

SOCIALIST PRESS



Weekly paper of the Workers Socialist League * No. 171 * 17 October 1979 * 15p



TORY CONFERENCE—Page 5

Convenors vote to reject, but

CONFED LEADERS CAMPAIGN FOR BL CLOSURES

British Leyland chairman Michael Edwardes is planning to ballot the 100,000 workers in BL cars on his package of closures and redundancies, over the heads of convenors, who at a meeting last Saturday voted overwhelmingly to reject it.

Working on the technique of the 'big scare', he will pose the ultimatum: accept the closure or part-closure of 13 plants and 25,000 redundancies, or face the closure of the whole of BL by the spring of next year.

But Edwardes has already enlisted an important ally in this attempt to bludgeon BL workers into submission: the leadership of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions!

Surrender

Confed General Secretary Alex Ferry vigorously argued the case at the convenors' meeting for acceptance of the Edwardes' plan, and the surrender of 25,000 jobs.

This means full, official, union backing for a massive frontal attack on workers at the very heart of the engineering industry.

The 25,000 cutback in BL would in itself bring an estimated 160,000 redundancies in component and other related firms linked to it.

Yet sooner than challenge the naked attacks of capitalism, the Confed leaders are prepared to sacrifice these jobs without lifting so much as a finger!

But as convenors pointed out after the meeting, this was not the unanimous view of the Confed bureaucracy.

Reject

ACTSS National Officer Todd Sullivan, the Secretary of the Emergency Committee set up by the Confed immediately after the announcement of the Edwardes plan, argued strongly that the plan should be rejected. Further contraction of BL on the scale envisaged by Edwardes would, he said, bring eventually the total demise of BL.

"We have to say quite clearly that if the plan is accepted the company will wind up over the

next four years."

But then Alex Ferry, speaking on behalf of the Confed Executive rose to oppose the Emergency Committee's recommendation.

The Executive had coped with closures and contractions in shipbuilding and elsewhere in engineering, he began:

"but this is the most difficult we have had to face because it is the most important and so central to the engineering industry in Britain.

"If we had the choice, we would be for expansion, but that choice is not on—not from the BL Board, the NEB or the government."

Edwardes had told Confed leaders on October 1 that there was no possibility of obtaining sufficient cash to save BL as it stands.

And he revealed that even if the money were there, he would not take it, since his terms of reference are to make BL profitable.

On October 8 the Confed leaders heard a similar tale from Tory axe-man Keith Joseph. Far from providing more cash, said Ferry, the Tories would not



Smiling bureaucrats hand in plea to Edwardes: they were reluctant to read out his reply

even pay the amounts allocated by the Labour government!

Then at a further meeting with Edwardes, he threatened the Confed bureaucrats that unless they gave him a commitment by October 10 that they would back his plan, he would not even ask for more money, thus causing banks to foreclose on outstanding loans, and the collapse of BL's dealer network.

"We were ready to reject the Edwardes plan", claimed Ferry.

But then they thought again about the October 10 deadline at which Edwardes would address a Board meeting and decide whether to seek new loans.

Pressure

And, like all those committed to seeking simple reforms within capitalism, the Confed leaders cracked, unable to contemplate opposing the notion that BL must be made profitable.

"You can't imagine the pressure on 14 men deciding on the jobs of at least 165,000 in BL and a further 500,000 in related industries", declared Ferry.

"We were not prepared to call their bluff—because some of us don't believe it is a bluff."



BL jobs massacre.

But if the reformist leaders offer nothing but humiliating surrender to Edwardes' ultimatum, the Communist Party members who spoke so strongly against the plan failed to put forward any alternative course of action.

Jack Adams, Longbridge TGWU convenor, correctly pointed out that there was no option of sacrificing 25,000 jobs to save the other 130,000—the plan was in reality "an orderly retreat into the closure of the whole of BL".

Len Brindle, another Stalinist, and convenor of the Truck and Bus division, pointed out that every retreat by union leaders in Leyland had landed workers in a worse position.

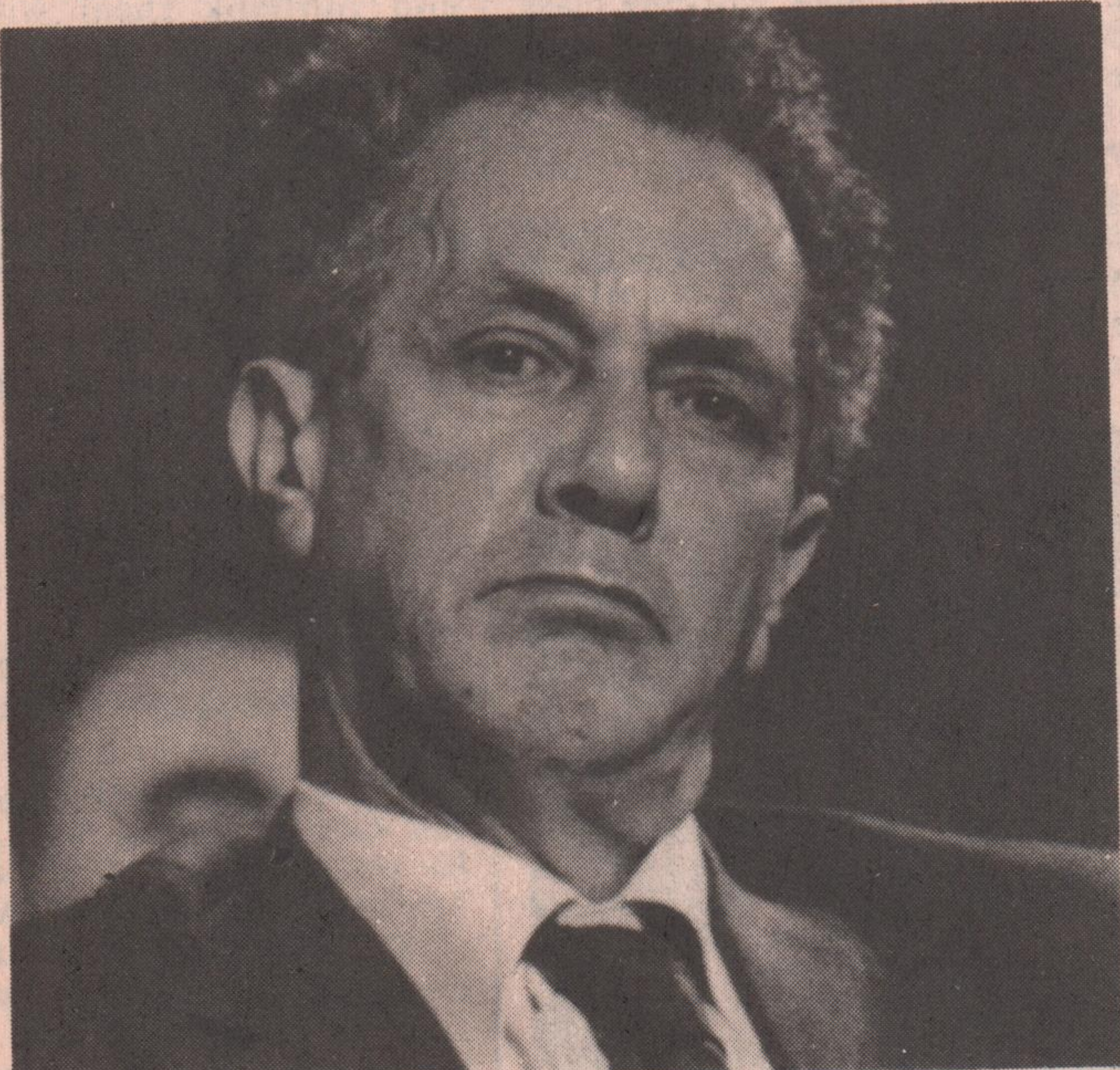
Death warrant

And Derek Robinson, Stalinist chairman of the Combine Committee pointed out that if they accepted the Edwardes plan BL workers would be "signing their own death warrant".

Robinson also admitted that because BL was a "public corporation" he and other convenors had "acquiesced to some things in the past". But he did not refer to the fact that he actually led the standing ovation for Edwardes and pledged him full support when he took over!

The strong points made against the Edwardes plan were enough to secure an overwhelming vote against it at the con-

Cont'd Back Page.



Joseph

OUR POLICIES

*Threatened plants must be occupied to provide a focus for the struggle throughout BL.

*Open the books of BL, its suppliers and bankers! Open the books of the British car industry! Unmask the profiteers! Warn of the dangers to thousands of workers outside BL.

*No redundancies! For work sharing on full pay: the reduced work available must be divided between the whole workforce, under the control of trade union

committees, without loss of pay.

*Defeat Edwardes and his Tory backers! For a massive campaign for a 'no' vote in Edwardes' ballot! Mobilise mass action alongside BL workers in the fight to bring down the Tory asset-strippers!

*For the nationalisation without compensation of the engineering industry and the banks, under workers' management. For a socialist plan of production for the need of the many, not the profits of the few!

*Kick out the Labour traitors! Drive out Edwardes' Confed collaborators, and the Labour leaders whose policies have paved the way for the Edwardes plan. Demand that those who claim to oppose the sackings stand up and lead a fight for a socialist alternative throughout the labour movement, or stand exposed.

*Build a principled, revolutionary leadership among BL workers!



Spain's generals press for crackdown

More evidence appears every day of feverish preparations by sections of the Spanish ruling class to put an end to the already restricted democratic rights which exist in Spain.

The centre of this activity has been the senior officer corps of the Francoist army.

About ten senior generals have been conducting what is evidently a coordinated campaign to make the public preparations for either a military coup or, at least, the declaration of a state of emergency.

Speeches

Five or six of the generals have in the last four weeks given widely publicised speeches lamenting the democratisation of the last two years.

The keynote of one of these, by General Gonzales del Yerro, was that "Spain is dying in our hands".

Several of the most senior generals have been giving similar interviews, including eulogies of Franco, to major national newspapers.

Sections of the capitalist class have also been organising a campaign among leaders of the ruling Democratic Centre Union (UDC) to throw out Adolfo Suarez and replace him with an even more right-wing Premier, less identified with compromises with the leaders of the workers' parties.

Suarez, himself, is now staking everything on getting a sufficiently huge majority for his fake Basque "autonomy" in the October 25 referendum.



Suarez

He hopes that this will put an end to ETA's successful campaign of terrorist acts against the police and military.

But this hope looks increasingly forlorn.

Not only is ETA's boycott campaign getting broad popular support, but the utterly inadequate "autonomy" proposals make it virtually inconceivable that, whatever the result of the referendum, ETA will be willing to end the campaign.

Indeed when the bourgeois Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) starts to take on a direct responsibility for repression in Euskadi, the political crisis of the region, and so of Spain as a whole, will be sharpened.

Exposed

The "opposition" PNV will be exposed as an agent of capitalist exploitation every bit the equal of Suarez' government

and the class war in Euskadi will emerge still more openly.

There is thus no possibility that the pressures within the ruling class towards emergency rule or a coup will diminish.

The only serious question is when they intend to strike.

The workers' movement must be alerted to the danger and must organise adequate measures of self-defence through independent working class organisations.

In doing this workers will encounter every possible obstacle from their main leaders—especially Communist Party leader Santiago Carrillo.

Played down

He has put his public faith in "democratic" Suarez—a stand echoed by the recently re-elected Socialist Party leader Felipe Gonzalez.

Last week Gonzalez dangerously played down the coup danger under the guise of opposing the government:

"When the military stage coup d'etat, it is to put the right in power. But it's already there."

But what Gonzalez failed to point out was that the section of the right which was in power today is able to exert control of the mass movement only because of the shameful collaboration of Gonzalez and his ilk.

Fear

The section of the right now preparing to ditch Suarez is doing so because it fears that the working class and its allies will be able to organise the anti-capitalist offensive which Gonzales and Carrillo relentlessly oppose.

The capitalists are increasingly becoming convinced that without the full restoration of the Francoist dictatorship, they and their system of exploitation will not be able to survive.

Zionist crisis grows

The desperate political crisis of the Zionist regime in occupied Palestine has opened up over recent weeks against the background of a series of important strikes.

Bank Leumi, one of the largest in Palestine, has locked out its workers since the beginning of the month after they made a 120% pay demand.

This claim would just about make up for the rate of inflation for the last year.

Similar demands are coming forward from teachers and other public sector workers.

This crisis is reflected in a number of ways within the regime itself.

The efforts of the ultra-reactionary Begin government to reach a deal with Sadat in Egypt against the Palestinian liberation struggle has been pre-empted by the setting up of a new organisation even to the right of Begin's Likud Party.



Begin

This new organisation, called the Tehiya ('Rebirth') wants to expand the Israeli state to the whole 'land of Israel' including the West Bank and probably also parts of Syria and Lebanon.

It attracted 3,000 people to its recent founding conference in Jerusalem.

This movement provides the political expression of the efforts of various ultra-Zionist groups to establish new settlements.

They are largely connived at by the Begin government but may in the end outflank them within the Zionist movement, especially as they express more accurately the Zionist state's continual need to seek further plunder.

The weakness of Begin's position at this point is shown by his inability to bring about the cabinet reshuffle he needs to appease the reactionaries.

He is known to want to dismiss his 'liberal' finance minister Simcha Erlich, but cannot do so for fear of upsetting the delicate balance between 'left' and 'right'.

In the end it may be that the Zionist regime may try to rescue itself, as always, by beginning a new war.

This time, however, the crisis-ridden regime may find it more difficult to hold back workers confronting 100% inflation, who are still denied any independent trade union organisation.

Jamaica: 'Cuban design' claims Seaga

The openly pro-imperialist Jamaica Labour Party has set out to capitalise on the mass discontent with the Manley government in preparation for the General Election due within the next eighteen months.

JLP leader Edward Seaga addressed a crowd of 45,000 supporters in Kingston on 4 October.

In his speech he claimed that attacks by Manley's People's National Party on the JLP, himself, the major capitalist paper—the Gleaner—and the United States were all part of a "Cuban design".

Orchestrated

This speech is the latest episode in an orchestrated campaign, eagerly supported by the Gleaner, to whip up anti-communist sentiment and direct it at Cuba and Manley's government.

Seaga went on to claim: "We must understand that the presence of Estrada (the Cuban Ambassador to Jamaica) here is to be Manley's boss, to be Manley's tutor, to direct Manley how to conduct affairs in Jamaica."

Arguing that he had no quarrel with Cuba and that he was not against the Cuban revolution Seaga said:

"What Castro wants to do with the Cubans in Cuba is his business [!]. What we object to is the interference in this

island's affairs by the Cuban government.

Seaga went on to list a number of areas where Cubans were actively assisting the government and claimed that the Cubans had masterminded the last state of emergency in Jamaica.

World crisis

Whatever the real extend of Cuban activity in Jamaica, one thing is certain. Neither the Cubans nor Manley have any intention of fighting to mobilise the masses against the catastrophic effects the world capitalist crisis is having on the Jamaican economy.

In line with IMF dictates Manley is holding down wages, slashing public services and allowing inflation to let rip.

It is these material conditions facing the Jamaican working class and the refusal of the 'socialist' Manley to carry out socialist policies for dealing with the situation that has allowed the pro-imperialist JLP to creep ahead of the PNP in the opinion polls.

Many sections of the working class however have resorted to strike action in an attempt to protect their living standards.

The combined efforts of the JLP, the Gleaner and US imperialism to prevent Manley winning a third term of office seem set to ensure a bitter and doubtless bloody election campaign when the time finally comes.

Fiat's mass victimisations

Last week Fiat, Italy's largest capitalist enterprise—part owned by Colonel Gaddafi's Libyan regime—launched an unprecedented wave of victimisations against worker militants.

61 workers were sacked on October 9 by Director Giovanni Agnelli. They were all charged with having violated the principles of "peaceful coexistence in the workplace".

Since 1975 three Fiat executives have been killed and 19 wounded in terrorist attacks.

Agnelli implied that the 61 victimised workers were responsible for these attacks.

The campaign against terrorism is thereby used as

a pretext for getting rid of the most militant workers in Fiat's Turin factories.

The trade union leaders have responded with half-hearted protests designed to sabotage any real struggle against the Fiat management's actions.

The Communist, Socialist and Catholic unions organised (badly) a token 3 hour [!] strike against the victimisations.

But they criticise the sackings not as a basic attack on the organised working class but on merely legalistic grounds, arguing simply that no detailed accusations were made against the 61.

The Stalinist and SP leaders are in any case in no position to combat the reactionary "struggle against terrorism" since they are themselves part of it.

They have backed every reactionary move of the Christian Democratic government to strengthen the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state.

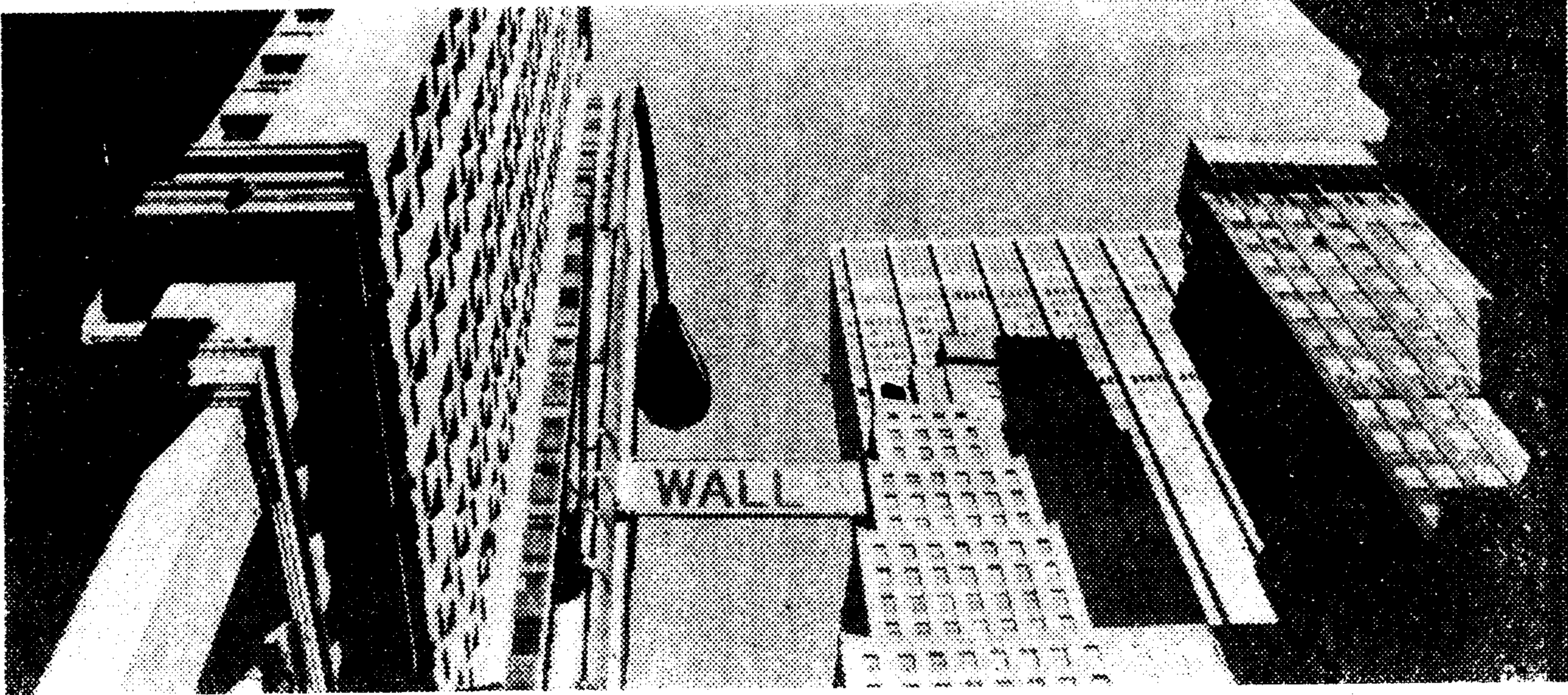
Fiat's home city of Turin, a main centre of terrorist activities, has a Communist Party mayor who has tried (unsuccessfully) to deal with the situation by swelling the police force by 2,000.

If the Fiat 61 are successfully to resist their victimisation, massive mobilisations of the Italian working class are required around a programme which rejects any support for the actions of the bosses and their state against terrorism.

Such actions are a pretext for a ruthless attack on the rights and organisation of the working class.



Italian car workers



Wild profits for gold speculators as millions starve

Robert Macnamara's life has been devoted to the capitalist system.

His first career led him to become Chief Executive of one of the world's largest corporations.

Then John F. Kennedy made him US Secretary of Defence, in which post he prepared and executed the demonic policies of US imperialism in Indochina.

Resigning on the eve of imperialism's humiliating defeat, the defoliator of Vietnam, the architect of some of the most barbaric acts of modern times, was considered with breathtaking cynicism to be the right man to head the World Bank—whose stated objective is to develop the backward countries of the capitalist world.

Incongruity

If Macnamara did not feel some incongruity at the time of his appointment, he has in his decade of office been forced more and more to recognise in public that this objective is very far from being achieved.

He has just launched the second World Development Report—a detailed annual compilation of economic and social statistics about the underdeveloped countries.

Despite his attempt to wrest at least a partially optimistic message from the figures, Macnamara's survey—compiled by World Bank economists and one of the most comprehensive ever published—carries a sombre message on, or between, every line.

Given the source of the survey—a bastion of imperialist reaction—the report carries perhaps even added weight as an empirical indictment of capitalism.

Differential

Of course, it is possible to find some aggregate figures which may seem to "prove" that the relative position of the economically backward countries is improving under capitalism,

WORLD BANK FIGURES SHOW REAL FACE OF CAPITALISM



Bolivian miners—exploited by imperialist bankers

albeit slowly. So, for instance, the Gross National Product of what the World Bank euphemistically calls the

"developing countries" rose at an average rate of 5.7% between 1960 and 1976, while that of the industrial "free market" (i.e. imperialist economies) grew at only 4.9%.

But the narrowing of the gap implied by these figures is more than wiped out by the differential in population growth rates.

More than that, the World Bank Report divides the developing countries into two groups—the poor ("middle income countries") and the extremely poor ("low income countries").

And the average rate of growth of production per head in these 37 poorest countries in the two "Development Decades" has been, according to the World Bank, scarcely more than 1% a year.

Even this figure conceals the undoubted accentuation

of economic inequality in the poorest countries.

The inescapable conclusion is that, during several decades in which the apparent concern of bourgeois politicians and media for world poverty has never been greater, the material lives of hundreds of millions of people has been getting steadily worse.

One of the "positive" facts in the Report is that life expectancy at birth in the poorest countries has risen from 42 years in 1960 to 50 years in 1977.

The other horrifying figures show that this means for most people eight extra years of deprivation and misery.

The plight of Cambodians today is an extreme case of a situation which is world-wide.

The World Bank estimates that food production per head in Cambodia

(Kampuchea) in 1975-77 was only 59% of the very low level it had been in 1969-71.

But Cambodia is only one of 48 underdeveloped countries in which food production per head fell during the same period.

Such developments mean that the often quoted figures which suggest that a growing share of the national production of the economically backward countries is in the industrial sector can be worse than misleading.

Sometimes, instead of demonstrating the expansion of industry it can be the statistical expression of decline in agriculture.

The growing food deficit, along with the increase in oil prices of the last few years, is one of the major reasons behind the growing balance of payments deficit of the economically backward countries.

An IMF estimate published two weeks ago suggests that the total deficit for 1979 will be as much as \$49 billion, bringing their cumulative deficit since 1973 to \$200 billion.

That staggering sum must be obtained largely from borrowing on the part of the economically backward countries.

And the problems of indebtedness are one of the major themes of this report.

The total medium and long-term public debts of "developing" countries, it shows, grew from \$113 billion in 1970 to \$231 billion in 1977.

The debt is very much concentrated in a limited number of countries—not so much the poorest countries which, being less "credit worthy", are left without even the prospect of borrowing from the banks.

A number of middle income countries, however, have fallen deeply into debt whence they have been "rescued" by the IMF acting for their creditors, which thereby obtain an iron grip on the economies.

In this way countries like Peru, Bolivia, Egypt, Mauritania, Mexico, Chile and Uruguay had to pay in 1977 over 20% of their export earnings in debt servicing (repayment and interest).

Enough for all

The statistics produced by economists show that the value of production in the world as a whole has passed \$10,000 billion—roughly \$2,500 a head of the world's population.

Such figures are simplistic and easily misused.

But they are part of the evidence that the forces of production have developed on a world scale sufficiently to make possible a decent material standard for every inhabitant.

Misery

Now is the first time in history that it has been possible to say that.

Yet the capitalist system, in whose orbit the great majority of people still live, has in its advanced regions been suffering for ten years a prolonged and agonising crisis while on its underdeveloped edge it accumulates human poverty and misery on a frightening scale.

The World Bank Survey carries a prediction that—on assumptions which are in no way unrealistically pessimistic—the world as it is now moving will contain millions more inhabitants who eat less than daily minimum calorie requirements by the year 2000.

Rotten ripe

It is one of the more startling of many facts and projections in this book which go to underline Lenin's view now more than half a century old, that the capitalist system is rotten ripe for overthrow.

Trotsky also said in his great *History of the Russian Revolution* that capitalism had:

"reached a point on the world arena where it ceased to justify its costs of production—understanding these not in the commercial but in the sociological sense.

"Tariffs, militarism, crises, wars, diplomatic conferences and other scourges, swallow up and squander so much creative energy that in spite of all achievements in technique there remains no room for the further growth of prosperity and culture."

Statistics of underdevelopment.

	37 low income countries	Industrialised capitalist countries
Life expectancy at birth (1977)	50	74
Child death rate age 1-4, per '000	19	1
Adult literacy rate (%)	36	99
Population per doctor	10,300	630
Population per nurse	9,720	210
Daily per capita calorie supply	2,036	3,342
Birth rate (per '000)	40	20
Death rate (per '000)	15	9

Corrie Bill — right wing press home advantage

In a week in which the BMA has denounced the John Corrie anti-abortion bill, and one doctor publicly declared that it would cause suffering, ill-health and certain death for numbers of women if passed, the campaign against the Bill proceeds.

But the reactionaries are also stepping up their propaganda.

Prominent outside the Tory Party conference were anti-abortion campaigners from SPUC, the so-called "Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child".

"Human Concern"

They handed out free copies of a newspaper cynically titled "Human Concern", in which the links between anti-abortion and all forms of sexual repression and social reaction was made clear.

Thatcher was praised for her support for the Corrie Bill, while Health minister Gerald Vaughan was slammed for equivocation on aspects of the Bill, though he actually voted in favour.

But elsewhere in the paper were articles attacking those who struggle for

women's rights—How Women's Lib militates against the poor and the black—sex education, birth control and lesbian couples.

Contradictory

A centre page article, reprinted from that staple source of reactionary propaganda, the *Evening Standard*, tore into sex education in schools, putting the following absurdly contradictory view:

"What should we have in its place to help youth sex problems?"

It is, I'm afraid, really quite simple, we should have more parental responsibility. Parents, who nowadays choose to bring a child into the world [! not if SPUC have their way!] should take full moral and psychological responsibility for their children."

So there the deadly logic of these mediaeval bigots is spelled out. On the one hand they oppose the birth control and sex education that can help prevent unwanted pregnancies: at the same time they oppose abortions, thus forcing women to bring unwanted children into the world; and then they turn round and claim that the full burden for the training of these children should fall on the same luckless women!

Small surprise that the paper gives over half a page to the reactionary rantings of the Pope, whose much vaunted campaign for "human rights" is limited to anti-communist propaganda in Poland and does not even extend to the elementary right of women to control the working of their own bodies or the right of men and women freely to determine their own sexuality.

Mediaevalists

Nor is it surprising that SPUC gloatingly print the full list of 55 Labour MPs who scandalously voted in favour of the Corrie Bill, taking their stand alongside traditional Tory mediaevalists and bigots in opposition to the basic rights of women.

The mass demonstration against the Corrie Bill for October 28 must be seen not as the culmination but a focal point of the campaign to drive such reactionaries out of the labour movement and to force the hundreds of Labour MPs who abstained to turn up and vote in force against the Bill at its Third Reading.

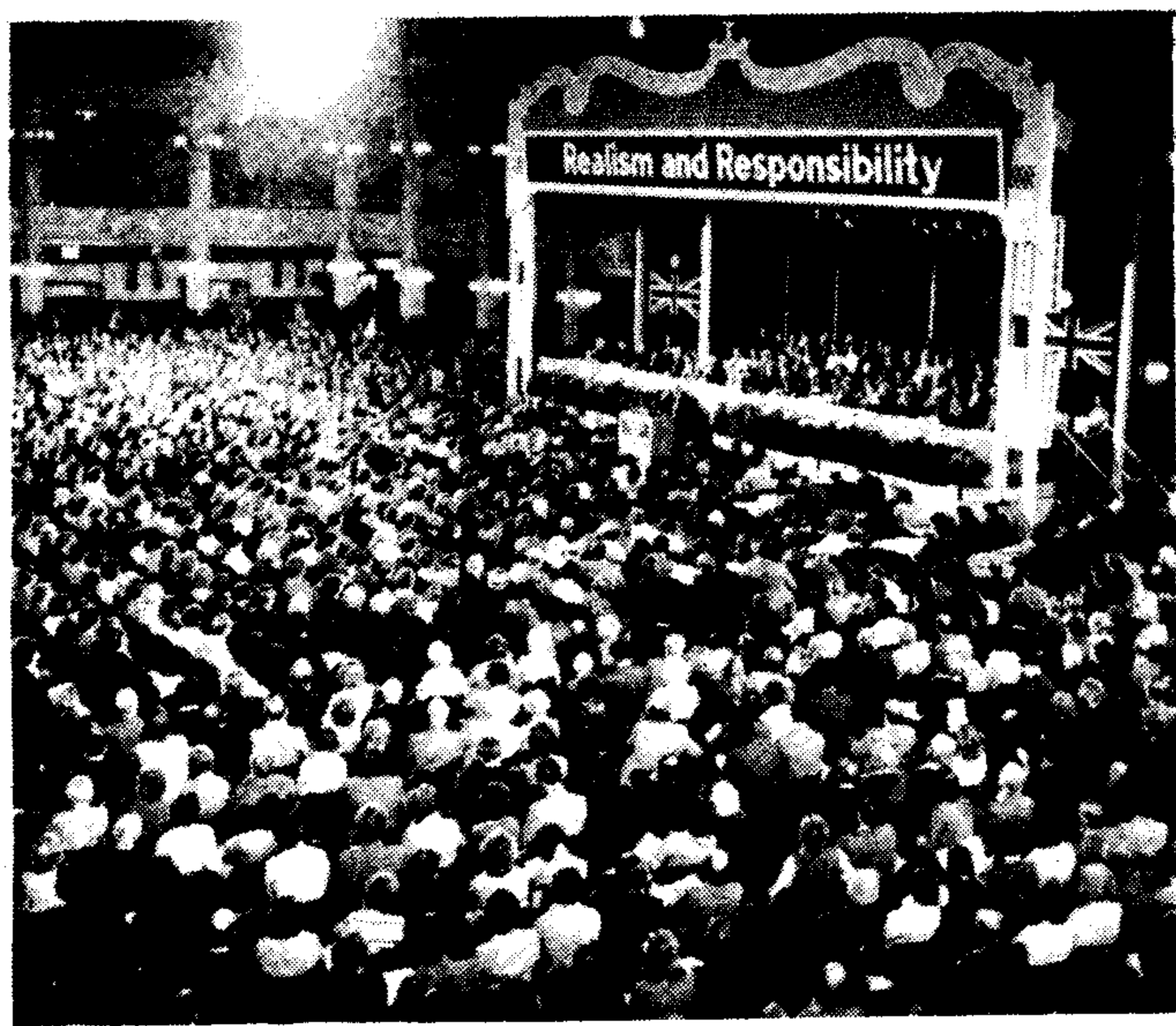
Spending cuts

Public sector unions in particular must also link the attacks on abortion rights to the fight against Tory spending cuts, in demanding that the TUC resolution for a national day of action against the cuts is implemented with mass strike action in every area.

MARCH

October 28, 1979
Assemble Speakers Corner
11.30 a.m. for march to
rally at Trafalgar Square

Throw out the Corrie Bill!
For free abortion on
demand on the NHS!
No cuts! For a sliding scale
of NHS spending!



The Tory Party conference

Take up 'troops out' fight

It was ironic that the Labour Party conference which voted for measures to increase Party democracy wound up by voting to support the continued denial of basic democratic rights to the Irish people.

A show of hands produced a majority against a motion calling for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from the occupied six counties, despite the fact that heavy and consistent lobbying by delegates had forced the topic onto the conference agenda against the recommendation of the NEC.

Collaboration

But many of those voting for a continuation of British military repression were trade union delegates expressing not the official policy of their organisations, but their own individual commitment to collaboration with British imperialism.

Only a tiny handful of union conferences have discussed Ireland at all in the last few years. In some unions, such as the TGWU, the issue is bundled bureaucratically off the agenda every two years without discussion.

The British labour movement has an obligation to sup-

port the historic liberation struggle by the Irish people.

This obligation can only be fulfilled if militants in every union branch and CLP take up the fight for the war in Ireland to be discussed at every level of their organisation, and a policy of immediate withdrawal of British troops adopted.

A useful starting point for such a struggle in the Labour Party is the fact that three

NEC members—Dennis Skinner, Joan Maynard and Les Huckfield—voted for the 'troops out' motion in the NEC.

These 'lefts' must be called upon to translate this correct stand into a serious struggle for the troops out policy throughout the labour and trade union movement and for the removal of the openly pro-imperialist Callaghan-Healey-Mason leadership.



PRESS GANG



'Colditz for the Yobbos' was how the *Star* greeted Whitelaw's plan for detention centres with military regimes.

It was an indication of the relief with which the press was able to greet the Tory Party conference.

No worries about how to handle 'infiltration' stories here.

Racism, naked class hatred, and sexism are all part of the mainstream of Tory conferences and they flowed freely through the Blackpool hall.

After the rigours of the Labour Party conference the press had come home and was able to bask in the congratulatory atmosphere of Blackpool.

The *Daily Star* which gloried in the "hard line corrective units dishing out

forces discipline" has interestingly only just taken a decision to 'declare' for the Labour Party, a decision which is expected to let TUC bureaucrats off the hook over their promises to launch a labour movement paper.

The *Sun* and the *Daily Mail*, which have no such pretensions and vie for the position of Thatcher's press officer, have been in seventh heaven.

After Thatcher's speech the *Sun* declared "Maggie blasts bully unions" and in a congratulatory leader declared:

"These were the words, this was the philosophy that ordinary people everywhere wanted to hear... she will deserve the applause of the whole country and a proud place in history."

The *Daily Mail* called her

speech "a personal appeal to millions of ordinary trade union members".

Like the *Sun*, the *Daily Mail* sees Thatcher as having a place in history, perhaps in the tradition of Queen Elizabeth I.

"Listening to her and looking at her yesterday, there was something about this extraordinary woman that does nurture optimism against the odds..."

"Maybe it is just because she is a woman that she has it in her to succeed."

"A woman who leads—and after yesterday can anyone doubt that she was born to lead her country?—calls forth responses wholly new."

On that note of responses as old as capitalism itself the press, like the Tory conference fades out to a rendering of Land of Hope and Glory.

Times bosses block return to work



PHOTO: Andrew Wiard, Report

Times workers demonstrate last November

Threats by the Thomson management to close the *Times* and *Sunday Times* for good came at the end of a week where the management deliberately prevented an agreement being reached for a return to work.

The leadership of the NGA had for the whole period of the shutdown been pressurising its chapels to accept sackings.

This culminated in an agreement in May which included loss of jobs and

technology agreements.

These job losses and agreements went only part of the way towards what the Thomson management were demanding.

The NATSOPA machine room chapel which had held out longest against the proposals settled last week—with management conceding a massive wage increase of up to 63%.

Not achieved

NGA members working alongside NATSOPA members immediately—as management knew they would—repudiated their

agreement and demanded an equivalent rise, overturning their union leadership on the question.

Despite the major climb-downs by the unions over the past year the Thomson management has not achieved the scale of job cutting that it requires.

Its threats to close the papers cannot be seen as an empty threat.

But the unions which have failed to raise the questions of occupation and nationalisation without compensation have at present no strategy for fighting such threats.

OUT NOW!

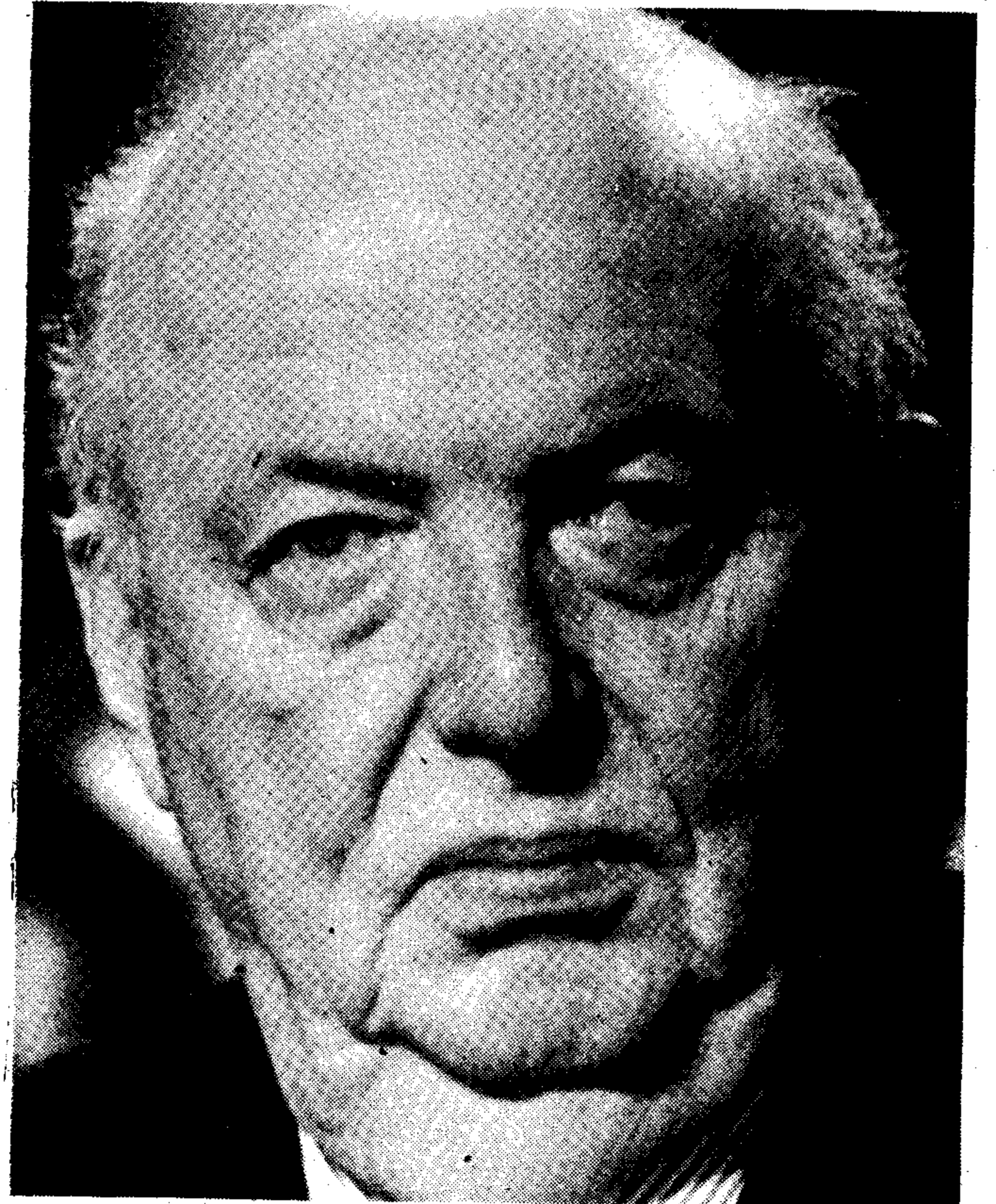
WOMAN WORKER No. 3

Articles on women in Ireland, fighting the cuts, Kampuchea, and the Communist Party's women's paper, "Link".

Price 16p including postage from WSL, 31 Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR



A cross section of the conference 'rank and file'



Undisguised face of Toryism - Lord Thorneycroft



A bored Keith Joseph



Business as usual - Prentice



A "Young" Conservative attacks the Campaign Against Youth Unemployment



Isn't it wonderful?

Letting the Tory hounds off the leash

John Lister reports on the ruling class in conference

"After all, we're all capitalists, aren't we?"

This was how one delegate aptly summed up the content of the monotonous 'debates' that have filled the four days of the Tory Party conference—'debates' in which the only question raised was whether the Thatcher government's reactionary course was sufficiently right wing.

The Tory Party's idea of "democracy" at its conferences must certainly have Callaghan flushing green with envy.

Nobody even pretends that the policies adopted will in the slightest way alter the policy of the Tory leadership.

There is not even the pretence of seeking to discuss the vast majority of the resolutions tabled.

Token vote

And after every ministerial winding-up speech, no matter how many may have spoken against the selected motion there is scarcely ever more than a token one vote against.

Tory Central Office is unable to recall an instance when the platform has been voted down.

But since they are all—or nearly all—capitalists, there isn't much for them to disagree about!

Why, since all apparently agree completely with the leadership, do the Tories bother to hold annual conferences?

Publicity value

Of course there is the publicity value—a renewed and intensified barrage of press propaganda for their vicious witch-hunting of the trade union movement and for the reactionary measures the Tories are preparing to implement.

But there are also other reasons. Again and again it becomes clear, for instance, that substantial numbers of the 'lords, ladies and gentlemen' on the floor of the conference are far to the right of the Party leadership, howling for the most draconian measures against the working class, against immigrants and youth.

Like a pack of hunting dogs, these slavering beasts must be let off the leash every so often, and given the run of the Blackpool Winter Gardens to sound off their various forms of pent-up class hatred.

Nauseating

A handful of nauseating upper middle class Tory school youth must also practice each year the rhetorical skills needed to become nauseating Tory

students—and seek to give the impression that the Party cares about youth.

Ageing ex-military men and assorted reactionaries from far-flung county seats seek in turn to pass on their Victorian world-view to up-and-coming young reactionaries.

The conference also allows millionaires and experienced spokesmen for big business to point the way and offer a glimmer of hope to crisis-ridden small-time company directors.

Privileged

A whole coterie of privileged and extremely rich people—few of whom have ever worked in their lives—can posture for a period as "the party of the people", and the "caring party", before closing still more hospitals, old people's homes,

schools and social services.

And a handful of beleaguered Tory trade unionists, (trying to persuade themselves that some of those workers conned by Saatchi and Saatchi into voting Tory actually now support Thatcher's policies of mass sackings, cuts and speed-up) get the chance to hobnob with employers who observe their efforts with the detached, morbid curiosity of a circus audience watching a nervous, outnumbered lion tamer.

And of course in the collective hysteria that is generated—in which the most grovelling compliments receive wild applause; stilted, boring and time-worn clichés are greeted as flights of oratory; and the most feeble jest gives rise to guffaws of rehearsed laughter—the Tory rank and file are able to convince themselves, for a day



'We're all capitalists aren't we?'

or two at least, that they really are able to do what they want to the working class.

In their minds they picture themselves slashing without restraint at the overgrown welfare state; riding in triumph through broken picket lines; stamping angrily on the windpipes of Arthur Scargill and Tony Benn; screwing endless increases in productivity at no extra cost from a workforce convinced into submission by Sir Geoffrey Howe's economic arguments; and eagerly hanging, shooting and flogging a vast army of scroungers, vandals and yobbos, along with the workshy, the militants and the terrorists (and a good proportion of the blacks as well).

These dreams and fantasies reach a culmination in Thatcher's Friday speech.

With a united, well-heeled, well-oiled, over-nourished yelp of delight they greet their triumphant leader—and declare their thanks for the tax cuts that have benefitted every parasite in the hall.

But then will come the bitter come-down of seeking to implement the Thatcher package in the real world, where workers resist, where ITV is still off the air, and where the Engineering Employers Federation—the toughest and most ruthless of employers' bodies—has just been defeated by 2 million workers.

Then, for all the ritualistic abuse wheeled out this week against the Labour and TUC leadership, the Thatcher cabinet will find themselves in reality increasingly dependent on these self-same Labour leaders' ability to hold back the anger and militancy of their members.



Remember him? Deposed Prime Minister Heath

USFI Xth WORLD CONGRESS

PART FOUR

The grim reality behind USFI's notable silences

The last two articles have examined the significant silence of the USFI documents and their actual positions on the massive revolutionary upsurge in Portugal 1974-76.

It might be thought that such an omission would be a big enough scar on a series of documents supposedly pointing the way forward for the USFI's militants.

But a closer examination shows other major holes in the USFI's analysis.

What about Vietnam and Kampuchea? The contradictory outcome to this war, and the nature of the Stalinist leadership is "analysed"—if you can use the word in this context—in four inches on page 9 of the World document:

"The Sino-Soviet conflict, in which Moscow and Peking jockeyed for position, and the restlessness of the rank and file in many Communist parties, who were affected by the prestige of the Indochinese, made it impossible for the Stalinists to block the revolutionary victory of the Vietnamese masses. With the elimination of capitalism [!] and the fusion of the two halves of Vietnam, a single deformed workers' state has been established there."

Thus the USFI offers the members not one word about Cambodia—even for discussions sake!

Counter-revolutionary

And the glib, generalised statement of the defeat of imperialism and "the elimination of capitalism" turns resolutely away from any serious analysis of the social processes involved—processes which echo similar overturns under Stalinist leadership in Yugoslavia and China in the post-war period and which in our view clearly demonstrate the essential counter-revolutionary role of the Hanoi bureaucracy.

Despite the formality of referring to Vietnam as a "deformed workers' state" there is no call in the World Document for a political revolution in Vietnam, or the building of a Trotskyist party. Nor do the majority offer any real clue as to what is 'deformed' about it.

And this embarrassed evasion on Cambodia is a reflection of the major division that has now

erupted within the USFI.

The Mandelites now argue that Pol Pot's Kampuchea prior to the Vietnamese invasion was a deformed workers' state, and call for the withdrawal of the Vietnamese invaders.

The SWP's supporters on the other hand describe the Pol Pot regime as "state capitalist", and fully endorse the Vietnamese invasion as "a step forward for the Indochinese revolution"!

A similar embarrassed evasion marks the World Document's references to the struggle in Angola in 1976 by the MPLA against the CIA-South African backed UNITA/FNLA forces.

At the time, of course the US Socialist Workers Party refused to take sides, branding it as a tribal war.

No-one could win the war, the SWP declared, and if the MPLA were to win then this could lead to genocidal extermination of much of the Angolan population.

Pogroms

Tony Thomas's report on the issue, approved by the SWP NC, declared that:

"I do not think that any of these groups can 'win' the war... If one of them does gain a decisive victory over the others... the real winner would be imperialism."

"We have to anticipate that the victory of either side in this war may mean pogroms, with victims running into tens of thousands. Already leaders of the MPLA have talked about turning the Bakongo areas held by the FNLA into 'another Biafra'. In Africa the word 'Biafra' is synonymous with the civil war in Nigeria and the immense slaughter that occurred over the so-called tribal issue. A similar perspective is involved in Angola."

The SWP never, until after the event declared its support for the MPLA's military struggle against the South African-CIA backed mercenary force—though it did, off-handedly, condemn the UNITA and FNLA forces for collaborating with the South Africans.

Uncritical

The Mandelites on the other hand lurched towards uncritical support for the MPLA.

Now however, the real positions of both sides are covered up in the World Document by a refusal to analyse

the issues involved in the war—a war which so dramatically tipped the balance of forces for the Zimbabwe liberation struggle and found an echo also in the Soweto events.

The Angolan war receives a mere *one column inch* in the World Perspectives Document—in which the SWP prudently—but without the slightest analysis or self-criticism—abandon their discredited positions, declaring:

"Angola constituted one of the main battlefields. Washington sought to intervene through use of the CIA and through backing military invasion mounted by the racist regime in South Africa" [this inflates the analysis of the power of the South African regime, by leaving out the proxy nature of their "invasion" attempt] "These efforts were beaten back by the MPLA government in Angola with the assistance of Cuban troops. The aid of the Cubans was decisive in defeating Washington's imperialist scheme and in driving the South African invaders out of the country".

But while this is an open evasion and a totally inadequate analysis, it is worth looking at the position of Moreno's Bolshevik Faction.

They have made some correct points against the SWP's position, but coupled them with a bizarre perspective of their own which reaches new heights of vagueness and absurdity:

"Gravest of all is that the SWP does not conceive the struggle of the Angolan MPLA as part of the *Black mobilisation and revolution on the whole planet*, including the Black people in the United States. The SWP limits itself to including the Black people of its own country within an appeal to the American people, and not as part of a *Black world revolution*, whose vanguard was the MPLA... Against the national, tribal and opportunistic conception of the IMT and of the LTF, we raise the internationalist and permanent programme of the Black Afro-American revolution".

For the Morenists, carried away with the Angolan struggle, class analysis is abandoned—and the novel idea of a worldwide "black revolution" is substituted.

This comes from a tendency that regards itself as a tendency more orthodox than ever."

But the new majority's evasion on Angola is coupled with their complete evasion and cover-up on the role of Cuba in Africa—and the strategic aims of the Kremlin, towards which the Cuban army is being used as a convenient lever.

The World Document describes the Cuban role ambiguously on Page 9—leaving it completely open for interpretation as to whether or not Cuba is acting in liaison with the Soviet bureaucracy.

"The Cubans, recognising Washington's temporary paralysis, sent material aid with Moscow's acceptance, including thousands of troops to Angola, Ethiopia and other countries in Africa."

Ford and subsequently Carter threatened reprisals, which they are prepared to carry out. However, Havana accepted the risk, winning the gratitude of most [!] anti-imperialist fighters in Africa.

The contrast between the standing of revolutionary Cuba and counterrevolutionary America among the insurgent peoples of Africa could hardly be more dramatic". (Our emphasis)

Covering up

Note the deliberate use of the term "revolutionary Cuba": we should note also that Cuba does not appear in the document's long, rambling section on political revolution.

And we should note as well that *IP/Inprecor* and the SWP-influenced press, while maintaining this uncritical stance has also been shamelessly covering up for the Cuban role in supporting the genocidal war being waged by the Ethiopian dictatorship of Mengistu against the Eritrean people.

Aspects only of this cover-up are reflected in this diplomatically worded World Document.

It singles out and strongly emphasises the "left" domestic policies of the Ethiopian Derg, and is at pains to minimise the Derg's vicious hostility to any and every form of political organisation of the Ethiopian masses.

It goes on to say: "... revolutionary Marxist forces everywhere in the world combine their defence of the African revolution with strong support for the right of independence for the Eritrean people."

The Cuban and Soviet

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USFI) is undoubtedly the largest and most widely known of the currents that have emerged from the post-war crisis of the Trotskyist movement.

With thousands of members and sections or sympathising sections in dozens of countries, it is viewed by many militants as "the" Trotskyist Fourth International.

The Workers Socialist League does not share this view. We see the USFI as a movement that has departed on numerous key questions from the positions and method put forward in the Transitional Programme on which the Fourth International was founded in 1938.

We know, of course, that the two other main groupings that lay claim to the title of "Fourth International" are both now substantially smaller than the USFI.

Both of them—the Healyite "International Committee" (run by the British WRP) and the "Organising Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International" (run by the French OCI)—certainly hold political positions as bad or far worse than the USFI on many questions and are themselves (like the USFI) wracked by internal crisis.

Disorientation

But the bankruptcy of their rivals is in our view no argument for recognising in the USFI the exclusive continuity of the Trotskyist movement,



Eritrean liberation fighters

governments should reject participating in any invasion of Eritrean territory or any attempt by the Derg to re-establish Ethiopian rule in Eritrea. Withdraw the Ethiopian troops!

Cuban recognition of the right of the Eritreans to decide their own fate would strengthen the defence of the Cuban workers' state against imperialism. To follow an opposite course would lead to negative results [!], injuring not only the Cuban revolution [!] but also the important revolutionary gains made in Ethiopia itself." (Our emphasis)

Reactionary role

This is in our view a brazen cover-up for the scandalously reactionary role being played by the Castroites as willing and servile tools of Kremlin foreign policy.

We believe that the Cuban role in Angola, in Mozambique and in the war in Zimbabwe; and their offer of an agreement to Carter to hold back rebel forces seeking to cross from Angola to Zaire all fit perfectly and consciously into the Kremlin's strategy.

This is to seek overall a peaceful coexistence with imperialism, coupled with the winning where possible of selected strategic diplomatic and military pressure points in Africa to compensate for its weakness in losing total control of the mass European CPs.

No analysis

Almost certainly the USFI majority would disagree with such an assessment of Stalinist strategy in Africa.

Yet despite the intrinsic importance of these questions both from the standpoint of theory and for practical purposes in assessing every day diplomatic-military comings and goings—particularly in Zimbabwe—there is no attempt in the World Document to present an analysis.

This is because the USFI leadership is now also divided over the nature of the Cuban

leadership.

While the SWP leadership continues to regard Cuba as an undeformed workers' state and the Castro leadership as 'revolutionary', forces are emerging both within the SWP itself and within the USFI as a whole which challenge this view, and regard both the Cuban state and the Castro leadership as bureaucratised, or seeking a half way house in which to hide out—brand it elusively as "centrist"—as does the IMG's Alan Jones.

Sooner than take a clear position around which a thorough debate can take place, the XI Congress documents fudge the issue, presenting a confusing and utterly inadequate stand.

Of course it is true that in the Latin American document the USFI does now at last concede that "a further evaluation of the achievement and problems facing the Cuban revolution is in order."

Schema

It is worth noting that in doing so, the document spells out beyond doubt the schema on which the USFI's attitude to the Castro leadership has been based:

"Should the USFI continue to act toward the Cuban leadership on the basis that, under the impact of revolutionary advances in the class struggle, especially in Latin America, and under the influence of a growing Fourth International [!] differentiations will take place [NB, in the Cuban leadership] and major components can evolve towards Leninist policies and norms of workers' democracy?" (Our emphasis)

The question itself of course is inadequate: the USFI should be asked whether such a tail-endist perspective should ever have been adopted by a movement regarding itself as Trotskyist!

But why does the USFI now suddenly move to concede a discussion on Cuba?

The counterrevolutionary actions of the Castroites are, of course, not new.

whose post-war period has been characterised by profound political disorientation and a continuing series of incomplete and opportunistic splits and fusions.

The forthcoming XIth World Congress of the USFI is however an important event. It offers Marxists the opportunity of assessing in more detail the stage of development of the political crisis which has characterised the USFI's existence since its formation in 1963.

At its Tenth World Congress in 1974 the main factions were the Leninist Trotskyist Faction, politically supporting the formally "orthodox", opportunist positions of the US Socialist Workers Party, and the International Majority Tendency, clinging on to the ultra-leftist and guerrillaist schemas of the USFI's European Secretariat.

taken by both the LTF and the IMT during the Portuguese events of 1974-6 and the Angolan war led to a sharp realignment of forces which now shapes the coming XIth World Congress.

The bulk of the USFI's Latin American member sections and sympathising sections broke with the line of the SWP and the LTF and, led by Nahuel Moreno's Argentinian PST, formed the 'Bolshevik Tendency'.

The growing challenge from these forces, combined with the complete collapse in the credibility of the IMT's guerrillaist perspectives of 1969 and 1974, pressured both the European and SWP leaders into a hasty dissolution of factions and the formation of a new, "united" leadership prior to the XIth Congress.

It was this new majority leadership that drafted the five main documents tabled for the Congress. But their manifest failure to reconcile past political disagreements is demonstrated by the pattern of conspicuous diplomatic omissions and evasions in the documents.

The Bolshevik Tendency has in the meantime declared itself a Faction dedicated to the removal of what it calls a 'Castroist current' and an "unprincipled bloc" at the head of the USFI and the restoration of "orthodox" Trotskyism.

Correct errors

A much lesser threat is seen in the statements produced by a new, 'Leninist Trotskyist Tendency' which has also emerged, with forces in a number of

sections, pledged to "correct the errors" of the existing USFI leadership.

The article below, part four of a series examining the position of the USFI in the run-up to its XIth Congress, is a critique of the five main texts presented to the Congress by the new majority leadership.

- These deal with:
- *The World Political Situation.
 - *European Perspectives.
 - *Perspectives for Latin America.
 - *The fight against women's oppression.
 - *Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.



Soweto events—the USFI draws no lessons

European sections of the USFI. It is therefore behind the formal orthodoxy and the notable silences that we need to look for the real, practical face of the USFI.

The position is no better on South Africa. Much of the press of the USFI at the time was packed with articles on the huge Soweto events of 1976—events that showed the massive threat to the apartheid capitalist state posed by the black proletariat in this industrialised African country.

Yet the USFI World Document dismisses the whole affair in a sentence:

"The unfolding struggles in industrialised South Africa—where an indigenous white bourgeoisie and its racist state are pitted against a powerful black working class and its allies—will be especially important for the course of the African revolution as a whole."

Behind this truism there lies another uncomfortably stark reality: whereas the Mandelites' "Self Criticism" and the USFI's document on Latin America explicitly *revoke* the USFI's disastrous 1969 guerrillaist perspective for that continent they have made no moves whatever to rescind the parallel 1969 policy for South Africa which states that:

"the South African revolution... [is] the only one which can base itself on a mass of workers and peasants who have been proletarianised and largely debilitated in the crucible of capitalist exploitation and apartheid oppression. The historic role of all the armed struggles now in progress in the African continent, which are slowly moving southward, is to prepare, facilitate and spur the outbreak of the South African revolution, beginning with guerrilla warfare." (our emphasis).

The Soweto events demonstrated the power and scope of the mass working class movement.

Refutation

The subsequent forcing of concessions from the apartheid capitalist state in the Crossroads settlement also stands as a complete refutation of the USFI's guerrillaist strategy.

Both mass movements are clear statements of the necessity for revolutionaries to fight for a programme of transitional and democratic demands to mobilise the black proletariat and create conditions for the masses to take up arms in the overthrow of capitalist-apartheid rule.

The USFI draws no such conclusion: it scandalously draws no political conclusion at all from the Soweto events, and thus clings willy nilly to a fundamentally wrongheaded policy that effectively lines it up with the anti-working class strategy peddled by the Stalinists of the ANC.

Finally we should just look at the situation in Turkey where, at the time of writing, Ecevit's supposedly 'democratic' RPP government was clinging to office by the skin of its teeth and by severe martial law repression of the workers movement (including repression of the USFI section's paper) in the main cities.

Turkey—wracked by insoluble economic crisis, worsened by each lurch in the worldwide crisis—has witnessed the emergence of the biggest organised fascist movement in the world.

Yet it also has a powerful and militant trade union movement, which has been restrained continuously by Stalinist and reformist leaders who are in a Popular Frontist political bloc with Ecevit and the RPP.

Their respect for this bourgeois leader whom they term a "social democrat", and their fear of the mass mobilisation of the working class has meant they have opposed establishing a working class united front to mount the necessary workers' defence against fascist attacks.

Political crisis

Yet these attacks daily claim the lives of dozens of workers, and have included the murder of leading members of the Turkish Labour Party.

The country is now in the grip of a political crisis as Ecevit's ministers and MPs desert him and the fascists wage a united struggle with the extreme right wing to discredit him through scandals, prior to defeating him in Parliament.

The danger of a military-fascist coup is crystal clear and has been for over a year now. The hallmarks of a 1930s-style Popular Front betrayal by the reformist and Stalinist leaders in tailing behind Ecevit are plain for Trotskyists to see—and have been for many months.

Yet the sole reference to Turkey occurs in the USFI's European Perspectives document—where the leadership inform us that its trade union movement has grown!

There is no analysis whatever of its political crisis.

But there is also a good reason for this omission: the USFI's Turkish supporters have repeatedly declared themselves in favour of supporting Ecevit's RPP government!

While in the last elections our supporters campaigned for a break by the unions and workers parties from the RPP and the fight for a workers' and peasants' government, the USFI group was in favour of a vote to Ecevit!

From that standpoint no programme, no analysis can be argued—other than hoping Ecevit clings to office.

The USFI have good reason to be silent on Turkey—but that silence too masks their real political position. For that we need to know their practice in the country concerned.



troops with captured Soviet tank

But what is new, and what forces itself even upon the blinkered empiricists of the USFI, is the fact that this policy now runs to the lengths of actually assisting genocide in Eritrea.

And Castro has also paraded for all the world to see as Brezhnev's puppet in the "non-aligned" Havana conference.

This has thrown Cuba's "revolutionary" credentials into question among the politically conscious workers and the petty bourgeois radical circles that form the actual base of most USFI sections.

While the description of Castro as a "revolutionary" could perhaps have been on the basis of superficial impressions adopted in the 1960s, it can only be defended in the 1970s on the basis of denying the most obvious of empirical evidence!

Thus the issue that 'united' the USFI in 1963 has now emerged as one of a whole series of bones of contention and sources of conflict in the late 1970s.

Of course the USFI could argue that it need not take a clear position on Vietnam, Angola and Cuba because it has no sections there (and no intention of building them in Vietnam or Cuba).

But that argument could hardly be put forward on Argentina, where Moreno's PST is one of those USFI groups claimed as the largest Trotskyist party in the world.

The practical experiences—be they positive or negative—of that party in the struggles to prevent and then to resist



South African troops patrolling on the border with Angola

Videla's military coup and vicious dictatorship must surely be a key starting point for analysing and developing the struggles of sections throughout Latin America.

Its mistakes must be analysed in order to prevent similar mistakes recurring: its strengths should be drawn out to reinforce the work of much weaker sections elsewhere on the continent.

What else is an International for?

But you will search in vain through the USFI's World Document or their Latin America Document for any such analysis.

The actual experience of the "biggest Trotskyist party in the world"—or certainly in Latin America—is apparently of little interest beside the vague and abstract formulations spun out by the new majority leadership of the USFI.

Incapable

A recognition that the PST is the lynch-pin in the main USFI opposition tendency is clearly a major factor in this omission: the leadership are plainly incapable of an objective assessment of its political experience.

They realise that if they endorse the PST's record, this might strengthen the opposition, but if they attack it they might direct a whole polemic towards examining the practical work of other USFI sections, who support the majority.

But this blindness to practical experience is not restricted to the majority leadership: the Bolshevik Tendency's own declaration makes no attempt whatever to assess its own practical work and struggles in Latin America—focussing almost exclusively on the issues of Portugal and Angola in the challenge to the majority leadership, and drawing no comparisons or contrasts with its own actions!

This shows as clearly as anything the preoccupation of the USFI sections with internationalism as an abstraction and ideas rather than practice.

The USFI majority, of course, cannot claim that it has no direct interest in Spain, where it claims that the LCR numbers several thousand members.

And of course in Spain the scale of mass mobilisation, particularly in the aftermath of Franco's death, has at times reached considerable proportions.

How are Marxists to assess the cautious, complex process through which the outward trappings of the old fascist apparatus have been dismantled and an increasingly fragile cosmetic face of bourgeois democracy erected by Franco's heirs in Spain?

Why is Spain seen as a 'model' by a string of Latin American and other dictatorships seeking to head off working class resistance?

In particular what does the reactionary Popular Frontist role played by Spain's "Eurocommunist" CP tell us about the developing position of Stalinism in Spain, and throughout Europe?

Are we to detect a chink of "progressive" light in Eurocommunism or understand it as a more brazen expression of the determination of the Stalinist leaders to embrace the politics of the Popular Front?

How are Trotskyists to fight this treachery?

Well, we in the Workers Socialist League, from Britain, have tried to assess this—and devoted a lot of space to the issue in *Socialist Press*.

We regard these political questions as of paramount importance, partly for understanding Stalinism in Britain, but more importantly for assessing its role and the fight against it on an international scale.

Practical record

The USFI does not seem so concerned, however. Nor are its leaders at all anxious to draw on the experience of another supposed "biggest Trotskyist party in the world"—the LCR in Spain.

The LCR's practical record

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Mussolini and Marquis de Sade



Mussolini was a keen advocate of the same bourgeois family values implicitly endorsed in Pasolini's film

It is more than ironic that a film which uses sadism as a metaphor for bourgeois power should have been itself mutilated by the bourgeois state censors.

No doubt, judging by what remains, the seven or so minutes removed are horrifying; however, as a study precisely of sexual violence and human degradation, the impact of "Salo" is diminished by the removal of a series of climactic passages. (The film is actually appearing somewhat ambiguously at a small club in Soho).

In bourgeois society human relationships are transformed into relations between things.

This reification and fetishisation, stemming from the capitalist mode of production, inevitably affects all aspects of social life.

Subtler expression

As regards sexuality, the person reduced to a sexual object stares out from the gutter press and the porn-shop windows, and reification finds subtler expression in the marriage contract and the bourgeois family.

Pasolini, in "Salo", has taken sadism as a clear and extreme sexual expression of the human-turned-object, and has used it as a metaphor for fascist power politics.

Historically, Salo was the name of the puppet state set up for Mussolini in Nazi-occupied northern Italy in 1943.

It was the fascist brutality and murderous violence of this short-lived "republic" that prompted Pasolini to use it as the setting for a cinematic adaptation of the Marquis de Sade's novel "120 Days of Sodom".

Four obviously 'cultured' men (representing in the film the force of the bourgeois state)—a banker, a judge, a bishop and a duke—establish a regime of orgiastic sadism in a luxurious mansion in Salo.

Fascist soldiers

With the aid of local collaborators, young men dressed as fascist soldiers, and four women procuresses, they select 16 virginal boys and girls for their orgies.

"Normal" heterosexual relationships are forbidden in the household, and the victims are forced to submit to the increasingly inhuman and degrading demands of the sadist dictators.

They are reduced to being the mere receptacles of sadist lust and vehicles for the assertion of the sadists' power.

The sterility of the sexual relationships is stressed by the need of the sadists to be sexually aroused for the orgies by erotic stories told by the procuresses.

Pure sadism cannot have a willing victim, nor can it avoid its ultimate expression: gratification at the violent death of the object.

Tortured to death

So, after they have been raped, forced to eat shit, and mutilated, the victims are tortured to death, the sexual overlords taking turns at being inventor, accomplice, executor and voyeur of the tortures.

The overt political dimension of "Salo" is slight—conveyed through the presence of the blackshirts, Mussolini's voice heard once on the radio, and the contemporary setting.

-'nauseatingly effective' combination

Enrique Alvares reviews "Salo", directed by Pier Pasolini and showing at the Compton Cinema Club, London.



Mussolini

More importantly it depends on the audience's prior awareness that sadism and fascism are to be somehow equated, or at least shown to be mutually illuminating.

And some correspondences are apparent: the powerlust of the protagonists, the role of collaborators and rifles, the victims driven by fear into denunciations of one another.

What is especially noticeable as lacking in a film made by a 'Marxist' (Pasolini was a member of the Italian CP until he was expelled for his homosexuality) is any response by the 'victim' class.

Certainly the victims retain some dignity in the face of the indignities heaped upon them (in contradistinction to the

treachery and easy acquiescence of the collaborators), but at no stage is this translated into solidarity aimed at revolt.

Rather, the continued cruelty leads to disintegration and betrayal.

As for the collaborators, the final scene of the film shows them to be apparently untouched by what they have participated in, as they contemplate their future lives once this episode is over.

The one instance of revolt that is shown occurs when one of the soldiers is caught making illicit love (clearly distinguished from the sadistic orgies) with a black woman servant.

He is immediately shot for this human warmth and for his "normal" sexuality, and faces

death with a communist salute.

Within the whole film, though, this brief scene has no real political meaning and is little more than a vague gesture towards the outward show of revolutionary politics.

Implicit logic

Furthermore, by identifying positive human behaviour once more solely with heterosexuality, the conservative sexual politics of the film are reinforced.

The implicit logic of these sexual politics is this: we are to condemn sexuality based on a power structure and reduced to a relationship between things; in the film such a sexuality is plausibly demonstrated by

sadism; but because straight heterosexuality is banned by the sadists whose starting point is sodomy, and because it is suggested as a real, human relationship, not only is sadism indicted, but 'normal' heterosexuality is implied to be the only possible form of non-reified sexuality.

(There was a similar reactionary effect when sections of the left in Germany attempted to blacken the Nazi image by associating Nazism with homosexuality—an association which inevitably worked both ways).

Again, the bourgeois family is associated with healthy human relationships—if only because it is clearly pointed out that the sadistic regime has violated the family, which remains a source of moral strength to the victims.

Suspect

These criticisms of the film would be less valid if "Salo" was presented simply as a portrayal of sadism. But, claiming as it does a directly political dimension, all its political and philosophical implications become clearer and more significant.

The whole project, though, of exploring the 'psychology' of fascist power through examining a small world of Sodom, is suspect.

While sadism and fetishised sexual relations generally are no doubt a feature of class society, they do not relate to class struggle in capitalism in the same way as does a socio-political development like fascism—even a puppet state like Mussolini's Salo which was obliged to rely so much on physical coercion and terror.

Mass psychology

Sadism has a politics as well as a psychology; and fascism has a 'psychology' too. But it is a mass psychology, a political, social, class-based psychology.

"Salo" shows no attempt at a class analysis of either fascism or sadism.

It might also be claimed that it is little more than an intellectual's game to attempt to understand fascism through a metaphor.

The workers and peasants of Italy do not need to see Pasolini's film of sadistic rituals to understand the brutality of Mussolini.

But it is here, it seems to me, that "Salo" can make its strongest claims—at least on those who

have no memory of fascist atrocities.

Through the explicit sexuality of the metaphor—to which everybody can at least partially and at times relate—the audience is led into a direct involvement in a way which could not be achieved in a documentary "Salo".

Credibility mounts

Just as in the preparatory period prior to fascism, large sections of society are prepared to condone attacks on bourgeois democratic rights in gratitude that consequently the trains are running on time, so in this film it is unlikely that most viewers will not respond to some degree erotically to the earlier scenes, despite the atmosphere of coercion.

Yet as the film continues, the violence and cruelty mounts up to peaks of sickening horror which retrospectively indict the viewer for his earlier limited acquiescence.

As a political film "Salo" achieves little, because of both the very nature of the project and the film's failure to offer any political perspective beyond horror at what has passed.

Its pessimism shows no definitive (revolutionary) conclusion to the sadistic regime; the final tableau suggests only a 'natural' return to normality after the climax—with the possibility of yet another cycle of collaboration, persecution, cruelty and murder.

Pasolini himself gave a totally un-Marxist explanation of social and sexual power-relationships: "what we call the class struggle", he has said, is one form of social stratification based on the power 'instincts' of 'human nature'.

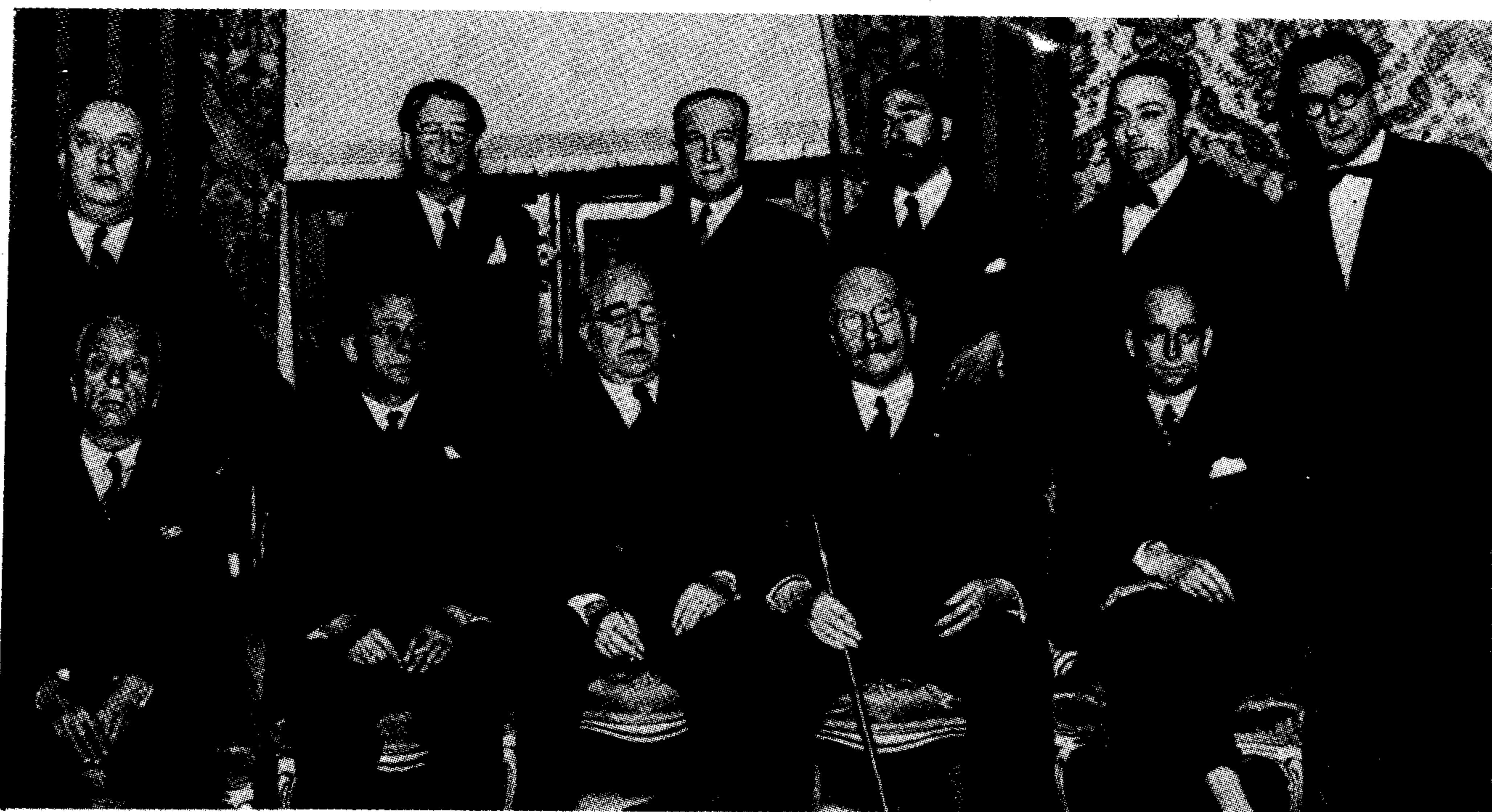
According to this unhistorical understanding it is fascism that would be the metaphor and the symptom—for some mystical human instinct of domination and submission. This is a view which all revolutionaries must reject.

But as a portrayal and indictment of human brutality, "Salo" is extremely, nauseatingly, effective.

It is a superbly made film, though mauled by the censors, with excellent acting performances; probably gratifying to sadists, and only slightly less worth seeing if you're looking for a masochistic night out—it hurts.

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Spanish Popular Front leaders Fascist devastation in the city of Toledo in the Civil War

When Trotsky was forced to spend a few weeks in Spain late in 1916 he can hardly have imagined what a significant role the country was later going to play in his political concerns.

At that time he knew no Spanish, spent his time in art galleries and museums and was arrested because, as the Madrid Chief of Police put it, his "views were a little too advanced for Spain!"

In the final decade of his life, Trotsky was to have occasion many times to express his advanced views on Spain and his writings fill a large volume.

Revolutionary potential

It is entirely made up of the letters and brief articles through which Trotsky reacted from a distance to the struggle of revolution and counter-revolution which filled the ten years following the downfall in 1930 of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship and the fall of the monarchy.

The writings are dominated by Trotsky's faith in the reality of the revolutionary potential of the Spanish working class.

The parallels between the downfall of Primo de Rivera and Alfonso XIII and that of the Tsar in February 1917 were only too obvious to Trotsky of all people.

Yet the striking thing about his writings on the Spanish events is his penetration of the differences.

Incisive observations

"In its specific gravity in the country's economic life, in its political and cultural level, the Spanish proletariat stood on the first day of the revolution not below but above the Russian proletariat at the beginning of 1917..."

"... from the very beginning the revolution expressed much more graphically the proletarian character than did the revolution of 1917 in Russia" (pp.322 and 366—all references to Pathfinder Press edition).

Trotsky's commentaries are suffused with incisive theoretical observations on socialism, fascism, popular fronts and proletarian revolutionary strategy.

Practical questions

But these emerge in the form of very detailed discussions of the practical questions facing revolutionaries.

These especially concern the period 1930-31 after the fall of the dictatorship and then the period just before the civil war when the centrist party, the POUM, led by former supporters of the Trotskyist International Left Opposition entered the Popular Front with the reformists, Stalinists and capitalist parties and helped to prepare the way for the tragic defeat of the Spanish proletariat.

Correct strategy

In both periods Trotsky's position is one of a practical search for the correct strategy and tactics for revolutionaries as against opportunists and sectarians.

"It is a truism", he writes, "that our epoch is characterised politically by a relentless

TROTSKY DRAWS LESSONS OF SPANISH STRUGGLES



Anti-fascist dies in battle against Franco forces

struggle between socialism (communism) and fascism. But unfortunately this does not mean that the proletariat is already and everywhere conscious of this alternative, nor that in any given country, at any given moment, it may ignore the partial struggle to safeguard its democratic liberties.

"The fundamental alternative, communism or fascism, established by Lenin, has become for many a hollow formula which the left centrists use only too often to cover up their capitulations, or the sectarians to justify their inaction" (p.293-4).

"The whole political task", to Trotsky in 1937 lay in how "to transform this hybrid, confused, half-blind and half-dead revolution into a socialist revolution." (P.295).

The method imperative for Bolsheviks was to relate to the existing struggles and concerns of the masses, and so to deserve and to win a position of leadership on which a fight for power could be based.

United front

What this required was a bold united front tactic with the revolutionary party in the vanguard of the drive for proletarian unity.

Such a united front must be based around what the masses were able to perceive as their needs—such as the extension of democracy, the fight for national self-determination and so on.

Trotsky all the time stresses the need to sum up the immediate tasks facing the proletariat in a set of a few slogans which evolved with the changing struggle and consciousness of the masses.

A constant theme in the

Continuing our series of articles on the writings of Leon Trotsky in this, the centenary year of his birth, Henry Phillips looks at Trotsky's writings on Spain, published as *The Spanish Revolution* by Pathfinder Press, New York, 1973. The best edited and fullest edition, however, is in French: *La Revolution Espagnole*, edited by Pierre Broue, Editions de Minuit, Paris 1975.

period 1930-32 is the rejection of any search for magic revolutionary slogans which are good for all situations.

"In order to issue such slogans we must not be guided by doctrinaire abstractions but by the state of consciousness of the masses and the way they react to the various partial successes.

"Simply counterposing the slogan of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' or 'workers and peasants republic' to the present regime is entirely inadequate because these slogans do not move the masses." (p.144).

The writings on 1930 and 1931 are also important because they contain Trotsky's fullest explanation of the role in the revolutionary struggle of Soviets (or 'workers' juntas' as he believed they should be called in Spain).

His view on the role of the juntas was the organisational side of his political insistence that "the immediate task of the Spanish communists is not the struggle for power but the struggle for the masses".

He goes on: "The creation of workers' juntas is undoubtedly the principle task of the day. But it is absurd to counterpose the juntas to democratic slogans... At the present stage, juntas are the organisational forms for the united proletarian front—for

strikes, for the expulsion of the Jesuits, for participation in the elections to the Cortes, to establish contact with the soldiers, as well as to provide support for the peasant movement.

"Only through juntas embracing the basic core of the proletariat can the communists assure their hegemony in the proletariat, and thus also in the revolution.

"Only to the extent that the influence of the communists grows in the working class will the juntas be transformed into organs of struggle for power... to counterpose the slogan of soviets as organs of the dictatorship of the proletariat to the realities of the present struggle means to convert the slogan of soviets into a supra-historical divinity, into a super-revolutionary icon, which individual saints may worship but which the masses will never follow." (p.129)

Transformed

If the emphasis of the early parts of the *Spanish Revolution* is often against the sectarianism of these "saints" it is because Trotsky was referring to the Comintern which was still at the height of its ultra-leftist "Third Period" policy, which was to split the powerful German working class and open the door for Hitler.

In the later period after 1935, of course, the emphasis is transformed.

From then on Trotsky's writings on Spain become a sustained and profound political polemic against the counter-revolutionary class collaboration of the Stalinists and reformists.

"Fatal role"

And Trotsky wages a ceaseless struggle against the "fatal role" of adaptation to this popular frontism played by the "revolutionary" Workers Party of Marxist Unification—the POUM—whose leaders were ironically persecuted and murdered for their "Trotskyism".

Trotsky's uncompromising analysis of the Popular Front and its role in opening the door to fascism is relatively well-known and there is no space to quote from it here.

But one particular article with which the *Spanish Revolution* ends must be mentioned—in fact it could almost claim an article in this series all to itself.

It is *The Class, the Party and the Leadership*, an article which was left unfinished when he was murdered.

It is a fitting culmination to Trotsky's long struggle for socialism, since it presents probably the best theoretical account written in the history

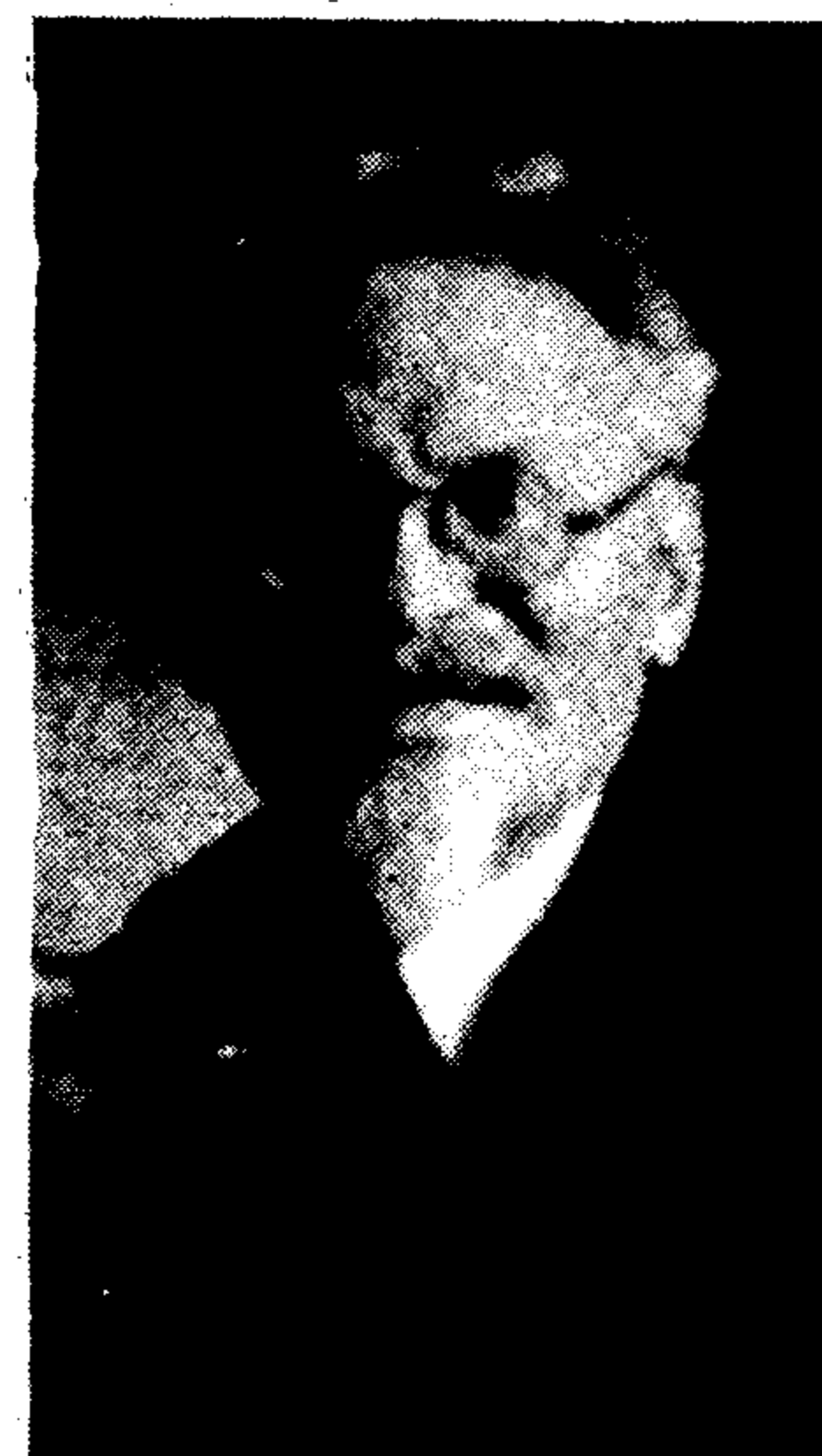
of the communist movement of the inter-relationships between the mass movement and its leadership.

Despite its unfinished state this article provides an essential component of a scientific understanding of that most central of all questions for revolutionaries—the winning of the leadership of the masses.

But there are relevant lessons, too, for today on virtually every page of Trotsky's writings on Spain.

The very parallels of the Spanish events after 1930 and those in some countries today presents a danger—that of simply 'lifting' Trotsky's conclusions about Spain and applying them in a wooden way to other circumstances.

The best safeguard against this danger is perhaps to see how in relation to Spain Trotsky himself was able to apply the lessons of Russia—not as a dead parallel but as a living political analogy.



Trotsky

Newham swings Tory axe

Newham Council last week, far from joining Haringey and Lambeth in refusing to carry out local government cuts, denied even that it was making any!

Yet the same meeting agreed to a freeze in staff appointments, a £2½ million cut in expenditure, the axeing of all capital plans, the closure of an old people's home and the planning of 5% cuts in education.

Call made

There was a 50-strong NALGO-led lobby outside, a packed gallery and a call made by two councillors, Ken Palmer and John Plant,

to refuse to make cuts and call a conference to mount a campaign to bring the Tories down.

Silent

But the numerous Tribune and other 'left' councillors sat completely silent, bowing to the lies of their Freemason leaders.

The two local trades councils had also colluded in covering for this gang of traitors by refusing to take part in the lobby or help build the local joint representatives committee against the cuts which has been initiated by NALGO and joined by the NUT.

Stalinists alongside right wingers argued that the local council should not be



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Milton Keynes workers march against cuts

attacked, that the only focus could be against central government.

West Ham Trades Council has undertaken to call a conference with Newham North East Labour Party, but separately from the existing cuts campaign.

Stalinists throughout London are similarly desperate to divert away from the call by Lambeth Council for a march on Westminster on November 7.

Impetus

A march and strike on that day from town halls all over London would give the very impetus to the fight on cuts that the bureaucrats fear.

Instead the Stalinist-dominated South East Region TUC is calling for a

"week of action" from 20 October—giving virtually no notice, and themselves doing nothing to mobilise any action.

But militants in Newham and in other boroughs must not be held back by such manoeuvres from their leaders.

Rather, the fight must be kept up in those areas to mobilise effective action in the form of strikes and occupations against the cuts.

The pressure must be kept up to force these labour movement bodies into action.

This will involve the long overdue throwing out of traitors whose aim is to strangle rather than develop the independent strength of the working class.

Camden Trades Council held their 200-strong launching conference on 10 October, to fight the Tory cuts.

A resolution was presented to the meeting by the Executive of the Trades Council on how to fight the cuts.

It consisted of a list of the usual Stalinist diversions of torch-light vigils and market rallies.

Four *Socialist Press* supporters from local Labour Parties proposed several amendments:

*that Camden Council should immediately refuse to implement cuts in public service and refuse to raise rates.

*that hospitals under threat of closure should be occupied and supported by local strike action.

*the co-ordinating committee proposed in the EC resolution should be extended to represent a wider cross-section of the Camden labour movement.

The chairman accepted these amendments but only after Christine Livingstone from Hampstead GMC was asked to put her amendment which proposed deleting a phrase at the end of a sentence saying "Camden Council should not put up rents or make other charges to put the burden of the Tory cuts on the working class".

"Other charges"

The offending words for Ms Livingstone were "any other charges" because she interpreted this to mean rates.

She went on to explain that although Camden's Labour Councillors were pledged to refuse to implement cuts this meant they had to raise rates.

The night before there had been a meeting of the Labour Local Government Committee where this amendment had been voted on and carried 17-5.

It was said at this meeting that if the LGC lost the amendment at the conference they would withdraw

from the campaign. Many delegates spoke strongly against the proposal by Camden Labour Council to raise the rates—including George Lobo, a member of the CPSA NEC.

Graham Shurety, a Labour Party member and supporter of *Socialist Press* correctly stated this was just a manoeuvre by Camden Council to subsidise the Tory cuts.

"We need to confront the Tories now", he stressed. The working class will respond if given the leadership to step forward to do this.

His contribution was met with enthusiastic applause.

The chairman of the meeting, CP member Roy Dunnett, however, refused to accept an amendment from *Socialist Press* supporters, demanding no rate rise.

Instead the campaign's resolution remained a vague statement about 'other charges'.

This line up was no accident. It is common knowledge among Labour LGC members that the right wing chairman of St. Pancras North Labour Party David Webster held prior informal talks with Communist Party members on the trades council.

They agreed that the Labour councillors were not at fault over the cuts and therefore supported rate rises.

John Suddaby, secretary of Camden General NUPE branch and leading member of the IMG moved a resolution on behalf of NUPE shop stewards committee.

This resolution supported Camden Council's stand on the cuts and went on to say that yearly rate rises were not the answer.

But Suddaby went on to explain he didn't necessarily mean the conference should oppose rate rises in the next financial year—but it should 'wait and see' how the campaign had gone by then, and if it hadn't mobilised enough support, then Camden Council would have 'no other choice'.

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 crackdown 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 decisive Marxist leadership is essential. Our movement though strong in programme remains small in numbers.

JOIN US and take forward the struggle for socialism!

DON'T GO INTO THE FIGHT BLINDFOLD!



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Supporting strikes needed to back St Stephens occupation

Part of St. Stephens Hospital, Fulham Road, is now under occupation in defiance of a closure ultimatum.

The running down of the Hospital has continued under successive Tory and Labour governments.

In 1972 there were 572 beds in the Hospital. There are now 350, in spite of a waiting list of 934.

The proposed closure of the wing would result in the loss of a further 76 beds!

The future of the whole hospital lies in jeopardy in an atmosphere of a Tory government hell-bent on making the working class pay (in blood if necessary) for their economic crisis.

At a public meeting called after the occupation, NUPE steward Dave Norman pointed out that while the Hospital was

being run down, casualty departments for miles around were turning away dying patients.

Demolition

Fellow steward Barry Thompson said that there was no longer a maternity unit at the hospital and that tenders amounting to thousands of pounds had gone out to demolition contractors.

Joe Beckles, TGWU steward at St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington, spoke of the need for co-ordinated action between trade unionists of all Hospitals under threat from Thatcher's plans, and for a full-scale mobilisation of workers against capitalist attacks on their most basic rights.

Another speaker in defence of the Hospital was Paul Kenny from the other local occupation at Fulham Swimming Baths.

He said that in his experience, mobilising trade union action was a "slow process".

The living answer as to why it was sometimes a "slow process" to mobilise workers in defence of their rights was provided by the presence of NUPE full-time official Godfrey Eastwood.

His carefully-steered contribution emphasised solely the need to involve "the community" and did not once mention

the crucial need to mobilise workers in supporting action.

Eastwood's attitude to cuts came to light when a Camden NUPE steward pointed to the fact that Eastwood had blocked the calling of an all-London NUPE meeting on the subject.

Eastwood and his fellow officials have no intention of initiating the necessary strike action to support occupations like that at St. Stephens.

Trade unionists must fight to expose such 'leaders' for what they are, by fighting to build the necessary action, including strike action, to defend elementary services.



The Oxford demonstration

Cuts policy blocked

A meeting on health service cuts in Oxford showed overwhelming support for a programme of policies to fight the cuts—but was inevitably denied its wish.

The meeting called by Oxford and District Trades Union Council drew 240—although few rank and file hospital workers were included in that number.

After a series of speeches against the cuts had called for a vote on an ASTMS resolution before the meeting the President of the

Trades Council declared that he would allow no vote. The meeting closed amidst frustration and protest.

The ASTMS Health Service branch had tabled a motion calling for restoration of all cuts and automatic increases in NHS spending to match inflation.

It also called for full support for hospital workers who occupied hospitals or who took supporting action.

The motion had also been endorsed by the local health service Joint Trade Union Committee, members of which had urged the public meeting to support it.

Although there were weaknesses in the ASTMS resolution—no call for nationalisation of private medicine and other omis-

sions—it gave a clear direction for action and a firm declaration of principled defence of the NHS.

Power—who had already closed one Trades Council meeting rather than take the resolution there—blocked the calls from every part of the hall for a vote.

And a 400-strong demonstration two days later through Oxford, against cuts in all social services showed the same determination from Power to avoid programme and policy.

Prominence was chiefly given to speakers with no record of a fight against the fights.

But Joanna Coxhead, a COHSE health steward succeeded in addressing the rally, to make a firm call for occupations and strike action to defeat the cuts.

LESSON OF SINGERS: COLLABORATION WON'T SAVE JOBS!

The giant Singer sewing machine corporation has announced the closure of its Clydebank factory, with the loss of 3,000 jobs.

The company blames plummeting orders for their machines and "falling productivity" for the closure.

Speed-up

But only 15 months ago, with total collaboration from plant covenor John McFadyean, the company forced through a plan to "save" the plant from closure—at the expense of 2,800 jobs over four years and a drastic increase in productivity.

The subsequent redundancies and short-time working at the plant have served only to prove the folly of such reliance on crisis-ridden capitalism to secure jobs.

Indeed the more that union leaders bow, scrape and grovel to the employers, offering to help step up the exploitation of their own members and pledging to assist in raising profitability, the more they pave the way for future attacks.

The company, of course, continues to point to its balance sheets and claim that the Clydebank plant was a loss-maker.

The Singer corporation as a whole in fact made \$26 million profits in the first half of 1979.

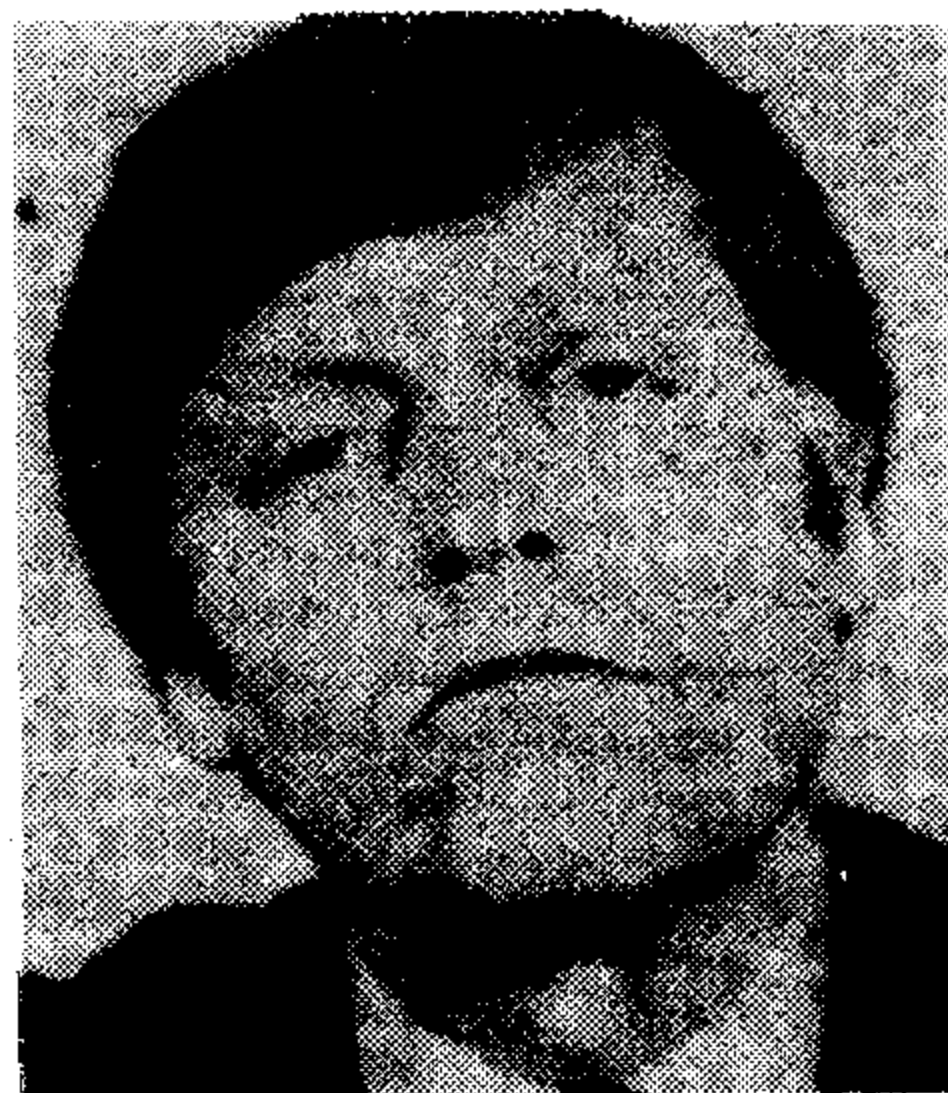
But for workers at Clydebank the profit or loss by any particular capitalist is of incidental interest: their requirement is secure employment, decent wages and healthy work-

ing conditions.

In a period of world-wide capitalist slump, it is becoming increasingly clear that no private employer can meet these requirements. They seek everywhere to 'rationalise', to speed-up, to hold down wages and close unwanted plants.

McFadyean's brand of class collaboration offers no way forward.

The answer in Singers, as in all threatened plants, must be to occupy, open the books of the firm to elected union committees to show the systematic exploitation of the workforce, and formulate a workers' plan for future production and demand full scale trade union



Singer boss Larry Mihlon support in the struggle to defeat the job-slashing Tory government and force the nationalisation of the plant, without compensation under workers' management.

At UCS such a fight could have been waged against Heath. Singer workers now have the chance to do so against Thatcher. The alternative is indefinite unemployment.

Vauxhall strikers end picket

After weathering clashes with the police thugs of the Essex "Force Support Unit" which left two shop stewards hospitalised and 13 workers including two deputy convenors arrested, Vauxhall strikers have called off their effective picket of the Harwich transport depot.

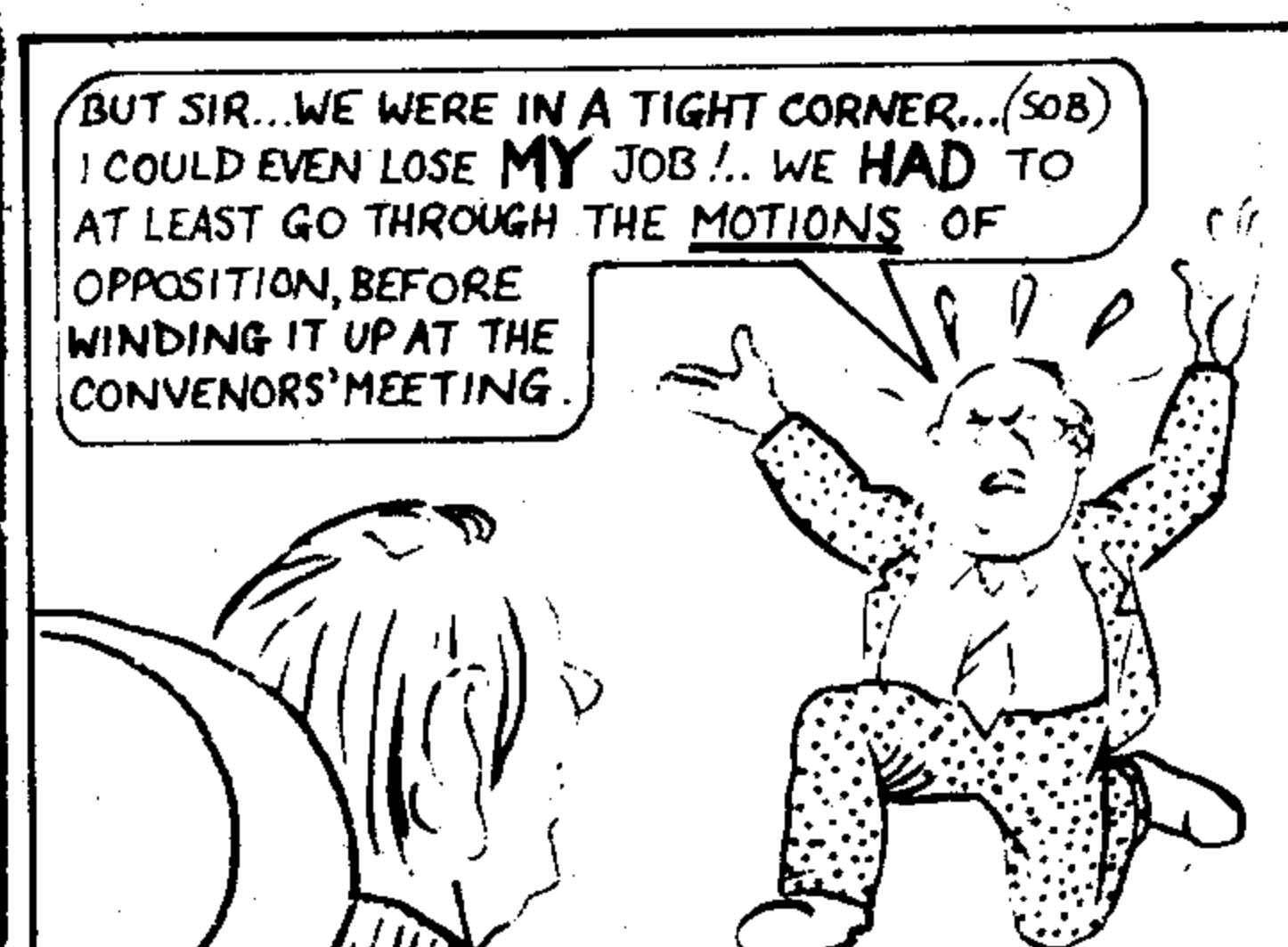
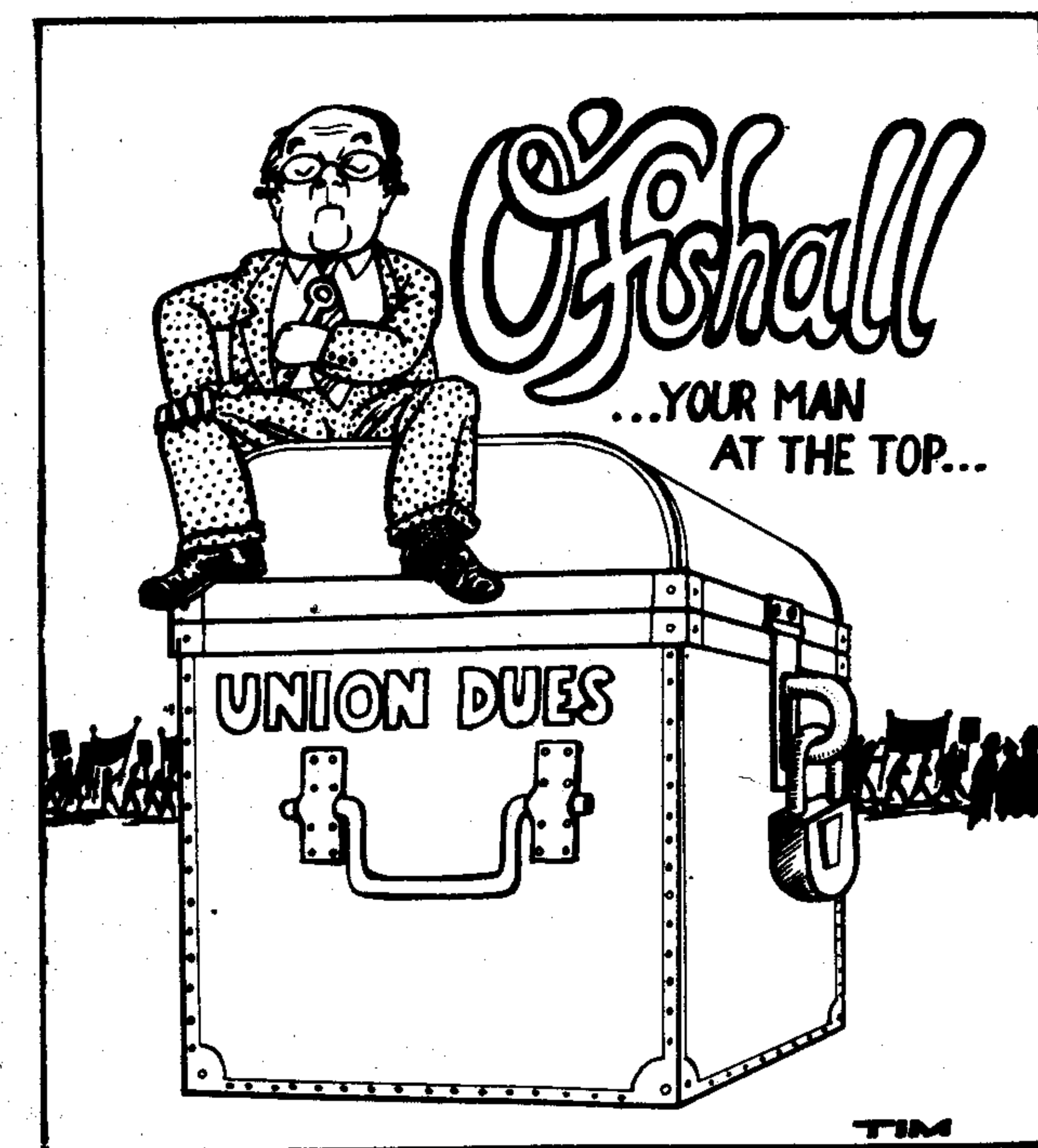
The picketing, by Ellesmere Port workers pursuing a pay claim, had tied up £15 million worth of imported cars and spares.

It was so successful that TGWU National Secretary Granville Hawley sent a strict instruc-

tion for the pickets to be withdrawn, and Vauxhalls obtained a court injunction for the removal of named pickets and equipment from the gates of the depot.

But the turning point in the 20-day picket came when Ellesmere Port convenor John Farrell responded to appeals by transport drivers from Silcock and Colling and Dependable Delivery. They claimed that the picketing had caused 20 layoffs and threatened them with the sack.

Now that the pickets have been withdrawn, these same drivers are working overtime to get the delayed scab supplies through to Vauxhall plants and dealers.



SOCIALIST PRESS



Blair Peach: still more delays

THATCHER SOUNDS BATTLE CRY

Last week saw another episode in the continuing mockery of justice after the police murder of Anti Nazi League demonstrator Blair Peach in Southall last April.

The inquest is to be adjourned for at least another month, while Peach's family press their case for the coroner to be required to sit with a jury.

The Peach family are also being forced to take further legal action in order to obtain a copy of witnesses' statements taken by the police, which have been made available only to the police barrister and the coroner.

And there remains a strong chance that the coroner, Dr. John Burton, will attempt to exclude the Anti Nazi League lawyer when the proceedings resume.

But a few miles away at Brent, the 342 victims of the police violence at Southall are being whisked in and out of farcical show trials at a rapid pace. Defence evidence is generally cast aside, as a staggering 87% conviction rate has been clocked up, colossal fines meted out, and five victims thrown into jail.

Jury vetting

If this contrast is not enough to demonstrate the blatant bias of British class 'justice', it is worth noting that in Sheffield, where two police officers are being charged with assault, Judge Pickles has given defence lawyers permission to 'vet' the jury—using police files—to exclude anyone possibly hostile to the police!

The workers movement must rally to the assistance of the Southall victims, demanding a labour movement inquiry into the events and sending donations to cover legal costs and fines.

Donations to: The Southall Defence Campaign, c/o PO Box 151, London WC2.

Suppress

In short every effort is being made by the state to obstruct, delay, exclude and suppress all those forces fighting to uncover the facts of the murder and demand the prosecution of the police thug responsible.



'Justice' seen to be done in Southall

After a week in which guarded statements from Tory ministers had attempted to stem the tide of reactionary demands from delegates at their Party conference, Thatcher's speech last Friday was the shrill battle-cry they had been eagerly waiting for.

The party of the employing class eagerly applauded as Thatcher promised strong measures against the unions, called on workers to scab on disputes and asserted that:

"Today trade unions have more power over working people and their families than any boss has."

Even while she spoke, the farcical nature of her argument was exposed by the arbitrary closure decision by Singer bosses, slashing 3,000 jobs in Glasgow while union leaders limply stand by.

At a point where millions of workers go in fear of redundancy, of public sector and social service cuts, and thousands of youth face a lifetime on the dole, Thatcher was wildly cheered as she turned reality on its head to declare that:

"Millions of British workers go in fear of union power".

And in a passage reminiscent of her ill-fated predecessor Heath, she went on:

"Today the conflict of interest is not so much between unions and employers as between unions and the nation".

Abstraction

The term "the nation" is a bland abstraction beloved by Tories, fascists and right wing Labourite class collaborators alike.

It conceals the fact that within "the nation" are two, opposing classes—the employing

capitalist class, which owns the means of production and lives by the extraction of surplus value from its workforce; and the working class which owns nothing beyond its ability to work, and which is paid only a fraction of the value it creates in the process of production.

Exploitation

Between these two opposing forces there is no common interest.

The employer seeks to maximise the exploitation of the working class in every way possible; the worker can only defend his or her job, conditions and living standards by struggling for the overthrow of the crisis-ridden system of capitalist exploitation.

In leading the all-sided Tory assault on the working class—comprising anti-union laws; public spending cuts; wholesale closures and rationalisation; the sale of assets; more handouts to the rich, and savage 'law and order' crackdown on immigrants, youth and workers—Thatcher makes it unmistakably plain which side of the divide the Tory Party stands on.

Rather it is the Labour Party with its leadership's firm commitment to upholding the

capitalist "mixed economy" and defending the profitability of the employers which attempts to straddle the fence and, while posing as the party of the working class, serves consistently to defend the interests of the employers.

This is why, as Thatcher's gang sallies into the attack on basic rights in the next few months, workers need to face the need for a new, principled leadership to champion their class interests.

This means rejecting out of hand Callaghan's stance of opposing mass action to bring down the Tories, and any attempt to hold back the struggles of the working class.

Independent

It means instead advancing a programme of demands that offer an independent road forward from today's crisis to the struggle for socialism.

The Workers Socialist League is fighting to build just such a leadership.

We urge our readers to attend and fight for labour movement delegations to the November 3 conference of the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement in which the question of programme and leadership in the fight against the Tories will be at the centre of discussion.

Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

*Prepare to force out the Tories!

*For mass action against Tory anti-union laws!

*Strikes and occupations against the cuts!

*Build Councils of Action!

Saturday November 3, 10.30am-5pm

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Open to all trade unionists and delegations from labour movement bodies

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FUND

The October Fund is now giving rise to great anxiety. Half way through the month only £178.55 out of a target of £750 has arrived. As was pointed out last week, the WSL is facing a period of rapid recruitment unlike anything we have witnessed previously. This gives us huge opportunities and means that our paper is now reaching completely new areas. It is more vital than ever that the monthly fund is raised in full and on time so that we are able to build on these successes.

All readers and supporters are urged to consider giving a contribution to the monthly fund and help us develop our work.

Our address is:

Socialist Press Monthly Fund
31, Dartmouth Park Hill,
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Demonstrate!

Provisional Sinn Fein National Demonstration
Restore POW Status to Irish Republican Prisoners
Oxford, Saturday October 20,
Assemble 2.00 p.m., Chapel Rd., off Cowley Rd.

BL closures . . .

venors' meeting.

But the only 'actual' policy the CP speakers could advocate was the nationalist call for import controls to keep out "foreign" competition.

Like the reformists on the Confed Executive, the CP shrank from putting the BL cut-backs in the context of the decline of British capitalism, which now requires the destruction of large areas of productive industry in the frantic attempt to raise the rate of profit.

Not one speaker questioned why BL is claimed to be unprofitable; nobody pointed to its links with the highly profitable and privately owned component industry, and the banks.

Manipulation of prices from these suppliers and huge interest payments on loans are the major factor that guarantees BL must remain in the red.

At the same time the possible closure of BL as a

whole has mammoth implications for workers throughout the engineering industry.

The full facts will never be revealed by accepting Edwardes' figures.

Open the books

The only way that the BL sackings can be effectively challenged is to begin a full scale inquiry by elected trade union committees into the finances of BL, its suppliers, dealers, hauliers and bankers: Open the books to inspection! Expose the profiteers!

The facts revealed will confirm the necessity for the nationalisation, without compensation of the entire automotive industry and the banks if jobs are to be protected.

Only a socialist plan of production, under workers' management, can develop rather than destroy the existing

productive forces.

Workers throughout the industry must be warned, and mobilised alongside BL workers in the struggle to defend jobs and bring down the Tories.

A crucial starting point for such a campaign must be for threatened plants to be occupied now, to provide a focus for the fight against the Edwardes' plan and forestall attempts at asset-stripping. All movement of work from closed plants must be blocked.

No sackings!

Whether or not BL is running down through a lack of orders caused by the capitalist recession, no redundancies must be accepted. Instead the work available must be shared by the whole workforce, without loss of pay; workers must refuse to shoulder the cost of the capitalist crisis.

Already the TGWU has promised to give full, official support to any section of workers in BL who, whatever the outcome of Edwardes' ballot, take action to defend their jobs.

Green light

This must be used as the green light for plant occupations which in turn would stimulate the necessary massive campaign throughout the corporation for a resounding 'no' vote in the coming postal ballot.

The BL crisis has exposed the inadequacy of the existing trade union leadership in the industry: the fight must be redoubled for a principled, revolutionary leadership prepared to fight at all costs for the independent interests of the working class.

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