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MAY DAY GREETINGS

The Socialist Press Editorial Board sends May Day greetings to the international trade union and labour movement, and to the oppressed in every country in their struggle against imperialist exploitation and against Stalinism.

Reconstruct the Fourth International!
Forward to the world socialist revolution!



Anti-war demonstrators in the USA

Militant/Lou Howort

CARTER'S FIASCO HEIGHTENS WAR DANGER



US fighters prepare for action

"Do not scoff at American power. Do not scoff at American reach". These solemn words from President Carter's chief security advisor Zbigniew Brezezinski in the wake of last week's catastrophic imperialist military debacle should not be seen as mere bluster.

While the US warmongers can be expected to bluff and swagger in a bid to restore their shattered prestige, the blow that has been struck against US military credibility is one which could still drive the Carter administration to the most desperate retaliatory measures.

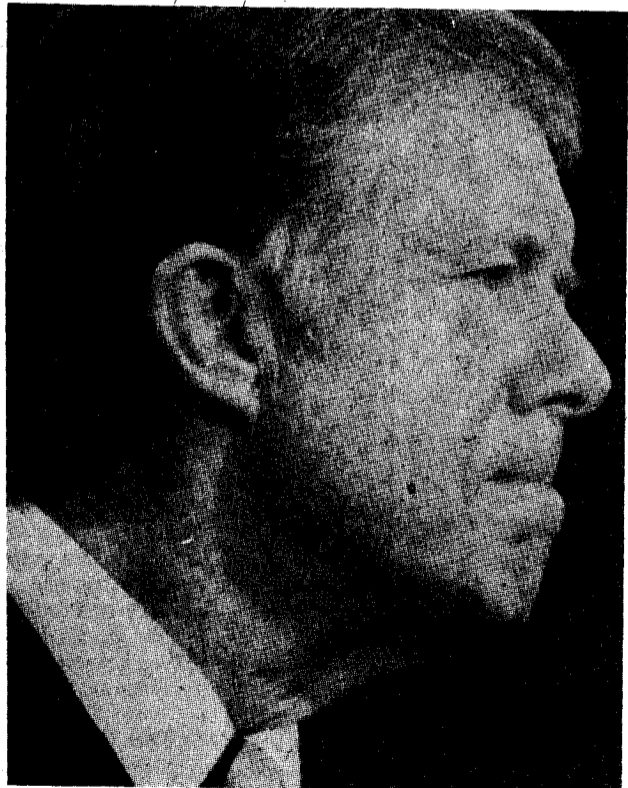
The rescue raid itself was clearly a wild and desperate gamble, and one that has shown beyond doubt that the lives of the 53 US hostages are only of incidental interest to Carter in his struggle to reassert US political and military domination over Iran and the Gulf region in the wake of the Shah's overthrow.

Indeed the first reaction of military experts was to viciously attack Carter for aborting the apparently futile rescue bid. He should have allowed the adventure to run its course, they argue: that way he would certainly have been let off the hook—either by the rescue of the hostages or by them being killed in the raid on the embassy!

No doubt in the course of time the full details of one of the most disastrous limited operations ever staged will emerge.

It is obvious for instance that Carter's evasive account was carefully framed to avoid reference to the ground forces within Iran itself that must have been lined up to assist the handful of marines in their assault on the embassy.

But his speech did pinpoint at least one of the reasons that drove him to give the go-ahead for the mad mission: the growing crisis of the Iranian central



Carter

government under President Bani-Sadr.

The early days of last week had seen the eruption of full-scale civil war in Kurdistan, in which national liberation fighters have come under a barbaric hail of fire from Iranian artillery and helicopter gunships.

At the same time right wing moves, personally led by Bani-Sadr, aimed at brutally crushing the power of the "Marxist" Fedayeen guerrilla forces and

their power bases in the universities were proving ineffective.

Bani-Sadr's inability to impose central government authority on the Iranian masses and national minorities has meant also that, despite his declared intention to resolve the hostages issue, he has been as impotent to influence the students as Jimmy Carter.

With his hopes of a negotiated settlement in tatters; his economic sanctions ineffective; his European "allies" in disarray

and refusing to act for another month; and with the prospect of further sanctions driving Iran into the open arms of the Soviet bureaucracy and the European Stalinist states, Carter clearly deduced that the situation was worsening all the time.

Meanwhile in the US itself a racist media campaign has been preparing the ground for an imperialist onslaught on Iran, while Carter in election year needs above all to divert voters' attention from runaway inflation, slump, and growing unemployment.

So the mission—reputedly planned months ago and practised up to 30 times in desert areas of the USA—was given the go-ahead, and the chapter of accidents began.

Having gambled and lost, Carter is now in a far worse plight than ever before. The hostages are now dispersed so widely they cannot be rescued.

The anti-imperialist sentiment and self-confidence of the Iranian masses has risen to a new peak; and new anti-imperialist pressures have surfaced, with demonstrations in Bahrain and denunciations of the raid by the reactionary Kuwaiti regime.

It is now plain that any more extensive imperialist offensive would trigger an upheaval of struggles throughout the Gulf region.

Carter has therefore exposed to the world the limited options he now has available. The most powerful imperialist nation is over a barrel.

*Any attempt to lay mines around the main Iranian oil port of Abadan would risk

hitting ships headed for Iraq.

*Moves for a naval blockade of the Gulf could create a confrontation with the Soviet task force lurking close behind the US warships. And it could antagonise other Gulf states, possibly halting up to 40% of Western oil supplies.

*A US military invasion of Iran is virtually out of the question. Under present arrangements it would take the US army a week to put even a single division of troops into Iran.

Iranian leaders have already talked of invoking Soviet aid against an invasion: the USSR has 14 divisions on the Northern borders, which could be in Iran within hours.

Even without the danger of Soviet involvement Carter knows that any invasion move would bring a long, bloody, and unwinnable war against a united anti-imperialist movement.

*Recognising this situation a secret Pentagon report has argued for the use of tactical nuclear weapons which would enable Carter, in the words of one general, to "turn Iran into a parking lot".

But the hopes of limiting such an action or avoiding confrontation with the entire Arab world would be minimal.

Carter's desperate weakness however is by no means a guarantee that he will not indulge in another military adventure: indeed the army pressure for punitive action to restore prestige must have risen dramatically.

The task of opposing a

renewed imperialist offensive against Iran is one that falls to the international working class.

In the US and every imperialist country the demand must go up loud and clear: Hands off Iran! Not one man, not one penny to the war effort! No to any sanctions against Iran!

In the US these events in election year point to the unanimity between the two capitalist parties in supporting Carter's imperialist policies: a Labour party must be built, based on the unions, to defend the independent interests of the US working class.

Revolutionaries must fight within such a party for a full programme of demands, for the overthrow of US capitalism and the establishment of a workers' government.

In Britain, and throughout the EEC, capitalist governments continue to back the US offensive: the labour movement must mobilise in mass action to defeat the war moves, force a withdrawal from the anti-communist NATO alliance and the EEC, and fight for the overthrow of capitalism and a Socialist United States of Europe.

And in Iran and the Gulf states, the workers movement and oppressed nationalities, while uniting to repel any imperialist offensive must mobilise in revolutionary struggle to topple pro-capitalist Islamic and semi-feudal regimes, and replace them with workers and peasants' governments committed to the struggle for a planned, socialist economy.



Brazil strikes shake loose 'liberal' strategy

The month-long strike by over 100,000 metalworkers in the Sao Bernardo and Santo Andre industrial suburbs of Sao Paulo has reduced the Figueiredo regime's strategy for 'liberalisation' (abertura) to tatters, reinforced the growing confidence and strength of the Brazilian industrial proletariat and forced the military to revert to its "hard line".

The strike began late in March in demand of a 15% wage rise against the employers' offer of 5%—inflation for the first quarter of 1980 was running at 18%.

The employers—the most important of which are the automobile multinationals VW, General Motors, Ford and Fiat, refused to make an offer above the limits imposed by the regime.

These are transparently designed to make the working class pay for Brazil's deepening economic crisis which has resulted in 90% inflation over the last twelve months, one of the highest levels of indebtedness in the world and unemployment of over 20%.

This strike by the metalworkers follows those of 1978 and 1979 as a direct challenge not simply to the economic offensive but also to the political attack on the organisations of the working class.

In 1979 the metalworkers' strike was declared illegal but nothing was done to arrest Luis Inacio da Silva (Lula), the union leader.

A week ago Lula, along with 80 other 'trouble makers' was

arrested, food supplies for the strikers intercepted, assembly places denied to them and a full-scale military operation launched to break the stoppage.

The union leaders have been charged under article 36 of the national security law, with "incitement to collective disobedience of the law".

The penalty can be up to 12 years' imprisonment.

The arrests were apparently carried out without President Figueiredo's knowledge, and reflect the growing independence and impatience of the "hardliners" in the armed forces as well as that of imperialist

capital with the regime's policy of "liberalisation".

Figueiredo had no choice but to acquiesce in the action which will, no doubt, herald a renewed offensive against the workers.

Strengthened

However, Lula's arrest has strengthened the resolve to continue the strike which, in any case, had been supported to the degree that it had proved unnecessary to post picket lines.

Every effort will be made to relieve Lula of his union post and replace him with a stooge

('pelego') as has occurred in several other unions in the last weeks.

Since Brazilian labour laws were directly modelled on those of Mussolini and have remained almost totally unaltered for over 40 years this will prove no problem—on paper.

However, Lula personified a challenge to the 'pelegos' that has broad backing amongst workers and taken an organisational form in the 'Oposicao Sindical' (trade union opposition), a rank and file movement centred in Sao Bernardo.

This movement is strongest amongst the car and metal

workers but it is beginning to expand, one factor in this being the militancy of workers, who are fired once they have worked three years in the plant and become as a result eligible for the top wage rates.

Dock strike

A further indication of the spread of militancy was last week's victory of the strike by workers in the docks of Santos.

Politically, the Oposicao Sindical is manifestly social democratic and syndicalist.

It has increasingly drawn

support from the liberal church hierarchy and is establishing links with the Brazilian Labour Party, although in the fluid and confused political climate resulting from the weakening of the dictatorship allegiances are constantly in flux.

What, above all else, is clear is that the vanguard of the Brazilian proletariat has through four massive strikes in successive years broken a decade of retreat and quiescence.

It is growing in militancy but lacks political leadership and remains vulnerable to the forces of the dictatorship which it must destroy.



Lula addressing Sao Paulo mass meeting

Red faces at Stalinist rally

The rally held by the Communist Party in London to celebrate the anniversary of the Portuguese revolution turned into a bitter rout of CP General Secretary Gordon McLennan.

The Portuguese Stalinist leader Alvaro Cunhal was lauded by the almost entirely CP audience as representing the "true" communist line—while McLennan was shouted down when he tried to defend the British CP's line of opposing the invasion of Afghanistan!

Cunhal centred his contribution on the same lines as the Portuguese military President Eanes in his recent presidential address.

The survival and consolidation of Portuguese democracy is now at stake, he declared, with the moves of the right wing around their presidential candidate General Antonio Soares Carneiro.

Cunhal said the CP is all for democratic government and for parliamentary elections.

The real thing is to reduce the right wing party to a minimum and increase the number of CP MPs.

He opposed Portuguese entry into the EEC on the grounds that it would ruin 'our' industry.

Eanes takes essentially the same line in warning the right wing generals about not destroying the gains made in April.

Cunhal of course did not deal with the role of the CP

which has since April 1974 held back the developments of the revolutionary struggle and fought all the time to confine it within the bounds of so-called "democracy" to the extent of organising demonstrations in defence of the Provisional Government of General Goncalves.

The political divisions with his hosts in the London meeting came over the question of Afghanistan.

Cunhal of course tried politely to paper over the cracks—saying that differences are quite acceptable.

Attacked

The audience, however, was in no mood for compromise.

They attacked McLennan for refusing to attend the Paris conference called by 'non-Euro' parties to discuss Afghanistan.

Yet the divisions are far more apparent than real.

Cunhal's politics both in Portugal and internationally reflect a firm adherence to the foreign policy requirements of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

Moscow's strategy of "peaceful coexistence" with capitalism in Europe was perfectly implemented by Cunhal's efforts to stem the tide of revolution in Portugal.

And its bureaucratic/military moves to defend the borders of the Soviet Union through the invasion of Afghanistan finds an equally obedient response from Cunhal and other "pro-Moscow" CP leaders.

McLennan and the British CP leadership, however, along with their Italian and Spanish co-thinkers, have taken the line of "peaceful coexistence" with capitalism one step further—in consolidating a much closer relationship with their "own" national bourgeoisie.

Split loyalties

This leaves them equally determined to head off and betray the independent struggles of the working class.

But it does mean that in instances where their "own" capitalist class emerges in conflict with the Kremlin bureaucracy, the CP leaders' loyalties (and even parties) are severely split.

In the case of Afghanistan therefore, the French "Eurocommunist" CP has swung in support of the Soviet invasion despite a major anti-communist witch-hunt, while the Italian and British CPs have lined up with their own capitalists in denouncing the invasion.

Neither pro-Moscow nor Eurocommunist parties offer any independent lead to the working class internationally: such a lead, can only come through the struggle for Trotskyist parties which set out consistently to defend the independent interests of the working class in the revolutionary struggle for power.

'Hold your fire' warns US envoy

The US State Department, mindful of the dangers of precipitate action in El Salvador, has once again warned the local oligarchy not to engage in independent terrorist action that threatens the imperialist strategy of "pacification".

Ambassador Robert White, embarrassed by the publicity gained by the assassination of Archbishop Romero and the continuing frictions in the imperialist apparatus ('hawks' and 'doves') over how to retain control of this tiny devastated country, recently openly accused the San Salvador Chamber of Commerce of funding and organising right wing terror squads.

It was a risky move but clearly necessary if the veil of 'reformism' was to have any credibility in masking expanding US intervention.

The move appears to confirm the decision taken in Washington that in order to hold El Salvador within the imperialist orbit it is necessary to ditch the '14 families' of the oligarchy and deepen the alliance between the military and the sector of the bourgeoisie that is directly linked with multinational capital.

This was certainly the

impression gained by the affronted capitalists as they trooped out of the meeting with White:

"Next the USA will just send in the marines to kill anyone in a 3-piece suit", remarked one.

Another was slightly more perspicacious:

"Like many others, I paid to have my workers propagandised against the lies of the left, and I gave money I suspected would go for guns.

And yes, I think a few of us paid to have evil men killed. The USA can rightly blame us for X and Y but not for the whole alphabet."

Such touching candour does, of course, contain an element of truth, but the imperialists are not in the business of shouldering moral responsibilities.

The interest of revolutionaries in this lies only in assessing the shift in class forces and the strategy of capital, which has slaughtered 2,000 Salvadoreans in the first three months of the year.

White's action has not put paid to the other tactics under way to eradicate the left.

The growing link between the Salvadorean and Guatemalan armies in elaborating a coordinated strategy for intervention was confirmed last week when a Guatemalan transport plane crashed on an 'internal' flight and several members of

the Salvadorean general staff were found amongst the dead.

Equally, the Honduran role in this 'Holy Alliance of Powers' has become clearer, with the confession of twenty 'Somocista' guerrillas captured in Nicaragua that they had been trained by the Hondurans as part of an extensive plan to establish right-wing terror groups in 'trouble spots'.

In El Salvador itself the killings continue—another 20 peasants were killed in the 'agrarian reform' last week—and the apparent lull in events after the general strike that followed Romero's assassination is clearly one that precedes the storm.

The leftist guerrillas, particularly the FPL, have resumed operations in the countryside, executing several well-known members of the right-wing ORDEN, and launching a successful attack on an army unit which apparently shook the US Embassy because it involved the use of heavy calibre weapons and evidenced military skills of which they were previously thought incapable.

This, however, is not the declaration of open war—for the left still lacks the capacity for an all-out military challenge to the army and will continue to do so until it receives aid from Nicaragua, Cuba and the workers states which have so far failed in this elementary international task.



INDIAN MASSES UP AGAINST CRISIS OF LEADERSHIP

In the face of mounting world economic recession and soaring prices, the dynamics of the class struggle throw more and more layers of the Indian masses into open struggle.

This has been shown by large scale demonstrations of the blind, the seizure of land by the Harijans in Bihar, and the national struggle of the Assamese.

As Gandhi steadily takes steps to enforce rigid political control and stability over the subcontinent, the Indian working class has expressed its strength through countless struggles over the past year.

Counter attack

Workers in jute, oil, ship-building, textiles and banks, alongside civil servants and the landless masses continue to force the bourgeoisie to prepare its counter-attack.

The escalation and polarisation of the class struggle takes place under new conditions and on a higher plane with the bourgeoisie led by its traditional party—the Congress (I).

And it is the outcome of the January Indian elections that glaringly highlights the acute crisis of proletarian leadership that confronts the Indian labour movement.

In the context of economic, political and civil chaos the Congress (I) and the Stalinist CPM emerged decisively.

The Janata Party, during its rule had proved totally incapable of arriving at a united, cohesive strategy either to hold back the forward movement of the working class, which had ousted Gandhi and her regime, or to solve the basic problems of the crisis-ridden economy.

In the face of an organised working class, a starving peasantry and profit stricken industrialists, the Janata Party was driven itself to attempt emergency measures—introducing preventive detention and a newly drawn Industrial Relations Bill.

It was such measures that facilitated conditions under which a reorganised Congress Party could consolidate itself as the leading political representative of the ruling class.



Gandhi

The main workers party, the CPM, extended its overall base in three traditional strongholds—West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura.

Its strength in these states no doubt reflects that the working class and peasantry voted for the CPM on a massive scale, especially in West Bengal, enabling it to pose as the main opposition party today.

However, the central thrust of the politics of the CPM remain those of a "people's democratic front".

The broadest possible amalgamation of capitalist and Stalinist parties is enthusiastically sought and incorporated within a popular front.

Since its inception, the CPM has faithfully pursued this strategy, forming electoral blocs "against the forces of authoritarianism".

Its recent alliance with the big landlord capitalist party the Lok Dal led by Charan Singh is a noteworthy demonstration of the CPM's willingness to ally with the most viciously reac-

tionary bourgeois forces.

The extent of its class collaboration was exposed particularly sharply in Uttar Pradesh, where the Lok Dal stood 78 candidates and the CPM one candidate in an electoral bloc that accrued benefit solely for the Lok Dal.

This took place in a context where in its forward movement the working class is actively searching for a political alternative to represent its independent class interests.

It is significant that when Gandhi moved in to dissolve oppositional state assemblies before the by-elections in order to secure a majority in the Rajya Sabha that the Stalinist states were left reassured and intact.

Administration

For the time being, Gandhi is content to leave the administration of capitalism in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura in the hands of the Left Democratic Front which has been responsible for managing the capitalist state economies in a comparatively stable fashion.

She is not yet ready to deal with the significant base that the CPM—for all its betrayals—has cultivated.

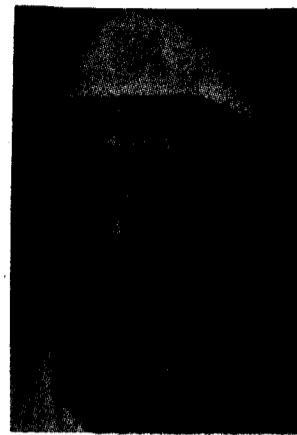
Indeed under the present circumstances, the CPM serves to act as a stabilising force in the face of a militant, class conscious labour movement.

As such it poses no threat to the ruling class.

However, as Gandhi proceeds to confront the tasks of resolving the crisis of bourgeois democracy in India, it is inevitable that she will combine her populism with increasingly repressive measures against the undefeated working class.

Already she has astutely dissolved the nine assemblies led by totally discredited right wing parties in order to centralise her authority and assert direct control over the weaker states.

She is being forced to abandon the skeleton farce of Indian democracy (which remains the pride of the imperialist bour-



Charan Singh

geoisie and the Indian Stalinists) and is preparing the necessary groundwork upon which to confront the working class and peasantry.

The CPM, balancing itself between the organised movement of the working class and the assaults of the Congress (I) will no doubt repeat their performance during years of Gandhi's Emergency and continue to seek and further support other bourgeois parties within the decrepit framework of parliamentarianism.

Trotskyists have consistently argued that parliamentary democracy is only desirable for the neo-colonial bourgeoisie in so far as it guarantees stability and serves in their ever more desperate search for profitability.

Unlike the Stalinists of the CPM, who periodically despair with the cry that "democracy is in peril" we refuse to sow any illusions of bourgeois democracy but point to the crucial need for workers to formulate demands that express their own independent class interests.

Fabric

It is not Gandhi's anti-democratic moves alone that are the enemy of the working class but the entire fabric of capitalist class relations of production.

The crucial task that faces workers and militants is to build a united front of the independent organisation of the working class and the peasants to withstand the capitalist onslaught.

One of the most vital demands to arise from such a united front should be to mobilise to force the Stalinists to break their criminal counter-revolutionary links with the parties of the bourgeoisie!

It is only the Indian working class which can smash through the barriers of the caste system, national and ethnic oppression and religious superstition that have fettered the peasantry and the rural oppressed.

It is the historical task of Indian workers to lead the peasantry in an alliance that will end the domination of finance capital and will build in its place a society where human need—not capitalist profitability determines the planning of production.

CAVIAR? - OR KIPPERS?

For years large tins labelled "herring" have been exported to capitalist Europe, where they are opened and their real contents—best Soviet caviar—repacked and sold at astronomical prices.

The difference between the herring price received by the Soviet state and the caviar price realised on the world market has been shared between the capitalist dealers and the Soviet officials they were in league with and deposited in a Swiss bank account.

Cracked

Last week the Soviet police finally cracked the racket and arrested 200 officials for what is being called one of the worst economic crimes in the history of the USSR.

In fact, of course, the caviar racket is simply a particularly dramatic sample of the kind of crime which goes on all the time and which the Soviet system of bureaucratic planning without any democratic workers control encourages.

The "greatest economic crimes" of Soviet history are not those committed against the regulations of the ruling Stalinist bureaucracies; they are those committed by the bureaucracy itself against the masses of workers and peasants, millions of whom have died for the Stalinist travesty of the planned economy.

Indeed, as far as the planned socialist economy is concerned, the Stalinist rulers always insist in their propaganda that what they are selling to the working class is authentic caviar. In fact it is worse than herring!



THE TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMME IN TODAY'S CLASS STRUGGLE
Founding document of the Trotskyist International Liaison Committee

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Algerian minority fights for rights

The northern area of Algeria—the Kabyle part of the Berber region—was reported last week to be in a state of open rebellion against the central government.

Correspondents of foreign newspapers have been forbidden to visit the region and the government party (FLN) newspaper, El Mujadid, has only made brief mention of "agitation used by foreigners to destabilise the regime".

But several reports speak of agitation in the towns of Tizi-Ouzou and Azazga by students, workers and peasants from the neighbouring countryside involving demonstrations, factory occupations, barricades in the streets, assaults on FLN offices, official buildings and hotels and the burning of public buses and police vehicles.

The university students of Tizi-Ouzou, who appear to have led the protests so far, are complaining about "cultural repression, forced Arabisation and crass ignorance of rights of the Berber culture and language."

Berber students have also demonstrated in Algiers itself. This agitation on national

rights

rights must be deeply disturbing to the bureaucratic military regime of the new President Chadli.

Berber people from Kabyle played a major role in the nationalist struggle against French imperialism and have provided many leading members of the FLN.

Despite this and the heavy economic spending by the regime in Kabyle, the FLN government, facing its first major political test since the death of General Boumedienne, appears to have lost mass support in a key area of the country.

Repression

Chadli's only means of response to mass opposition so far is bloody repression—several deaths of demonstrators in Tizi-Ouzou and Azazga have been reported—and an attempt to label the agitation "foreign-inspired".

As in Tehran the government

forced students out of the university at bayonet point.

While there can be no doubting the mass hostility to the central government, it is less easy to explain why Berber nationalism should have surfaced at this point.

Indeed the term Berber is misleading, since it embraces several subcultures who share little other than the fact that their spoken dialect is derived from the same root.

The most important group in number and influence are the Kabyles—some 3 million strong—in an Algerian population of 17 million—who live in the mountainous areas East of Algiers.

The second largest are the Shawiyas—around 1 million; there are also other groupings, generally little involved in national politics.

The Kabyles—many of whom have emigrated to France in search of employment—are in general more Westernised and cosmopolitan in outlook than the other Berber groupings, but do not appear to suffer from economic or political discrimination at the hands of the central government.

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Report slams police violence at Southall

The policeman whose truncheon blow to the head killed Blair Peach already knows he is to get away scot free: but the Friends of Blair Peach who have fought to expose the murder face possible legal action at the hands of the Director of Public Prosecutions!

The DPP is considering whether to take court action

over the publication by the Friends of Blair Peach of a poster describing the six-strong SPG squad as 'wanted for murder', and against the *Sunday Times* for publicising the names

of the policemen—one of whom killed Peach.

Meanwhile the independent report on last year's Southall events commissioned by the NCCL has been published. It

condemns the council for allowing the National Front to stage its provocative meeting in Southall Town Hall; the courts for their biased handling of the cases of those arrested; the DPP; the media; the police for their brutal methods and racist abuse; and the Coroner's court hearing the inquest on Blair Peach.

It called for an official public inquiry into the Southall events and in particular into the SPG, whose officers are confirmed to have been found to possess a wide array of illegal weapons, including a metal weighted truncheon, in their lockers.

It is plain that the inquiry has done much to illuminate the savage reality of the police riot in Southall; but it comes as no surprise that it can offer no serious answer to the problems it reveals.

In reality such violence from the capitalist state machinery can be brought to an end not by inquiries and protest, but by revolutionary action to bring down the Tories, drive out Labour's right wing leaders, and install a workers government which will set about disbanding the police and standing army and establishing in their place workers' militias answerable to the labour movement.

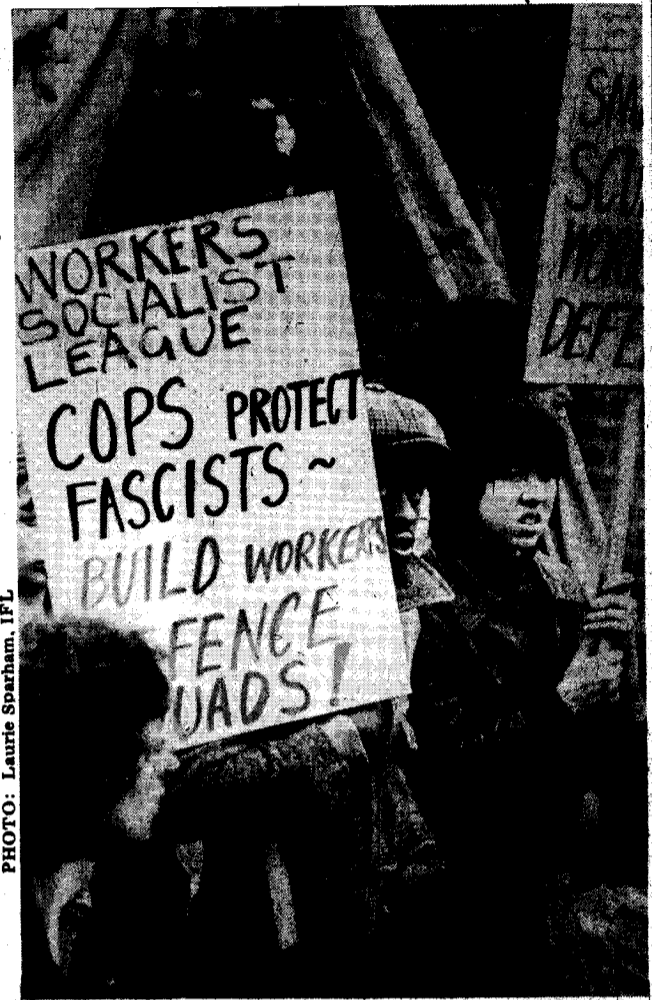


PHOTO: Laurie Sparham, IFL

Police escort fascists through Corby

The Stalinist dominated Corby Trades Council set out on April 26 to prevent any confrontation with the fascists.

After militant speeches earlier in the week about keeping the fascists off the streets of 'our town' they transformed this on the day into a sterile round of speeches and liberal sloganising.

When a march was finally organised in a move by the Stalinists to defuse the mounting militancy of the 1,000 plus anti fascists (many of them local youth who had gathered at the Civic Centre) this turned out to be no more than a circular tour of the town shopping square.

Militant anti-fascists intervened to demand the march head straight for the area where the fascists were assembling—and were able to win the support of many of the youth.

For a brief moment, with few police about, it was possible to make a decisive move towards breaking up the NF

march. But the dithering of some of the SWP contingent allowed the Stalinist stewards to line up with the police to divert the whole thing back to the Civic Centre.

Under pressure, the Stalinists then agreed to open up the platform to all speakers and take a vote on what action was required to stop the fascists marching.

But the same stewards swiftly changed their minds and made it clear that no one who wanted to drive the fascists off the streets would get near the microphone.

Anti-racists from Leicester then intervened, using a borrowed loud-hailer, to argue the case for 'no platform', and wop a resounding vote for immediate action.

Bigwigs

The Trades Council bigwigs found themselves alone in the empty square.

As the anti-fascists moved

off they came into immediate confrontation with a small group of fascists parading on the opposite side of the road.

There were a number of arrests as youth tried to break through and get at them. The anti-fascists then went for the Front assembly area, breaking through the police lines on the way.

Headed-off by police reinforcements they returned to the town to block the route of the NF march.

The anger of the local youth was clear as they rampaged through the shopping area.

When the 400 rabid NF finally did march, under an escort of 1,500 police, they arrived chanting 'British Jobs for British Workers' and calling for 'import controls' to keep steel in Corby—the very slogans the Stalinists themselves used to knife the fight for steel jobs!

The more than 60 anti-fascists arrested were largely victims of the frustration caused by the reactionary manoeuvrings of the CP.

PRESS GANG



The *Daily Mail* was unequivocal. 'We are with you all the way' it declared to President Carter on behalf of Mrs. Thatcher.

The *Mail* was premature. Its clarion call in support of an armed raid on the American Embassy in Tehran came 24 hours before the raid took place, and would no doubt be rubbed out by Mrs Thatcher if she had the chance.

Warmongering is a popular sport with newspaper owners. It fits easily with their belligerent and instinctive attacks on their own workforces; their hatred for anything foreign and their paranoia over anything that might possibly be tinged with Bolshevism.

In the case of Iran, racism has been the dominant method of attack since the Shah was overthrown.

References to Mad Mullahs, jokes about Arabs and a willful determination to find the moods and motivations of the masses incomprehensible has set the scene for a campaign to back a military invasion or anything short of that.

Had the US marines reached their target; had they massacred everyone in the place including

the hostages, and had they left behind a liberal number of their own dead on the doorsteps of the Embassy compound, these same newspaper owners could have found it in their hearts to applaud.

But the US attack foundered not in the drama-filled streets of Tehran but in a remote desert area of eastern Iran.

Even granted that the official Carter story is not the true one, there is little to stir the hearts of the most jingoistic of imperialistic bigots in this tale of bungling death.

What was left for the war hounds of Fleet Street but the gnashing of teeth?

Plaintive

The *Daily Express* wailed plaintively that the real issue was that US allies (i.e. Mrs Thatcher) had heard about the raid on BBC radio and had not been taken into Carter's confidence.

But while the press had been taking its cue from the Tory front bench it now found itself echoing the opinions of the loyal backbenchers.

The Alliance Comes First, was the message in the *Financial Times*.

"Whatever criticism

European Governments have of the American action, the first priority must be to maintain the alliance intact."

The *Guardian* (which rejected "easy smirks at the fiasco somewhere in the Iranian Badlands") said:

"In short order several lessons flow. That alliance, consultation and loyalty—amid such evident danger—is a two way street. That the White House, wallowing pitifully and alone needs counsel far more than it needs simple obedience... Driving Iran pell-mell and needlessly into the arms of the Soviet Union makes no sense."

In that last sentence lies the key.

The press knows that there is a time for criticism and a time for silence.

It knows that Carter and Thatcher together provide the only credible card they see around to play against the Soviet Union.

Amidst the growing aggression of frustrated imperialism, and the tub thumping moves in the direction of military confrontation, the capitalist press finds its own doubts are buried beneath the overwhelming desire to state which side they are on.

While the long-running saga over right wing moves to expel Oxford socialist Ted Heslin from the Labour Party drags on into yet another inquiry, an angry letter to *Labour Weekly* from Northampton shows the problems a constituency faces if it wishes to expel extreme right wingers.

The Northampton South CLP refused to reselect two sitting councillors, who flouted the discipline of the Labour Group.

In a typical display of right wing contempt for democratic decisions the two councillors proceeded to run as indepen-

dents, producing political material that attacked the local Labour leadership.

When the GMC discussed disciplinary action against them the necessary two-thirds majority was obtained for their expulsion.

Overtuned

Yet that expulsion decision was promptly overturned by the NEC—in whose view it is apparently quite legitimate for right wing Labour Party members to run independent election campaigns in defiance of the local organisation.

We can be certain that no such tolerance would have been shown had the "independent"

candidacy been one based on socialist policies.

Meanwhile, as National Agent David Hughes intransigently defends the NEC's protection of the Northampton renegades, the local GMC has voted to uphold its expulsion decision, and has publicly challenged the Party to explain why it has denied its right under rule to select local candidates and why members who run as "independents" against the district party should not all be treated alike.

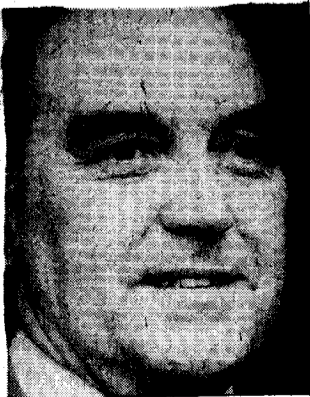
The answer of course is clear: the social democrats of the Labour leadership are neither socialists nor democrats.

Their policies are those of seeking piecemeal "reforms" within a bankrupt and crisis-ridden capitalism—and therefore lead consistently to them supporting attacks on the working class.

And the internal regime of the party reflects above all the need of the Callaghan-Healey leadership to preserve its control in defiance of a leftward moving rank and file membership.

While the fight must be taken up within the Labour Party on policy and on accountability and party democracy, a revolutionary socialist leadership must be constructed.

Roy's catch



Mason

PHOTO: Derek Speers, IFL

Tory Lord St Oswald recently invited one of his political acquaintances to fish his well-stocked lake at Norstell Priory, near Wakefield recently.

During the European election campaign when the noble lord unsuccessfully made a bid for Yorkshire West, his rather unscrupulous past was revealed.

As a foreign journalist he—like many other sections of the ruling class and the *Daily Mail*—backed the barbarous fascist Franco in the Spanish Civil War.

Our readers will be delighted to learn that St Oswald's obviously talented and sporting guest landed a 5½ lb trout.

They may also be more than interested to learn the identity of this individual—none other than the Rt. Hon. Roy Mason, Labour MP for Barnsley and the Labour government's torture chief in Ireland.

This should aid clarification on what is meant by "extremist elements" in the Labour Party.



Callaghan

PREPARE TO BRING DOWN THE TORIES!



The political crisis facing the British working class has been sharpened by the return of the Thatcher government and the response of the trade union and Labour Party leadership.

The final year of the Labour government's life was marked by a series of tenacious pay strikes in which the political thrust became increasingly apparent. The public sector strikes, though led to defeat by the cowardice and perfidy of the union leaderships, were a damaging blow to a government which had only one claim to govern—that it was capable of reducing class conflict.

The lorry drivers' strike took a high form of class struggle. Picket lines and strike committees brought the movement of supplies under their control, and in many cases broke free of the chains of the bureaucracy. It brought fury to the capitalist class and the forces of the state to see employers lining up in front of strike committees and asking for permission to move supplies.

These strikes underlined the truth of the WSL perspective, which we had to defend against a variety of political forces. This was that the working class will fight courageously when it sees its material interests at risk, and that these struggles can rapidly take a high level of struggle.

Yet the effect of these struggles was to shift the labour bureaucracy to the right. The Callaghan/Healey government grew increasingly intransigent as its claim to be better placed to ram cuts in living standards down the throats of the working class grew increasingly hollow. The lefts, though vociferous against the five per cent limit, shunned action which could threaten the government.

1. Behind the bosses' attack

This week we are publishing the first of two parts of the document on British Perspectives that was adopted at the Fourth Annual Conference of the Workers Socialist League on April 4-6 1980. For reasons of space, some sections have been slightly abbreviated. The second part, *The Crisis of Working Class Leadership*, will appear in next week's *Socialist Press*.



Callaghan bluntly told them they should either challenge his leadership or shut up. They chose the latter.

Although the trade union leadership grew shrill verbally and issued dark and dire warnings, they, too, were pushed to the right by the pressure of events. The TUC code on

picketing gave the ruling class almost every concession it required. Although workers on picket lines virtually ignored the code, it gave strength to the courts and police and undermined solidarity.

The election took place with the working class angry and confused. It saw no clear path for-

ward but was fuelled mainly by anti-Toryism. Although some workers in this confusion did vote Tory, the reason for the Thatcher victory was the mass defection from the Labour Party of its petty bourgeois support which found what it saw as a refreshing 'radicalism' in the Thatcher programme.

Thatcher came to power with a clear mandate from the ruling class and the middle classes to smash up the organisations of the working class.

This truth has become such common rhetoric among labour bureaucrats and every shade of left that its meaning has been diluted. It is not a phrase but reality.

It must also be clearly understood that the task of the Thatcher government is not a 'return to the 30s'. The Tory vision of the 80s needs no such historical apology.

Its aim is not simply to remove rights from the working class but to *destroy* them in struggle, and by doing so leave the working class, in a *worse* position than the 30s.

Those cynics in the Labour party who argued that the return of Thatcher was 'no different' from the right wing Labour government were wrong.

Those who argued that at least the working class would fight Thatcher, were actually arguing that the Labour bureau-

cracy would fight Thatcher. They were wrong too.

The working class has shown that it is prepared to fight whichever government is in power. The number of days lost to strikes (which admittedly is not an adequate guide to the temperature of the class struggle) shows that the 29 million working days lost last year were, proportionately speaking, evenly divided between the four months of Labour rule and the eight months of Tory rule.

The bureaucracy, on the other hand, has shrunk still further from confrontation. Not only has the TUC continued to talk to the Tories, and continued to parade its Concordat (which it periodically buries, only to resurrect), but it has increased its efforts to isolate the struggles of the working class which do break out.

The first three months of 1980 have shown the massive strength of the working class and a level of betrayal by its leadership which constantly outstrips all previous experience.

It is in this sense that there is a qualitative difference between the struggles of the class against the decaying Labour government, and the struggles against the Tories.

The need for a break with syndicalism has become even more acute. The struggle for political leadership of the working class has become even sharper.

The opportunities are greater; the penalties for failure more severe.

International Economic Crisis

All present evidence points

to a worsening economic situation for world capitalism. Within a whole period of very slow growth of production, a new sharp downturn, expected to be at least as severe as in 1974-75, has begun and is likely to be particularly acute in Britain.

Virtually all the indicators of capitalist profits show a continued downward trend. As world inflation once again accelerates, pushed on by further escalations in the oil price, there are continued signs of the precarious instability of the world currency and exchange system—evidenced by intense fluctuations in the price of precious metals (reflecting waves of defensive and pessimistic speculation), and in sharpening inter-capitalist rivalries (the upward auction of interest rates, competitive devaluations and mounting pressure for trade war measures).

While we avoid a perspective of imminent, inevitable catastrophe, and struggle towards an understanding of capitalism's still considerable armoury of defensive measures, we must recognise that the overall economic situation of the capitalist system—the problem of producing and realising surplus value under stable conditions—has been acute for a decade and continues to worsen. And in these circumstances we cannot rule out sudden economic downturns much more severe than we have seen up to now, monetary crises, waves of protectionism and so on.

The round of price increases imposed by OPEC over the last 12 months has become a major component of the economic crisis confronting the capitalist



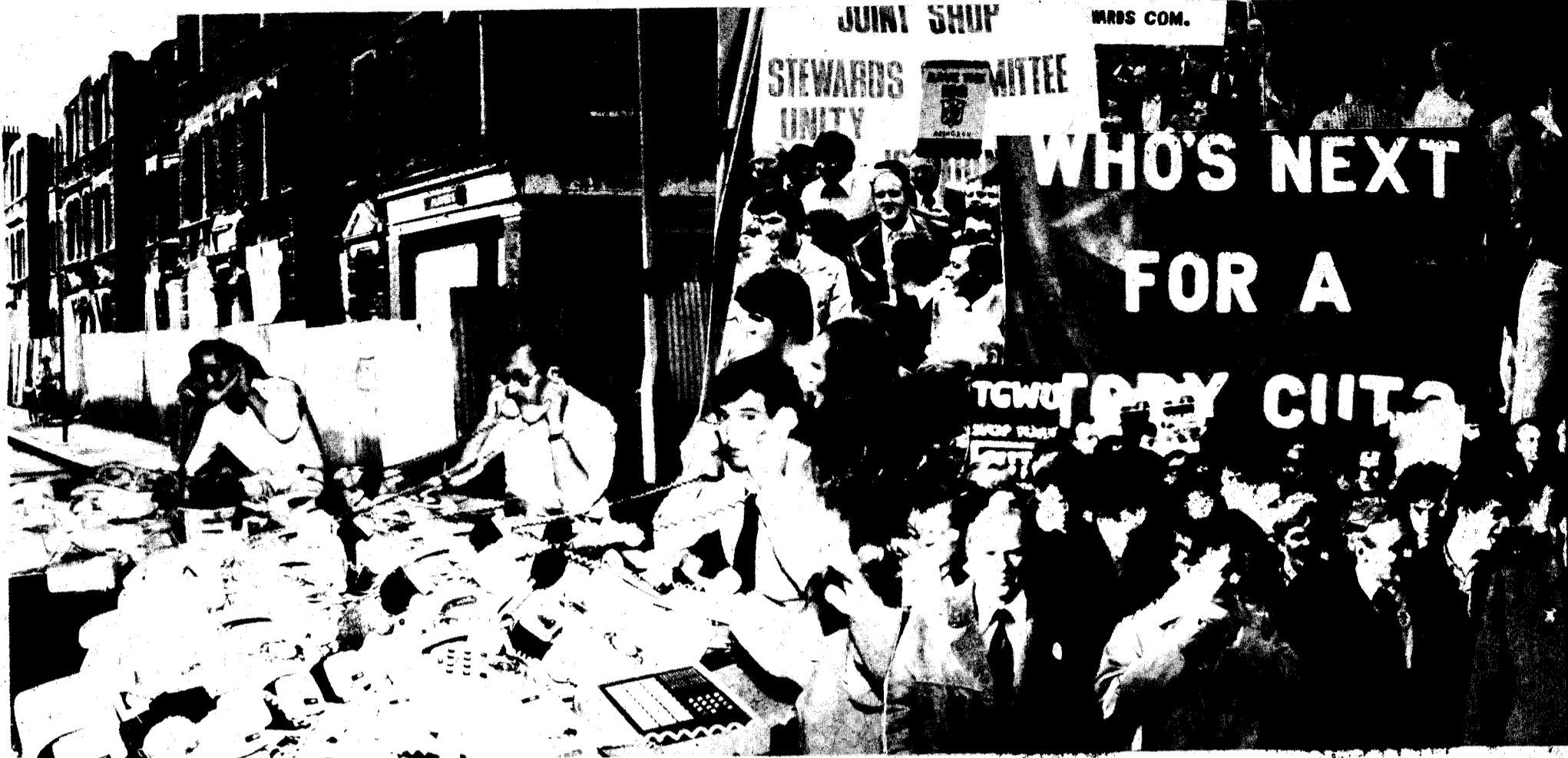
PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Steel pickets at Port Talbot on the first day of the strike



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Public sector workers on the January 22 Day of Action 1979



world—and increasingly penetrating to the economies of the deformed and degenerated workers states.

As the dollar has fallen in value against other major capitalist currencies—in particular the Deutsch Mark and the Yen—so the purchasing power of the vast pool of \$800 billion dollars held outside the USA has fallen.

To protect themselves against the anti-imperialist mood and mounting demands of the workers and peasants in their own countries, the rulers of the oil-producing states need to prevent their oil revenues falling too far in real terms.

And the Iranian revolution proved to be the trigger to the development in 1979 of a new aggressive pricing policy amongst the oil producers which has restricted supplies to the world market and raised average prices to \$26 per barrel.

Every forecaster is now agreed that this will have a dramatic impact on the ailing world economy—driving up inflation, unemployment, and balance of payments deficits.

The 24-nation Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD) predicts an overall growth in gross national product of its member countries at no more than 0.3% in 1980—as against an original forecast of 1%, and a growth last year of 3%.

Within this average increase, Britain and the US are expected to actually decline by 1.25% and 2% respectively. This decline in growth, put crudely means the destruction of existing forces of production, and a further rise in already high levels of unemployment (up from 17 million to 20 million in the OECD countries alone). Elsewhere, too, the picture is one of stagnation or insignificant growth—at a time when human needs continue to increase.

Yet far from steering clear of such a slump, capitalist leaders are forced to head relentlessly in that direction in their efforts to cut out the least profitable sectors of industry, to hold down the price of oil through cutting back demand, and attempt, through monetary policies, to curtail runaway inflation.

The impact of the oil crisis is felt everywhere: from the powerful Japanese economy—driven from huge balance of payments surpluses into deficit by the oil price rise and the rising value of the yen—to the strong West German economy—revising downwards its forecasts for growth in the light of prospects for oil supplies and prices: from the crisis-ridden US economy—facing the traumas of Carter's "energy programme" in a do-or-die attempt to cut back on its huge oil import bill, to the chronically sick British economy—in which manufacturing industry is still forced to pay

world market prices even for North Sea oil, while the inflated value of sterling drives export prices sky high.

Underdeveloped Economies

But if last year's oil price rises have caused havoc in the advanced capitalist countries, the last 12 months have brought a staggering \$33 billion dollar increase in the oil bills of the underdeveloped economies.

This increase amounts to more than 12% of their total export revenue, and as such signals a renewed round of increasingly savage attacks by puppet governments and military dictatorships upon the already super-exploited workers and peasants of the semi-colonial countries.

Yet the generalised slump in the world capitalist economy and the already desperate state of the economy in many of the underdeveloped countries—whose combined foreign debts already exceed \$400 million and will increase by a further \$55 million in 1980—create the very real danger for imperialism that even the most brutal onslaught on the oppressed masses will fail to extract sufficient increased exploitation.

There remains the haunting possibility of one or more underdeveloped countries defaulting on their debts to the imperialist bankers—a move that could precipitate a catastrophic chain reaction of foreclosures and financial collapses in the advanced capitalist countries themselves.

Such a prospect is particularly worrying at a point of time when the political hold of imperialism over the underdeveloped economies and oil states is increasingly coming into question.

The confrontation between the US and the Khomeini

regime over the hostages issue, for instance, led into a series of reciprocal reprisals in which a whole series of fundamental principles of capitalist relations have been thrown overboard.

The Carter regime "froze" (i.e. stole) billions of dollars of Iranian government assets lodged with US banks; the Iranians responded by refusing to make regular repayments on a \$500 million loan—only to be declared in default on the loan at the instigation of leading US banks.

As writs fly over the legality of the US procedures (in particular the freezing of Iranian money in US banks in Europe), there is the possibility that Iran will repudiate its \$15 billion international debts, and refuse to accept US dollars in payment for oil supplies, as well as slashing back production to a subsistence level; such moves threaten to prompt simultaneously a new round in the monetary crisis, a new crisis of confidence in major banks, and a new shortage of oil on the world market.

But no less damaging to the confidence of the imperialists is the fact that a \$500 billion Iranian loan has actually fallen into default—the first time a government has fallen into default since World War 2.

With underdeveloped countries all over the world facing monumental debts and impossible conditions at home, the temptation for them to simply withhold payment and default must be growing. And, as one Midland Bank official told Newsweek: "Quite honestly, if a country cannot repay, what can you do? You can't force it to pay what it hasn't got."

As the workings of finance

capital divide the capitalist world more sharply into creditor and debtor nations, the problems for the imperialists in reclaiming bad debts and preserving the system of credit become greater month by month.

At the same time the cuts already imposed in the living standards of the masses of the world, the cuts in government spending programmes, and the deliberate policies of recession imposed in a whole series of countries have helped to throw the world market into stagnation.

Monopoly manufacturers with investment in plant and technology designed to cater for an expanding world market are thus forced to compete with each other under conditions where their combined productive capacity exceeds the market available.

Such a crisis of overproduction which hits profits and is a basic phenomenon of the crisis, leads to an intensification of national rivalries as giant firms fight to retain their own markets and to capture those of their competitors, and must eventually bring the rationalisation of industry, as the least competitive is driven to the wall—as can be seen to be the case in the car industry with the mortal crisis of Chrysler and British Leyland.

Falling Value of Currency

The continued rise in the price of oil both reflects and intensifies the slide in the value of paper currencies in relation to commodities in general.

At the same time, capitalist governments continue to engage in (albeit heavily trimmed) spending programmes, or (effectively the same thing) in "tax cuts" designed to stimulate private industry.

In Britain, the Tory "tax cuts" have in fact taken the form of a redistribution of the tax burden from richer to poorer through increases in VAT, health charges, etc., as part of an overall package of deflationary and recessionary policies including public service cuts.

But even the slashing of public services and rationalisation of industry, and the boosting of mass unemployment involve large sums of government spending if a major explosion of working class opposition is to be avoided.

Another sphere of inflationary government spending which is now firmly on the increase is armaments and "defence" spending in the imperialist countries. Hundreds of millions more pounds are to be allocated to new weaponry and military activity in the next period, acting as a further drain on the rate of profit in productive industry.

The NATO agreement has committed its members to 3% growth per annum on defence spending in real terms. In Britain this constitutes a massive burden on the economy.

Meanwhile, supposedly in a bid to stop inflation by limiting the growth of credit, interest rates have been raised—in Britain to a staggering 17%, and in the USA to 15%. Such rates of interest act as a major deterrent to industrial investment and intensify the slump, while at the same time adding massively to the overheads of industry and helping to drive up prices of finished commodities.

As the cost of living races out of control and social services are destroyed, workers are driven to struggle in order to maintain their living standards.

Far from being the cause of inflation—which is a product of the anarchic capitalist world economy—wage increases are a belated and generally inadequate response to inflation, a response which, like other reformist attempts to confront the crisis of capitalism, in fact merely perpetuates and intensifies the problem.

In fighting consistently for the defence of living standards through the policy of a sliding scale of wages, we do so not as a self-sufficient slogan, but as part of a programme which counterposes the interests of the working class to those of the capitalists and their anarchic system.

In reality the only defence of workers' living standards lies in the overthrow of capitalism, expropriation of private industry and the establishment of a planned, socialist economy.

Falling Rate of Profit

But the superficial movement of prices, of currencies and of interest rates are not the

root of the crisis: merely forms taken by it. At the base of these developments is the tendency of the rate of profit to fall.

And the falling rate of profit, in turn is the expression of the fundamental contradiction of capitalism—that the profits of the minority class who own the means of production are derived solely from their exploitation of the toiling masses who are forced to sell their labour power in order to live.

Production under capitalism only takes place in pursuit of profit. Yet to offer the capitalist class even a temporary respite in the decline of profitability, a frontal onslaught is necessary on the living standards, working conditions and basic rights established by the working class in decades of struggle.

In Britain, for instance, where for some firms profits in money terms continue to rise, the rate of profit, in terms of return on investment, continues to remain pathetically low, with every prospect of falling still further. One forecast anticipates a staggering 30% drop in industrial and commercial profits in 1980.

Protectionism

Desperate sections of the capitalist class and chauvinist elements in the movement seize upon such developments as "proof" of the need to impose a national policy of import controls to protect home markets and thus export the crisis and resultant unemployment to other countries.

Now, with even the British CBI having taken up this demand, and with US steel producers and other employers forcing such measures on the Carter administration, Thatcher seems prepared to toy with the idea of "selective import controls".

But of course the drive to protectionism carries with it (even in imperialist terms) the danger of developing into full-scale inter-imperialist trade war, in which world trade would slump still further, and national rivalries could develop out of hand, from economic confrontation to outright military clashes.

In opposing protectionism, revolutionaries argue not in favour of the old capitalist ideal of "free trade" but first and foremost against any notion of a common "national interest" between the working class and its employers.

The main enemy is not a "foreign" employer, however cheap his imports may be: the main enemy is the capitalist at home, who exploits the workforce, and who takes the decision to protect his own interests—his profits—through speed-up, wage cuts, redundancies or closures.



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report



Challenge to Imperialist Rule

It is particularly important that this concept of "the national interest" and every tendency towards national chauvinism is challenged at a time when imperialism is increasingly under fire from a rising tide of struggles by the masses of the colonial and semi-colonial world in struggle for national liberation and an end to exploitation.

1979 has seen such struggles reach a new peak under the grotesque misleadership of Khomeini in Iran, under the petty bourgeois FSLN in Nicaragua, and under the treacherous patriotic Front leadership in Zimbabwe.

But elsewhere, in Central and Latin America, in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, there exist struggles, or the potential for struggles, which could inflict equal setbacks on imperialism, against which the imperialists will be tempted to strike back to preserve the stability of their system of exploitation.

Indeed it is in this political context that we must understand the renewed anti-Soviet Cold War moves by the imperialists in the wake of the Afghan invasion.

In his aggressive international stance Carter's most enthusiastic supporter has turned out to be the reactionary Thatcher government: the Tories have led the struggle to win acceptance of US missiles in Europe; they eagerly took up the call for a boycott of the Olympics and for political and economic sanctions against the Soviet Union; and they have placed British imperialism firmly at the centre of the drive against revolutionary and national liberation struggles.

It is in this context that we must insist that, in Britain and internationally, only the most resolute internationalist struggle can lay the basis to resist war moves and to mobilise the working class in opposition to the main enemy: the bourgeoisie at home.

In this context the role of British revolutionaries must be examined in particular in relation to their struggle for the defeat of their own imperialist forces in Ireland.

In many respects, therefore, the political and economic aspects of the crisis of imperialism overlap and pose related tasks and problems for the working class.

The coming period offers capitalists and workers alike the prospect of chronic instability, the reversal of human progress in the destruction and stagnation of the productive forces, the shackling of science and technology to petty profit-seeking and military interests, and the ever-present possibility that the runaway boom will be finally tipped

over the brink—by some new and unexpected sequence of events—into absolute chaos, collapse or world war.

As it is, the scope of the decline that can be predicted for the future is moderated chiefly by the extent of the slump that is already upon us.

For the working class the only way forward is through principled struggle against every aspect of the capitalist offensive, and the construction of an international revolutionary leadership capable of mobilising independent class action.

Britain

In Britain all of the elements of this international crisis are present. There are endless well-founded complaints from the employers that their profits are at a rock-bottom level.

The over-confidence and conservatism of a once world-dominant British capitalist class, that has recognised all too slowly the extent to which it has been wiped out of world markets by its more modern competitors, has produced an antiquated industrial economy which is unable to generate the resources needed for the wholesale rationalisation and reconstruction that it needs to make itself "viable".

Despite the abrupt fall in living standards inflicted on the British working class in recent years the profitability of whole sections of basic industry has fallen so low that, for the capitalist class, only the most drastic surgery can provide the answer—hence the brutal closure plans for the shipyards, for BL and for the steel industry.

Yet even this "solution" comes up against the problem of decreased production which means that plant is forced to operate at low levels of profitability.

Indeed, the Thatcher government is attempting to embark on this course of action at a point where the world economy teeters on the brink of a historic slump, and where pressures towards protectionism internationally threaten a further cutback in trade. It is the hardest possible point at which to seek, through ruthless pruning, to produce an expansion in profits from manufacturing industry.

Despite these problems Thatcher has firmly set her face against the Callaghan strategy for British capitalism, which rested on government measures to prop up whole sectors of industry—at the expense of the profitability of other sectors that would have survived in any event.

Instead, under the banner of "free enterprise" and "non-intervention", the Tory government has cut back government aid, and lifted protective measures: it has lifted exchange controls, allowed the pound to ride high in the foreign,

exchange markets at the expense of British exports, boosted interest rates to an all-time record, and left firms to sink or swim.

At the same time, however, the hiking up of interest rates, by effectively diverting wealth from industrial to finance capital, has the effect of intensifying the drive towards rationalisation of industry through the wiping out of unprofitable sections and further developing the process of monopolisation and mergers.

This tendency towards the centralisation rather than the accumulation of capital has sharpened visibly in Britain since the return of the Tory government—to the point where the total "value" of announced mergers for the first two months of 1980 is already greater than the annual totals for 1975-78. Such steps clearly prepare the way for trade war in a shrinking world market and for major class battles at home.

This policy runs alongside direct government cutbacks in the social services, civil service and nationalised industries, enforced by rigid cash limits.

The results can be seen already in mounting unemployment and in the organised appeals from the CBI to Thatcher not to cut back any more on government assistance to private firms, many of which face a prospect of stagnation or collapse in the next period.

The problems for both the weakest sections of capitalists and the working class are worsened by the unleashing of inflation, spurred on by a series of deliberate government decisions—raising VAT, petrol and nationalised industry prices, health charges, etc.

While the major monopolies ride out a wave of inflation by simply raising prices, small firms often lack the leeway to do this, and the working class, of course, if its living standards are not to be destroyed, is forced to struggle for wage increases to keep pace with inflation.

But every one of the Tory policies benefits the bankers. Though not, of course, entirely separate from industrial capital, the banks stand to gain from the Tory tax cuts, from the rising interest rates, from the high value of the pound and from the increased borrowing that is forced on crisis-ridden firms; banks draw profits—in interest—from the most bankrupt companies and nationalised industries, from the NHS and local authorities.

As inflation gathers pace, bank profits are sustained by the larger volume of money changing hands; as smaller firms go to the wall it is bankers who

benefit from the final asset-stripping operations.

And as the Tories sell off profitable sectors of nationalised industry it is, of course, the bankers who stand by ready to seize the opportunity more directly to exploit new sections of workers.

While the manufacturing base of British industry is liquidated under Tory policy, and traditional sectors of the industrial capitalist class are forced into damaging confrontations with the working class in a bid to drive up the rate of profit, the bankers wait with hand outstretched—either to pick up their share of the winnings or to shift their investments to more profitable industry in the EEC or elsewhere.

The Working Class

The Thatcher strategy is therefore one which benefits above all the finance capitalist and which is designed to force through a rationalisation of manufacturing industry. What are the implications for the working class?

Already the December unemployment figures show a 100,000 growth in the numbers out of work. The Tory budget of June 1979 laid plans for 300,000 more unemployed over the next 12 months.

Meanwhile recorded female unemployment has increased by 62% over the last four years—from 254,000 to 412,000. These figures do not, of course, include the vast numbers of married women who have been driven back into the home by cut-backs in staffing and lack of nursery provision, and who now constitute an "invisible" army of unemployed.

The Tory hopes are that such a huge shake-out of workers from weaker sections of capital and from the public sector will not only force through speed-up and increased exploitation amongst those remaining, but begin to act as a means of holding down wages.

To do this, workers on the dole have to be press-ganged into a desperate hunt for work. The Tories seem intent on doing this by holding down (effectively cutting) benefits at a time of 20% inflation, and by stepping up the pressure on the unemployed to take low-paid, unorganised jobs.

At the same time moves are in hand to cut the benefits payable to strikers' families. Thus a pincer movement—preparing an army of potential scabs, and attacking would-be strikers—is being lined up to smash working class action on pay or jobs.

Alongside unemployment, workers face a continued fall in

the standard of public services, with the ongoing crisis in the NHS, cutbacks in education, and the whole range of social services under pressure from local authority cuts.

Rate and rent increases will come on top of a lengthening of council housing queues as housing programmes grind to a halt.

Under such conditions of stress, racial divisions will be deliberately widened by new Tory immigration laws, which pave the way for a new spate of propaganda designed to exploit the frustration and anger within the working class at the material problems they face, and at the absence of any political direction from their trade union or Labour leaders.

Though some victories have been achieved, few workers will obtain a pay settlement that will maintain their living standards at last year's level.

In short, the capitalist crisis and the Tory response to it ensure that 1980 means an actual reverse of social progress for the British working class—a reverse which can only be halted by resolute class action to bring down the Thatcher government and oppose the Labour and trade union traitors.

Tory Offensive

Recognising that their programme must lead to confrontation with the working class, the Tories have moved in from their first days in office with a package of measures designed to strengthen the forces of the state and the employers, and to divide and weaken the working class.

Within hours of their assuming office, huge pay increases were awarded to the police and the armed forces—increases which had been worked out under the Callaghan government but withheld in order to avoid further antagonising trade unionists.

Thatcher's pledge to devote more resources to "law and order" and to defence has been carried out, and Whitelaw's steadfast refusal to concede an enquiry into the murder of Blair Peach or Jimmy Kelly have reinforced the view of absolute Tory backing for the most brutal police repression.

This is, of course, interlinked with the new anti-union laws put forward in Prior's Employment Bill, which aim at destroying the power of the closed shop, and restricting the right to picket.

It is significant that the third strand of the anti-union laws—the pressure for postal ballots within the unions, which further open up trade union decisions for the intervention of the media, and force workers to vote as individuals rather than as part of a class action—has been actually welcomed by right-wing union leaders in the NUM,

AUEW and elsewhere.

Of course, the NUJ's legal victory in the McShane "black-lining" case and the sharpened struggles around the steel strike, (with the legal moves of the private steel employers pressing Lord Denning to jump the gun and invent his own anti-union legislation) have forced the Tories to prepare extensive amendments to tighten up their own Bill.

At the same time, the rising tide of working class militancy and the fact that workers' attention has now been focussed on the prospect of new laws to limit the right to strike, creates very unfavourable conditions to enforce such legislation.

This is plainly why the Thatcher cabinet has been forced to weather the vicious criticism from the CBI and other right-wing elements, and has refused to be rushed into putting stringent new laws through Parliament to deal with the steel strike.

The most likely development in the coming period will be growing rank and file anger at the danger to their hard-won rights continuing to conflict with a stubborn refusal of the TUC to launch any serious fight to prevent its passage.

Instead advanced action around the Tory anti-union laws is likely to be combined with action on other issues—cuts, jobs, pay, etc.—while the main resistance to them will very likely (as with Heath's Industrial Relations Act) emerge only in resistance to the implementation of its provisions in practice.

Yet we do not look to any simple repetition of the events of the early 1970s as a solution to the Tory attacks. We must of course stand in the forefront of the fight for action to stop this legislation, while making clear our conviction that, like the Industrial Relations Act, it can be effectively killed only by the defeat of the Tory government itself.

Other Tory attacks on the working class also aim to divide and weaken it. The latest Immigration Bill, whose effect on actual immigration will be negligible, has a double impact.

In pandering to the most extreme racist elements drawn around the Tory Party from the National Front during the 1979 election campaign on the basis of Thatcher's racist statements, it will help fuel a new wave of racist propaganda and thus help divide the working class.

And in establishing beyond doubt a "second class citizen" category for immigrant women it creates conditions for increased deportation of immigrants and, in the future, for the



PHOTO: Laurie Sparham, IFL

Young women march against Corrie

immigrant register and other restrictions and discriminatory measures demanded by the racialists.

The factor working against this Tory strategy is the growing militancy and combativity of the working class, which breaks down racial barriers in united struggle.

Needless to say, as with nearly every other Tory attack, the groundwork for the new Immigration Bill has been laid by years of Labour betrayals, in which Tory immigration laws have been effectively strengthened by the Wilson and Callaghan governments.

In the field of women's rights the Tories' bid to eliminate even the inadequate abortion rights embodied in the 1967 Act amounts to a major offensive against working women. Combined with Prior's attacks on maternity rights and women's rights at work, it can be seen as part of a determined Tory move to reverse the gains made by women in the last ten years, and to force them back into the confines of the home and the menial tasks of child-care and domestic labour.

It is impossible to ascribe one particular conscious motive for this Tory offensive: in part, they act from the need to eliminate thousands of workers from the payroll of an economy in recession; in part, from the fact that the withdrawal of social services and health care from the elderly, the cutbacks in education and youth facilities, the axing of nurseries and child care, require—in the Tories' view—that women in the home

undertake these burdens that are properly the responsibility of the state. And of course there is also the desire on the Tories—shared by the right wing of the Labour Party—to wage an ideological offensive to bolster up the old constrictive values of the bourgeois family unit. The oppression of women in the home plays a crucial role in isolating them from the class struggle and transforming them into the victims of the individualistic, conservative and even religious propaganda poured out by the media.

The Tory strategy of appealing to the individual worker and family unit to act against the interests of the working class as a whole can also be seen in the use of postal ballots to defuse class consciousness and militancy, the propaganda surrounding Howe's package of "tax cuts", and the development of government policy on housing and private medicine.

The axing of council house building and Heseltine's "sale of the century" of existing council property at knockdown prices are designed long-term to effectively abolish the role of the state sector in housing. They represent therefore a major attack on the working class as a whole.

The attack, however, is being carried through with propaganda aimed at individual tenants, designed to persuade them to secure their own interests by taking advantage of a

"bargain" offer. The net financial loss to be carried by the state in selling off these houses is regarded by the Tories in the same way as large sums paid out in voluntary redundancy—they are an investment for the future, in which private landlords can look forward to higher rents and eventually to buying up chunks of prime council estates, and private developers can drive house prices even higher as the inevitable shortages arise.

Private medical schemes—given a boost in the last year by deals involving power workers and other unions—are another way in which the Tories aim to press sections of workers and the middle class to seek an individual way out of the crisis facing the NHS, and thus to reduce the opposition to further drastic cuts. There has been an actual increase in private medicine as state facilities are run down. By offering doctors in particular the hopes of a profitable excursion into private practice, the Tories can hope to remove their influence and prestige from the struggle against the destruction of the NHS, a struggle already muted by the continual sabotage of public sector union leaders.

These moves towards utilising the individual and the family unit as a bulwark against class consciousness run hand-in-hand with an eager series of Tory press witch-hunts on socialists and communists that oppose

such positions and fight to mobilise resistance within the labour movement.

Ireland

Such witch-hunts have also extended to attempts to whip up violence against those workers identified with the struggle against British imperialist oppression in Ireland. The Tories have so far largely followed the reactionary Labour strategy on the Irish war.

The Atkins conference on the future of the province was a predictable failure. The Tories seem likely to attempt to impose some form of devolution on the north, banking on the SDLP confining itself to verbal protests, and at the same time to step up attempts to 'Ulsterise' the security forces by putting a strengthened RUC more into the front line, while making some cosmetic withdrawals of British troops.

Such steps will do nothing to resolve the crisis for the British state whereby the growing polarisation and the increased military strength of the republican movement puts a military or diplomatic solution out of the question.

Irish workers, north and south, face growing attacks on their jobs and living standards. Surveys in the north now predict 17% unemployment, the bulk of which is borne by the Catholic population.

Tens of thousands of working class Catholic men (and virtually all Catholic women) are outside the ranks of the trade union movement.

The trade unions are in many cases dominated by Orangeism and fail to provide a forum where northern Catholics can fight their double oppression.

Those not dominated by Orange forces have adopted the Stalinist/Official republican line of the Better Life for All Campaign.

This is a jumble of utopian abstractions which recognises both the sectarian Orange state and the right of the British government to legislate. We condemn this policy without reservation.

While Trotskyists in the north must agitate within the trade unions, we recognise that in these conditions work outside the official labour movement takes on added importance.

In the south workers have shown over and over again their readiness to struggle on economic demands. The Haughey government, which replaced Lynch, has merely stepped up its attacks on the working class and savagely increased taxes. The bureaucracy has attempted to channel the militancy of the Irish workers into a peaceful campaign on the tax system.

There is no automatic link between the economic struggle and the national question. Protestant workers in the grip of Loyalism in the north have proved capable of major struggles on the economic front. Such struggles objectively

point to the common interest of all workers against imperialist rule in Ireland, but the task of the Trotskyist party—to organise the class as a class—cannot be glibly posed.

At each point where limited unity between Catholic and Protestant workers has been achieved against their common class enemy, the Orange leaders have successfully used the 'Papist Threat' to the material privileges of Protestant workers to re-establish the sectarian divide.

Faced with such a division Trotskyists do not adopt a haughty even-handed attitude. We are not indifferent to the double oppression of the Catholic minority in the north and we do not hesitate to support their struggle, arms in hand, against the British army.

In Britain, when confronted by workers (or left groups like the RCG) who see the Provisionals as the only legitimate leadership for the anti-imperialist struggle, we oppose them.

We point out that the Provisional movement is a petty bourgeois nationalist movement, which (as is so clearly illustrated by Mugabe in Zimbabwe) never bases itself on defence and independence of the working class.

We point to the capitulation by the Provisionals to the Pope's visit; its failure to even try to organise workers as anything more than individuals within a guerrilla movement; and its disdainful attitude towards the British working class.

But for every worker with such illusions in Britain there are 99 others who have been poisoned by the state, the press and the labour leadership, to condemning the Provisionals as 'terrorists' and 'murderers'.

That is why the majority of our propaganda and agitation in Britain must be directed towards defending unconditionally Republican forces against imperialism.

Failure to do so condemns any movement as objectively aiding imperialism against that struggle.

When we take up the question of Ireland in the trade unions, and when Socialist Press supporters take up the issue in the Labour Party, we clearly do not pose as a precondition that such bodies adopt a policy of an Irish Workers Republic before they can demand the immediate withdrawal of troops.

We must ensure however that we consistently put forward this demand in our press and that when speaking on Ireland in the organisation of the working class we must make it clear that we do not support a reunification of Ireland based on a double exploitation of a Protestant minority by a Catholic-dominated Dublin government.

In campaigning on Ireland in the labour movement it is essential that revolutionaries avoid the temptation to identify the backwardness of sections of

British workers with the conscious pro-imperialist stance taken by their bureaucratic trade union and Labour leaders.

What is needed is not arrogant lectures against national chauvinism, but patient propaganda and agitational work designed to counter the censored lies and provocations of the mass media, to expose the reality of the Irish war and to mobilise workers—in conflict with their reformist and Stalinist leaders—to oppose the role of their 'own' capitalist class.

In Britain the struggle against press censorship, against the so-called 'Prevention of Terrorism' Act, and in solidarity with the long and bitter struggle of the republican prisoners of Long Kesh and Armagh Jail for the restoration of political prisoner status are all central democratic demands to be raised by our comrades in every labour movement body.

This is not just a propaganda campaign. Our task is to build a real mass anti-imperialist movement which will break the stranglehold of the trade union and Labour Party bureaucracies.

We also demand self-determination for the Irish people as a whole. This demand which has a transitional revolutionary content against both the British and Irish bourgeoisie, cannot be evaded by 'defending' the rights of the Protestant workers in the north.

That would be not to defend their real interests, but their reactionary consciousness and their allegiance to Paisley and other extreme reactionary forces.

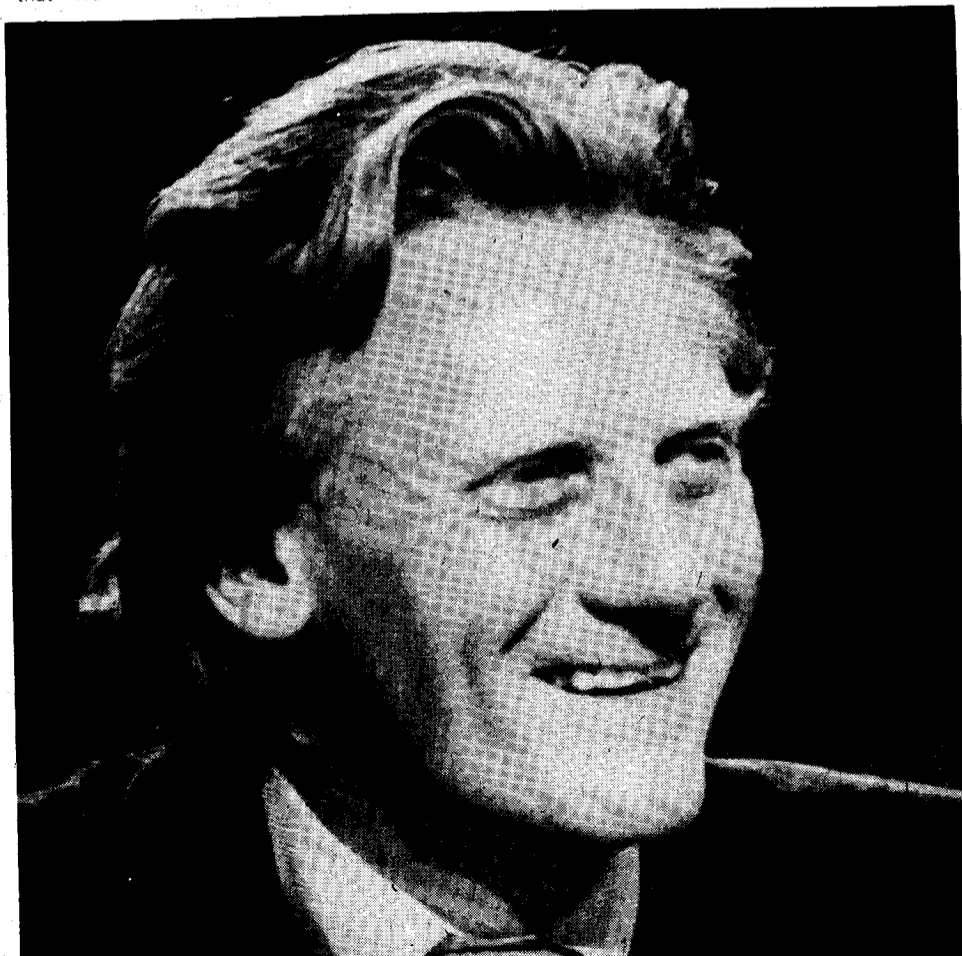
Not to call for self-determination for the Irish people as a whole must mean to call in fact for the right to 'self-determination' for the Protestant minority (which was created an artificial majority by imperialism).

While stressing the obligation of the British workers' movement to assist its Irish brothers and sisters, we must not shrink from exposing the way in which the schooling of the British armed forces in urban guerrilla warfare and mass repression in Ireland also poses a direct threat to the British working class, which now faces one of the most battle-hardened and brutalised armies in all the advanced capitalist countries.

The Tory press and the Labour bureaucracy, with assistance from the right wing and state forces, have shown themselves determined to witch-hunt and even provoke violence against those who press the struggle for solidarity with the Irish people.

The answer to such witch-hunts must be to turn into the labour movement in a determined fight to broaden the base of support for the demands of "troops out now" and "self-determination for the Irish people".

Continued next week



"Sale of the Century" man Heseltine

Why Communist Party backs Evans' betrayal

By Jack Davies

At the very point when he has become most despised and hated by British Leyland workers for his cynical sell-out of their struggle against Edwardes' pay-and-strings package, Moss Evans has fallen back on the support of his most devoted friends—the Stalinists of the Communist Party.

The CP has itself played a crucial role in the betrayal of BL workers in the face of the bosses' offensive. Party members hold senior positions in several BL plants—most notably the convenorship of the giant Longbridge complex.

The Stalinist alliance with Evans is therefore of far more than propaganda importance.

And it emerged in the open in the most brazen fashion.

The day after Evans' capitulation to BL negotiator Horrocks the capitalist press was cock-a-hoop. The *Daily Mail* headlined it as a "Complete Surrender". The *Sun* waxed ecstatic about "Mighty Mick" Edwardes.

The only contrary note was struck by the Stalinist daily *Morning Star*. As workers cursed Evans and the employers laughed all the way to the bank, the CP astoundingly proclaimed Evans' deal to be a victory!

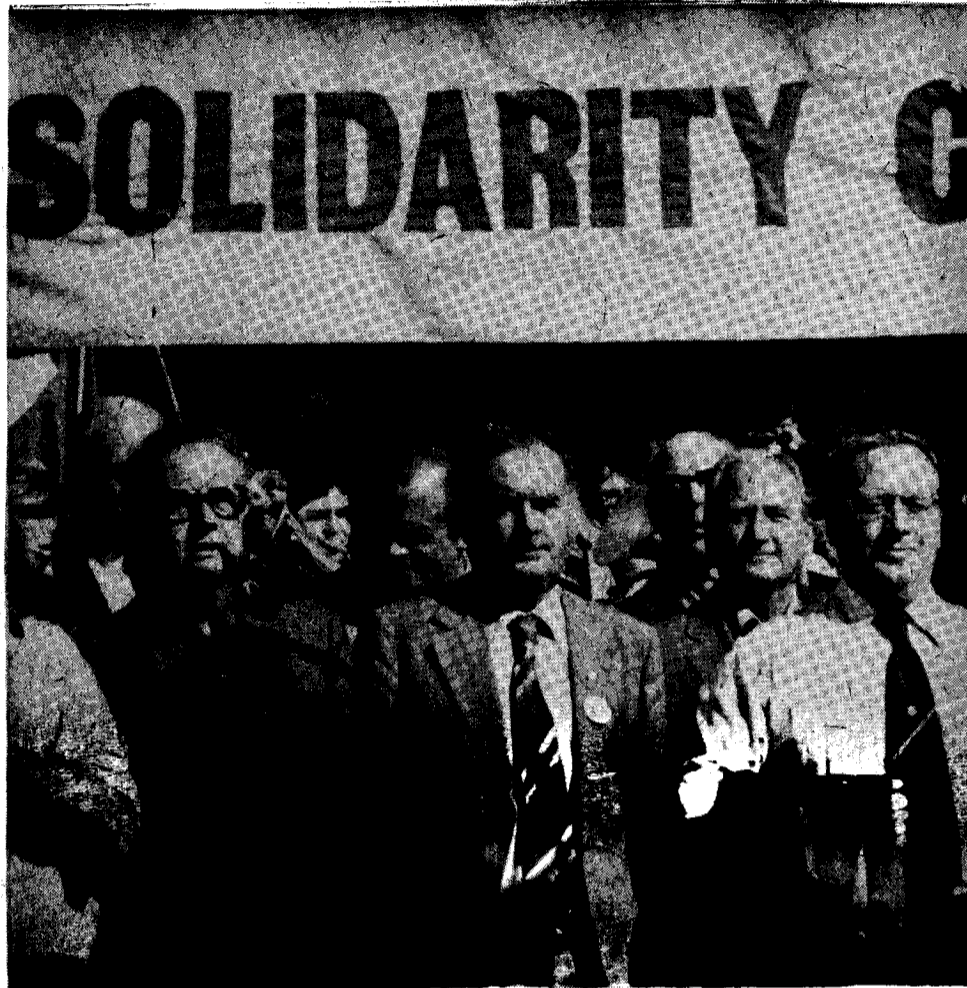
Under the headline "Climb-down by Leyland on sack threat", the Stalinist General Secretary of the Sheetmetal Workers union George Guy was quoted as saying:

"This is a trade union victory for the restoration of trade union rights of mutual agreement."

Saturday's *Morning Star* followed this up by attempting the thankless task of explaining away the fact that the whole capitalist class was exultant at Edwardes' victory.

Under the headline "They CAN be stopped!", the *Star* declared:

"How the establishment



Evans (right) with CP leader Gordon McLennan behind his shoulder

"hates to admit when its beat."! Describing Michael Edwardes riding into town as in a Western the article goes on:

"On Thursday night he slipped out quietly, his posse frightened off by the firm stand of the trade unions."

Such an account would be an amusing piece of fiction if the subject matter were not so deadly serious—the collaboration of union leaders in the dismantling of hard-won agreements throughout BL.

The *Star* proclaims that, despite the reports in the capitalist press,

"Leyland was stopped by united action—something that Fleet Street could not bring itself to admit."

How did they escape these "facts"? The *Star* claims that the press ignored the following "key words" in Evans' sordid deal:

"Subject to such resumption of normal working the Company undertakes not to proceed

with the action announced in the Statement to all employees of BL Cars dated 16 April 1980, and to restore all entitlements."

But this is no change from the 16 April statement—which always declared that the sacking threat only applied to those workers who did *not* resume normal working by April 23.

The clause quoted by the *Morning Star* proves only that the company did *not* withdraw this threat: they only reworded

it! But why has the CP engaged in such desperate lies—in each case a front page lead article—to cover up for Evans' sell-out?

The fact is that on the following Monday BL Senior Stewards, including several prominent Stalinists, were to meet and decide what position to take on Evans' sell-out: whether to recommend a return to work or an all-out fight against the company.

Not mentioned

The *Morning Star* significantly does not even mention the latter possibility. The CP had no intention of fighting for such action.

If BL workers had stayed out it would have piled pressure on CP convenors in plants not on strike, and exposed Evans still further in the eyes of the workforce.

By extending the fight in defence of trade unionism in BL they would create conditions to bring out other plants.

Yet the CP has consistently opposed such a perspective. At the convenors meeting on April 2, Jack Adams, Derek Robinson's Stalinist replacement at Longbridge, announced that he was telling his members to comply with Edwardes' ultimatum and clock in on April 8—no matter what any other plant was doing!

This was music to the ears of Evans and the TGWU leadership. They wanted to posture as standing to the left of Duffy and the extreme right wing AUEW leadership—while at the same time avoiding any real fight!

Limited

By leaving the decision on whether or not to take a stand against Edwardes up to individual plants, and simply offering support for those that came out on strike, they hoped that the action would be limited and peter out.

Keeping Longbridge at work was vital in creating this hoped-for demoralisation.

But the plan misfired. Isolated action at Jaguar and at the Sherpa Plant at Common Lane spread to Rover and other plants. Soon 18,000 were out, with a mass meeting planned for the Cowley Assembly plant on the Monday.

Most of these strikes broke out when the company took steps to enforce the 92 page document of strings. The only plant where this document was enforced without strike action was Longbridge—where workers on the Mini were laid off without pay.

In reality there was a growing mood for action throughout BL, which grew enormously following the sacking threat made on the Wednesday.

What was the CP response to this actual "unity in action" in Leyland?

They relegated all news of the developing strikes to small reports, without comment, in the *Morning Star*.

And as calls for all-out action grew in Longbridge, Adams put the same position as the right wing leadership in another vital plant, the Cowley Body Plant.

Mass meetings

They argued against mass meetings, and, as militancy reached its peak on the Wednesday and Thursday, they told sections who wanted to strike to hold their fire—since Moss Evans was "about to call us all out anyway".

From that point on leading Stalinists such as George Guy began to argue in favour of the sell-out, since they recognised that the only alternative was an all-out battle with BL management.

Like Evans, the Stalinists realise the company is on the brink of bankruptcy.

And, like Evans, the reformist politics of the Communist Party's British Road to Socialism offers only one way out of such a dilemma—concessions on the part of the working class to enable the capitalist class to make BL "viable" and profitable.

This, garnished with a little 'left' rhetoric about resisting closures, and under a barrage of demands for import controls to protect BL against foreign competition, was essentially the line put forward by Derek Robinson and the Stalinist-led Combine Committee in the ill-fated booklet that provided the pretext for his victimisation.

This same bankrupt strategy has now led the CP to emerge as a crucial prop for Moss Evans at a point where his betrayal has been widely recognised by shop floor workers.

Offensive

In the current capitalist crisis there is no way in which there can be a "peaceful co-existence" between employers and workforce—as the continued offensive of BL management confirms.

The continued existence of capitalism can be ensured only at the expense of the working class.

This is why Trotskyists reject the policy and perspectives of the reformist leaders and Communist Party, and fight for a programme which mobilises the working class in the struggle to defend jobs, wages and working conditions and the building of organisations that can prepare the ground for the overthrow of the Tories and capitalist rule and the taking of power.

THE FIRST MAY DAY

By John Docherty

In each new period of the struggle of the working class movement it becomes necessary to remind the rising generation of the sacrifices which have been needed to set up our organisations and establish our rights.

It came as a surprise to one of our members in his union branch the other week to discover that nobody seemed to know why May Day is celebrated as International Workers Day. The general opinion was that it might have something to do with fertility rites, Morris Dancing and the beginning of Spring, so it seemed a good idea to explain that its origins really lie in a particular struggle to improve workers conditions and to express solidarity with those who have suffered to maintain them.

In 1884 an obscure American workers organisation by the name of the Federation of Organised Trade and Labour Unions issued a call for a legal eight hour day and for a general strike if this was not obtained

within two years.

Many actions were initiated on this call in the following period throughout the United States, and though individual employers were forced to concede shorter hours, there was no general legal change.

When the two-year period came to an end on 1 May 1886 workers in every part of America were on strike or were preparing to do so to obtain the eight hour day.

Shot dead

In Chicago at least four workers were shot dead as they tried to prevent the entry of scabs into a factory.

On the evening of 4 May about 3,000 people gathered in the Haymarket Square in the centre of town to protest. As they were dispersing, the police suddenly charged into the crowd, and a bomb went off killing seven policemen.

To this day it is uncertain who let off the bomb, but the most likely explanation is that the explosion was the work of an agent provocateur or an

attempt to pay off a personal grudge.

However, any careful consideration of the case was impossible at the time in an atmosphere of witch-hunt and hysteria built up by the press and exploited by the legal system.

After numerous raids and arrests eight men were found guilty of 'conspiracy'—not because they could have played any part in the incident, but because they advocated policies which according to the police might have led to it.

Of these one committed suicide and four others were hanged in 1887. With the rope around his neck, one of them, August Spies, declared:

"There will be a time when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you strangle today."

Not forgotten

The stepping up of the struggle for the eight hour day ensured that the Haymarket martyrs were not forgotten. The American Federation of Labour,

to which most unions were affiliated at the time, took up the call for further action if there were no concessions by 1 May 1890.

In 1889 when the Socialist (Second) International was set up, one of the first motions it passed called for action in every country on that day aiming 'to reduce the working day by law to eight hours'.

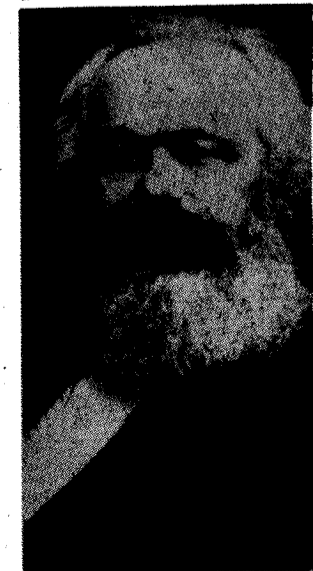
Stoppages

Thus on May Day 1890 there were stoppages of work and demonstrations throughout Europe and North America on this demand, and many gains were reported from France, the United States and elsewhere.

Only in Britain did the conservative trade union leaders refuse to initiate any action on May Day itself, but called instead for demonstrations over the following weekend.

This rather shame-faced practice is no doubt partly responsible for the fact that few British workers now seem to know that May Day began in militant action and solidarity

with those throughout the world who have lost their lives and livelihoods in the struggle for the emancipation of their class.



Karl Marx — put forward call for legal 8-hr day.



NUJ pulls out of Press Council

NUR Executive throws out Weighell's deal

In a sharp rebuff for both the employers and General Secretary Sid Weighell, the national executive of the National Union of Railwaymen last week voted 21-6 to reject a staged 20%-with-strings pay deal.

The package of strings amounts to a medium-size book—equivalent to the 92-page document brought forward by BL management.

Its initial provisions include cuts in manning and extensive changes in existing conditions in freight, parcels and administration.

Weighell had emerged from the pay talks having agreed to all of these proposals and assuring eager journalists that BR "will get their changes".

But the NUR Executive rejected both the staging of the pay increase—16% now and

another 4% in June—and the strings attached.

Weighell was sent back to try again.

This puts added pressure on 'left' talking train drivers' leader Ray Buckton of ASLEF, who had also accepted a deal which includes a vicious package of attacks on drivers' working conditions.

But, as Weighell was hasty to point out, the NUR is still "a long way from strike action".

Like their fellow TUC leaders, Buckton and Weighell are desperately anxious to avoid a strike that would bring a further challenge to the Thatcher government.

But the cringing collaboration of the union leaders has repeatedly come up against the same obstacle: the militant determination of their members to defend their jobs and living

standards.

The NUR Executive is just the latest of a succession of union bodies that have thrown out pay deals negotiated and recommended by full time officials.

Railway workers, like every other section, face the need to construct a new, revolutionary leadership if they are to defend themselves against the Tory offensive.

The NUJ conference, a report of which appeared last week, took an important decision to withdraw immediately from the Press Council.

This body is roughly speaking to the newspaper proprietors what the police complaints committee is to the police.

The Press Council from time to time admonishes papers for 'errors' but consistently upholds attacks on the working class (however malicious and untrue).

During the provincial newspaper strike it upheld a complaint against press officers who had refused to supply copy to scabs.

Last year those in the union who want to keep its allegiance to the press council won a small majority for a further year's grace.

ignore the decision to withdraw from the Press Council (as they have consistently ignored the decision to refuse to use police

LAST WEEK'S report of the NUJ conference in Portrush contained a serious error, due to a mistake in transmission from Ireland as Socialist Press was going to press.

The resolution calling for the withdrawal of troops was amended to delete that section, replacing it with a general call on the union to oppose repression wherever it was found.

The overall thrust of the conference remained a serious blow against those who wanted its Irish venue to be used to support the six county state, despite this important weakening of one resolution.

In particular the conference closed with a condemnation of the TUC's disaffiliation of Tameside Trades Council for organising a conference on Ireland.

It instructed the NEC to proceed with the NUJ's conference on censorship regardless of the attitude of the TUC.

press passes) and to seek their own representation on the Press Council.

The union also voted for strike action on May 14, and to defy any legislation eroding trade union rights. It asserted that it will accept no restrictions by law or otherwise on free collective bargaining.

A motion for the election of officials was passed, but was then heavily amended to leave only three positions—general secretary, deputy general secretary and editor of the *Journalist* open for election—by postal ballot.

Office holders over the age of 55 are to be exempted.

Abortion rights were defended and fights against the cuts backed.

The union also declared itself opposed to attempts to use the Olympic Games as anti-Soviet propaganda.

A motion for the NUJ to affiliate to the Labour Party was heavily defeated.

As well as expected opposition from advocates of a 'non political' union the resolution was opposed by full time official Bob Norris who spoke as "a life long member of the Labour Party" but said that to put it out to ballot would be to weaken the union's credibility if it were lost.

Not one of the Labour councillors or would-be councillors and MFs present spoke in favour of the resolution.

TROTSKYIST INTERNATIONAL LIAISON COMMITTEE

INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL

TROTSKYISM AND THE MASS MOVEMENT

Eight days of lectures and discussion on basic questions of Marxism and the fight to reconstruct the Fourth International.

JULY 20-27 1980

- *TROTSKYISM AND THE TRADE UNIONS: USA in the 1930s. France in the 1930s. The postwar struggle to build Trotskyist parties in the working class.
- *TROTSKYISM, STALINISM AND SOCIAL DEMOCRACY. The struggle for the FI against Stalinism in the 1930s. Lessons for the period of entry into social democracy in France and the USA.
- *TROTSKYISM AND THE FIGHT AGAINST SEXUAL OPPRESSION.
- *TROTSKYISM AND PETTY BOURGEOIS NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS
- *THE FIGHT FOR A TROTSKYIST YOUTH MOVEMENT
- *RECONSTRUCT THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

The school will be attended by delegations from the organisations affiliated to the TILC and members of the WSL. A special invitation is being extended to supporters of the WSL to take part in the discussion and learn more about the WSL and the TILC.

Details are available from any WSL branch or from: WSL, 3M Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX.

This year the London Central Branch, representing Fleet Street journalists, wanted to delay a decision again, but were defeated 122-92.

The union is now committed to reporting by October on proposals for alternative bodies to handle complaints.

This break with an employers' body (which includes as one of its leading officers Ken Morgan, former General Secretary of the NUJ) is an important one but represents only a halfway house.

The Union should establish a workers complaints procedure which does not aim to be 'impartial' between the owners and the workers but which sets itself the target of clearly exposing the class role of the capitalist press.

Central London Branch officers (who are forever complaining that the annual conference is 'undemocratic') have already warned that they may



PHOTO: Andrew Wiard, Report

Subject to election - NUJ General Secretary Ashton

JOIN THE WSL!

With workers by the thousand taking to the streets to oppose Tory policies there is plainly no lack of militancy in the organised working class.

Yet the existing trade union bureaucrats and Labour leaders—whether right or 'left'—have no perspective to offer those workers prepared to fight in defence of jobs, living standards, social services and democratic rights.

These can only be defended through policies which start from the independent interests of the working class, which, as an international class, has nothing to gain and everything to lose from attempts to restore the profitability of their "own" employing class.

In a period where the contradictions of the anarchic capitalist system force the wholesale closure and destruction of the productive forces of society, only a socialist planned economy on a world scale offers a way forward.

To achieve such a perspective a leadership is needed which, in today's struggles fights

to advance workers beyond trade union militancy, protest politics and illusions that capitalism can be abolished through parliament.

The Workers Socialist League is a Trotskyist movement fighting day in and day out to build such a principled leadership in the working class in Britain.

Internationally, we are affiliated to the newly-formed Trotskyist International Liaison Committee, which fights for the reconstruction of the Fourth International and the building of revolutionary parties in every country to lead the struggle against imperialism and against the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracies in the deformed and degenerated workers' states.

We invite all readers of Socialist Press to seek more details of the WSL and its work, and to join us in the struggle for socialism.

NOW AVAILABLE
Labour movement bulletin on Ireland with background articles on witch-hunts in Oxford and Tameside. 25p including p&p from WSL, BM Box 5277 London WC1V 6XX.



Please send me more details of the Workers Socialist League.

Name

Address

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Send to WSL: BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX.

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Chapple launches new witch-hunt

NURSERIES: the fight grows



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Lobbyists oppose an earlier bureaucratic move—in 1977

That extreme right wing Electricians' union leader Frank Chapple has finally dispensed with even the last vestige of union democracy is clearly demonstrated by the classic bureaucratic shutdown of the 2000-strong Cardiff branch.

Chapple's latest dictate (itself a flagrant contravention of union rule 10) follows closely the suspension of Birmingham Midland branch (6,000 members) earlier this year.

Hazard

Of course, the liquidation of militants into right wing-dominated branches and the suppression of ballot results, particularly when they reject Chapple nominees, has always been an occupational hazard for union activists in the EETPU.

Chapple has always been the first TUC leader to sacrifice his members' living standards in the "national interest".

The 'Concordat', inspired by Chapple and Basnett (GMWU) under the last Labour government included:

- *Limitations on picketing rights
- *Acceptance of secret ballots before strike action
- *Pledges not to strike before wage deals expire
- *Rejection of the principle of the 'closed shop'.

At the very sharpest point in last year's Confed engineering strike it was Chapple who threatened to ballot EETPU members, effectively sabotaging the struggle and the pay claim.

Again, in negotiating private medical cover for electricians Chapple has gone farthest in undermining the NHS.

In the power industry, without consultation of the membership, another 'American type' labour deal has been imposed; the latest deal concedes 19%—but is designed to hold until July 1981, i.e. 18 months!

Another Chapple imposition was the notorious JIB for contracting 'sparks' where wage levels are cobbled together, again over the heads of workers.

It is through this Board that militants are blacklisted, with full knowledge of union officials.

Undoubtedly, with the upsurge of workers prepared to defend their interests (steelworkers, carworkers etc) Chapple fears a loosening of the shackles in the EETPU and this struggle has been given voice, albeit inadequately, in both the Cardiff and Birmingham branches.

Hence the witch-hunting of the Cardiff branch as "supporting the SWP". This attack must be resisted by EETPU members, as part of a struggle for a genuine alternative leadership within this hard-pressed union.

EETPU members should

WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE
Public meeting LEICESTER
 "New leaders needed to defeat the Tories"
Wednesday May 7 at 7.30
Queen Victoria Hotel
Southampton Street
Leicester



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Chapple

ignore Chapple's latest union circular which opposes the TUC May 14 demonstration, and instead fight for maximum strike support, not as a 'one off' but as a first step towards a general strike to bring down the Tory government.

SAVE OUR NURSERIES
Midlands Region
NURSERIES ACTION CONFERENCE
 Co-sponsored by Leicester, Nottingham and Oxford Nursery Campaigns
Saturday May 17
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Portland Building,
Nottingham University
 Further details from Save Our Nurseries Campaign
 c/o 135a Mansfield Road,
 Nottingham.

Nearly 300 parents and children demonstrated in Ealing on Saturday against the Tories' decision to end the provision of education for the under-5s.

Over 3,000 children will be affected, the number of nursery places will be halved (at present 200 full-time and 1,400 part-time), teachers and ancillary workers will be made redundant and classes will be larger.

At the beginning of the year parents affected formed a group called the Ealing 3-5 Education Action Group (E3-5AG) and at their first public meeting on March 6 they drew an audience

of over 700.

At that meeting the group urged the audience to march to Ealing Town Hall on March 11 to join with the NUT in their half-day strike.

The Campaign needs to be strengthened by the active involvement of all trade unions and trades councils in the Borough and the local Labour Party.

The only councillor to speak at the rally was Drabwell, an ex-Tory turned independent: but where were the Labour councillors?

The Labour Group has verbally pledged to restore the cuts if and when they regain control of the council.

The Campaign is urging parents to organise PTA meetings in the week of May 12 in preparation for an all-day vigil outside the Town Hall on May 19.

While petitions and lobbies are important the parents must start thinking in terms of what action to take if all else fails. Action must be taken now if it is not to be too late to stop the 182 proposed redundancies of teachers in the borough.

Pressure from the Campaign needs to be applied to NUT officials, demanding to know what they, together with other public sector unions, intend doing to safeguard their members' jobs and services.

Leicester

At Leicester on Tuesday April 22 a meeting was called to form a Nursery Campaign against the proposed redundancies of nursery nurses, freezing of nursery places and closure of some nurseries.

Speakers included Gill Blackwell, from the Oxford City Nursery Campaign, Carole Ralph from the Save Our Nurseries Campaign in Nottingham, Nick Butler from the NUT and a speaker from the West

Leicestershire Nursery Campaign.

In the audience of over 70 were people representing the parents action group, the women's sub-committee of the trades council, teaching and ancillary staff from both social service and education nurseries and branch officers of NALGO.

Also the NUT Division in Leicester had decided that day to support strike action on May 14 and would be making nursery provision a major focus on the demonstration that would take place.

In contrast the NALGO representatives were still seeking consultations with the Council on the proposed redundancies!

NALGO, it was said, was not instructing its members to support May 14, since they would be "unlikely to come out!"

There must be many NALGO members wishing they could decide on such questions instead of having it decided for them.

A further meeting was planned to form the Nursery Campaign after hearing what other areas have managed to do.

Round one goes to Wandsworth sit-in

The Nightingale Lane Day Nursery is now in its seventh week of occupation, despite some setbacks in having gas services turned off a few weeks ago.

Last week the occupiers scored a point off Wandsworth Borough Council in all places the High Court—not an arena renowned for sympathetic hearings for the working class.

The decision was mainly round a legal technicality since the Council's legal advisors had failed to carry out the proper procedure for securing an eviction.

The Council has been ordered by the Judge to return next Friday with the proper procedure carried out.

Ironically the Nursery occupiers were represented by the Wandsworth Legal Resource

Project—which because of cuts has itself had a number of law centres closed down.

'Not fair'

The solicitor acting on behalf of Wandsworth accused the occupiers' solicitor of 'not playing fair', by failing to inform him that the legal technicality would be used in court, and quoting a previous case prior to the Criminal Trespass Act.

The Judge however stated that any solicitor aware of the law would have knowledge of this ruling.

Although the occupation has won this brief, reprieve it is highly unlikely that the Judge will fail to grant the repossession order.

In contrast to the nursery occupation, the campaign to save the Winstanley Junior Library which was occupied on

the same day was not legally represented, and has not taken up offers of joint demonstrations and events—like gate crashing the Easter Parade at Battersea.

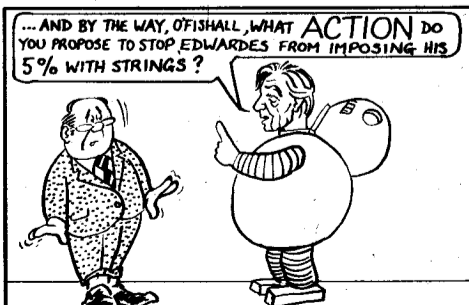
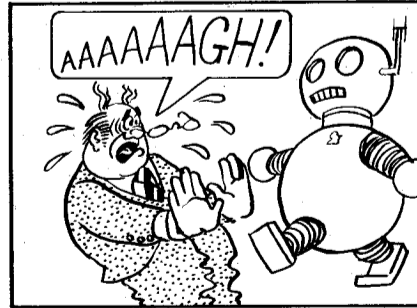
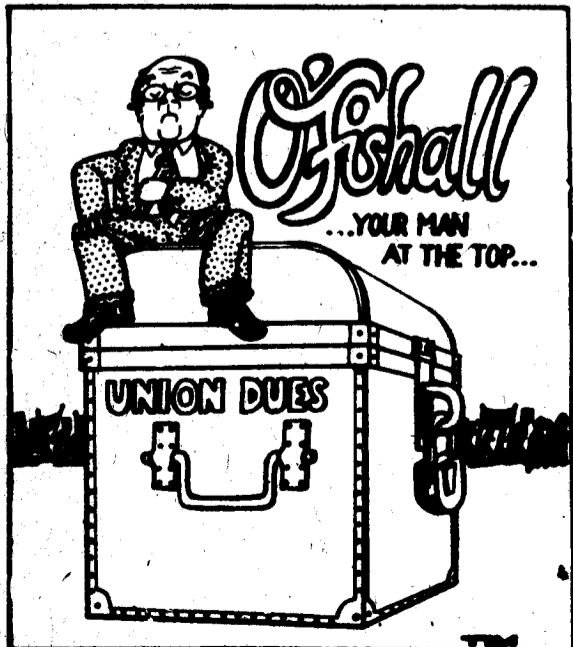
At the High Court on Friday their campaign (comprising and led by a few vicars) kept at more than arm's length from the nursery demonstration and dressed up as Wombles.

High Court

The nursery occupation is calling for support on their demonstration at the High Court, the Strand, around 12 o'clock on Friday 2 May.

Letters of support and donations should be sent to:

Nightingale Lane Day Nursery Occupation, c/o Nightingale Lane, London SW12.



SOCIALIST PRESS



FUND—step up fight

Both the monthly fund and the special fund continue to come in at a very slow rate. This is particularly worrying in the case of the monthly fund as there are only a few days to go to the end of the month.

We cannot afford a shortfall on this fund or delays in raising the second half of the special fund. With increased resources being put into helping the Socialist Youth League build for its conference in May, we need every penny we can get.

Socialist Press Monthly Fund
BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX

SACKED!

Notts teacher victimised

On Tuesday afternoon while Eileen Crosbie, the nursery teacher in Nottingham was facing a five hour disciplinary hearing for refusing to teach an oversized class, over 2,000 teachers staged a half-day strike, and well over 500 attended a rally at the Albert Hall in the City Centre.

The Chairman said at the outset that he didn't want the meeting "bogged down" by questions concerning action—which could be asked and answered at branch meetings!

Reinstatement

After four months the NUT should be calling the membership out on all-out strike until Eileen Crosbie is reinstated along with adequate nursery nurses.

This was underlined when, only three hours after the rally, the decision of Eileen Crosbie's hearing was that she was to be sacked. Now, the NUT is changing its strategy and calling for no-cover action in primary and secondary schools if their classes go over a certain size.

In reply to a question on other teachers being suspended, Peter Kennedy stated that the rest of the staff in the school in such a situation would be asked to "retire to the staff room".

Weakness

The fact that management are more than ready to cash in on such a show of weakness was quickly demonstrated by the suspension of the headmaster and the whole staff of Brinsley Primary School.

The head was suspended for refusing to warn staff of disciplinary action if they implemented the no-cover policy for

classes of more than 30. The staff were suspended for refusing to work without the headmaster.

This is a frontal challenge to the NUT which must be met by all-out action if the union is to maintain even the pretence of fighting the cuts and defending standards.

The membership are obviously willing to fight. Over 200 schools voted for action in support of Eileen Crosbie—but have been called out only one by one by the NUT's so-called

"action" committee.

The refusal of the NUT to lead this struggle in Nottingham is an echo of their refusal to lead a determined fight elsewhere as in Avon and Stafford, where the membership is plainly ready to take action.

Resolutions should be passed in local branches and sent to NUT HQ demanding national action not only on Eileen Crosbie's sacking but against all the cuts and their effects on education.



NGA militants on the march during last year's 'Times' dispute



NGA leader Wade

Lock-out in the print

About 45,000 NGA printers have been locked out since Monday in a frontal assault on their union rights.

The printers—in provincial newspapers, book publishers and general printing houses—are nominally locked out for taking sporadic and limited action over this year's pay claim.

In fact the British Printing Industries Federation and the Newspaper Society are launching a major challenge to demarcation lines and the unions' traditional grip on employment.

The dispute has the potential to develop quickly into an all-out attack on the NGA closed shop.

It is therefore of critical importance to every print union and to the whole organised

working class.

The lock-out is completely in line with the employers' offensive in steel, in BL and on the cuts.

The NGA has claimed a minimum basic wage of £75 a week with a minimum earnings level of £80 a week.

In addition the union is demanding a two-stage reduction in hours from 40 to 37½ by April 1981.

The crucial flexibility clauses which management are demanding have already been conceded by the NGA leadership.

The model claim on which print shops are being allowed to settle locally includes complete flexibility between all NGA crafts in the print setting and between all crafts in the machine room.

In addition, print machines will be allowed to run by the union when less than a full crew reports for duty or there is an "unavoidable absence".

The BPIF and the Newspaper Society are still looking for other clauses, such as a demand that they would have the right to fill jobs from outside the NGA lists if the NGA had not done so within a month.

The employers are now demanding that the union take

*As part of the general offensive 1,300 IPC journalists have been sacked following a one-day strike in support of a wage claim.

The journalists work for magazines within the group and for Butterworth and Hamlyn book publishing subsidiaries.

the issue to a secret ballot.

But although the NGA leadership has stood firm in the face of the lock out, NGA members can have no confidence in their leadership.

The union should call an immediate strike of the whole of Fleet Street to bring the employers quickly to their knees.

The longer the lock out lasts the greater will be the incentive for management to offer full protection to scabs to return to work in an attempt to break the NGA closed shop.

NGA members will have to struggle to break free of the bureaucratic hold of the union leadership to turn the struggle onto the offensive.

Picket lines must be made effective and demand support from other workers.

A national lock-out committee must be set up to co-ordinate the struggle and the strings must be removed from the agreement.

Jag strikers face sacking threat

As we go to press a sell-out deal has been drawn up which could end the strikes at Browns Lane and Radford Jaguar plants which have been the most solid focus of opposition to BL management's new pay and conditions package.

Despite management threats to sack the strikers, the dispute has remained solid over the last week.

BL pulled back from their threat to sack last Wednesday and extended the deadline to Monday, hoping that the trade union bureaucracy could solve the problem for them.

National Strike

The prospect of a national strike in defence of hundreds who would have to be sacked was obviously something both management and union officials

wished to prepare for whether by reducing the numbers on strike or by pressuring a return to work with no concessions given.

Over the weekend, talks were held involving all the stewards who were prepared or able to turn up to them.

Throughout Saturday and Sunday they listened to Jaguar management repeating the same "offer" as had been made previously—an "independent inquiry" into the new grading system.

In the face of management pressure, union officials were eventually able to get acceptance of a statement, the crucial two paragraphs of which read as follows:

"As a result of these discussions and the progress made, the trade unions have agreed to call a meeting on Tuesday April 29 of all the employees in dispute to report back in an endeavour to secure a return to

work.

In the light of the above, the company is prepared not to activate dismissal letters for those employees in dispute who do not report for work on Monday/Tuesday April 28/29".

It is not surprising that there is no commitment to a direct recommendation to return, seeing that management has budged not one inch from what was previously offered.

Return

That said, it is clear that the case for a return to work will be forcefully argued at Tuesday's mass meeting.

By Monday morning however it was clear that the mass "back to work" movement which officials were predicting had failed to materialise.

Those returning and attempting to go through the mass picket could probably have been counted on the fingers of

one hand.

This will help those stewards who oppose the self-out formula and who will be fighting against a return to work at Tuesday's mass meeting.

The events throughout the dispute both at national and local level have posed centrally the question of leadership.

The statement drawn up over the weekend shows once more the need for new leaders and new policies for workers throughout BL in the struggle against the Tory-backed offensive.

*As we go to press, paint shop workers in BL's Cowley Body Plant have walked out on strike over management's imposition of the 92-page document on working conditions, which deprives them of their "toggling up" money.

They have not fixed to meet again. A prolonged stoppage would halt Maxi and Princess production.



NUT leader Jarvis

PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

PHOTO: Andrew Wliard, Report