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BL CRISIS

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# TURKEY'S "BLOODLESS COUP" PRELUDE TO MASS REPRESSION



The impossibility of a Parliamentary solution to Turkey's economic and political crisis has been brutally confirmed by last week's long expected military coup.

General Kenan Evren and the other military chiefs who comprise the National Security Council have displaced Demirel's minority right wing Justice Party government and with it the remnants of bourgeois democratic rights still intact after nearly two years of escalating martial law.

The Grand National Assembly for a whole period virtually paralysed has been closed down, and with it all unions, apart from the state-run Turk-Is federation.

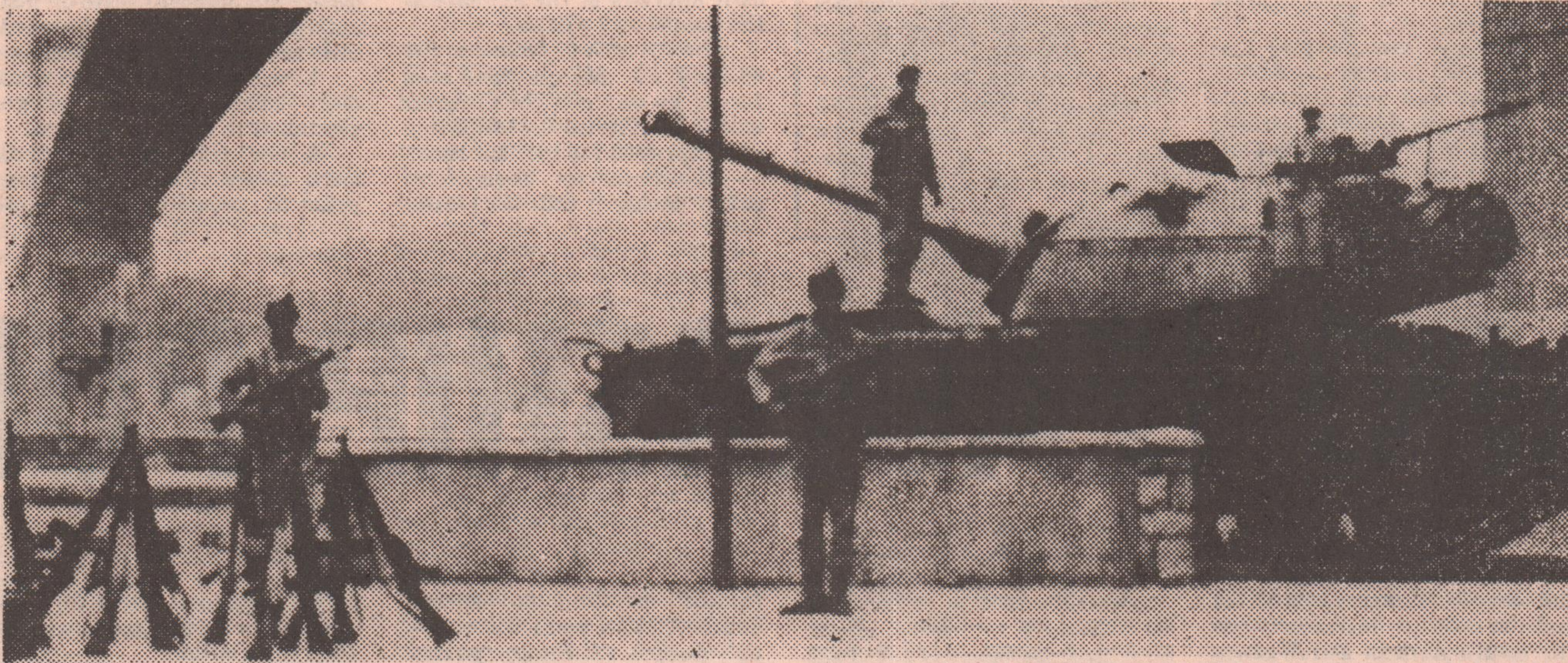
The right to strike, already heavily restricted has now been completely abolished and there are moves by the junta to impose wage rises substantially below the 100% plus inflation rate.

Among the thousands arrested are MPs, trade union leaders, militants and political activists.

The junta has declared its intention to put many of them on trial and execute those already in custody who have previously had their death sentence postponed.

The generals now take on direct responsibility for the problems faced by the ruling class. Their ravaged capitalist economy, a bankrupt victim of the international crisis, has long since only been sustained by vast amounts of credit from the IMF and other imperialist money-lenders complementing the debts already owed directly to western governments.

Turkey's ability to pay back even the interest on the staggering \$16 billion total borrowed



Tanks in Istanbul: (above) London demonstration against the coup last Sunday supported by WSL

is dubious. Finance Minister Turgut Ozal, kept on by the military, was turned away empty-handed by British bankers only days before the coup.

Throughout the seventies Turkey's trade deficit accelerated; the value of imports doubled and exports dropped by half.

It was the obstinacy and scale of this problem which had forced both Demirel and Republican People's Party 'progressive' leader Ecevit before him to more and more rely on the military in the face of their own failure to 'democratically' suppress the militant struggles of the working class, youth and Kurdish people.

When earlier this year Demirel embarked on a savage rescue programme imposed by the IMF even Ecevit was forced to say that to enforce it would require a South American-style dictatorship.

With the native capitalist

class tied hand and foot to imperialism and finance capital, the material basis for anything approaching stable bourgeois democracy simply does not exist.

Stark confirmation of this has been the previous resort to military takeovers in 1960 and 1971.

But today conditions are quite different, which makes direct comparisons with those short-term regimes limited.

Externally the present crisis of imperialism, and particularly its weakened military authority within the Middle East means that NATO partner Turkey is looked to as a key ingredient for reasserting supremacy in a region comprised of hostile or unstable governments.

At this moment NATO-organised manoeuvres including British troops are going ahead in Turkey as normal.

Temporary stability of the Turkish state is not enough. It is therefore to the potentially

more secure social force of fascism that reactionaries inside and outside the country now look for a longer-term answer.

Complimenting the military, the gendarmerie and police attacks on a growing scale over the last few years have been the fascist bands of Grey Wolves, the stormtroopers of 'respectable' General turned politician Alparslam Turkes, leader of the Nationalist Action Party.

Fascist terrorist provocation has been the source of most of the fierce street violence which has brought 5,000 killings in the last two years.

Directed at any organisation or individual regarded as in any way 'liberal' or pro-socialist, especially union militants, it reached a new stage at the end of July with the assassination of DISK leader Kemal Turkler.

## Fascists strengthened

The fact that Turkes has now been detained along with

other political leaders should fool no-one. The fascists have become bolder as state repression has grown, and their influence in the army and police can only be strengthened by the latest developments.

Under these conditions the building of workers anti-fascist militias takes on a new urgency.

Illusions in the junta as 'neutral' are in line both with the way it has been presented in the British press as merely a 'peacekeeping' alternative to civil war, and Evren's careful populist declarations.

As well as the Presidency he has taken upon himself 'responsibility for fighting against anarchy, terrorism, divisiveness and Communist, fascist and fanatical religious ideologies', and pledges faith in the nationalist tradition of Attaturk.

Made 'Man of the Week' by the Financial Times it is nevertheless questionable whether he will last at the head of a regime

which is clearly determined to hold power for a long time.

Though other chiefs from the 'democratic' and 'constitutional' wing of the army such as Pinochet and Videla have presided over mass slaughter in South America, like every other section of the state and society the army is polarised, and the openly pro-fascist faction is preparing its moves.

## Confrontations

The 'bloodless' takeover and lack of mass resistance at this point will not last.

Only major confrontations between the workers, unemployed and poor peasants and the ruling class and its allies can decide the issues which are at stake.

The workers' ability to struggle remains intact, and the Kurdish people will continue their fight against colonialism.

The deployment of unreliable conscript soldiers, now being sent into previously 'no go' left-controlled areas, contains big dangers for the bourgeoisie.

The workers' organisations must join forces in a united front for the tasks ahead, on policies expressing their independent class interests which can rally the petty bourgeoisie behind them.

## Sapped strength

Policies which strategically ally the working class with a 'democratic' and 'anti-imperialist' sections of the ruling class ranged behind the bourgeois RPP have already done more than enough to disarm and sap the workers' fighting capacity.

Foremost in pressing this criminal line have been the Stalinist leaders of the Com-

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# For a General Strike in Turkey!



# INTERNATIONAL

## Guatemalan 'mole' exposes CIA links

The regime of General Romeo Lucas Garcia in Guatemala continues to murder oppositionists at the rate of 30 each day, a toll which includes the whole trade union leadership.

However the dictatorship has suffered two heavy blows: the first of these was the successful sugar workers strike which gained 100% wage rises.

The confidence of workers and peasants was given a further boost last week when the government press secretary Elias Barahona called a press conference while on holiday in Panama to reveal that he was a member of the Ejercito Guerrillero de los Pobres (Guerrilla Army of the Poor) and had been infiltrating the government for four years!

Barahona's main job had been to put out propaganda claiming that the daily killings were caused by fighting between left and right wing groups.

He has now broadcast the fact that the two right wing paramilitary organisations, the Secret Anti-communist Army and the Death Squadron are under the direct command of the President, the Interior Minister and four others.

He also revealed direct links between CIA agents in Mexico and Guatemala and prominent government and court officials and confirmed reports that 2,000 of Somoza's former National Guard have been incorporated into the army.

It seems that top Guatemalan, Honduran and El Salvadorian army officers have drawn up plans for a military offensive in El Salvador in the event of a guerrilla victory and against Nicaragua in the long term.

Carter rashly cut off US



Repression in Guatemala

military aid to Guatemala at the peak of his 'human rights' phase: but the regime has found a willing supplier in Israel.

The Israelis provide not only the military hardware necessary to sustain a thoroughly unpopular oligarchy but also "counter-insurgency" advisers, their skills honed on Palestinian backs.

Chile and Argentina also provide training in what is chillingly termed 'interrogation techniques'.

Barahona also revealed that Britain has reached a shoddy imperialist deal with Guatemala on the future of Belize, ceding a third of its territory—against the wishes of the people—in return for an assurance that Britain can

have a permanent military base within its frontiers allowing Guatemala access to the Caribbean.

The fourth congress of the Latin American Anti-communist Confederation met in Buenos Aires last week to denounce the 'pressures and threats of Carter-communism against the valiant governments of Argentina, Guatemala, Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile and Bolivia.

However, revolutionaries cannot afford to dismiss these as insane ramblings while those who perpetuate them oppress the masses of Central and South America with the approval and material support of our imperialist governments.

# Peking leaders caught out on Polish strikes

The Chinese bureaucracy has been caught with its trousers down in its eagerness to attack the Soviet Union.

They seized on the struggles of workers in Poland not for their revolutionary potential but to prove that the Soviet bureaucracy is 'social imperialist'.

They even printed all the 21 demands of the Gdansk workers on the front page of the *Peoples Daily*.

However, this apparent support for strikes and condoning of free trade unions has come as a surprise to Chinese workers who have experienced exactly the same stranglehold on their organisations as workers in Poland!

Chairman Hua Guofeng was forced to deal with this subject in his two hour contribution to the National People's Congress which has just ended.

He talked of giving unions a more prominent role, of reducing bureaucracy and 'liberalising' the economy.

The attack on various government departments and their leaders was a recurrent theme throughout the Congress.

Hua himself even talked of a bureaucracy which "has hampered all kinds of work and aroused much popular discontent".

Warnings were given to those who wish to look after their own interests at the expense of the people as a whole.

The strength of feeling in the country on this question even forced its way into the Congress where hostility to the leadership was expressed for the first time.

Objection to government policy included calls for greater



Deng

democracy, for restrictions on the power of the Communist Party and criticisms of the marriage law.

However, the Democracy Wall in Peking which played an important role in past oppositions has been closed down.

When Hua talked of 'liberalising' the economy he didn't mean giving workers more rights but of opening up even more Chinese workers to direct exploitation by capitalism.

The present economic system, he said, consisted mainly of what was copied from the Soviet Union in the 1950s and certain practices derived from the civil war period.

It was necessary to retain a mixed economy of state-owned enterprises, collectively owned ones and individual production.

Announced at Congress were more inducements to foreign capitalists to operate in China.

A low tax rate of 15% is being offered to foreign enterprises to operate in special econ-

omic zones established in Guangdong Province, South China, near Hong Kong.

No restrictions on remitting profits were mentioned.

And according to the standing committee, "assets, profits and other legitimate rights and interests" of businesses in the economic zones will be protected under Chinese law.

### Resignation

The Congress formally approved the resignation of Hua Guofeng from his post as Prime Minister and of Deng Xiaoping as his deputy.

Both men retain their party posts. Zhao Ziyang, an experienced provincial administrator, is to take over. He has been a supporter of Deng.

Hua has been in a more and more untenable position in the face of the growing and open attacks on Mao and his policies. Six other deputies also resigned, some on grounds of age.

The occasion of the Congress was used to attack the sentences meted out during the Cultural Revolution and to announce the forthcoming show trial of the 'Gang of Four'.

But no shuffling round of the bureaucracy will solve the problems confronting the workers and peasants in China. Nor does the further expansion of capitalist exploitation.

Only the development of independent organs of struggle and the political overthrow of Mao's heirs in the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy can open up the road to the planned expansion of China's nationalised economy under genuine workers' management.

# SWAPO LEADERSHIP PURGE

The Namibian nationalist organisation SWAPO last week convened a conference in Paris to "generate a solidarity campaign" in Europe aimed at isolating South Africa's puppet administration in Namibia and at pressing for sanctions on the South African government.

700 representatives of imperialist and African governments, the UN, the World Council of Churches, and other bodies attended.

SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma attacked the obstruction of the UN plan for independence by

the South African government and the secret collusion between the South African and Western governments.

### Expelled

The conference followed in the wake of the recent leadership shake-up in SWAPO.

SWAPO's central committee met in Angola at the end of July, weeks after the massive military attack launched by the South African regime into southern Angola, in which South African generals claimed major successes against SWAPO's guerrilla army. (See *Socialist Press* no. 206).

At the central committee meeting, the leading clique around Nujoma expelled nine top SWAPO officials—including the acting vice-president Mishake Muyongo, two other central committee members and four military commanders.

The expulsions represented the biggest ever upheaval in the SWAPO bureaucracy.

A SWAPO statement accused the nine leaders of "counter-revolutionary secessionist activities" and of accepting bribes from South African military intelligence.

Muyongo was accused of trying to reconstitute CANU (Caprivi African National Union)—a regional organisation

formed in 1963 to counter South African plans for setting up stooge bantustan governments in Namibia, and which merged with SWAPO in 1964.

Muyongo retaliated by accusing the leadership of Ovambo tribalism and gangsterism. His credibility was dealt a heavy blow by an official South African press statement claiming that he had been in touch with a minister in the stooge Caprivi bantustan government.

The South African regime and the imperialist powers clearly played their part in fostering this latest split.

But the grounds for splits and antagonisms (often resulting in armed conflicts) within the SWAPO leadership have already been laid by the reformist politics of petty bourgeois nationalists.

The SWAPO leadership is an embattled bureaucracy, weakened by the consequences of its own reformist policies.

### Divisions

As *Socialist Press* has pointed out (SP 194) the pressure being exerted on the bureaucracy in the face of the South African imperialist drive for stable capitalist control, is bound to sharpen the internal divisions in the opportunist leadership.

The massive South African attack on Angola in June-July (which has been followed by ongoing smaller raids by jet bombers and paratroopers) clearly dealt a heavy blow to the military capacity of SWAPO.

At the same time, it increased the pressure on the

MPLA regime to push SWAPO towards further compromises with imperialism.

The SWAPO leadership succumbs to the pressures of the imperialist powers, the Kremlin bureaucracy and bourgeois nationalist governments, because it is to these forces that it looks in its ambitions to govern an independent Namibia.

### Intrigues

While the workers, guerrilla fighters and poor peasants of Namibia show time and again their militant determination in the courageous struggle against colonial rule and imperialist exploitation, the SWAPO tops engage in opportunist intrigues and offer the mass struggle only the treacherous policies of popular frontism.

The solidarity campaign launched by the SWAPO bureaucracy at the Paris conference is no more than a desperate class collaborationist manoeuvre.

Reformists and Stalinists in the labour movement of the imperialist countries will be eager to take up its toothless appeals to the ruling class.

Only the international working class, through independent class action can materially and consistently aid the struggle of the Namibian masses.

The fight to mobilise independent workers action in support of the Namibian struggle is part of the fight to break the grip of the existing misleaders of the labour movement.

\*No secret diplomacy. All

deals and negotiations to be opened up to the workers' movement.

\*No business secrets. Open the books of all firms involved in Namibia.

\*For immediate blacking of all arms and related supplies to the South African government.

\*Nationalise under workers' management all firms (including banks) involved in Namibia.

\*For workers' control of trade.

### TURKEY . . . from p.1

munist Party of Turkey—who even now will be looking for ways to preserve it.

Hopes in Ecevit and the RPP have helped open the door to the present reaction.

Democratic rights and their defence are inseparable from the struggle for state power and socialist revolution itself.

The building of a mass party which bases itself on the principles and programme of the Bolsheviks is continued today only by those fighting for the reconstruction of the Fourth International.

\*Down with military dictatorship in Turkey!

\*For a general strike in Turkey!

\*Release all political prisoners!

\*United front of workers' organisations against fascism!

\*Build workers' militias against fascist and state terror!

\*Self determination for the Kurdish people!

\*For a workers' and peasants' government in Turkey!



SWAPO demonstrators in Windhoek



INTERNATIONAL

# El Salvador LEFT

Part three of a series by DON FLINT

# GROUPS CLING TO STALINIST STRATEGY

The Communist Party of El Salvador (PCS) clings on to a perspective of a long-term alliance with supposedly 'progressive' sections of capitalists.

This, the policy of the 'popular front' is now the predominant line of the left in El Salvador.

In seeking to break from this position and to find a more radical line of policy, the leadership of the Popular Revolutionary Block (BPR) initially went far beyond merely criticising the CP's lack of any perspective of armed struggle.

While they did of course attack this position, the BPR went on to reject outright what it described as the PCS's consistent efforts to:

"orientate the masses towards bourgeois objectives such as 'constitutionality (which legalises the capitalist system of exploitation) and 'the installing of a democratic government' (of a bourgeois character, headed not by workers and peasants but by the opposition bourgeoisie".

(*Combate*, 3/7/77)

Moreover the BPR correctly showed that these positions flow from the PCS's:

"belief in the possibility of the growth of a 'national' independent bourgeoisie; a position that for many years has lost its objective basis and possibilities, to the degree that international monopoly capital has been penetrating our economy".

(*The People's Alternative*, 11 July 1976.)

From this starting point the BPR assailed the PCS as "reformist", "revisionist", "moving to the right", and even "aiding the counter-revolution and imperialism" through its capitulationist policies (BPR *Boletín Internacional*, San Francisco, Dec. 1979).

## Bureaucratisation

The BPR had also earlier attacked the United Popular Action Front (FAPU) on a similar basis - criticising its purely anti-fascist strategy.

And the BPR's critique features an assessment of the bureaucratisation of trade union leaderships which appear to echo many Trotskyist formulations.

Both the BPR and the Popular Liberation Front (FPL) have explicitly declared themselves to be "forces of revolutionary socialism."

They have stated that the only fundamental classes are those of capital and labour, and that the science of "marxism-leninism" provides the central means of understanding and overthrowing capitalism.

The revolutionary mobilisation will not cease until this is achieved, they argue (*Boletín Internacional*, June 1979).

But against the PCS's search for an alliance with a "progressive" wing of the capitalist class, the BPR counterposes the call for a "Revolutionary Front" which, they say, must:

"(a) be led and orientated in its struggle by the proletariat and its revolutionary principles, the indispensable condition of the Popular Revolution towards socialism.

(b) have as its fundamental driving force the worker-peasant alliance, based on the revolutionary alliances of the people. The worker-peasant alliance will



Victims of right wing violence (above and right)

have to draw around itself the advanced members of the petty bourgeoisie and of the middle strata. . .

(*The People's Alternative*)

Quotes from Mao and Vietnamese leader Giap are used to support these positions, and there is more than a hint of Maoism in the BPR's emphasis on 'returning to the popular masses'.

It is this "return" which is used to argue for the turn away from the industrial proletariat and towards the peasantry. It is among the peasants that the BPR found the principal source of its strength in its early years.

The attraction of Maoism for the BPR leaders in their break from the pacifism of the Communist Party is that it offers a military strategy while remaining within the confines of the Stalinist view of "Marxism-leninism".

The crude popular frontism of the PCS is replaced not by a fight for the mobilisation of the proletariat, but by a concentration on the peasantry under the guise of a strategy for "all revolutionary classes".

It is telling that when the BPR refers to these classes it effectively suppresses the leading role of the proletariat.

These 'revolutionary classes' are described as:

"the workers of the countryside and the city, the poor and middle peasants, the most exploited sectors of the petty bourgeoisie (small producers, small proprietors, traders, etc) and the most oppressed sectors of the middle strata (teachers, students, intellectuals, etc) who are the agents of the revolutionary process, and nobody can replace them in this historic mission."

(*The People's Alternative*)

There is a political link between these lines written in July 1976 and the programme of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR), written in February 1980.

## Rhetoric

Despite its fighting rhetoric and critique of PCS pacifism, the BPR could not attain a genuine alternative to the politics of the PCS without embracing Trotskyism, which alone comprehends the necessary leading role of the working class, as expressed in the theory of Permanent Revolution.

lution.

This has left the BPR with only a road back towards a 'left' form of class alliance and popular frontism.

However the principal external influence upon this political development is not Peking or Hanoi (although it is interesting to note that FAPU manifests keen interest in Hanoi, with the entire June issue of its magazine *Polemica Internacional* devoted to a discussion of the strategy of the NLF in Vietnam), but Nicaragua.

## Stuffing

The Nicaraguan revolution has put the stuffing into the 'policy of alliances' with remarkable speed.

Indeed the impact of the defeat of Somoza can be seen in the turnaround by BPR leader Cayetano.

In February of this year he denounced the connections between Ruben Zamora and the US State Department, and stated that the proposed Popular Revolutionary Government of El Salvador would be constituted "from all social sectors, excluding the 14 families, imperialism, and its allies".

(*Barricada*, 25 Feb)

Yet a mere two months later Cayetano was well ensconced alongside Zamora in the FDR, fighting now for a government which in Cayetano's words:

"will not be socialist but, rather, a government that, with the efforts of the entire people, will build an economy on the basis of independence and sovereign development."

This orientation has been defended and pursued even more consistently by FAPU, which is also politically descended from the PCS. Its guerrilla arm, the FARN, grew out of the ERP, which was the guerrillaist (Castroite) break-away from the CP in the 1960s.

The ERP was headed by the celebrated poet Roque Dalton who had been a leading Stalinist for over a decade; but he quickly appreciated the errors of guerrillaism and was killed in a sordid internal struggle when he set up FARN.

In 1974 FAPU was established from a grouping of radical trade union caucuses. But while it achieved a substantial base among the industrial working class, it still held on to



El Salvador National Guard

points which draw together a correlation of forces necessary to make a definitive breakthrough . . . It was important to gain the support of everybody, not just the left . . ."

(*Pueblo*, 10 March 1980)

Thus the new authority of the FSLN in post-revolutionary Nicaragua is being thrown unambiguously into international alliances that submerge completely the leading role of the working class, and reduce the question of socialist revolution to one of "stages" in the classic Stalinist pattern - first "democratic" capitalism, then, at some point in the future, 'socialism'.

The third major 'politico-military' organisation is the LP28/ERP, which joined the FDR-DRU alliance later than the others principally because the ERP has maintained a more adventurist and Guevarist strategy than the other groups.

This tendency has certainly been somewhat tamed in recent months, in part by the necessity of co-ordinating actions as the tempo rises, and in part by the very cost sustained during the attempted full-scale insurrection called by the ERP in October after the overthrow of General Romero.

## Adventurism

All the same, the ERP's adventurism is still evident and remarked upon by its peers.

The LP-28 has demonstrated similar tendencies in the political field, and this can be explained to some degree by the fact that a large part of its membership is drawn from the slums of San Salvador, and that it lacks an appreciable base in the industrial working class or the peasantry.

Comparatively undeveloped programmatically, largely staffed by student radicals and the recently-mobilised lumpen-proletariat, the LP-28 remains the most 'insurrectionist', immediately populist current.

Nevertheless, it has shown itself to be increasingly influenced by the political programmes of the BPR and FAPU and its military capacity has grown considerably over recent months, with the army now admitting that the ERP controls large parts of the north-eastern province of Morazan.

Concluded next week

a broad anti-fascist programme, and failed to undertake any serious work amongst the rural proletariat and the peasantry which led to the formation of the BPR the following year.

The BPR attacked the FAPU as:

"a vacillating petty bourgeois current, the political strategy of which has led it to attach itself to the designs of the revisionists."

(*Combate* 3/7/77)

## Left voice

Yet FAPU itself has a highly adroit left voice. It argues, like the BPR, that "marxism-leninism is the only science capable of guiding the people towards socialism and communism" (*Polemica Internacional*, June 1980). It argues that:

"the fundamental social classes are the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and that the struggle between these two classes constitutes, without any doubt, the essential nucleus of class struggle in El Salvador."

(*Polemica Internacional*, February 1980).

It argues that the fate of Latin American military dictatorships is inextricably linked to the crisis in world capitalism and goes on to warn that while CP leader Shafik fears the plans of the ultra right, the danger comes equally, if not even more so from another quarter:

"the 'Great Right', the not-so-extreme-right, but in the end still the right, which accounts for a good part of the middle class and bourgeoisie . . . which is against a military counter-coup because it understands that in the long term

the costs of military dictatorship are too great."

Equally, despite the fact that it did not immediately call for the overthrow of the October junta, FAPU identified it as:

"an alliance between the army (as the principal bastion, within which agreement was reached between the pro-imperialist sector and the young officer sector on the basis of the partial displacement of the fascist sector), the 'aperturist' sector of the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeois reformist political parties, and intellectual sectors linked to the Catholic Church."

Yet, like the BPR, FAPU has eagerly grasped the "lessons of Nicaragua":

"the second lesson which the Sandinista Revolution has taught us is the necessity of establishing the broadest alliances with democratic forces. . ."

(*Pueblo*, 10 March 1980)

## "Mature forces"

In the March issue of *Pueblo*, FAPU give prominence to an interview with FSLN 'Comandante' Humberto Ortega in which he emphasises the importance of 'flexible, mature policies of alliances':

"Mature forces? . . . I refer to those bourgeois forces which continue to mature and do not indulge in adventurist acts like those of the CIA and the most reactionary and retrograde sectors. There are mature forces in the world which while they understand the nature, the strength of a revolutionary movement, and are at the same time in partial contradiction with it, can come to respect it.

One can reach determinate alliances at determinate political

# FIGHTING TORY ATTACKS IN SCOTLAND

With the official government figures showing 241,267 unemployed in Scotland (10.7%) pressure is mounting in the Labour Party Scottish Executive and the Scottish Trades Union Congress to give some leadership in the fight against the Tory government.

The Labour Party are to hold a conference on the cuts on October 18 for delegates from local authority Labour Groups and from CLPs.

The Labour Party hold a large majority of the Parliamentary seats in Scotland, controlling the main Regional Councils in industrial Central Scotland.

They swept the board in the last District Council elections.

The question which should be posed on October 18 is how to unite these forces in a campaign of no cuts, no rent rises, and no rates rises in defiance of the Tory government.

However the choice being posed is between policies of cuts—albeit slower than the government wants—which Strathclyde Regional Council and Central Regional Council

are carrying out; and the 'left' policy of "no cuts but put up the rates" as advocated by Dundee District, Stirling District and Lothian Regional Councils. Sitting on the sidelines are the Scottish National Party with Jim Sillars and the 79 Group within them.

The 79 Group argue for a more positive SNP intervention on the question of unemployment and the cuts.

## Inability

They want to campaign on Labour's inability to defend the Scottish and argue that therefore what is needed is self government.

The SNP after a massive growth were discredited in practice but still maintain a 20% share of the electorate.

If the labour movement fail to solve their problems of leadership, fail to tackle the Tory government, then the bourgeois SNP party threaten to make a comeback.

The Tory party continue to push forward with their attacks on the working class. They are insisting that council house rents must double over the next three years or they will cut local

authority housing support grants.

The Labour controlled local authorities have only two options: bow to the Tories and carry out their policies or unite and fight.

The General Council of the STUC have announced they will be organising an all-Scottish conference on unemployment in December to discuss ways of "easing the disastrous situation".

Going by past experience this probably means the broadest fronts with Tory controlled local authorities and the SNP being invited.

If this proves the case, the STUC will not mobilise the Scottish trade union movement against the Tories but will instead diffuse any opposition which is building up into a talking shop.

## Wasted energy

Past conferences of this nature have led to delegates wasting energy on bickering with the Tories and SNP rather than hammering out a plan of action for the labour movement.

There are some signs that the grass roots of the movement are not willing to wait for a lead



which might not come.

Following on from the recent meetings of the Labour Coordinating Committee in Stirling and the Rank and File Mobilising Committee in Edinburgh there has been the Cuts Conference in Glasgow and Cumbernauld Trades Council have called a demonstration through the town against unemployment on Saturday 20 September.

In the Central Region a con-

ference on unemployment has been arranged in Falkirk.

As of yet there has been no major successful struggle against the Tory government but the signs of opposition are growing.

The Falkirk Conference against unemployment on Sunday 12 October has been organised by the Central Region Federation of Trades Councils at the request of the Grange-mouth Area District Committee

of the TGWU.

The intention is to give the Labour and trade union movement in the Central Region some perspectives for mounting a fight against the Tory government and the rising tide of unemployment.

The conference is being arranged around a programme of action which has the following headings:

- \*Organise the unemployed.
- \*United action to fight redundancies.
- \*No cuts in local services.
- \*To defend living standards.
- \*Companies to open their books when in trouble.
- \*Fightback against redundancies.
- \*Work sharing, abolish overtime, and re-training.
- \*An alternative economic programme for the labour movement.

## Major union

With the support of the TGWU, which is the major union in the area, and with the Federation of Trades Councils attempting to pull in the other unions and the Labour Party branches, the Conference lays the basis in one area at least for united action against the Tories.

However the real test will be whether a united fight can be organised in the factories and workplaces where redundancies are being announced and in the Labour-controlled local authorities in the Region.

## Trotsky study group

The first conference of the Group for the Study of Leon Trotsky and the Revolutionary Movement will take place on Saturday 20 September, starting at 11 a.m.

It will be held at the Polytechnic of Central London, Marylebone Road, in Room 319/320.

Papers will be read on the 1932 disaffiliation of the Independent Labour Party from the Labour Party and the subsequent role of the Trotskyists in the Revolutionary Policy Committee and on parliamentary by-elections at Aylesbury in 1938 where Reg Groves was a candidate and at Neath in 1945 where the Revolutionary Communist Party stood Jock Haston.

# Belfast dockers fight on jobs and wages

340 deep sea dockers in Belfast are now entering their fifth week on strike.

In September 1978 members of the same workforce staged a major strike against the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

The strike occurred when three members of the ITGWU were detained under this reactionary law when travelling to England on a routine training course.

## Cleared

Their names had previously been cleared with the RUC by the union.

Following the detention of the dockers the strikers marched through the centre of Belfast demanding their release.

While two were released, the third, Paddy Kelly, an ex-internee, was still detained.

This inspired the dockers to more militant action—for two hours they laid siege to Stormont Castle—the former home of the unionist government and now British imperialism's headquarters in the six counties.

They blocked the entrance to the Belfast Harbour and sealed off roads to the city.

The militancy and strength of the dockers is again reflected in this current strike.

The strike began at a time of an upsurge of militancy among Catholic working class youth manifested in fierce rioting and attacks on the British army and the RUC.

## Demands

The two principal demands of the dockers are for a £25 per day basic wage and against a return to the system of casual dock labour.

With the announcement on August 11 of the bankruptcy of the workers' employing



Scottish workers on a march against the cuts last November

agency—The Dockers' Employers' Pay Organisation (DEPO)—dockers faced the end of a guaranteed weekly wage and a return to the cattle market system of casual labour.

## Daily queue

This would involve the dockers to queue up each day to be viewed by the stevedores who could then choose who they would allow to work that day.

DEPO was formed by seven major Irish grain importers (many of whom have multimillion pound turnovers).

The agency employed the dockers, allocated them to particular jobs and then charged the shipping companies.

While the dockers were paid a basic daily wage of £17.20, any money earned in excess of this, after DEPO had extracted its share, was set aside to pay

the dockers at times when there was no work.

## Guaranteed wage

Through this scheme they were guaranteed a weekly wage of £86 per week.

The collapse of DEPO occurred after the bosses had been trying to push through 100 voluntary redundancies.

Even if these redundancies are pushed through there is no guarantee that the remainder of the workforce will get enough work to sustain their weekly basic wage.

Before the strike the dockers were reduced to two days work per week, which if it were to be continued after a return to work and in the absence of DEPO, would reduce the dockers' weekly take home pay to £34.40.

A return to the casual system of dock labour which

was abolished in 1972 threatens all the gains made by the workers.

The deep sea dockers have traditionally been a majority Catholic workforce, and if the bosses were allowed to pick and choose on a daily basis, opportunities for discriminating against Catholic workers would obviously increase.

The threat of religious discrimination is increased by the current increases in lay offs and redundancies among Protestant workers.

## Unemployment

This is a very serious threat with the current rate of unemployment among Catholic workers being 23.3% as opposed to 9.35% among the Protestant working class.

Although dockers in Derry, Larne, Carrickfergus and Warrenpoint are blacking cargo normally handled by the Belfast

dockers, only the Dublin docks in the south have responded with solidarity action.

If the strikers are not to be isolated it will be necessary to extend blacking and solidarity action, not only to all the southern docks workers and transport workers, but also to the British ports.

On Britain, with the placing of 178 registered dockers on the Liverpool Temporary Unattached Register, the bosses are beginning a similar attack on British dockers.

With the proposed national strike by dockworkers against the threat of redundancies the British dockers must take up the demands of the Irish deep sea dockers.

British workers can take up the fight in their own unions to force their union leadership to implement solidarity action and support for the Irish deep sea dockers in their struggle against imperialist exploitation.

# Block votes set against Labour democracy

By John Lister

"It could be that this year major changes in the way the Labour Party conducts its affairs may rest on the decisions of a small number of people".

In these characteristically naive words *Labour Weekly* sums up the fact that this year, as every year, the bulk of the votes at the Labour Party conference are wielded by a handful of trade union bureaucrats.

Out of 7.1 million votes to be cast at the conference, 6.46 million are union block votes.

And while a few unions (UCATT and NUPE in particular) have a specific conference mandate to support long-needed democratic reforms in the Labour Party, most union leaders have succeeded in obtaining policy decisions that enable them—in horse-trading and back stairs deals with the Labour leadership—to take the final decision.



Callaghan at TUC Congress

## Standing ovation

As shown by the standing ovation for Callaghan's reactionary speech at the TUC Congress, the rightward-moving union bureaucracy is increasingly driven towards an alliance with the Labour right wing against the militant demands of their rank and file membership for action to defeat the Tories.

In the eyes of many union leaders, any victory to the Labour 'left' at the conference

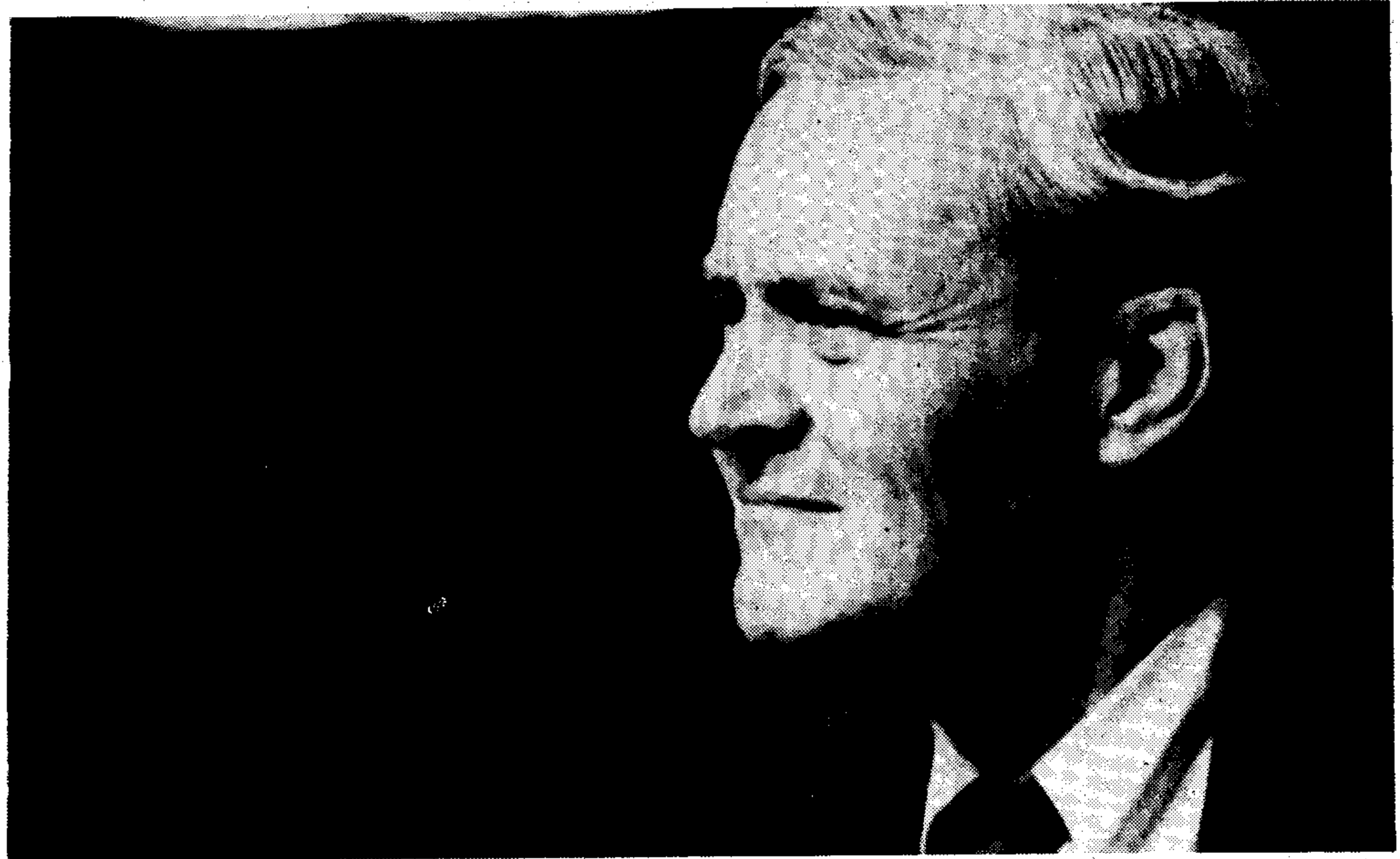
would merely encourage workers to place embarrassing demands on the Labour leadership and to intensify the struggle for a socialist alternative to Thatcher's attacks.

The union bureaucrats have no such alternative to offer: and they know all too well that the "alternative economic strategy" peddled by Tony Benn and the Labour 'left' could rapidly be exposed as a threadbare diversion if the Tories were to fall this winter and Labour be catapulted, willy nilly, into

office. This explains the likely lineup of union votes against the proposed democratisation of the election of the Labour leadership and against giving the Party's NEC control over the election manifesto.

## Reselection

While many unions are obliged by mandate to vote in favour of the reselection of MPs (a majority of up to 800,000 seems likely) a *Labour Weekly*



Benn—victory receding?

survey suggests that a change in leadership election could be rejected by one million votes, with a further 500,000 majority of union block votes cast against NEC control of the manifesto.

The outcome on the manifesto issue could thus unusually hinge on the otherwise peripheral 700,000 votes wielded by the constituency parties and socialist societies.

Meanwhile the Callaghan/Basnett Commission of Inquiry seems likely to make a last-ditch bid to salvage something from its abortive sessions by rail-roading through a recommendation for the reinstatement of the "three year rule".

This would outlaw further discussion on these constitutional changes for three years—probably ensuring that the method of electing the party leader would remain unchanged until the next election!

Such an outcome would greatly please both the union bureaucrats and "social democrats", for whom "democracy" is the last thing they wish to see.

But it would spell out once more for Labour activists that the fight for party democracy is inseparable from the fight throughout the labour movement for an alternative political leadership.

With neither 'left' nor right wing trade union or political leaders offering a serious programme for action against Thatcher, a revolutionary leadership offers the only way forward.

That is the way offered by Socialist Press.

# School meals campaign

As a result of the provisions of the 1980 Education Act, it has been estimated that about 600,000 school children (approx. 50% previously eligible for free school meals, will no longer qualify.

The requirements of the Act have been rigorously carried out by many county councils, not the least of which is the virtual withdrawal of the school meal service in Tory-controlled Dorset, with a loss of 800 jobs ensuring that hot meals are no longer available to any children under 12 and that those "in need" are discriminated against by the degrading handing-out of County packed lunches.

The proposed cash-cafeteria £1 school dinner in Lincolnshire which will be likely in January is further evidence.

Lancashire County Council are carrying out government cuts in school meals with equal vigour.

Drastic reductions in the threshold levels for free school meals have proved a massive

burden on many low-income families, now faced with a weekly school meals charge of £2 per child.

The local education office is refusing to give details of families affected.

The 14.3% increase in the cost of a school meal and the erosion of their nutritional content under the revised menus are forcing more and more children into taking packed lunches.

## Destruction

Cabinet proposals for further £50 million cuts in the Education budget are bound to result in the virtual destruction of the school meals system in most countries.

But parents and workers in Lancashire are fighting back.

The recently formed 'School Meals Campaign' in the Hyndburn/Rosendale area, involving parents, teachers and trade unionists is determined to defend jobs and to fight to retain what is left of the limited school meals service.

The group are equally determined in their struggle to see the full restoration of the provision of school dinners for all, a service which has been eroded by Labour and Conservative governments alike, almost from its inception.

The progressive nature of the campaign's positions are reflected in the linked demands of 'no more cuts', 'extend the school meals service' and 'free school meals for all'.

The campaign is hoping to link with other 'anti-cuts' campaigns in the area and with struggles to defend jobs, the school meal service and, therefore, living standards throughout Lancashire.

Support is being sought from local Trades Councils, workers, teachers and trade unionists and from community and one-parent family groups.

# Letters

# Tameside slogan

## Sexism raises its head

Dear Comrades,

As a member of the sex that actually forms the majority of the population I would just like to point out to comrade Jack Burnett that—contrary to common belief—the "average person" is not male!

This is in reference to a paragraph in the final part of his series on Prior's Anti-union laws (SP 213) which starts: "It might be thought by the average person" . . . and ends "he thinks to himself the primary purpose of disrupting supplies must be . . . to disrupt supplies".

## Specific attacks

Comrade Burnett has written one of his articles on the way Prior's Act specifically attacks women, through the sections curtailing maternity leave, etc.

I think it is vital to stress that women are not only hit by those specific sections but that, as trade unionists, they too will be hit by these attacks on the right to strike, to picket or to have a closed shop.

In fact it is from the experience that Prior has had from many of the struggles actually led by women (Chix, Grunwicks) that he is deter-

mined to limit these strengths in the working class.

Sexist language is insidious. It can slip in very often unnoticed, so that sexist notions like the average person being male become established as basic assumptions.

I can only presume that comrade Burnett holds these assumptions for though he points out the "schizophrenia" in the quote from satirist Michael Frayn which he uses to introduce his article, he does not in any way point out Frayn's sexism in the quote: "Public opinion as far as I can judge concedes the right of a worker in a free society to withdraw his labour".

It is a fundamental responsibility of all Trotskyists to fight to destroy sexist notions that presume that all workers, all trade unionists and "average people" are male, as these concepts play a fundamental part in the double oppression of women workers which we are seeking to end.

AMS  
Oxford

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Cde AMS's first point is well taken. But in fairness it should be noted that Jack Burnett's article was on Prior's Act, not media sexism.

Dear Comrades,

Recent issues of *Socialist Press* have mentioned several times that while supporting the struggle of Tameside Trades Council for reaffiliation to the TUC, the WSL doesn't support the central demand raised by Tameside which led to its expulsion by the pro-imperialist TUC bureaucrats—'Bring the war to Britain'.

The only reason given for opposing this demand is that it is 'ambiguous'.

But in the war of an oppressed nation against its imperialist oppressors there is no ambiguity comrades.

It is simply a question of choosing sides—for or against British imperialism.

Trotskyists in the oppressor (British) nation must unconditionally support the struggle of the oppressed (Irish) nation in their fight to rid themselves of their imperialist oppressors and determine their own future.

The slogan 'Bring the war to Britain' unambiguously states where Trotskyists in Britain stand on the question of the Irish war.

We stand alongside the Irish people against the British state—whether the Irish guerrillas literally choose to wage war in Britain or not.

But more important than that the slogan demonstrates the surest way in which revolutionaries in Britain can support the Irish struggle—by taking up the class war against our own bourgeoisie.

Trotskyists have no illusions in the petit-bourgeois politics of guerrillaism. But our task in Britain is to win workers to the independent class war against British imperialism and to support for the struggle of the Irish people against our common enemy.

Support for Tameside means support for the slogan 'Bring the war to Britain'—otherwise the WSL is attaching the same qualifications as the TUC bureaucrats did when they expelled Tameside.

Fraternally,  
Socialist Press supporter.

## \*WE REPLY

In our coverage of Ireland and in our active campaigns within the labour movement, *Socialist Press* and the WSL fight in practice to raise the issue of the Irish war in Britain.

But the slogan "Bring the war to Britain" is in our view mistaken in that it is readily interpreted by workers as advocating bombing campaigns and similar methods of struggle.

## Solidarity

Such methods contribute neither to the development of the necessary revolutionary consciousness amongst Irish workers—nor to the fight for international solidarity in the British labour movement.

In putting forward slogans that clearly oppose and fight for the defeat of British imperialism and its repression of the republican movement in the six counties, it is by no means

incumbent upon revolutionaries to use formulations that foster unnecessary confusion in the labour movement—as the Tameside slogan unfortunately does.

We have, however, consistently defended the right of Tameside Trades Council to use this and any other anti-imperialist slogan in its struggle for solidarity with the Irish people and against the chauvinist reactionaries of the TUC bureaucracy.



Tameside lobby at Brighton TUC

# CAR CRISIS: A

# PROGRAMME FOR BLW

\*20% wage increase now!  
\*Restore the agreements lost last year!  
\*For a sliding scale of wages to protect against inflation!

\*Defend jobs—stop redun-

dancies—work sharing on full pay!

\*Stop all closures—occupy the plants.  
\*Support occupations with an all-out official strike.  
\*Open the books of BL, the

One of the most dramatic aspects of the current world slump has been the collapse of vehicle sales.

From small cars through to heavy trucks, sales have plunged by anything from 25 to 60%: two of the three major US car monopolies are deep in the red with losses totalling well over \$2 billion predicted for this financial year.

The plunge in sales has produced a crisis of overproduction for the major manufacturers: and as stocks of unsold cars have grown uncontrollably, a spate of lay-offs, closures and cutbacks have been imposed on a world scale.

In the USA, domestic car production is down to 5.5 million this year—3.8 million below the 1978 figure. 300,000 car workers are laid off, along with a further 500,000 in component firms and related businesses.

In Italy, Fiat is facing an unsold stock of 60,000 cars with losses on car production last year of \$120 million: lay offs have been prevented so far only by militant union resistance.

## German sackings

In West Germany 12,000 car workers have lost their jobs in Ford and Opel, while tens of thousands more are on short time working in the other firms.

In Britain, too, every major car manufacturer is operating short time, lay offs or redundancies as sales have slumped by over 38% this year.

And things are getting worse as the recession continues to deepen.

In such conditions competition between car giants becomes cut throat. There are signs of a price war as manufacturers scramble to launch new models to corner an increased share of a declining market.

Ford, for instance, have launched their new 'world car' (the Escort replacement), the Erica, at a US price that means an estimated \$200 per car loss in a bid to recapture lost sales.

And Ford's \$4 billion investment programme includes the establishment of automation far in advance of its European rivals—with 500 assembly robots operating in Europe in the next three years.

General Motors, too, is embarked on a vast multi-billion international investment programme involving the closure of "obsolete" plants in Australia and West Germany and the building of new plants with government aid in Austria, Spain and Northern Ireland.

Overshadowing these massive investment programmes is the growth of Japanese car exports. By 1984 Japanese car exports to the USA are expected to equal Ford's entire US production!

## Strikes

Throughout Europe, too, car manufacturers are bleating long and loud about import penetration—and, of course, blaming workers for low productivity and strikes as supposedly the cause of their economic crisis.

In Britain, Ford has emerged as the most profitable car manufacturer, while the past year has seen both Talbot and Vauxhall claiming to make a loss.

BL, after returning only marginal profits has now returned a £155 million loss for the first half of this year, indicating a new crisis point for the

corporation.

But recent months have seen a rapid deterioration in the UK. Both Talbot and Vauxhall are on short time.

The slump, coupled with closures in heavy manufacturing industry such as steel, have also resulted in the lay-up of tens of thousands of lorries in the areas affected.

## Worst slump

This has created by far the worst slump in the history of the heavy vehicle industry. Fodens have gone into liquidation, while some BL heavy vehicle plants are operating only one day a week.

In cars, BL plants are operating at only a fraction of its capacity with many plants on short time working. Further cuts are taking place at Jaguar, Range Rover, the Rover SD1 Saloon where output is now a mere 20% of the target announced when the model was launched four years ago.

The Cowley Assembly Plant which has a capacity of nearly 10,000 cars a week, is also cutting production down to 1,900 a week—a mere 20% of capacity.

These BL cuts come despite the near completion of the factory closures under the Edwardes plan. Canley is now closed, Castle Bromwich is closed and MG closes next month.

The best indication of the slump is the new mini Metro, which was to be the "saviour of BL". Before it is even in the showrooms its production target has been halved to 3,500 per week!

Similarly the new Morris Ital has been cut back after only 3 months on the market.

Under these conditions can BL survive? It is hard to see how.

Certainly the near future is likely to produce at the very least a further "Edwardes Plan", foreshadowing the complete break-up of the company.

## Bleak

Under these conditions how can BL workers defend their jobs?

On the face of it things look impossibly bleak. The employers are getting away with murder.

Factories throughout industry are closing daily.

But it must be understood that the biggest single reason for the success of the employers in closing plants without resistance from the workforce is that the strength of the trade union movement has never been used to stop one!

In steel, for example, not a finger is being lifted to stop the closures. Redundancy pay was negotiated at Port Talbot against the official policy of the unions.

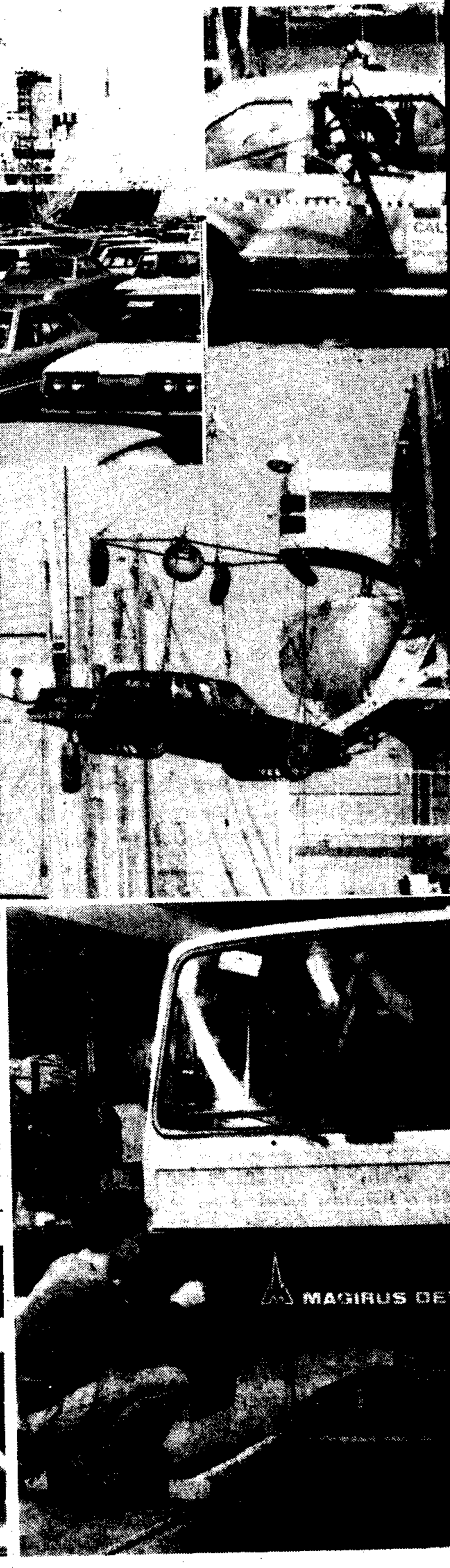
At Consett the unions "reluctantly recommended" acceptance of the closure—even while stirring speeches were being made against the closure at the TUC!

The Confed actually backed the Edwardes plan. When BL balloted the workforce the Confed enclosed a letter urging a "yes" vote.

As a result, Derek Robinson was sacked and Edwardes won a major victory.

Is it any wonder with such leaders that there are few fights against closures at the present time?

When workers make a stand, as at Meccano, the officials



refuse to give them enough backing to win.

If closures are to be challenged there is only one answer—a programme to defend the jobs, direct action to implement the programme and the mobilisation of the full strength of the trade union movement behind that action.

But a programme and action of this kind is a directly political question.

It requires a leadership that refuses to accept the "right" of the employer to make profits at the expense of the exploitation and redundancy of his workforce.

## Overthrow

In other words it requires a leadership that is prepared to fight for the overthrow of the anarchic and crisis-ridden capitalist system of production.

But the existing trade union leadership seek only to achieve reforms within the capitalist system.

They recognise that their own fat salaries, expense accounts and influential positions depend upon their ability to balance between the strength of the working class and the strength of the

employers. If the employers were defeated, the union bureaucracy itself could also be swept away.

## No reforms

This is why the union leaders time and again emerge as opposed to any direct challenge to the system itself: and even when the capitalists make it clear there are no reforms on offer, the union bureaucrats divert workers with illusions that if they make concessions on hard-won conditions and living standards, it will open the door.

The Stalinists of the Communist Party who dominate the shop stewards in BL are no different. Their policy of "peaceful coexistence" with capitalism lands them up in peaceful coexistence with Edwardes! They have an appalling record.

They accepted both the Measured Day Work system and the Ryder Report. Derek Robinson, as senior "participation" representative pledged "total cooperation" at the inception of the Metro project.

The Stalinists supported the witch-hunt of Trotskyists. They helped to introduce the new five

grade structure and advocated corporate-level bargaining. They even refused to challenge Duffy when Robinson himself was sacked in a major move designed to discipline the trade union movement.

Now Jack Adams, the successor to Derek Robinson has circulated a bulletin around the Longbridge plant calling for full cooperation with the mini Metro project—only days after he was disciplined by management for attending a meeting of the BL Combine Committee!

Between the Communist Party convenors and right wing union officials a division of labour has been established in which through both the official and unofficial bodies of the unions they combine to block any independent struggle and to force through the only policy they can offer—on which they both agree: the reactionary call for import controls.

## Apparent logic

Many workers see more import controls as a way to save British industry and defend British jobs.

The policy appears to have a logic: imported cars for example have doubled their penetration

into the British market in the past ten years.

Imports are going up. Would it therefore not be "sensible" to cut imports and protect the British car industry?

After all didn't "Japanese competition" destroy the motorcycle industry?

It is this kind of apparent logic, coupled with an overwhelming desire not to get into a confrontation with the motorcycle employers which has led major unions like the TGWU to base everything around the demands on the Tories for import controls.

The TGWU Executive Council launched their Save British Industry Campaign last spring which adopted a ten-point charter on import controls.

They have adopted a TGWU 'alternative plan' in which they offer a no-strike clause in return for import controls and more investment.

The question is would import controls save jobs even Margaret Thatcher and Keith Joseph could be persuaded to implement them?

Thatcher and Joseph of course look at things from the point of view of capitalism as a whole and know the implications

suppliers, distributors and banks.  
 \*For a new leadership in BL - build the Leyland Action Committee.  
 \*Strengthen the shop stewards movement - rebuild the

combine committee.  
 \*For a nationalised, integrated automotive industry under workers' management.

# WORKERS



# CONFEDERATION OF SHIPBUILDING AND ENGINEERING UNIONS.

**The Executive Council is convinced there is no feasible alternative to the BL recovery plan. We therefore strongly urge all Trade Union members to vote YES in the present ballot.**

manning levels must be defended and workers who go VR replaced on their jobs.

Work sharing on full pay, when management cut production.

BL workers have fallen far behind in the wages league. In 1973 for example, the national average wage was £40 a week. A track worker in BL was on £50. Now a BL track worker is on £88 and the national average wage is £122.

This year the 20% claim must be won in full. One of its weaknesses is that it has no *cost of living clause* to cancel out the effects of inflation.

Future claims must contain such a clause. Since the working class are not responsible for inflation and have no influence over it they must have agreements adequate to protect them against it.

But neither jobs nor wages are going to be defended unless there is a struggle for leadership.

The official leaders are moving rapidly to the right—as shown at the recent TUC Congress. Now they are not just calling for *import controls* but even supporting Callaghan's call for *wage controls*.

### No-strike clause

The TGWU on the basis of the report they commissioned from Eurofinance, have drawn up an "alternative plan" for BL which offers a *no strike clause* in return for more investment and import controls.

In talks on the reconstitution of the BL JNC the Confed discussed a document containing a *legally binding no strike clause*.

Although no agreement was reached this is still on the agenda to be resolved by the 1981 review.

Meanwhile the unofficial BL Combine Committee is almost defunct. Its recent meeting (the first for a year) was attended by less than 50 stewards—the smallest meeting since it was set up 16 years ago.

In an unprecedented move, those who attended the meeting including Longbridge convenor Jack Adams were disciplined by management for attending an unofficial meeting inside working hours. This means that the committee is unlikely to meet again in the foreseeable future.

The Combine Committee must be rebuilt. Historically the shop floor strength in the car industry has been built on the unofficial movement. But this requires a development amongst militant workers and shop stewards in BL.

This is a big job but is entirely possible. The Leyland Action Committee has made an important start. It has adopted a programme which is essentially the same as the programme outlined in this article.

### Divisions

An action programme for BL must break down divisions between workers throughout the car industry, both internationally and within Britain.

Ford workers must not be played off against BL workers. Vauxhall workers must not be played off against Talbot workers, or workers in the component industry.

Such moves must be combatted through the call for a nationalised integrated car and component industry in Britain, embracing all car and component manufacturers and distributors. Only such a measure could bring any kind of planning or order to the industry.

It is true to say that no real or lasting solution can be achieved under capitalism; that only socialism and a planned economy can resolve the problem.

But there is an intimate connection between the fight in defence of the workers rights today and the possibility of overturning capitalism and establishing socialism.

Trotsky set this out in the Transitional Programme.

The programme explains that it is only through the defence of the working class today that a leadership can be developed in struggle, adequate to the task of social revolution.

It is only through such struggles that the consciousness of the working class in the car industry and elsewhere can be raised to carry through that historic task.

By Bill Peters

keep out Japanese or Italian imports then *productivity* must be raised, the commodity must be made more competitive, wages must be held down, factories must be closed and hard-won agreements must be given up!

The trade union leaders have, of course, gone along with this—as BL workers are painfully aware.

The unions are now involving themselves in advertising campaigns and sales promotion. The TGWU recently gave a full page of the *Record* to a reprint of BL's 'Buy British' advertisement. Convenors cooperate in sales promotions in their individual plants.

In this way import controls lead workers directly into alliance with their own employer at the very point when they are facing severe conditions created by the crisis of capitalism and requiring a socialist solution.

So how can BL workers actually defend themselves under these conditions? There is no magic formula.

First and foremost it is a question of *leadership*. They must be prepared to challenge their existing "leaders" at every level. They must tell them to stop the sell-outs. Stop the collaboration with management, stop the soft jobs and the easy life.

It is necessary to find ways of demonstrating clearly to workers exactly what these 'leaders' are and who they represent.

At the same time defence of jobs needs a plan, a programme around which to organise action. Workers must demand that their leaders support this plan. Workers must at the same time be prepared to build a *new leadership* from amongst those who are prepared to fight.

The situation must be ended where the employers keep all the trump cards in their hands and are allowed to play them so that everything turns into a scramble for the highest redundancy pay. This happens when it appears to workers that there is no alternative but to accept the money.

There must be a clear alternative which can develop a confidence amongst workers that there is a real chance of success in defending their jobs.

Such an alternative must start clearly from the *independent interests of the working class as distinct from that of the employers*.

The trade unions must declare that the problems facing the workers stem from the private enterprise system of the employers themselves.

They arise from the system of production for profit and the contradictions within the capitalist mode of production.

They must say clearly that the working class have a *right* to a decent house and a *right* to a living wage, a *right* to a decent home and a *right* to a health and education service.

They must say that it is unacceptable that the working class be made to pay for the crisis.

Having got that straight it is necessary to have a programme which directly challenges the "rights" and prerogatives which employers have for so long been allowed to exercise.

*Business secrecy* for example. When closures and redundancies are announced the only people who know the whole picture are the employers: this enables them to say anything they like to justify their actions.

Last spring, Edwardes created a crisis situation. He claimed massive overstocking, laid most plants off for a month and ran a programme of voluntary redundancy.

When Edwardes' "crisis" was investigated (by an open the books committee set up from the shop stewards committee in Cowley, for example) it was found that with the exception of the Rover SD1, stocks at the time were normal!

The lay-off had created a shortage of cars. A month later some plants put production up and recruited labour—having just made hundreds "redundant"!

The exercise, while appearing to be economic madness, in fact paid Edwardes very well. It was timed just before the crunch on the annual wage review and created the feeling that it was hard to fight for wages because the company was stacked out with cars. It had the desired effect.

This autumn, although the crisis is very real and not contrived it is again being manipulated and synchronised to coincide with the pay review to have a similar effect.

The only reason management can play this kind of game is because they monopolise information.

When a closure is announced they usually show the full time officials a simple balance sheet of profit and loss. But this does not mean anything. Only management have all the information; and they use it to suit themselves.

They never reveal where all the money is going—for instance what they are paying for their components and services; or what rake-off the distributors are getting.

Even small items like how much they are paying into Tory Party funds or £1 million to charter a cruise liner to take the distributors on a holiday are hidden away.

Yet two-thirds of a car is manufactured in the private component industry. With BL being government controlled the pricing policy of the component suppliers is of particular importance.

There is no point in saying BL is making a 'loss' if profit is simply being creamed off by component manufacturers.

Distributors, for example, get a 30% rake-off from the sale of a car.

To get a true picture it is necessary to know all of this. If workers are to lose their jobs

or are being denied a living wage they have the right to know.

The unions should therefore demand the opening of the books—all the books, all the files and all the information about the operation of the company as well as its suppliers, distributors and bankers—who are currently receiving £70 million a year in interest payments from BL.

This investigation is a step towards workers' control. If it turns out that the company is bankrupt then the mobilisation created around forcing the opening of the books can be turned to actively demand *nationalisation* in the case of a private firm.

If the firm is already nationalised, demands can be placed on the government to nationalise the distributors, the suppliers and the banks and to fund a programme of alternative production for social use under workers' management.

A campaign of this sort gives the initiative back to the labour force and puts management on the defensive.

Obviously simply to open the books will not save jobs. For that occupation is crucial.

Thoughts of redundancy payments must be set aside, and everything concentrated on defending the plant.

The property of the employer must be seized and the plant brought physically under workers' control.

Occupation alone may not be enough but it certainly puts management on the defensive, gives workers confidence, raises the issue sharply and provides the necessary platform to demand full support from the trade union movement for what is usually decisive in the end—*strike action in support*.

A major battle of this sort would transform the situation in relationship to closures and must be the objective if a new Edwardes plan is announced in BL.

To avoid occupations the employers run plants down gradually. It is an effective tactic.

### Immediate occupation

Just look at Canley and Castle Bromwich. By the time the closure comes there is not much left. Occupation should therefore be *immediate*, whilst the plant and the workforce is still intact.

Voluntary redundancy (VR) is also used repeatedly to run-down plants both for closure and to cut production.

In some plants management select who will go from amongst those who apply. They select the shop stewards and the militants.

In the Cowley Assembly Plant 80 out of 180 TGWU shop stewards went VR last spring in one exercise. It both deflates the trade union movement and gives the impression that stewards have been given preference.

VR must be resisted. If it cannot be stopped then

# SOCIALISTS DEMAND LABOURITES FIGHT CUTS

The local authorities throughout the country are facing the threat of more cuts and restrictions on their powers which will force them to make further cuts themselves if they fail to mount a fight against the Thatcher government.

Labour Party bureaucrats and careerists are caught in a dilemma between the need to be seen to be fighting the Tory

threat and the fact that any realistic fight will very rapidly go beyond their control and become a challenge to the government's right to govern, thereby undermining the Parliamentary system on which the Labour leaders depend for their career prospects and privileges.

One example of the way that the Labour leaders are being forced into a show of

action is in the Newham area of London, where the controlling Labour Group on the Council, and the Local Government Committee are calling a conference to discuss the way forward for the labour movement to oppose the Tories.

The Council itself has failed to lead any fight and has disciplined councillors who have broken the Group's rule of silence on

these questions, and so it cannot be expected to give any real lead.

The Kensington Ward of Newham North East Labour Party will be proposing a policy document, which we print below, designed to bring forward the demands which are needed to break out of the limits imposed by the present leaderships and to mount a serious attack against the Tories.

Those of us who thought that the present leaders of the Council were capable of defending the people of Newham against the attacks of the Tories have been proved decisively wrong.

It is now evident that none of the senior councillors, and very few among the newer members, have any wish to see the Council take any part in the struggle to defeat Thatcher.

This is the main point to be borne in mind by Labour Party members attending the conference "to prepare a socialist fight back" against the Local Government Bill.

The majority of councillors have not only failed to lead any opposition to the cuts but have also not even attempted to do so.

Anti-cuts lobbyists have been ignored and sometimes insulted by the councillors who are supposed to represent them. It is within this framework that Kensington branch feels the conference must draw up a 'strategy for Newham' and a 'socialist fight back'.

## Cuts made

The Local Government Bill is not the only threat to Newham. Massive cuts have already been made without the Bill, and more will be made without it.

The sale of council houses will be imposed upon the Council by the Housing Act, which also force vicious rent increases on council tenants. Added to this are the other Tory policies of economic collapse, unemployment and price inflation.

To cope with the inevitable opposition to all this, the Tories are attempting to destroy the rights of trade unions and are building up the numbers of the army and the police.

Why then do the Labour Group and the Local Government Committee wish only to consider the Local Government Bill? The reason is that the Bill, when it becomes law, will take away from the Council most of its room for political manoeuvre.

They will not be permitted to wriggle out of the cuts by increasing the rates and they will be told in some detail what to spend and on what to spend it.

## No hiding place

This leaves them with no political hiding place. They will have to either oppose the Tories (that is break the law), or obey orders (that is make more cuts and sack employees).

Why should this cause concern? Surely a solid Labour council would welcome the chance to take part in the massive opposition to Thatcher? After all has not the Labour movement always been forced to fight in the open at every



PHOTO: Mark Risher. IFL

Lambeth march against the cuts

stage from Tolpuddle to the Saltley Gates?

The real problem is twofold. Firstly, a number of the leading councillors, although standing for election on the Labour ticket, are not socialists of any description.

Their main concern is to maintain their own prestigious positions by being able to allocate the Council's resources. In order to continue in this way they need political stability and a passive working class.

This type of person has always tried to creep into the Party, particularly since the War. We remember their support of Prentice.

Secondly, there are a number of councillors, good active trade unionists and community representatives, who are afraid of trying to lead a cam-

paign against the Tories.

They are afraid because they think that there will be no response. They think there will be no response because the people of Newham will not trust the Councillors to lead them. And they think this because of their own failure to give such a lead.

These are the problems we, in Kensington branch, begin with in drawing up a strategy. The Labour Party must find a strategy and an approach that does not limit the Labour movement to actions the Council wishes to take but will force the Council into taking positive socialist actions.

What this means is drawing up and fighting for a programme of demands that corresponds to the present political situation, to the real threats which the Tories represent.

While recognising that Newham on its own could not overthrow the present government, Newham should be part of the growing forces opposing the Tories.

The programme can be nothing less than the replacement of the Thatcher government by a socialist government, formed on the basis of solving the workers' problems and not those of the capitalists.

To achieve this aim we suggest the following:

1. Industrial action to be taken and encouraged on the widest scale. Labour councils can make important contributions if they gain support of the workers. To gain this support the Council must use all of its resources of publicity and propaganda to launch its rejection of the cuts. Other boroughs in

London have shown the way, let Newham follow.

2. The council must assure the people of the borough that there will be NO MORE CUTS, either in services or jobs. Neither should cuts be introduced in the form of increases in rents, rates or mortgage repayments.

3. If the Council will not give these promises, the Party must go over their heads and give such a promise on behalf of the next council and then select candidates who are willing to fight. In that way the Party can build a socialist fight back despite the Council.

4) To take the fight forward we need demands that make the step from the present crisis to the socialist solution. To the Council's employees we must say that we fill all the vacancies.

To the growing number of unemployed we must say that we will start an enormous process of public works, giving full training and trade union pay, and at the same time working to solve the borough's problems.

5. To the ethnic minorities we must offer the resources of the council and the Labour movement in their fight against fascist and racist violence.

6. To those who will say that this is impossible, we must reply that it is absolutely necessary and that no other socialist answer exists. In order to achieve this programme we will work with other socialists and trade unionists throughout the borough and the country to turn our local struggles into an unstoppable movement against the Tories.



# Trotskyists warned of Bolivian army coup

Copies of the last five issues of *Masas*, the paper of the Partido Obrero Revolucionario (POR) led by Guillermo Lora have been smuggled out of Bolivia and sent to *Socialist Press*.

The POR have clearly learnt from their apparent reluctance to call for the arming of the oppressed masses in the period prior to General Banzer's coup of 1971—for which the POR were much criticised.

It should also be said to those who now criticise them from on high for intervening in CONADE (Committee for the Defence of Democracy—a body set up by the COB trade union federation and various centrist parties before the 1980 coup) that they did so in order to argue for proletarian revolution—and that they refused to sign the agreement when they lost this position.

The POR was alone in understanding that bourgeois democracy cannot function in a country as poor and backward as Bolivia, and in the months before the election warned that even if the election actually took place the results would not be allowed to stand.

## Indefinite strike

By May they were calling for preparation for an indefinite general strike, road blockades and the worker peasant alliance: "The POR has information that the Coups are on the march. If the coup takes place we call on the exploited to organise and come out on the streets to crush it. The mistakes of November 1 (the Natusch coup) must not be repeated. All unorganised resistance could lead to a useless massacre.

Every neighbourhood, area or block must organise defence committees responsible for directing the tactics of resistance. Remember that your enemy is not a united monolith and that our efficient resistance can increase its fissures.

If we want victory our mission must be to win soldiers and officers to our positions. All our resistance tactics must have as their reference point the concretisation of the indefinite general strike, road blockades and armed pickets as laid down by the COB.

The character of the projected coup will be to swiftly occupy the centres of resistance in order to later drown in blood all political and trade union leaders. Our slogan is to paralyse the enemy and destroy its links.

We call on the left to immediately form a political command to direct the struggle nationwide.

Only armed insurrection can install the workers' and peasants' government. Unity of the exploited under workers' leadership: anti-imperialist revolution front (FRA).

In the face of the failures and inability of bourgeois democracy: proletarian revolution and dictatorship!"

## Blank vote

In the election, the POR's repudiation of 'parliamentary cretinism' which they were convinced was widespread, led them to wage a campaign for a 'political blank vote'.

This was a tactic to be used in the ballot box to give a political statement to the masses and to the world.



Bolivian miners

stated:

"POR:  
\*Against the fascist coup.  
Prepare for general strike and road blockades.

\*Against misery.  
Wage rises and sliding scale across the board.

\*Against bourgeois and pro-bourgeois fronts.  
Unity of the exploited under workers' leadership (FRA).  
Only armed insurrection can install the workers' and peasants' government.

Proletarian dictatorship".  
*Socialist Press* has also received three copies of *Masas* printed after the coup of 17 July which testifies at the least to the high level of organisation and bravery of these comrades given the brutal character of the coup.

## Unity of the left

The first—printed on July 24—calls for 'Death to Fascism', armed struggle and 'unity of the left with a proletarian strategy... around clear revolutionary ideas in the FRA'.

POR comrades are directed to work within trade union and popular organisations, organising clandestine unions and committees.

"This resistance cannot be limited to the general strike and road blockades, vital as these are, but where appropriate must take the form of work-to-rules, partial strikes, hostility to bosses and government, sabotage and also acts of terror.

The rule must be: each house, each street, each work place must be a trench of struggle and resistance against

the fascist coup.

We must explain exhaustively that we are not talking of individual acts of terror but rather of a form of mass action and struggle".

## Housewives committees

The paper gives a moving account of heroic struggles, particularly in the mining localities by miners, the housewives committees and peasants.

The various miners' radio stations were focal points, able to transmit freely for several days, denouncing the coup and informing the resistance of troop movements.

These stations were primarily defended by human barricades of women and children who also organised the distribution of food to the mining communities and the thousands of peasants who thronged to these districts to join in the fighting side by side with the workers.

Roads leading to the Siglo XX and Catavi mines were successfully controlled by armed pickets although the Huanuni mine and radio station finally fell early on Sunday 20 July, leaving a trail of blood and mourning.

In Santa Ana mining women valiantly fought against a whole regiment while the traitor bureaucrat Lechin who had been arrested sent out communiques and pleaded on television cheek by jowl with the butcher Arze.

"We can talk over our problems and ambitions some other day but now let us avoid useless bloodletting. I repeat: I exhort all workers and peasants



Junta chief Garcia

and people in general to abandon blockades and civil resistance."

Entire regiments were retreating in disarray, soldiers were defecting and refusing to fire.

Ten thousand peasants surrounded the Challapata barracks and another huge mobilisation advanced on the Uncia barracks provoking another spurt of desertions and the consequent arrest of the commanding officer.

The activity of the peasants is all the more remarkable given the long tradition of the military-peasant pact in Bolivia to which their official leaders were still loyal stooges.

The military called for a truce mass meeting with the Siglo XX and Catavi miners who unanimously rejected a plea to stop broadcasting and return to work with the statement:

"Even if they manage to enter and silence the radio, massacring workers, we will not cease to fight this military thuggery".

By the issue of August 8 the military had succeeded in breaking the back of the resistance. Lechin's exhortations broke the strike in the cities, and the miners were finally forced to lay down their arms when the Coloviri mine was bombed from the air and the other districts threatened with the same fate.

Sending in troops was proving to be a risky bet and the Junta was prepared to go to any lengths to destroy opposition.

It is no longer correct to expect those generals who have

usurped power to fall immediately to a popular rising. The most important sectors of the masses (workers and peasants) have had to retreat for the moment and concentrate around their own organisations such as the unions...

"Our struggle against military thuggery is directed towards proletarian revolution and not the capitalist regime sought by the democratising bourgeoisie and imperialism".

*Masas* argues for taking up democratic demands but not the slogan of Siles' so-called clandestine government:

"We must strengthen, unite and spread those pockets of resistance to the military however small they are... to make this possible we need an adequate clandestine leadership.

For these reasons the constitution of the FRA is a need which can no longer be postponed".

The heroic resistance of the miners did not go unrewarded, since they remain free from the constraints of the national curfew and overt military interference.

When Stalinists and MIR (radical petty bourgeois nationalists) signed an agreement which contravened the mandate of the Siglo XX workers calling for freedom for all workers they were forced to another mass meeting where they were verbally and physically abused for their pains.

## Snatched away

However, even the precarious freedom enjoyed by the miners will be snatched away unless organised resistance to the 'cocaine coup' strengthens (and even this 'freedom' is accompanied by starvation).

We urge readers again to put the model resolution (see below) to their unions and to send donations to the Bolivia Solidarity Campaign, 1 Cambridge Terrace, London WWS.

They will be forwarded to exiled miners in Peru who can smuggle it in.

In case anyone still needs convincing of the value of their support we finish with a final quote:

"We salute with true feeling the solidarity of peoples all over the world with the struggle against military thuggery which we Bolivians are waging.

We salute the solidarity we have received from the proletariat and the masses in general. This support strengthens us and pushes forward the cause of world revolution.

We will have nothing to do with, nor do we ask for the support of puppet governments in this continent nor that of the imperialists. This support has only one destination: that of the democratising bourgeoisie and those political sectors which serve capital and the Yankees".

# Pass these resolutions!

## Resolution for union branches.

"This (trade union branch) deplores the recent military coup in Bolivia and expresses its solidarity with the struggle of the miners, peasants and other workers of Bolivia against the new Junta.

It calls on the union to give maximum material support to this struggle in:

1) Blacking of all trade with the Junta and calling on the TUC to organise a full-scale blacking campaign.

2) Participating in building a national campaign of solidarity.

3) Using all necessary means to ensure that recognition and aid are withheld from the Junta by the British government."

## Resolution for Labour Parties.

"This (Labour Party) deplores the recent military coup in Bolivia and calls on the NEC to support all trade union action in Britain in solidarity with the miners, peasants and other workers of Bolivia in their struggle to overthrow the new Junta. It calls on the NEC to ensure that all necessary means are used to prevent British government recognition of or aid to the Bolivian Junta, and further calls on the NEC to give active support to a national campaign of solidarity in Britain with the Bolivian working class."

# SOLIDARITY BONDS

The Bolivian POR have issued £1 bonds to raise money for the struggle they are waging to mobilise the masses against the military junta.

If you would like to buy some of these bonds, send your donation to WSL, BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX. We will forward your money and send you your bonds.



# Stalinist attacks

## 'lefties'

Nuneaton Trades Council was last week the scene of a bizarre witch-hunt against left-wingers—led by a Communist Party member.

Nuneaton Committee Against Racism and Fascism (NCARF) had just confirmed its plans for an anti-racist demonstration in the town on 28 September.

The demonstration will be held just four days before the trial of seven anti-fascists who were arrested on August 17—when the National Front marched in Nuneaton.

However, the campaign for the march received a minor unexpected setback at the Nuneaton Trades Council when Mary Collyer—one of the leading members of the local CP—launched a vicious attack on the march and opposed Trades Council support.

Having resigned from the NCARF one hour before the

Trades Council meeting, Collyer attacked the march as "bringing in lefties from all over the Midlands and through this witch-hunting succeeded in swaying a majority of the delegates to oppose it."

The CP locally and nationally must make its position clear. Does it support Collyer or does it support the call for an anti-racist demonstration on 28 September?

The demonstration assemblies at 11 a.m. at Pingles Sports Centre Car Park. Donations for the Defence Fund can be sent to Nuneaton Committee Against Racism and Fascism, 111 Bulkington Lane, Bedworth Nuneaton, Warwickshire.

# Fight against sackings at Ayrshire Marine

The struggle for basic safety conditions at the Ayrshire Marine Construction Site at Hunterston has escalated into a full scale battle between the workers involved and the vicious practices of multi-national capitalism.

Ranged against the workers are the joint interests of Chicago Bridge International, the Weir Group and Phillips Petroleum, an unholy alliance of American, British and Dutch big business. Having dismissed all 900, they have now declared that

they will close down the site and tow the partially completed platform away.

Whether this is possible or not is subordinate to the main issue which is the blackmailing tactics being used.

### Arrests

In all of this the big business interests involved have the backing of the capitalist state. On Wednesday last the Ayrshire police arrested 70 pickets and charged 48 with breach of the peace.

Yard convenor Ronnie

Munro told *Socialist Press*:

"About 200 police marched down to the picket lines and a police chief announced through a loudhailer that we were on private ground and must remove ourselves. We stood our ground and then they moved in and made arrests.

They took us to Largs police station where we were kept for five hours without even a cup of tea allowed. There we were questioned twice over, photographed and our names run through a computer to check if we had any previous records.

The whole operation was carried out in a military fashion and as if they were practising for something bigger.

We issued a press statement condemning the way in which the police acted, but little attention was paid to it in the newspapers."

One vital lesson that the workers involved are learning is the treacherous attitude of the official trade union and labour leadership.

On Tuesday last a delegation from the yard addressed the General Council of the STUC in Glasgow where Jimmy Milne, Hugh Wyper and John Pollock, among others, were present.

Having been given assurances of support from the General Council, they read in the newspapers next day a statement by

Milne demanding that the men return to work immediately without any prior concessions by the management.

The same attitude was adopted by the local Labour MP David Lambie, in a statement to the press. These people are like frightened rabbits, hypnotised by the wealth and arrogance of international big business.

The real friends and allies of the workers at Hunterston are the masses of workers now moving into conflict with the Tory government.

Ronnie Munro paid tribute to the generous aid they have received from Irvine Trades Council who have helped the strike committee set up headquarters and sought support for them in the trade union and labour movement.

There must now be the most determined effort by all militants to rally support for the men at Hunterston. The on-shore liaison committee must immediately convene a conference of all stewards involved in oil rig construction to campaign for a total shutdown of all sites until the Hunterston men get their jobs back and the management statement which provoked the dispute is withdrawn.

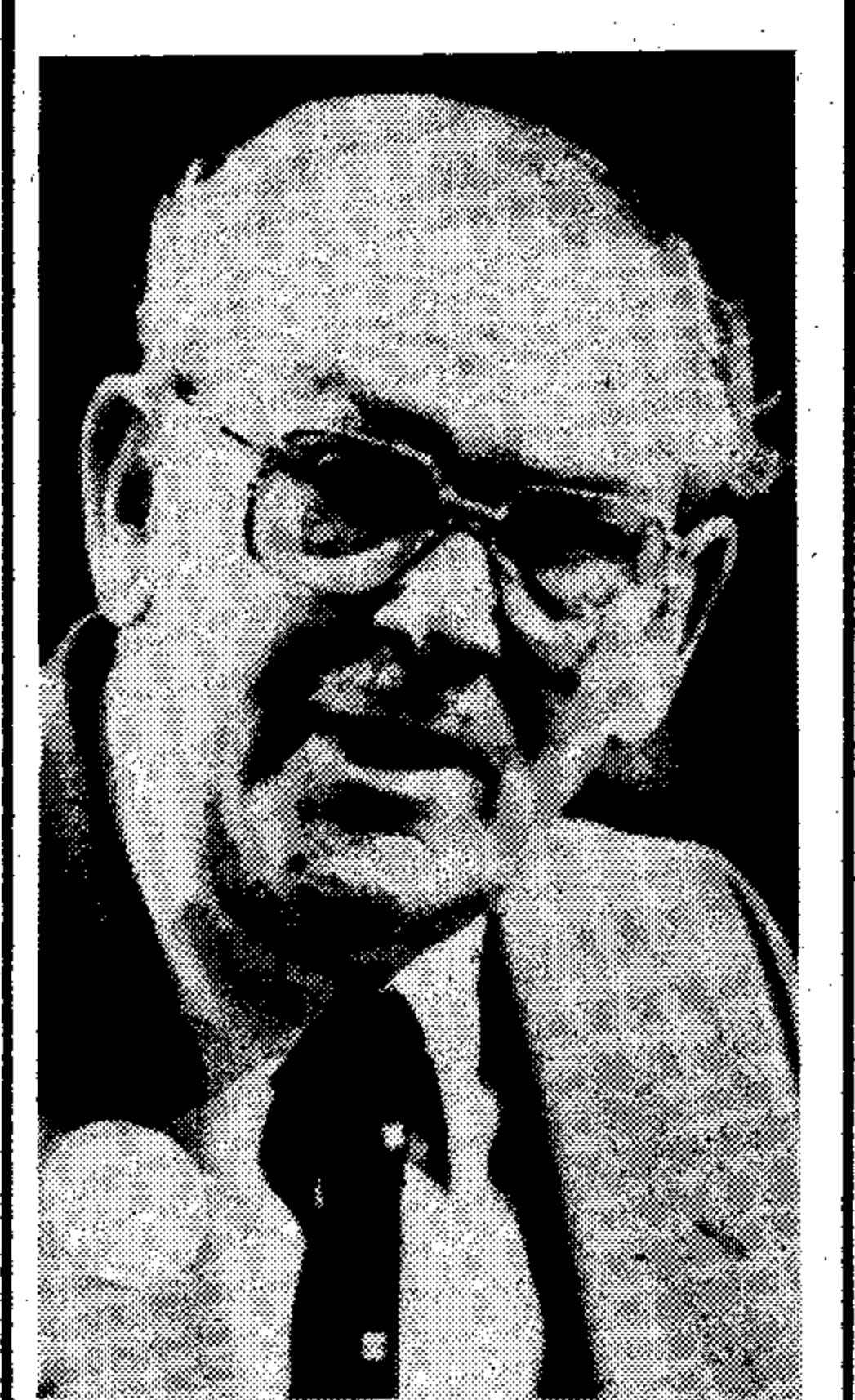
Messages of moral and financial support should be sent to the Shop Stewards Committee, (Hunterston Dispute), c/o Trade Union Centre, Ardrossan Road, Irvine, Ayrshire.

## Glasgow cuts fight

A well attended anti-cuts conference organised by Glasgow Campaign Against the Cuts last Saturday heard Ronnie Munroe, convenor at Ayrshire Marine denounce the General Council of the STUC for reneging on their agreement to support the 900 workers in struggle there.

A lame attempt to white-wash the STUC was made by Bob Gillespie, who attacked this effort to bring the struggle of industrial workers into the anti-cuts campaign.

A major weakness of the conference was that the obvious willingness to fight by the 270 delegates was not reflected in the toothless resolution presented to the conference at the end of the day.



Duffy

## Confed rejects

### 6.2%

Leaders of the Confederation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Unions last week rejected a miserable 6.2% pay offer from the Engineering Employers Federation—but made it clear that they had no intention of fighting.

Right wing AUEW President Terry Duffy—himself better off by some 26% following this year's pay rise for union officials—declared that "we are not in an aggressive mood".

The union leaders had suffered the humiliation of seeing every other aspect of their 18.5% claim thrown out as well.

Employers' spokesman Anthony Frodsham claimed that pay had gone up ten times as fast as productivity in the last three years.

In Japan, he claimed, productivity was rising faster than pay.

These arguments seem to have been taken seriously by Duffy and his fellow right wing Confed leaders, who were last year forced by the pressure of their membership into ten weeks of partial strike action, which eventually brought EEF concessions on pay, hours and holidays.

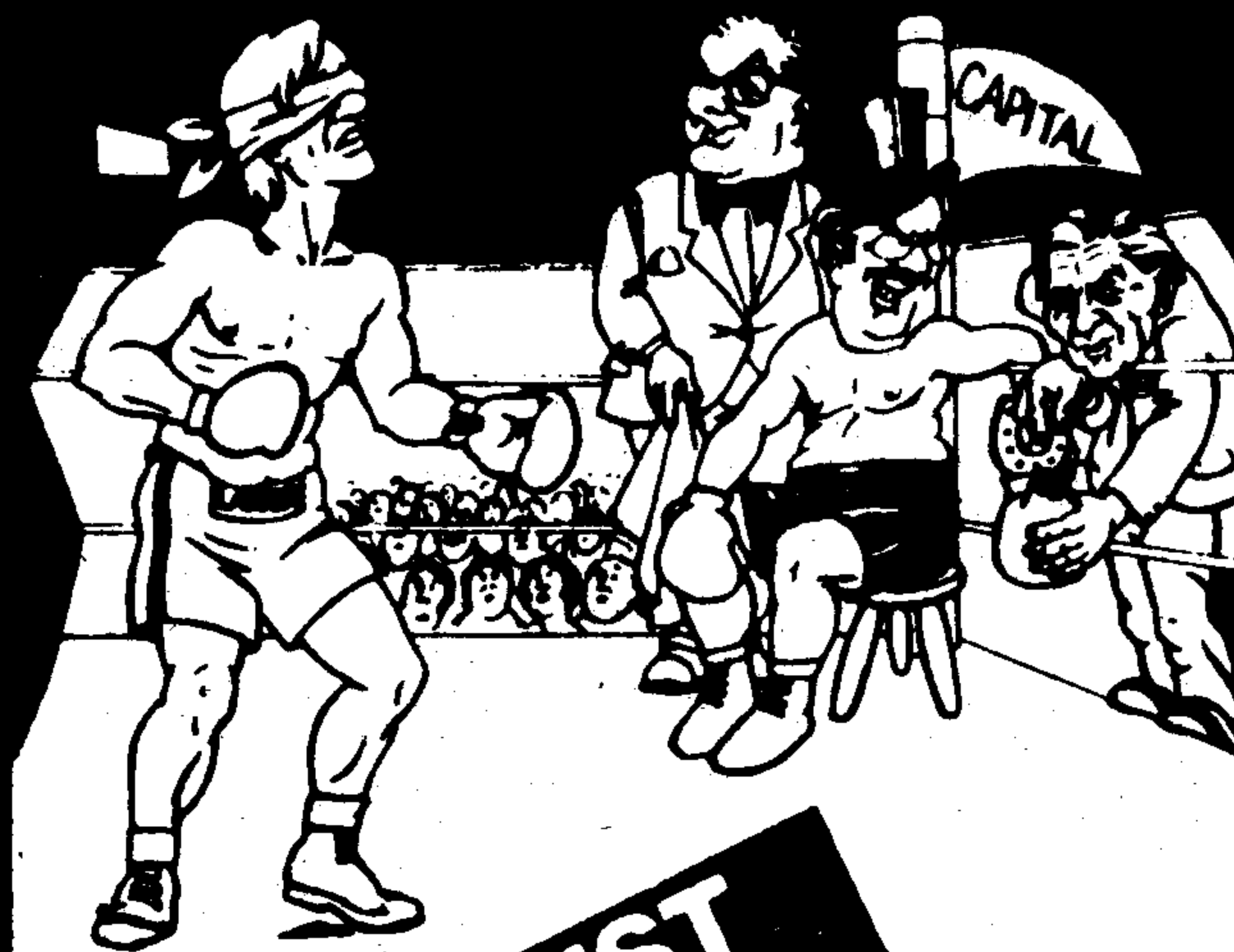
It has been plain since then that they want nothing less than another such confrontation with the employers.

Indeed they accept that capitalist firms should remain profitable—at the expense of workers' living standards.

Duffy has said that while recognising the "poor state" of the engineering industry, they are seeking "a good wage for a good day's work"—implicitly offering the employers the prospect of still further job-slashing productivity deals in exchange for a few extra percentage points on the pay settlement.

Engineering workers must reject such a position, and demand that Confed leaders lead a fight for a settlement no less than the 18.5% claim—which itself is insufficient to match the rate of Tory-stoked inflation.

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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.

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

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

degenerated workers' states.

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

Please send me more details of the Workers Socialist League.

Name .....

Address .....

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

# BL losses—on time for pay review

BL made a staggering £181 million loss in the first six months of 1980, as against a £9.2 million profit in the same period last year.

When "extraordinary items", including the closure of plants (£23 million) are taken into account the pre-tax loss was £154.9 million.

With BL sales down from 414,000 cars last year to 290,000 this year, this loss amounts to the equivalent of £500 for every car sold!

But not everyone is displeased with these figures. While cutting back its own profit margins in order to compete for sales in Britain and internationally, the state-run BL continues to provide profits for private component firms and distributors.

## Indebtedness

And while even these profits have fallen back in recent months, this drop is the result of the Tory-stoked recession, and not the fault of BL.

For the bankers, however, BL is an even better proposition. Its growing indebtedness, coupled with sky-high interest rates, mean that this "loss making" corporation with its increasingly exploited and low-paid workforce is in fact a source of steady profits for the banks.

Interest payments are a major factor in BL's "losses"—amounting to £44.7 million in the first half of 1980, as against only £27.6 million in the same period of 1979.

Even Sir Michael Edwardes, darling of the Tory government, felt obliged to comment on the fact that Thatcher's policy of extortionate interest rates has cost BL an extra £12 million—and called for a substantial reduction.

## Plunge

But even were interest rates to be reduced, the dramatic plunge in worldwide demand for cars must mean that BL will remain deep in debt for the foreseeable future. Major plants such as Cowley and Solihull are running at only 20% of capacity; Jaguar workers at Browns Lane, Coventry, face 2½ weeks' lay-off through falling sales; targets for the new Metro have already been halved; and further cutbacks are

expected this week.

This under-utilisation of plant means that it is impossible in capitalist terms to return an adequate rate of profit.

## Derisory

This in turn intensifies management's determination to axe more jobs and drive down still further the real wages of workers on the shop floor.

The announcement of huge losses is just what Edwardes required in his moves to force through yet another derisory pay increase in this year's pay review.

At a meeting last week union negotiators fixed a flat rate claim of £17.20 for BL workers in the November review.

But Edwardes will exploit to the full the latest figures and will also certainly insist that government cash to support the new LC-10 model will only be forthcoming if union leaders swallow another single figure pay increase and force it home without resistance.

Now that the Mini Metro—once supposedly the "saviour" of BL—is actually in production, its cancellation is no longer a viable threat. This is why the

LC-10 is now proclaimed as the model vital for the future of the firm.

With 30,000 jobs so far axed by Edwardes with the collaboration of union leaders, and a 5% pay deal rammed through last year with a savage package of strings, it must be clear that neither jobs nor wages can be defended without a full-scale confrontation with Edwardes.

## Balance sheet

This also means a fight against all those union convenors and officials who accept Edwardes' arguments and regard the problems of BL's balance sheet as more important than the plunging living standards of their members.

BL: Programme for Action Centre pages

As we go to press, news has come in of further cutbacks by BL at Cowley. 1,460 jobs are to go in the Body Plant in a "voluntary" redundancy programme: the Cowley complex together with the rest of BL is to shut down for an extra week at the end of this month, and then join virtually the whole of BL cars on short time working.

# Anti-Tory conference

A one-day conference entitled "Bring down the Tories this Winter!" is to be convened in Birmingham on November 15.

Called by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement, it will draw out the political lessons of this year's TUC Congress and Labour Party conference, and point to the kind of leadership needed in the battle to defeat the Tory offensive.

The campaign for the conference was launched last week at a well-attended meeting of the CDLM in Acton, where workers from Ford and CAV were

among those that heard Cowley shop steward Alan Thornett.

Socialist Press urges all readers to support this important conference which will be held in Dibgeth Hall, Birmingham, 10.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. on Saturday November 15.

It is open both to delegates from trade union and Labour Party bodies, as well as from anti-cuts campaigns and individual observers.

Further details and credentials (£1 or 50p for un-waged) are obtainable from Campaign Secretary Godfrey Webster, 169 Barclay Road, Smethwick, West Midlands.

## Metal Box plans closures

1,700 jobs are under threat in Metal Box, including the proposed closure of the plant at Winsford, Cheshire, employing 500 workers.

The Winsford plant is scheduled to close by the end of the year. Three months later the firm plans to close its Rochester plant, axing 760 jobs.

## Short-time

8,000 of the firm's workers also face short time working from the middle of this month.

Once again the Tory-stoked recession is to blame, cutting back demand for cans and containers, and pressuring employers into a renewed attack on shopfloor workers.

The Winsford closure comes at the same time as redundancies at the local ICL plant and in the midst of a wave of closures in textiles and other industries in the North West.

It must be resisted by a campaign based on occupation of the plant linked to a call for supporting strike and blacking action through Metal Box and related industries.

# School meals W. Glamorgan follows Tory lead

West Glamorgan's Labour council is to consider whether to overtake even the cuts made by Tory-run Dorset—by scrapping the school meals service altogether.

A full meeting of the Education Committee on September 23 is to consider this proposal from a special sub-committee, which would lead to the axing of 2,500 school meals jobs.

In Dorset, the Tory council has scrapped school meals for children under 12 years of age.

And in Solihull, Tory councillors are debating how much of the meals service should be axed.

But in each case these attacks are proceeding the more enthusiastically because of the complete refusal of union officials to mount any serious

opposition to them. In West Glamorgan, NUPE Divisional Officer proudly announced his plan for... a petition against the closure of the service!

In Dorset, NUPE and GMWU leaders have focussed all their energies not on mobilising action to halt the closures, but on the launching of a school meals cooperative, using the old school kitchens but dispensing with the NALGO administrative workforce.

In Hull, GMWU officials have actually gone so far as to bring along voluntary redundancy forms for distribution at union meetings sooner than fight in defence of jobs and services!

Only determined strike action, with a fight for broad labour movement support, can defend school meals as a crucial part of the hard-won education system.

# Dock strike

From back page

cies in Liverpool and elsewhere, and restoring the casualisation of dock work.

Jones-Aldington specifically laid down that dockers surplus to any firm should be transferred to other employers, and that they should only be placed on the temporary unattached register for disciplinary reasons.

## Thousands of jobs

It is on this agreement that thousands of dock jobs throughout the country depend: and for this reason not only Liverpool dockers, but docks mass meetings in Southampton, Hull and Glasgow have voted to strike if it is flouted in the port of Liverpool.

As such it is one of the few struggles against redundancy to be forced into the national arena.

The employers are now looking to improved redundancy payments in a bid to head off the threatened stoppage: but the mass unemployment on Merseyside means that their chances of inducing Liverpool dockers to sell their jobs must be slim.

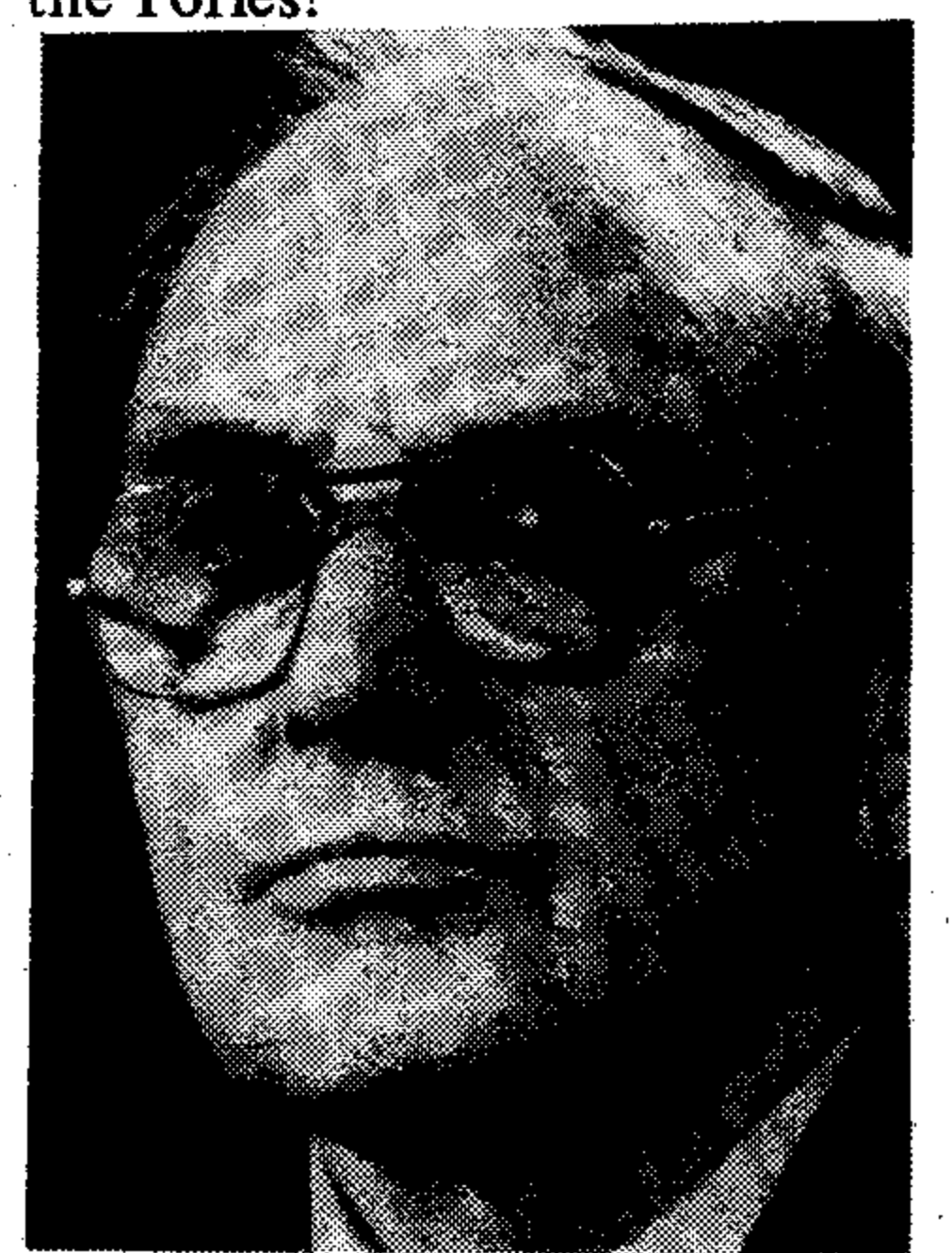
While the Tories have publicly declared that they will not intervene, there is little doubt that their monetarist policies are the force driving the employers into this confrontation and that they long to see the uneasy Jones-Aldington truce—which epitomised the

failure of the Heath government to crush the dockers—decisively broken in order to strike a blow against the whole working class.

TGWU leaders appear to have bowed to the immense feeling on this issue among dockers: but a spate of frantic behind-the-scenes manoeuvres can be expected between now and the strike deadline as bureaucrats and employers seek to head off an explosion of militancy that offers a lead to every section of workers in struggle against closures and redundancies.

\*No retreat! Defend all dock jobs! Work sharing without loss of pay!

\*Support the dockers! For mass strike action to bring down the Tories!

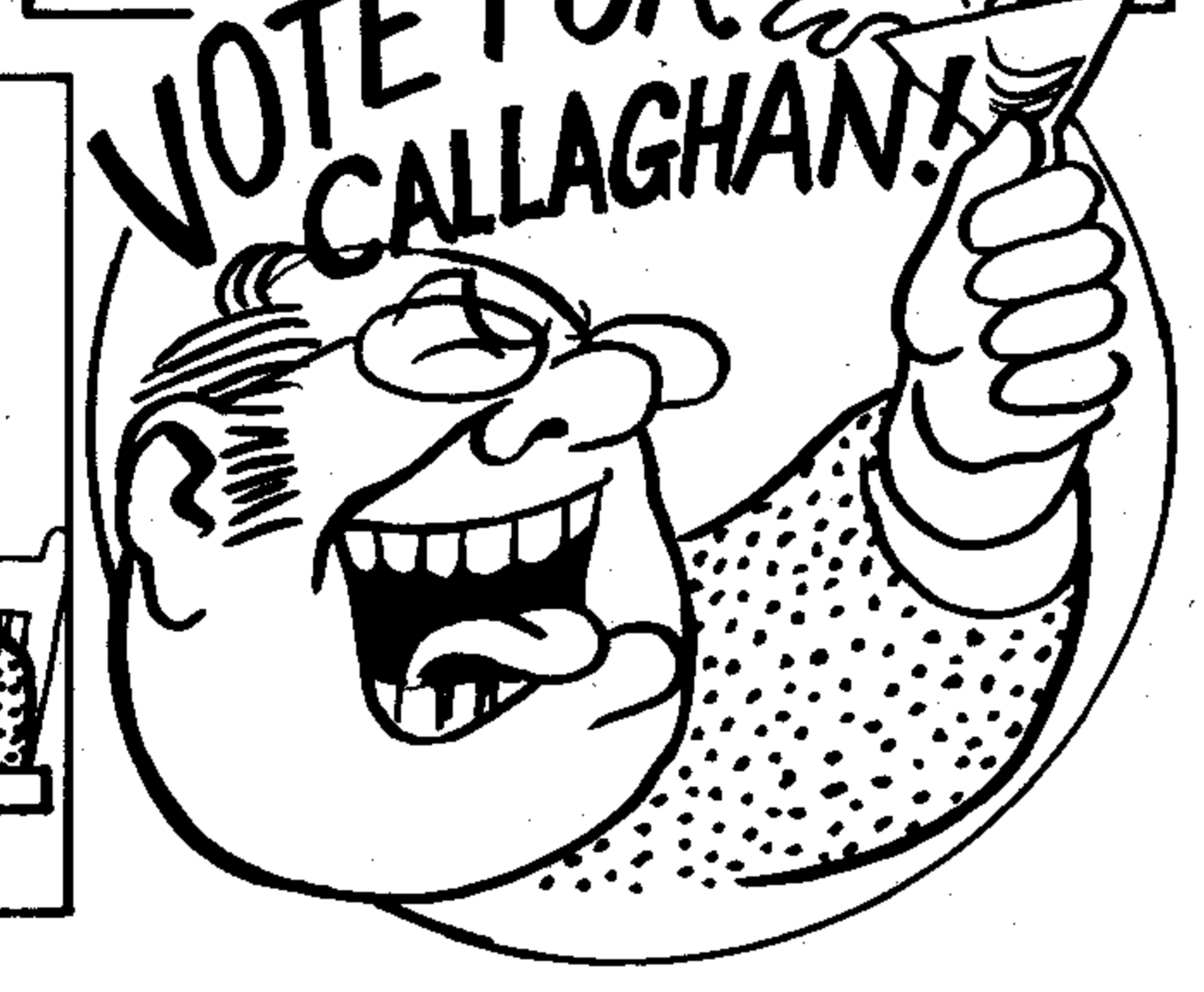
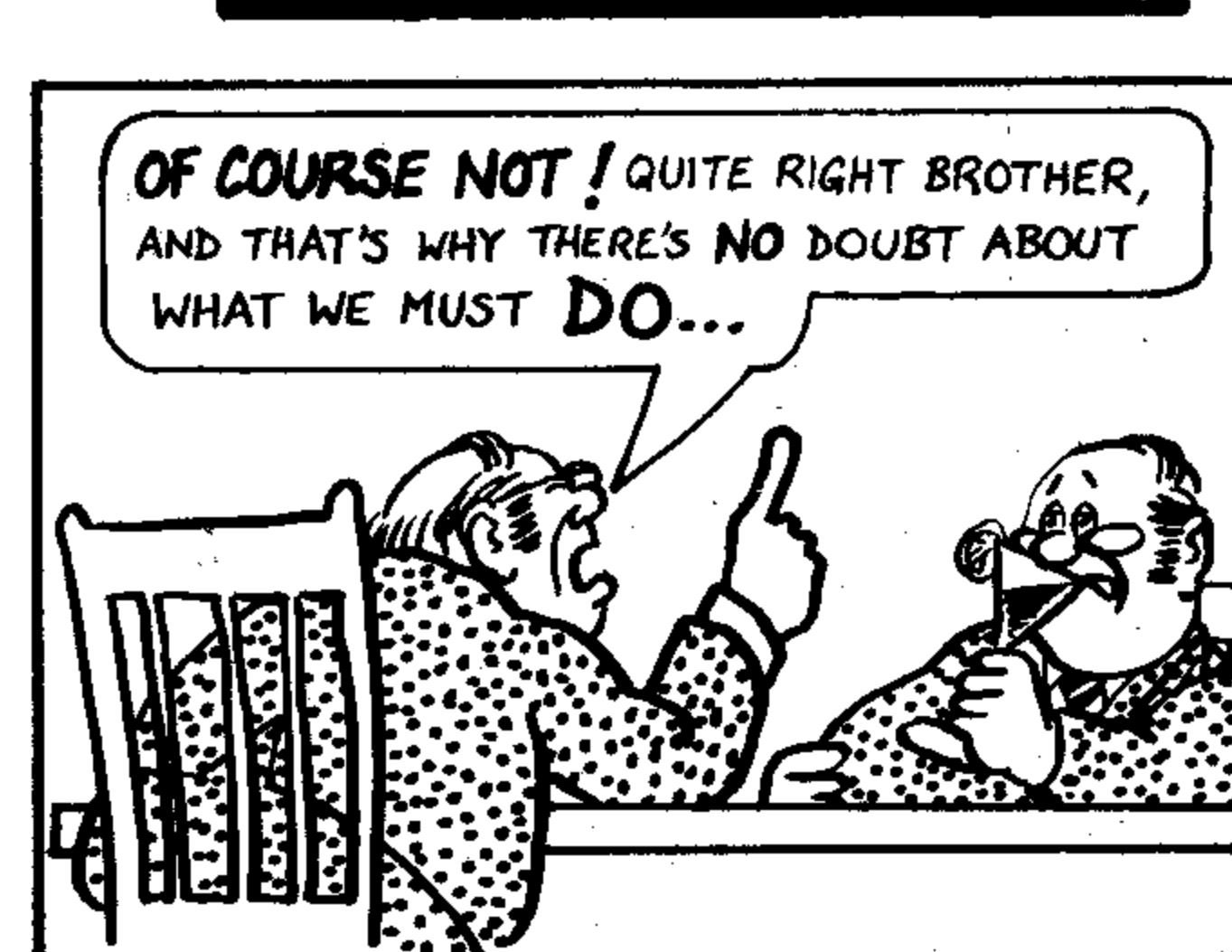
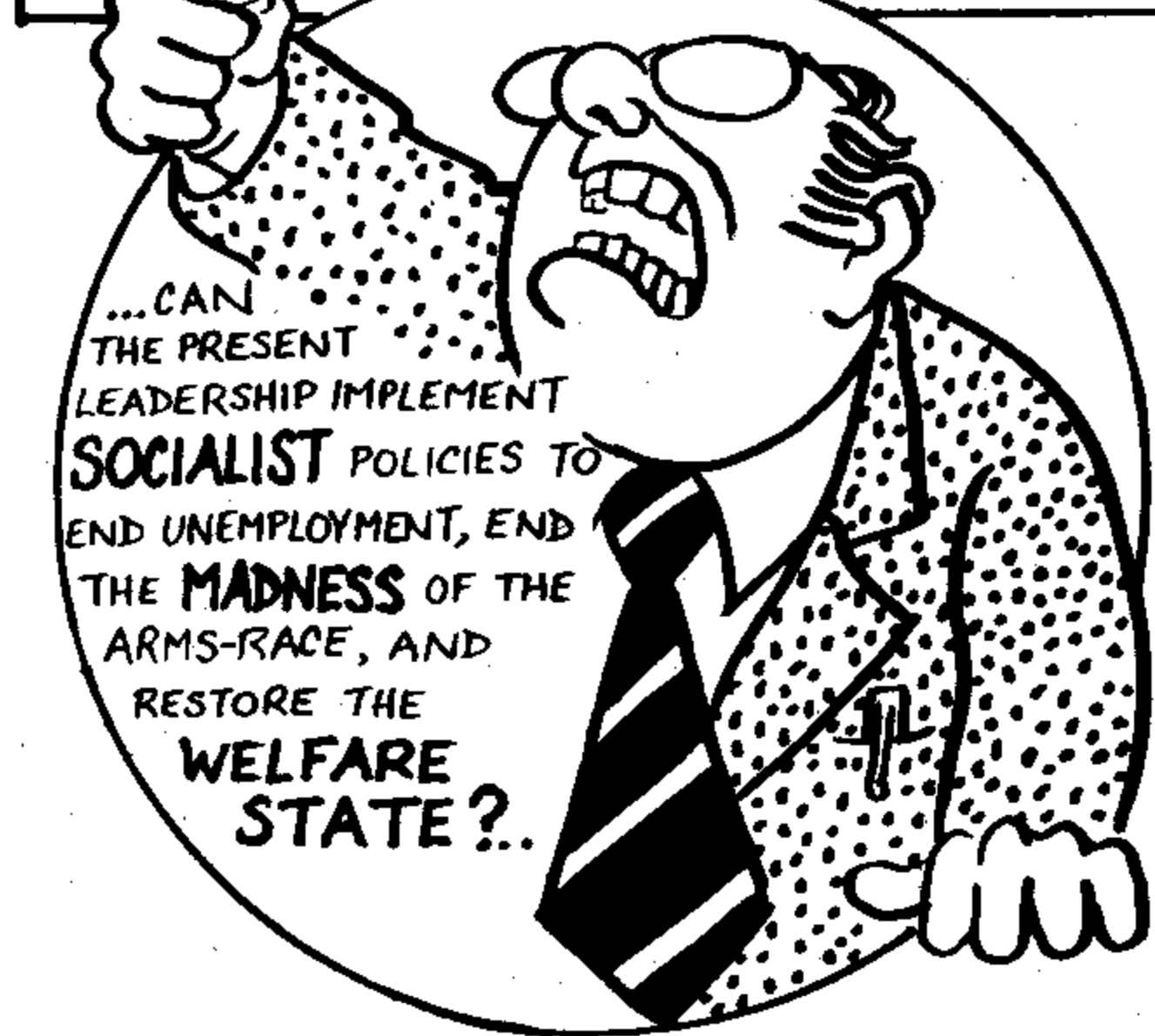
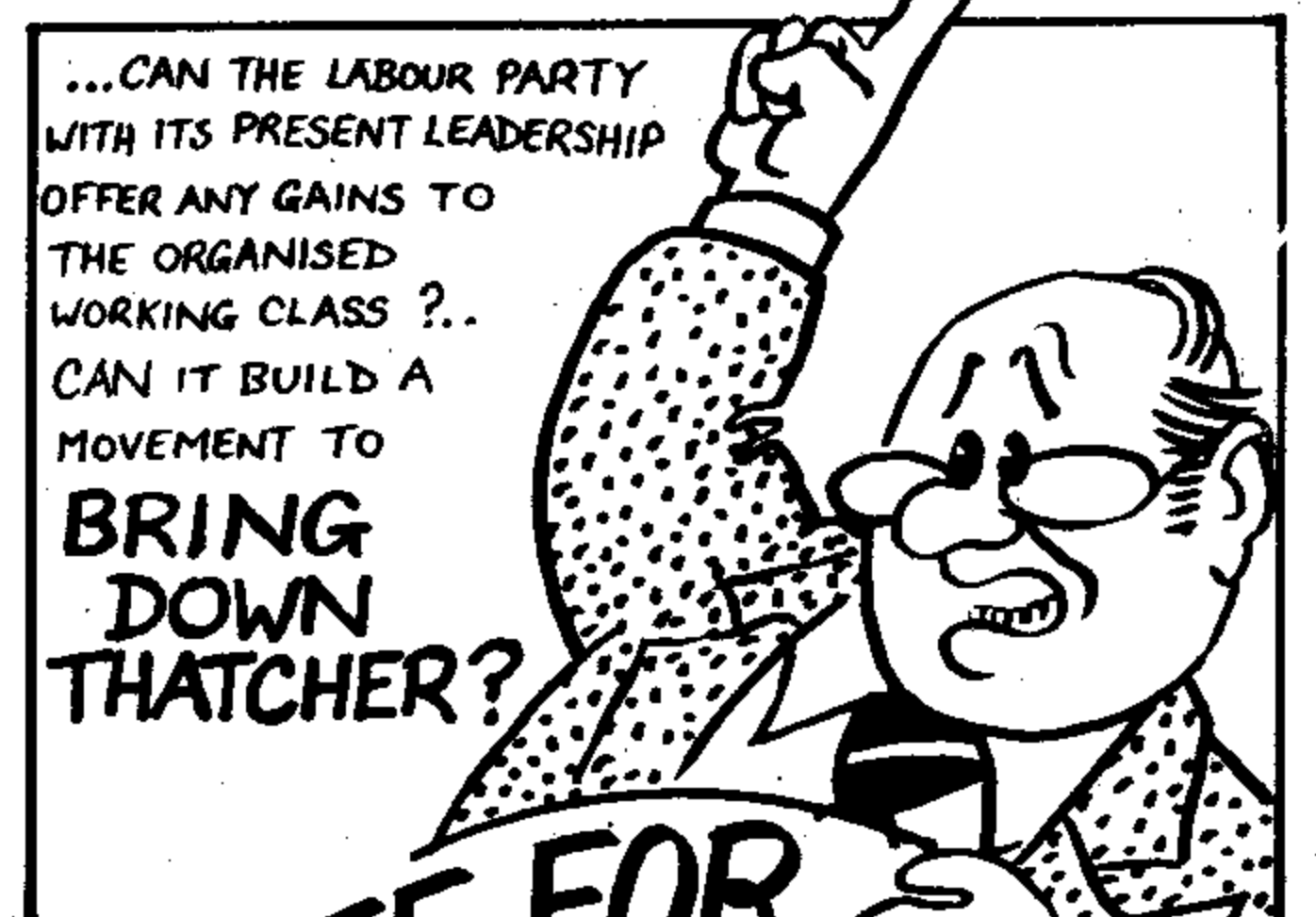
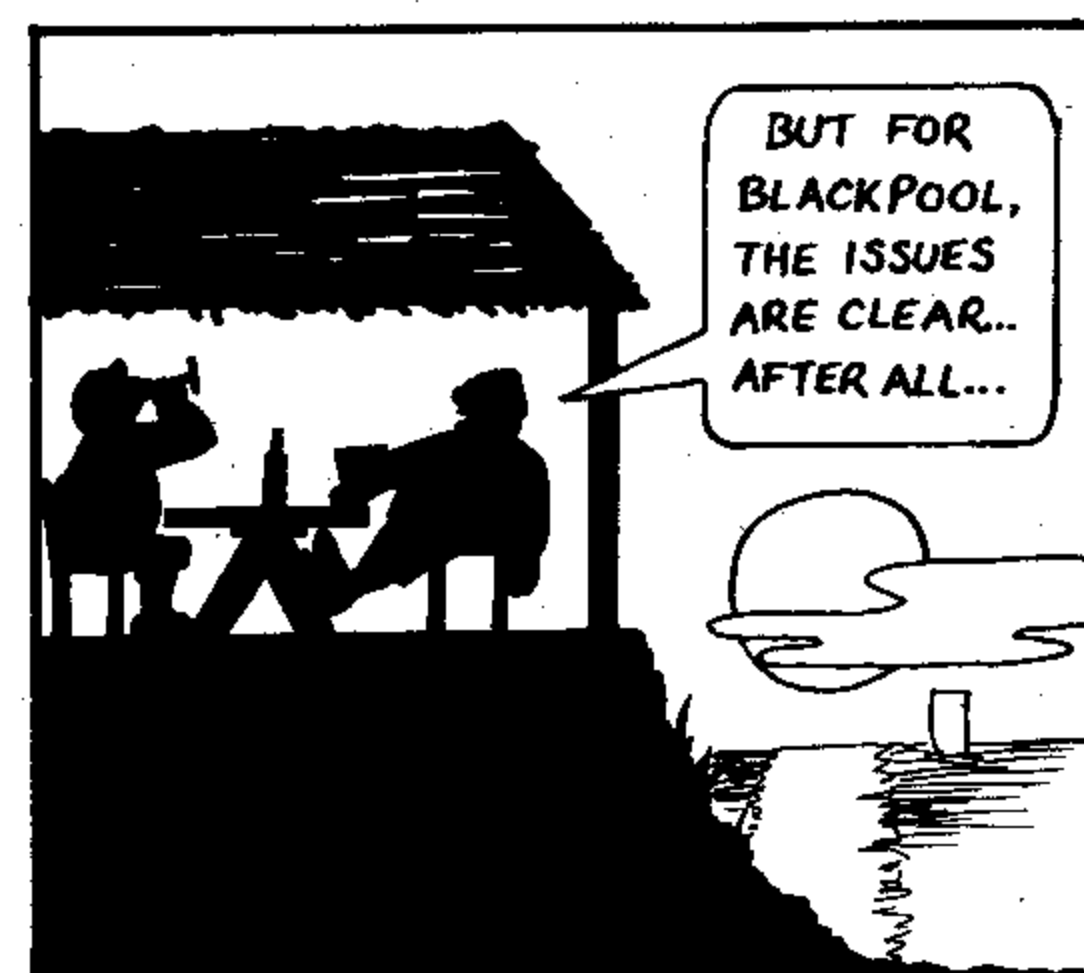
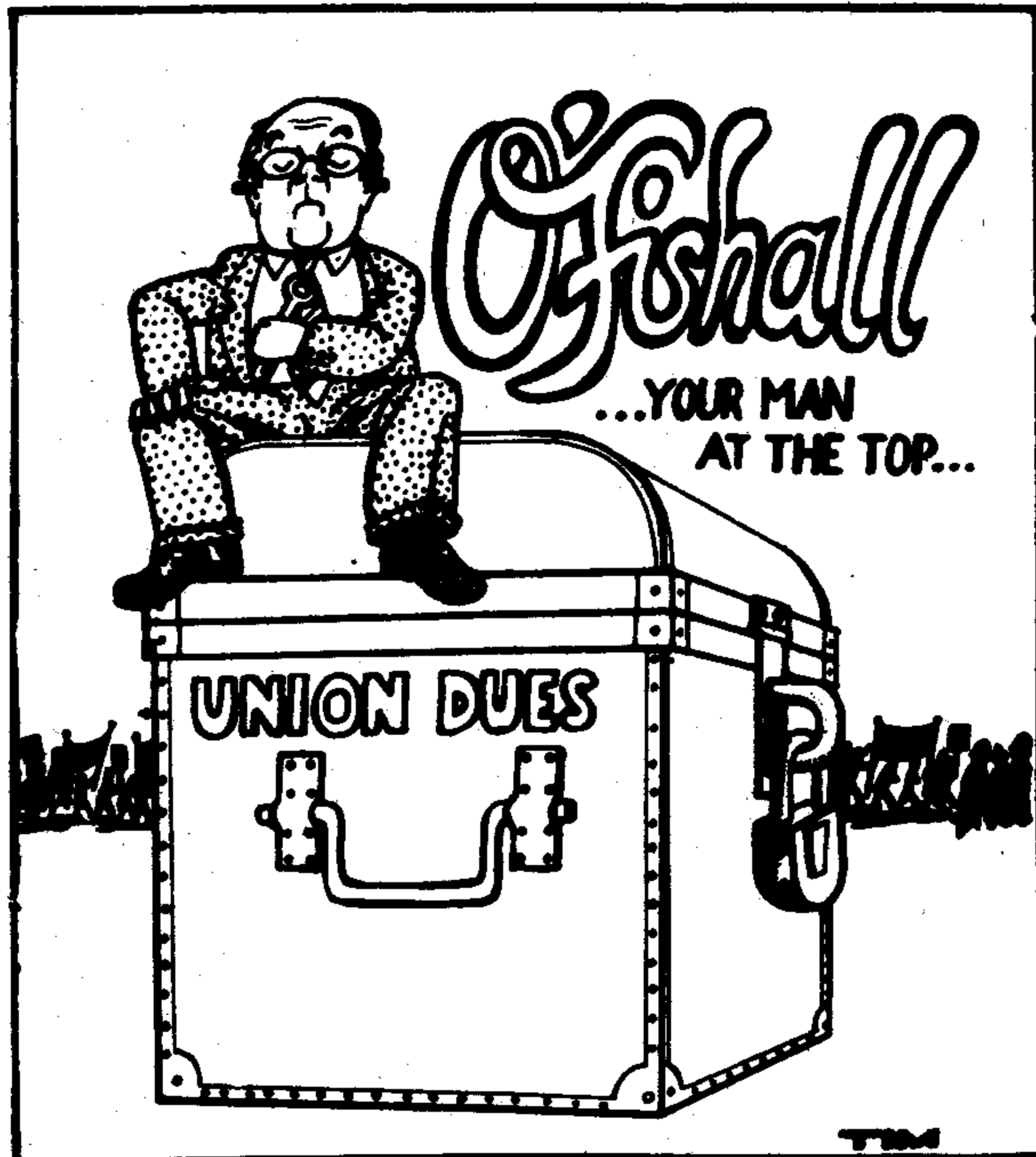


Jones

## Support Adwest picket!

Adwest strikers 19 weeks on unofficial strike against victimisation of TGWU Convenor, shop stewards and other workers have called for maximum solidarity in their mass picket in Reading on Monday September 22. Assemble 6 a.m. outside Adwest Engineering, Woodley, Reading.

Donations to the strike fund should be sent to D. Broderick, 46 Berkley Road, Reading. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to J. Dhoot.



# SOCIALIST PRESS



## FUND

Half way through the month and only £260.30 to show for it. That leaves us £589.70 to raise in two weeks if we are to complete our £850 target on time. This means a good response is needed now so that we are not left with an impossible task on our hands at the end of the month.

Send a donation to help support the work of Socialist Press today. Our address is: Socialist Press, BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX

# AHA gangsters raid hospital ST BENEDICTS: FORCE UNION CHIEFS TO ACT!



Fisher

Just what does it take to force the leaders of Britain's public sector unions into taking action to halt the Tory cuts?

This must be the question on the lips of every health worker and every trade unionist who read of last week's savage snatch raids in which AHA heavies seized patients out of the St. Benedicts Hospital work-in in Tooting.

The hospital has been occupied and run by staff since it

was threatened with closure last November.

Until last week it still had nearly 100 elderly patients receiving special care and treatment.

This was too much for the wreckers of the Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth AHA, who were impatient to implement their closure plan following the approval of Tory "Health" Minister Gerard Vaughan.

Last Tuesday September 9 they called in squads of police and hired a fleet of private

ambulances with scab crews to drive through angry pickets, grab six luckless patients—including one old woman on an intravenous drip—and haul them off to Bolingbroke hospital.

On Friday, the operation was repeated, and as pickets pelted the scab ambulances with bricks, police moved in to arrest three of them.

Many of the elderly patients who are being ruthlessly uprooted and shunted into new surroundings to satisfy the Tory government and their AHA hirelings are long-stay patients: some have lived there for 20-30 years, many for ten years.

To suddenly transfer them to unfamiliar surroundings in itself could cause them untold shock and problems of adjustment.

But, additionally, the loss of these NHS beds has severe implications for many other elderly patients in the South London area. And it is a key battle in the fight to save the NHS.

### Done nothing

But what have the health service unions done to prevent this vicious attack? Predictably the RCN—opposed to any action to defend nurses or the NHS—has done nothing.

But both NUPE and COHSE formally support a policy of occupying hospitals against closure (though they have yet to take the initiative and officially lead an occupation).

Alan Fisher is this year's President of the TUC General Council. A clear call from him for mass action to defend St. Benedicts would put every union on the spot and force the issue into the open.

### "Consequences"

Yet neither union has lifted a finger to mobilise the necessary strike action and mass pickets to defend the St. Benedicts work-in as the focal point of the struggle against NHS cuts in London.

COHSE official Nigel Beckett declared vaguely that "there will be consequences".

NUPE leaders have not even uttered dark threats.

Meanwhile the AHA and the Tory government, encouraged by every such sign of weakness, are pressing ruthlessly home with their attack. Scab ambulances are now returning again and again to seize St. Benedicts' patients. And throughout the rest of London and elsewhere the cuts and closures continue.

There is no way that Fisher or COHSE leader Spanswick can fob off the blame for this betrayal onto the supposed "apathy" of the union membership: the St. Benedicts work-force have shown by their tenacious work-in that they—like thousands of other health workers—are more than ready to fight to defend the hospital and the NHS.

### Immediate action

But they cannot win alone. If the union bureaucracy continues to refuse to mobilise full-scale local and national supporting action, there is no doubt that yet another victory will be handed to the Tories on a plate.

Trade unionists must demand immediate action and a full scale fight against the Tory cuts.

**\*Defend St. Benedicts! NUPE, COHSE and all NHS unions must call immediate supporting strikes throughout the London area!**

**\*Stop all NHS cuts! Occupy threatened facilities: defend every job and existing levels of service!**

**\*Bring down the Tories! Kick out the Callaghan-Healey axemen! Restore NHS spending to pre-cuts levels!**



Spanswick

## Polish leaders struggle for control

The depth of the movement against the Polish bureaucracy continues to manifest itself.

Strikes are still taking place three months after the first one. There is not an area or an industry that has not been affected by the demand for independent trade unions.

Even writers, actors and lecturers are now demanding their own unions. It is clear that if the bureaucracy had not granted concessions in the north that a general strike would have ensued.

The feeling is so strong that even some of the "official" unions, such as the dockers, are now disaffiliating from the Central Trade Union Council.

The bureaucracy is trying a number of measures to counteract these developments, many of which are proving ineffective. The hard-line of threatening workers against forming unions has actually provoked a number of strikes and led to demands for the removal of the officials.

Another method has been to threaten the loss of social service benefits. The most dangerous is the reported entry of a number of Communist Party workers into the new unions in a bid to take control of them.

This in itself represents a problem: the Polish Communist Party is a *bureaucratized* party that cannot change, despite the promises of a purge.

It is an organised force to defend privilege. But it also contains people who can be won to the political revolution.

This has meant a problem for those organising the new unions. There was a press conference, given last Thursday in Warsaw by a group of the new leaders who were setting up a union for the whole of Mazovia, covering Warsaw and Lodz.

These people said that members of the CP would be excluded from union posts. In Silesia, on the other hand, CP members are participating in leading positions and helping the new unions.

Their fear of the mass movement has led the new "selected" TUC chairman to declare that the "official" unions would call strikes "if necessary".

This "union" leader Romuald Jankowski said that parliament would be passing laws allowing strikes, but, significantly, "include clauses aimed at preventing wild-cat strikes".

Censorship of news on many of the developments continues in Poland as do the attacks in the press on the dissidents as "false friends".

This is in sharp contradiction to the way that the workers have insisted on some of the dissidents being on strike committees: and it reminds us that Polish workers have still a lot further to go in the fight to overthrow the parasitic power of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

## DOCKS: CALL FOR STRIKE ON JOBS



Moss Evans

Following the unanimous votes for strike action by a mass meeting of Liverpool dockers and by a national docks delegate conference, the Executive of the TGWU has endorsed a call for an all-out stoppage from Monday September 22.

At issue is a move by dock employers in Liverpool to tear up the six-year old Jones-Aldington agreement which gave dockers in ports covered by the National Docks Labour Scheme a permanent guarantee of employment.

The agreement—which flowed from the stormy strikes and struggles of 1972—was accepted at the time by the employers because the TGWU in exchange conceded a major reduction of the dock work-force—implemented through a programme of large severance payments to dockers who sold

their jobs.

But since that time the continued drive towards containerisation and other means of circumventing traditional cargo handling has gone alongside a slump in trade and a new crisis of profitability for the dock employers.

### "Overmanning"

For several years now the employers have been complaining of "overmanning" on the docks. In London docks they even succeeded, through large redundancy payments, in securing a cutback in the workforce without a fight.

But the move by Liverpool dock employers to put 175 dockers onto the temporary unattached register is an unmistakable move towards scrapping the terms of Jones-Aldington, imposing redundan-

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