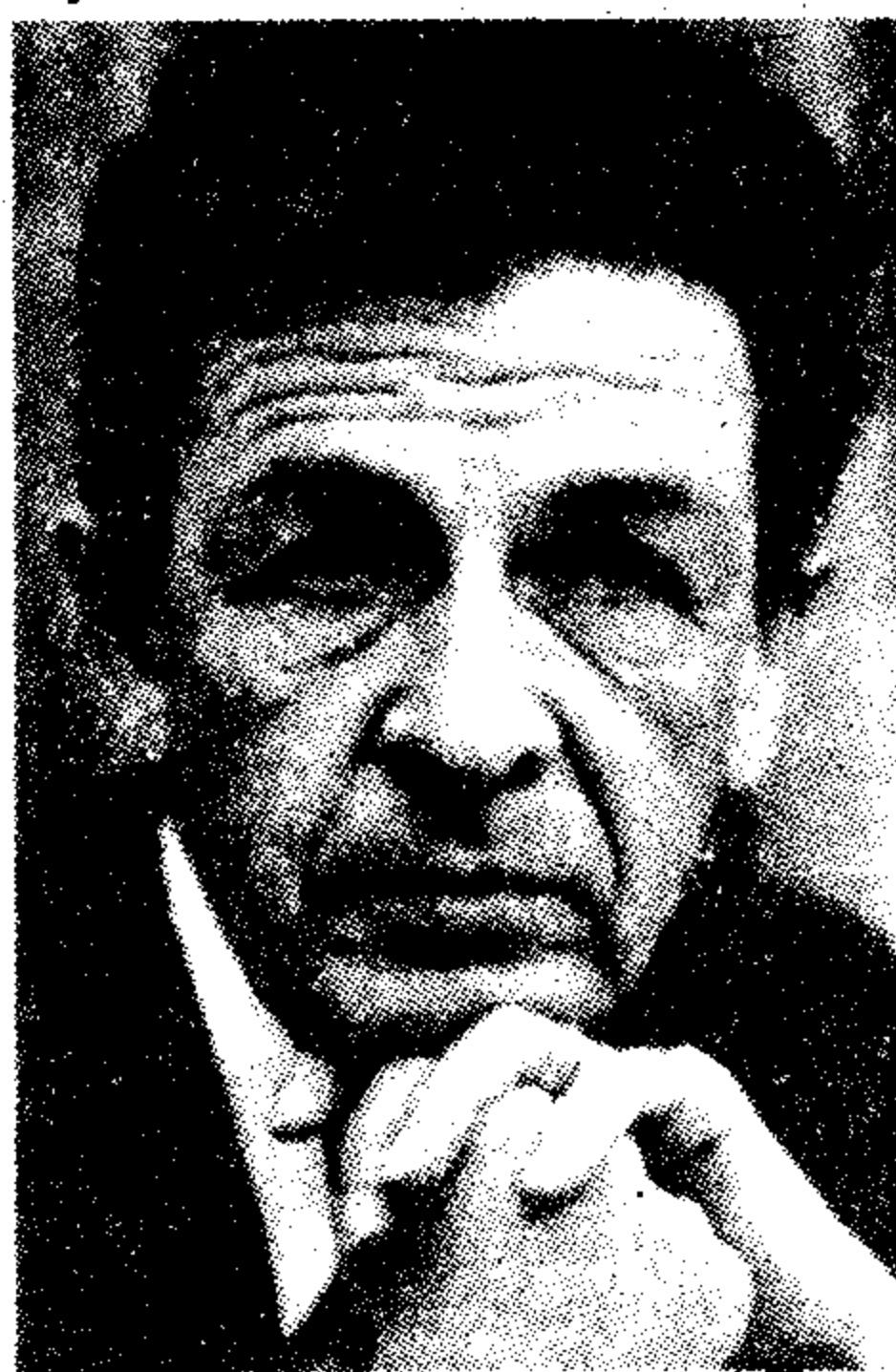
a revival of the centre-left formula of the 1960s.

But the Social Democrats—responding to Socialist Party pressure—would not accept this formula.

They insisted as a condition that "Independents" known to be sympathetic to the CP be included in the Cabinet.

The CP leadership would probably have accepted this as the only alternative to elections.

But, according to our latest information, the Christian Democrats have completely rejected it.



Berlinguer

This makes elections a virtual certainty within the next two or three months.

Only a last minute cave-in by the Stalinist leadership can now avoid them and that doesn't seem probable.

Fundamentally the CP leadership would like to avoid elections or anything else which might bring it to account to its working class base.

But the irony is that if there are to be elections then this for the CP leaders is the best time.

Because they face another call to account in the form of the Fifteenth Congress of the Italian CP due to begin in a week's time.

Of course, all the usual Stalinist techniques have been used for weeks to make sure that any serious debate in the Congress is smothered more or less at birth.

### Obvious anger

Nonetheless the anger of many sections of the rank and file is obvious and the Berlinguer leadership could use an impending election to make demagogic calls for unity and turn the Congress into a public election rally.

But Berlinguer will rant from the platform haunted by

knowledge that the proletarian forces whom it is his political role to hold in check are increasingly hostile to his policies.

He may publicly rejoice in the research institute's discovery that 80% of his members supported the "historic compromise".

He will not, however, be trumpeting the simultaneous discovery that the overwhelming majority of this 80% regard the "historic compromise" as a short-term tactic for the present parliamentary situation and not, as it has become in the hands of the Stalinist leaders a long-term strategy for abject class collaboration.

Well over 70% of the CP members interviewed said they supported either a government of workers' parties, a Communist government or the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This shows how important today in Italy is the slogan for a CP-SP government, the rejection of all deals and compromise with the bourgeois parties and for a programme of socialist policies for such a government of workers' parties to pursue.

Revolutionaries who fight effectively for those demands today will be helping to set off an explosion within Italy's enormous Communist Party.

## ECEVIT FACES ECONOMIC RUIN

**The most recent desperate efforts by Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit to obtain the promised loan from leading imperialist countries seem to have fallen on deaf ears.**

So do his loud complaints about the lack of any concrete steps on the part of the Western countries to help solve the chronic problems of Turkish capitalism.

Ecevit has attacked the pre-conditions for any loans laid down by the West through the OECD. These include the requirement that the Turkish

government impose a fresh round of austerity measures including a large devaluation of the Turkish lira, along lines proposed by the IMF.

The imperialist powers have clearly made up their minds that if the IMF measures are not introduced at once, they will not put in the money needed to prop up Turkish capitalism.

Negotiations on allowing Turkey to draw a third amount under a \$450 million stand-by agreement signed last April have been suspended.

It was the Iranian revolution, which prompted the recent talk of emergency financial aid for Turkey. But should the new Bazargan-Khomeini government succeed in temporarily stabilising the situation and imposing their reactionary rule, there would be a renewed threat of military and fascist attacks on the Turkish working class.

Unlike Iran, where the Shah's military apparatus was isolated from any mass reactionary movement, the imperialists and the Turkish bourgeoisie have successfully sponsored a mass fascist movement.

The right wing opposition to Ecevit is now stepping up its opposition to his government, with both the fascist National Action Party and the right wing Justice Party calling on the Turkish people to overturn the government.

They demand a government that will give free rein to the military in the implementation

of total martial law. They accuse Ecevit of restraining this through the martial law committee on which he, some of his ministers, and a group of generals sit.

Chief of Staff Evren however has spoken up in Ecevit's defence, accusing the right wing opposition of forcing the military to take anti-democratic measures to curb "anarchy".

The right wing's response to this was to say that army leaders "should not be involved in politics".

Meanwhile the fascist terror campaign designed to extend the martial law measures has intensified in areas not already

covered by direct army rule.

Financed by major sections of the Turkish bourgeoisie, the fascists are attempting to create conditions for imposing the kind of measures demanded by the IMF—by smashing the organised strength of the Turkish working class.

In the face of this threat of a historic defeat, the reformist and Stalinist leaders of the Turkish labour movement offer no perspective whatever.

Still peddling the illusion that bourgeois leader Ecevit offers a "progressive", "democratic" alternative to fascism, rather than providing the fascists with the time and scope

to organise, they continue to give him full political support.

And they have made not the slightest move to defend the workers' movement against mounting fascist violence through the establishment of armed workers defence squads.

Yet the Iranian events have shown unmistakably the power and tenacity of the working class.

There must be a complete political break from Ecevit and a struggle for a workers and peasants government in Turkey.

\*Form a united front of workers' organisations in the struggle against fascist gangs: build armed workers militias!



Ecevit

## 'Peace' trip flops

**The precipitous visit of chief imperialist organiser Jimmy Carter to the Middle East this week has been motivated by one thing above all—fear that the Iranian mass movement will spread elsewhere.**

Carter's many minions are desperately organising to hold together his allies in the area.

Zionist-in-chief Begin was first brought to the US and compelled to agree to at

least some withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula and some formula for 'autonomy for the Palestinians'.

These paper concessions on which neither the Palestinians nor anyone else have been consulted were then put to the Egyptian government with the accompaniment of the full panoply of a state visit.

Every effort is being made to bolster the pro-imperialist Sadat regime, which surely looks much less stable now than the Shah did a year ago.

Sadat has already been taking over some of the jobs of the Shah, by sending troops to support the blood-thirsty British puppet Sultan Qabus of Oman.

Carter's visit, whatever the precise outcome, was designed to put pressure on the Zionists to allow Sadat to gain something from the treaty.

Whatever is agreed between the imperialists and their friends the last word will come from the Palestinians and the Egyptian masses.



# SHADOW OF IRAN EVENTS HANGS OVER MID-EAST REGIMES

The ripples from the stone thrown into the pool of world politics by the Iranian Revolution are nowhere more turbulent and intense than in the Arab world.

Every corrupt tinpot potentate in the Arab gulf, every American stooge or agent in the regimes of Saudi Arabia, Egypt or Jordan, every Zionist land-grabber now feels under threat from the great surge forward of the Iranian masses.

Every other tyrant, colonialist and imperialist agent now looks over his shoulder each day, wondering whether he will be the next to go.

PLO leader Yassir Arafat was therefore quite right when during his recent visit to Tehran he spoke of the change in the balance of mid-Eastern politics.

## Palestinian struggle

But of course this balance will only tip decisively in favour of the Palestinian national struggle by the mobilisation of the workers and peasants of the Arab world in the kind of mass struggles that toppled the Shah.

This requires a leadership that will develop policies to fulfil the socialist needs of the oppressed masses.

Despite the fact that the PLO has no such perspective, the collapse of a major imperialist bulwark in the area, the close links now developed between the Iranian bourgeois regime and the PLO leadership and the decision to cut Iranian oil supplies to Israel have combined to drive on President Carter's anxiety to consolidate the fragile 'peace' between US imperialism's chosen stooge regimes, Egypt and Israel (see other pages).

## Kurdistan

But the ripples of the Iranian events are being felt even more sharply in the next most important of the national liberation struggles in the area—the historic battle of the Kurds for self-determination against the regimes of Iraq, Iran, Turkey and the Soviet Union.

The recent death in Washington of Kurdish leader Mustapha Barzani, known to have received support in the past from both the CIA and the Shah, should now make it possible for this struggle to take a new direction.

Ever since 1925 the regimes of Iraq and Iran



PLO leader Arafat takes possession of his new embassy in Tehran

have cooperated to suppress the Kurds, who have also been the victims of fascist attacks in Turkey.

The new vistas opened up by the Iranian revolution will present a new impetus to this struggle and a real challenge to the new regime in Iran.

This will also challenge the bourgeois anti-communists who run the Ba'athist regime in Iraq.

## Saudi allies

These so-called 'lefts' and 'rejectionists' have recently been building bridges for their own protection not only with their erstwhile enemies in Syria, but also with the reactionary regime in Saudi Arabia, with whom they have signed a security agreement.

Despite all the regime's sickeningly hypocritical "anti-imperialist" pretensions, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein has distinguished himself not only by kicking out Ayatollah Khomeini as the mass struggles in Iran began to gather pace, thus declaring clear support for the Shah, but also by arresting and murdering hundreds of Communist Party members and other political opponents.

## "Professional killer"

Such behaviour has prompted even Yassir Arafat to denounce Hussein as "a professional killer who has much in common with Menachem Begin". And the British *Morning Star* has carried repeated articles listing the Iraqi CP members

and supporters jailed or murdered by the regime.

No such reservations have been shown by the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy, however. As the waves of arrests of Iraqi Stalinists reached a peak last December, "professional killer" Hussein with other Iraqi leaders visited Moscow, where they met Brezhnev, Kosygin and Gromyko.

Kosygin declared that the talks had:

**"discussed in detail our further cooperation in the economic and political fields . . . We have done everything so that our relations should strengthen still further."**

Meanwhile, Iraq's British apologists—the so-called 'Trotskyists' of the crisis-



Saudi despot Fahd

wracked Workers Revolutionary Party—continue to depict Hussein's bloody Ba'athist regime as a revolutionary government carrying out a "socialist transformation" of Iraq!

## Smouldering war

The Iraqis' more significant reactionary allies, the Saudi Arabian regime, however, is also facing renewed problems, as the long-smouldering war between its client regime in the desert kingdom of North Yemen and the Soviet-backed 'Marxist' regime in South Yemen has burst into open conflict.

Though the South Yemenis remain a continuing thorn in the side of the maintenance of imperialist control, it is unlikely that they can be defeated by the North Yemenis who have hardly yet managed to establish a stable capitalist nation state, let alone an efficient army.

As we go to press, none of the 'ceasefire' efforts by the Arab bourgeois regimes has been successful in saving the North Yemenis from defeat. Fighting continues unabated.

## Arms and aid

President Carter has come under heavy pressure from the worried Saudi regime to supply unlimited arms and aid to the North Yemenis and to bolster up the comparatively small-scale military forces of Saudi Arabia itself.

While such aid is being made available, it is clear that the US imperialists are doubly reluctant after the Iran fiasco of simply supplying sophisticated weaponry to inherently unstable regimes.

The sight of the Vietnamese airforce sending mixed squadrons of MIGs and captured US F-4 and Phantom jets into action against Chinese troops must also have been a galling one for US imperialist chiefs.

## New fleet

With this in mind there is now talk of the US itself stepping up its police role in the Middle East, with the possibility of establishing a new fleet in the Indian ocean, and the dispatch at once of the aircraft carrier Constellation to offer at least moral support for the beleaguered North Yemenis.

The crucial question as imperialists, bourgeois nationalists and Stalinists jockey for position and struggle each in their own way to shackle and defuse the revolutionary ferment in the Middle East, is for the building of Trotskyist parties in each country as sections of a reconstructed Fourth International.

Only such parties can offer the oppressed masses a clear perspective of independent struggle against dictatorial and feudal repression and for national liberation through socialist revolution.

## Namibia plan near collapse

As the March 15 deadline for the UN ceasefire in Namibia approaches, the entire imperialist plan looks increasingly near collapse.

The past few days have seen a SWAPO attack on a South African camp, South African reprisal raids into Angola and sharp denunciations of specific proposals made by UN Secretary General Waldheim from the South African government and its Namibian ally the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance.

The threat to the plan comes not from SWAPO but from South African determination despite guarantees the plan provides, to go for nothing less than a fully controllable 'friendly' regime.

Once again South Africa raises objections to the imperialist proposals with which it appeared to be going along: once again these are raised after a period used to strengthen its own position.

For the Namibian militant, both inside and outside of SWAPO and Namibia, SWAPO support for the imperialist deal has meant greater bureaucratic control and restriction of guerrilla activity by both the SWAPO leadership and the 'frontline presidents'; greater repression inside Namibia, a greater South African army presence, an escalation of South African military attacks.

The same period has meant the military, financial and organisational strengthening of the DTA and other right-wing forces.

This situation has been brought about by the SWAPO leadership's capitulation to an imperialist plan designed to preserve capitalism in Namibia—a plan described by the Presidential envoy from 'Marxist' Angola as 'a victory for Africa and the world'.

It seems likely that for the SWAPO leadership, the raid on a South African army camp which preceded the South African attacks was an attempt to safeguard their tarnished left credentials and restore some credibility as militants.

Such propagandistic military acts are likely to be stepped up if the South Africans finally declare a rejection of the imperialist plan.

Zig-zags from negotiated capitulation to adventurist militarism in no way represent a break from a political tie to imperialism and its 'solution' of a 'reform' of the capitalist state.

The recent wave of strike action starting from the Rossing mine, together with continued military acts by SWAPO militants are clear signals that there are forces inside and outside SWAPO who are not prepared to give up their struggles in favour of a deal with imperialism.

# COMPLAINTS MAN QUILTS OVER TORTURE COVER-UP

The level of anti-imperialist sentiment among the working class in the occupied six counties of Ireland has continued to rise, with a major demonstration through Newry.

The march of several thousand compared in size with those held during the height of the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s, and shouted anti-British slogans along with denunciations of the sectarian RUC.

RUC men later attempted their revenge when they launched an attack on the dispersing marchers.

But the growing tensions produced by the anti-imperialist struggle continue to create political problems for the British imperialists and

their Loyalist stooges in the RUC.

With half a dozen RUC thugs still due for trial on charges of sectarian murder of Catholic workers, this week has seen a former member of the "Northern Ireland Police Authority Complaints Commission" confirm publicly that there are some 20 "detective savages" at work in the notorious Castlereagh interrogation centre in Belfast.

### "Suicide"

Castlereagh was the scene of the suspicious "suicide" of trace union militant Brian McGuire, and has for years been the subject of extensive dossiers documenting police violence against republican and socialist "suspects".

Amnesty International



An earlier Sinn Fein demonstration on the 'H' Block issue

has joined a world-wide chorus of protest at the beatings and torture carried out inside Castlereagh.

Now Mr Jack Hazard, an independent Protestant councillor from Dungannon has resigned from the Complaints Committee denouncing its failure to investigate complaints of police brutality.

He declared that: "In my opinion the police authority is guilty of a massive cover-up. They simply don't want to know about what's going on."

A police surgeon has told the ITV programme Weekend World that he has seen 150-160 prisoners in Castlereagh who have received injuries that could not be self-inflicted.

Such revelations will not please Labour's 'Minister for Torture' Roy Mason, who has himself been campaigning to justify the continued barbaric ill-treatment of republican prisoners in 'H' Block of the Long Kesh concentration camp.

But for the British labour movement to put an end to

police-military violence in Ireland it is necessary to do far more than embarrass Mason—it is crucial to start an all-out campaign throughout the unions and the Labour Party for his removal from office, along with the entire Callaghan-Healey leadership.

The barbarism of military repression will only be brought to an end when the troops are withdrawn and the Irish people have achieved the basic right to self-determination.

## 5,000 on student march

About 5,000 students from all over the country joined last Friday's grants demonstration called by the NUS.

The Executive had made sure that no workers were able to attend by calling the march on a week-day ensuring that the fight for full, mandatory grants for all students is isolated from the pay struggles in the public sector and other sections of workers.

### Gesture

Nevertheless, the Stalinist-dominated Executive made a token gesture towards the public sector workers by having a NUPE bureaucrat on the platform at the end of the march.

This NUPE Executive Council member gave a demagogic speech about the plight of the low-paid and their 'industrial dispute', but managed to do this without once mentioning the words 'strike' or '£60 and 35 hours'.

NUS President, Trevor Phillips made it clear in his speech that his latest plan for winning the grants claim is to lobby potential Council and Parliament candidates (whether Labour Conservative or Liberal) saying that students will only vote for them when their demands are met!

# NAC MARCH DODGES CUTS ISSUE

The right to abortion under the NHS is under attack. Government spending cuts, hospital closures and cutbacks, and the crisis within this crumbling health service mean that for many women abortion is harder to obtain and a greater ordeal than before.

50% of women still have to pay privately for abortions because of lack of facilities—even though one woman in ten will need an abortion at some point in her life.

Any campaign to extend abortion rights must focus on this scandalous state of

affairs and the attacks on women's rights being carried through by the present Labour government.

But a demonstration with very different emphasis is to be called on March 31 by the National Abortion Campaign as part of an international day of demonstrations on the issue.

### Legislation

Ignoring the cuts, the NAC's leaflet blithely calls for Parliamentary legislation to 'oblige' the NHS to provide sufficient abortion facilities in every area.

Just which of Labour's wretched crew of MPs is supposed to take up this fight—having lifted not a finger to resist any of Healey's cutbacks in the NHS—is not stated.

Nor does the NAC leaflet make any demand whatever on public sector union leaders or the broader labour movement to take any action to stop the attacks on existing abortion rights.

### Parliament

Instead, NAC clearly hopes that, by some vague process, the militant demands of the thousands of women who will doubtless be marching on March 31 will make themselves felt in the Houses of Parliament and miraculously emerge as reforming legislation.

Such a standpoint might simply be regarded as well-intentioned confusion on behalf of the NAC leadership, if it were not such a consistent feature of NAC's history of marches and conferences—and if practical alternative policies were not so stubbornly resisted when raised.

Only a few months ago the NAC trade union delegate conference saw pride of place given to now discredited NUPE leader Alan Fisher. Angry attacks were made from the platform against a Workers Socialist League leaflet that pointed to Fisher's repeated betrayals of struggles against the cuts.

### Inseparable

After a sustained struggle by WSL members an amendment to NAC's so-called 'action proposals' was carried at the conference, declaring that the fight for abortion rights 'is inseparable from the fight to defend and improve the NHS as a whole'.

The leaflet for the March 31 demonstration shows, however, that despite this decision the NAC leadership—an awkward coalition of 'lefts', feminists, and Stalinists—remains determined to restrict the campaign for abortion rights to a toothless 'single issue' protest which in no way exposes the hypocrisy of the Labour

**MARCH! Saturday 31 March, assembling at Hyde Park at 1.30 p.m. to march to rally in Trafalgar Square.**

and trade union leaders. If, as seems likely, this is to be the pattern of the demonstrations on the issue in other countries, then the 'international day of action' will amount to little more than a token gesture of a fight.

In critically supporting the March 31 demonstration Workers Socialist League members and supporters will take up the demand for the abortion fight to be tied at all levels to the struggle for strikes and occupations to prevent hospital closures

and NHS cutbacks threatening existing facilities.

We will be pointing to the practical role of those Labour 'lefts' and union bureaucrats that pose as supporters of NAC's campaigns.

And we will be spelling out the need for a principled, revolutionary leadership to carry through the struggle against women's oppression hand in hand with the struggle for the overthrow of capitalist exploitation.



NAC demonstration in Birmingham

PHOTO: Laurie Sparham, IFL.



Faded 'left' Fisher

PHOTO: Mark Fisher, IFL.

# CHILE EXILE DEPORTED

A campaign is under-way in protest at the deportation of Chilean socialist Nelson Gutierrez, and the levelling of frame-up charges against Chilean refugee Perfecto Benavides.

The two men arrived at Heathrow airport on 6 February—only to be stopped, strip-searched and brow-beaten by immigration officials.

## Accosted

Benavides was allowed to leave first, but half an hour later, while waiting for Gutierrez to be released, he was again accosted by immigration officers, who accused him of stealing a watch—and “found” one in his bag.

He was due to appear in court as this article goes to press.

Meanwhile Gutierrez, a Political Commission member of the Chilean MIR



Pinochet

(Revolutionary Left) was detained for the whole day at the airport, before being denied the right to enter Britain even for long enough to see his nine year old daughter he had arranged to meet.

## Deportee

Instead, despite his eventual agreement to sign a document stating that he had left of his own accord, Gutierrez was sent back to Italy as a deportee—raising the danger that he be forcibly returned to Chile.

In Italy he was met off the plane by police, who held him until an energetic campaign on his behalf secured his release.

This incident follows on the revelations of the racist “virginity tests” carried out on Asian women by Heathrow immigration officers.

Yet these acts of harassment and degradation take place not under a Tory but a supposedly Labour government—one that has publicly declared itself opposed to the bloody Chilean dictatorship.

## Hypocrisy

This, and other examples that reveal the hypocrisy of the Labour government’s stance on Chile and the refusal of the trade union leadership to implement a policy of blacking or take any serious steps in solidarity with the Chilean masses, should be among the topics raised at the Trade Union Conference on Chile called by the Chile Solidarity Campaign at NUR Unity House on Saturday March 24.

# Labour’s costly Euro-charade

The counting will not start until the voting is finished everywhere. The announcements of the results as they emerge from each country will make an exciting Euro-night on television.

Get your swingometer ready now!

This nonsense is part of Labour Weekly’s desperate effort to whip up some interest among Party members in the

Great Yawn elections—the June 7 poll for the impotent and ludicrously extravagant European Parliament.

## Hacks

A seemingly unending line of careerist hacks, fake ‘lefts’ and crypto-Tories have made their way through Labour’s bureaucratic selection procedure in hopes of winning a well-paid Euro-jaunt in June.

All that is lacking is any enthusiasm within the working class for this elaborate and



Labour conference delegates



costly charade. Even Labour Weekly’s special supplement on “The Big Euro MPs Battle” is forced to admit the futility of the Euro Parliament:

“We are voting to elect a Parliament which will analyse and expose what is being done or suggested by the powers that are in the European Community”.

Clearly, then, one ‘power that isn’t’ is the Euro-Parliament! Labour Weekly blunders on:

“The European Parliament is largely consultative. It has little power—and Labour’s policy is not to give it any more.”

So there you have it! Turn out and tramp the streets to fight for the election of a panel of anti-socialist Labour place seekers to a body which nobody believes should have the power to do anything anyway!

But as an added lure—to prove how hard and rewarding is the “work” of a Euro MP, the Labour Weekly supplement gives a rundown of a month’s work of one of them.

## Lavish

In a series of lavish expense-account jaunts, this unnamed but no doubt tireless servant of the working class managed to cover eight meetings of impotent bodies, spread between Rome, Brussels, Bordeaux, Brussels (again), Lille and Luxembourg!

Among the highlights of the Labourite involvement in the February proceedings were a debate initiated by George



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

## Euro-fat cat Jenkins

Cunningham on textile imports, and a question by Lord Kennet on tobacco consumption.

The supplement must confirm the worst fears of many Labour Party activists—that the June elections will be a costly fiasco for the Party, laying the basis for an even more costly fiasco as Callaghan steers the Party into a General Election without even so much as the pretence of a socialist policy.

Only one thing is offered as consolation. With European funds oozing from every pore, the Euro Parliament’s socialist group has coughed up enough cash to pay for the supplement.

Thus their political bankruptcy can be hidden behind a screen of apparent affluence.

# NOT ALL WITCH-HUNTS SUCCEED

London N.19  
20/2/79

Dear comrades,

I read the article in Socialist Press of the 14/2/79 headed ‘No socialism and no democracy’ concerning the history of expulsions and bans in the Labour Party, in which passing reference was made to my own expulsion and re-instatement.

I feel I must take issue with the wholly pessimistic and one-sided slant of this article as I cannot see how

## Letter

the tale of woe told by Jeff Harris can possibly be of any service to socialists fighting inside the Labour Party.

Firstly, it is worth dispelling a few myths about the C.P. application to affiliate.

According to comrade Harris, the C.P. asked to affiliate—but what he omits to say is the manner in which this was done and the

sterile ultra-leftism which characterised the early history of the British C.P.

The actual letter applying to affiliate in 1923 contained the stirring phrase ‘we intend to destroy you’ and went on to point out that the infant C.P. saw itself as trying to replace the Labour Party.

It is small wonder that the right wing were able to use this to deny affiliation and discredit the writers.

## Expulsions

Having been rebuffed the C.P. then stupidly provoked expulsions of its leading militants in various constituencies. What Lenin thought about these antics can be clearly deduced from *Left Wing Communism*.

The C.P. from 1927 onwards gradually swung into supporting the ‘Third Period’ line of Stalin and actually characterised social-democracy as a greater danger than fascism!

Consequently it disavowed all interest in joining the Labour Party—a stupid ultimatum that still to this day characterises British Stalinism.

## Bourgeois parties

Equally, throughout the 1930s the push for a popular front including the openly bourgeois parties was used by the Labour

right to discredit the C.P. and its fellow-travellers.

Ernest Bevin even told one Labour Conference that ‘The only united front we need is the Labour movement, the Labour Party and the unions’.

Formally, this was actually to the left of the line pedalled by the C.P., which saw its ‘unity’ even with progressive Tories—amongst whom it even included Churchill!

Small wonder the movement was thoroughly demoralised and confused—and totally incapable of fighting a principled campaign against the expulsion of left-wingers.

To come up to date, there is really no basis for the profoundly defeatist and sceptical line taken in the article.

## Fought off

Expulsions have been successfully fought off by literally dozens of militants and socialists in the last few years—precisely because the movement is incomparably stronger and more combative than it was either in the 1930s or 1950s.

Much of the left is now more sophisticated and aware of the need to fight tenaciously to remain in the mass party of the working class.

To quote only a few

examples, Ken Coates was expelled in the middle 1960s from the Nottingham Labour Party, only to win a long fight for reinstatement and to poll nearly 100,000 votes when he stood for the National Executive a few years later.

The attempted expulsions in Newham South in 1976 were defeated, as was similar moves in a number of other parties.

## Successful

Even my own case that you quote proves that a successful fight can be waged even in the most difficult circumstances.

The swing to the left inside the Labour Party has led to class traitors like Taverne, Prentice and Mayhew quitting the party—a healthy process if there ever was one. I am fairly confident that the comrades in St. Helens and Oxford recently attacked will also win their appeals.

To sum up, it is important to work seriously and centrally inside—fighting off witch-hunts when they occur without getting hysterical and over-reacting.

Most successful exclusions of left-wingers have occurred because the latter have been devoid of any concept of how to fight and/or have taken a thoroughly sectarian attitude.

The right in the party are



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

## Prentice

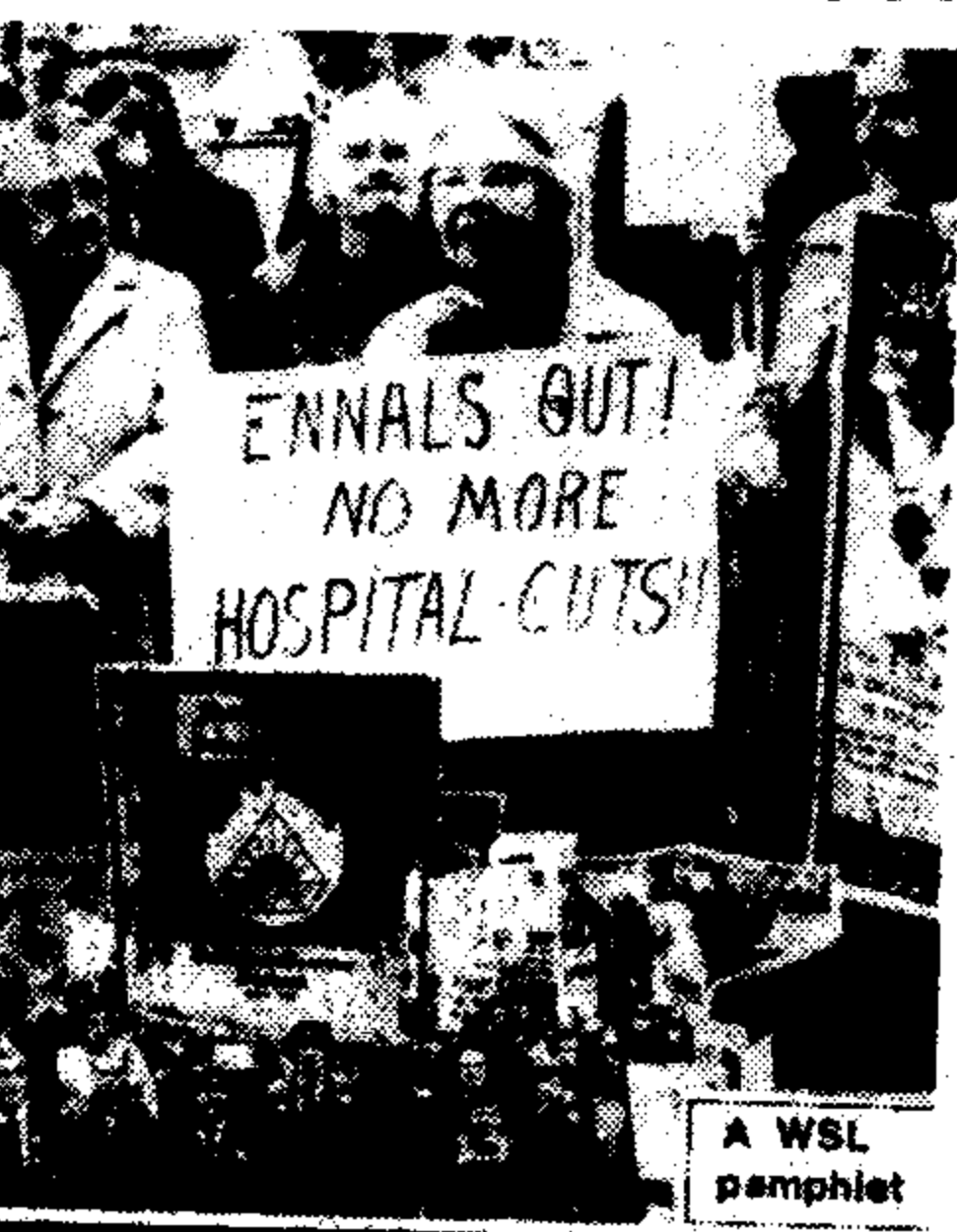
only too happy for Marxists and socialists to isolate themselves: it is imperative that we do not play into their hands.

Trotsky, in his interview with Collins in the late 1930s, correctly stressed the need for revolutionaries in Britain to have a serious attitude to work inside the Labour Party.

Perhaps Socialist Press would like to reprint this sadly neglected interview as part of the discussion on this important topic?

Best wishes,  
Yours fraternally,  
Keith Veness

## THE KEY TO THE CUTS FIGHT!



The booklet which spells out the policies necessary for all-out struggle against the cuts, drawing on practical experience at the EGA and the Oxford Nursery Occupation.

30p plus 10p p&p from the WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill London NW5 1HR.

# WORKERS LEADERS

# SUAREZ ELECTION V

The victory of the Democratic Centre Union (UCD) in the Spanish elections of March 1 was a product not of the strength of the Spanish bourgeoisie, but of the treachery of the main workers' parties over the last three years since the death of Franco.

Both the Socialist Party (PSOE) and the smaller CP have collaborated with Adolfo Suarez and his "reforming" Francoists in imposing what purports to be a democratic constitution.

The working class, however, have seen clearly enough that the Socialist and Communist-backed democratic constitution leaves intact not only the content of some of the organic laws of the Franco dictatorship but also the repressive, hated and still omnipresent armed police and civil guard.

## Untouched

These apparatuses, like Franco's army, have been completely untouched by the Suarez-Gonzales-Carrillo reforms.

As Spain went to the polls, over 100 political prisoners remained in jail without being charged, striking municipal workers were drafted into the army as a strike-breaking measure, and in other disputes pickets were being arrested.

When this is the kind of state that Gonzales and Carrillo and the other PSOE and CP leaders have helped to create, it was little wonder that many workers stayed at home rather than voting for leaders whose policies seemed so little different from those of the former officials of the Franco dictatorship.

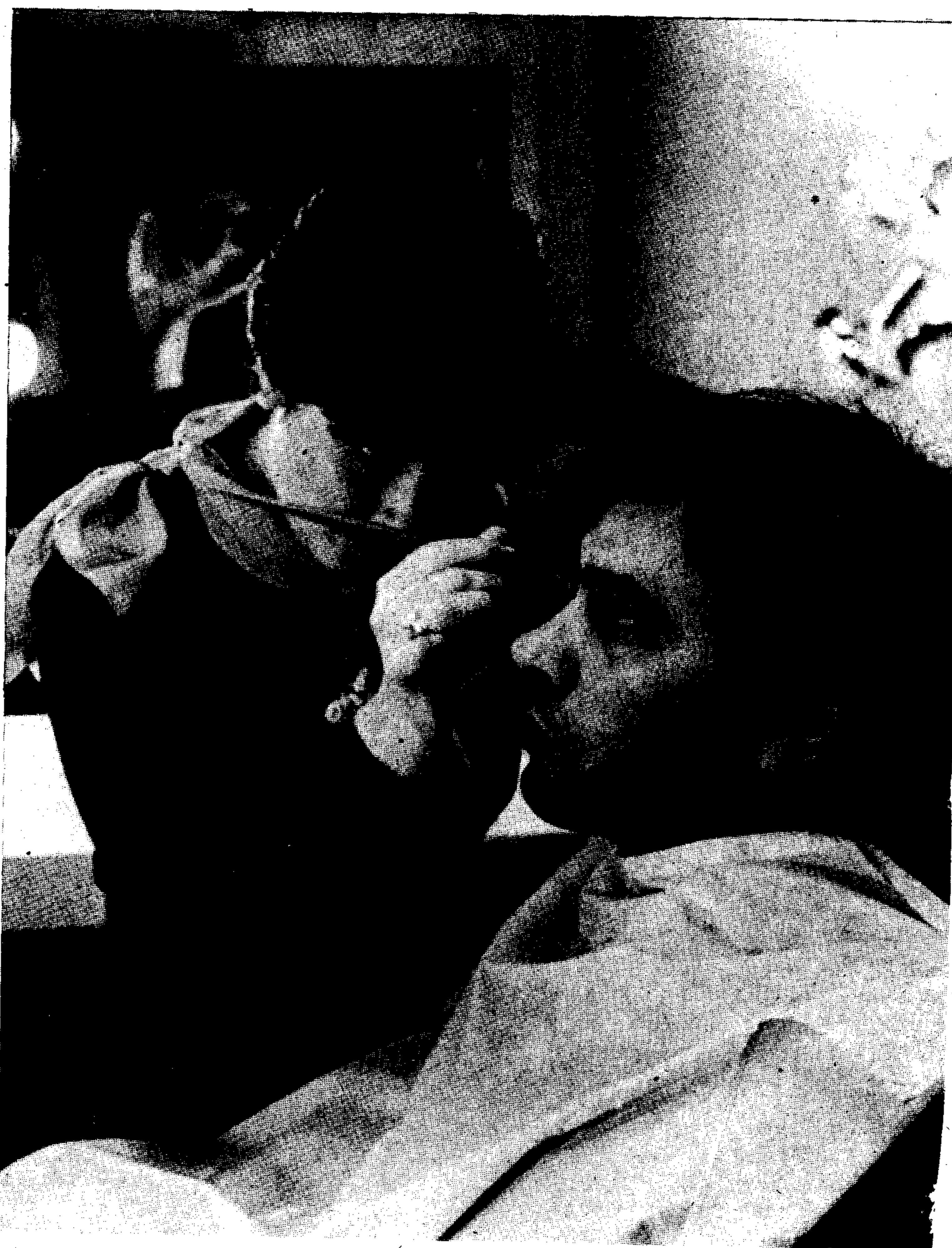
The poll in the March 1 elections was 68%—somewhat higher than in the constitutional referendum of last Dec. 15, but considerably below the first post-Franco elections in June 1977.

## Abstentions

And the high level of abstentions this time was not the result of the influence of the Basque nationalists who (left and right) participated in these elections, but rather of some political disillusion in the country as a whole especially among the working class.

Workers have observed not only the PSOE and CP leadership helping to strengthen the "liberalised" regime still run in its essentials by Francoists, but also the persistent role of the reformist and Stalinist party and trade union bureaucrats in sabotaging struggles for higher wages, better conditions and national and other rights.

In addition they had just



Gonzalez—putting on a left face for the electorate?

been treated to an election campaign in which both the PSOE and CP leaderships strenuously refused to fight in the name of the independent interests of the working class.

Both workers' parties ran a campaign not for the right to form a government themselves but for the right to join a government of the main bourgeois political formation, the UCD.

In the case of the CP, this position was explicit.

Throughout the campaign CP leader Carrillo said that the country needed a "government of national unity" including all the "democratic forces".

## Juggler

This category in Carrillo's view means the CP, the PSOE, the UCD and (depending on his mood) the ever further right Democratic Coalition led by the Francoist butcher Manuel Fraga.

Carrillo, however, is a skilful juggler with words.

He managed to combine the call for this grand class collaborationist coalition with a denunciation of the PSOE for preparing to enter a coalition with the UCD

excluding the CP and for being, therefore, "no different from the UCD".

Whether or not this line of argument had any effect, the CP did increase its parliamentary strength from 20 to 23 and its share of the vote by 2%.

## Friendly

The PSOE's campaign was based first on scornfully ignoring the CP and second on more or less friendly criticism of the UCD, preparing the way for entry into a class collaborationist coalition—which its leaders were careful never to mention.

They called for a "firm government", but not in any way for a socialist government, let alone a workers' government.

The unspoken condition for entry into coalition with the UCD, however, was that the socialists should make striking gains in the elections.

## Collaborationist

Gonzalez and the collaborationist leaders could then argue that the UCD had been forced into coalition by the strength of the PSOE.

Gonzalez not surprisingly greeted the electoral setback with a combination of throwing the blame elsewhere and a peevish, demagogic display of opposition to the CDU government.

The PSOE, he said, did not fulfil electoral expectations because of the "scare tactics" used by the UCD, and also because the PSOE in the last election had already reached the "ceiling of its votes in the present situation!"

Gonzalez publicly refused to congratulate Suarez on his victory on the grounds that he "did not congratulate liars".

"Let them govern alone", he declared two days after the election, "the PSOE will pass into a critical and not destructive opposition".

Though this does not automatically rule out the early establishment of a coalition government, it makes it much less likely than it seemed the day before the election.

It is almost certain that after their election setback the PSOE leaders will for now be of greater use to the bourgeoisie in opposition than in government.

Only though "opposition" to the UCD can Gonzalez win back some of his lost prestige and restore his control both within the

They can see that this will increase pressure on the CP leaders from their own working class base to oppose the reactionary policies of the government.

After expressing satisfaction at the CP's modest electoral gains, Stalinist leader Santiago Carrillo insisted after the elections on his demand for a coalition government with the UCD—explicitly ruling out any alliance of workers' parties.

He recognised that the time was "not yet ripe" for CP participation in the government though that remains his aim.

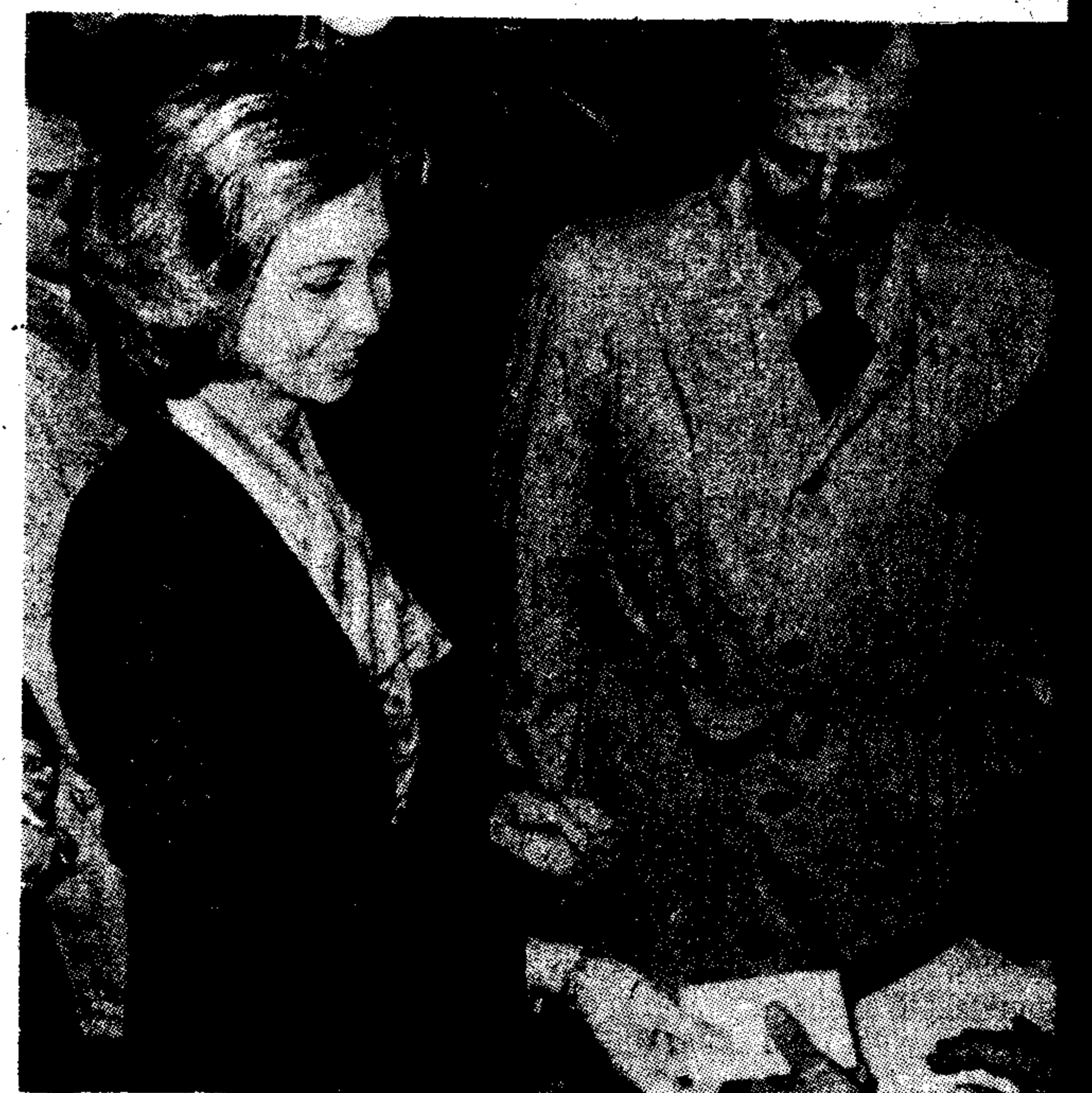
## Must govern

He insists that the PSOE must now govern in conjunction with the UCD.

"I believe," he said at a press conference last week, "that the PSOE will come off a good deal worse if it's not in the Government than if it enters it."

"We are still in a period of transition. The approval of the Constitution doesn't mean total political stability, and there are still some themes to be developed especially that of the regional autonomies which means the game of alternatives in political power is not permitted."

"In today's situation in the country it would not



King Juan Carlos and

party and in the workers' movement as a whole.

Such "opposition", however, will clearly not touch on any policies of the UCD but only, as in the past, trivial questions of methods and style.

Through the campaign Gonzalez supported wage limits, called for support for the viciously repressive Forces of Public Order and rejected demands for self-determination or even a serious degree of autonomy in the Basque country.

The CP leaders, however, are strongly opposed to any form of PSOE "opposition" to the bourgeoisie, however fraudulent.

have been opportune to move towards a government of the left."

## Treacherous

A clearer statement of the treacherous policies of the CP would scarcely be possible.

Carrillo alludes to what every worker militant in Spain today is well aware of—the fact that basic democratic rights are very far from having been gained in Spain.

In fact, serious attempts have been made by sections of the Francoist military within the last six months to stage a coup d'etat.

# PAVED WAY FOR NEW

# ICTORY

## PSOE makes call for 'firm government'

Many bitter lessons of history prove that the only possible route towards establishing democratic rights and of fighting fascism is through the independent struggle of the working class.

This requires the establishment of a united front of workers' organisations and the rejection of all forms of collaboration with the bourgeoisie and its parties.

As the founding programme of the Fourth International (the Transitional Programme) makes clear:

"A merciless exposure of the theory and practice of the 'People's Front' is therefore the first condition for a revolutionary struggle against fascism..."

Stalinist Santiago Carrillo and the rest of the Spanish CP leadership move in precisely the opposite direction.

### Inopportune

In the name of fighting the danger of fascism and of winning "democracy", Carrillo brands the independent struggles of the working class "inopportune".

In their place, he seeks to tie the working class to the "reforming" Francoists who have instituted a policy which at every turn restricts

They serve rather to restrict democratic rights and weaken the working class in the face of the offensive of the Spanish capitalist class and the threat of renewed fascist reaction.

In face of the treacherous policies of the PSOE and CP, was there an alternative party in Spain which represented the need for unity and independence of the working class?

### Candidates

In the third article next week, we will attempt to answer this question by examining a number of campaigns.

We will analyse the positions of the Maoist parties, of the 'left' and 'socialist' nationalists in Euskadi, and of two organisations claiming adherence to Trotskyism.

The Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), Spanish section of the USFI, presented its own candidates in 35 provinces.

The smaller Communist League (LC) presented a list of candidates in five provinces under the title "Workers' Alliance", but withdrew before the voting, calling for a critical vote to the main workers' parties in most of Spain and in Euskadi to the LCR.

An examination of these campaigns can point to some important lessons in the fight for a principled intervention in bourgeois elections and for the method of the Trotskyist Transitional Programme.

### Extracts from the electoral programme of the PSOE:

Freedom is now in your hands.

The enormous hopes which the Spanish people had deposited in the socialists in the June 15, 1977 elections were reflected in the fact that one in three voters considered us their representatives.

We proposed, in the first point of our programme, the making of a Constitution which recognises and guarantees to all Spaniards their rights and freedoms through democratic and civilised forms of government.

The Constitution was approved by the Cortes, backed by the people and sanctioned by the King.

Meanwhile we socialists have worked to make other points of our programme a reality, strengthening the nascent democratic system and carrying on the work of controlling the government from a constructive opposition.

Proof of that are the laws we have proposed in the Cortes—more than all the other Parliamentary groups put together. (...)

We carried out constant work perfecting the laws presented by the government.

### Unity

Fulfilling the desire for unity felt by all, we have carried out the integration of diverse socialist currents into the mainstream of the PSOE so as to be able to confront the tasks of government from the strength of our unity, the power of the youth, the guarantee of honesty, the force of our implantation in the whole of Spain and the experience of the 100 years of our history. A firm government.

But the peaceful path towards democracy has been criminally obstructed by terrorism and the nostalgias of yesterday which use it as a pretext to offer us magic

formulas of salvation which try again to rob the people of the rights and freedoms so laboriously gained.

Also it makes more difficult the reversal of the economic crisis which in Spain has worsened as a result of the ineffectiveness of governments which haven't wanted to or haven't known how to take the precise measures in time.

In broad sections of our society there is felt the need for a new government which is able to drag the country out of stagnation.

### Rights

A government which carries out a firm policy of defence of the rights and freedoms recognised in the Constitution, developing it in a progressive way.

A government which puts into operation the regional autonomies from the perspective of solidarity and the capacity for self-government.

A government which when it gives an undertaking fulfills what it has undertaken in all its details.

### Invest

A government which undertakes a clear position of economic cleansing which puts an end to the discouragement of the entrepreneurs by stimulating them to invest and puts an end to the bad state of the workers by encouraging them to work more and better.

A government possessing authority to resolve tensions in some sections of the Armed Forces and Security Forces.

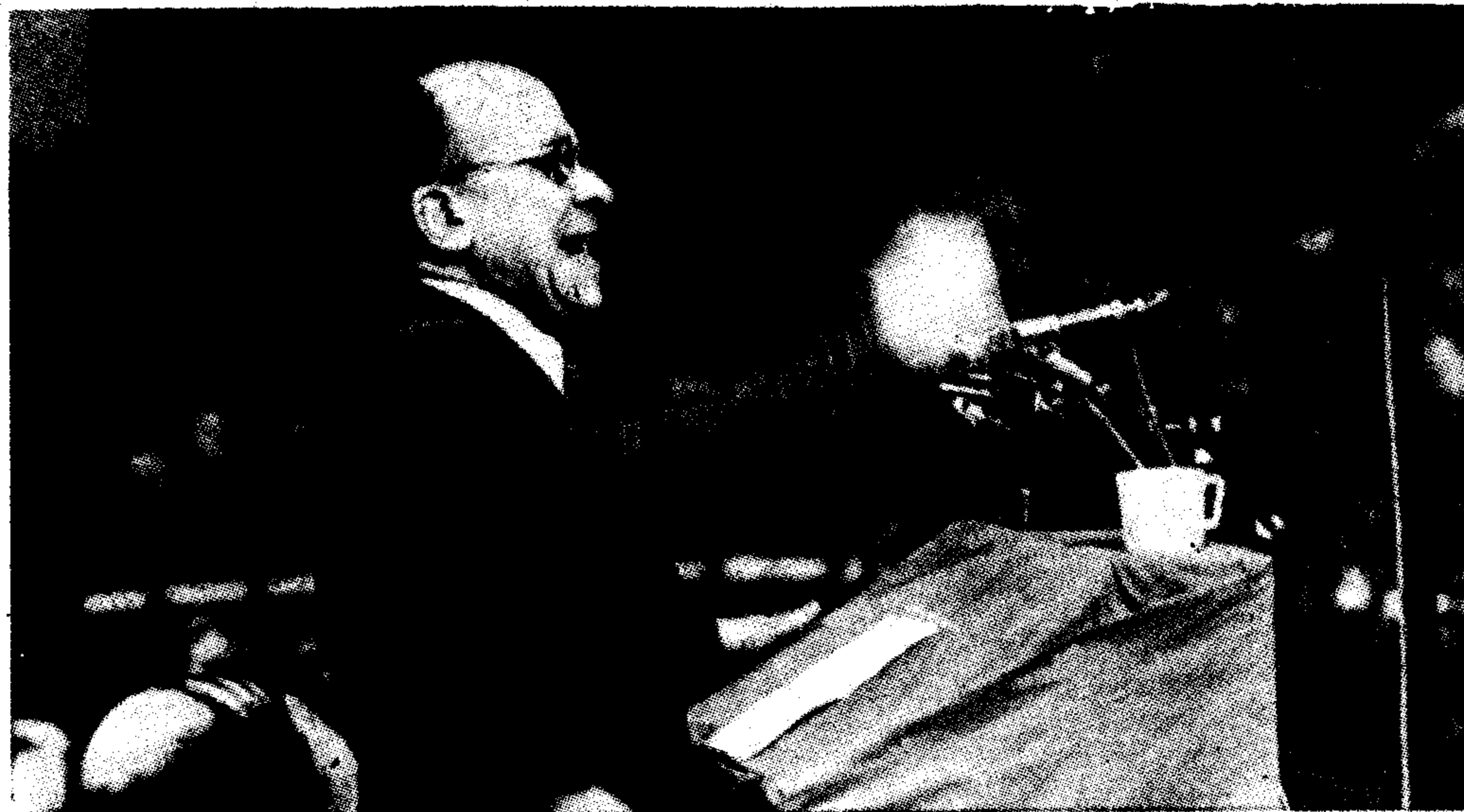
A government able to create an atmosphere of understanding and solidarity with the Basque country and which uses imagination, knowledge and decision for an effective anti-terrorist struggle.

### New jobs

A government which creates new jobs through investment in infrastructure, housing and collective works which improve the conditions of life in towns and city suburbs, which are at present more geared to create juvenile delinquency than for community life.

Which gives sufficient benefit to those who cannot find work, which ends the corruption and inefficiency of the Social Security system and is ready to provide humanised services and sufficient pensions. (...)

We need a government finally which makes Spain a happy, just, safe, prosperous and free country, worthy of the respect and recognition which its history, its culture and its people deserve.



Carrillo

# Stalinists seek 'cordial relations' with army

### Extracts from the Spanish CP election programme.

The role of the CP has been crucial in bringing about the democratic constitution.

We were not in favour of having general elections now.

The urgent thing was to confront the most pressing political and economic problems—unemployment, the crisis, terrorism, autonomies and not delaying the municipal elections. (...)

With your vote on March 1 give the elections a new meaning: Spain needs a policy of democratic concentration and a majority government of a progressive kind.

To get that the decisive thing is an increase in Communist votes and deputies.

Therefore, the useful vote is the Communist vote which will influence the democratic forces as a whole to take into account the interests of the workers and of the progress of the whole people.

(...)  
Reform of the State.

Once the constitution is in force it will be the priority task of the new Cortes to develop its content, beginning with the reform of the State, so that it is of the service of the people. Among the primary questions here are:

\*Laws of Public Function which increase the responsibility and effectiveness of the Administration.

\*An organic law on the Armed Forces to accentuate the unity of the people with their army, and to defend the national territory and the constitutional order.

\*A new relationship of mutual and cordial confidence between the people and the forces of public order. The Struggle against terrorism.

Terrorism is the mortal enemy of the workers and of democratic advance.

Today in Spain terrorism is essentially that of ETA. To fight against it and eradicate it, the

mobilisation of the workers and citizens is essential.

Also it is just as fundamental to eliminate all kinds of social support or arguments which provide a supposed justification for terrorism.

In this sense what is urgent are solutions to the problems of the autonomies, unemployment, youth and all kinds of social marginalisation. (...)

For a progressive alternative in face of the economic and social crisis.

For a new model of development. The grave economic crisis, and its evolution during 1978, have proved that at this time the central problem is unemployment.

A problem which, along with inflation, cannot be resolved without a true global alternative, which emphasises an important expansion of public works (housing, education, health, public transport), unemployment, insurance and worthwhile pensions.

Against the position of the right and the social democrats, who think that a system whose own internal logic leads to 10% of the workers permanently without jobs is justifiable, the CP proposes the definition of new functions and tasks for the public sector, and the creation of non-discriminatory conditions for small and medium enterprise. (...)

For a foreign policy of peace and non-alignment.

A democratic Spain needs a policy of peace, coexistence, friendship and cooperation with all countries. (...)

A programme to consolidate and develop democracy.

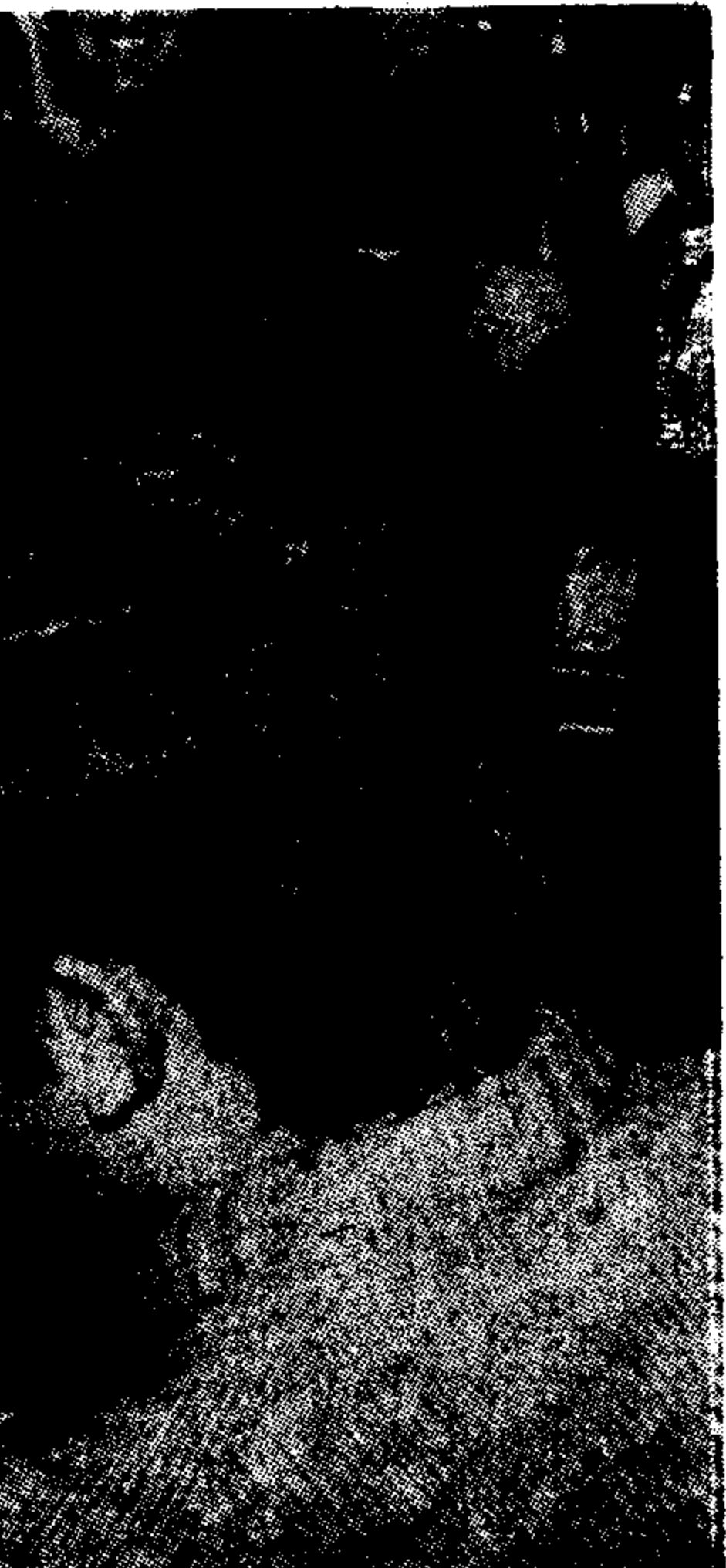
We Communists will fight in the Cortes and among the masses for this programme.

We offer it for discussion among the whole people and among the other democratic and progressive forces elected to the future Parliament.

After such a discussion a



Government could be formed with a parliamentary majority and with true popular support, capable of successfully confronting the next four years of democratic advance and consolidation.



Women Sofia casting their votes

even the most elementary democratic rights—such as the right to strike and organise freely, the right to free expression, the rights of women (abortion and contraception) and of homosexuals, or the rights to national self-determination for the Basques, Catalans and other nationalities of Spain.

### Shameless

Carrillo's politics of shameless cooperation with the bourgeoisie and of betrayal of one workers' struggle after another do not and cannot gain democratic rights as he claims.

# GUEST REVIEW

# ART FROM THE OUTSIDE

In 1932 in Copenhagen, Leon Trotsky delivered what was to be his last public speech.

Reflecting on the future of humanity he had this to say:

"It is true that humanity has more than once brought forth giants of thought and action who tower over their contemporaries like summits in a range of mountains.

The human race has a right to be proud of its Aristotle, Shakespeare, Darwin, Beethoven, Goethe, Marx, Edison and Lenin. But why are they so rare?

Above all because almost without exception they came out of the upper and middle classes. Apart from rare exceptions, the sparks of genius in the suppressed depths of the people are choked before they can burst into flame.

But also because the process of creating, developing and educating a human being have been and remain essentially a matter of chance, not subjected to consciousness and will."

The exhibition

'Outsiders' is a rich collection of these sparks of genius from the suppressed depths of the people demonstrating brilliantly how human creative power can survive even the most extreme forms of alienation.

## Not a school

The 'Outsiders' are not a school or movement of art in any usual sense. The work shown here has been assembled from the artists' private collections, from mental hospitals and institutions and even from commercial galleries.

The organisers of the exhibition have set themselves the task of presenting a collection of work by creators immune or resistant to the surrounding culture.

The exhibition itself is remarkable. Over 40 artists are represented by paintings, drawings, sculptures, models and assemblages of astonishing inventiveness and originality. On this ground alone it can be unreservedly recommended.

But there is much more to interest us than just the

display of novel works. As revolutionaries we will be concerned with the relationships between the content of the work and the social context in which it is produced.

'Outside' is not an absolute value but rather one pole on a social scale.

The purest example of alienated creativity in the exhibition are probably the pencil drawings of the artist 'Max' who has spent most of his life in psychiatric care.

Many of the artists have spent at least some of their time in mental institutions but others maintain a normal working life, devoting their non-working hours to their art.

## Alienation

The degree of social alienation to be found in their ways of working ranges all the way from the totally formalised abstract paintings of Augustin Lesage to the explicit social criticism in the tableaux of Francis Marshall.

It is interesting to consider the extent to which the art works on show reflect the stress of the proletarian condition.

In the cases of several of the artists the question cannot be easily answered.

The paintings and drawings that we see are representations of the artists' hallucinations or visions, whose origins we can only guess at.

## Compulsion

This is certainly true of many of the institutionalised artists, but also of others who become subject to some compulsion to take up art work.

Augustin Lesage, for

Ernie Stubbins reviews the exhibition 'Outsiders' on show at the Hayward Gallery, South Bank, London.

example, was a coal miner until one day while working at the coal face he heard a voice telling him to become an artist. His paintings were so rigorously abstract and formalised as to defy all interpretation.

In other cases we can begin to glimpse the social and economic basis for the disturbance of the artist's life.

## Stolen

Heinrich Anton Muller for example was a small farmer who invented a machine for pruning grapevines. His idea was stolen and exploited and his reaction to this blow led him eventually to a psychiatric hospital.

There he went through a phase of producing complicated but useless machines before turning to the remarkable sequence of drawings and paintings by which he is represented in the exhibition.

Some of the work can be interpreted as no more than the display of psychopathological symptoms.

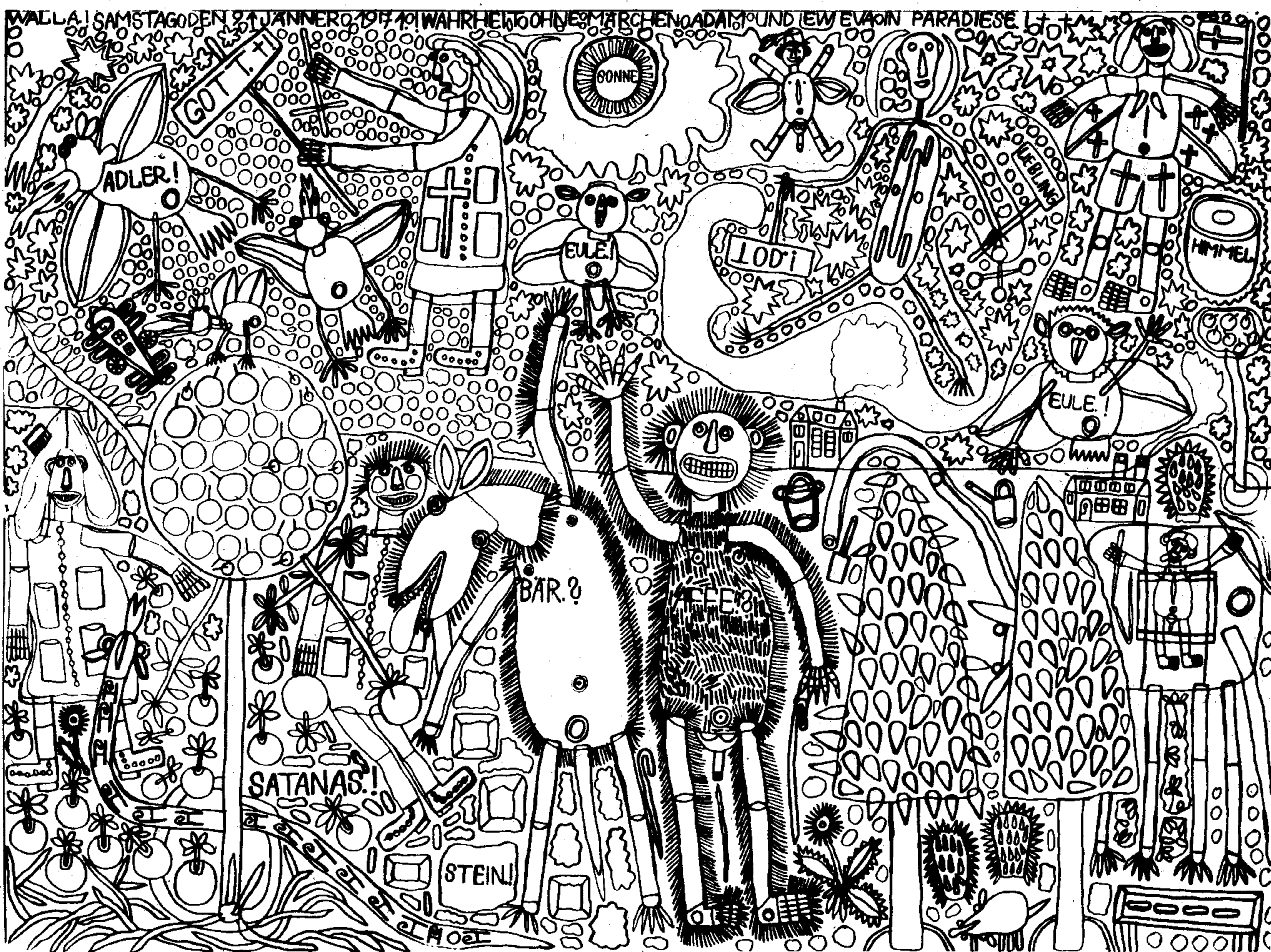
## Fantasies

This would be true of the sado-masochistic fantasies of Joseph Sell, or the remarkable pseudo-anatomical drawings by an anonymous Hungarian artist.

Others, such as August Neter, set out to record their hallucinations in a systematic way for their own benefit or for others.

For several of the artists it is clear that the purpose of the work is the creation of an environment more to their liking than the one in which they live.

Sometimes this is a strictly internal fantasy



August Walla: Adam and Eve in Paradise

world, such as that created by Aloise Corbaz, showing herself as the centre of a wonderful world of love and colour.

## 13 volumes

Another remarkable example of this kind is the recently discovered Henry Darger, a hospital cleaner who spent all his spare time creating a massive illustrated epic 'Realms of the Unreal' about a revolution of children against adults. By the time of his death he had completed 13 enormous volumes of this work.

Rarer are the cases where proletarian artists set out to create a physical world which corresponds to their internal requirements.

Deservedly famous among these are the postman Cheval who spent 33 years building an 'ideal palace' in his garden near Lyon, and Simon Rodia, a telephone repairman who

built the great metal towers in Los Angeles.

It would be possible to write volumes on the individuals whose works are shown here.

For me the most lasting memory of the whole exhibition was a series of tableaux by Francis Marshall showing stages in the life of 'a woman Mauriette'.

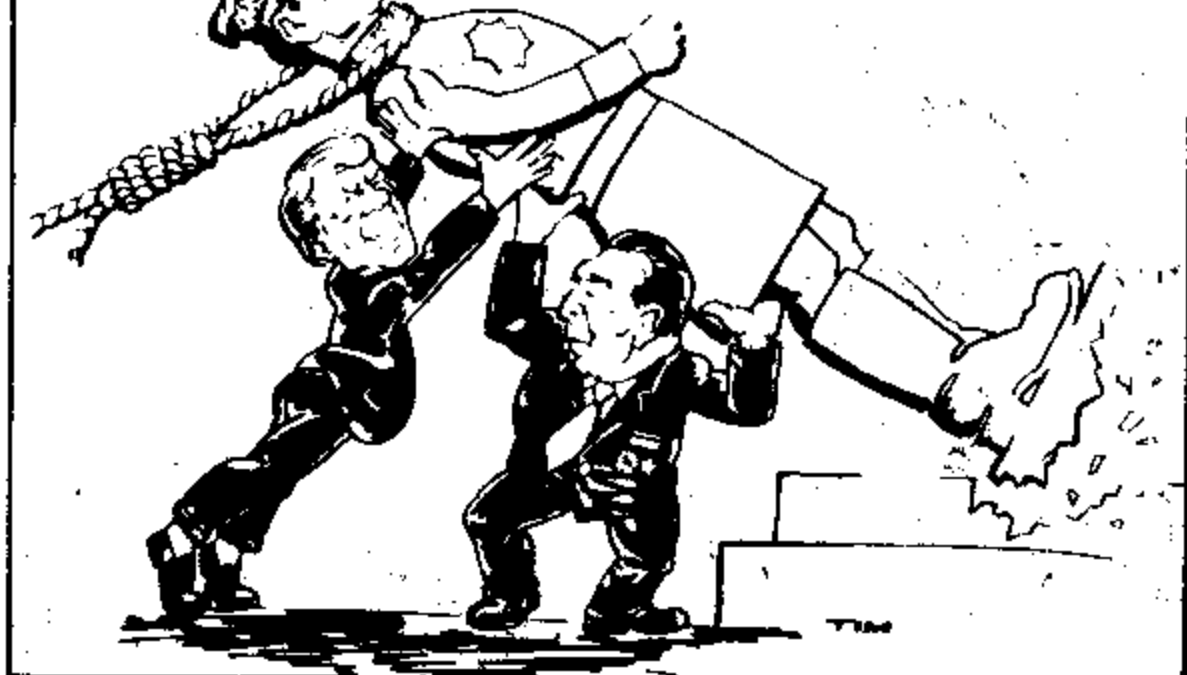
## Bucket

All the figures are assembled from discarded materials, life in school and family life, of adolescence and religion among the French poor. The final scene is, significantly, not the death of Mauriette but 'Mauriette has found a job'.

We see Mauriette as a cleaner, on her hands and knees with her head slumped into her bucket.

## TROTSKYISM TODAY

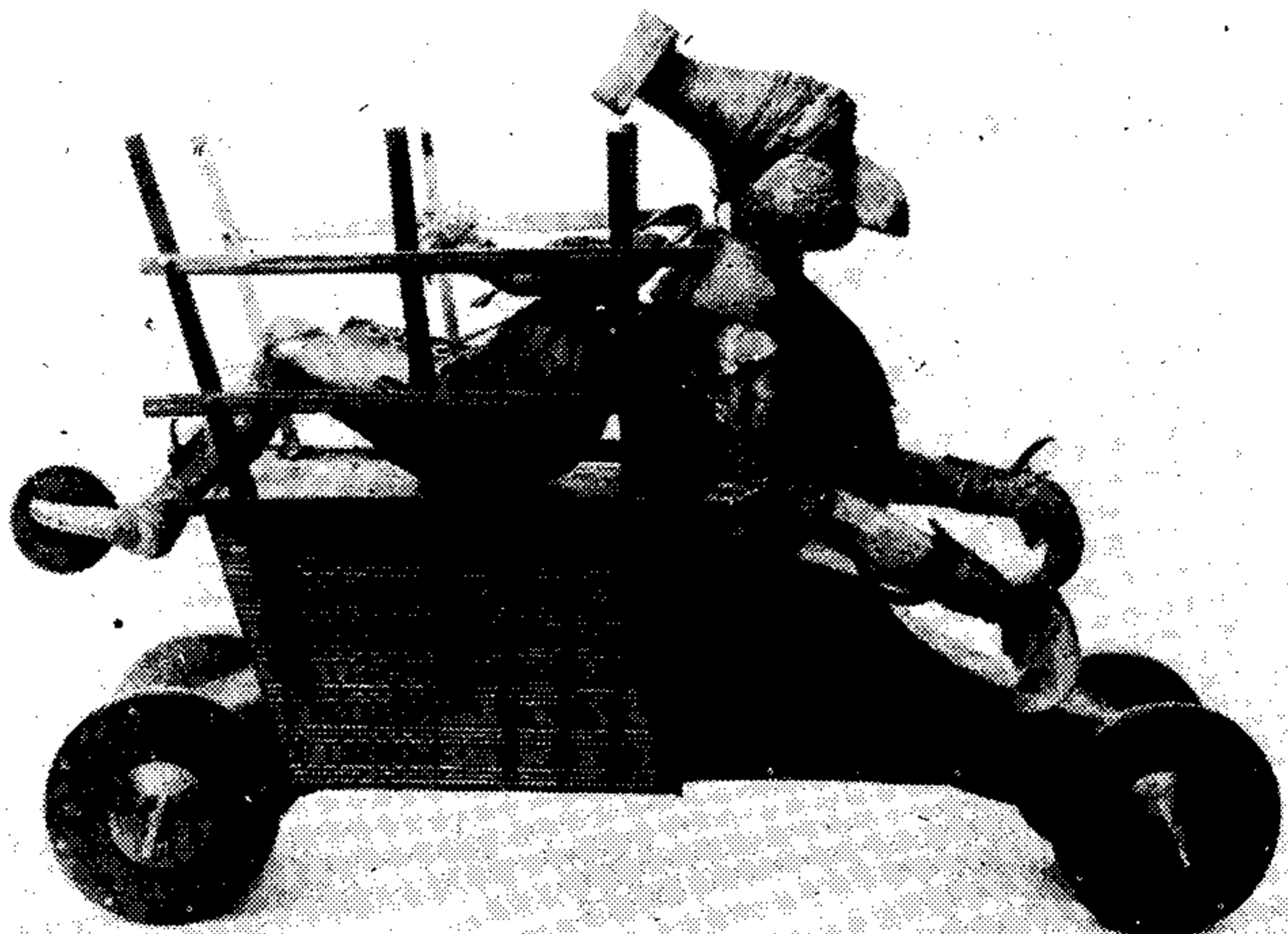
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Joel Negri: Charrette avec une jambe



# ERITREA: where do CP and IMG stand?

The Eritrean people in their struggle for liberation need the support of all socialists throughout the world, now more than ever before.

The toll from the latest offensive launched by the Ethiopian military dictatorship and the allies of the Derg has been colossal.

## Newsletter

In its December issue, 'Mekalih Sewrana' (monthly newsletter of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front) gave the following balance sheet of losses suffered since the offensive began on 18 November:

\*154 villages heavily damaged or destroyed.

\*4,700 people killed or seriously injured.

\*8,000 more people being treated for wounds inflicted in the raids.

\*100,000 people homeless, suffering from hunger and disease.

All these figures are in addition to the massive casualties of earlier phases in the war—for example, the ¼ million refugees in the Sudan.

## No support

The EPLF receives no effective support from any state or external force which can help to deal with these problems.

Medical supplies are urgently needed, and they can be provided only by assistance from those forces internationally which support the Eritrean people in their struggle for self-determination and independence.

Providing that material aid is the responsibility of the labour movement in this country. And it is the clear duty of all those who call themselves revolutionaries and proletarian internationalists to ensure that the British labour movement meets that responsibility.

A recent meeting in London revealed just how much work remains to be done to achieve even such limited objectives.

## Discussion

Called by the Eritrea Support Committee and the Workers Film Association, the meeting on 25 February at the Scala, Tottenham Road, fell into two parts—a showing of the film 'Sawrana' was watched by some 100 people, who then moved into a session of discussion.

Speakers from the EPLF reported briefly on the unity agreement reached between the ELF and EPLF on 21 January, which provides for a complete fusion of military forces and preparation towards political fusion.

In giving an account of recent developments within Eritrea, they also reported that the meeting in Sierra Leone between Mengistu



PHOTO: Laurence Spacham, IFL

WSL supporters march on the December demonstration in support of Eritrean struggle

(head of the Derg) and Numeiri (president of the Sudan) had broken up when Numeiri refused to meet Mengistu's demands for a ban on all refugees entering the Sudan from Eritrea, and the cutting of all supply-lines to the liberation forces.

The Ethiopian Embassy had been invited to send a representative, but none materialised.

## Absentee

Yet the emissary of the Derg was only one among the notable absentees.

Aside from the EPLF, Eritrean Relief Association and Eritrean Support Committee, the only political tendencies which identified themselves were the Organisation of Women in Africa, the CPGB and the Workers Socialist League.

Where were all the other 'revolutionary' organisations of the left in Britain?

## Silent IMG?

*Socialist Challenge* had carried a notice of the meeting in its edition of 8 February, 'For those who are horrified at what is going on in Eritrea—and for anyone else'.

But if any members of the International Marxist Group were present, then they remained stunningly silent.

Perhaps the comrades of the IMG have been too exhausted through being 'excited' by the revolution in Iran, to be 'horrified' by the war in Eritrea.

But this is not the first time that the IMG has chosen to keep well away from events called by the Eritrean organisations in

Britain.

In December, this British section of the 'United' Secretariat of the Fourth International was conspicuously absent from a demonstration called by the Associations of Eritrean Workers and Students in the UK, protesting at the role played by the Soviet Union in the war.

Once again, it was the WSL which provided the only contingent from the British labour movement.

Since that time, false and fleeting hopes have been raised by *Socialist Challenge*.

## Guilty

Under the heading 'Eritrea: the guilty and the silent', a full-page article appeared in the edition of 25 January.

The opening paragraph

exposed quickly enough the light-minded attitude of *Socialist Challenge* and its IMG producers to the struggles in Eritrea:

"Russia's Vietnam" is an inexact and incorrect description. But on the emotional level it does sum up what is going on in Eritrea."

Perhaps some sophisticated IMG Pabloite can explain to us the political content of this crude journalistic ploy?

The bulk of the article contained information which should have appeared long ago in *Socialist Challenge*—but better late than never.

Yet two statements cannot go unchallenged. Driven uncomfortably by the USFI's increasing worship of the Cuban revolution and the supposed "revolutionary internationalism" of Castro's left Stalinist leadership, the author has to provide some cover for the Cuban bureaucracy's complicity in the Derg's colonial war of genocide:

"As in Angola the Cubans are doubtless moved by some healthy considerations. But the root of the betrayal in Eritrea lies in their failure to understand that support for the Ethiopian revolution is not the same thing as support for the Derg—indeed the two are incompatible."

## Doublethink

It would be difficult to find a more astounding example of doublethink. Castro and the Cuban leaders have intervened in Ethiopia precisely because they understand that situation only too well.

Their rhetoric may be more radical, but the

Stalinists in Havana are only following the instructions of their Kremlin tutors in the vicious arts of counter-revolution.

Such grotesque distortions of Marxism are not unexpected from the IMG—British heirs of Pabloism. But perhaps, in its small way, the other statement is even more breath-taking:

"even on the rare occasions it mentions Eritrea, the left has almost totally ignored the possibility that Cuban and Soviet troops have been used."

*Socialist Press* for one has given consistent coverage to the struggles in Eritrea, and paid considerable attention to the role played by the Stalinists.

But of course the 'left' for the IMG means essentially *Socialist Challenge*, *Tribune* and the *Morning Star*.

And even within this blessed trinity, the *Socialist Challenge* article was actually tail-ending *Tribune*!

## Unanswered

The question *Socialist Press* asked the IMG back in December still remains unanswered: why do you not give practical support to the Eritrean liberation struggle?

But if the IMG, SWP and assorted 'Trotskyists' of the British left feared to tread in Scala last month, Vishnu Sharma, leading CP member and Indian Workers Association leader rushed right in.

After a WSL speaker had argued that it was necessary to build an international campaign in the labour movement to demand an end to the Soviet and Cuban involvement in Eritrea, this 'Marxist' condemned this as "a call for an international war against communism".

Sharma also had the audacity to cite the support given by the Soviet Union and its allies at the UN in 1950 to the right of the Eritreans to self-determination, and also the fact that in the past the Cuban bureaucracy had assisted in training EPLF fighters.

Unfortunately he neglected to mention how the Soviet bureaucracy maintained its 'principled' stand until recent times—for example, by giving Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie as a birthday present two jets and a helicopter for his personal use!

## Demand

But this Stalinist did point out correctly that not all CPs have supported Soviet policy in the Horn of Africa. We therefore take up the demand raised by a WSL speaker in the meeting: where does the CPGB stand on Eritrea?

Does the CP give its clear support to the right of the Eritrean people to self-determination?

Does the CP clearly condemn the policy being pursued by the Soviet Union and Cuba in Eritrea?

And where do other left wing groups in Britain stand on these questions?

Any refusal to agree to these two basic points means an alliance with counter-revolution in Eritrea. On the basis of agreement with these two points, an effective solidarity movement can be built in Britain to assist in defending and advancing the struggles of the Eritrean people.

By John Parker



EPLF freedom fighters on captured tank



# INDUSTRIAL NEWS

## Garners action day - March 24

Support is building up throughout the labour movement for the Garners strikers who have called for a Day of Action on 24 March in solidarity with their marathon struggle for union recognition.

A £30 donation arrived this week from as far afield as Dunlop, Liverpool. Dunlop workers themselves face a bitter fight against redundancies.

Support is also building up on the Liverpool docks.

### Action

This weekend a representative from the strike committee went to address the Stalinist-dominated LCDTU Conference to demand action to back up their verbal declarations of solidarity.

On Tuesday the Joint Shop Stewards Committee of the Fords Dagenham engine plant (who made a substantial financial donation earlier in the

strike) received another representative from the strike committee appealing for support.

*Socialist Press* has continually pointed to the fact that the bureaucracy of the TGWU Region 1 wants the Day of Action on 24 February to be a failure.

### Late material

Their sabotage is still reflected in the extremely late appearance of any material declaring official backing.

Indeed, although 700 letters have now gone out to individuals, many union branches will not be able to discuss March 24 in time to mobilise support.

### Mobilise!

We appeal again to every reader. Mobilise for the Day of Action! Support the demands of the strike committee for adequate strike pay, a serious mobilisation on the picket lines, full-backing and the national TGWU Conference to plan the victory of the strike.

An illuminating example of the open 'pro-scab' role of the police at Garners came on Friday night.

A particularly naive constable, who clearly still believed his job was to preserve the law, rather than crush the working class, responded to pickets' complaints against a scab waiter who had seized placards from the picket line.

He arrested the man, but later gave an embarrassed report to pickets: "They're letting him go."

My superiors copped out. I can't understand it, it's sickening. They are always keen enough to arrest pickets."

Pickets did however learn the scab's name and address. It is Mr. Razon Bonfas, 133, Cambridge Street, Victoria, SW1.

Messages of support and further information and the leaflets for the Day of Action from Garners' Strike Committee, TGWU Offices, 12/13 Henrietta St., London, W1.



Police move in during the last day of action



PHOTO: Mark Russer, IFL

PHOTO: Laurie Spahm, IFL

## St Columba's Hospital occupied

The occupation of St. Columba's hospital, a small terminal care hospital on the edge of Hampstead Heath, was officially begun last Monday.

The hospital is under threat of being closed by Kensington, Westminster and Chelsea Area Health Authority within less than three weeks, and from the moment the closure was announced, the workers in the hospital, mainly NUPE members, expressed their determination to fight the decision.

At Monday's meeting, the staff formed an occupation committee, with NUPE steward Tom Dykes as its secretary.

They also passed a resolution to the NUPE Executive demanding that they give full and official support to the occupation, and official backing to any strike action taken in local NUPE branches in defence of the hospital.

This followed a meeting of the local district health joint shop stewards committee which resolved to call mass meetings in their branches and argue for strike action if any attempt was made to close the hospital.

Support has also been given by the Emergency Bed Service COHSE branch, who have played a vital role in keeping the EGA open, and by ambulance workers, who have pledged not to cross the picket line and remove patients.

### Support strong

It is obvious that support for the occupation is very strong and the fact that the fight was already being taken to the London Division of NUPE, the NUPE NEC and Westminster Trades Council will make it very difficult for the trade union leadership and local labour leaders to ditch the struggle.

It will also create problems for the collaborationist policies of the Communist Party since David Treisman, who is secretary of Westminster Trades Council, also sits on the AHA which is trying to close the hospital!

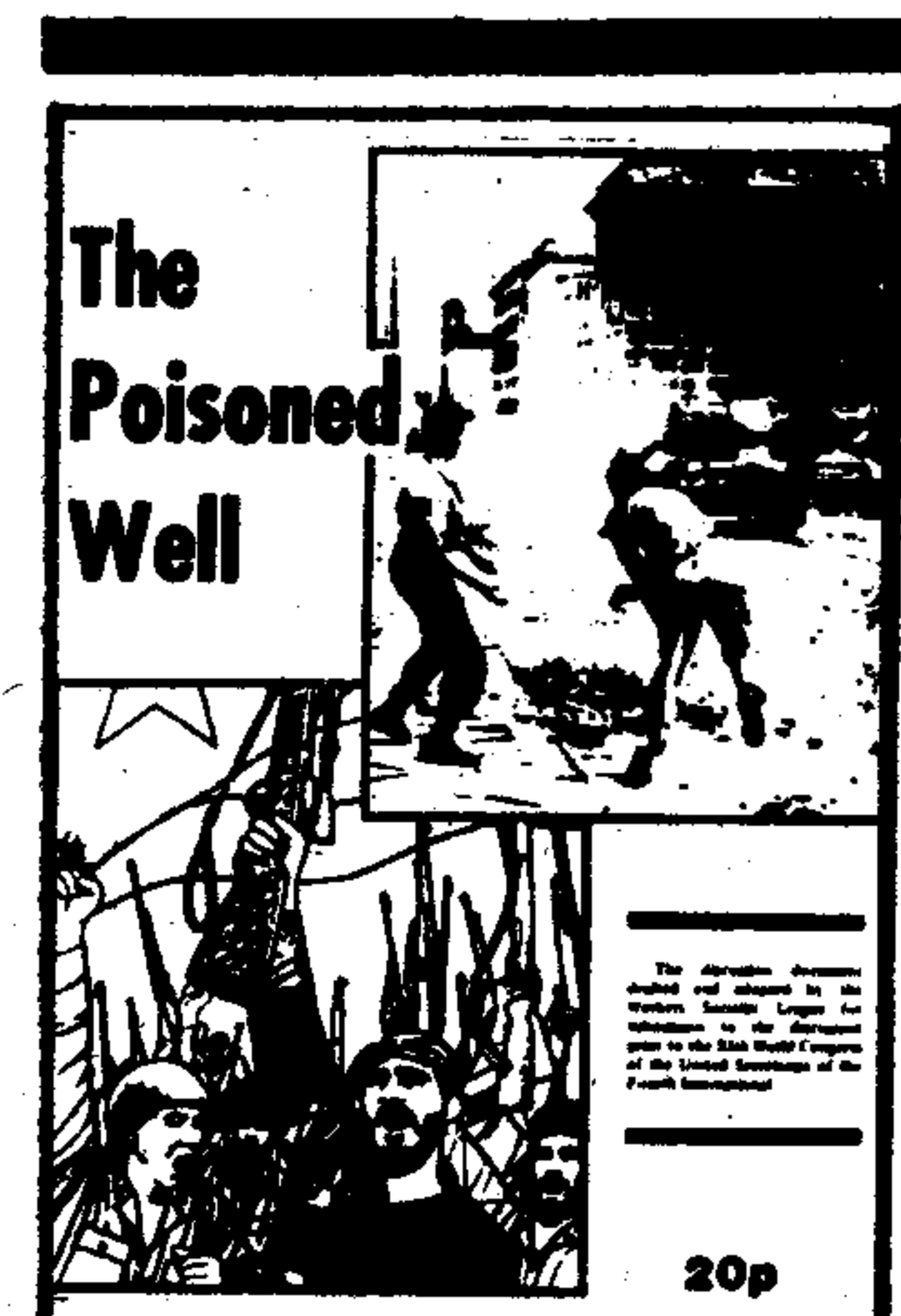
Given the strength of the resistance to the closure which has been added to by the fact that local GPs are likely to continue referring patients, it is now vital that the hospital occupation committee continues to give a strong lead in defending St. Columba's.

### Committee

The occupation committee must meet regularly to keep the hospital staff fully involved in the fight and a public meeting must be called to raise funds and organise local support.

The bureaucrats on the AHA have already been delayed in attempts to close two other hospitals in the area, due to the resistance of the local JSSC and they are now desperate to make drastic cuts in health spending.

Cuts such as these will continue unless the public sector union leadership is forced to lead a national campaign of strike action to defeat the Callaghan government's policy of social service cuts and cash limits.



NOW OUT! The WSL discussion document adopted for submission to the USFI XIth World Congress. Price 20p plus 10p p&p from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

## WSL: we offer a lead

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

The massive revolutionary upheaval that has now toppled the seemingly impregnable might of the Shah of Iran and which is now already coming into conflict with the restrictions placed upon it by its Islamic "leaders" serves as a vivid reminder that socialist revolution is not only possible, but essential if the apparatus of capitalist repression and exploitation is to be destroyed once and for all.

But such a revolution requires a conscious Marxist leadership. And the fight to construct such a leadership is inseparable from the fight in the day-to-day struggles of the working class internationally for the principles, method and demands of the Trotskyist Transitional Programme. The Workers Socialist League has time and again proved to be the only movement in Britain that fights patiently and relentlessly on such a perspective.

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

Of course this policy has made us no friends in the trade union and Labour bureaucracy, or amongst the opportunists and centrists of the British 'left'. But it has meant that the WSL has consistently offered the most powerful lead to workers in struggle.

In each struggle we set out to prove to workers both in theory and in practice the necessity of a new, revolutionary 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.

This is why the WSL has featured at the forefront of the fight against redundancies and closures, in struggles against the cuts, unionisation fights, and the fight for democracy in the labour movement.

This method of approach - rejecting any descent to simple trade union militancy or concession to the labour bureaucracy - is of course essential not only in Britain but internationally.

In taking up international issues in the labour movement the WSL stresses 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; but its approach to both theory and practice make it 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

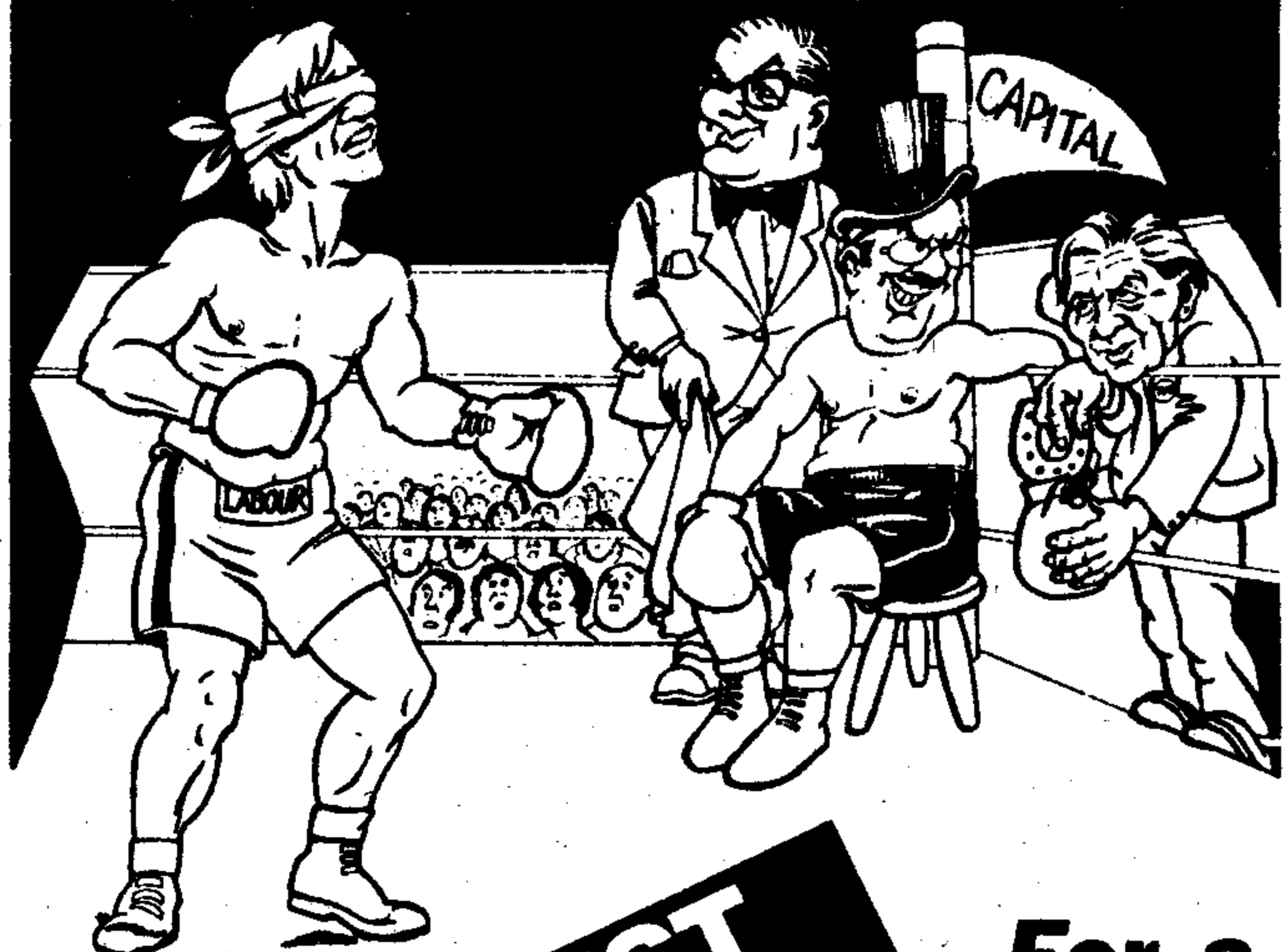
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Name .....

Address .....

Send to Workers Socialist League, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

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# Journalists 'no' to strikes to back Nottingham

Leaders of the National Union of Journalists reaped the whirlwind of their betrayal of the sacked Nottingham journalists at the weekend.

Less than two months ago Mike Bower, northern organiser for the NUJ, witch-hunted calls to keep the national pay strike going until 28 members on the Nottingham *Evening Post*—sacked for taking part in the strike—were reinstated.

Last weekend Bower appealed to a similar meeting of FoCs for a programme of one day strikes throughout the provincial press in support of Nottingham.

## Call defeated

The result was a defeat by 84 votes to 57 for the policy—which included a call for mass pickets to close the paper down.

Bower's appeal was pitched in terms of blaming the membership:

"If you are not prepared to do this your membership (of the NUJ) is not worth a lot either."

An indication of the reaction to the call was seen in the fact that delegates from Bristol had been mandated to vote against one day strikes.

Bristol was one of the power houses of the seven week national strike and had voted almost unanimously to stay on strike in January until Nottingham journalists were reinstated.

Other chapels showed a similar switch in policy which

had come about through the NUJ leadership's turn away from industrial action by the membership.

Now when that same leadership attempted to turn the tap back on—without explanation for the switch—the pipes were frozen.

One day strikes in themselves are ineffective. They were a permissible policy in this case, to the extent to which they

were being used to bring the NUJ provincial membership back into the reinstatement fight.

Nottingham journalists sitting in the meeting walked out in disgust and disappointment after the vote.

The meeting went on to vote in support of a motion calling for a one-day strike of the entire NUJ—a vote which has little meaning but was used by

the platform to claim that the meeting was not a disaster.

The reinstatement of the Nottingham members is still on the agenda.

But first the members involved and their supporters have to recognise that before the battle against the employer can be won, the obstacles in the leadership of the trade unions have to be faced and overcome.

Faith in an NGA/Slade campaign of blacking of advertising is futile.

## Done nothing

The leadership of those unions have done nothing in six years to counter the Nottingham *Post's* anti-union stance and will do little now.

Sacked journalists should also restart picketing—if only on a limited scale.

Producing their own news-

paper may have helped the sacked workers' morale but it has done nothing and will do nothing to win reinstatement.

## Mass action

Only mass action by the membership will do that. Strikers must visit provincial paper chapels to put their case to prepare for a call for an all-out strike to force the Nottingham *Evening Post* to take the sacked journalists back and recognise the union.

As George Miller, one of the sacked members told the meeting:

"It's not a million miles away if this bloke wins. It's coming to your door. It's going to be new technology and you're going to squirm just like we did."



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

NUJ members march in Nottingham last December

## Times bosses retreat

Times Newspapers management have been forced to back down over demands that new technology is forced in while thousands of workers stay sacked.

The management last week re-engaged all staff until 17 April and have paid retrospective half pay to all workers whose notice periods had expired.

But the climbdown is a prelude to pushing through with the main thrust of the management drive—to win a massive cut in jobs by agreement with the print unions, particularly the NGA.

Now that a target date for reopening the papers has been fixed (April 17), the management have cleared out of the way the sole point on which the NGA leadership were unable to yield.

But before the closedown Joe Wade had already in secret negotiations conceded that NGA members would accept a deal which only guaranteed that their members retained all key-boarding work for five years.

The decision to start paying Times workers is a sign of the weakness of the management.

But it is certain to be the beginning of the attempts by print union leaders to sell jobs.

It is not therefore itself a victory for Times workers, though it shows that by a united determination not to sell jobs that the management could be forced to back down.

The EETPU leadership has meanwhile nailed its colours to the management mast by suspending the entire London Press Branch of 1,200 members because the branch refused to ratify an agreement on electricians' jobs at the *Times*.

# Dunlop: clear lead needed!

Nearly 1,000 workers joined a demonstration last week in protest against the closure of Dunlop's factory at Speke in Merseyside.

The march was part of an international day of action in which Dunlop workers in Italy, France and Germany are reported to have engaged in token stoppages or one day strikes in solidarity with their British counterparts.

Though the demonstration won a warm response as it made its way through Speke, the one-day strike itself has had no impact on the task of halting Dunlop's closure plan.

Union leaders on the plant—including TGWU General Executive chairman Stan Pemberton—have constantly argued against adopting a policy for occupation of the plant.

Running scared of any fight against the Callaghan-Healey government, they have wasted week after precious week in futile talks, lobbies and protests while demoralisation begins to gather pace among the Speke workforce.

Already 83 workers have taken redundancy money and left the plant. The "action committee" has allowed this to continue.

## Import controls

Pemberton, along with the Communist Party, has focussed most attention on the reactionary call for import controls, supposedly to protect "British" jobs by banning "foreign" tyres. Ironically this leads the CP into arguing against imports

from Eastern Europe and the USSR!

But an equally pernicious line is being put forward by the Socialist Workers Party, whose leaflet on the issue calls for occupation only as a stop-gap policy until a new employer can be persuaded to take over the Speke plant.

"Similarly at Drylanders in St. Helens the workers occupied their factory as the only alternative to being thrown on the scrap-heap... and were able to find another group to take over their factory, saving most of the jobs. The lessons are quite clear."

The crisis-wracked Workers Revolutionary Party put out a leaflet which called in ultimatum fashion for the bringing down of the Labour government—but which failed to call for the essential policy of factory occupation in Speke!

An article in *Newsline* mysteriously defended unnamed "Trots" from Pemberton's witch-hunting—while remaining tactfully silent about the fact that the "Trots" arguing for occupation were not the WRP but the Workers Socialist League.

A WSL leaflet on the other hand did spell out the way forward in the Dunlop struggle:

- \*Occupy the plant!
- \*Open the books of the company to elected trade union committees!
- \*Work-sharing on full pay!
- \*For a nationalised motor and components industry under the management of elected trade union committees as part of a socialist planned economy!
- \*Build councils of action!

## Dustmen fight scabbing

The Tories on the Brighton Council are spear-heading an attack on all public sector workers by victimising local dustmen.

By mobilising the police from as far afield as Hastings and making 43 arrests, they hope not only to defeat the 'low pay' campaign but break the back of the Brighton local authority unions.

The dispute arose when four East Sussex dustmen came out on strike over a wage claim.

## Support

Fellow Brighton dustmen showed their support by refusing to cross the picket line at Sheepcote Tip.

However, they reported for work every day and dealt with emergency services.

Due to this action, the dustmen have been deemed by the local authority to be on strike. As a result, the Brighton council refused to pay the men their wages.

This heated situation exploded further when Tory councillor Dudley Baker brought in private contractors to clear the rubbish without any real negotiations with the GMWU.

In response to this attack, sections within the GMWU such

as park and toilet attendants and sewer workers joined the dustmen in their fight.

It is quite clear that the present struggle concerns more than a strike over back pay.

## Union rights

At stake are fundamental democratic rights over the maintenance and the extension of union rights.

Although the dustmen were willing to work, scab contractors were hired at the phenomenal cost of £50 per lorry per day, which amounts to more than one dustman's weekly wage!

The failure of the leadership in the GMWU to consolidate the strike by linking up with the other public sector wage struggles in Brighton has led the dustmen's action to be regarded as an isolated dispute.

The leadership further weakened the already tenuous strike when they directed some of their own sections to resume work, leaving the dustmen in an extremely vulnerable position.

The dispute now needs to be urgently strengthened by developing it into one around the issue of low pay which would effectively pull in different sections of the GMWU and other public sector workers in the East Sussex County area

and Brighton Corporation.

A very successful meeting was held in Brighton by the WSL on the 8th March addressed (in a personal capacity) by dustmen's steward Peter Large at which student WSL members were thanked for organising support for the picketing.

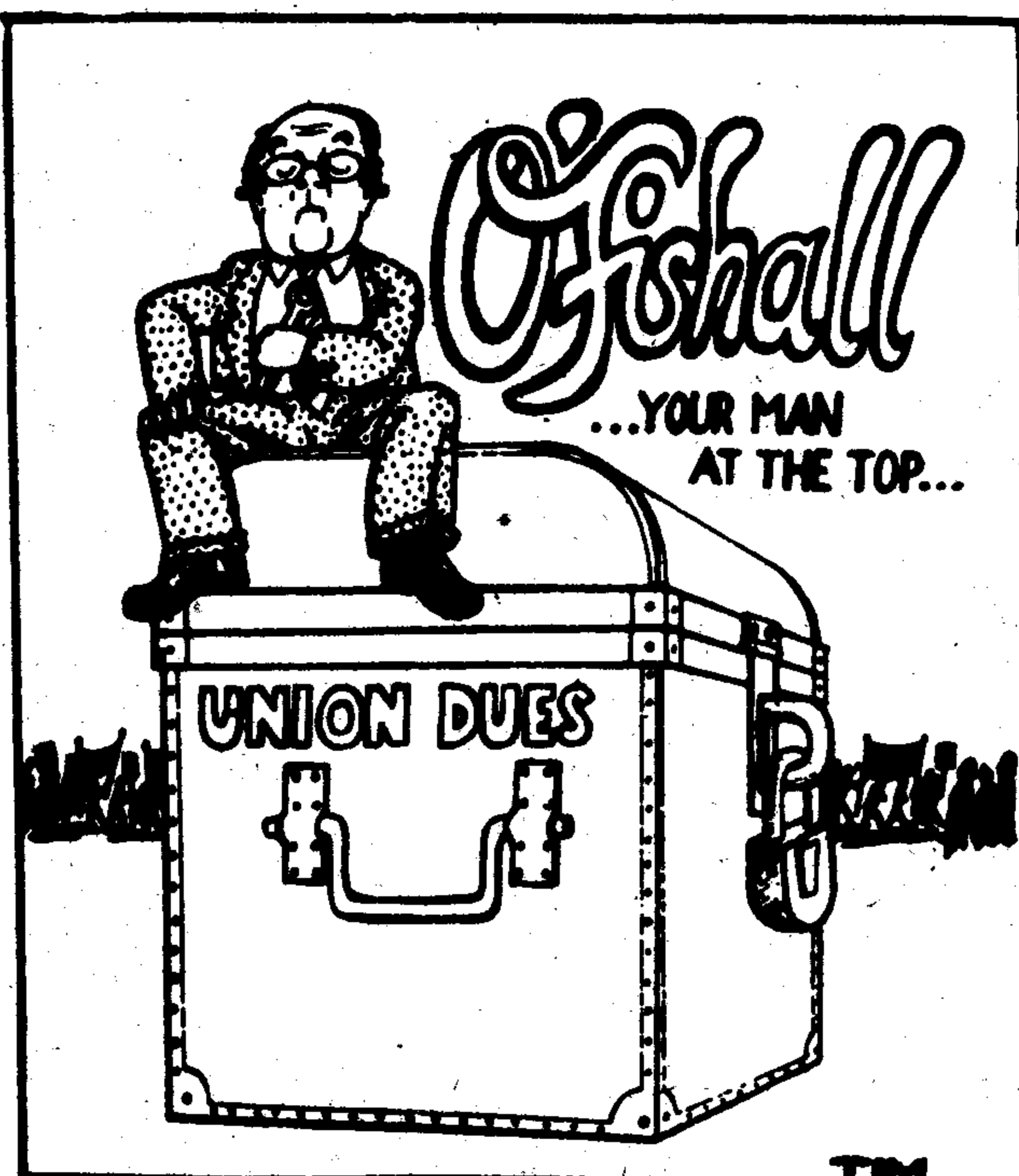
Lessons were drawn out from the experiences in the Camden struggle on pay, and a full discussion followed as to the policies necessary to regain wider support to win the struggle.

## Demonstration

Due to the extreme demoralisation which set in after the arrests, the suggestion by a WSL member for an area demonstration was welcomed.

Efforts are being made at present to organise this event, in conjunction with the students at the University of Sussex who are presently in occupation over the issue of overseas students quotas.

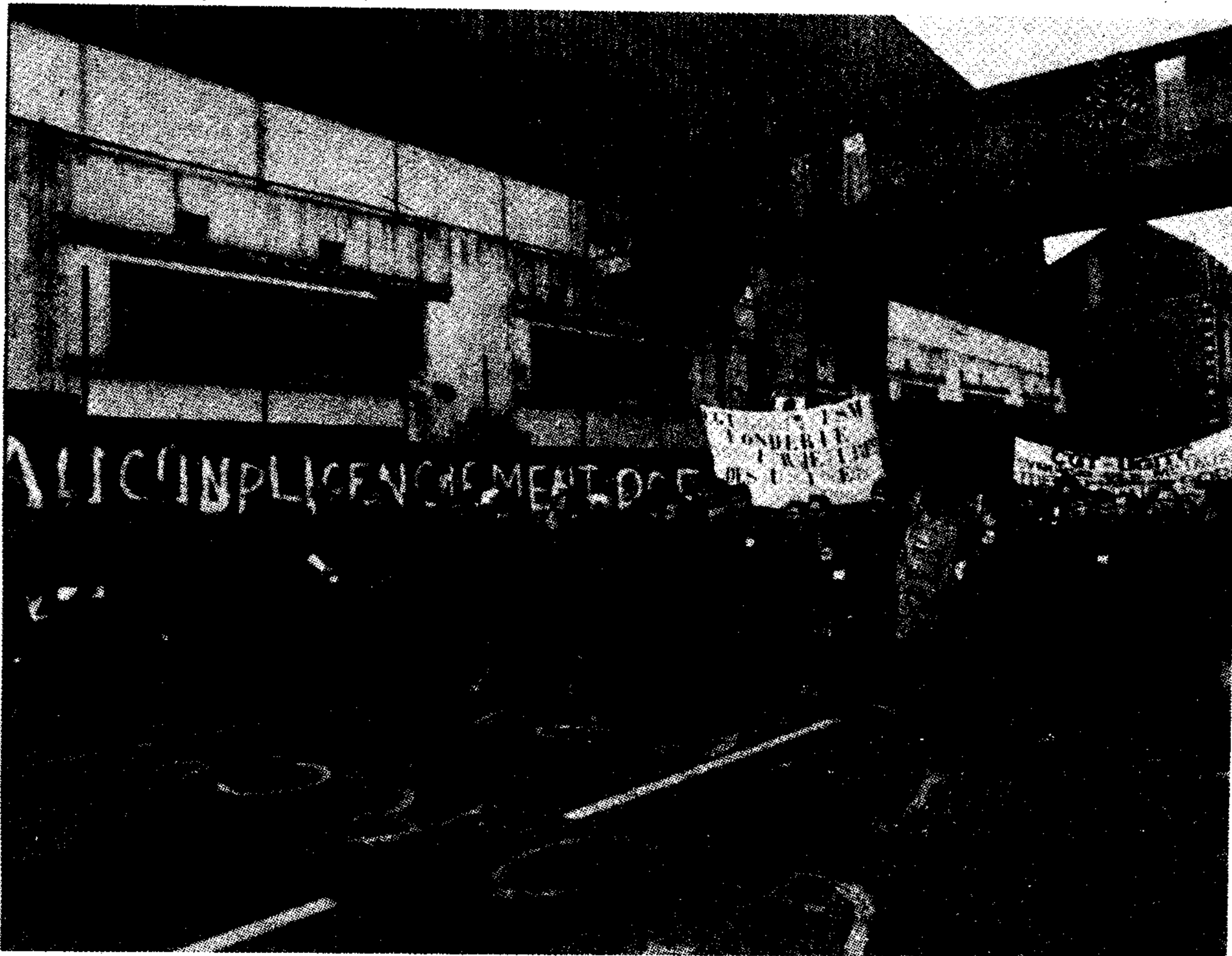
At the same time, the GMWU leadership must ensure the inclusion of the hospital workers and ambulancemen in this activity through the Trades Council in order to guarantee the winning of the dustmen's dispute as well as other local authority union wage claims.



# SOCIALIST PRESS



## French strikers force concessions



"The truth is, there is no violence which is worse than the violence of breaking up factories, of throwing workers out into the street, of blighting the youth, of condemning towns and whole regions to death in order to satisfy interests which are foreign to those of the nation."

That was how Georges Seguy spoke last week to 'defend' French workers against the attacks of the bourgeois media. The French ruling class had reacted with indignation and outrage to the methods used by the swelling mass movement against unemployment, and further huge redundancies in the steel industry.

Seguy, Stalinist leader of the CGT union confederation gave the bourgeoisie little cause for relief in his speech. The reactionary chauvinist policies which the French Communist Party has tried to foist on the movement have not been able to curb militancy:

## FUND

An excellent collection of £410 at the Third Annual Conference of the Workers Socialist League and a good start to the March fund with £337.75 already collected indicates the growing support that exists for the Workers Socialist League and Socialist Press in the labour movement.

With 2½ weeks still to go to the end of the month we are well placed to meet our £600 fund target in full.

All donations should be sent to: Socialist Press Monthly Fund, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

### French steel workers on the march

Only a few days later, the action of steelworkers reached a new peak in the town of Denain, north of Paris, near the Belgian border.

Throughout the steel-producing areas, groups of workers continued to stage occupations of employers' organisation offices, and block railways by emptying loads of iron ore onto the tracks.

### Resistance

These actions in themselves are only one part of a rising tide of resistance to the 'anti-inflation' policies of Barre's bourgeois government.

Workers in the nationalised railway, and post and telecommunications sectors have also taken strike action and threatened increasing activity.

But at Denain on Wednesday the conflict between the working class and capital took the form of violent confrontations between the police and demonstrators.

After clashes and skirmishes the night before, some 1600

workers from the morning shift at Usinor (one of the major steel firms) gathered in the factory yard to decide on their reply.

Union leaders tried to divert this anger into the futile protest gestures of blocking the Paris-Brussels motorway. But when the workers moved off, to be joined by many others in a demonstration of several thousands, their immediate objective was the local police station—heavily guarded by the brutal and hated CRS riot-police.

Armed only with iron bars and makeshift weapons, the demonstrators were subjected to a barrage of teargas and chlorine bombs. The first clashes developed into a pitched battle through the afternoon, which ended only at 1 o'clock the next morning.

### Gaz explosives

In the course of the fighting, several police were injured by shots from a rifle. But the demonstrators mostly resorted to explosives of Camping-Gaz canisters, and the hasty con-



Georges Seguy

struction of barricades against the repeated police charges.

Although older steel-workers were always in the forefront of the fighting, youth played a major part in the day's events.

Completely beyond the influence of the union bureaucracy, well-organised and disciplined, it was the youth who provided the workers with supplies of improvised Molotov cocktails.

In the evening, the union bureaucrats made their major attempt to end the battle by calling for an immediate protest occupation of the factory and the defusing of all demonstrations until Sunday.

This diversionary tactic was rejected with contempt by the demonstrators.

The battle of Denain revealed more sharply than any events of recent weeks the problems facing the bureaucracy.

The strength and militancy of workers has left them with little room to manoeuvre.

Their thoroughly reactionary policies have proved useless to deflect the violent anger of steelworkers into respectable channels of negotiation.

Usinor has now temporarily withdrawn its redundancy notices and a series of talks has been planned between government, management and bureaucracy—talks centring on improved conditions of redundancy.

But for all their militancy, French steelworkers will not be able to defeat completely these moves of their leaders towards betrayal without taking up a fight for an independent socialist alternative.

## NUPE leaders prepare to kill off fight



PHOTO: Laurence Spaham, IFT

COHSE leader Spanswick: done nothing for low paid

After spending every day since January 22nd trying to get their members back to work, the leadership of TGWU, COHSE and GMWU have crowned their glorious contribution to the low pay campaign by recommending acceptance of the 9% offer which actually makes their members worse off against inflation.

The bureaucrats in these unions have clearly shown that they have no intention whatsoever of fighting to improve the pay and conditions of their public sector members if it means the slightest confrontation with Callaghan's pay policy.

After contributing nothing at all to the fight for a £60 minimum wage and 35 hour week they have now recommended acceptance of the offer by means of mysterious "delegate conferences" and

open ballots to give the impression that their membership have actually given up the fight.

It is also obvious that the leadership of NUPE, despite their promises to escalate the action amongst their health members, are waiting for the earliest opportunity to call off the whole campaign.

At a meeting of the NUPE NEC in London last Wednesday—which was lobbied by workers from Westminster hospital and ambulance drivers—full-time officers on the EC made it clear that they have no intention of working for all-out strike action for the full claim.

Full-time officer Ron Keating, in a typical display of arrogant hatred for his own members, could only talk of "intensifying the selective action".

When asked about further action amongst ambulance drivers, he stated that there was "no way" he would support another ambulance strike.

Although some EC members did say that they would support—rather than lead—all-out strikes, it is unlikely that they will put up a fight against the blustering of Keating, who is quite open about his intention to sell out the pay fight.

Alan Fisher, the man who actually launched the low pay campaign last year, was nowhere to be seen at the lobby.

The task ahead for militant workers in the public sector is to expose the hypocrisy and betrayals of their own leadership and to fight against the bureaucratic and secretive way they have forced through acceptance of the 9% offer.

### Agents

There is no doubt that NUPE will still try to sell out the pay struggle—and in this task they have plenty of agents within the branches, such as Councillor Jamie Morris, at the Westminster Hospital, who announced his acceptance of the offer at a time calculated to do the maximum damage to future pay struggles in the health service.

He will undoubtedly be rewarded for this act of cynical betrayal by being asked to join the other parasites at NUPE head office at some future date.

The task in the other three unions in the claim is to expose the betrayals of the leadership before the members.

National and area delegate conferences comprising genuinely elected delegates must be called for the TGWU, COHSE and GMWU, the decisions to accept the 9% must be reversed, and a policy of all-out indefinite strike action for the full claim must be adopted.

Sections of these three unions are still determined to fight on for the full claim—and some, in London and Brighton at least—are at this moment on strike over pay.

The fight by these branches must be broadened into a resumption of all-out strike action for the full claim, and the union bureaucracy must be forced to lead this action.

## CRAFTSMEN CLIMB DOWN

The newly formed Leyland Joint Trades Committee voted last Saturday to withdraw its resolution for all-out strike action from Friday 16 March.

The decision took place at a meeting of Leyland skilled stewards in Birmingham.

Acting chairman Roy Fraser said this was because some of the delegates' factories had not considered the strike resolution.

He then went on to argue that, since their organisation was now broader-based, he considered that the craftsmen could now win their pay demands without a strike.

On Radio Oxford he said that he considered the meeting a success.

The same meeting also decided to change the original claim for a £90 a week wage to one for a "substantial" increase, since the Coventry factories considered the original claim too "conservative".

The reality is that the leadership of these skilled men is doing everything to avert a confrontation with the company.

Fraser is showing that he is the same as the other misleaders in Leyland, trying to drive the

workers into the company's plans.

### LORD PARTICIPATION

Nine months ago there was a decision of the ad-hoc committee of appointed union representatives in Leyland that they would call a Senior Stewards meeting with a recommendation to give the company six months notice of withdrawal from the "participation" scheme.

But now the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions has refused to sanction such a meeting.

Lord Scanlon—who though retired, is still President of the Confed explains:

"We are fully in support of BL workers' participation, but believe you cannot solve the problems by coming out—that is why we want evidence."

The CSEU is therefore setting up a meeting to hear evidence of lack of consultation by management and take this to the NEB.

PHOTO: Laurence Spaham, IFT