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The Politics
of State
Capitalism
Centre pages

NICARAGUA: Somoza totters

BREAK FROM CAPITALISTS! FOR SOCIAL REVOLUTION!

The civil war in Nicaragua is now at its peak.

The failure of dictator Somoza to drive out a second invasion by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) from Costa Rica; the fall of the country's second city Leon; the increasing isolation of the forces of the dictatorship in the capital Managua itself; and the granting of 'belligerent' status to the rebels by several Latin American states spell doom for the 40 year-old regime.

There can be no doubt that the fall of Somoza represents a major setback for imperialism.

US Secretary of State Vance has finally called for Somoza's removal albeit through a 'political' and 'negotiated' solution, as a last resort in the face of insuperable odds.

Intervention

Yet, at the same time the US has persisted in its pressure for intervention by a military force from the Organisation of American States (OAS) to impose such a 'solution'.

This has been resisted by states such as Brazil and other dictatorships—not least because they fear the prospect of similar action in the future against themselves.

Moreover, the claims of Somoza and his allies in the US that Cuba is actively aiding the rebels are scarcely borne out by the facts.

It is not the Cuban Stalinist bureaucracy but the "social democracies" of Venezuela, Mexico and Costa Rica that are providing the major support for the FSLN.

And though the likes of Edward Kennedy in the USA fear the 'installation of a Marxist regime' in Nicaragua, there is precious little in the Sandinistas' programme or activity to suggest that this is their aim.

Indeed, the dominant Tercerista wing of the FSLN is pursuing such a blatant strategy of 'popular front' alliance with Nicaraguan capitalists that the mass struggle is in real danger of simply handing over political power from Somoza to a different section of the bourgeoisie.

Danger

Socialist Press has outlined this grave danger before; but it must now be spelt out in black and white so that the conquests of the masses are not syphoned off, prevented from accelerating and finally stamped out.

The FSLN itself has subordinated political differences for the sake of 'unity' in the armed struggle.

This has meant that the 'Marxist' currents of the Tendencia Proletaria and the Guerra Popular Prolongada factions within the FSLN have given way to the reformist policies of the Terceristas.

From early on in the rebellion the Terceristas made overtures to major sectors of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie, notably the pressure group 'Los Doce' ('The Twelve') and the FAO (Broad Opposition Front).

It was these groups that, in the name of the employers, played a major part in orches-

trating the general strikes in the towns.

The masses, for their own reasons, responded heroically, and industrial production in Nicaragua has long since come to a halt.

It was on the back of the action by the urban masses that the guerrillas attacked and captured cities.

Unprotected

However, up until recent weeks these attacks were not consolidated and in the wake of guerrilla withdrawals the workers were left unprotected to suffer the wrath of Somoza's National Guard.

The attrition has been devastating. It is the masses not the guerrillas that have taken the brunt of the civil war—partially

at least, as a direct consequence of the elitist military strategy adopted by the FSLN.

The division between the working people of Nicaragua and the direction of the rebellion has now been further widened by the appointment by the FSLN of a bourgeois provisional government.

This includes only one member of the FSLN itself. The other four are representatives of the FAO, the Conservative Party, 'Los Doce', and the university.

The provisional government's ambassador to the OAS is a priest who is also a member of 'Los Doce'.

It is this group, described by the FSLN as "a well balanced array of opposition figures" that has attracted virtual diplomatic recognition from several Latin

American states including most of the Andean Pact countries.

It should be borne in mind that at the height of the first guerrilla offensive last September the US actually pushed for acceptance of the FAO into the government; Somoza even offered them 50% of the positions in the cabinet.

Rhetoric

While these groups produce a ceaseless stream of anti-yankee rhetoric they have not, as we might well expect, come out with a political programme beyond the call for "national unity".

To them 'imperialism' means no more than Somoza. The removal of Somoza is the end of the game. It would enable them to proceed unhindered with

their own exploitation of the Nicaraguan workers and peasants.

The FSLN itself has scarcely bettered this programme. It has called for the nationalisation of the Somoza family's extensive property and industrial holdings, the establishment of educational reforms, and "freedom and fulfillment" for the working people.

They say they are fighting for "good and honourable" patriots of every hue.

In a FSLN film made earlier this year and recently shown in this country no concrete demands were made or political programme put forward.

Virtually the entire production was spent eulogising the military training of guerrilla recruits and their 'revolutionary' interpretation of the Bible!

Somoza himself was simply projected as mad, 'a Hitler', a macabre and solitary figure.

It is crystal clear to all revolutionaries that we must give the utmost support to the struggle for the removal of Somoza.

We shall do likewise with all struggles against imperialist puppet dictatorships in Central America and elsewhere.

It is equally evident, however, that such struggles will be deprived of all revolutionary content if they are left under the domination of the bourgeoisie who will oppose every one of the policies necessary to meet the problems of the hard-pressed Nicaraguan masses.

This is why the illusory 'safety in numbers' approach of popular frontism must be vigorously rejected, and the fight taken up for a mass movement under *working class leadership*.

This is why we now call for the 'Marxists' in the FSLN and the 'Trotskyist' LMR (Marxist Revolutionary League, organisation sympathising with the USFI) to fight for a *break* with the bourgeois parties and for the deepening and extension of the struggle of the masses against *all* forms of imperialist capital.

Workers' councils

Workers' and peasants' councils must be established and set up armed self defence squads in preparation for the inevitable clash with the capitalist 'transitional government of national reconciliation' urged by Vance.

Factories, workplaces and banks must be occupied and the books of the employers opened by workers' committees to expose the profiteering role of 'Los Doce' and build the mass movement that must force their nationalisation without compensation under workers' management.

Somoza's vicious National Guard and other state forces must be *disbanded* and replaced by armed workers' militia answerable to workers' councils.

Insofar as Somoza still survives, the struggle for these policies must be undertaken within the context of support for the armed movement. There is no one moment when fighting stops and politics starts.

The Terceristas and bourgeois parties by their dedication to a continuation of capitalism have made that clear: revolutionaries must answer in kind.

The defeat of a bourgeois resolution to the civil war must be fought for through the construction of a revolutionary party, a Trotskyist party, forged in the heat of the struggle, based on the independent strength and class demands of the working class and dedicated to the overthrow of imperialism in *all* its guises.



Somoza

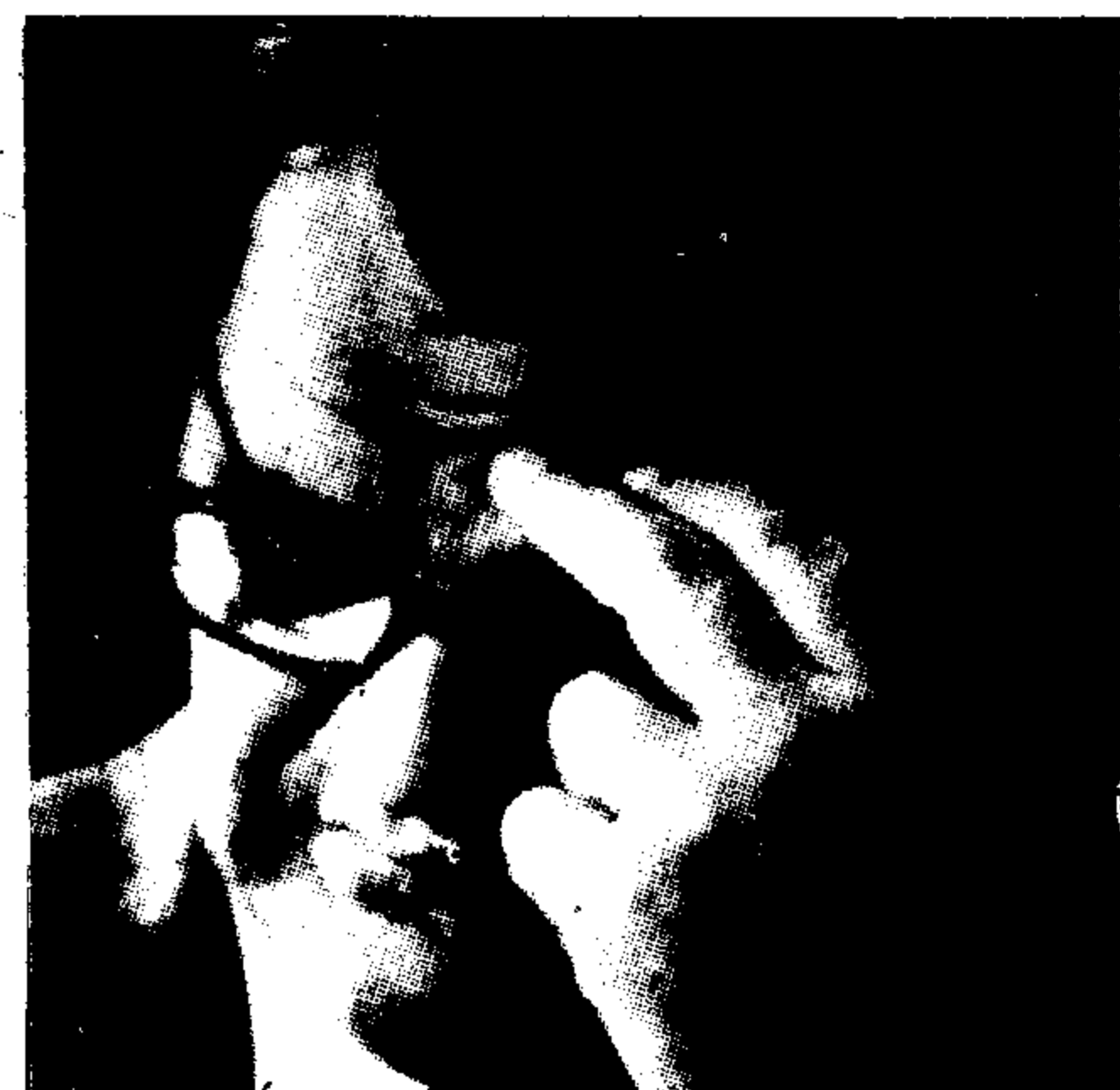


Somoza's National Guard under fire in Managua



INTERNATIONAL

Revolutionary lead needed to exploit weaknesses of apartheid regime



Mulder

While President Vorster, under constant pressure from the bourgeois media and the liberal parliamentary opposition, was finally forced to resign, more information about the extent of the South African government's secret diplomacy was being disclosed.

Reports have recently revealed deals with the tottering reactionaries of Dominica and Zaire.

Consolidate

Prime Minister Botha has used Vorster's resignation—for which he strongly pressed—to attempt to consolidate his own control inside the cabinet and the party.

He has also set about restoring a battered morale and self-confidence amongst the ranks of traditional nationalist voters.

Botha has shifted out Jimmy Kruger, Minister of Police and the main cabinet supporter of ex-Minister Mulder, by 'promoting' him to the relatively powerless Presidency of the Senate.

At the same time, in order to stem the alienation of the powerful Transvaal wing of the party—of which Mulder and Vorster were past leaders—he has been forced to promote in the cabinet the die-hard right wing ideologue Andras Treurnicht, the present leader of the Transvaal party and a supporter of Mulder.

Majority

Inside South Africa, the immediate response of the bulk of the white electorate to 'Muldergate' appears to have been a consolidation



South African police cadets on parade: white workers are moving to extreme right

around the ruling National Party, which commands an enormous electoral majority.

However a small but significant number of traditional nationalist voters have shifted support (in recent by-elections) to the extreme right wing break-away Herstigte National Party (HNP).

Crisis

The increased receptivity of some white workers to the extreme right wing demagoguery of the HNP which, of course, continues within sections of the National Party, is not merely based on concern at the fate of Vorster and Mulder.

Fundamentally it is based on concern over their own fate in a situation where the ruling class is no longer able either economically or politically to simply continue immunising all white workers from the

effects of the capitalist crisis.

The high rate of inflation and moves by the government and the employers to open up jobs, previously preserved for whites, to cheaper black labour are factors promoting concern amongst white workers.

Socialist Press has argued that the development of the struggle in South Africa has placed white liberal capitalists, with their black capitalist and petty bourgeois collaborators, in an increasingly important role as the ruling class seeks ways of stemming the forward movement of black workers.

Responded

It is partly in recognition of that new importance that Botha has responded to widespread opposition from the liberal controlled media (echoed in part by National Party newspapers) and withdrawn, for the meanwhile, his threats to further curb

press 'freedom'.

In its efforts to assert full political control over black workers the government leadership, sometimes using the 'good offices' of the liberals, is adopting limited aspects of a long-standing liberal strategy of co-optation.

This is aimed at securing through strictly limited and controlled reforms, an alliance with co-opted sections of the black petty-bourgeoisie and a layer of skilled black workers.

These, they hope, will act as a buffer between the ruling class and the mass of black workers.

Like the ruling class of all capitalist states, the ruling class in South Africa has never been a static, homogeneous bloc either of whites as the bourgeois media would have it, or of white capitalists as according to the radical bourgeois media.

There have always been divisions in the ruling class,

especially relating to the use of black labour and the place of the black 'petty bourgeoisie'.

In recent years these discussions, which extend into the ruling National Party have been sharpened by the accelerated development of the real crises facing the ruling class—the crises of profits and political control posed most clearly during the events of Soweto.



Botha

Different sections of the ruling class and different sections of the ruling party have all attempted to make political capital of the disclosures leading up to the resignation of Vorster, using them as weapons in their ongoing political disagreements and divisions.

Divisions inside the ruling class are not, however, automatically translated into the immediate strengthening of the working class.

Divided and weakened ruling classes, facing enormous crises have been able to inflict defeats on the working class precisely because the workers have lacked the revolutionary leadership necessary to exploit the crises facing capitalism and resolve them in the interests of workers.

The development of the crisis of capitalism poses ever more sharply the major crisis facing the working class—that of leadership.

The only real way of building the strength of the working class is by the development of revolutionary leadership, programme and organisational forms based unshakably on the independent class interests of the working class.

Khomeini prepares new crackdown

Khomeini and his revolutionary council have now published their draft constitution for the Islamic Republic.

These religious leaders and their supporters talked before the revolution of freedom from tyranny in Iran.

Now they have dropped their promises of a Constituent Assembly despite opposition even from fellow Ayatollahs like Shariat-Madari, (now branded as 'a communist' by Khomeini).

Indeed last week saw a violent attack launched by Khomeini's followers on a rally called by the National Democratic Front. As NDF speakers were pelted with stones, pro-Khomeini bigots

carried placards proclaiming that:

"Those who want a constituent assembly are counter-revolutionary".

As the religious leaders work to impose their oppressive and dictatorial rule, every misplaced hope that Khomeini would guarantee democratic rights is now confronted by the dangers of reality.

In the draft constitution the national minorities have no right to self-determination. Although the equality of the sexes is formally acknowledged, women are being driven out of executive positions (for example all women judges have been barred from hearing cases).

While these developments continue, the chiefs of the armed forces are calling more loudly for the



Khomeini

repressive state apparatus and its bodies of armed men to be strengthened.

General Rahimi, head of the military police, has

demanding a 'national' effort to reconstruct the army and defend the 'unity' of Iran.

Beyond these immediate moves, the Khomeini/Bazar-

gan government is rapidly approaching the necessity of vicious austerity measures, if it is to preserve capitalist property relations in Iran.

Huge cuts in the government budget and the cancellation of major contracts have been designed to counter the crisis fuelled by the Shah's economic policies.

Wage cutting

But such measures can be effective only if their cost is borne by the Iranian workers in the form of unemployment, wage-cutting and increased misery.

Such attacks will force the working class into direct confrontation with today's leaders of the Iranian revolution.

But such opposition can succeed in defending and

advancing the gains of the revolution only if it is based in a conscious struggle for a socialist programme to defeat the forces of reaction.

The building of a revolutionary party based in the proletariat is the essential task confronting all those elements who genuinely seek to achieve socialist revolution in Iran.

The task of Trotskyists is to lead that fight, armed with the transitional programme.

NEXT WEEK
An article examining the mounting political crisis in Turkey.



Zionist settlements key to colonialist strategy

In the past week or so the Zionist state of Israel has engaged in instituting new settlements in territory previously closed to Jewish settlers.

The manner in which this is customarily done and the reasons for doing it are hotly disputed and provide an occasion for an examination of the nature of the Israeli state and its motives for pursuing this policy.

The Israeli state has its origins in the historic persecution of Jews.

Religious roots

It is a fact that Jews have been widely persecuted, but it is a fact that is denied by most present day Near and Middle Eastern regimes.

Persecution was not confined to the Near and Middle East however. It had a world-wide character and was particularly vicious in central and Eastern Europe around the turn of the 19th Century.

Some Jews responded to this not by looking for the class origins of this persecution but by peddling the idea of reuniting the Jewish people in a land the believed was promised to them by God—"Zion".

This "Zionism" had religious roots but, as expressed by ideologues at the turn of the last century, it became a political philosophy.

Steady trickle

Whereas previously the reunification was to be left to God, now it became the province and task of man.

Funds were established to buy land in Palestine for Jewish settlement, and a steady trickle of hardy settlers made their way there.

Disputes broke out almost immediately as native tenant farmers whose land had been literally sold out from under their feet



Begin as the commander of the terrorist Irgun group in 1948

by absentee landlords fought to retain control of their sole means of livelihood.

That the newcomers were Jewish was in the first instance, of little importance to the native farmers.

They might have been martians for all they cared. What was important was that their long-established water rights, grazing rights and security of tenure were now threatened.

In this context fortified Jewish settlements were established—kibbutzim.

It is no accident that even today these kibbutzim to which many western

youth make pilgrimages in the summer, in the belief that they hold the key to a socialist future, are situated in outlying border areas.

Their collective character is then forced upon them by circumstances; shoulder to shoulder to fight a common enemy.

Non-Jews are exploited by the kibbutzim as labourers, but very few are permitted to join.

As the trickle of Jewish settlers turned into a flood, as a result of increased persecution of Jews by European fascist states, fighting in Palestine spread, and acquired an anti-Jewish character as the local landed

nobility and infant bourgeoisie egged on the peasantry.

By this time the local landed nobility and emerging bourgeoisie were feeling threatened by what they rightly interpreted as moves by the imperialist powers to establish a Jewish state in the area, a state from which they would be largely excluded.

Campaign of terror

When that State was proclaimed in 1948 there followed a widespread Zionist campaign of terror to drive potentially hostile non-Jewish elements out of the area.

Hundreds of villages were dynamited flat to prevent them returning.

The refugee problem began.

Since that date it has been the policy of the Zionist state to establish settlements of sympathisers all over the area that it occupies in order to be better able to police that area.

The latest settlements are part of that process and their institution becomes the more urgent the more that Zionist territorial gains are threatened.

The recent relinquishment of settlements in Sinai is no exception. It was a straight exchange for the right to build other settlements elsewhere.

Under pressure from their US paymasters the Zionist ruling clique exchanged their Sinai settlements for an Egyptian government assurance that it would not intervene to prevent them being built elsewhere.

In practice this is the meaning of the Egyptian government's recognition of the State of Israel.

While this racially exclusive state continues to exist there can be no solution to the problems of the dispossessed Arab and Palestinian masses whose land is now within the borders of Israel.

Nor, under conditions where the Zionist settlements are so intricately bound up with military policy and diplomatic manoeuvre, is it simply a question of opening them up to all those who wish to settle in them.

Rather the fight must be for the mobilisation of the Arab and Palestinian masses in the struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeois state of Israel in which the Zionists exploit and repress both Arab and Jewish workers and the establishment of a democratic secular Palestine, in which minority rights are granted to Jewish workers.

Healy caught in his own net

Still in the throes of its "worst financial crisis for a decade", Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party is now up to its neck in an even more intractable political mess.

For several years Healy has scandalously and without scruple grovelled to the most motley array of Middle East despotisms and petty bourgeois nationalists.

The WRP's daily *Newsline* has been turned into a British press agency churning out uncritically reams of 'left' demagoguery and anti-imperialist statements from the bloodstained regimes of Libya, Iraq and Syria, and from the Arafat leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

More recently the WRP switched its position on the Khomeini Islamic regime in Iran dropping its criticisms and accusing those who supported the struggles of Iranian women for democratic rights, and those who denounced the massacre of gays and the oppression of national minorities in Iran of opposing the Iranian revolution.

Opportunist web

But the evolution of events has now trapped the WRP in its own opportunist web.

The new upsurge in the historic liberation struggle of the Kurdish national minority—currently oppressed by the bourgeois governments of Turkey, Iran and Iraq—has come at a time when the Iraqi Ba'athist dictatorship fear above all the growth of a mass movement that might oust them from power.

They have responded by a vicious anti-communist crackdown in Iraq—jailing thousands of students and trade unionists—and with savage aerial bombing of the Kurds not only inside Iraq's borders but also reaching into Iran.

The Khomeini/Bazargan regime, though equally hostile to the Kurds' struggle for self-determination, has for its part called for a mass uprising in Baghdad to oust the present Ba'athist 'gangsters and tyrants' and replace them by 'a rule of divine justice'.

But the WRP's problems are more complex still. In their struggle against repression from Khomeini/Bazargan the Iranian Arabs have appealed for assistance to Yassir Arafat and the PLO.

Arafat, however, who has consolidated an opportunist deal with Khomeini, has other problems on his mind.

Each of his supposed bourgeois "allies" in the struggle for the restoration of Palestinian national rights is holding back from giving any practical support that might trigger fresh upheavals in the area.

This is why, having been pressured early this month by the Syrian regime to withdraw PLO bases from the Lebanese port of Tyre, Arafat flew off to Libya to register with Gaddafi his protest at the lack of support forthcoming from Arab leaders.

Far from participating in a principled and united "anti-imperialist front", Healy has quite obviously and inevitably found himself trampled in the opportunist power politics of anti-communist nationalist leaders.

Hence the sudden and deafening silence on Middle East politics in recent issues of the *Newsline*, accompanied by the steady flow of expulsions and resignations of disgusted WRP members and supporters.

Shift of course by Chinese Stalinists

"China will spend the next 3 years carrying out economic readjustments" scaling down the more ambitious projects announced last year, declared Chairman Hua Quofeng at the opening of the Second Session of the 5th National People's Congress this week.

Clearly this Congress is not to be just a rubber stamping of a continuation of previous decisions.

The government had "underestimated" the effects of the "sabotage" caused by the Gang of Four and would now have to spend time correcting errors.

Difficulties

Stress is now to be placed on the development of light industry so that exports can increase and more consumer goods be made available.

Hua referred to difficulties in meeting demands for fuel, power, transport and communications.



Hua

Capital construction will be curtailed with tight central control on development projects.

The policy of using foreign funds is to be continued and a law on "mixed enterprises with Chinese and foreign capital", keenly awaited by China's main commercial partners, notably Japan and America is to be passed.

A bombshell dropped by Hua also revealed that the USSR has finally agreed to condemn the crime of "hegemony".

And although Hua stressed that the success of forthcoming Sino-Soviet negotiations would depend on whether Moscow made a "substantive change" in its position in practice, the note was one of cautious optimism.

Other revelations were made by Chi Pengfei, a vice-chairman of the standing committee in a press conference on the eve of the Congress.

Secret ballot

He said that the 3,299 deputies would be asked to approve a bill which will give free, direct elections by secret ballot, with a choice of candidates, including non-CP members.

The elections would be for the local, county-level People's Congresses.

In another far-reaching change, the existing thousands of revolutionary committees, set up in the Cultural Revolution, will be changed into People's Governments with powers to act when the full body is not in session.

A new law is also to be proposed which it is claimed,



Deng with former Japanese PM Fukuda

will improve the rights of people on remand.

Restlessness

Two pressures are evident on the bureaucracy in China. The continuing economic problems with the inability of any solution within a backward peasant country faced with the rapacity of imperialism.

And on the other hand, the

restlessness of the masses, demanding more democratic rights and sick of being fed on Marxist exhortations to work harder.

The present clique around Hua and Deng reflect these pressures in their new, more "realistic" policies.

Labour women call for sliding scale of wages

Callaghan's major outburst opposing political action by trade unions to block Tory policies or bring down the government emerged at the Labour Party's Women's Conference at Felixstowe.

But the conference itself went on to adopt a series of policies which stand as a challenge to Callaghan's reactionary line.

Two motions on pay called for a struggle against low pay for women on the basis of a fight for a national minimum wage and a 35 hour week, coupled with a campaign to recruit women into the unions.

And a Manchester resolution went further and called correctly for wages to be protected against inflation through a sliding scale of wages providing increases based on a prices index drawn up by elected com-



Joan Maynard

PHOTO: Peter Harrop, Report

mittees of trade unionists and housewives.

When right wing APEX delegate Irene Gregory opposed the motions on pay and urged that the question be left up to the unions, another delegate immediately responded by pointing

out that Labour's pay limits were imposed by the TUC.

Tribunite 'left' Joan Maynard, who has done nothing to fight for the removal of Labour's right wing leaders, sounded off with belated and muted critical remarks against "certain Labour Cabinet members" who had attacked last winter's pay strikes.

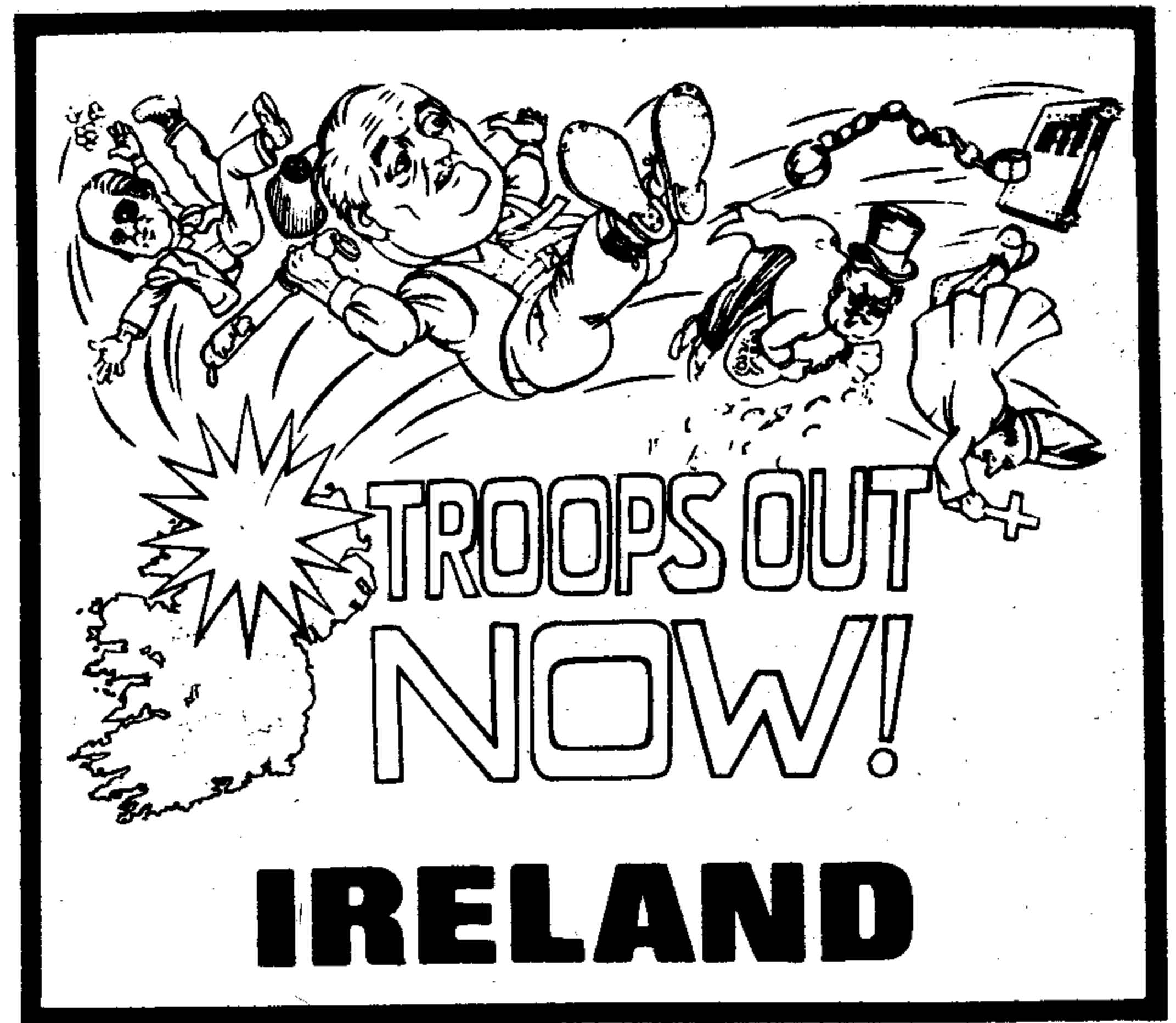
But although one delegate correctly stressed that some of the biggest male chauvinists were to be found in the labour movement, the decision to set up a working party to find ways of recruiting more women to the Party avoided the need to throw aside the reactionary Callaghan leadership and the concentration of Party propaganda on extolling the bourgeois values of the family.

Such a fight requires the construction of a principled revolutionary leadership in the labour movement.

Support grows for Ireland fight

The committee which emerged on an ad-hoc basis from a recent Oxford labour movement conference on Ireland has continued to win growing support from local trade unions and other bodies.

At its meeting last week delegates were present from the Oxford NUJ Branch, the local CPSA/DHSS branch, and the ACTSS 5/833 Branch as well as the local women's movement. Delegates have also been



elected by Oxford Trades Council, while other trade unionists and students continue to attend the committee meetings.

Other labour movement organisations are being approached to support the committee in its campaign for the sending of a 12-strong fact-finding labour movement delegation to Ireland next spring.

The first issue of a bulletin designed to raise this issue and prompt wider discussion on Ireland throughout the local labour movement is due out within two weeks.

The first issue will contain an account of the Oxford conference and a transcript of the speech given to it by troops out campaigner Brendan Gallagher.

Already orders for it from union branches and organisations including the local UTOM/'H' Block Committee amount to nearly 200.

The Committee—which is to be called the Oxford Irish Delegation Committee—also

discussed plans to mobilise the maximum delegation on the national demonstration on Ireland called on August 12.

Though this demonstration has been convened on opportunist slogans which fail to call for the immediate withdrawal of British troops it was agreed that the wide sponsorship the march has received from trade unionists and Labour leaders will make it a focal point for the building of a broad movement against the British war in Ireland.

The Committee agreed to fight where possible for delegations to attend the march on the basis of the policies adopted at the Oxford conference on May 19—

*British Troops Out Now!

*Self determination for the Irish people as a whole.

*Support for the blanket prisoners of Long Kesh and Armagh jail in their struggle for the restoration of PoW status.

*End media censorship of coverage on Ireland.



Brendan Gallagher

PHOTO: Derek Spiers, IFL

Left talk cannot win nurseries

There will obviously be no shortage of rousing 'left' rhetoric from the panel of bureaucrats due to speak at the SE Region TUC's conference "Care of the Under Fives".

But there will be little if any talk of practical action by the TUC or local union officials to defend existing child care facilities from savage Labour government cuts and the prospect of annihilation they now face under the Tories.

So reluctant are the TUC to wage any fight on this, an issue which affects millions of working class women, that their own comprehensive booklet

Care of the Under Fives has for months been out of print, while the much smaller "Under Fives Charter" is obtainable only on request.

In the South East Region, the major struggle waged so far in defence of nursery facilities—the occupation of the South Oxford nursery class—met with a stubborn refusal from union officials to call the supporting strike action that was necessary to take the struggle forward.

This conference therefore provides a good opportunity to contrast the fiery words with the pathetic or outright treacherous actions of the labour bureaucracy on the question of child care and the cuts, and to

discuss the way these issues must be taken up in practice in working class areas and within the workers' movement as a whole through meetings, conferences, strikes and occupations in the fight for:

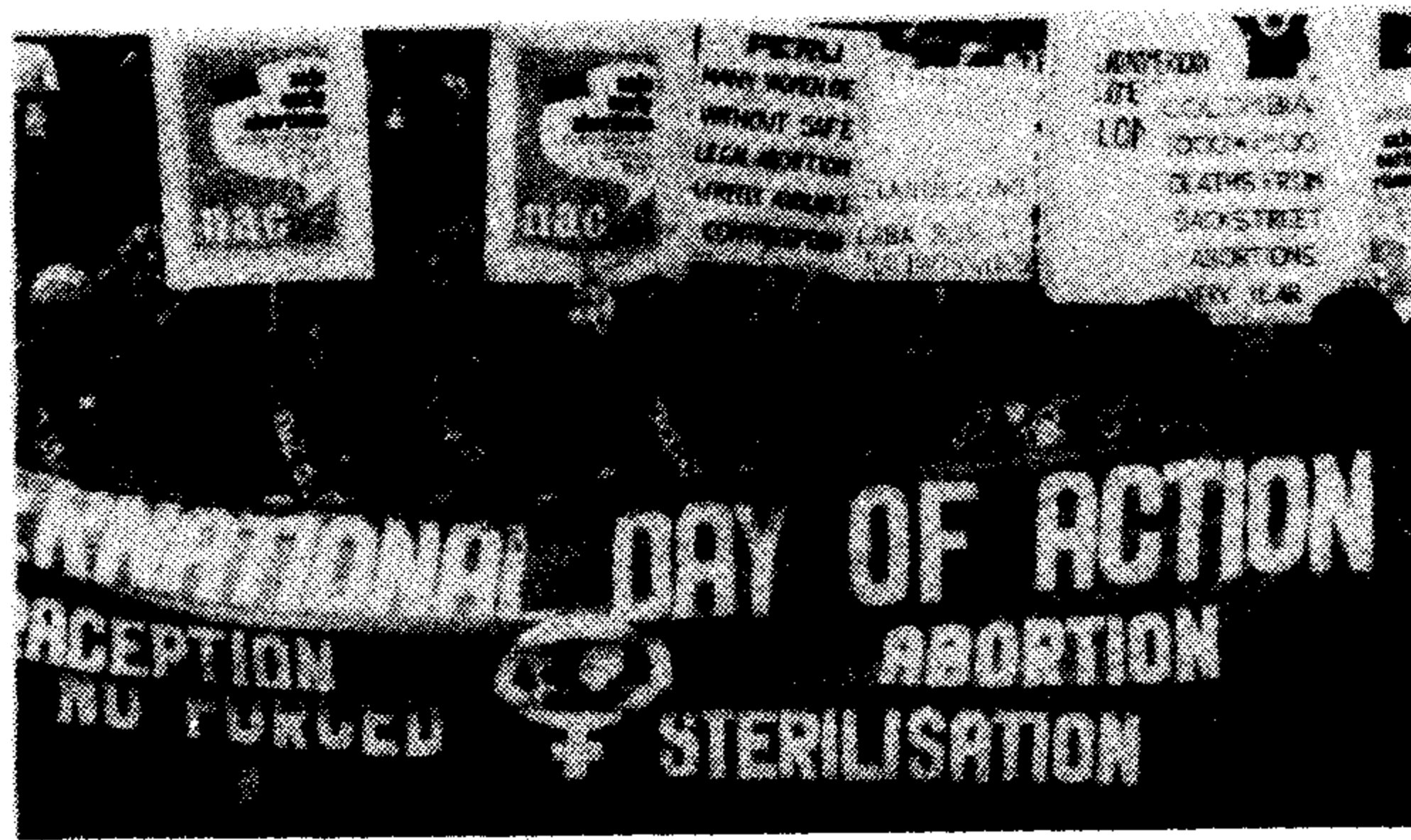
*No cuts and closures! Open all nursery facilities! Protect services from inflation through a sliding scale of spending.

*Expose the profiteers! Open the books of local authorities to show the cash paid out to private contractors, suppliers and banks!

*Demand free state nursery care for the under fives.

*Call on public sector and teaching unions for action to defend services against the cuts!

Abortion rights face two prong attack



A Private Members Bill in the Commons by Tory MP John Corrie that plans to restrict existing abortion rights is only the most obvious attack now being waged on a woman's right to choose.

Corrie's Bill cashes in on the recent spate of sick publicity about crying foetuses left to die on draining boards peddled by the press on the prompting of the religious bigots of the 'Life' group and the Catholic Church.

Lower limit

It proposes to lower the time limit for abortion from the present 28 weeks to 20 weeks.

But this clampdown is only part of a Tory pincer-movement that threatens to leave thousands of working class women saddled with unwanted pregnancies.

The other arm is the public spending cuts and the rigid cash limits on the National Health Service, which with current

rates of inflation rising to 20% in the coming year will mean a curtailment of service.

Forced to wait

This means that already inadequate facilities for abortion will be further cut back, and women will in some cases be forced to wait beyond the 20-week limit.

The only way that such attacks can be fought is through the mobilisation of the trade union and labour movement in strike action and occupations to halt the cuts, and a full-scale campaign for the removal of those reactionary Labour MPs who will undoubtedly vote in favour of the new Tory anti-abortion bill.

Those unions that nominally hold a policy in favour of free abortion on demand must demand that sponsored MPs vote in line with this policy.

To allow the Tory Bill and the cuts to succeed would condemn working class women to the isolation of the home and unrelieved domestic drudgery,

while health care, nursery care, education and the opportunity for employment are ruthlessly cut back.

That all these moves form a pattern of attack against women's rights is far from accidental.

Last week Tory Lord Spens let the cat out of the bag when he declared in a debate on unemployment the government's view that to cut the numbers on the dole:

"Married women should leave paid work to men and stay at home."

But the Tories are not the only ones to attempt to force women back into the stultifying oppression of the home.

Callaghan's election campaign focussed on the values of the family—and even 'enlightened' Labour peer Lord Wallace announced in reply to Lord Spens that:

"Women now have equal opportunities, and many have brains the same as men..."



International Summer School

The WSL is holding its annual international summer school from July 21 to July 29 inclusive. The school is open to members and supporters of the WSL.

This year we are extending a special invitation to EX-MEMBERS OF THE WRP—both those who have been the victims of recent expulsions and those who have found themselves outside the WRP in various ways over the past few years due to the political degeneration of the movement and the increasing bureaucratisation of the internal regime.

The WSL from its inception has based itself on developing the continuity of the strengths that were contained in the SLL/WRP International Committee tradition.

We have stated that these strengths in the period of the 1960s and the early 1970s included the correct insistence that, despite the 'boom' capitalism remained a system of crisis and had not changed; the ability to work carefully and systematically in the unions; the insistence on the importance of Marxist theory, and the centrality of the fight for Trotskyist parties.

But such strengths did not mean that the IC was free from major political weaknesses—weaknesses which showed themselves the more the movement was put to the test of practice.

Today, in the most fertile conditions for revolutionary work, the WRP has reached its deepest stage of political degeneration. Its heritage has been liquidated by its leadership.

The WSL now represents the most developed expression of the continuity of the strengths of the IC tradition and the fight for the Trotskyist programme—its principles and method—developed over the last 4½ years.

One of the tasks of the summer school will be to deepen our understanding of this development as a basis for the struggle to reconstruct the Trotskyist Fourth International.

The main presentations will include: Political Economy; Dialectical Materialism; the International Committee; the USFI; the OCI; and the development of the WSL as an international tendency.

Our founder members were expelled from the WRP in 1974—two weeks before the annual conference. All discussion was stifled. Recent expulsions were on similar lines.

The suppressed discussion must proceed now. Our summer school offers a unique opportunity for that to take place. We think that all ex-SLL/WRP comrades have an obligation to be part of this.

The WSL has of course been consistently slandered by Healy in the Newsline and elsewhere, presumably in order to create a barrier between ourselves and the membership and ex-members of the WRP.

We urge ex-members to examine us on our politics and our practical record and not to be influenced by this approach.

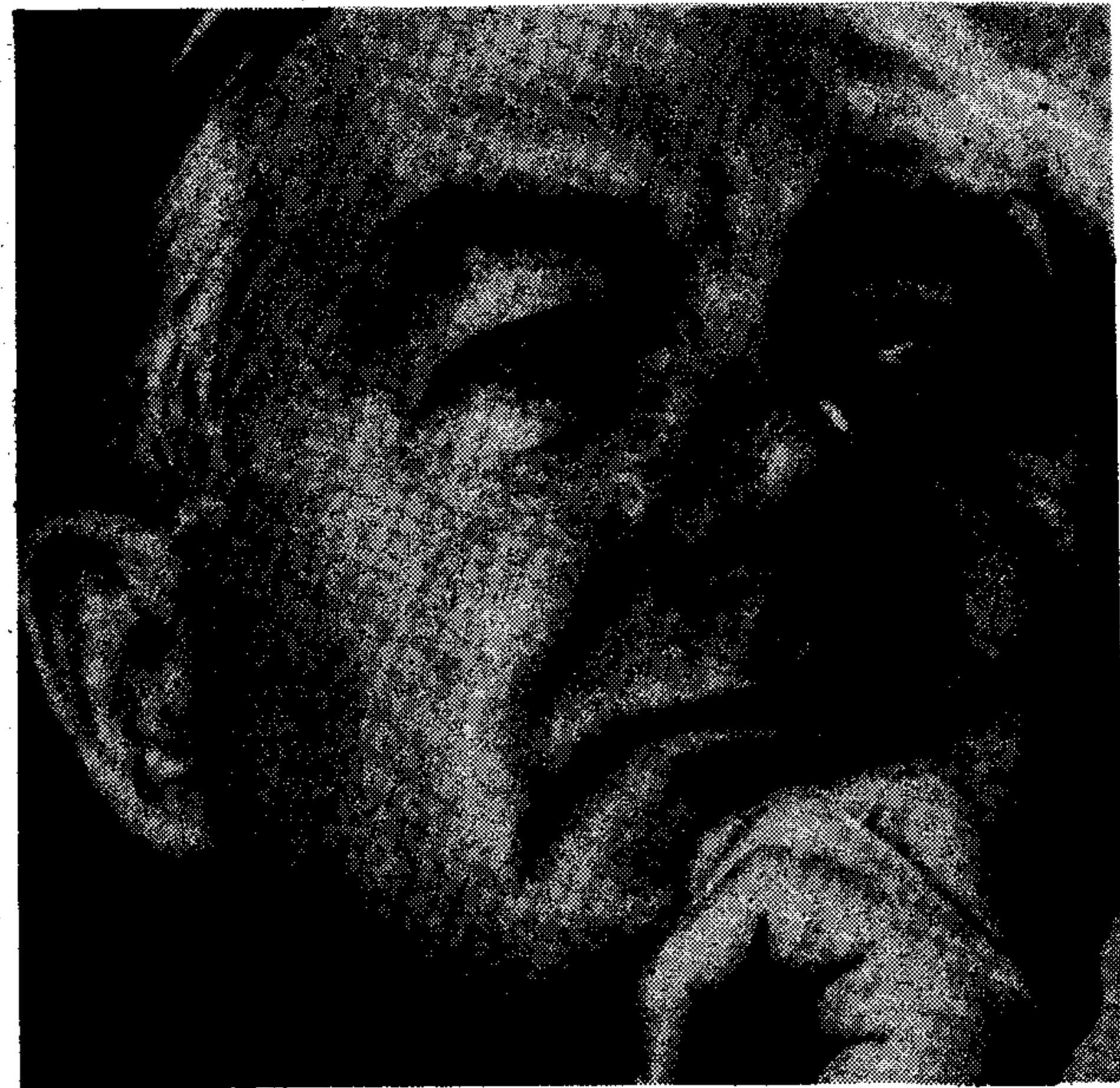
The school will provide the opportunity to discuss all questions on which there may be disagreement.

Write for the agenda of the school plus the practical details. Accommodation will be provided with meals at low cost.

Details from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

As Callaghan seeks more independence from Party policies

ABOLISH THE PLP!



Callaghan

PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

The issue of the independence of the Parliamentary Labour Party and its refusal to be bound by conference decisions of the Labour Party has again come to the fore.

Callaghan's attempts to appropriate the whole of the £160,000 voted to the Opposition by Parliament, as a means of consolidating this independence, have been challenged by Tribune party Treasurer Norman Atkinson.

He and other NEC members have insisted that it should be made clear that the PLP is subject to the control of the national party organisation.

Callaghan, more wary than ever of moves that might make the right-wing dominated PLP in any way answerable to the rank and file of the Labour Party, has replied however that the money should be controlled

entirely by the PLP itself.

In this he has the enthusiastic backing of Tory ministers who are eager to promote the present separation between Party and leadership.

Meanwhile Labour's opportunist 'left' is obviously itself divided on its attitude to the present system of patronage within the PLP. Through this mechanism Callaghan, like other Labour leaders before him, has been able to preserve the control of the right wing leading clique while cynically exploiting individual token 'lefts'.

Appointed

Following the recent PLP ballot which elected 12 of the 17 places on the Shadow Cabinet (11 of them right wingers) Callaghan offered an appointed place on the front bench to both Eric Heffer (a former Labour minister under Wilson— and to rising oppor-



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Kinnock

tunist 'left' Neil Kinnock. Heffer refused, declaring that all the places should be elected, and that it was not worth being "gagged".

Kinnock, however, had no

such objection, and took up Callaghan's offer of the position of Education and Science spokesman.

Both Heffer and Benn, in their plans for the 'democratisation' of the Labour Party, stress, however, the role of the PLP, rather than Party conference in electing the shadow cabinet.

But as long as the PLP continues to function on an autonomous basis, the Party leadership will be able to use procedural excuses to evade the clear mandate of Party conference.

The way forward must be to combine the fight for the removal of the present right wing leadership with the call for the abolition of the PLP, and for all MPs to be answerable to the Party rank and file for their actions.

No such fight will be taken up by Labour's 'left'.

They, like the right wing, see Parliamentary manoeuvres and piecemeal reforms as the way forward to socialism.

Vauxhall Party evicted by millionaire baron

As a fitting tribute to a long, distinguished career, George Russell Strauss was created a life peer by Callaghan in his retiring 'honours' list.

The new baron had been 'Father' of the House of Commons in its last session. Elected to parliament in the 1930s, he had served the electors of Lambeth (Vauxhall) in his own way for forty years.

Increasingly, the electors and the local Labour Party doubted if Strauss's way was the way they wanted their MP to behave.

Marginal

It even began to look as if what should have been a solidly safe Labour seat might become

a marginal as increasing numbers of Labour voters failed to turn out to put Strauss in.

As a metals millionaire (and Minister of Supply 1947-51), owner of several desirable residences (and landlord of the constituency party headquarters), Strauss was not unduly concerned, and did not even bother to appear more frequently before local voters (he did not of course live in the constituency).

Taking all this into consideration, and noting his advanced age (Strauss was born in 1901),

the local GC did not re-adopt their former MP as candidate for the General Election.

Scarcely able to believe his senses, Strauss fought against these moves and was defeated.

But, with typical generosity, Callaghan has given his old ally the opportunity to continue a monotonous record of right-wing reformism in the House of Lords.

While the baron idles out the rest of an active, if totally unproductive life at his Mediterranean villa, the Lambeth (Vauxhall) LP is less well off.

As a parting shot, Strauss ended their lease on his Georgian terraced house in Kennington. While the party is homeless for the moment, their old headquarters are up for auction.

Profitable

There is no suggestion that the proceeds might be used to aid the local party and its new MP (Stuart Holland) or any other section of the labour movement. No doubt Strauss has more profitable ventures in mind.

Call to seize industries

A surprisingly militant resolution has been tabled for the 1979 Labour Party Conference by the Oxford CLP.

This called for the next Labour government, in its first session, to re-nationalise without compensation any sectors of industry denationalised by the Tories—a policy specifically attacked by Callaghan only a few weeks ago.

The Oxford resolution had come from the right-wing led TGWU 5/60 branch (Body Plant, British Leyland, Cowley) and obviously reflected the resistance of workers to the plans of the Thatcher government.

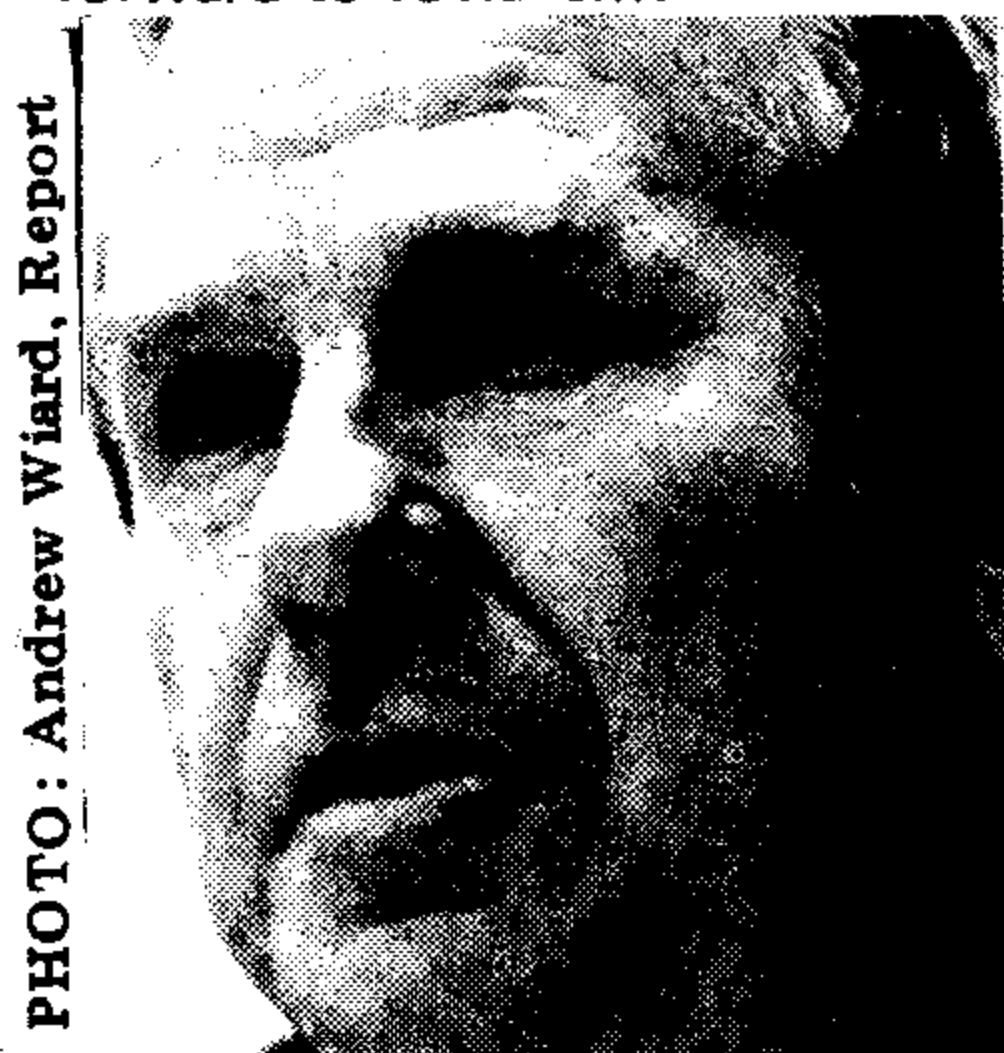


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Shadow 'left' Orme

And the 'lefts' themselves dread being called to account for their own betrayals and capitulations to Callaghan—which at present take place behind the closed doors of the PLP.

HEFFER VERSUS HEFFER: LABOUR'S GREAT DEBATE GRINDS INTO ACTION

Stop yawning! This is the great debate on the way forward for the Labour Party after the Wilson-Callaghan debacle!

Day after day now the capitalist press and the papers of the labour movement carry careful advertising statements by

faded Labour 'lefts' desperately trying to polish up their tarnished image without actually calling for or launching any fight to remove the Callaghan leadership clique.

Every move and skilfully ambiguous statement by Tony Benn, in particular, is obligingly retailed in the press as evidence of an impending left-wing take over of the Party—while Benn in practice makes no effort to challenge Callaghan's outright opposition to working class action against Thatcher.

Juggler

But the most bizarre public relations exercise must surely be that being carried out by Eric Heffer. Like a third-rate juggler, he is struggling to keep two rather deflated balls in the air at the same time.

For the trendy 'lefts' of the Tribune Group and the Stalinists of the Morning Star Heffer has cultivated a 'radical' image; for the staid old reformists who plough through Labour Weekly each week he has retained a more respectable face.

On June 21 the Morning Star published Heffer's Tribune Group paper on "political perspectives" which begins by unambiguously stating that: "Right wing policies within the Labour Party have proved a failure".

Yet in Labour Weekly of June 22, Heffer appears in more studied pose, weighing the merits of each side:

"There are those in the party who, looking for scapegoats (as well as trying to excuse their own policy failures) for the defeat in the General Election will blame everything on Party organisation or the Left and the NEC.

"There are others (. . .) who will blame the 1974-79 Labour Government's policies, particularly the 5 per cent wages policy".

Take your choice, Labour Weekly readers!

But Heffer's split personality develops more dramatically in divergent directions. His Tribune discussion article calls not only for nationalisation but also "as an essential part of it", for "democratic management, on an elected basis".

No such policy appears in his Labour Weekly article.

Peaceful road

Heffer's Tribune statement takes up—surprisingly—the question of whether there is a peaceful road to socialism:

" . . . it would be nice, but completely wrong, to believe that the political establishment based on the economic power of the big capitalists, will cheerfully allow us to carry

through our programme without serious opposition.

"The experiences of Italy, Spain and Germany before the war, and Greece, Chile, Uruguay, Brazil, etc. since the war should make us worry about such matters."

Learned nothing

Of course Heffer goes on to show he has learned nothing by proposing the Stalinist line of "democratising" rather than the Marxist position of *disbanding* the repressive machinery of the capitalist state—the police and the armed forces.

This rings remarkably hollow from the man who proposed the NEC's reactionary resolution on law and order at last year's Labour Party conference.

But it is a position far to the left of Heffer in Labour Weekly who talks of the role of Labour Parliamentarians as simply:

"to steer society in a socialist direction."

The Labour Weekly article goes further and declares that:

"There are two areas of immediate importance for the party—policy and organisation. With regard to policy, it is not new ones which are required, as we already have excellent policies."

What is lacking, he declares, is:

"the will and determination

on the part of some leading members to fight for them".

Does he propose then a campaign to create conditions to remove these unnamed "leading members"?

Certainly not! Neither face of Heffer offers any perspective for such a fight.

As for foreign policy and Heffer's concept of 'internationalism', this is a topic reserved for the Tribune Group and the Morning Star.

Labour Weekly readers are deprived of the chance to see that Heffer thinks:

"It is important for us to be in support of the colonial revolutions".

But then, since Heffer stands in practice *opposed* to the colonial revolution currently taking place against British imperialism only a few miles away from his Merseyside constituency, in Ireland, perhaps it is Labour Weekly readers who get the truer picture of his real positions.

Indeed five years of Labour in government have demonstrated repeatedly that Heffer is as spineless as any of the Tribune 'left': the first weeks of Tory government have shown that he is also two-faced in Opposition.



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Heffer



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

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• The significance of the Transitional Programme
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SWP: THE POLITICS OF 'STATE CAPITALISM'

Part Two of a series by Keith White

The leadership of the International Marxist Group are fond of quoting Trotsky to the effect that it would be monstrous to split with comrades over the analysis of the Soviet Union—if firm agreement existed on the political tasks of the day.

We would agree with Trotsky but not with the IMG, for the Cliff theory of state capitalism has a profound effect on the politics of the SWP—something we begin to explain below.

Every communist in Britain and advanced capitalist countries sooner or later is confronted by the jibe "Get back to Russia". Everyone who attempts to fight in the working class for a communist perspective has to answer the question "it didn't work in Russia why should it work here?"

In answering these attacks and questions comrades often find there is little time before the questioner throws up his or her hands and walks away. It is a test of those who would argue to the home communist that they resist the temptation to adapt themselves to this sometimes hostile environment by rushing to disclaim any responsibility, for what both the stalinists falsely call the communist 'states' and the capitalist class each for their own reasons.

The fight for a clear understanding of the Soviet Union and other stalinist states is a central part of the struggle for revolutionary parties throughout the world.

Public opinion

If the pressure of bourgeois 'public opinion' is great in Britain today, what must it have been like at the height of the Cold War? Certainly in the USA communists were subjected to the most vicious campaigns. Many lost their jobs or were jailed.

The most famous victims were of course the Rosenbergs executed on trumped up charges of spying for the Soviet Union.

These were the material conditions that explain the emergence of the present day Socialist Workers Party in Britain.

Now Socialist Workers Party spokesman Paul Foot writes that:

"The International Socialists started in the early 1960's as a very small fringe group."

(Why You Should be a Socialist p91).

But he is not being entirely honest.

Fled from fight

We can date the emergence of the IS/SWP from 1950 when a group around Tony Cliff fled from the Trotskyist movement at the time of the Korean War and growing Cold War propaganda to form the Socialist Review Group.

This is significant in view of the fact that, as we began to show last week, SWP today has a profound contempt for



Paul Foot

Marxist theory.

But we should note that this same group had its origins in a 1950's theoretical discussion circle which scarcely intervened in the class struggle at all.

This seemingly contradictory development becomes understandable once one considers the nature of the theories which the Socialist Review group developed, and the class pressures which gave rise to these theories.

The post-war world differed from what Trotskyists had expected in two fundamental ways.

On the one hand the Stalinist bureaucracy emerged from the war with its power extended by the absorption of Eastern Europe and later China into its orbit of influence.

Betrays

On the other hand, the betrayal of the Stalinists in Western Europe enabled capitalism to re-establish itself on a more stable basis.

Both these developments were based on the betrayal of the working class internationally by its mass leaders during the war and in the years 1944-1947.

These betrayals in turn led to the isolation of the only groups calling for a proletarian revolution, the Trotskyists.

The anti-communist witch-hunt which developed made it very difficult to maintain the Trotskyist position of defending the nationalised property relations in the Soviet Union as a gain for the working class.

Reacting to these Tony Cliff began to question whether Russia was a workers' state.

Theory and practice

What then, was the immediate effect of Cliff's theories on his comrades' practice in the early 1950's? Ian Birchall in his history

of IS-Part 1 (int. Soc. No 76) claims that the Socialist Review Group: "made no concessions to the Western Alliance and the South Korean dictatorship it supported."

He quotes from Socialist Review of Nov/Dec 1951 that:

"The Labour movement must oppose the alliance with Truman, Adenauer, Syngman Rhee and other representatives of 'Western Democracy'. They must fight for an alliance with the millions of toilers of Europe, Asia, Africa and the rest of the world."

He also quotes the May 1952 issue which denounced 'the full-scale colonial wars in Vietnam and Malaya.'

Adaptation

However, Birchall made no attempt to include in these brief lines any attempt to rebut the evidence brought forward by Ken Tarbuck (who was Secretary of the Socialist Review Group in its initial period) that the first issue of Socialist Review carried two articles on the Korean War which adapted the two pressures of public opinion.

"In fact two articles appeared on this question in the first issue of Socialist Review. The very first article in the journal was 'The struggle of the Powers' by R. Vennart (Tony Cliff). This devoted two pages to criticising American imperialism—and nearly five pages to attacking 'Russian imperialism'."



Polish workers riot in 1970: clarity is needed in struggle for political revolution



Trotsky—fought Stalinism from Marxist standpoint

The other article on this question was entitled 'Whither Socialist Outlook' (the Healy Group's paper in the Labour Party).

Attack

This is a scathing attack on the "pro-Stalinist" policy being pursued by Socialist Outlook (which supported North Korea against US imperialism).

It very clearly separated Socialist Review from such policies and took an uncompromising 'third camp' position.

Thus at a crucial time when imperialism was threatening the North Korean and Chinese states Socialist Review appeared and played the role of left cover for the enemies of those fighting in the British labour movement for defence of the workers states.

Cliff's book Russia—A Marxist Analysis bases itself on the absence of workers' democracy at all levels in Russia.

It argues that in the absence of workers control over planning, the bureaucracy becomes a class whose survival depends on a high rate of capital accumulation to defend itself against the Western powers and against its own working class.

Parties

The Stalinist parties it claims are just the representatives of one particular capitalist class in the other capitalist countries.

The greatest danger of such an analysis is that it ignores the historical significance of the Soviet Union in the international workers movement.

It is no accident that the Stalinist parties lead the masses of workers and peasants in most parts of the world.

That is a consequence of the Russian revolution. The power of the Stalinists to lead and betray millions rests entirely on the fact that capitalism has been abolished in the Soviet Union.

With a state capitalist theory it becomes completely impossible to understand the strength of Stalinism and the importance of the struggle against it.

State capitalism is a theory which is useless in guiding the everyday struggle against Stalinism in the working class but which provided an attractive pole for recruitment in the petty bourgeois intelligentsia disgusted with the cold war, and moving towards pacifist and non-class organisations such as CND.

Eloquent

If the members of the SWP want to find the most eloquent denunciations of the bureaucracy they need look no further than Trotsky, but they will find in his writings neither liberal revisionism nor adaptation to Stalinism.

In Trotsky's major work

Chinese troops in Korea in 1950

"Revolution Betrayed" his starting point is an attempt to define the class nature of the Soviet state was not simply to ask "do the workers control the state?" but to look at the ruling bureaucracy from the point of view of its relationship to the means of production.

"The nationalisation of the land, the means of industrial production, transport and exchange, together with the monopoly of foreign trade constitute the basis of Soviet social structure. Through these relations, established by the proletarian revolution, the nature of the Soviet Union as a proletarian state is for us basically defined." (p 248).

Defend USSR

It was because of those nationalised property relations that time and time again Trotsky insisted on the need to defend the Soviet Union in the event of an attack by imperialism.

Under capitalism the means of production are held in the form of private property. The capitalist produces commodities for sale on the market in order to expand his private capital.

The expansion of capital is the increase in value held by the ruling class either in money or in the means of production.

The source of this value is that proportion of the labour time worked by those who are forced to sell their labour power for which they are unpaid.

This process does not take place in the Soviet economy, where what is in fact accumulated is not capital but means of production.

The bureaucracy, to be sure, makes certain that it creams off the necessary resources to provide itself with privileges and the comforts of life. But the process by which this takes place is one of appropriation, not exploitation.

Again, as Trotsky writes: "The attempt to represent the Soviet bureaucracy as a class of 'state capitalists' will obviously not withstand criticism."

"The bureaucracy has neither stocks nor bonds. It is recruited, supplemented and renewed in the manner of an administrative hierarchy, independently of any special property relations of its own."

"The individual bureaucrat cannot transmit to his heirs his rights in the exploitation of the state apparatus."

"The bureaucracy enjoys its privileges under the form of an abuse of power."

"It conceals its income; it pretends that as a special social group it does not even exist."

"Its appropriations of a vast share of the national income has the character of social parasitism."



Cliff's group refused to defend Korea, the Soviet Union China or Eastern Europe against imperialism

"All this makes the position of the commanding Soviet stratum in the highest degree contradictory, equivocal and undignified, notwithstanding the completeness of its power and the smokescreen of flattery that conceals it."

The crisis which faces the capitalists and that which faces the Stalinist bureaucracies are intimately related, but are different in origin.

The capitalist faces a crisis of profits: but the bureaucrat faces a crisis ushered in by the impossibility of constructing socialism in one country in a hostile capitalist world.

This is compounded by the inefficiencies of bureaucratic production methods which suppress that force—the working class—which alone can express "the deeply rooted inner needs of production" (*In Defence of Marxism*, p.7).

That is to say, while the working class is prevented from taking charge of the socially owned means of production, no efficient planning can take place.

Strides forward

Despite the crushing weight of the bureaucracy, however, great strides have been made by the soviet economy.

Logically, therefore, the IS/SWP theory of state capitalism should lead to a recognition that the productive forces can be expanded through the medium of state capitalist regimes, and that they are therefore progressive in relation to a rotting crisis-ridden capitalism.

For a marxist this would lead to a position of support for the Soviet 'ruling class' as against the Western capitalist classes.

But even this line the IS/SWP is not prepared to take up for two very simple reasons—it conflicts with the IS/SWP line of accommodation to anti-communist pressure in Western capitalist society; and their political theories are not marxist but liberal.

For Trotskyists, the developments which have taken place in the Soviet economy are the result of the nationalised property relations which are in fact held back, restricted and ultimately endangered by the Soviet bureaucracy.

Not finished

Trotsky in no way regarded the class nature of the Soviet union to be a finished question.

"The scientific task as well as the political is not to give a finished definition to an unfinished process but to follow all its stages, separate its progressive from its reactionary tendencies, expose their mutual

relations, foresee possible variants of development and find in this foresight a basis for action" (*Revolution Betrayed*, pp.255-256).

The definition Trotsky gave was as follows:

"The Soviet Union is a contradictory society halfway between capitalism and socialism, in which (a) the productive forces are still far from adequate to give the state property a socialist character; (b) the tendency towards primitive accumulation created by want breaks out through innumerable pores of the planned economy; (c) norms of distribution preserving a bourgeois character lie at the basis of a new differentiation of society; (d) the economic growth, while slowly bettering the situation of the toilers, promotes a swift formation of privileged strata; (e) exploiting the social antagonisms, a bureaucracy has converted itself into an uncontrolled caste alien to socialism; (f) the social revolution, betrayed by the ruling party, still exists in property relations and in the consciousness of the toiling masses; (g) a further development of the accumulating contradictions can as well lead to socialism as back to capitalism; (h) on the road to capitalism the counter-revolution would have to break the resistance of the workers; (i) on the road to socialism the workers would have to overthrow the bureaucracy. In the last analysis the question will be decided by a struggle of living social forces, both on the national and the world arena" (p. 255).

It is this contradictory, dialectical nature of the Soviet Union that the IS/SWP cannot grasp.

For them something is either A or B—but never a combination of both.

The post-war social over- turns by Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe, China and by Stalinist-backed nationalist forces in Cuba have further complicated the situation for those who want to see the world in such black and white terms.

The IS/SWP are correct in pointing to the widespread confusion in the Trotskyist movement in relation to Stalinism; but they themselves have taken a step far more serious than have the opportunist sections of the post-war Fourth International, and openly abandoned Trotskyism altogether.

Those members of the SWP who wish seriously to study these questions will be prepared to study the work on Stalinism carried out by the WSL—especially our book *Communists Against Revolu-*

tion'. There they will see a development of Trotsky's positions into an analysis of the post-war world reality.

Again the contradictory nature of Stalinism has to be grasped if we are to understand the process which has gone on.

For us the deformed workers' states created by the Stalinists in Moscow, Peking, Belgrade, Havanna, Hanoi etc.—for all their manifest reactionary aspects—are gains for the working class internationally.

understood to mean the expansionist policy of finance capital ..."

While stressing the fact that the bureaucracy is indeed an agent of imperialism within the workers' state, Trotsky goes on to say:

"If we want to define the foreign policy of the Kremlin exactly, we must say that it is the policy of the Bonapartist bureaucracy of a degenerated workers' state in imperialist encirclement. This definition is not as short or as sonorous as



Tony Cliff

Yet we must repeat that in those states it is only the nationalised property relations which we defend.

We are implacably opposed to the bureaucracies which oppress the workers there. Like Trotsky, we refuse to defend each and every action of the Stalinists on a world scale.

For us as with Trotsky there are no blue-prints, no pat formulae:

"In every case the Fourth International will know how to distinguish where and when the Red Army is acting solely as an instrument of the Bonapartist reaction and where it defends the social basis of the USSR."

In his dispute with the Schachtmanite opposition that argued for a "state capitalist" view of the Soviet Union within the US Trotskyist party, the SWP, Trotsky posed the question "Can the present expansion of the Kremlin be termed imperialism?"

His reply to his own question is that: "... in contemporary literature, at least Marxist literature, imperialism is

capitalist states?

Would this not usher in a new period of capitalist accumulation and growth?

We know that the Kremlin attempts to check the upsurge of the colonial revolution.

But what would be the effect on colonial revolutions of a successful reconquest of power by western capitalism in what you call the "state capitalist" countries?

Cliff argued in *"Russia—a Marxist analysis"* that the development of a new capitalist class was inevitable if Russia remained isolated.

The alternative economic policies advocated by Preobrazhensky and Bukharin both led to the restoration of capitalism.

This view is extended in *"Deflected Permanent Revolution"* to an international scale.

A working class victory in any backward country is said to be impossible, whereas a state capitalist development would develop the productive forces rapidly and lay the basis for a socialist revolution.

Neutrality

This new development of the theory enabled IS to move from a position of neutrality as the Korean War (which was seen as a squabble over spheres of influence of rival capitalist powers) to a position of support for the NLF in Vietnam (a state capitalist victory would be progressive).

It is interesting that this political shift by IS coincided with a shift in the position of the British petit-bourgeoisie from pacifism towards support for anti-imperialist struggle (as long as they were a long way away).

The theory that state capitalism in backward countries could be progressive was always implied in the theory of state capitalism itself.

But its formal development marked a further important step in the IS break with Trotskyism. It undermined the whole Leninist concept of the present imperialist epoch as the highest stage of capitalism.

If there is in fact a higher form of capitalism which can develop the third world, then clearly capitalism as a system is not rotten ripe for socialism, and the crisis of proletarian leadership is not immediately posed.

This reactionary theory clearly lies behind both IS's refusal in the 60s to recognise the importance of building a disciplined party, and its theory of the "vacuum on the left".

Permanent arms economy

To put this further in perspective it is necessary to look at the Socialist Review

Group's explanation of the 'long boom', which rests on their theory of the 'permanent arms economy'.

According to this notion, the arms race between capitalist and state capitalist countries provides a highly profitable investment sector and soaks up surplus capital which could otherwise cause a recession.

This whole argument flies in the face of marxist economics. In the first place, arms as part of the luxury goods sector are financed out of the profits of the consumer and producer goods sector.

A high level of profitability in arms can only be financed by higher taxation—which must reduce profits correspondingly in the other sectors.

Furthermore, the whole expenditure on arms is a burden on the productive sectors and will slow down the accumulation of productive capital.

Shortage

Far from capitalism suffering from a surplus of capital it suffers from an ever more and more acute shortage as the declining rate of profit takes effect.

The only way arms expenditure can benefit a capitalist country is if through use of the arms it enables the country in question by imperialist exploitation to obtain raw materials more cheaply than its rivals.

The IS theory, insofar as it is consistently held, suggests that because there is a surplus of capital, the struggle of the working class for a greater share of production, and of the third world countries against imperialism actually strengthen capitalism.

This is of course a capitulation to the worst kinds of Keynesian bourgeois economics, which deny any difference of interests between workers and capital.

It was a theory most popular in the petit-bourgeoisie during the "boom", but which reality has rudely shattered in the 1970s.

The "theories" of the Permanent Arms Economy and of Deflected Permanent Revolution raised the prospect of a long period of stability, in which the building of a party was not only a hopeless but even an unnecessary task.

This again fitted conveniently with the petit-bourgeois lifestyle and outlook of the Socialist Review Group and its periphery.

It did not locate the causes of a temporary stability precisely in the crisis of leadership of the world proletariat.

Its theory was an explanation by adaptation to petit-bourgeois prejudice. In no way could it serve as a basis for action.

When IS began to recruit workers it was therefore to be expected that it would adapt to their level of consciousness in the same way as it had to the petit-bourgeoisie.

But it still remains an essentially petit-bourgeois group.

Because it does not see things in terms of a crisis of leadership, it has developed the notion that there is a "vacuum" of leadership in the working class rather than a conscious counter-revolutionary leadership of reformists and Stalinists.

It therefore thinks that all that is needed is to generalise the struggles of the class, and not to break the political hold of the existing leadership.

Petty bourgeois

It is precisely the petty-bourgeois nature of IS theory which has led to the opposition to Marxist theory so crudely displayed by its leadership and reflected among its members.

Their theory has no relation to their everyday needs in struggle, and they are therefore left to their spontaneous political responses.

These spontaneous moods and feelings are of course no match for the developed counter-revolutionary understanding of the capitalists and their reformist and Stalinist servants.

Continued next week

In December 1974 Jeremy Isaacs, head of Thames TV sent out a notorious memo.

It read in part: "The law in this country has changed. I am advised that it is illegal to interview on television members of organisations proscribed under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. So far the schedule of proscribed organisations consists of only one, the IRA."

"From now on it is imperative that no approach be made by any of you for an interview with any member of a terrorist organisation in this country without the prior consent of the Controller of Current Affairs and Documentaries, John Edwards, who will obtain my positive approval before giving permission to go ahead."

In the annals of British reporting of Ireland this is just one of the written instructions to censor the opinions of republicans in Ireland which have become part of the history of the British media, and therefore of British imperialism.

The history of the press in Ireland closely mirrors the history of the British government policy. For those inside newspapers and television who, however dimly, perceive this, the state has an arsenal of weapons equal to their military strength.

Special hatred

For those liberals who seek 'balance' the army holds a special hatred. Editors, TV authorities and the journalists themselves are squeezed or cajoled into softening their line or abandoning it. Deaths are put at their door.

The TV films are banned, delayed or distorted. In the last resort those reporters or editors don't work again on Irish articles or films.

The army has a massive press and information department. The RUC a smaller one. More often than not these are the sole sources of the 'news' of bombings and shootings in Ireland.

These departments have a history of feeding 'stories' directly into the pages of the national press.

Within the establishment of the press, which is constantly haranguing the world on its own virtues, there is no opposition. When in 1971 Christopher Chataway, Tory minister responsible for broadcasting reminded TV and radio that their reports on Ireland must fall within "the values and the objectives of the society they are there to serve", Lord Hill, chairman of the BBC replied approvingly:

"... between the British Army and the gunmen the BBC is not and cannot be impartial."

To be welcomed

Details of the method of suppression by the state of information or analysis of events in Ireland have been outlined in two recent pamphlets. Neither can be accepted as presenting a clear class account of the relationship between the press and the state, but both pamphlets are to be welcomed.

First hand evidence of the pressure and suppression of news or comment adverse to the army interests is, whatever the other deficiencies of the pamphlets, essential reading for all concerned with fighting for the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

The glossier of the two is produced by the Campaign for Free Speech on Ireland and is called "The British Media and Ireland—Truth the First Casualty".

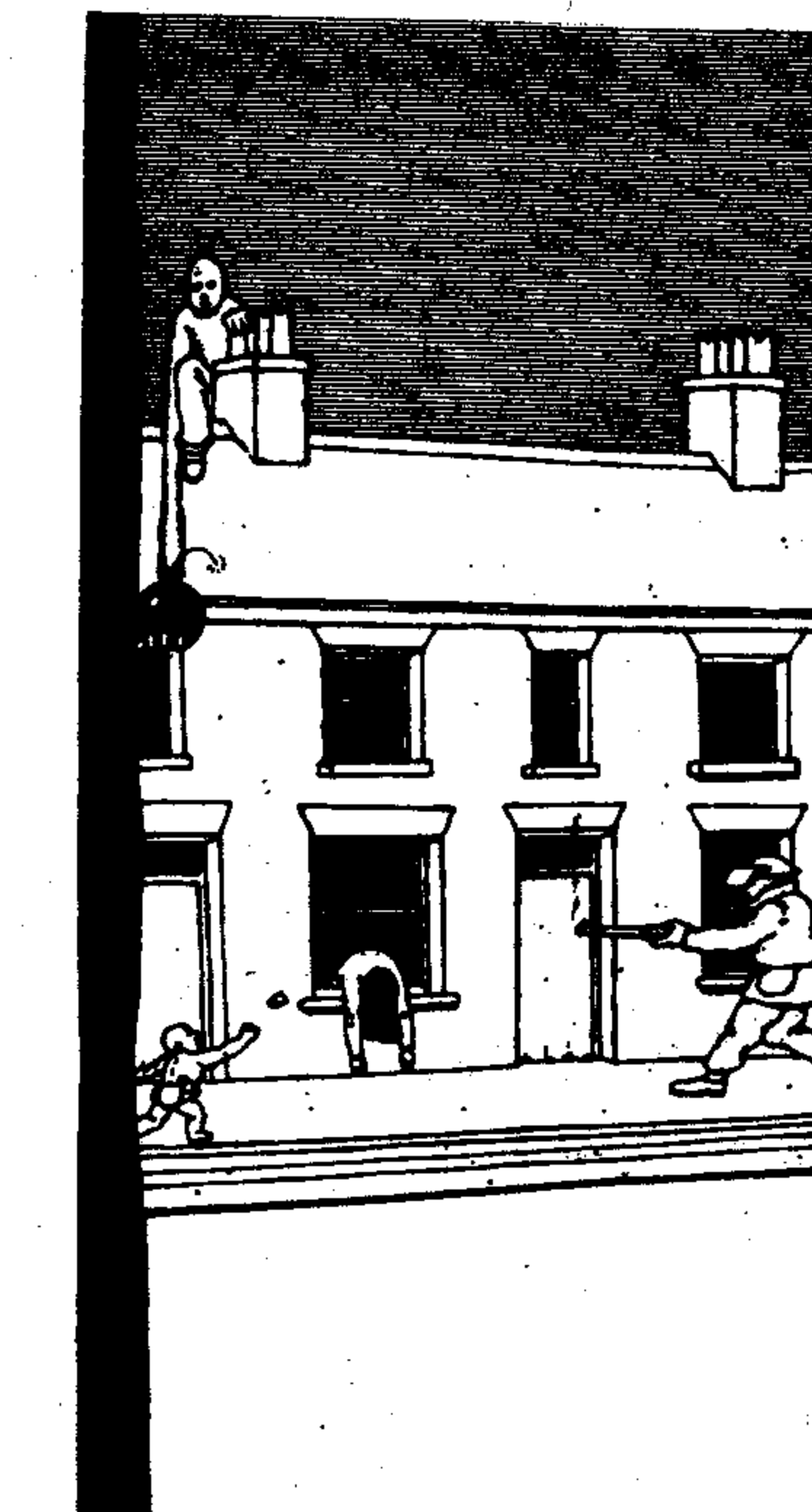
Resigned

It is strongly represented by TV reporters and producers who have had programmes edited or censored on Ireland, from This Week reporter Peter Taylor, to Roland Joffe, director of the play about Willie Gallagher's Diplock Trial: The Legion Hall Bombing.

Many of the contributors have attempted to take on the might of the TV empires single handed and most have failed.

Some have resigned their jobs. None gets close to pointing the way forward towards ending the censorship.

Because they see themselves as professionals defending an abstract ethic, some of the liberals who have fought these



HOW THE MEDIA BACK THE BRITISH WAR EFFORT

reports, immediate eye witness accounts were later ignored, in favour of army (police) accounts.

Although this pamphlet attempts to place the censorship in terms of imperialism there is no analysis of the struggle against British imperialism itself.

Fail to progress

The producers of the pamphlet would certainly argue that this was not its aim, but the effect is to fail to progress from liberal demands for a 'freer' press to revolutionary demands for an end to imperialism in Ireland or indeed for nationalisation of the press under workers' control.

It also allows some odd mixture of articles. One concentrates on lambasting one journalist in the pocket of the British army, in a way which suggests that the problem of reporting in Ireland is an individual one.

However there is again a wealth of material illustrating particular examples of how stories are released by the army and used as front page news without any checking, and of censorship.

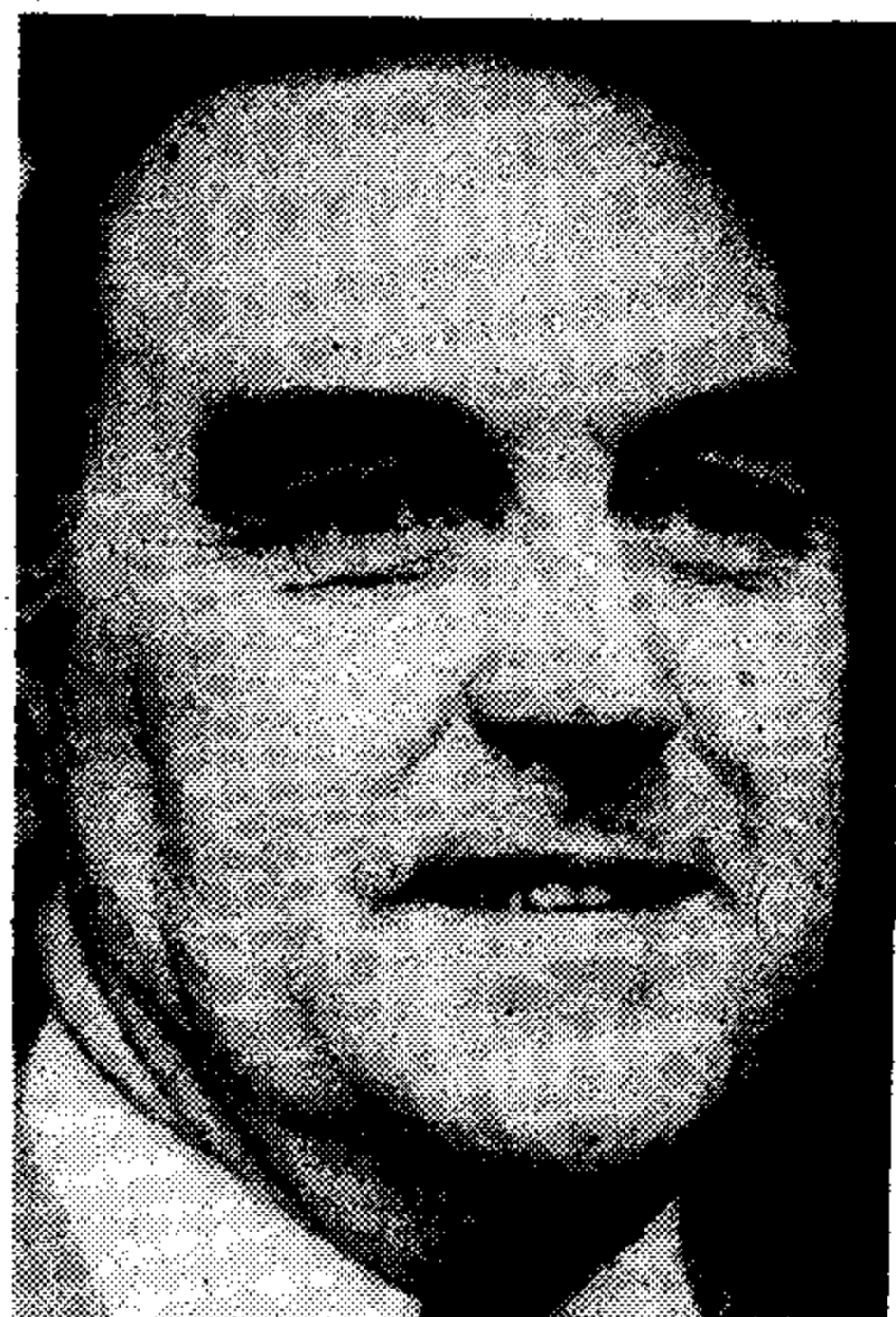


PHOTO: Derek Spiers, IFL

"Belfast Bulletin", headed Media Misreport N. Ireland, also contains a run down on the main capitalist papers in Northern Ireland, a detailed analysis of the press coverage of the Ulster Workers Council strike in 1974, and an account of the strike and subsequent closure of Ballantynes sports-wear factory in Coleraine.

This last article is notable for ignoring almost completely the role of the union bureaucracy during the strike, occupation of the plant and subsequent defeat of the workers.

It comes to the remarkable conclusion:

"In metropolitan capitalist countries like Britain a strong trade union movement is in a better position, given militant leadership, to defend workers' gains than in an isolated dependent economy like Northern Ireland's... The lesson of Ballantynes is that strong trade union organisation and an economy dependent on foreign capital cannot exist side by side in Northern Ireland... if anywhere."

If the Belfast Workers Research Unit think that workers are somehow able to counter capitalism without a political leadership and organisation capable of raising them to the necessary level—which means a revolutionary political party—then they will have little to offer workers on the way forward in struggle.

battles become totally confused over where and how to fight.

David Elstein, who is more perceptive than most, says:

"What the public knows nothing about at all is the most sophisticated process of self-censorship."

"That is when the 'brave' producer carefully stakes out the ground he thinks worth defending against institutional assault and thereby concedes all the ground which is never put in contention, and so is defined as untenable. By playing the game, the producer endorses the rules."

Colin Thomas, a BBC director, self critically describes how this liberal opposition crumbles.

He agreed to make a series of films on Ireland ("not what I wanted but was, I felt, better than nothing") and filmed in Derry among other places. When he returned and looked at the film "my heart sank".

He had made a film about oppression and poverty and about unemployment. He had not included any film of the army which would not have met with the approval of the army PR department.

"It was not the fault of the film editor. I myself had failed to put on film examples of army oppression that I had learned of during my stay there: the beating up of Catholics and Protestants by soldiers coming to an end of their tour of duty; the ruthless searches of Catholic homes; more than £1,000 of

apparently malicious damage done to a Catholic community centre at which I had filmed."

He then describes how most reporters explain away these 'apses' to themselves:

"In conversations with friends I attempted to do what I had so often done in the past—claim the small victories and disown the substantial defeat."

Eventually the film, inadequate as it was, proved too strong meat for the BBC who ordered cuts. One of these was to exclude the headstone of a grave on which a Catholic mother was placing flowers. It read: "Murdered by British Paratroopers on Bloody Sunday".

Thomas had had enough. He resigned. His only turn to the unions was to print what happened to him in the ACTT union paper.

Methods

If the breastbeating of the liberal consciences is a bit overpowering, the pamphlet does bring home in some detail the methods by which BBC and the IBA comply with government wishes on Ireland. Mason was reputed to have barked that if he had had control of the BBC the army in Ireland would have won. By and large he has had control.

One virtue of the pamphlet is a brief introduction by David Brazil in which the reporting of the war in Ireland is put into

the context of censorship in wars in general.

During the Boer war a film of a Red Cross tent being bombed was mocked up on Hampstead Heath and shown to the British public as the real thing.

Sacked

During the Korean war the editor of Picture Post, Tom Hopkinson, was sacked because he refused to scrub a report from James Cameron on the treatment of political prisoners by the South Koreans. The owner, Sir Edward Hulton, claimed it would provide "aid and comfort to the enemy".

The second pamphlet, "Belfast Bulletin", is one of a series produced by the Belfast Workers Research Unit.

An introduction puts the reporting of Ireland into the context of capitalist owned press and points to the way in which claims to balance, fairness and independence are used to justify banning republican viewpoints.

There are revealing quotes from reporters and sub editors. (Sub Editor: "You don't always have time to check out the army's account. After all it is the British army and we are on their side.")

Ignored

After Bloody Sunday many of the Fleet Street papers

carried immediate eye witness accounts squarely pinning blame on the army.

In subsequent days articles began appearing 'debating' who was to blame.

In a procedure reminiscent of the Blair Peach murder

Belfast Bulletin
65p plus 15p p&p
from 52, Broadway
Belfast 12

The British Media and Ireland
50p plus 15p p&p
from Information on
Ireland, 1, North End
Rd., London W14

WOMAN WORKER
Women's paper of the
Workers Socialist
League
Available price 6p plus 7p p&p
from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park
Hill, London NW5 1HR.

woman worker
New paper gives a
lead to women's fight
against Tory attacks
Available price 6p plus 7p p&p
from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park
Hill, London NW5 1HR.

Stonewall and the fight for gay rights



Riot by San Francisco gays earlier this year

The centre of London will be filled this Saturday by thousands of people in the rally and carnival which mark the climax of Gay Pride Week.

Gay Pride has been celebrated in London since 1971, but the organisers expect this year's event to be the 'biggest ever gathering in Europe of homosexual men and women'. Gay Pride 1979 is commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Stonewall riots in New York.

It was these riots which violently induced the birth of the Gay Liberation Movement—first in the US, and then (unevenly) on an international scale.

Ghetto areas

The Stonewall was a dancing bar in Christopher St—the centre of New York's 'gay ghetto' in Greenwich Village.

The repression of homosexuality under capitalism had led to the development of such ghetto areas in most metropolitan cities of the major imperialist states.

Centred round bars and clubs, these areas housed and employed many gays. They were the scene of the only social and leisure existence for many thousands of others.

But Christopher St., like the other ghettos, was in no sense a 'free zone'. Capitalist states attempted, as far as possible, to restrict the open expression of homosexuality to such enclosed semi-societies and sub-cultures.

But even this 'freedom' was severely limited. Capitalist exploitation took full advantage of this enclosed and captive market.

Controlled by Mafia

Until the growth of the Gay Liberation Movement, all New York's gay bars and clubs were controlled by the Mafia.

Alongside this extraction

of profit the capitalist state intervened directly and constantly through its police force.

Raids (to investigate alleged abuses of liquor laws, etc) were an almost nightly feature of the Christopher St. area.

Fought back

On 27 June 1969 it was the turn of the Stonewall Inn. But on that night the customers fought back against the police, who were forced to call in reinforcements.

The unprecedented fighting developed into riots which continued for two days and the next two nights.

The Stonewall customers were joined by other gays from the area, students from Columbia University and other forces sympathetic to their protest.

It was this breakthrough which led to the formation of the New York Gay Liberation Front.

The GLF was very obviously a part of 'The Movement'—the radicalisation of US students and petty bourgeois forces which surged forward in response to the crisis of US imperialism, and particularly in protest at the war against the liberation struggles in Vietnam.

GLF

GLF grew rapidly in the US and began to spread internationally. In the autumn of 1970, a Gay Liberation Front was set up in London under the influence of the US movement.

The legal situation in Britain was by that time quite different from conditions in the US. Pressure groups had made various attempts to reform the law, but these had all foundered until 1967.

In the second Labour government under Wilson, Lord Arran introduced a bill in the House of Lords, which was then taken up as a private member's bill in the Commons by Labour

MP Leo Abse.

It was this bill—which became the Sexual Offences Act—that remains the major legal apparatus to supervise male homosexuality.

The bill legalised homosexual acts in private between consenting adults over the age of 21 provided only 2 men were involved.

It was certainly a major reform. But it applied only in England and Wales—the provisions do not extend to Scotland, Northern Ireland, the armed forces and the merchant navy.

Yet in some areas, the Act actually increased legal penalties, and of course it remains not only an inadequate reform but a piece of legislation which continues the repression of male homosexuality and the oppression of gay men. For any man under the age of 21, however consenting, any sexual act with another man of any age is illegal.

Provocateurs

Any male homosexual acts in public are grounds for prosecution and this extends not only to kissing but even to partners holding hands.

The police interpret 'public' in the widest possible sense, make widespread use of provocateurs and have actually increased the number of prosecutions brought against gay men since the 1967 Act was passed.

But the 1967 Act was nevertheless a major boost to the attempts by homosexual men to achieve an ending of legal penalties and social discrimination.

The Act was important not just for its progressive aspects, but also for what it symbolised—a shift in the ideological structures operated within capitalism and a changing social consciousness of homosexuality.

The growth of London GLF, and similar groups in other cities, was a factor in that process as it continued after 1967.

Before then, only small and elitist pressure groups for reform had existed, clothed in respectability and dignified politeness.

One of these bodies was the North-Western Homosexual Law Reform Committee, based in Manchester.

With partial law reform, this group began to set up groups all over the country.

'Coming out'

As a large membership grew, this organisation became the Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE) which exists today nationally on a considerable scale.

GLF, and later radical groups, had a tense relationship with the conservative tendencies which dominated CHE.

GLF stressed a very different political emphasis and orientation.

'Coming out' was crucial here—public identification as gay, with pride in that identity and anger at social oppression.

This position led to the use of protest tactics—from badges and posters to pickets, demonstrations and the 'zapping' of pubs which refused to serve gays or shows which exploited sexual oppression as exploitative entertainment.

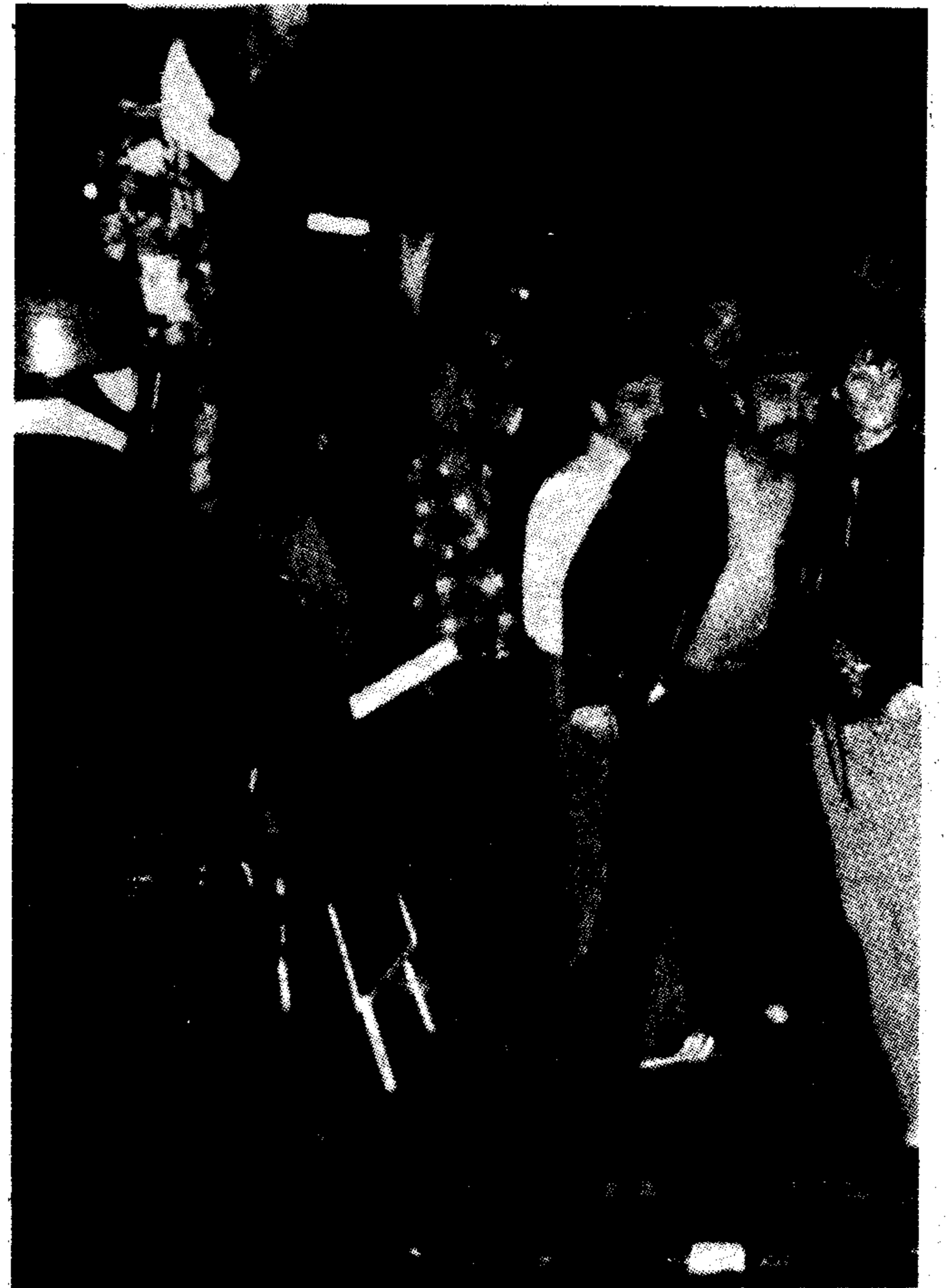
Switchboards

The theoretical work which went alongside this owed a great deal to the work of feminists, and also concentrated particularly on the ways in which psychiatry was used to attack gays.

GLF also spurred on other initiatives—including the development of counselling services and switchboards, and the launching of *Gay News* (a voice for the gay community).

But its existence was short-lived. Wracked by internal dissent, GLF collapsed after 2 years, although local organisations continued to function, particularly in the north of England (Manchester, Leeds, Bradford).

Since then, CHE has continued its steady course but wide sections of the gay movement have been almost



San Francisco gays challenge the cops

completely disoriented.

The first signs of an end in this drifting came last year with the campaign against the prosecution of *Gay News* for blasphemy—a prosecution launched by Mary Whitehouse, then taken over by the state.

The size of the campaign encouraged the formation of Gay Activists Alliance, which has developed a national organisation and local groups.

Ten years after Stonewall gays in Britain have been able to gain a new confidence and the possibility exists for a new political clarity on the struggles that are necessary to overthrow sexual oppression.

But at the same time, the threat of reactionary attacks is rising to a new and extremely dangerous level.

As they move on to the offensive against the working class, the Tory leaders are even more determined than Callaghan's government to shore up the bourgeois family.

Not enough

One part of this will almost certainly be a more violent application of the Act—an Act already labelled the "buggers' charter" by that well-known dispenser of "justice", Judge Melford Stephenson.

The thousands of gays who participate in Saturday's carnival will be

demonstrating their pride in their homosexuality.

But gay pride, and even gay anger, will not be enough to defend homosexuals against the attacks of fascists and the state. The gains already made have to be developed.

In those battles gays will need to turn to the organised strength of the labour movement for support while all socialists must at the same time take up a fight on the issues within the mass organisations of the working class.

The demand must be for programmatic action to gain basic democratic rights for gay women and gay men in the struggles to overthrow the sexual oppression imposed by the capitalist ruling class and its social order.

By David Whitfield

GAY PRIDE

'Grand Carnival'
Assemble 1 p.m. Temple
Place, Temple Embankment, moving off to
Hyde Park, concert 3pm



INDUSTRIAL NEWS

NALGO-RIGHT WING AND CP RUN FROM FIGHT



Glyn Phillips

The NALGO conference a week ago was the first major trade union conference to consider the implications of Howe's budget.

It saw the union's right wing NEC and their Stalinist messengers of the 'NALGO Progressive Alliance', manoeuvre desperately to block discussions of a serious programme to fight back against cuts, sackings and plunging living standards.

General Secretary Drain, returning from an emergency meeting of the TUC Economic Committee, stirred himself into his annual feat of eloquence. After claiming that NALGO had "led the fight"



Geoffrey Drain against previous cuts—a claim which would astonish those sections of NALGO members like the social workers or the Hounslow

Hospital Occupation, which have in reality led the fight—he pledged to "fight, fight, fight until we reverse this Government's policies."

Former right wing President, Glyn Phillips, promised full support from the NEC for any branches taking action against redundancies, and actually proposed a resolution stating total opposition to the budget.

Real position

NALGO members should certainly not let these statements be forgotten; but nor should they have any illusions about the real position of their leaders.

The NEC has changed little from the one which backed all the phases of wage control under Labour.

Indeed Phillips' most vehement disagreement with Howe was based on Howe's apparent abandonment of the wage controls behind which the NEC has hidden its refusal to fight during recent years.

Worse even than this, in the NEC's view, is the way that Howe appears to have blocked the growth of a national public sector wage bargaining system—the reactionary "Basnett plan".

Promise

The second motion, concocted by the Metropolitan

and Scottish District Councils, and heavily backed by the Stalinists of the Communist Party, demanded no more than publicity against the cuts and a promise of support for action taken by branches.

The NEC of course had no objection to this resolution, since it did no more than they had previously pledged, and permitted a display of 'unity' between the leadership and the toothless Stalinist minority.

Things went differently with an amendment from the GLC, City University and Westminster branches.

These branches called for an urgent effort to call a trade union demonstration expressing opposition to the budget; for a declaration of support to any local authorities refusing to cut jobs or services; for blacking to be imposed on all the statistical information which the Government needs to plan further cuts; and for a reformulation of all the present round of pay claims to take account of the inflationary effects of the budget.

The Stalinists rejected this amendment and desperately pressured the sponsoring branches to withdraw it—in the interests of "unity".

At the crucial moment,

when the speakers in favour of the amendment had left their delegations to take their places on the speakers benches, the Stalinists and the bureaucracy renewed their efforts, finally forcing the delegates to agree withdrawal.

Relief

Smiles of relief and handshakes were exchanged between NEC members and Stalinists. Large sections of the Conference were less happy and shouted their objections, to no avail.

If the Stalinists thought the NEC was in any mood

to reciprocate their services they were mistaken.

The next item was moved by Richard Maybin, convener of the CP's NALGO fraction, calling for a restoration of strike pay, currently limited to £4 per week, to the previous level of 55% of gross.

This move met a swift death in the face of a sharp attack by the NEC.

The overall result of these complex proceedings was to leave NALGO members without any programme of action against the cuts.

They have general promises of "full support" for any action they are prepared to take—providing they can live on £4 per week; and still they have no alternative leadership within the union prepared to fight the NEC betrayers.

The SWP's catspaw NALGO Action Group failed to produce any resolution in reply to the budget—despite having a large representation at the conference.

In the face of savage cuts in jobs and services, NALGO members have to overcome the problem of leadership.

There is no other way for them to begin the campaign of defence of essential services, jobs and wages.

Earlier in the week Conference rejected the section of the NEC report dealing with the oppression of foreign workers.

This resulted from a row over a union delegation to Romania which many members thought should not have taken place when striking miners were being imprisoned in labour camps.

JOIN OUR FIGHT AGAINST TORIES!

Returned to office after five years of Labour betrayals, the Tory government has immediately begun wielding a sharpened axe on jobs, conditions and social services. Trade Union rights face imminent legal attack. Prices are already beginning to rocket upwards.

Plum sectors of state industry will be handed to the Tories profiteering big business backers; and the pay rises to police and armed forces mark only the prelude to increased state violence against pickets and anti-fascists, and an intensified army crack-down in the occupied North of Ireland.

The Callaghan-Healey leadership has made it clear that it will oppose any perspective other than settling down and meekly accepting five years of Tory devastation.

And, though they have once more dusted off their near-forgotten "socialist" speeches, Labour's "left-wing" MPs have continued to duck away from any fight to remove Callaghan.

TUC leaders, too, have set out to establish a basis for collaboration with Thatcher and the Tory cabinet, paralleling their anti-working class alliance with Wilson and then Callaghan.

But the working class has experienced and overcome such betrayals before—to topple Heath's union-bashing government in 1974, and smash through Callaghan's reactionary Phase 4 of wage controls in a series of monumental pay battles last winter.

These experiences are not dead. They point to the way that jobs, social services and hard-won union rights can be defended against renewed Tory attacks.

But a principled, revolutionary leadership is needed if the Labour traitors, the TUC collaborators and their hangers-on in the Communist Party are to be exposed and pushed aside, and the mass struggles mobilised that can defeat and remove the Tory government.

Such a leadership must fight day in and day out for a programme of *transitional demands* which, starting from today's conditions and today's consciousness within the working class, lead workers to grasp the necessity for socialist revolution.

And in taking up democratic demands—such as an end to racial and sexual discrimination, it must show the crucial role that must be played by the working class as the only consistently revolutionary class capable of leading the struggle for the emancipation of mankind.

And it must fight on an *international* basis—mobilising solidarity for anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggles—whether in Ireland, in Southern Africa or elsewhere throughout the world, and drawing strength and political lessons from revolutionary upheavals such as that which ousted the hated Shah in Iran.

This means fighting for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International.

This method of approach, rejecting any descent to simple trade union militancy, or concessions to any wing of the labour bureaucracy, is the method fought for by the Workers Socialist League.

The next period will see major class struggles in Britain. A principled, Marxist leadership is essential. Our movement though strong in programme remains small in numbers.

JOIN US and take forward the struggle for socialism!

Real position

NALGO members should certainly not let these statements be forgotten; but nor should they have any illusions about the real position of their leaders.

The NEC has changed little from the one which backed all the phases of wage control under Labour.

Indeed Phillips' most vehement disagreement with Howe was based on Howe's apparent abandonment of the wage controls behind which the NEC has hidden its refusal to fight during recent years.

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Promise

The second motion, concocted by the Metropolitan



PHOTO: Andrew Wiarid, Report

Striking social workers

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PRINT UNIONS DROP TIMES CHARADE

Having masqueraded for seven months as defenders of their members jobs at the *Times* and *Sunday Times* officials of the NGA have decided to back the management closure.

The NGA executive decided

last week to tell its members to "find other jobs"—thereby effectively putting an end to any struggle against job cutting. Joe Wade, General Secretary of the NGA said: "We have had to come reluctantly to the conclusion that the *Times* and the *Sunday Times* are dead."

NATSOPA has already called off the fight and the NUJ President, Jake Ecclestone, who is also FoC of the *Times* chapel, said that in view of the NGA decision the NUJ would consider a similar policy.

Times Newspapers stopped publication seven months ago demanding massive job cuts before they would reopen. For all of that period the chapels have shown themselves ready to take action—launching 24 hour pickets until being instructed to allow *Guardian* printers through the pickets at night.

But the leadership of the unions—which held secret talks with *Times* management before the closure—has taken no steps necessary to win the fight.

The *Times* and *Sunday Times* should have been occupied. The locked out members should have been producing a regular widely distributed workers' paper.

In addition workers should have—and still can—challenge the management's right to cut jobs by demanding full and public access to the books.

Instead of boosting Tony Benn's blatherings about a

"workers' cooperative", the chapels should have been demanding immediate nationalisation of both papers under workers control without compensation.

The muscle is there. All Fleet Street chapels should have been called out.

Thomson Regional chapels should be called out in support.

The management should be challenged at the sharpest point—their right to own the papers.

Instead officials have talked of cooperatives and new owners.

No call for occupation has ever been made. No challenge to the Thomson owners has ever been posed.

Increased run

Worse, the print unions have all allowed other Fleet Street managements—who are almost certainly supporting the *Times*—to step up their print runs.

The *Observer* announced its latest increase just two days after Wade's announcement.

NGA, NUJ, SOGAT and NATSOPA members have little time now to mount a challenge.

Unless a clear call to overturn leadership policies and mount real opposition to the *Times* closure is made now, the campaign to 'save' jobs at the *Times* and *Sunday Times* will end with the sacking of everybody.

Top Civil Servants in pay battle

The Institution of Professional Civil Servants—which organises Government scientists and technologists in areas such as Air Traffic Control, nuclear reactors and safety in mines establishments—staged a one-day strike on Friday in pursuit of their pay claim.

The strike was significant as it was the first time the NEC had issued an overall instruction to strike.

Reluctance

The previous reluctance to take industrial action had caused much ill-feeling between IPCS and the other Civil Service Unions over the one-day strikes during this year's long and bitter pay negotiations.

Possibly as a result of their reluctance to act on that occasion, the Government is now attempting to sell its scientists and technologists short by paying them less in comparison with other Civil Servants as

well as their counterparts in the private sector.

The NEC's decision to instruct its members to strike was thoroughly vindicated as there was practically total support for the action and well-supported picket lines at most workplaces.

Most IPCS grades still do not know what their final pay instalment to be paid in January will be—and the pay review was due last April!

IPCS must now join the efforts of the other Civil Service Unions to break from the archaic and pernicious system of pay negotiations which sets union against union and lower paid against higher paid.

Price index

Flat rate increases, protected against inflation through cost-of-living clauses based on a working class price index will ensure a better deal for the low paid and end the divisiveness and bitterness that has characterised this year's struggle for fair pay for government workers.



Fleet Street march early in the 'campaign'

Official's 'tactics' threaten struggle for union rights

After the defeat of a rapid move by TGWU District Official Phil Eynan to force a return to work, the strike by 20 workers at Selected Toys Limited, Didcot remains solid.

Picketing has been maintained, and support has been obtained from local unions.

The strikers walked out in defence of five victimised TGWU members and are demanding full reinstatement, union recognition and higher wages—present basic rates vary from 28p to 67p an hour.

Though management, lulled into a false sense of security by Eynan's determination to end the struggle, were plainly shocked to see the picket line outside the plant last Monday, they had obviously worked out contingency plans for supplies.

Plates concealed

That afternoon a private van was driven in by management with the number plates concealed.

On Wednesday ACAS

officials met STL boss Young, and set up talks between Young and Eynan for Friday.

Realising that strikers would be anxious to see him before this meeting, Eynan arrived only 20 minutes before it was due to take place—and went in to spend two hours deep in conversation with Young in the presence of ACAS and Young's lawyer.

Brushed aside

Demands from the strikers that one of their representatives should be at this meeting were brushed aside by Eynan, who emerged to report that Young was now planning a 50% cut in workforce—from 32 to 16.

Clearly Young hopes that this would offer him the leeway to increase wages for the remaining staff while stepping up the effort of those employed.

In a pathetic effort to "trap" management into taking back some of the strikers, Eynan accepted without question the proposed cut in workforce—insisting only that with no more than 11 scabs still working in

the plant Young would need to take back five of those now on the picket lines.

Even ACAS apparently objected to this line of argument, but Eynan continues to labour under the illusion that he is a great tactician.

He is certainly an arrogant bureaucrat. After the failure of his initial attempts to force the strikers back to work he complained that "men" would understand his tactical approach and moaned that the largely female strikers had not enough union experience to see his point of view.

But a sell-out smells the same to all trade unionists, be they men, women or raw recruits to the union.

Basic demands

In pressing ahead with their struggle STL strikers will need to spell out to Eynan in words of one syllable that they will return to work only when their three basic demands are met—and that they are not going to be browbeaten into defeat by someone who is supposed to be their own official representative.

Fight closure of creche

With no more than one week's notice to the nursery nurse and the parents, Southfields College in Leicester has shut down a part-time creche.

The creche has been used to train nursery nurses. But the cutback is part of drastic education cuts in the area which have slashed £50,000 from the budget of Southfields College alone.

This move has particularly angered parents who have been stung by the callous indifference of the College and the Child Studies Department.

On the one hand these bodies seek to train nursery nurses in the importance of child care; on the other they summagily axe a much-needed day care facility.

The parents are determined to fight this decision and to keep the creche open.

They have formed an Action Committee comprised of parents and delegates from the Trades Council women's sub-committee as well as the Playgroup Association to discuss a programme of action.

Defend Geddes!

Workers at West London's Hammersmith Hospital have been called on to stage a token strike on Friday June 29 in support of victimised NUPE chairman Bill Geddes.

Geddes was sacked by Ealing, Hammersmith and Hounslow Area Health Authority only days after hitting the headlines by his speech at the NUPE conference where he successfully moved a call for a campaign to drive private patients out of NHS hospitals.

An official NUPE circular calls on local Health Service branches to send delegations to support the Hammersmith action, which will include a picket and demonstration outside the AHA meeting.

But there is little doubt that one-day and token actions will be insufficient to change the AHA's decision: Geddes' reinstatement must be fought for through all-out strike action, stressing the obvious link between his victimisation and the stepped up Tory cuts in the NHS and public sector as a whole.

Renolds workers occupy plant

Workers at Renolds Chains in Didsbury, Manchester have been occupying the works since Thursday after management attempted to lock them out.

The thousand strong workforce, in the AUEW, GMWU and TGWU, had turned down a pay

offer consisting of about £2.50 on basic, with an additional £2.50 bonus in return for shedding some jobs.

In support of an improved offer they had banned overtime and bonus working.

Shop stewards at the works told *Socialist Press* that current pay is £37-£38 for unskilled grades and that the previous bonus scheme had delivered only 38p in the first month of operation and nothing for months subsequently.

Now, with the workers rejecting the company's offer, management removed the clock cards at lunchtime on Thursday and refused to pay for work done in the afternoon.

In addition they have threatened 107 redundancies on 14 September.

The occupation, involving all the workforce and run in shifts is preventing movement of supplies into the plant and removal of chains from the storage warehouse, though management and the clerical grades are still being allowed in.

Workers at the multinational firm's other British plant, in Coventry, have pledged support but as yet no approach has been made to Renolds factories worldwide.

The question of dispute pay from the unions and the establishment of a dispute fund also remains to be settled.

Who will lead fight for NUR pay claim?

As the National Union of Railwaymen meets in conference this week it seems certain that a pay demand for a 30% increase in the basic rate will be adopted.

Even right wing General Secretary Syd Weighell has declared that with inflation rising at its present rate any less than this would leave railwaymen's living standards standing still by next April's review date.

But Weighell is an old campaigner, and is accomplished at trotting out hollow 'left' phrases in good time to head off militancy during the union's annual conference, only to abandon them at the end of the week.

Indeed his recent conduct of

pay talks for the union's 15,000 London Underground train staff indicates that he has no intention of using the NUR's colossal strength to win the 30% pay deal from British Rail next year.

An inadequate and complicated claim for 17-20% increases met a pathetic response from management, who offered 10.3%—which is only just equal to the current rate of inflation.

Bluster and threats of strike action by NUR leaders who declared that it was "difficult to control" their members faded away as an arbitration board was called in.

As the Tories piled on huge new burdens on the cost of living, slashing the real wages of Underground workers, the arbitration board has now recommended an increase of only 14% which the NUR leadership has declared itself willing to accept.

This settlement, if endorsed by London Transport, will effectively secure a 6% cut in NUR members' living standards over the next year—and is accompanied by the threat of fare increases, cuts in service and a further intensification of productivity.

A similar miserable climb-

down on the British Rail pay review must be expected if the 30% claim is adopted. And of course any flat rate increase in the present inflationary crisis threatens to be gobbled up by rising prices.

A new leadership is needed in the rail unions that will fight for the independent interests of their members, including a policy of cost-of-living clauses to protect wage levels against inflation.

Suspicion

The militancy among NUR members and their suspicion of their right wing officials were demonstrated last week in South Wales.

200 railwaymen struck in



Weighell support of a train crew disciplined for refusing to conform to British Rail's "fuel saving" cuts in service.

The strikers refused to meet NUR Divisional Officer Archie Kirkwood, but returned to work as soon as British Rail management climbed down and withdrew the disciplinary notices.

SOCIALIST PRESS



Tories cheer wildly as

CALLAGHAN FIGHTS PAY RESTRAINT!

PHOTO: A. Ward, Report



Low pay strikers—witch-hunted

Nothing interests a right wing Labourite as much as the state of his own wallet.

Plainly no other force could have moved arch wage-cutter Callaghan to his feet in Parliament to oppose wage restraint—in this case the Tory plan to phase in the thumping 82% increase in MP's pay over two years.

Callaghan was warmly applauded by Tory back benches for his stand—while Labour MPs bayed for the resignation of Tory Leader of the House Norman St. John-Stevas.

They whined and moaned about pay 'anomalies' and the effects of inflation on their hefty £6,897 salaries.

But these were the same Labour careerists who imposed three years of wage cuts on the working class and viciously witch-hunted the public sector workers who took strike action last winter in a desperate bid to increase their wages from poverty line levels to a modest £60/35 hour week.

And they are the same

It is becoming more obvious each day that pay claims that fail to protect against inflation through cost of living clauses run the risk of leaving workers bearing the full brunt of the runaway price increases that are now a central plank of Tory policy.

Union conferences and negotiating bodies must be called upon to formulate demands that include automatic monthly increases to keep pace with the real cost of living as assessed by elected committees of trade unionists and housewives.

Where possible such committees should be established now on a local level to reveal to the workers' movement the full extent to which living standards are being savaged by Tory policies.

Other Tory attacks on social services and jobs must be met by similar independent mass action.

As such struggles emerge, growing numbers of workers will echo demands for the

resignation of the Tories, but with two important differences from Labour's careerist MPs at Westminster: workers will mean it, and be prepared to fight for it; and they will know that in united mass action they can achieve it.

What plainly worries Callaghan and his fellow Labourites—right wing and left alike—is that in the course of the struggle to come workers will also step up the demand for the removal of the crypto-Tories and reactionaries that claim to lead the labour movement.

And workers are also likely to demand that self-styled 'socialists' take up a real fight for socialist policies within the Labour Party—a demand which could only lead to the exposure of the existing leaders and a political ferment in which workers could break from Labour's reformist politics and a revolutionary party could be built.

No to sackings! Occupy Prestcolds!

Prestcold workers last week voted at a recalled meeting to accept voluntary redundancies and only fight to keep some of the present 900 jobs at the firm's two Glasgow factories.

The factories, which make refrigeration plant, employ a large proportion of older, skilled men and have become virtually an island among a sea of unemployment on the Upper Clyde.

News that the plants would close in September was announced on June 7 and the management called in a firm of consultants to prepare a report on the reasons for the losses.

The consultants' report, released on June 18 was deliberately kept away from shop stewards.

Bad management

It explicitly blamed bad management as the reason for the losses and stated that the factory did have a viable commercial future once the new range of compressors for domestic fridges was introduced in 1981.

Of course they did not reveal the enormous profits already made out of the operation by the firm and its bankers and suppliers.

The report also stated that as little as £52 million invested over five years would make the factory viable.

Keith Joseph, putting into practice the anarchic, anti-working class doctrines of the 'free' market has naturally refused any such aid to Prestcold.

He has told the workforce—and Scottish workers in general—to go and find themselves other jobs—or start something up for themselves!



US plan for 'unilateral strike force'

Only days after the fanfare of publicity surrounding the signing of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) in Vienna last week, it was revealed that US imperialism is to put a 110,000-strong strike force on a war footing.

The SALT agreement epitomises the dangers to the deformed workers' states and the world's working class by the reactionary Kremlin Stalinists' policy of 'peaceful coexistence' with imperialism.

In exchange for a piece of paper bearing Carter's signature,



Soviet leaders will actually destroy a number of existing nuclear weapons, while portraying the deal as a step towards 'world peace'.

But in reality US imperialism driven to desperation by the upsurge of mass anti-imperialist struggles throughout the world, is now contemplating the prospect of new military adventures that could dwarf even the Vietnam conflict.

At the centre of their plans are the problems of guaranteeing oil supplies to the West.

Hence the plans to establish what the US Pentagon describes as the 'unilateral force' based around the 82nd Airborne Division, together with air, navy and marine units, designed as a 'quick strike force' to hit targets in the Middle East, Persian Gulf or North East Asia.

Conscription

Propaganda on the oil crisis is being whipped up within the USA to create the climate of public opinion to force this plan through Congress—though it would consume enormous sums of money and almost certainly require the reimposition of conscription.

But this leaves out of account the scale of the conflict that would be engendered by a US military intervention into this highly polarised area of the world.

The reactionary feudal rulers of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have maintained explosives rigged on oil installations and declared their intention to set them alight in the event of any invasion.

And the mass anti-imperialist movement that toppled the Shah and now worries every Middle East bourgeois regime would focus its full fury in resistance and retaliation to such attack.

War threat

In short, while the ageing Brezhnev returns to the Kremlin waving a paper agreement for 'world peace' the imperialists are hell-bent on a course that threatens renewed war.

It is not through class collaboration on a national or a world scale that peace can be brought about: there can be no end to war until crisis-ridden imperialism is overthrown through the revolutionary mobilisation of the working class.

And that is a prospect feared above all by both the imperialist chiefs and the Stalinist bureaucrats.

FUND

STEP UP THE FIGHT! That is the now urgent task for readers and supporters of Socialist Press if we are to reach our target of £2,500 by the end of July. Last week brought us in only £35.99, bringing our total so far to £1104.75.

If you live in London or Oxford and are willing to help with our Summer Fairs contact us. If you can send a donation or take a collection at work or at your union branch it will all help us to reach our target on time.

Donations to the fund should be sent to: Socialist Press Monthly Fund, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

SUMMER FETE

Saturday July 7 from 12 to 4 p.m.

Cowley Community Centre
Cowley, Oxford

Cakes * Plants * Games
Bargains * Fortune teller * Refreshments

Organised by the
Oxford Area Workers
Socialist League

WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE WINSFORD

Public meeting

"Trade unions and the Tory government"

Sunday July 1 at 7.30

George and Dragon
Delamere St.