



POLAND: EXTEND THE STRIKE COMMITTEES OVERTHROW THE BUREAUCRACY

The Polish Stalinist bureaucracy has made a major move to try and end the mass movement that is threatening to topple it.

They have climbed down in the face of the strike movement but made only cosmetic changes. They had first refused to meet the United Strike Committee but last week they not only met them but admitted that the strikes had their roots in genuine grievances.

But the reaction of the state leadership; its desire to appear to make major changes; shows its weakness in the face of determined working class opposition. Although devious and still hopeful of regaining the initiative the bureaucracy is on the run.

All the most hated bureaucrats have been removed. Prime Minister Edward Babiuch who increased the meat prices, the head of TV and radio, the head of the official trade unions and the director of planning (sic).

Secret ballots

Party leader Edward Gierek has promised secret ballots in official trade union elections, curtailment of investments and citizens to have a bigger say in running the country.

All of these are completely cosmetic precisely because they are done by the bureaucracy. Who decided which ministers went? The bureaucrats did, to save themselves. Who runs the elections? The present trade union bureaucrats. Who decides what is to be curtailed? Bureaucrats do! To offer the workers a 'bigger' say, they should run the state in the same way that the workers are doing in Gdansk today.

The aim is to confine the Polish working class to reforms and away from the 'political' solution of the overthrow of the bureaucracy. This is why the KOR members are still in prison—in order to prevent the danger of outside forces. This is despite the fact that the KOR themselves have a reformist perspective. They are the scape-



Walesa

goats for the bureaucrats' "anti-political" campaign.

There is a conspiracy to present this as the victory the workers have fought for.

The capitalist press presents it this way on purpose.

The capitalist class are determined to defend the Polish bureaucracy against a mass movement as the recent loans have shown, including a joint

one last week between British, American and Russian banks. As always the trade union bureaucracy in Britain feel the same as the capitalists. This is why the TUC is continuing with its visit to Poland at the invitation of the official trade unions.

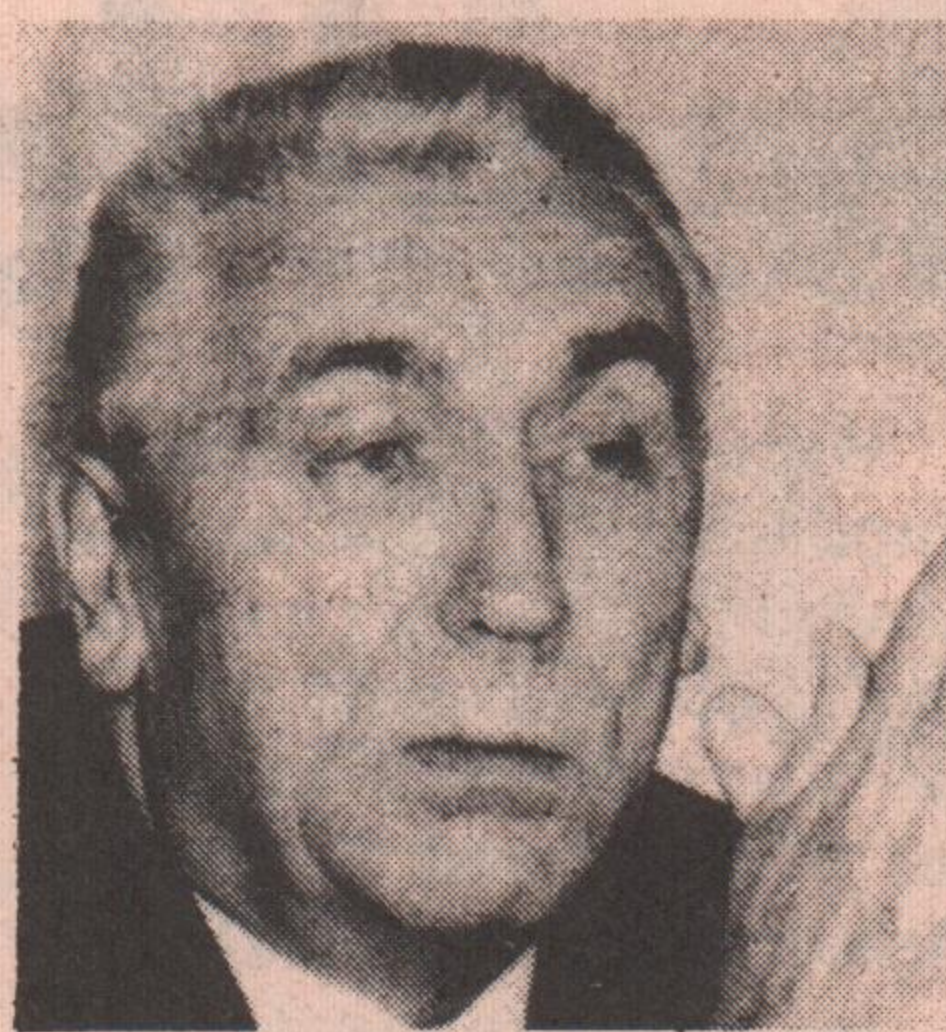
Polish workers should learn from history and not be fooled by this conspiracy. Extend the strikes and strike committees.

'Support'

Workers in capitalist countries must also not be fooled by the reaction of imperialism.

Its 'support' for the strikers is a cover for its fear of the mass movement. The cautious approach from Carter and the fact that Thatcher has not opened her mouth on the subject are testimony to that fear.

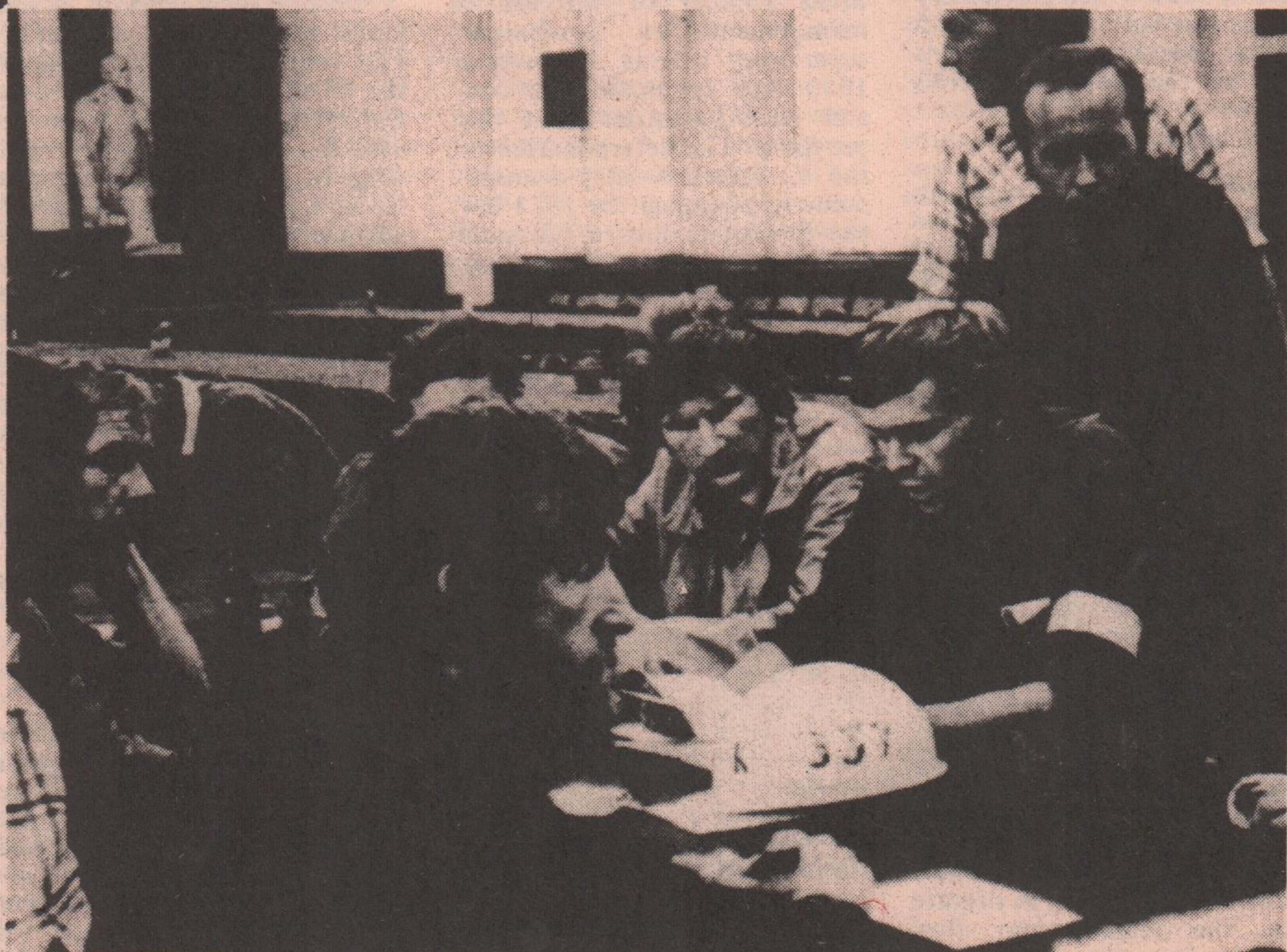
The capitalists like to see the bureaucracy embarrassed. They



Gierek

do not want to see the bureaucracy overthrown by a mass movement of workers which offers nothing to capitalism. That is the reason for the massive West German loans to Poland.

That is the reason for their statements that the strikes are the internal affairs of Poland. They are not internal but international.



Polish strikers' meeting in Gdansk

The attempts to portray the Church on the same side as the workers is also a lie. Of course the vacillating, unprincipled attitude of the Polish bureaucracy to the Church has caused it to strengthen its grip.

But already Church leaders have used their pulpits inside and outside the occupations to demand 'moderation on both sides'—a euphemism to cover the fact that they too want to keep the Polish Stalinists in power if the alternative is that they are overthrown by the working class.

As the United Strike Committee in Gdansk has been pressing for more and more reforms from the bureaucracy it has been transforming itself into something more than a trade union body.

Soviet-type body

Because the Stalinist bureaucracy at first took a hard line, the strikers, in spreading the strikes were forced into taking decisions about the running of society. That turned the United Strike Committee into a soviet-type body. This is particularly the case as it broadened its base to include the support of sections of the intelligentsia and of the peasantry.

The United Strike Committee in the Lenin Shipyard decides whether the trains run, what emergency services are allowed to function and who runs them. Generally they are functioning as a government. What has developed is a form of dual power, on one side the bureaucracy, taking decisions it is unable to implement, on the other side the United Strike Committee.

These are the words of a reporter from an unofficial "Information Bulletin" inside the shipyard at a strike committee meeting.

"A delegate from a fishing firm is just taking the floor and asking for gas. A boatful of fish may get rotten if freezers are not supplied with power.

"The problem is tackled with a gas representative. All the issues are discussed very openly and broadcast through loud-

speakers to all sections of the shipyard".

He also reported no drunkenness among the thousands of occupying workers and complete involvement.

This is a genuine mass anti-bureaucratic movement that is now reaching an important turning point. What is happening in Gdansk is the same throughout the Baltic coast. The support for the strikers is nationwide and is even taking place in other East European countries as reports of strikes in Romania have shown.

It is necessary to spread the strikes and through that the United Strike Committees, throughout the country. This would be the basis for a genuine dictatorship of the proletariat. Already this has taken place in the north where strike committee representatives from Szczecin and Elblag have met with the MKS committee in Gdansk.

The movement must be turned to the overthrow of the bureaucracy and the United Strike Committees turned into the government of Poland, with a genuinely anti-bureaucratic programme.

Here the words of the outstanding leader of the movement Lech Walesa show his limitations. Walesa was sacked from the shipyards four years ago and reinstated earlier this month as one of the first demands of the strike. It is to him the masses look. In front of mass strike delegate meetings government representatives are all greeted with silence and he is cheered.

He is reported as saying, in response to the government's climbdown:

"We go on striking. I am not a politician and I do not care about political developments. I am interested in free trade unions. But these changes are a victory for us".

It is absolutely necessary that these workers struggling for free trade unions and democratic rights within Poland realise that the bureaucracy cannot co-exist with them.

Continued page 2



INTERNATIONAL

POLAND

From front page

The first bureaucracy in a workers state, the one that developed under Stalin in Russia, could only consolidate itself by removing all democratic rights.

If the working class have any means of expressing themselves then they will challenge the privileges and power of the bureaucracy.

To fight against privileges, for independent organs, for freedom of the press, against political oppression, and for an end to secret diplomacy means of necessity to fight to overthrow the bureaucracy.

Cosmetic changes, leaving Gierk in power, only mean that what concessions are won today, the bureaucracy will take back tomorrow. The history of the struggle against the bureaucracy shows that. To involve the United Strike Committees in the "official" trade union elections means that the bureaucracy will hope to buy them off later.

In 1970 Gierk promised to mass meetings in Gdansk that there would be new elections in the official trade unions. The workers gained nothing out of this.

Safety valve

Similarly in Cuba in the early 1970s Castro, under pressure, held a series of democratic trade union elections, as a safety valve. All the higher levels remained completely under the control of the bureaucracy and the working class made no step forward.

Whatever happens the working class will never be the same, in that they have seen their own power, their anti-bureaucratic consciousness will have been developed.

But if they return to work now then the cosmetic changes will mean no real gains.

Walesa and his comrades must become 'political' in that they must turn to the history of the struggle for a political revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy. This lies in the struggle of the Trotskyist movement, the Fourth International.

The Transitional Programme contains demands for the political revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy as part of the struggle for a world revolution to overthrow capitalism on a world scale.

Allies

The workers of the world are the allies of the Polish workers. Whatever they want 'black', whatever supplies they require, the United Strike Committees should appeal to the world's working class.

When Edward Gierk talks about investigating workers' conditions, about modifying plans, about elections in the official trade unions, the question for the workers is who does he intend to carry this out?

The problems of the Polish economy are brought out clearly from the debts to the West, but that is not where they came from.

They arose precisely because a parasitic bureaucracy is in control, it is even them who make the changes. They have the power in their hands.

Plans for the economy are made in a bureaucratic manner.

The masses are excluded except as a limited pressure group. When they threaten the Polish workers with Soviet intervention, they appeal as one parasitic bureaucracy to another.

The United Strike Committees should prepare to take the power in their hands, start to plan the economy in a genuinely socialist manner and appeal to the whole of the masses of the deformed and degenerated workers' states to follow them.

They must then help revolutionary movements throughout the world to overthrow capitalism and link up as a step towards planning the world's resources.

The Trotskyist programme to be fought for in the United Strike Committees would include:

*Continue and extend the strikes and United Strike Committees as steps towards soviets.

*To defend such organisations against the violence of the bureaucracy, genuine workers' militia must be built, under the control of the workers councils.

*Build soviets in the armed forces to control the officers. Link the soldiers' soviets with the workers' militia.

*Withdraw Soviet troops! Oppose Soviet intervention! Call on Soviet workers and the Red Army to follow the lead of the Polish workers, form soviets and overthrow the Soviet bureaucracy.

*End all bureaucratic privileges! Close the special shops and the dollar shops; stop the tourists taking food and goods denied to Polish workers.

*For workers control over the press and mass media, exercised through workers' councils.

*Release all the arrested KOR members immediately.

*Release all political prisoners except proven agents of imperialism convicted before workers' courts. Disband the secret police!

*For the right of free speech, to strike and to assembly for all workers' parties and newspapers.

*Open the books of the economy! For a workers' plan of production formulated not by bureaucrats but by factory committees, consumers and soviets.

*No secret diplomacy! Publish the talks between Gierk and Brezhnev, plotting against the workers of Poland and the USSR! Full support to revolutionary struggles throughout the world. Break the isolation of the deformed workers' states through the international struggle for socialism!

*For an independent Soviet Poland as a step towards a United Socialist States of Europe!

*Defend Polish workers against Stalinist attacks: defend the workers' states against imperialist attack! For a revolutionary Marxist party to lead the struggles of the Polish workers as part of a reconstructed Fourth International!

WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE OXFORD
Public meeting
Poland—For Political Revolution!
Friday August 29 at 8.00 p.m.
East Oxford Community Centre
Princes St

BLACK WORKERS SHAKE S.A. STATE



South African strikers and carworkers



In the mounting wave of struggle in South Africa, the black working class has shown magnificent combativity, determination and courage, and a developed level of class unity and independent class action.

As broader layers have been awakened and mobilised, black workers and youth have grown in confidence and awareness of their class strength.

During the past few months, every important urban industrial area has been shaken by the mobilised strength of workers and youth in struggle against the vicious oppression and exploitation of apartheid-capitalism.

Two weeks ago, following the massive strike in Johannesburg by around 1,000 municipal workers, Cape Town was the scene of explosions of anger in sections of the working class.

Extreme provocation by police in their efforts to crush a boycott of buses, led to attacks on motor vehicles and clashes with police, in which five people were killed.

The bus boycott was launched in early June in response to massive increases in busfares, and has remained rock solid in the African working

class ghettos. The struggle against rising transport costs has been closely linked to the boycotts and partial occupations of schools by working class youth, and to a range of struggles and demands around housing, jobs, wages, etc.

The demand for adequate, cheap housing and the fight against the pass laws have been highlighted by the long and bitter struggle to defend the Crossroads squatter community. The organised unity of this courageous working class community and the threat of struggles in solidarity with it, forced the state in April 1979 to back down from demolishing the squatter shacks, and to promise to build houses for the community.

Untouched

This concession stopped far short of meeting the housing needs of workers and their families, and leaves untouched the workers needs and demands in relation to control over their daily lives, jobs, wages, transport and so on.

Revolutionaries in Cape Town, as elsewhere, must fight for the building of independent working class committees around each partial struggle (transport, housing, education, jobs, wages) to organise and mobilise workers and youth.

A revolutionary programme of demands must be put forward—demands that start from workers' needs and show the way forward in the mass struggle for workers' power.

The demands for a massive job-creating programme of useful public works and services under workers' control, and for the nationalisation of the bus companies under workers' control, are two of the crucial demands emerging from today's struggles.

The fight must be taken up to develop Councils of Action to link and unify struggles and to organise workers' defence.

The rising levels of militancy and class consciousness mean that struggles are set to erupt in each area over the miserable living conditions and murderous repression faced by the black working class.

Last week in Soweto, the largest working class ghetto in the country, a mass meeting of bus drivers saw demands raised for strike action—against the advice of some union leaders.

About 1,000 bus drivers had gone on strike over pay, conditions and union recognition in early July.

The strike forced bosses to negotiate with the drivers' action committee, and the drivers suspended their action on condition that their grievances were resolved.

Major struggles

The possible bus drivers' strike comes at a time when the bus company is applying for an increase in busfares, and follows the recent increase in rents for the hovels in Soweto that workers and their families are forced to live in.

The combination of these and other explosive grievances in Soweto, coming in the wake of the recent municipal workers strike, prepares the ground for major struggles in the urban industrial heart of South Africa.

The sharpening of working class struggle and capitalist counter-offensive heightens the necessity for a revolutionary Trotskyist party, as the only means of leading the working class to power. Such a party will be built only in irreconcilable opposition to the counter-revolutionary reformist and Stalinist forces.

SPD coalition points need for new leaders

With the West German Bundestag (Parliament) Elections little over a month away, opinion polls predict an overwhelming majority for Schmidt and the Social Democratic Party (SPD).

In Baden-Wurthemburg in March, neither the Christian Democrat-Christian Socialist coalition (CDU/CSU) nor the SPD gained, and it was the 'Greens' (Ecologists) who created the surprises by winning 5.3% of the vote, but this has not turned out to be a trend-setter.

In the North Rhein/Westphalia election in May, the Greens failed to qualify and the SPD gained a landslide victory. It is this Land which is generally seen as the indicator for the 5 October election, since about a third of the population lives there.

War-monger

The election was fought on the basis of Schmidt versus Strauss rather than on the merits of the local candidates. Schmidt's popularity seems to be on the increase, not least because of Strauss's reputation as an extreme right-winger and a war-monger.

Nevertheless, Schmidt is not yet counting his chickens in public. One of his remaining worries must be over the stability of the national coalition between the SPD and the 'liberal capitalist' Free Democratic Party (FDP). In North Rhein/Westphalia the FDP failed to qualify: if they do no better in the national Bundestag elections, the SPD's ruling position would be in jeopardy.

More recently there has been another blow to the SPD/FDP coalition. The metalworkers union, IG Metall, are in dispute with the Mannesmann steel concern over the question of "Co-determination". This stems from a 1951 Act which binds



Schmidt



Strauss

management to accepting an equal number of workers as management on companies' supervisory boards. However a 1976 Act exempted the coal and steel industries from this provision. The determination of the IG Metall to stop management sidestepping the 1951 law has developed into a full scale row, which has remained deadlocked for some time.

Far-reaching

The implications for the SPD/FDP coalition and the October election are far-reaching. About 200 SPD deputies, eager to appear on the side of the workers, have pledged themselves to recall Parliament if co-determination is not enforced at Mannesmann. However, the FDP, predictably enough, has come out against co-determination and supports management's freedom to rationalise workforces at Mannesmann as elsewhere.

Chancellor Schmidt has offered to mediate in the dispute in order to avoid a Parliamentary split between the SPD and FDP. Meanwhile, 30,000 workers have been on strike over the issue—although such a strike is by definition illegal in

West Germany.

Despite these tensions, it still looks unlikely that the SPD/FDP coalition will crack. It gives the FDP political leverage over the ruling party, and it has its uses for Schmidt and the right wing of the SPD, who use the 'necessity' for the SPD/FDP alliance to beat left-wing SPD deputies over the head.

The SPD no more represents the interests of the West German working class than does the Labour Party those of British workers. With the increasing level of militancy in response to the growing economic crisis (80,000 workers on short time, unemployment 3.7% and rising) there will be increasing opposition to right wing social democracy and reformism.

Disillusioned

Workers who last winter accepted low wage settlements on the understanding that there would be no redundancies are reportedly growing disillusioned as jobs are cut and short time working introduced. Under these conditions the need for alternative leadership in the West German labour movement becomes even more urgent.

El Salvador—the war imperialism cannot afford to lose

"The United States could never allow another Nicaragua, even if this meant using the most reprehensible methods".

Zbigniew Brzezinski

El Salvador is at war. It is a war that was long ago declared by both left and right but remains ignored throughout most of the world since it has none of the clamour of the Nicaraguan insurrection, none of the international impact of Cuba or the mass deployment of troops seen in Vietnam.

It seems likely that as the imperialist offensive deepens and the military activity of the left escalates the conflict will acquire at least some of these characteristics but in the shadow of Afghanistan and Iran this bitter struggle has gone unheralded.

Brzezinski has been as good as his word; the cost to the Salvadorean masses is a death rate of 40-50 a day. The death toll this year is over 4,000 and the logistical experts of the local ruling class reckon on 30,000 being 'the optimum kill-rate for pacification', a task they can achieve only with the direction and assistance of the Pentagon.

Battleground

Nicaragua has 'revolutionised the counter-revolution' as did Cuba 20 years ago; reeling under the impact of the overthrow of Somoza and the wave of mass mobilisations in the rest of Central America the imperialists have made a stand and transformed El Salvador into the battleground for the region.

The campaign being fought by the Salvadorean left will be very much harsher than that in Nicaragua, distinct if not in the essence of petty bourgeois radicalism then certainly in terms of the resolve and capacity of the enemy and the international impact.

Defeat for the US in El Salvador will rip apart Central America, threaten the key prize of Mexico and represent a setback to the interests of monopoly capital out of all proportion to the size and apparent significance of this tiny republic.

Deceptive

The marines are, already there, certainly over a hundred and possibly as many as 200, flown in to 'protect the embassy and professionalise the armed forces'.

However the numbers are deceptive (as they were in the early stages of Vietnam) for although they are a formidable intelligence and training force they by no means represent the scope of the imperialist military commitment.

This is more accurately reflected in the rapid supply of \$10.3 millions in military aid—62% of total US military aid to El Salvador from 1950-79, handed over in just six months.

Moreover, the Pentagon has internationalised the war long

1979

Oct. 15. Colonels oust dictator Romero.

Oct. 16. US State Department declares new regime is 'centrist and moderate', offers military aid. Dozens of workers occupying factories killed.

Oct. 18. CP calls for 'popular understanding' with junta; mass organisations (BPR/FAPU/LP-28) denounce coup as a 'ploy'. 195 killed, over 400 wounded by army in two weeks.

November. Mass organisations occupy ministries and embassies and launch selective strikes for wage increases, price controls.

Dec. 27. Rightists group around capitalist organisation ANEP to call for 'vigorous action' against left.

Dec. 31. Civilians in junta demand that it take direct control of the armed forces.

1980

Jan. 3. Army rejects civilian politicians' demand: Social Democrats and Stalinists resign.

Jan. 9. Christian Democrats join junta.

Jan. 10. Guerrillas (FPL/FARN/PCS) and mass organisations (BPR/FAPU/UDN respectively) and LP-28 create Coordinadora Revolucionaria de Masas (CRM).

Jan. 22. CRM demonstration to mark 48th anniversary of 1932 uprising; 250,000 march; 67 killed, 250 wounded.

February. Spate of ministry/embassy occupations by ERP and FARN guerrillas, increased rural actions by FPL.

Feb. 26. CRM publishes Programmatic Platform of Democratic Revolutionary Government.

March 1. Chacon (BPR) and Argueta (LP-28) released after capture by Guardia Nacional.

March 5. 'Moderate' Christian Democrats leave junta in protest at repression.

March 6. State of siege declared.

March 7. Agrarian reform announced; 800 government agronomists strike.

March 8. ERP join CRM; military invasion in Chalatenango.

March 17. 24-hour general strike closes 200 factories; 2 million participate in CRM action.

March 24. Archbishop Romero assassinated.

March 27. Further junta resignations; only extreme right Christian Democrats remain.

March 30. 100 killed, 500 wounded at Romero's funeral.

April. US manoeuvres in Caribbean.

April 4. Formation of Democratic Front of Salvador (FDS) by petty bourgeois groups, unaffiliated unions and bourgeois opposition.

April 18. Formation of Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR) by FDS and CRM—100,000 attend rally.

May 7. Abortive coup by oligarchy (led by Roberto D'Abuison) succeeds in ousting 'reformist' Colonel Majano as army commander; conspirators released; central power bloc fully cohered.

May 14-16. Some 600 people killed by Salvadorean and Honduran troops in Chalatenango department.

May 20. Urban strike movement grows—40,000 out, including doctors and teachers.

June 10. ERP/FARN/FPL/PCS unite military operational commands. Junta and FDR send missions to European governments; FDR receives backing of Second International.

June 24. 48-hour general strike paralyses San Salvador and major cities; over 300 bodies found in university after military attack.

July 10. FARN take over San Miguel, third city, for several hours.

July 30. Massive anti-guerrilla operation around Perquin and Aguilares; 10,000 peasants 'evacuated'; 1,500 troops deployed; army admits heavy casualties. By end of month death toll for 1980 well over 3,000.



National Guard stand over wounded prisoners after the March strike

before the left has.

Alongside the three official wings of the repressive forces—the army, the Guardia Nacional and the Policia de Hacienda—and the right wing vigilantes of ORDEN are to be found the Israeli-trained and armed troops of Guatemala and Honduras.

(Their presence was long suspected and recently confirmed by the discovery of foreign documents and money on the corpses of soldiers wearing Salvadorean uniforms).

The imperialist strategy is that this unholy alliance, which can muster at least 50,000 troops, will avoid the international embarrassment of sending the Rapid Development Force

set up late last year and 'tested' in the 'assault' on the US base at Guantanamo on the coast of Cuba.

As a fall-back the US has formally suggested the use of an intervention force from the Organisation of American States, a call that has so far fallen on deaf ears since even those states that actively back the junta (Venezuela, Colombia and Panama) have no desire to play the role of 'seapoys of the marines'.

The following testimony from a seventy year-old peasant gives an idea of the new 'combined operations' work. The events he relates occurred during the offensive of 13-16 May

during which Salvadorean and Honduran troops slaughtered over 600 people.

"I live in El Jicaro, canton of Las Minas, in the department of Chalatenango. On Tuesday May 13 at around 7 am I had gone down from my hiding place from the guard, the soldiers and ORDEN, and began to sow when I saw an olive-green helicopter flying over the huts.

"Moments later a large contingent of national guards, soldiers and members of ORDEN—I should say around 900—approached . . . we were attacked from all sides, two helicopters fired on us from the air and the soldiers blocked any means of escape.

"The only possibility was to

flee across the River Sumpul to Honduras. In this attack at least 25 people died . . . when I jumped into the water I saw seven little children swallowed up in the strong current . . . Half an hour later the Honduran authorities told us to return to our country by swimming back across the river; there were herded up, kicked and beaten with rifle butts for nearly eight hours.

"At 5 p.m. the oldest, some of the women and children were set free . . . some 25 people remaining in custody. We were 15 minutes into the bush when we heard a loud volley of shots.

"Sure enough, the soldiers had massacred those who remained prisoner".

This barbarism goes under the name of the 'agrarian reform', introduced in March and heralded by the appearance of large numbers of American Institute for Free Labour Development (AIFLD) staff.

These include Roy Prosterman who directed a similar 'Land of the Tiller' pacification programme in the early 1960s—in Vietnam.

Prosterman and his friends have taken over the top two floors of the San Salvador Sheraton Hotel and, armed with hundreds of thousands of dollars and a direct telephone line to the high command, are working in earnest.

It is since the introduction of this 'reform' that the escalation of fighting rose to its present level.

There is precious little, if any, redistribution of land. The ruling oligarchy simply subdivided their estates by formally registering different tracts of land in the names of members of their families, thereby avoiding exceeding the size limits.

In any case 800 government agronomists have been on strike since the campaign began, putting paid to any chance of 'proper' implementation. Large numbers of the fixed-wave walkie-talkies issued to the reform institute have been found in the possession of members of ORDEN who, unsurprisingly, are often taking over that land which is being expropriated.

In recent weeks the tempo of repression has risen still further. In last July large numbers of troops were drafted into the regions around Perquin and Aguilares in what appeared to be an attempt to wipe out a major force of the FPL. However, the army reported many casualties and failed to claim a victory.

The ability of the FARN to take over the city of San Miguel albeit only for a few hours and the remarkable takeover by the ERP of large parts of Morazan province on 14 August suggest a qualitative stepping up of guerrilla actions.

Terrain

These, however, still remain limited by the Salvadorean terrain, which effectively prohibits the holding of liberated zones before the final insurrectionary push, an apparently rigid adherence to the strategy of 'prolonged peoples war', which has had the effect of leaving large sectors of the peasantry vulnerable to reprisal and left thousands of striking workers without clear political objectives or the means of self-defence.

The immediate danger is that the masses, harried with ceaseless repression and lacking concrete examples of success, will become demoralised and withdraw from the struggle.

These tactical and strategic shortcomings do not simply arise from the military position; they relate directly to the politics and programme of the left in El Salvador.

A second article will take up this question in detail and show how the betrayals of the petty bourgeois nationalists in Nicaragua threaten to be repeated in El Salvador.

With all the jingoistic hou-ha surrounding the media coverage of the French fishermen's strike and blockade, the basic issues have been obscured.

Unprecedented solidarity has now closed all the channel, Normandy, Brittany and Mediterranean ports and created a major political crisis for the French government.

The demands of the strikers are straightforward enough: 30 million francs of government aid to the ailing industry; wage rises; an increase in the price of their fish in line with rising costs; and a decrease in their fuel tax.

It is the latter demand which has united the workers on the fishing boats and those who

Solidarity shuts French ports

own their small vessels and scrimp and save to eke out an existence.

What began as a small dispute between the industrial fishermen of Boulogne and their employers has succeeded in unleashing the first major wave of prolonged strike action against the viciously anti-working class Barre government.

The sailors from Etaples in Boulogne were the first to give assistance in blockading the ports. The dockers of the two main unions the CGT and CFDT have decided to unload no more fish as long as the dispute lasts.

The drivers who transport the fish inland, after their employers had railed against the



fishermen for killing their profits, blocked off the approaches to Calais in protest at attempts to break through

the blockade.

And the small farmers near Le Touquet airport threatened

to park their tractors on the runways to stop the extra flights being planned by the English operators.

The fishermen refuse to negotiate local deals. "It is a conflict which can only have a national solution" declared the CFDT steward in front of several thousand people. Everywhere a political solution is called for.

The main slogan on the demonstration in Boulogne was "Down with Le Theule!" Joel Le Theule is the Minister of Transport with responsibility for fisheries. He has tried to keep himself aloof from the dispute as having nothing to do with him!

However it was his proposals to the trawler employers which sparked off the strike wave. He has declared that he is well aware of the deficiencies of the old French vessels in competition with Norwegian, Japanese and Soviet ships. He has offered assistance in return for certain "increases in efficiency".

Several employers of course took this to mean giving them a licence to sack. It was the reduction in hours of work of the crews that provoked the strike in Boulogne.

It is this underlying fear of unemployment and hatred of the government as well as the decisive and bold forms of action taken, which have tapped that well of solidarity within the French working class for those involved in struggle.

Police 'armies' -growth industry

A 12,000 strong army of 'special' police with training in riot control now exists in Britain.

A further 12,000 are now trained in the use of firearms—according to a report from State Research.

Just under half the forces in the country—24 out of 52—had special squads modelled on the Special Patrol Group. The research group also discovered another 28 forces with 'public support units' which are used in industrial disputes and demonstrations.

'Civil defence'

PSUs were set up in 1974, supposedly to act as 'civil defence' after a nuclear war.

In fact 'peacetime training' has revealed that they are trained to create their own holocausts on picket lines.

During the NF march in Leicester in April 1979 20 forces sent their PSUs to make up the 5,000 police contingent.

Nine forces have specialised firearms units and 10% of all police receive firearms training. The issuing of firearms rose by 800% between 1970 and 1979, when firearms were issued on 8,374 occasions.

Even this figure does not allow for protection of VIPs and guarding convoys.

*State Research Bulletin No. 19, 9 Poland Street, London W1. Price 50p.

NUPE MEMBERSHIP: ANOTHER YEAR OLDER AND DEEPER IN DEBT

It is now a year since NUPE members received any information from their national office on how to fight the cuts.

In a circular headed Action Against the Cuts in Public Expenditure last August Alan Fisher and the EC sanctioned the use of working to rule, refusing extra workloads, demonstrations, etc., as 'direct action' to strengthen the position of the negotiators.

On the section headed 'Strike Action', however, he wrote the following.

"In a situation where public expenditure is under severe pressure, extensive and/or prolonged strikes might be counter-productive if, by reducing wage costs, they provide the employers with the savings they are seeking. But circumstances may arise where it is necessary to engage in full scale strike action to demonstrate the Union's determination to safeguard members' interests.

"In such situations the strike action must be carefully organised so that it has the maximum impact and must be conducted within the provisions of the Union's Rules, which require the sanction of the EC."

'Circumstances'

If the circumstances warranting all-out strike action have not arisen in the year since this advice was given, it is difficult to assess just what the circumstances are that Fisher is alluding to.

Obviously the demolition of the school meals service is not one of these 'circumstances', nor the loss of six thousand non-teaching jobs in schools last year. Nor the attack on nursery provision (136 nursery nurses' posts in Nottingham alone!), nor the hospitals cuts (3,000 fewer beds in Greater London), nor the ending of direct works and the wholesale replacement of public employees with private contracts.



Alan Fisher addressing May Day rally two years ago

The list of circumstances that have arisen attacking NUPE members interests and jobs is endless but it is still not enough to qualify for full scale strike action 'to demonstrate the unions' determination to safeguard members' interests'.

So what is the NUPE leadership doing in fighting the Tory attacks?

Whatever it is it's costing them more—they've just asked for a 10p subs increase, telling the membership about it in a charming letter from Alan Fisher which starts:

"Dear Member,
You will know from your own experience in balancing your household budget just how much the cost of living has gone up over the last few years." and ends:

"In the present economic crisis with unemployment and prices rising and the government intent on cutting public services and holding down public employees pay—the union needs to use all of its resources to defend members' interests. Your contribution to the union enables it to do that job.

With best wishes
Yours fraternally
Alan Fisher."

The membership of NUPE have yet to be convinced that subs of even £50 a week each would enable the union leadership to protect members' interests.

Where, after all, does this money go? It's obviously not being drained out of NUPE's coffers by strike pay—with their policy during the low pay strikes for example of selective

one-day strikes which didn't qualify the strikers for a single penny, and a national levy to cover what strike pay was needed.

Glossy posters

Admittedly high wages and pay increases for NUPE full times must take their toll as must producing endless glossy posters as part of the TUC Campaign for Economic and Social Advance but the remaining funds from NUPE's members must be considerable even after NUPE's large administrative costs.

Is it lying there waiting to be used as strike pay 'when the circumstances arise'?

Or is NUPE looking around for projects to spend some of its money on? It seems to have found one in the decision to give £80,000 to Lewisham Council, the borough that houses the NUPE head offices.

And just why have they donated this money, none other

than to establish a social services day nursery—a local authority nursery not state funded but paid for by NUPE! Does this reflect a concern among the NUPE leadership over creating more nursery provision—a concern certainly not reflected in their defence of existing nursery provision as the list of cut nursery schools, classes and staff grows.

Abandoned

There has not been one single attempt by the leadership to organise for their defence and they have abandoned those struggles that have taken place.

When many of the NUPE members are trying to fight the private sector taking over, business sponsorship and charity funding as the state funds are slashed to ribbons, the NUPE leadership steps in and give its own little contribution.

What a precedent—as schools, hospitals, old peoples homes are shut down!

Bidwell fined by defenders of fascists



Bidwell

Ealing Council is the Tory council that insisted that the fascist NF had the right to free speech and a meeting in Southall Town Hall.

This was, of course, the meeting that led to the police riot in which Blair Peach was murdered.

Fined

After unsuccessfully trying to get a trade union rally in Southall Park banned in the High Courts the council has now succeeded in getting Labour MP for Southall Syd Bidwell and three trade union leaders fined for addressing it.

This is despite the fact that both the police and the superintendent of parks had given verbal permission for the rally.

The council refused permission only five days before the meeting and long after it had been widely advertised.

The four were fined £40 each and Bidwell is refusing to pay his fine although he expects it to be paid for him.

Bidwell, George Guy of the TUC General Council, Alex Ferry of the CSEU and Roger Butler of the AUEW spoke to the meeting on May 14 as part of the TUC's Day of Action. They were deemed to have been in breach of a local by-law that banned anything but religious meetings in the park.

Court actions

At a time when they are making some of the most savage cuts in the country the council is prepared to spend tens of thousands of pounds on court actions to prevent labour movement meetings.

The NF obviously has more right to free speech than trade unionists in the eyes of these Tory "democrats".

NUPE BACKS OCCUPATION

NUPE has given official backing to an occupation!

Laundry workers at the Royal Gwent Hospital in South Wales are occupying the former linen room in the hospital grounds. They are protesting that the new linen room, in the hospital basement is hot and dark.



Police defend "free speech" for fascists

WOMEN MUST WAIT-TUC Election inquiry

The General Council of the TUC has shown itself as ready as ever to resist women's rights.

The Women's TUC had called for seven seats for women on the General Council of the TUC against the two at present, to reflect the rapid growth in women trade union members.

After due consideration and bearing in mind their desire to hang on to their own seats a bit longer the General Council has agreed to five women's seats—and a delay until 1981 before this is implemented.

An inquiry has been called into the Boiler-makers' Presidential elections.

The poll result was announced as a victory by 2,034 to 1,903 votes for Jimmy Murray over Broad Left candidate Barry Williams.

Murray, chairman of the General Council was confident of winning by a big majority and the narrow vote came as a big surprise to him.

But now the executive has postponed announcing the result while it investigates allegations of voting irregularities.

The allegations, if proven, are thought to affect the result.

Don't spoil the show!

Dear Socialist Press,
I think that the film reviews in the paper are often interesting and can provide a bit of light relief from the more "heavy" articles in the paper. There is, however, one complaint I feel moved to make about them.

In at least two recent reviews, 'Zombies' and 'The Empire Strikes Back' your reviewers have given away the endings of the film. Comrade Eggleton actually seemed to take a perverse pleasure in doing

so. Having seen 'Zombies' after reading Comrade Bush's review I can only say it considerably lessened the tension in parts of the film knowing exactly which of our heroes were going to survive to the end.

I hope future reviewers will bear this point in mind and attempt to give us a review of the film without revealing everything that happens in it.

Yours fraternally
Louis B. Mayer

CASTLEREAGH FROM THE INSIDE!

We reprint here an account by Francis Barry of his arrest, detention and interrogation following his participation in an open-air meeting called by the IRSP in Belfast.

On the evening of Friday August 8 I attended an open air Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP) meeting on political status in the Markets area of Belfast.

I was asked to address the meeting (as someone who had just come from Britain for the weekend).

It soon became clear that the army intended to keep a close watch. They drove around in a jeep taking photographs. I spoke on developments in Britain; the fate of Tameside and Edinburgh Trades Councils and rank and file pressure in the Labour Party for a discussion on Ireland.

In conclusion I expressed solidarity for the struggle of the Irish people against the British government.

Immediately after the meeting our car was stopped by the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). Having been questioned, three of us, two IRSP comrades and I, were arrested by the 'peace keeping' British army.

We were taken to the inappropriately named Grand Central Hotel Barracks (the building was an hotel before its purchase by the army). I was forcibly photographed and had details such as the colour of my eyes, and my weight noted. I was refused a solicitor or the right to make a telephone call.

Short lived

At 10.15 p.m. I was released. My satisfaction was however short lived. I was immediately rearrested with the other two comrades under Section II of the Emergency Provision Act and taken to Castlereagh. We were detained here from 10.15 Friday night to 12.30 p.m. on Monday afternoon. In protest against my detention I went on hunger strike.

The RUC took my personal possessions such as watch and money and then locked me in a



Northern Ireland marchers protest against another state frame-up earlier this month

small grey cell. It had no windows, two small grills which allowed in little or no air, a bed and chair. The bed was supplied with paper sheets and pillow cases.

As no sunlight entered the cell it was impossible to judge the time accurately.

In these circumstances I was held in solitary confinement, with absolutely no contact with other prisoners throughout my stay. When asked about exercise I was told that I could exercise in my cell.

Even the writing on the walls seemed designed to add to one's psychological disorientation and feeling of isolation. An initial comment was followed by one from the same prisoner dated many months later. All this compounded my dejection and sense of helplessness. Time passed extremely slowly.

In all I was interviewed five times. During the interrogations plain clothed guardians of the peace made numerous threats.

One interviewer told me that he could give evidence stating

that I had verbally admitted membership of the INLA and could have me put away in Long Kesh for six months on remand. I was told that I would be taken into the corridor where there were no cameras, and be beaten. (One of the results of the Bennett Report was the fitting of cameras in all interrogation rooms).

I was threatened with being placed in a loyalist area on my release where I was informed I would be torn apart limb by limb.

Threats were also made about my return to Britain. One warning was that I would be detained for seven days and then deported to Southern Ireland (my place of origin).

The interviewer told me he would be waiting for me when I got off the boat and would get me during the seven days.

Others concentrated on my fate when I returned to Colchester. My name and other details would be passed to squaddies in this garrison town. It was also threatened that my

landlord and any future employer would be informed of my activities.

During the course of my detention I was also fingerprinted and again photographed.

I was repeatedly questioned about membership of left organisations in Britain and association with republican organisations. Questions were also asked about my attitude to the Northern Ireland statelet and the RUC.

The point was repeatedly made that my arrest and subsequent detention was due not to my presence in the six counties but to my association with republican figures and my expression of solidarity with the struggle of the Irish people.

Several things flow from the experience of others who were harassed during their visit to the six counties (e.g. those who appeared in court) and my own.

Unnecessary

It is important that all who travel to Northern Ireland be well versed in their legal rights. They should know what questions they are obliged to answer and those they may refuse, how long they may be detained for, and at what stage they are entitled to see a solicitor. Lack of such information can result in unnecessary information being given away and unnecessary physiological distress.

Discussion with the inhabitants of West Belfast makes it clear that the harassment meted out to some of us in Belfast was merely a very small taste of the manner in which the army continually treats the people of Ireland. Our experience must therefore strengthen our resolve to build an anti-imperialist movement in Britain committed to the immediate withdrawal of troops from Ireland.

Francis Barry
16.8.80

"Police knew NF route"

Confirmation that the police knew the National Front march was to take place in Nuneaton while they were being banned in five other towns has come from the fascists themselves.

Martin Webster, national activities organiser for the NF, said that plans had been drawn up in advance and route maps sent out to fascists in other parts of the country.

Labour MP for Nuneaton, Leslie Huckfield—who supports legal bans as a solution to fascist marches—has written to the Chief Constable of the West Midlands Police demanding an explanation.

About 2,000 police turned up in Nuneaton to protect the march and succeeded in keeping at bay those anti-fascists who managed to get past police checks to try and stop it.

Police roadblocks outside Leamington—where the anti-fascists had gathered—and outside Nuneaton, suggest a carefully planned police operation for which they had received adequate notice of the fascists' real plans.

Huckfield said: "I don't believe they were all touring round in coaches waiting to find out where it would take place".

The net result of the ban has been to prevent labour movement marches in five towns while permitting the fascists to march—a fact now being ignored by lefts and the Anti-Nazi League who called for the ban.

The Agony and the Ecstasy

PRESS GANG



'Callous exploitation' by Trotskyists HOW MOLES RIPPED OFF A UNION

We'll strike for year'

By DAVID SHEARS in Bonn

DOLAND'S strikers refused to be intimidated yesterday by the detention of prominent dissidents in Warsaw the previous night. Far from checking the t-in stoppages which have brought the nation to the brink of chaos, the security crackdown had the opposite effect.

"The paper (Glos Szczecinski) appealed to the strikers to think of children about to start a new school term and of families needing food, and to permit that such basic foods were satisfied."

"Television presented only some 'ordinary workers' speaking about the losses caused by the strikes in the harbours".

Daily Telegraph "A union leader bitterly attacked the left wing Socialist Workers Party yesterday for 'callous exploitation' of an industrial dispute".

Daily Mail

The Polish press has been slow off the mark but is learning fast. This business of ignoring strikes is elementary first grade stuff now only used by our glorious national press as a last resort.

Western technology is however fast developing the Polish hacks. Teams of 'advisers' have been airlifted into strike-bound areas ostensibly to bring back reports of the great upheaval.

Secretly they are giving night classes to Polish journalists.

It cannot be long before the Polish press begin to feature appeals from wives and mothers for the strike to finish.

Meanwhile the Polish strikers are still finding favour in reports sent back to Britain. When was the last time the Daily Telegraph reported a strike this way?

"Poland's strikers refused to be intimidated yesterday . . . Despite pouring rain, hundreds of strikers cheered every announcement that yet another industrial enterprise had downed tools".

Without a blush the same issues of these papers are recording with pleasure the fact that the French navy was sent to break the fishermen's blockade at Fos-sur-Mer and the savage attack of CPSA General Secretary, Ken Thomas.

What in Poland is heroic action, in Britain is 'callous exploitation' by Trotskyists'. Meanwhile the Polish press brushes the dirt off its 'extremists' and 'minority of trouble makers' headlines. The tools of repression are truly international.

While the hypocrisy of the British press is being widely noted by the working class, its

true positions on the Polish strikes are only just beginning to emerge.

While the news pages continue to praise the strikers (though with less enthusiasm than they praise the dissidents) the editorial columns have taken a decidedly luke warm line.

The Telegraph was the first to crack, warning the strikers of the dangers of not modifying their demands. The Daily Mail followed, stressing the need for reform. The Observer has called for increased aid for Poland as has the right wing Now magazine and aid of course means taking the side of the Polish bureaucracy against the strikers.

The Telegraph was the most honest advising its readers that what was required was enough change to embarrass the Soviet Union but not enough to destabilise Poland.

The truth is known in Fleet Street that pictures of the Pope notwithstanding, there is nothing for them in a determined move to overthrow the bureaucracy in Poland. It is not just a question of loans.

It is those on the streets of Brixton, Reading and picket lines throughout the world who take heart from the Polish strikes—not the poisonous witch-hunters of the Mail and the Telegraph.

Women, youth bear brunt THE DISCIPLINARY MASS UNEMPLOYMENT

About six workers out of every hundred in the main capitalist countries are unemployed.

That adds up to more than 20 million workers without jobs in all the countries which are members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

It is not only the staggering size of this figure which illustrates the profound and deepening problems of the capitalist economies, but also the frightening speed with which the figure has grown and continues to grow with no prospects of any respite.

The figures in Table 1 show that the average rate of unemployment is now double what it was during the closing years of the post-war capitalist boom in the OECD countries as a whole.

In some of the countries in that list, unemployment has grown much faster than in others.

Underestimate

In France it has tripled, in Germany quadrupled and in Spain increased by six times in the last decade.

Everywhere that rate of increase is getting faster day by day.

And the faster the number grows, the more the official figures underestimate the true numbers involved.

One major reason for this underestimation is that as unemployment grows, married women and others who are not entitled to receive unemployment benefit do not bother to register as unemployed.

They don't therefore appear in the official statistics, though they are no less unemployed for that.

Even according to the official statistics, the OECD estimates that all unemployment figures should be increased by 30% to take account of this one fact.

But especially in some of the OECD countries which have had the lowest unemployment figures, there is another very important reason for understatement.

That is the existence of millions of immigrant workers on temporary contracts from countries such as Yugoslavia, Turkey, Portugal, Spain and Algeria.

"Guest workers"

In countries like France and West Germany, the growth of unemployment very often falls most heavily initially on these "guest workers".

Instead of signing on at unemployment exchanges and so appearing in the official unemployment figures, they are put on the first train back to their own country to swell the unemployment figures there.

This is one of the reasons why the increase in registered unemployment has been so particularly rapid in countries like Spain and Portugal.

Another reason why the unemployment figures underestimate the depth of the problems of capitalism is the existence of increasing millions of workers on short time, which amounts to a disguised form of unemployment.

Last month in Britain for example, the official figures



Thatcher

showed about 4% of workers on short time, bringing the total unemployed and on short time to over 10%.

Finally the unemployment figures understate the problem because as most of the OECD countries have in the last few years taken measures, such as increasing the school leaving age, in the absence of which the unemployment figures would be even higher.

Even when all these allowances are made, the figures in Table 1 are still only broad averages.

Regional levels

And a single average figure for national unemployment can be a very bad guide to the exact form which unemployment is taking and the social and political effects which it has.

The first thing that the national averages conceal is differences in the regional levels of unemployment. In Table 2 for instance, the British national unemployment figure of a bit more than 5% is broken down into different regions.

The South East, in spite of the rapid increase in unemployment even in that region, still has an overall unemployment rate only a little over half the national average, whereas in Northern Ireland the figure is around 12%—double the British national average. Of course even that figure is an average and to that extent potentially misleading.

In Northern Ireland there are towns and areas where the unemployment figure is much more than 12%—in exceptional cases rising to about 50%.

Evidence suggests that the highest rates are in the Catholic areas.

Obviously the political implications of unemployment which is unequally distributed in this way, are very different from the political implications of having the same national average level in all towns and districts.

Women

The jobless situation in Northern Ireland illustrates a principle which applies in different ways throughout the capitalist world—that it is the sections of the population which are most socially disadvantaged and discriminated against who suffer disproportionately also from unemployment.

This applies universally in the case of women. Here is one case where the current evolution of the capitalist economies are very different from what was often predicted by Marx in the nineteenth century.



Joseph

Marx saw the capitalists' pursuit of profitability leading increasingly with the mechanisation of production tasks to the employment of women and children—at lower wage levels—at the expense of adult male workers.

That indeed is what happened in many periods of nineteenth century capitalist development.

Today, however, as the economic crisis of capitalism leads to more mass unemployment it is women and youth everywhere who are either thrown out of work first, or never have the opportunity to get a job in the first place.

The effect of the growth of women's unemployment is not only to reduce the incomes and standard of living of them and their families, if they are members of families, but also it is to force women out of productive social employment back into the isolation and dependence of the home and the family.

This leads individually to all kinds of demoralisation and personal oppression and collectively, as the historical evidence of the 1930s proves, it can be the breeding ground of reactionary political ideologies.

Another section of the population universally hit in a disproportionate way by the present growth of mass unemployment is the oppressed racial minorities.

Youth

Probably the clearest case of this is that of the USA.

While the average level of unemployment in the USA as a whole is 6% (about the international capitalist average), the rate among urban blacks in cities like Miami or Detroit is vastly greater than this.

Specific surveys have on many occasions shown figures in excess of 25%.

Breaking down the average even further, the levels of unemployment among black urban youth in the USA (and indeed also in Britain) are commonly well in excess of 50%.

Facts such as these must have a great deal to do with the explanation of recent events like the black uprisings in Miami.

Those events reflect not only the exceptionally oppressed economic condition of racial minorities but also they illustrate a feature of the new mass unemployment which is even more universal than that—namely the position of youth.

The universal nature of the economic oppression of youth in the present capitalist crisis is shown by the fact that young people take to the streets spontaneously to protest against



Unemployed march crosses Westminster

their position and against capitalist police repression not only in Miami and in Bristol and in Soweto and Capetown, but also in the areas where the capitalists thought that they had created the very paradise of the free market economy—in Zurich in Switzerland.

Summary

Because the problem of youth unemployment in the advanced capitalist countries has become so acute in the last few years, the OECD economists have collected a large amount of special statistics about it.

There is a summary of their results in Tables 3 and 4. If these are compared with the figures in Table 1 (the national rates of unemployment for all workers) it is easy to see that almost everywhere the rate of youth unemployment (age 15-24) is at least twice as high as the national average.

It is also easy to see from Table 3 that the problem of youth unemployment is growing even faster than unemployment in general.

And in countries such as Italy and Spain, the level of youth unemployment is now so high that it constitutes a major social crisis by itself.

As always it is possible to break down these figures even further to show the way in which even among youth, unem-

ployment has a disproportionate effect on some groups.

The difference between male and female unemployment is one of the most striking.

Table 4 shows that in every country for which figures are available, teenage women are worse hit than men.

In France, for instance, 14 out of every hundred teenage men were unemployed; for women the figure is a staggering 42 in every 100.

To summarise all the complex statistics, it could be said that for each worker in the main capitalist countries, there is today about a one-in-sixteen chance that he or she is unemployed.

Zero

But for a female youth, a member of a racial minority, living in an economically backward or deprived area, the chances of getting a job of any kind have in the last few years been reduced to almost zero.

The new mass unemployment, I argued in last week's *Socialist Press*, is the necessary result of the efforts by the capitalist class to recreate, at the expense of the working class, the conditions in which profitable capitalist accumulation is once again possible!

But that does not mean that the creation of mass unemployment is a simple or straightforward route for the capitalist

class from crisis to renewed profitability.

In fact, the growth of unemployment both expresses and leads to important contradictions in the working of the capitalist economy.

Marx pointed out that the appropriation of surplus value by the capitalist class—the process by which they made profits, the lifeblood of their survival—was a unity of two different processes. These are the production and realisation of surplus value.

Surplus value is produced in the factory by workers making commodities containing more value than the commodities (or money equivalent) which they receive in wages.

But that surplus value remains potential until it is made real (realised) by being sold at the pre-supposed price on the market.

Only then has the capitalist retrieved the money with which s/he started out a production cycle and the additional profit which represents her/his realised surplus value.

Many different and complex conditions have to be met for this surplus value to be produced and realised in the capitalist economy.

Marx's work, unlike that of previous political economists, showed how the conditions which were necessary for

of the slump WHIP OF ENT

Part two of a three part series
by Bob Sutcliffe



ter Bridge, London in 1933

surplus value to be produced were not the same as those necessary for it to be realised.

In fact, sometimes the conditions for one were in direct contradiction to the conditions for the other.

This contradiction was very central to Marx's explanation of capitalist crises and it is just as relevant in helping to explain the economic crisis that exists today and the dilemmas of the capitalist class in dealing with it.

Beneficial

As capitalists attempt to recreate better conditions for the production of surplus value they drive "surplus" workers out of the production process into unemployment.

This may help their existing employers to obtain a higher level of productivity from the remaining workers.

Even when the unemployment results from the closure of bankrupt firms, this may be beneficial to the productivity of other firms because competition in the market is reduced.

But at the same time an unemployed worker is a worker without wages and hence the growth of unemployment is at the same time a decline in the demand for many products which the capitalists produce.

So steps taken by capitalists, or forced upon them, which assist some of them in

producing surplus value, increasing the exploitation of their labour force which may also help their competitive situation, at the same time sworsens the conditions for the realisation of that surplus value by reducing the level of demand in the market

The same contradiction (between the production and realisation of surplus value) shows up in relation to state expenditure.

All capitalist governments, especially the British Tories, are at present making an effort to reduce the level of government spending and so the huge size of government deficits.

Their objective is to drive down the real standard of living of the working class and thereby remove some of the burdens (the finance of the social services) which are at present a drain on the surplus value available to the capitalists to appropriate for themselves.

Also the public spending cuts, by creating more unemployment, is intended to contribute to the policy of dividing the working class and weaken its bargaining strength in wages struggles.

The contradictory aspect of this policy however, is that cuts in public spending reduce the level of demand for the goods and services produced by capitalists and so create big problems for sections of the capitalist class itself, especially those directly dependent on state spending (e.g. large sections of the construction industry) and many of these sections of capital are being driven into bankruptcy.

In all capitalist states this contradiction creates both conflicts between different sections of the capitalist class, between those who expect indirectly to gain and those who directly lose from the public expenditure cuts.

These conflicts, along with fear of the working class, are at the root of the hesitation, uncertainty, confusion and "U-turns" which characterise the policies of so many capitalist governments.

It is so far still the special feature of the Thatcher government that it maintains a ruthlessness towards the vulnerable sections of its own class which other weaker capitalist governments have not been able to match.

But even if this cannibalistic frame of mind is maintained, Thatcher still faces some major policy contradictions in relation to public expenditure and unemployment.

In the first place the policy of cutting public spending on services does not necessarily cut public spending at all.

What Thatcher is now finding is that much of the amount which has been cut from the social services, is having to be paid out under existing legislation to the rapidly growing number of unemployed.

Each increase in unemployment involves more government spending on unemployment benefit and social security, on the administration of the service and a cut in the government revenue from direct and indirect taxes.

Although the government is extremely unwilling to admit these figures in public, its economic experts recognise that every increase of 100,000 at the present time in the level of unemployment worsens the public sector deficit by £500 million.

That means that of the present government deficit of about £8½ billion a year forecast for 1980-81, £5 billion results from the increase in unemployment which has taken place since 1973.

Of course the Thatcher government would still prefer to pay money to the unemployed, who can serve as a drag to labour's bargaining strength in the labour market, rather than spend the same amount of money on employing workers to produce useful social services.

Nonetheless, this is a real contradiction for the Tories, both from the point of view of fulfilling their public spending plans and also from insuring that mass unemployment has

the maximum possible weakening effect on the bargaining strength of labour.

Thatcher needs in a hurry to reduce unemployment benefit and social security payments to something even closer to real starvation levels than they are at the present time.

The government's refusal to increase benefit levels in line with inflation is a first step along that road.

This, however, can only intensify the other-political-contradiction which is created by Thatcher's mass unemployment policies.

That is the danger that the deliberate creation of mass unemployment and the driving down of the living standards of the unemployed to starvation levels will provoke a political reaction which will threaten the life not only of Thatcher's government but of the whole capitalist system which it is her overwhelming aim to rescue.

A further part of Thatcher's plan to make the unemployed as dead a weight as possible around the neck of the employed working class are the

increasingly explicit plans of herself and leading ministers to introduce some scheme of forced labour for the unemployed.

When these schemes were first publicly discussed a few weeks ago one of her ministers, Lord Gowrie, in his anxiety to make schemes of forced labour sound more socially palatable, by accident tripped over an important truth.

Ridiculous

He noted how ridiculous it seemed that there were so many obviously unfulfilled social needs while nearly 2 million people were unemployed.

No doubt ministers have been advised in future to steer clear of such unintentional truths.

Lord Gowrie's pathetic life, like that of other Tory ministers, has been devoted to the preservation of a system which is incapable of using the human resources available to it to fulfill social needs, since their sole function for capitalism is the creation of profits.

Nonetheless the fact remains

that Thatcher was not elected explicitly in order to create mass unemployment and it is a source of some political embarrassment to Tory ministers that the veil has had to be thrown off so quickly.

But no matter what they say there is no chance at all that the Tory government will introduce schemes designed to reduce unemployment as a primary objective.

The five enterprise zones which have recently been announced, in which capitalists will be able to operate with an absence of restriction and control which would have been the envy even of their early nineteenth century ancestors, are in fact a significant part of the Tory government plan to recreate the conditions of profitability by driving down the living standard of workers and robbing them of their historic democratic gains.

But the universal horror over the level of mass unemployment permits Thatcher to present these plans for greater exploitation in the guise of measures to alleviate unemployment.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 15-24

	1960	1970	1980
UNITED STATES	10.0	9.9	11.2
JAPAN	1.4	2.0	3.6
WEST GERMANY	0.7	1.0	3.8
FRANCE	4.2	5.6	13.3
BRITAIN	-	2.9	11.9
ITALY	3.1	9.7	24.6
SPAIN	-	2.4	22.8

Table 3

UNEMPLOYMENT OF YOUTH AGED 15-17

	1970	Males 1979	1970	Females 1979
USA	11	15	14	17
W. Germany	0.5	2	0.5	5
France	4	14	8	42
Italy	12	25	11	39
UK	4	18	2	19

Table 4

UNEMPLOYMENT IN CAPITALIST COUNTRIES		
	Average %	
	1964-73	1980
USA	4.4	6.0
JAPAN	1.2	1.8
WEST GERMANY	0.7	2.8
FRANCE	2.2	6.0
BRITAIN	3.1	6.0
ITALY	5.5	7.8
SPAIN	1.8	10.9
Total OECD	3.0	5.2

Table 1

REGIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT IN BRITAIN (May 1980)	
	%
Great Britain	6.1
South-East	3.9
East Anglia	4.9
South-West	5.7
West Midlands	6.2
East Midlands	5.3
Yorkshire and Humberside	6.4
North-West	7.9
North	9.3
Wales	8.8
Scotland	8.7
Northern Ireland	11.8

Table 2



Corby families campaign unsuccessfully against closure

BEYOND FRAGMENTS...

THE FRAGMENTS



On Saturday August 30, there is to be a one-day conference in Leeds "to go Beyond the Fragments". In advance of this Socialist Press is publishing two reviews of the book which has sold nearly 10,000 copies, and formed a major topic of discussion on the left. The first was published last week. The second of these reviews, by Mary Wilson, appears here.

The essays in *Beyond the Fragments* are essentially concerned with the organisational problems of uniting the numerous, fragmented left groups in Britain into a coordinated anti-capitalist campaign.

The authors believe that the differences which distinguish left groups are not so great that they cannot work together. At the moment their resources and individual strengths remain ineffective because of their isolation.

Wainwright's introduction quite correctly recognises that different forms of oppression—oppression of women, of blacks, of workers—are interconnected. Each of these oppressed groups is in confrontation with the state, which directly or indirectly maintains their subordination.

In response to this, however, she argues that there are two immediate problems to be resolved.

"Common programme"

"One problem is that of drawing up a common programme of political and social change meeting the needs of all oppressed groups and arguing for it among each group.

"The other problem is that of gathering together all the different sources of strength, uniting the social power of the community with the industrial power of those in production and pitting this popular power against the existing state." (p.4)

This immediately points to some of the fundamental weaknesses of the *Beyond the Fragments* programme.

The authors are not so naive as to imagine that there are not important differences of aim, programme and tactics between many left groups.

Federal structure

However they do not appear to acknowledge that this fact in any way precludes the unification of the left. It is quite acceptable in their view to unite on a minimal programme.

"In organisational terms this could imply some sort of federal structure which provides a framework for united action following from the fundamental principles on which revolutionaries could agree, for collective discussion of our differing experiences and traditions, and autonomy to take initiatives when tactical disagreements keep us apart." (p.6)

Thus, far from being democratic centralist, this new organisation, it is proposed, will guarantee to each member group the right to act autonomously.

Presumably in some instances this would mean federated groups taking contradictory positions and action for the disagreements between left groups are not merely tactical. They stem from a fundamentally different orientation towards such basic mass organisations as the social democratic parties, the trade unions, and towards international groupings.

Propaganda

The "fundamental principles on which revolutionaries could agree" would necessarily be extremely broad in character and few in number.

But there is little possibility that the federation floated in *Beyond the Fragments* would be faced with the spectacle of its members fighting on different sides of barricades—because none of the campaigns envisaged go beyond the level of propaganda.

The authors specifically criticise those socialist organisations in the Labour Party and

"Leninist parties" on the grounds that:

"both are organised in ways more appropriate to seizing power—governmental power and state power respectively—than to the necessary preliminaries of raising and extending socialist consciousness and grass root organisation among the majority of working people." (p.2)

For Rowbotham and Co., any programme to confront the state is, at the moment, premature. Such a stage would only emerge when the working class and oppressed groups:

"have developed a level of consciousness, sense of purpose and degree of self confidence to re-make society. The purpose of socialist organisation now should be to develop that consciousness, together with a vision of an alternative society." (p.18)

Swapping ideas

Then, at some indefinite time in the future, when everyone is aware of the need for socialism, we can begin to accomplish our plan for an alternative society. Until then, the task is simply one of swapping ideas:

"exchanging the understandings arrived at by different movements—industrial militants, for example, contributing their sharp sense of the material sources of working class power, that flows from a detailed knowledge of how production is organised, or feminists challenging the competitive ego-tripping and ego-trampling arrogance which still erodes the collective strength and democracy of many trade union and socialist organisations... a forum for political debate and discussion through which the truths and weaknesses of different traditions can be sifted and tested in relation to the contemporary problems." (p.12)

It is hard to see how participants in the open-ended discussion would in any way come into conflict with the labour movement bureaucracy or break away potential revolutionaries from the politics of reformism—the main barrier to a mass anti-capitalist movement.

Consciousness-raising

But having discovered that the route to left unity is through renouncing practical struggle in favour of propagandism, then the demand that the left should "learn from the insights of the Women's Liberation Movement" follows on naturally.

The WLM is the prime example of a broad-based propaganda organisation—one which has developed the notion of "consciousness-raising" as a strategy.

The WLM has also grouped around itself a whole series of 'organisational structures'—regional networks, women's centres, conferences, publishing groups, theatre groups, folk and rock bands, film collectives, trade union caucuses, food co-ops...

That the WLM is also predominantly middle class, displays a huge political disparity between one town and the next, and achieves few tangible results, are of course, not regarded as valid criticisms!

But while the WLM and propagandist left groups

RESISTANCE ★

BEYOND THE FRAGMENTS

Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright

THE NEW LINK

FOR LABOUR & DEMOCRACY

AGAINST

continue their efforts to convince people, the capitalist class is proceeding to launch a wholesale attack on the rights and living standards of the working class—mass sackings and closures; public spending cuts; anti-union laws; and witch hunts and victimisations of militants.

The propagandist authors of *Beyond the Fragments* take no account of the fact that their fight to "raise consciousness" cannot take place in a static situation, but in the midst of an escalating economic and political crisis.

Try as they might, no oppressed group can rest content with simply attempting in today's conditions to change the world through changing

people's ideas. As Marx wrote 150 years ago, it is not enough: "merely to produce correct consciousness of an existing fact; for the real communist it is a question of overthrowing the existing state of things" (C.W. Vol 5 p.58)

Since Rowbotham and Co. apparently doubt even this basic principle, it is hard to see how they claim to be Marxists at all.

But *Beyond the Fragments* goes beyond this fundamental error, and overlooks the fact that by the very act of engaging in a practical struggle against the Tory offensive and fighting for principled demands, revolutionaries are at the same time "doing propaganda work".

Class consciousness, and

awareness of an alternative society is best developed in the material conflict with the existing social order—whether this be a unionisation dispute, a fight against redundancies, or a campaign to save a threatened hospital.

Crucial to this is the Trotskyist Transitional Programme which contains a system of demands that are both immediately relevant to today's struggle of the working class, and also point the way towards the wresting of power from the capitalists, and the establishment of workers management of a socialist economy.

The Transitional Programme thus provides a bridge between today's consciousness of the

masses and the socialist consciousness that is necessary for the mass mobilisation of workers against the capitalist system.

Thus the fight to open the books of industry, or to achieve a sliding scale of wages to protect against inflation, offer a means of both raising consciousness and advancing workers' struggles.

When Lynne Segal argues, with her fellow contributors, that "our social relations must now reflect or 'prefigure' the social relations we want to create after the revolution" (p.161), she too shows a failure to grasp the significance of the Trotskyist programme.

The transitional demands—spelling out for instance the need for elected factory committees to assert workers' control over production, and for broad-based councils of action or soviets to mobilise the masses in opposition to the bourgeois state—point precisely to the kind of organisation needed after the revolution.

"Undemocratic"

Such demands combine propaganda for socialism, with agitation and practical action against today's capitalist offensive.

It is for this reason that the narrow propagandist limits imposed upon revolutionary activity by the *Beyond the Fragments* team must be rejected.

But their call for unity on a minimal political basis is combined with their rejection of "hierarchy", leaders and centralism as "undemocratic".

In this they echo the WLM, which regards these as means whereby individuals can gain positions of power over others even within a socialist organisation.

Obviously there is more need for centralised control in an organisation engaged in practical struggles than in the one envisaged by the *Beyond the Fragments* authors, dedicated to simply an exchange of ideas.

Answerable

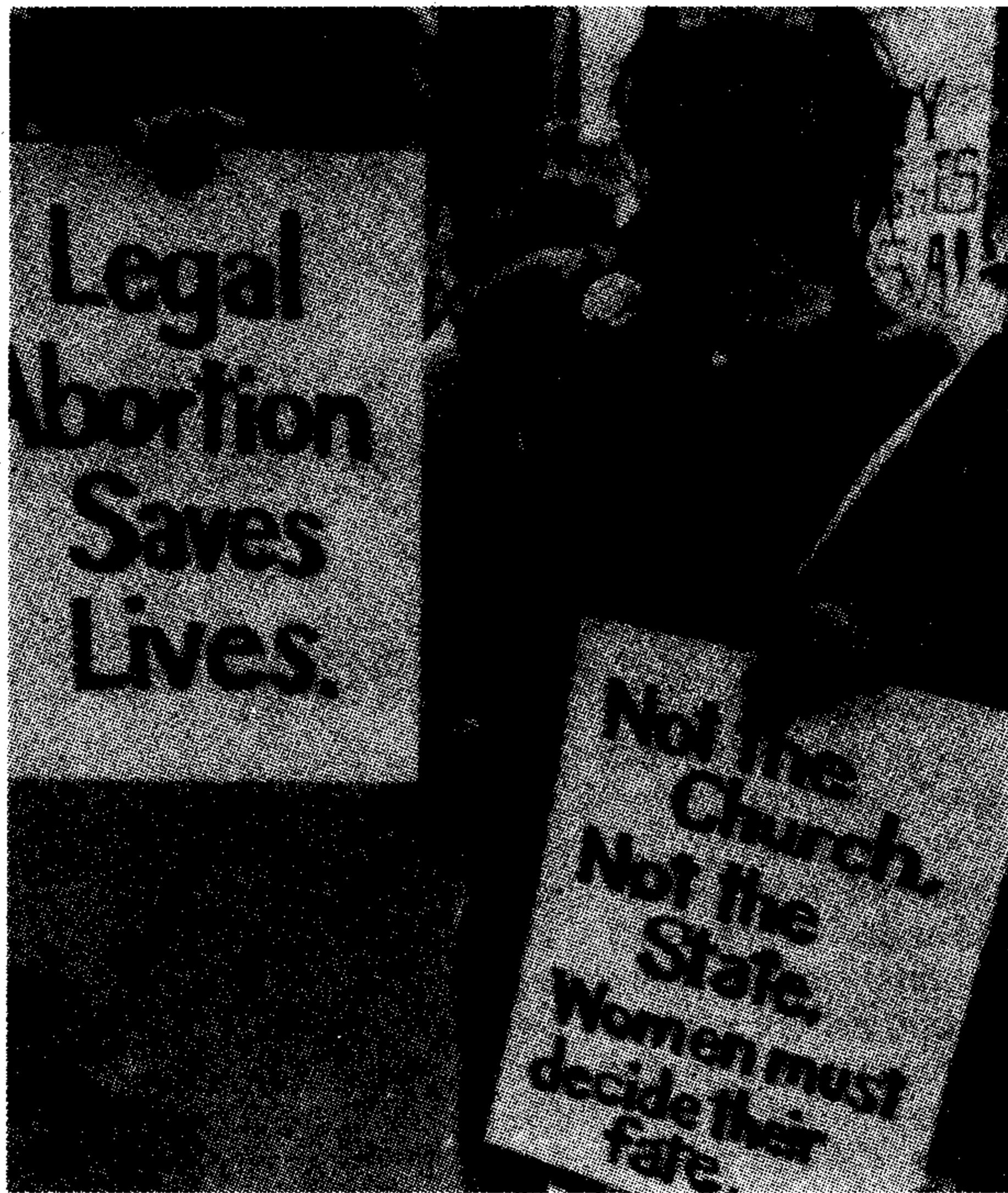
If a revolutionary party is to be built on a basis to lead the working class in struggle against the labour movement bureaucracy and the machinery of the capitalist state, it is essential that it have a clear and united programme and a central decision-making body to make day-to-day decisions which need to be acted upon immediately and in coordinated fashion.

What is of course crucial in this is that this central leadership is made answerable to the membership, and denied the scope to erect itself as a 'hierarchy'.

Equally it is important that the elected leadership act in accordance with programme and policies democratically arrived at by the broadest possible involvement of the membership.

Obviously there will almost always be a minority who dissent from particular policies. But if an organisation is to operate effectively minorities must agree to be bound by majority decisions while retaining their political right to disagree within the movement.

In other words the Leninist method of democratic centralism is of vital importance to such an organisation. It is



Rowbotham paints a caricature of:

"Trotskyism's emphasis on the 'analysis' of an unfolding objective crisis suggest[s] the professional revolutionary going in, extracting the salient bits of reality, and fashioning the programme accordingly."

But all this shows is Rowbotham's refusal to deal seriously with the question of just how revolutionaries are to understand and intervene in the real world. She reduces the discussion to an infantile level.

How indeed can one tell which are the "salient bits" of reality? Or, if the whole exercise of analysis is impossible, how do you decide how to respond to events? While deriding the method of Marxism, Rowbotham offers nothing in its place.

Ignorance

Of course there are, as Rowbotham says, times when:

"It is important to be able to say 'I don't know' and 'Nobody knows, we need to find out' without being dismissed as stupid."

At the same time it is necessary to establish a scientific means of finding out, rather than simply glorifying a state of ignorance.

Equally, Marxists must admit that they have no monopoly over theory: most left groups are for instance indebted in some respect to the WLM for their recognition of the reality of sexual oppression.

One concept which Rowbotham takes up from the WLM is the need to recognise that "the personal is political", and that personal and cultural needs are no less important than political and workplace demands.

"Pyramid"

She claims that: "Left organisations, particularly since the Bolsheviks, have assumed a kind of pyramid of levels of activity. Near the top are struggles for political power and conflict at the workplace. Community struggles follow, traditionally seen mainly as the housing question and tenants' movements. After them education, welfare and cultural issues may be considered with an optional cluster of sexual politics, ecology and whatnot, under a rather dusty heading of 'quality of life'". (p.110)

Here again Rowbotham's description of Trotskyist activity is no more than a caricature.

Dangers

She herself admits that there are dangers in the slogan "personal is political"—that it can become a justification for ignoring broader political issues.

But on the issue of priorities in political work, the distinction is between on the one hand a broad-based campaign for "liberation" and the search for reforms to transform personal relations within the existing system, or on the other hand a perspective for the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist state.

The main reason why Trotskyists focus on political and workplace activities is because they are key areas of confrontation between the classes, and between workers and the state.

Majority

"Oppressed workers" are not simply another oppressed "group", like the homeless, gays or blacks: the working class as a class embraces the majority of women, gays, blacks, homeless and every other oppressed minority.

It is insofar as they can be related to the mobilisation of the class as a whole that the demands and struggles of these minorities stand a hope of long term success in ending their oppression.

It is difficult to think of personal issues which are irrelevant to the struggle between Capital and Labour.

The demand for women to have the right to control their own fertility for instance immediately confronts the government policy of cuts in the NHS, the Tory desire to restrict abortion rights, and the ideological campaign designed to bolster the idea that 'a woman's place is in the home'

Clearly there are degrees to which different issues directly confront the state. Some (for example the attempts to combat sexual assault and violence within the home) pose no threat to it.

But as communists we cannot condone any oppression of vulnerable groups in society. Thus we oppose racism and sexism not simply because such prejudices can be utilised by the bosses and the state to divide the working class, but because of the suffering, degradation and subordination they bring about.

It would be hypocritical to condemn such practices in society but condone racism or sexism by individual members.

Political commitment to equality for blacks, gays and women must therefore be reflected in the fight to establish non-racist, non-sexist behaviour on a personal level within the party.

Similarly political work around ethnic minorities and women's issues must not be left to black and women members, but be taken up by the whole movement.

There are of course problems in the uneven development of revolutionary consciousness. A militant may grasp the nature of class conflict while harbouring reactionary nationalist or sexist views.

These will only be eliminated by an ongoing struggle to develop new members as revolutionaries—a struggle that requires the structure of a disciplined movement to be carried through successfully.

Rowbotham's complaint that the left groups characterise elements as "backward" or "advanced", and her argument that this shows that we "need a much more delicate kind of socialist theory to gauge different forms of consciousness", neglects the fact that socialists themselves recognise that such characterisations are at best temporary and superficial.

Struggle

There are of course radicalised petty bourgeois; and there are many reactionary workers. Among both groups a struggle is necessary to raise consciousness to the level of revolutionary socialism.

Yet—for all its imprecision—the broad characterisation of the forces involved is of value in directing the propaganda and agitation of revolutionaries in each case.

It is fair to say that *Beyond the Fragments* raises some valid questions about left organisations—though in many instances the faults they condemn are already well known and acknowledged by left groups anyway.

In addition, the alternative form of organisation put forward by *Beyond the Fragments* is as unworkable as it is idealist.

Perhaps the key to understanding the views of this book is to be found in Rowbotham's autobiographical history 'In the Left'.

Lack of knowledge

From a petty bourgeois background, she dabbled in the New Left, Tony Cliff's International Socialists, and Libertarian Marxism, finally rejecting membership of any left group.

Her confusion and ignorance of the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky is equalled by her lack of knowledge of Trotskyist groups and lack of involvement in working class struggles.

Given this history, it is scarcely surprising that she, and her coauthors, who share the same kind of history, should be so muddle-headed when it comes to suggesting a new way forward.

Of course the left in Britain needs to get "Beyond the Fragments" and build a mass movement to overthrow capitalism.

But the vital question is how to win workers to a mass revolutionary party on a principled programme. Fusions, whether nationally or internationally, can only be made in this context and on the basis of common programme, principles and organisational methods.

Because it is only the independent mobilisation of the working class, and not an amorphous, broadly-based, cross-class federation, that can wrest state power and ownership of the means of production from a disciplined and centralised capitalist class.

Only such a revolution can establish a socialist planned economy and open up the way for the liberation of the oppressed.

Gendarmes of fascism in focus

One side effect of the Bologna bombing investigations in Italy has been the light thrown on fascist activity in France.

Links between the French police and fascists, tolerated for years, have forced the authorities into temporary suspensions.

The most celebrated is Paul-Louis Durand, aged 25, a police inspector in Versailles who previously spent a year at the Police Headquarters in Paris.

He is a member of the central leadership of the FANE—the Federation of National and European Action, a small neo-Nazi group which has been accredited with several bomb and physical attacks over the last few months.

Spain brought together about 100 European "nationalists" from Belgium, West Germany, France, Spain and the NF from England.

Durand's colleagues were amazed at his suspension since he had always operated so openly and even signed articles in the paper "Our Europe". (Some even thought it was 'useful' to have members in the right wing groups).

Durand is now denying everything except for admitting to an "ancient" allegiance to the FANE in 1975.

The FANE has gained a large amount of publicity and has now gained a head start on the other right wing groups.

Set up in 1966 with the fusion of several groups of activists (the Charlemagne



The remains of Bologna station after the fascist bomb attack

It was not for his opinions nor his political activities—both of which were well-known and tolerated by his superiors—that Inspector Durand was suspended. It was rather because of the inopportune and unfavourable publicity accorded to him by the Italian press since the bomb went off in Bologna station killing 80 and injuring dozens of others.

One suspect named by the Italian police was Marco Affatigato who has been living in Nice for the last two years. He is well known to the French police both because of his Italian past and because of his activities in the ranks of the extreme right in France.

Released

He was arrested several months ago in Monaco possessing several false identity papers but was released a few hours later.

When he was implicated in a DC 9 explosion while flying near Palermo on June 27 the French police reassured their Italian colleagues that he had not left Nice.

At one time active in the Parti des Forces Nouvelles (PFN) he changed his adherence to the FANE.

However he was still in favour enough to take part in a debate in a major Nice hotel last May organised by the PFN presidential candidate Pascal Gauchon.

The Nice police were well aware that their colleague Paul-Louis Durand was in charge of the FANE's international contacts with special reference to Italy and was in contact with Affatigato.

His employers only appear to have become concerned when the Italian press revealed some of his recent comings and goings. These included meeting several leading neo-Nazis and a trip to the European fascist international "summer camp" Last year such a camp held in

Circle, Western-Action, and Friends of the True Europe) the FANE for a long time found itself pushed into the background by the rise of the New Order. It was only after its dissolution and the killing of Francois Duprat, leader of the Nationalist Revolutionary Groups (NGR) that the FANE, joined by the activists of the GNR, began to be more significant.

"War crimes"

Its founder, Marc Fredrikson, is a 44-year old "pleasant" bank employee who has worked for ten years for the reconstruction of the "Black International" and who stood unsuccessfully in the elections in March 1978.

He will be tried in September for being an "apologist for war crimes" and for racism.

While the PFN and the Front National have been officially preparing their presidential campaign, the destruction of monuments to the memory of those who died in the Resistance; anti-semitic graffiti and attacks in the rue des Rosiers have all been attributed to FANE.

Some members have been caught in the act, others have been apprehended with firearms or questioned about articles in their paper "Our Europe".

All have been released through "lack of proof".

What happened in Bologna has greatly changed public opinion. The law to dissolve FANE only needs the signature of the minister. The fascists of course are well prepared for this eventuality. They have already registered two new associations, whose address is the same as the FANE.

In an interview in "Liberation", Marc Fredrikson said that the type of "strategy" used in Bologna was not yet part of the war method of the FANE "as long as we are not outlawed".



Jobs torn up by Bowater

In a week that has seen the announcement of thousands more redundancies affecting major areas of industry one of the more serious was the decision of Bowater to make 1,600 workers redundant at their Mersey Mill, Ellesmere Port.

A further 3,000 workers' jobs in Merseyside—where unemployment is over 14%—will be affected by the decision to close this mill—Britain's largest newsprint plant.

The bosses blame the overvalued pound which has prevented a rise in the price of newsprint for 3½ years. Imported newsprint, particularly from North America and Scandinavia, costs £40 a ton less than British newsprint, largely due to high energy costs which are as much as twice as high as they are in foreign newsprint industries.

Joint approach

The subsequent announcement of further redundancies by Reid, another major paper manufacturer, underlines the threat to jobs in the paper industry.

Bill Keys, general secretary of SOGAT blamed government policies for the redundancies and said that his union would fight the redundancies.

"I have made it quite clear to Bowater chairman that we are not going to accept this closure. I don't preclude any form of action to save these jobs, they're not going to get

away with it.

"The decision has nothing at all to do with labour relations which have been excellent and everything to do with the government's policy of making people expendable on the altar of monetarism."

However, the policy of the union to date has been to participate in a joint approach with the bosses to the Thatcher government for aid to the industry—an approach which has met with determined refusal on the part of the Tories.

There is no way that Keys is going to act on the implications of his statement and lead a struggle against the Tories' monetarist policies.

Challenged on BBC's PM programme about his threats to close Fleet Street in the struggle to prevent the closure of Bowater an angry sounding

Keys immediately back peddled, arguing that not all official channels had yet been exhausted.

Workers in the paper industry will have to rely on their own independent strength and policies such as occupation of threatened mills and the opening of the books of the multinationals that own the paper industry if they are to defend their jobs.

This will mean taking up and acting on Keys' implicit recognition that the Tories must be thrown out if jobs are to be saved—something Keys himself absolutely refuses to do.

*In a tragi-comic response to the job massacre, Bowater workers have agreed to pay for advertisements in national newspapers to tell the public about the crisis in paper making.

More jobs to go

Engineering stewards at Hoovers in Camburslang in Scotland have called for resistance to redundancies.

The company is demanding the axe for 160 jobs out of a total of 2,000. Although the stewards are pledged to fight they have not yet prepared a plan to defeat the company.

*Great Universal stores have swallowed the mail order firm, John Myers, on the condition that Myers axe 1,900 jobs. USDAW deputy general secretary John Flood, described the

decision as 'mind boggling' and asked the company for 'statistical evidence' to support the mass sackings.

*More than 4,000 clerical workers in BL are to lose their jobs as the Edwardes axe swung from the production line to the office blocks.

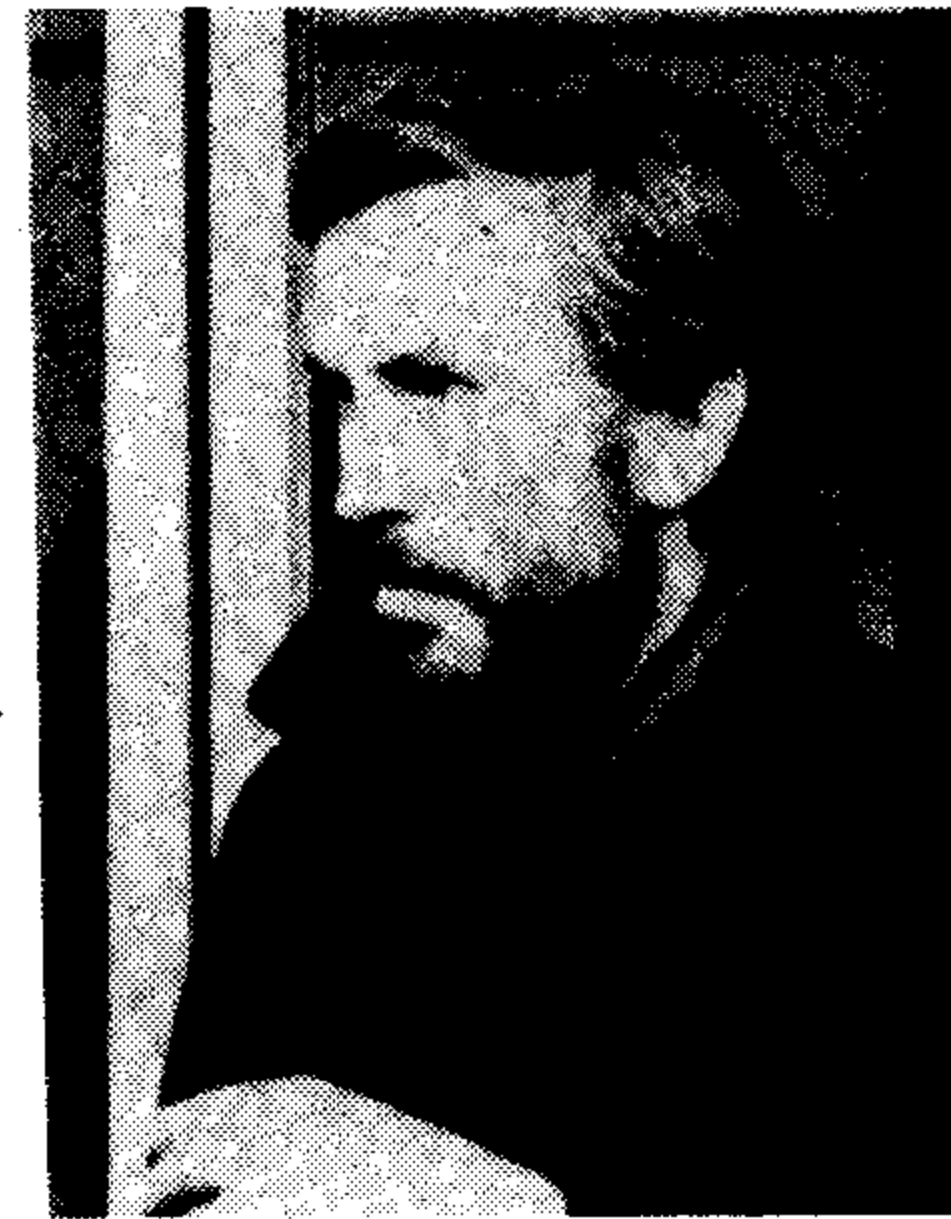
*Doug Daniels, Manchester North Secretary of the AUEW said the union would fight the plan to make several hundred workers out of 2,450 at L. Gardner and Sons redundant. No strategy has been put forward to save the jobs in the diesel engine firm.

Times journalists stop the presses

As journalists at the Times put up their first ever picket line last weekend both the Times and the Observer were being threatened with closure.

The journalists voted 117 votes to 54 to strike after management refused to implement an arbitration award of 21%—repeating instead their 18% offer.

The journalists, who had claimed more than 30% were recommended for the 21% rise by Professor John Crossley of Leeds University. In his recommendation—which is not legally binding—Crossley said that pay related to the performance of the company and that all future pay awards should be linked to the cost of living to recognise the standard of 'excellence' of their journalists.



Times NUJ FoC Jake Ecclestone

vote on the 18% offer (which would certainly have been accepted).

This position is unacceptable. Times journalists must picket the Sunday Times members and demand they join the strike.

While the Times management is jibbing at a few hundred pounds a year for journalists they are negotiating the next round of a technology agreement with the NGA and offering up to £20,000 each to buy out casual shift workers.

This is the reason for their intransigence and for the threat by Thomson Newspapers to shut the Times.

Meanwhile following the NGA instructions to their Observer chapel to abandon

their wage claim, the Observer owners, Atlantic Richfield, have warned that the paper might be shut down anyway because of lack of profitability.

They are demonstrating that employers are never appeased by union weakness—they merely grow more arrogant in their demands.

The Times strike gives a chance to put the boot on the other foot. The chapels must fight not to allow any 'spare circulation' to be taken up by the other papers and to launch immediate solidarity action.

Closure of the Times or Observer must immediately be met with occupations to defeat the employers.

Provincial journalists in London are to be called out on one day strikes to win a claim for London weighting. The chapels have been operating sanctions since the employers offered £4 a week—only £2 of which would not be absorbed. Journalists at the Kilburn Times voted for an all-out strike to defend jobs after management demanded four redundancies.

Jobs go at Lucas

Workers at the Lucas CAV plant in Acton came back from their annual holiday to the announcement of more redundancies.

Two departments had already been shut down in the last few months and the management have just announced the drastic run-down of a third.

Unit 5 is part of the parts and service business, employing about 130 people from whom 60 redundancies are now being demanded. If enough volunteers are not forthcoming by the end of September compulsory redundancies will follow.

Shop stewards have been told that other sections are also under review. No worker in the plant can feel that their job is safe.

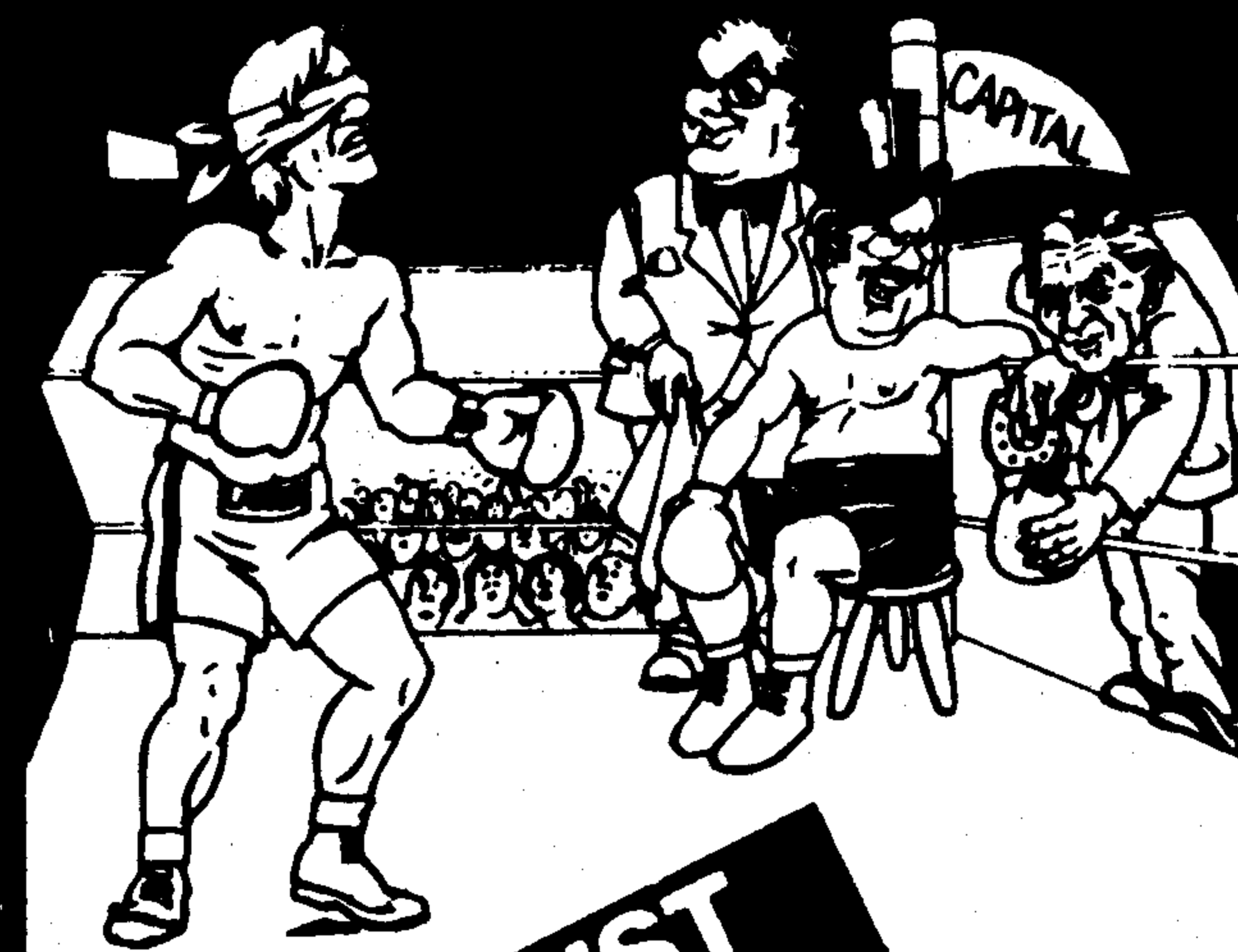
It is vital that the unions break from their policy of co-operation with the run down of the plant. The increasing number of fascist and racist attacks and provocations in the area is partly due to the level of youth unemployment.

As well as the fight on jobs, the unions in all of the Lucas plants must get together to plan a campaign of action to force the employer to raise its 10% wage offer.

At present, Lucas are refusing to negotiate on this figure. Only if the plants form a combine committee to organise a combine-wide fight will it be possible to shift them from their position. The present 'wait and see' attitude of some of the plants can only result in them becoming demoralised.

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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.

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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.

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BL SECRET "NO STRIKE" PLAN

A secret legally binding no strike agreement between BL and the major unions is in an advanced state of discussion.

The agreement—which would finally remove all vestiges of control by BL workers over their own demands and negotiations—has been discussed in complete secrecy by the Executive of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions.

It stems from the attack by the Tories on the unions but shows union officials implicated up to their necks in the most vicious attack yet carried out on BL workers.

The 'no strike' clause as yet applies only to strikes called by the Confed or any strikes called against federations and associations of employers'.

Legally binding

But it also seeks legally binding agreement that all disputes would be referred for decision to a BL Council made up of top management of BL and Leyland Vehicles and full time officials of the Confed. The BL Council "shall have the responsibility and authority to ensure that procedural arrangements are agreed and maintained".

The background to the attack is the dissolving of the previous BL National Joint Negotiating Committee which ceased to exist on August 1 in line with the document signed by Moss Evans for the TGWU in April to sell out the Midlands strikes.

The document, drawn up between BL and the Confed executive, has been named 'The Relationship Agreement'.

That relationship is as follows: a Joint Negotiating Committee (the BL Council) entirely composed of national officials appointed by the Confed; the stamping out of the Combine Committee by both the company and the unions and for a legally enforceable 'no strike' clause.

The document says: "The employing Companies will provide appropriate facilities for representation and negotiations. The employing Companies will not provide any facilities for unconstitutional trade unionism..."

"The unions shall take active steps wherever necessary to maintain constitutional trade unionism among employees and to prevent unconstitutional trade unionism from damaging the employing Companies..."

"The parties acknowledge their unique responsibilities for securing the survival and the success of the United Kingdom's only remaining major auto-



Robinson... more victimisations planned

motive manufacturer... "The BL Council shall become responsible for the BL Procedure Agreement for hourly paid employees of 29 March 1976; questions arising under section 6 (Interpretation and Application) of that Agreement shall be referred to the Council for resolution..."

"The BL Council shall have the responsibility and authority to ensure that procedural arrangements are agreed and maintained in the employing Companies..."

"Employees covered by 6.2 and 6.3 shall not take part in strikes or other forms of industrial action in support of any claim or dispute between any or all of the unions and federations and associations of employers."

"Since the Agreement has been freely and voluntarily entered into by the parties on behalf of the BL employing Companies and on behalf of the employees it shall be mutually binding in honour and in law and shall therefore expressly form part of the contracts of employment of those employees who are covered by its scope..."

"Any question of interpreta-

tion of this Agreement that cannot be determined within the procedures adopted by the employing Companies shall be referred to the BL Council for resolution..."

"The unions' members shall normally be the President of the CSEU, the General Secretary of the CSEU and national officials, to be appointed by the CSEU."

"Additionally, one national official of any union not normally represented may attend a meeting of special importance at the request of his national executive committee or other comparable body."

The document is not yet signed. It has been discussed in secret by the Confed executive at two meetings in the past three months and a further meeting was being held this Wednesday (August 27).

Officials were obviously planning to reach agreement without informing the workforce.

The agreement would cover the TGWU, AUEW, TASS, ACTSS, APEX, EETPU, GMWU, UCATT and the Boilermakers, Metalworkers, Patternmakers, Furniture, Sheet Metal Workers and Metal Mechanics unions.

BL Combine warning

BL have cracked down on the Combine Committee—a committee of senior stewards which has been meeting in working hours for the past 25 years.

The Chairman, Jack Adams, and Mick Clark, the treasurer, have been given a 'final warning' after attending a meeting of the Combine on August 15.

All those who attended were

warned by the company not to attend again.

Adams and Clark were singled out for special treatment because management claimed they had already received a 'final warning' when Derek Robinson was sacked last November.

Now management have said that a further meeting of the Combine Committee will lead to their automatic sacking.

CPSA witch-hunt against strikers

Under the threat of another militant mass picket the Department of Employment moved with amazing rapidity to reinstate Phil Corddell and Richard Cleverley hours before the picket started—an obvious and clumsy attempt to defuse a situation which was growing more entrenched and bitter by the hour.

The reinstatements were, however, hedged around with "conditions". The striking CPSA members are still out after being informed by management that a further five of them in addition to the two reinstated are to be disciplined by being transferred to other offices from the Brixton Unemployment Benefit Office.

Corddell and Cleverley themselves are to be reemployed only if they accept a final warning.

While management have been pushed back from a position of sackings they have carte blanche to frame both men at a time and place of their own choosing.

CPSA General Secretary Ken Thomas, weighed in with a vicious witch-hunt against the SWP (both Corddell and Cleverley are members). Thomas launched an attack on Labour MPs Stuart Holland and Reg Race for publicising and attending the mass pickets. He issued an all-members circular vilifying the unofficial strikers and abusing the SWP.

He goes so far as to imply that the "hounding out" of all communist militants from the union must be on the agenda for the not-too-distant future.

Safe in the knowledge that he has the right wing NEC behind him, Thomas is embarking on a campaign to whip into line all branches and area committees that have supported the Brixton members (now in their eighth week of unofficial strike action).

Whilst Thomas sees to things within the CPSA, the TUC itself has taken up the attacks on Holland and Race. Fearful of any link up between the Labour lefts and workers in struggle Len Murray has entered the fray with an attack he would never dream of making on Tory MPs.

Holland and Race have argued that Prior's law must be opposed on the streets. All that the TUC is proposing at its Congress is to "monitor" the Employment Bill, to act as a faithful recorder of the number of workers arrested in each area.

Thomas' letter to the membership is unprecedented in the degree of its arrogance and bile.

Amid dismissive references to "the dafter end of the political spectrum" he says that groups like the SWP have so far been tolerated, "initially with amusement... but in recent years, because of our tolerance, they have increasingly and totally unrepresentatively misused the machinery of this union, as a result of which our name has sometimes been a joke in the trade union movement".

The letter is ludicrously entitled "A Victory for our Union" and Thomas uses all the italics and underlining possible in a desperate bid to prove that industrial action did not win reinstatement.

After a hard day's grovel with his cap clenched firmly in his hand it must be galling for Thomas to realise that it was determined rank and file action that produced the concession.

Lessons

Thomas says the CPSA must be united to continue the fight against the 100,000 job cuts in the civil service—but he has not lifted a finger to oppose either the cuts already made or those just around the corner.

CPSA members must draw out the lessons of this dispute both in terms of government and union leadership.

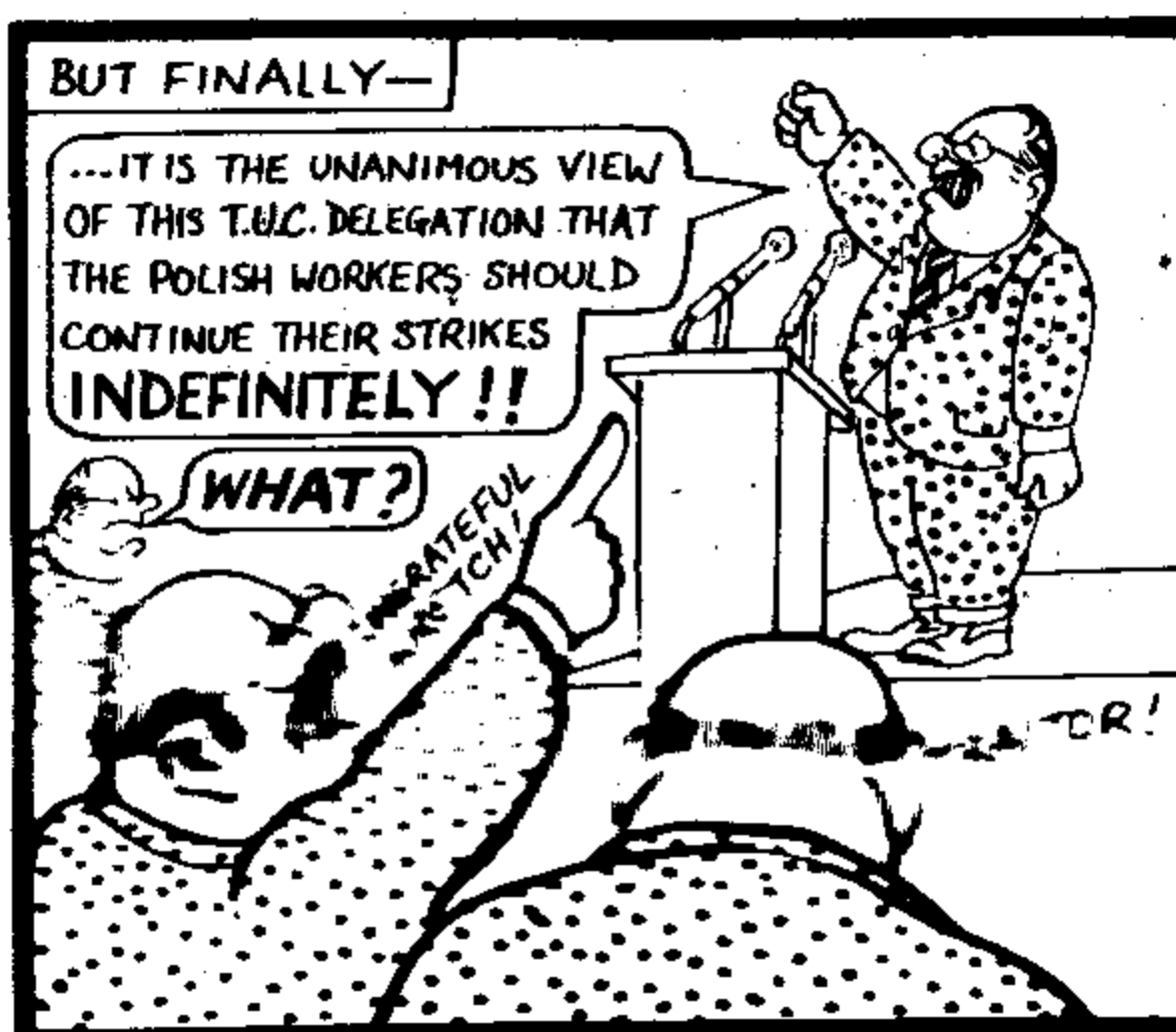
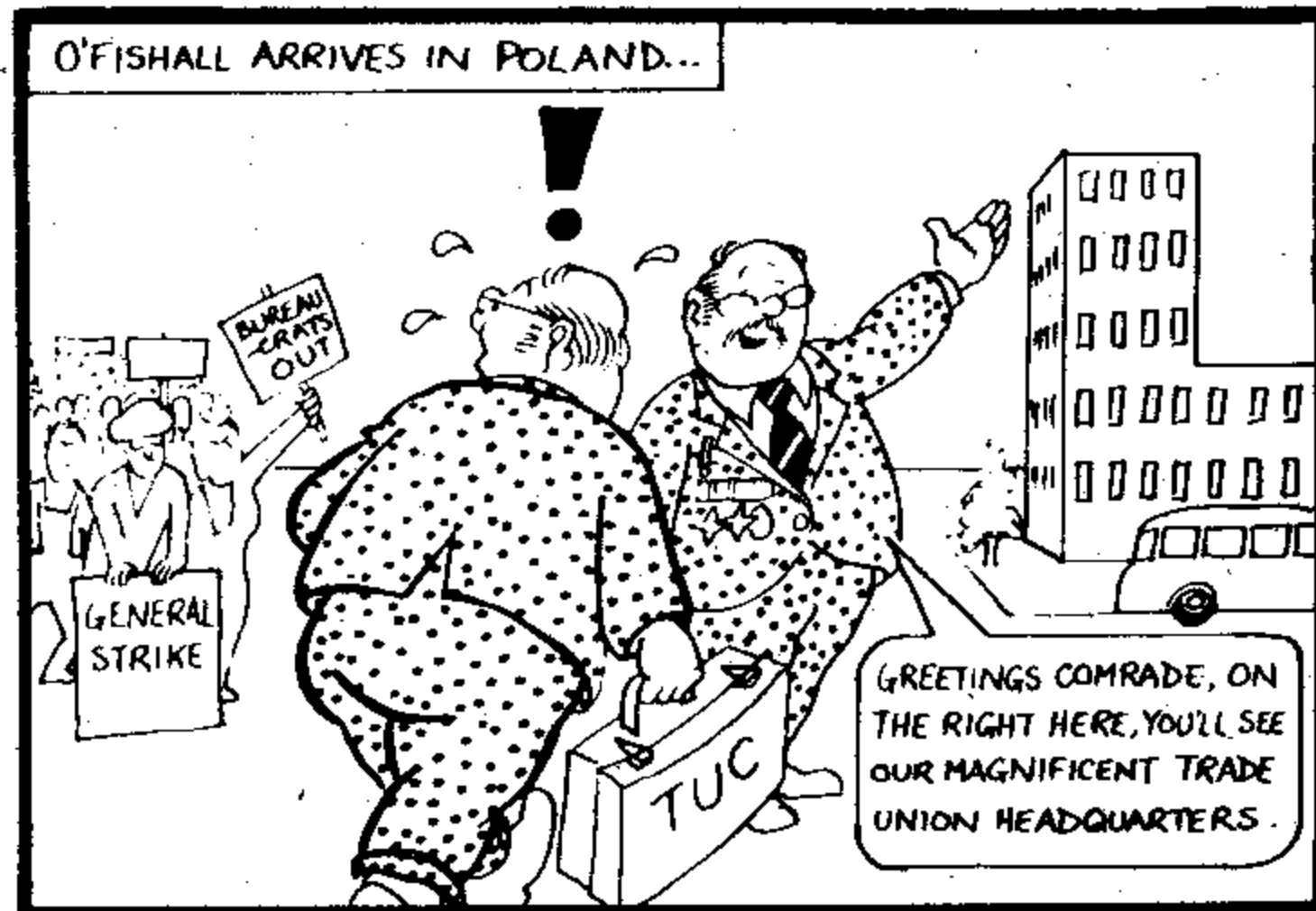
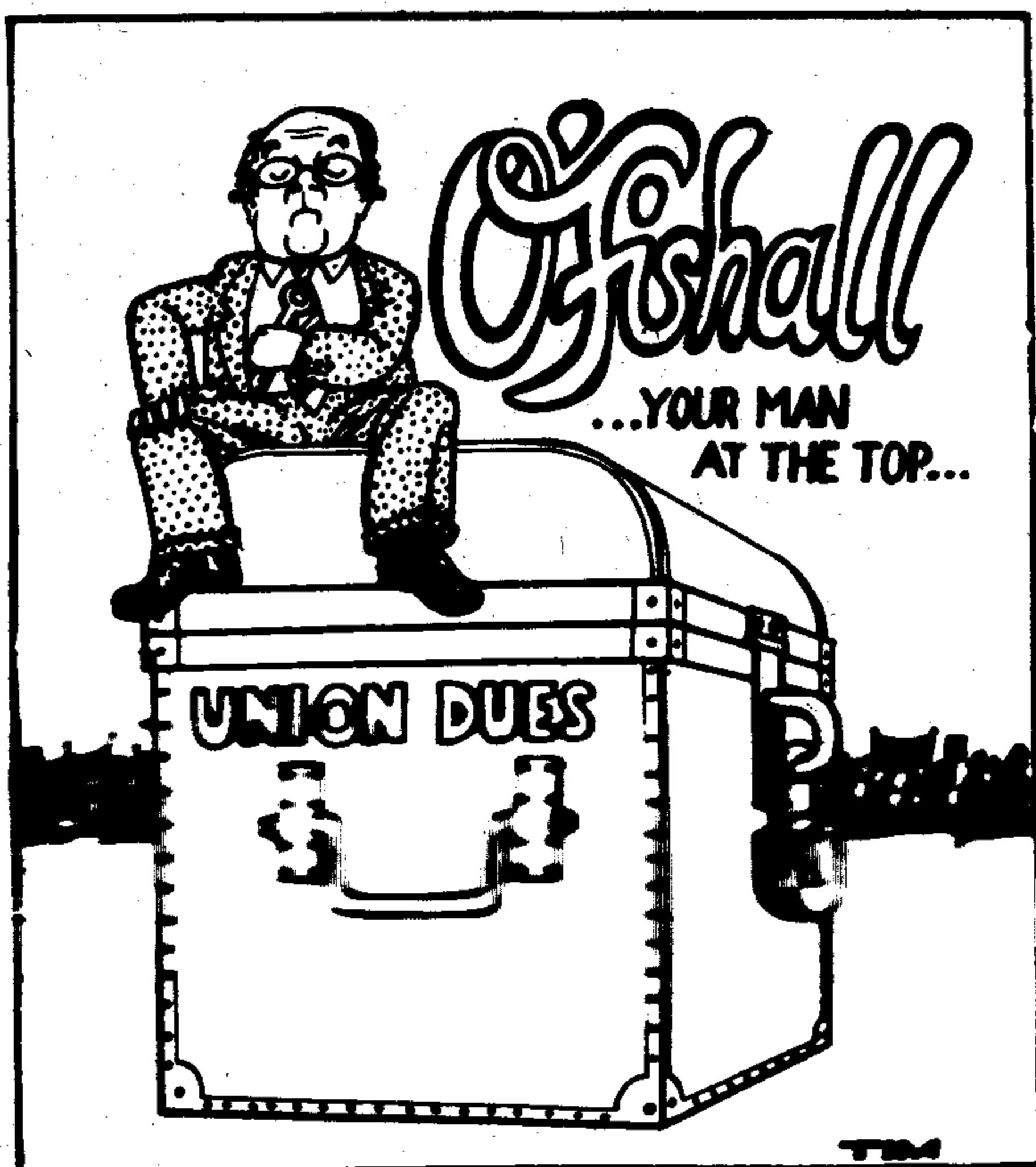
The 'conditions' must be fought all along the line. In addition Thomas and the right wing puppets of the NEC must be kicked out.

In Thomas' case an immediate campaign for his resignation must be initiated in all branches which have supported Brixton.

At the end of his letter Thomas says that he will "slip back into the faceless role of General Secretary". This is one hit and run merchant who must not be allowed to creep back into the sanctity of his cosy office.



More than six police on duty outside Brixton unemployment office



YEAH, SO LONG AS THOSE POLISH WRECKERS AREN'T WORKING THEY CAN'T BE FLOODING BRITAIN WITH THEIR CHEAP FOREIGN IMPORTS!

