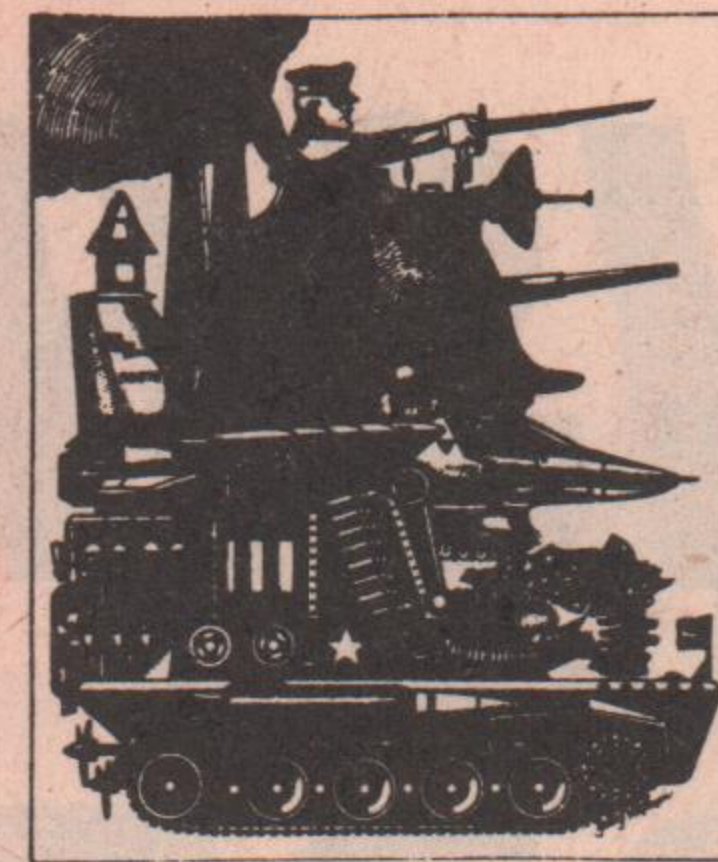


SOCIALIST PRESS



Protest
and
Survive

reviewed - p.9

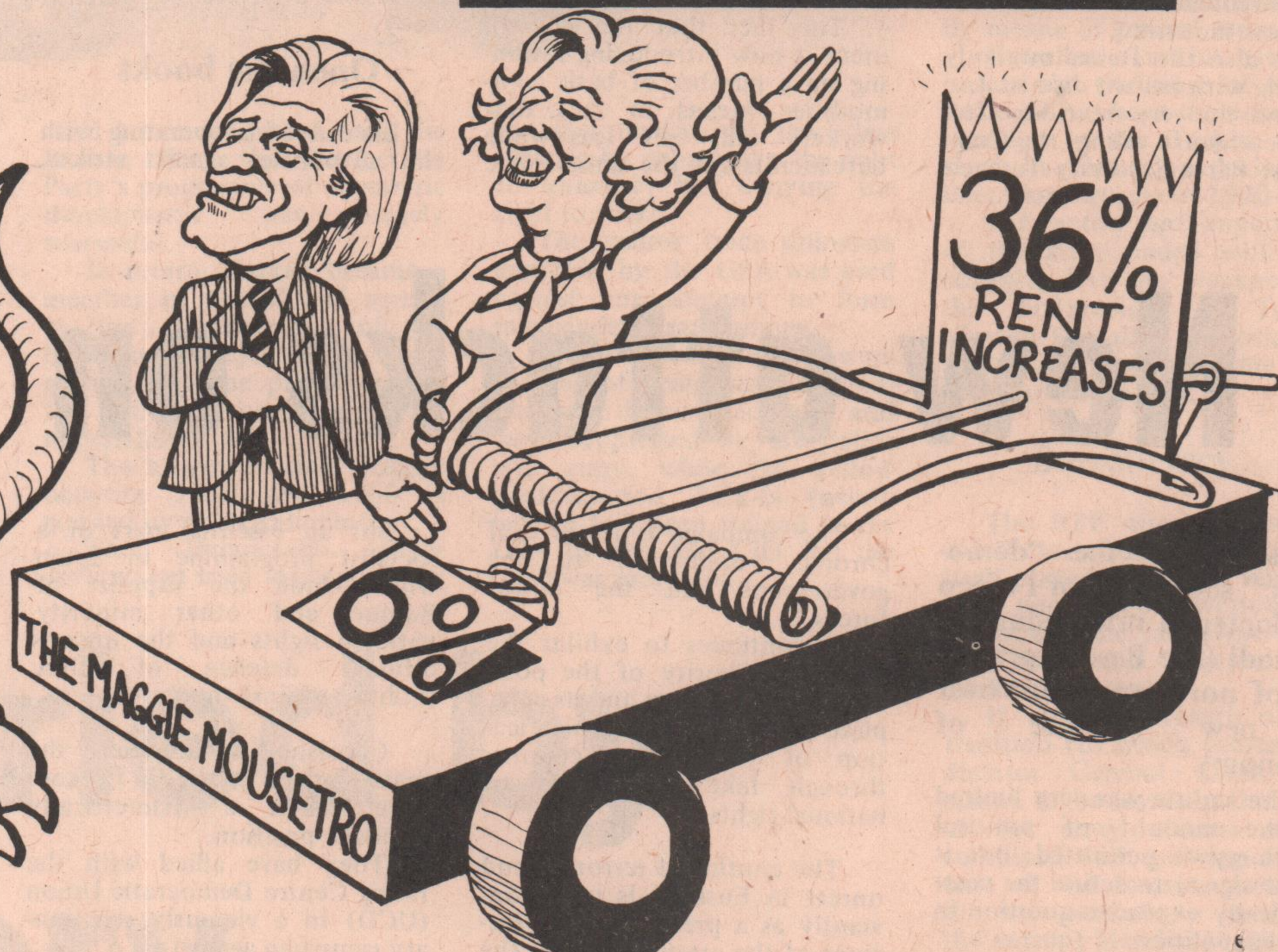
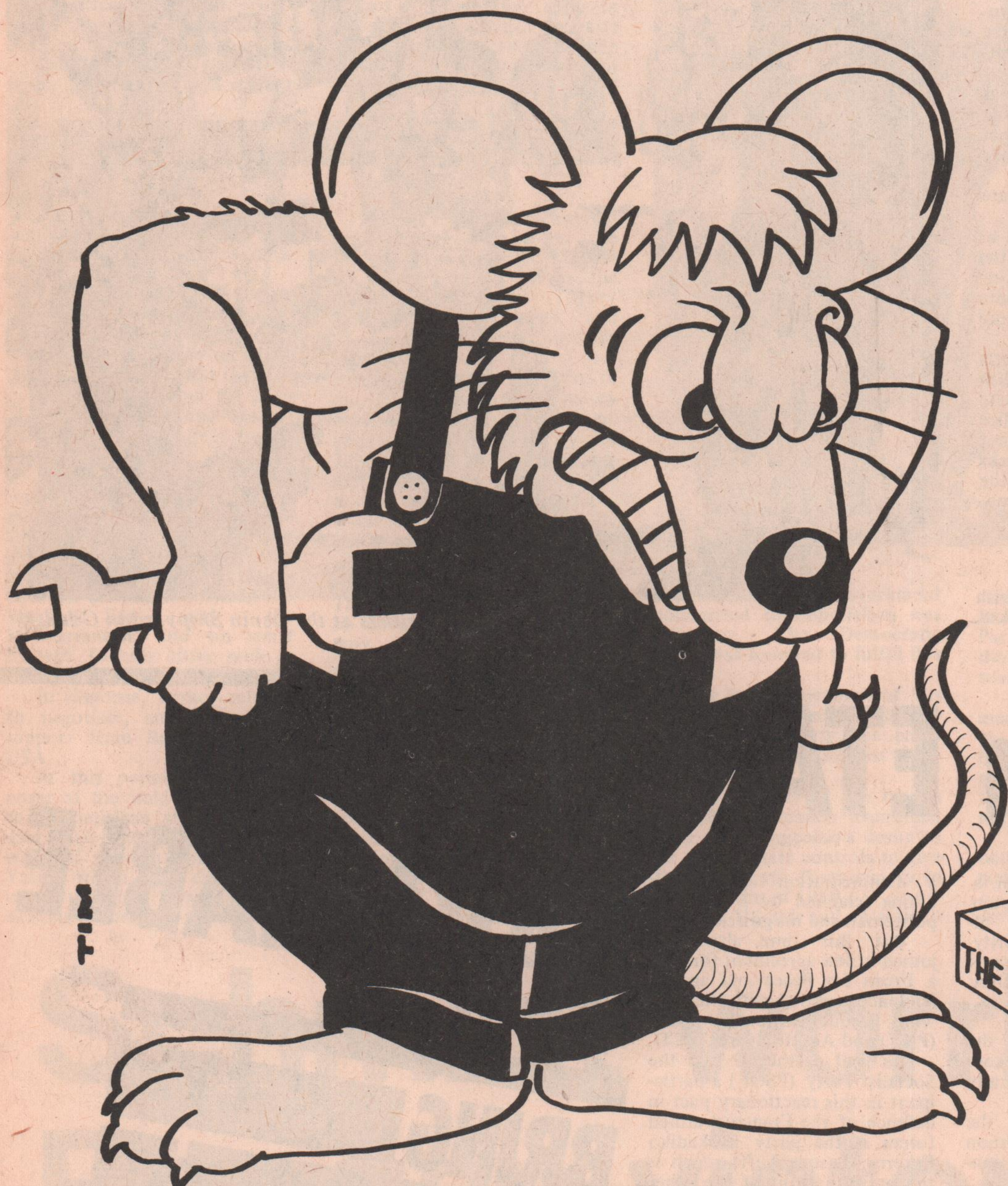
Support hunger strikers—back page

Weekly paper of the Workers Socialist League * No. 224 * November 19, 1980 * 20p

Affiliated to the Trotskyist International Liaison Committee

6% LIMIT ON PAY:

36% RISE IN RENTS!



This government has got to go!

Its contempt for the working class—for the unemployed, the poor, the sick, the homeless, the elderly—is matched only by Thatcher's determination to increase the profits of the banks, bosses and speculators who finance the Tory Party.

Last week proved this beyond doubt. On Monday, Thatcher herself stood up amid the sumptuous Lord Mayor's banquet in London to defend the new 6% pay limit on public sector workers and announce that:

"We now have no alternative but to accept a reduction in the standard of the country's living if investment and employment are to recover."

Whose living standards is she talking about? The managers and employers who cruise around in company Rovers, living off expense accounts as they plan their next asset-stripping factory closure?

No! Thatcher means to sacrifice *your* living standards—the living standards of the *working*

class—in order to maintain the rich in the style to which they have become accustomed.

Every step taken by the Tories since they rode to office on a platform of fraudulent promises has been taken with this sole objective.

They have slashed spending on education, health services, housing, old people's homes, social services and transport; they have sent prices rocketing; they have even driven the weakest employers into bankruptcy in a bid to increase the profits of the strongest.

Low paid

Then, a week ago, they came along with a 6% pay limit in the public sector—aimed primarily at millions of low-paid manual workers already struggling to survive in the midst of 15% inflation.

But even as they announced the derisory 6% figure—and thus tore up the pay deal settled with the firemen in 1978—the Tories were planning to take even *more* money off the working class!

The first public revelation of this was the fumbled attempt by

Michael Heseltine, the Secretary of the Environment (and a millionaire) to sneak through a thumping £3 a week rise in council house rents.

That rent increase alone would effectively wipe out a 6% pay increase for the 5½ million families affected.

But behind the scenes the knives are being sharpened for even more drastic attacks! The Thatcher cabinet is debating how to allocate a further £2 billion in spending cuts so as to unload the burden wholly onto the backs of the working class.

Thatcher appears to have failed to win support for a cut in the value of old age pensions: but it seems likely that taxes on drink and tobacco will be increased, along with a rise in the employee's national insurance payment—effectively a further straight cut in wages for millions of workers.

And the growing army of unemployed—who have already had their benefits cut by 5% by Thatcher—seem likely to face another onslaught on their poverty-line existence.

These attacks have not gone

without notice in the working class. The outcry against the Tory government has reached an intensity and a unanimity as great as at any time under the Heath government.

Firemen are right now engaged in action against the 6% limit; BL car workers who voted 2-1 for strike action on pay have been held back only by the most shameful manoeuvres of convenors and union officials; miners, water workers and gas workers are among the many who have indicated a readiness to fight to defend living standards against this government. In the private sector, 100,000 furniture workers are already operating sanctions in pursuit of their pay demands.

On November 1, 700 delegates from the trade union and labour movement voted at a conference convened by Lambeth Labour council to fight for mass industrial action to halt the cuts in local government spending.

On all sides there is evidence that workers are ready to fight the Tories. Yet they are being

offered only abject surrender by their union leadership, and the vague hopes of a chance to vote Labour in 1984 by the Labour leaders.

This is not because they are unaware of the feeling in the working class: Michael Foot in an interview with the *Guardian* last week pointed out correctly that:

"I think there is a very deep ferment growing. When it will explode I do not know."

But for Foot the main objective is not to direct the rising militancy towards mass action to bring down the Tories: it is to head workers back towards the rigmarole of Parliament.

"I want it to explode in a way which will make it possible to maintain democratic institutions in this country, and that means that the agitation outside this place [Parliament] has got to have its representation here."

This explains the fisticuffs by Labour MPs in Parliament last week over the £3 rent increase—and Foot's refusal to condemn those responsible.

We support their action—as far as it went. But nobody

should be fooled into thinking that such gestures can halt the Thatcher offensive or remove the Tories from office.

The task in the next period is not to mass picket the House of Commons in order to prevent the entry of Black Rod: it is to mobilise the mass strength of the working class to prevent the Thatcher government destroying our basic rights and living standards.

It is by their stand in this struggle that workers must judge their trade union and Labour leaders.

Those that seriously wish to defend the working class will join the fight for mass action alongside the firemen, BL workers and any other section prepared to battle against the Tories.

Those who oppose such a fight must be exposed and removed.

This means building a new leadership in the labour movement.

That's what *Socialist Press* is all about. Join us in the fight for action to bring down the Tories this winter!

BRING DOWN THE TORIES THIS WINTER!



INTERNATIONAL

POLISH STALINISTS BID TO PRESSURE WALESA

The strikes called for November 12 by Solidarity, the new unofficial union confederation, were called off when the Polish Supreme Court withdrew the clauses in their union's constitution that had been added by a lower court.

This was a clear victory and showed the continuing strength of the mass movement and the difficulties of the Polish bureaucrats.

The main strategy that the bureaucracy is using in order to retain its power and privileges is to put pressure on the leadership of Solidarity. This is proving effective—as has been shown by this week's events.

Two methods are used. One is the 'soft' line of "building up" the importance of the leaders, particularly Lech Walesa. Last Friday Walesa had a first meeting with Polish Communist Party leader Stanislaw Kania—so displaying Walesa's respectability.

But this is combined with the hard line. In the Southern industrial city of Czestochowa the local governor, in the run-up to November 12, took away all the union's typewriters, refused the use of loudspeaker systems and threatened to use force to suppress the strike.

He also threatened anybody striking with instant dismissal.

And the very next day after the new court ruling, the Communist Party Secretary Tadeusz

Grabski announced a ban on "political strikes".

This double method goes alongside the pressure of the Catholic church. Pope John Paul had another meeting with a member of the Polish 'Council of State' this week.

This is clearly aimed particularly at curbing Walesa, who is now arguing for an end to the present strikes: "Even when there is just cause there are other ways to settle our grievances without striking".

Walesa has accepted the necessity of working with the continued existence of bureaucratic 'planning'. As a result, he accepts that because there is a shortage of sugar, sugar workers should not strike.

The job of Solidarity, he says, is to get production up and to turn Poland into "another Japan".

Gdansk

Meanwhile the Polish working class continues its struggles. The occupation of the Gdansk Town Hall by 150 health workers and teachers' representatives from all over Poland appears to have won them substantial concessions. The miners' hunger strikes continue against the old union.

The fact that the government is now introducing rationing on a number of basic commodities means in fact that workers will get less—while bureaucrats get the same, since

the already thriving black market and special and dollar shops continue to exist.

Walesa says "we shall watch into whose pockets the money goes". But this is meaningless unless it is elected workers' committees that do this watching, and are willing to maintain and use their independence from the bureaucracy.

Overthrow

The necessity for a new conscious leadership with a programme that directs towards a political revolution to overthrow the Polish bureaucracy becomes clearer every day. It is only with such a Trotskyist leadership and programme that genuinely independent unions can be developed.

The possibilities for this are clear.

A banner now displayed at Warsaw University has the following inscription quoting Lenin: "A police state is a state where policemen earn more than teachers".

This correctly disconnects Lenin from the present Polish bureaucrats, declares that there is in existence in Poland a police state (which obviously cannot be cooperated with) and attacks the inequality in earnings by the oppressive forces of the bureaucracy.

Open the books

Instead of cooperating with the authorities against strikes,

the Polish unions should be demanding the opening of the books of the economy.

And they must fight through the central strike committees that began to develop in Gdansk to control the factories—both in terms of production and distribution.

For this the workers will

need to develop defence militias under their own control.

They will also have to develop work in the army so that it comes under their control through soldiers' soviets.

On this basis, too, the Polish masses must appeal to the

Russian army and masses for solidarity and similar independent action for political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies from the deformed and degenerated workers' states.



Strikers at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk

New attacks on ETA

Last year the "democratic" successors of Franco conducted a referendum in Euskadi (the Basque provinces of northern Spain) over a new 'statute of autonomy'.

The statute was very limited in the amount of political autonomy it permitted; but it was designed to defuse the most politically explosive question in Spanish politics.

Although there was a majority vote to accept the statute and subsequently elections were held to elect a Basque parliament, the radical Basque nationalist organisation, Euzko (Basque) continued its military campaign against the Spanish state.

ETA is a small organisation which has nonetheless since Franco's time had massive popular support.

The support has been shown in two ways. First, in the large numbers of votes gained by the parties of Herri Batasuna (Popular Unity) which have been the public face of ETA in recent elections.

Second, in the fact that the Basque population has given tacit backing to ETA's long and extraordinarily effective terrorist campaign against capitalists and members of the repressive forces of the Spanish state.

No evidence

Most of the population refuse, for instance, to give evidence against ETA terrorists to the police or in court.

So far this year over 100 people have been killed in the war between ETA and the Spanish state, most of these from the Spanish police and armed forces who now occupy "autonomous" Euskadi in even greater numbers than ever before.

The campaign is a source of chronic humiliation to the government and the armed forces.

It continues to exhibit the lack of authority of the post-Franco government and its complete failure to secure pacification of the Basque country through fake concessions to national rights.

The continued terrorism and unrest in Euskadi is used constantly as a pretext by the sections of the army which see the only way of regaining full bourgeois control of Spain as being through a military coup.

The nationalist politics of ETA cannot, of course, resolve the problems facing Basque or Spanish workers.

But an essential part of a socialist programme in Spain will include the support of Basque and other minority national rights and the unconditional defence of ETA (militar) against the state.

Consistently, however, the main workers' parties in Euskadi have taken a diametrically opposite position.

They have allied with the ruling Centre Democratic Union (UCD) in a vicious reactionary campaign against ETA.

The Communist and Socialist Parties have frequently supported reactionary demonstrations "against violence", most recently on November 7 in Zarawe (near San Sebastian) when 3,000 people marched in

a demonstration against the killing (claimed by ETA) of a policeman and his girlfriend.

But this time also they joined a new agreement forming a Front for Peace and against Violence together with the right wing Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) and Adolfo Suarez' UCD.

As well as the CP and the Socialist Party (PSOE) a participant in this reactionary pact in defence of the Francoist armed forces is the party Euzkadiko Eskerra (Basque Left) which is the political front of the other branch of ETA—ETA (politico-militar).

It is likely that this new move will more or less dissolve the small amount of prestige which ETA (PM) retains.

Carrillo in Peking

Few things could illustrate the break-up of the Stalinist monolith better than the recent visit of Santiago Carrillo to China.

Carrillo, leader of the Spanish Communist Party, sat at the Peking banquets in seats still warm from the imprint of Enrico Berlinguer, his Italian "Eurocommunist" counterpart.

The visit consisted of a few days of flattery on both sides as had been the case with Berlinguer.

Five years ago Mao's government used to revile the Italian and Spanish Eurocommunists as even worse than the Russian "social imperialists".

Now, Mao's successors see Berlinguer and Carrillo as revered allies against the Soviet

Union.

The Chinese press has had feature articles on "post-Francoist" Spain congratulating the Spanish CP on its fight against "unemployment, pornography and anarchistic tendencies".

The Chinese CP and Carrillo agreed that "Aggressions like in Vietnam, Cambodia, Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan are absolutely intolerable in the modern world".

They also agreed to pass over the "errors of the past".

This gave Hu Yaobang, the Chinese CP Secretary General, the chance to declare that after 1957 Mao Tse-tung had "committed numerous ultra-left errors"—one of the most explicit criticisms yet of Mao by the new leadership.

Both sides in the talks also

sought to emphasise differences between the USSR and the other Eastern European countries.

This was part of the effort of the Chinese, which Carrillo went along with, to give the visit a strongly anti-Soviet character.

The accord between the Spanish and Chinese CPs against Soviet domination should not, however, be allowed to obscure another basic fact.

For although the USSR is hostile to Carrillo's independence from Moscow, the Kremlin leaders totally support (as do the Peking Stalinists) the long-term policy of the Spanish CP which centres on collaboration with the Spanish bourgeoisie.

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INTERNATIONAL



TURKEY: the imperialists' captive 'ally'

By David Larkin

Between the Second World War and the September 1980 coup, Turkey has suffered two previous military coups.

However, the latest crack-down is of a completely different character from those of 1960 and 1971.

And the two earlier coups were different in important respects, which we hope to describe in this two-part series.

The 'left' coup of 1960 overthrew the corrupt government

of Menderes' Democratic Party, and it found itself forced to recognise the right of workers to organise and strike.

In response to the movement of the working class it introduced a democratic constitution.

In contrast, the coup of 1971 was a response to the onset of imperialist crisis; to repress the working class in defence of capitalist interests that Demirel's right wing Justice Party government was unable to adequately defend.

The military regime of 1960 came to power in response to a situation of complete economic and political crisis.

This was a crisis of a regime that had prospered in the conditions of the post-war boom which US dominance established for imperialism after the war.

But to understand the crisis of this regime we must look at its background and historical roots.

On 19 March 1945 Stalin repealed the 'Friendship Agreement' between Turkey and the USSR.

In negotiating a new one, Molotov made territorial claims both on the straits between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, and on some Eastern Turkish cities such as Rize and Trabzon.

In response, Turkey refused to negotiate, and looked for support from Britain and the USA.

In this period, before the onset of the 'cold war' in 1947 the imperialists stood by the deal done with the degenerated workers' state at Potsdam and Yalta, which had carved the world up into "peacefully co-existing" spheres of influence.

Turkey received no imperialist support. Only after the advent of the Cold War was the US Navy dispatched to the straits, supporting Turkey against Stalin's claims, and bringing Turkey firmly into the imperialist fold.

The first twenty-five years of the Turkish Republic's history from its foundation in 1923 had been marked not only by the failure to establish an independent capitalist economy but also a failure to establish even a stable dependent position within imperialism.

Because of the economic condition of imperialism in the Thirties, no credit was available to develop the Turkish economy.

'Beneficiaries'

But with the stabilisation of imperialism after the war, by agreement with Stalin, and its expansion of credit, Turkey became one of the prime 'beneficiaries' of the strategy of the Truman Doctrine and associated Marshall Aid.

But if a stable capitalist economy was to take full advantage



of the boom, a government committed to imperialism was necessary. The Democratic Party was founded to fulfill this role.

The leading members of this party broke from the Republican People's Party, the party of Ataturk's nationalist one-party state.

The hostility of the masses to RPP repression combined with the bourgeoisie's desire to be free of state controls to give the Democratic Party victory in the elections of 1950.

With US aid, and an agricul-

tural boom associated with the Korean War, the Democratic Party's programme of economic development was largely successful.

In return, Turkey became a member of NATO and agreed to the establishment of US bases in Turkey. Military integration was the price paid by the Turkish bourgeoisie for imperialism's aid.

The history of class struggle between 1950 and 1960 is marked by rapid unionisation.

The Democratic Party government tried to accommodate

to the reality of the class struggle by recognising the right to unionise, but denying the right to strike.

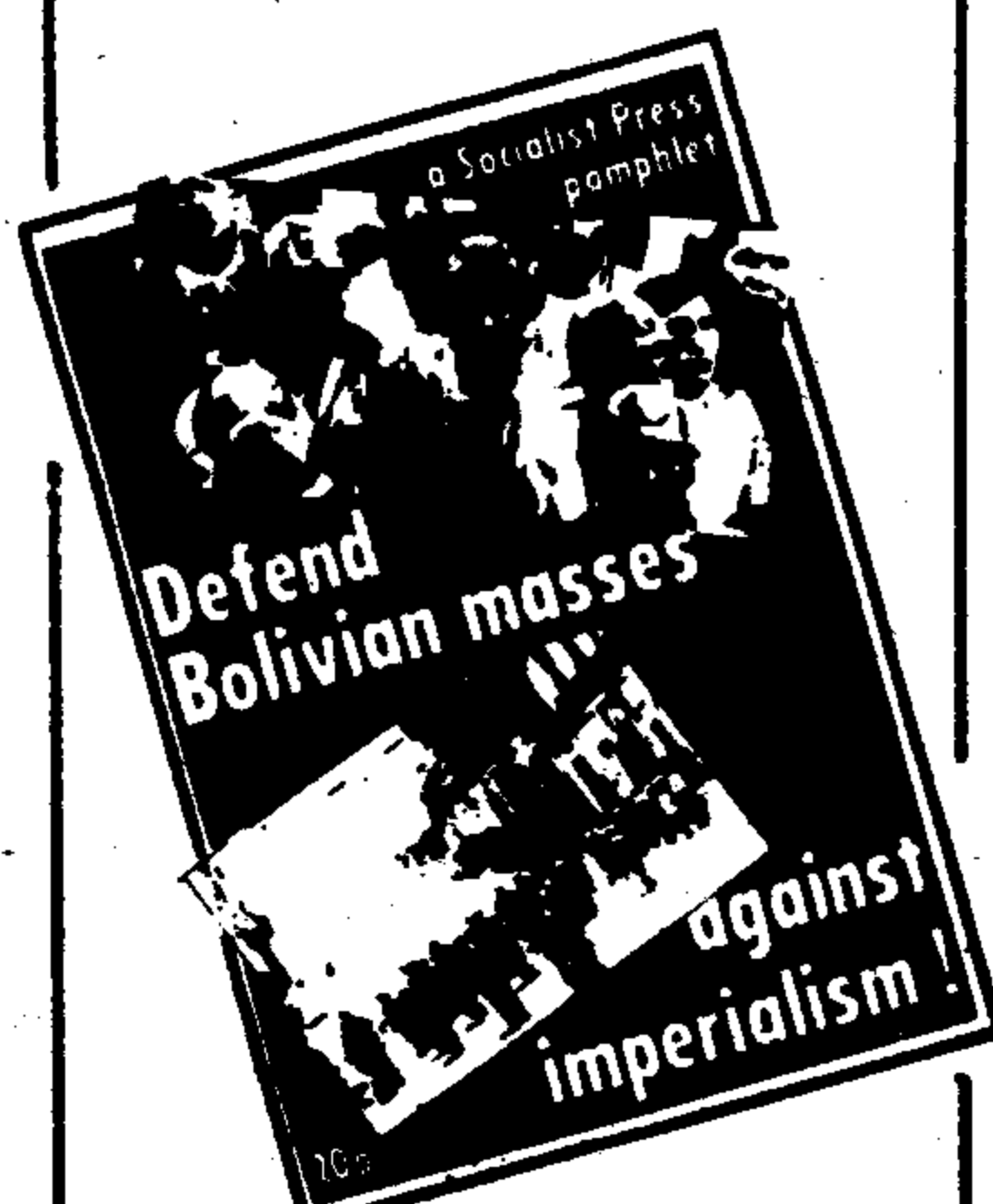
The yellow trade unionism exported by the USA was used against any attempt to form independent trade unions.

All independent unions were accused of being nests of communists, divisionists, etc., and were suppressed by the police and army, while the yellow confederation Turk-Is (whose leaders had been trained in the USA by the AFL-CIO and the CIA) was promoted.

Schmidt worried by Reagan victory

New!

Socialist Press Pamphlet containing analysis of the military coup by the Bolivian generals.



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As expected, Helmut Schmidt was re-elected Chancellor following the Social Democrat/Free Democrat (SDP/FDP) coalition victory in last month's West German Bundestag elections.

But he, and the French president Giscard d'Estaing, are reportedly very worried by Reagan's win in the United States.

They fear the repercussions it could have on East-West relations—West Germany's "Ostpolitik".

Schmidt will be discussing with Reagan in Washington in the next week or so—recognising that West Germany is at the front of the firing line should Reagan trigger off a military confrontation.

Strike ballot

But there are worries for him even at home.

Next month the Postal Workers' Union are to hold a strike ballot, demanding more free time for 200,000 shift workers.

The government will not

make any concessions and the ballot is expected to go in favour of Christmas strike action—a 75% vote is the legal requirement before a strike is permitted by West German laws.

This rise in militancy runs alongside a worsening of West Germany's economic crisis, with a sharp rise in unemployment.

Outlet

The anti-nuclear lobby is perhaps bigger in West Germany than anywhere else and also provides an outlet for anti-militarist feeling.

This has shown itself in demonstrations of thousands against the "Bundeswehr" (German Armed Forces) jubilee celebrations, which the police have broken up with water cannon.

Earlier this year 250 police and hundreds more civilians were injured in demonstrations against NATO anniversary demonstrations.

Anyone who thought that the "liberal" FDP would be a restraining influence on the "socialist" SDP should look at the changes in the notorious "Berufsverbot".

The "Berufsverbot" (professional ban) is a law which effectively bans all those who the state considers "enemies" (i.e. communists), from getting jobs in the public sector and can even have people sacked for the same reasons.

Although this vicious legislation against the left has sometimes proved an embarrassment to the SDP, it was the FDP who pushed for liberalising measures to draw distinctions between "minor" public employees and senior civil servants.

The FDP also want the abolition of SPD laws which forbid contact between "terrorists" and their lawyers.

Vulnerability

The SPD will not give way on this; but because of their vulnerability, they have had to agree to support FDP amendments to the law.

The Schmidt government, their confidence boosted by the election victory, will not hesitate to attack the working class as the world recession invades even West Germany's economic miracle, and an urgent necessity is the building of a Trotskyist

party which starts from the independent interests of the working class.



West German cop films demonstrators

Despite this, strikes for unionisation, wages and conditions grew. The highest point of struggle was the miners' strike which was smashed after a short time by the intervention of the army.

After the initial economic success, based on Marshall Aid and agricultural boom, the problems of the Menderes government mounted.

Borrowing

Marshall Aid was replaced not by imperialist investment but by government borrowing. The overall failure to build an independent, capitalist economy led to policies—borrowing from abroad and printing money at home—that resulted in roaring inflation.

In August 1958 the Turkish lira was devalued by 265%!

The growing discontent of the masses was met by government repression of all kinds of opposition.

Even the RPP was attacked, with some of its leaders being imprisoned. Despite the loss of any base of support, the Democratic Party continued in power, winning the 1958 elections only by means of general repression.

Kemalism—Turkish nationalism in the traditions of Kemal Ataturk—has been the dominant ideology in the Turkish army since its formation during the liberation struggle of 1920-23.

The active anti-imperialism of the army ended with that struggle; but the weakness of the bourgeoisie in Turkey allowed Kemalism to remain in power, in the shape of the RPP, until the late forties.

Bureaucracy

The RPP directly represented the state bureaucracy, which itself played the role of unifying the two major sections of exploiters; the landowners and the new and inexperienced Turkish bourgeoisie.

It was the strength of this tradition (to which present-day dictator General Evren now claims to be loyal) in the ranks of the army officers which, combined with growing discontent of the masses, persuaded the top generals to overthrow the corrupt Menderes regime on 27 May 1960—with the demagogic pledge to repair and replace the full independence of the nation.

The same pressures forced the generals to put forward a democratic constitution that was supported overwhelmingly when put to a national vote.

The right to strike however was not recognised for another three years, and then only with limitations. Nevertheless throughout this period there were many strikes and occupations.

Impetus

It was this working class movement and mass radicalisation of the working masses and students that gave impetus and life to the last drops of Kemalist blood in the ranks of the army, forming the character of the 1960 coup.

But the 'radical' phase did not last long. Negotiations with the US for fresh loans, in return for US bases on Turkish soil, were started immediately after the coup.

A radical rebellion in a military school was smashed, showing imperialism that the Kemalist ideology was only the rhetoric that came from a regime that in practice ensured Turkey was a reliable and subservient 'ally'.

150 discuss way forward against Thatcher

Conference reflects anti Tory militancy

SPECIAL REPORT
BY TERRY SMITH

They used to call us 'Generals without an army'; but now it is us that stand at the head of thousands of workers who want to fight the Tories—while their 'Generals' in the union bureaucracy are fighting on the other side!

These words from Alan Thornett—a deputy convenor at BL's Cowley Assembly plant—summed up the increased confidence expressed by nearly every speaker in the November 15 conference of the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement.

Set-backs and betrayals have indeed been suffered, as several speakers explained; and trade union and Labour leaders continue to fight tooth and nail to hold back the struggles of the working class.

But this conference, more than any previous conference held by the CDLM, succeeded in reflecting a new mood of militancy emerging on the shop floor and underlining the fact that the crucial factor in the next period is the fight put up for a correct programme and independent leadership in the working class.

Speakers at the 150-strong conference at Digbeth Hall, Birmingham, included active participants from many of the major struggles against the Tory offensive in the last period.

Tony Richardson from BL's Cowley Body Plant introduced the conference main resolution, outlining the fight to reverse the sell-out of the BL pay dispute.

Firefighters

FBU speakers pressed for a resolution pledging delegates to fight to mobilise other sections alongside the firefighters in their struggle to defeat the 6% pay limit.

A second resolution was also carried, which called for the series of one-day FBU strikes to be backed up by a call for all-out action—"such action to be taken to coincide with strikes by other sections of workers or at the completion of four one-day strikes—whichever is the sooner."

Other speakers detailed their bitter experiences of betrayal at the hands of union officials.

Jim Robertson from the Birmetals strike pointed out that the major unions involved—TGWU, GMWU, AUEW and EETPU—had the power to shut down the whole Birmid group in their support; yet officials had done nothing but urge their members to lift their 24-hour picket!

A young worker from the Ayrshire Marine oil-rig yard at Hunterston gave an account of the development of their 15-week health and safety dispute, and the lengths to which Boiler-makers' leaders had gone to sell-out the strike.

Gardners

Gardners convenor Tom McAfee admitted that "We thought we had insurmountable problems until we heard some of the stories today".

The easy part of the Gardners occupation had been to force the AUEW to make the dispute official. That had happened within a week.

But the hard part is getting the dispute benefit: in six



Labour movement bodies that sent delegates to the CDLM conference included: Enfield Trades Council; Leicester Trades Council; Cowley 5/293 TGWU; Export Packing 5/104 TGWU Banbury; ACTSS 5/293 Blackwells, Oxford; Leicester AUEW 16; Leicester AUEW 17; COHSE branches in Oxford and Great Barr; Oxford NUJ; Camden General branch of NUPE; Hunterston Joint Shop Stewards Committee; Mid-Leicestershire NUT; Leicester Cuts Committee; Oxford CPSSA DHSS Branch; ASLEF Kings Cross Branch; Bucks Brigade FBU; Accrington CLP; Aylesbury LPYS; Rank and File Mobilising Committee; strike committees at Adwest, Birmetals and Gardners; and the Llanwrn Action Committee.



weeks the occupiers have received not a penny from the AUEW, while the DHSS has been docking £9 per week from allowances due to dependants.

A speaker from the Llanwrn steelworkers Action Group outlined the problems in fighting for democracy within the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation.

They were demanding that the ISTC's annual conference should be decision-making; that its delegates should be democratically elected; and that union officials be elected and accountable to the members.

The link between the fight for democratic procedures within the unions and the struggle for demands necessary to defend the working class was also a major theme of the contribution by Alan Thornett.

He described the campaign waged by Cowley Assembly Plant shop stewards against the unrepresentative BL Joint Negotiating Committee and the



Foot

Speaking on the fight for democracy in the Labour Party, Ted Heslin, expelled for selling *Socialist Press*, pointed out that this had been a recurrent question at CDLM conferences.

The very first CDLM conference had included a platform speech from Keith Vaness—expelled from Islington Labour Party for criticising the local MP!

The CDLM had also fought in defence of Tony Kelly, the socialist, witch-hunted for his efforts to drive out Reg Prentice at Newham North East.

But as John Bloxham, secretary of the Rank and File Mobilising Committee emphasised,



Firemen on the march during their national strike

even more unrepresentative BL convenors' conference.

Instead, the Cowley stewards are demanding a democratic delegate conference which would then elect a Joint Negotiating Committee.

Until this is done, national officials and "convenors" representing only handfuls of members could continue to ride roughshod over the wishes of a 2-1 majority of BL manual workers.

Scottish teacher Ian McCalman, chairing the afternoon session of the conference, drew attention to the fighting programme adopted at a Central Scotland conference on unemployment in Falkirk.

Joint Committee

This programme—though not entirely adequate—was already beginning to be put into practice.

And in Glasgow SOGAT had begun an important campaign

for the establishment of a city-wide Joint Shop Stewards Committee to draw delegates from all unions in the public and private sector—a development unlike any since World War I.

Oxford COHSE delegate Jo Coxhead drew out the contrast between the stubborn fight against closure waged by union members at a small, isolated geriatric hospital, with the refusal of the convenor at a much larger and better organised hospital to wage any fight whatsoever.

The large hospital had been closed: the smaller one has been kept open, and workers have declared themselves willing to work-in to prevent closure.

Steps were being taken to support the work-in with strike action.

But the NUPE and COHSE leaders had done nothing to prevent the closure of St. Benedict's Hospital in London.

"We don't know what will happen—but we'll keep on fight-

ing, or there won't be any health service left."

Youth

TGWU member Mick Liggins spoke of the fight to organise youth on a "Youth Opportunities Programme", where the wage is only £23.50 per week. A factory committee had been set up, a fight waged against racialism, and a list of demands formulated.

Drawing the session to a close, Tony Richardson emphasised that:

"We are not waiting for the mass movement—the mass movement is already on. Workers want to know which way to proceed. We must offer them a perspective."

In the fight against the capitalist class workers would recognise the need for a new leadership.

Make Labour leaders accountable

the conditions for the fight for programme within the Party had changed dramatically as a result of the Blackpool conference.

The fight was on two levels—the fight for control over the Party leadership by the rank and file, and the fight for socialist policies.

Neither fight should be used as an argument for postponing or ducking the other.

Marxists

And Marxists in the Labour Party haven't always played the role they should have done in recent years, stressed Bloxham.

The Rank and File Mobilising Committee was a united front for struggle against the right wing.

But it was not a complete united front—there is an ongoing battle to secure the full

admission of the CDLM to the Committee; and it was limited in its scope by fundamental differences on policy.

What is before us is the fight to ensure that the rank and file are not cheated out of the gains of the October conference, stressed Bloxham.

He strongly attacked the right wing plan for election of the Labour leader by postal ballot—which would disenfranchise trade union affiliated members, and hand over control to the Tory mass media.

"Politically there is no argument for the PLP to have any special role in the election of the leader: but at present we must fight simply to minimise that role. Taking this fight into the unions will overlap with the fight for trade union democracy.

An amended resolution on

democracy in the Labour Party was carried, including a pledge that:

"The CDLM commits itself to campaign in union branches to vote for any formula for the election of party leader which satisfies the following conditions:

1. Annual elections, mandatory when the party is in opposition and optional (to be decided by simple majority) when in office.

2. Voting at conference with direct voting for every organisation and MP.

3. At least two-thirds of the total votes for trade unions and CLPs with the PLP not to exceed that of CLPs.

4. Recorded voting with details available to every affiliated organisation.

5. Full provision for casual vacancies."

The fight in the unions

The conference discussion on the fight for democracy in the unions was curtailed in time by the moving of an emergency motion in support of the Irish hunger strikers in Long Kesh and Armagh Gaol (see page 2).

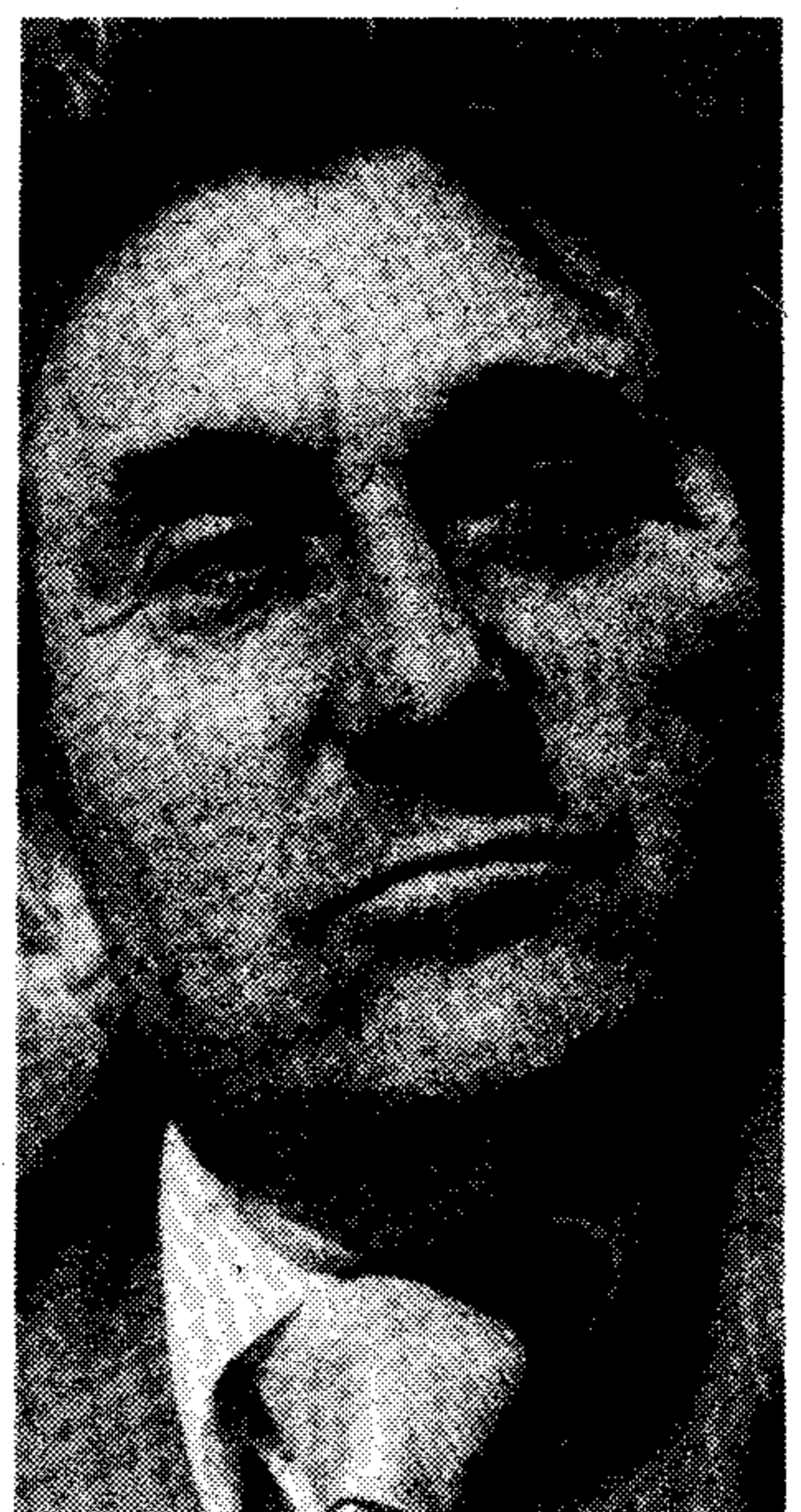
But there was time for Arthur Pearce, a candidate for the Presidency of the EETPU, to point to the barrage of 36 rule changes that had been implemented by the Chapple leadership since the witch-hunt of Communists from the leadership in 1962.

And Danny Broderick, from the Adwest strike committee outlined the obstacles that confront workers who now look for a road of struggle against the employers—they face not only the bosses, the government, the police, the courts, the DHSS officialdom and the witch-hunting of the national press, but also the sabotage carried out by union leaders.

Not one of the three key officials responsible for betraying the Adwest strike was elected to office or accountable to the membership.

Despite the defeat of their fight at Adwest, Broderick insisted that he had learned important lessons, and had no intention of pulling back from the class struggle.

A resolution was carried spelling out demands for election of all union officials; for democratic systems of voting; for officials to be made accountable to the membership; and the expansion of democracy in pay negotiations.



Chapple

Fighting to stop Camden Council cuts

Council cuts

The bankruptcy of a policy of jacking up the rates as a substitute for fighting the Tories has finally rebounded on the Labour leadership of Camden Council.

The Labour Council's commitment to 'manage' capitalism at all costs has seen them move onto the offensive—not against the Tories, but against the working class in Camden.

The combination of huge cuts in the rate support grant, the penalty provisions in the Local Government and Land Bill and now the 6% cash limit on public sector pay rises has first of all shaken the right wing in the council and then forced them to move rapidly to a position of imposing cuts.

Socialist Press supporters have been struggling to bring this sharp turn in the Council's policy out into the open.

At internal party meetings rank and file members have been told that the council will once again pass off the Tory assault via a massive 58% rise in next year's rates and a 6p supplementary rate rise in December.

Even a cursory look at the Council leader's October report to the Camden Labour Group,

or the council's proposals to the October Local Government Committee, reveals that the Council are:

- *asking all departments to make contingency plans 'exemplifying' the effects of a 10% cut.

- *have decided to sell council houses.

- *are asset stripping by selling off surplus sites and buildings on long leases.

- *are threatening up to 300 jobs in the building department by axing the estates modernisation programme.

- *are attempting to force through redeployment.

Having adopted these policies the Council leadership has to impose them at the expense of the very working class solidarity that they could have called upon to fight the Tories.

Edwardes-style

Following the method of Michael Edwardes at BL, Roy Shaw, Council leader, sent a letter to all council employees on 28 October:

"earnestly asking you for in particular a flexible outlook towards change notably redeployment and less rigid working arrangements."

As we go to press Andrew Bethnal (building works and services chairman) has taken this tactic a stage further by issuing a letter to staff asking them to consider taking voluntary redundancy.

This tactic can only divide the workforce (for example UCATT workers will be told that the reason they can't be offered work is a direct result of the inflexible attitude on redeployment adopted by NALGO and NUPE).

And it will undermine the authority of the elected union leadership in the Borough.

It has been followed up with management-convened section meetings pushing the council line.

This capitulation to Heseltine has met with a sharp response from three major council unions at the Camden Joint Shop Stewards Conference.

On Tuesday 11 November 80 stewards from NUPE, UCATT, and NALGO agreed on a policy of no redundancies; no voluntary redundancies; no redeployment; no cuts in jobs and services.

This meeting also set up a steering committee of the three unions to negotiate with the council.

But at the same time it



represents a very big step forward for future co-ordinated strike action against the council.

The council's moves have also been met with a response within the Labour Party itself.

On November 2 a meeting of over 20 Labour Party members from the three constituencies in the Borough agreed to set up the Camden Labour Left.

This caucus is based from its inception on a commitment to fight the council's betrayal and has already convened a meeting on November 30th.

Through its elected steering committee it is inviting speakers from the 'Lambeth Left' and the unions in the borough to

start a campaign within the Labour Party to oppose council cuts.

Leaflet

As the leaflet advertising the meeting correctly says:

"all council decisions have been taken within the confines of the council chamber, between the Labour Group and council officers... at no stage have the leadership turned to the Labour Party outside the trade unions to mobilise opposition to these Tory attacks."

"We believe that an alternative exists to the council leadership's capitulation. This fight must include the mobilisation of

trades unions and tenants associations alongside the Labour Party and other councils on Heseltine's 'hit list', in a direct confrontation with the Tory government.

Council rejection of such a policy will see the labour movement in Camden—including large sections of the Labour Party itself—ranged against their policy of cuts.

This is the direction that Socialist Press supporters and WSL members have fought for and will continue to fight for.

TORIES PRACTISE ARMY CALL UP



Between November 7 and 27 8,000 regular army reservists living in the North East will be 'called up' for one day as part of a country wide plan to reduce the time needed to mobilise the country's 45,000-strong reserve.

Hundreds of ex-soldiers, most of whom left the army less than nine years ago, have already reported to receive full kit issue to be kept in readiness at home to speed up mobilisation.

Previously reservists were expected to keep in touch by post at quarterly intervals and their liability to report for a spell of training annually was never invoked.

From this year, reservists will be expected to report for

at least one day every year for equipment checks and briefing or training.

Defence Secretary Pym expects these changes to halve the time needed to mobilise the reserve, with soldiers now reporting to centres near their homes instead of travelling to depots all over the country.

The potential strength of these forces and their usefulness to the Tories during an industrial upsurge can be grasped if we remember that they are all trained soldiers and secondly when we look at the figures involved from major northern industrial towns—Bradford 550, Halifax 200, Huddersfield 200, Leeds 700, Sheffield 1,200, Wakefield 700, Cleveland 300, Darlington 500, Durham 300, Newcastle 1,300, Sunderland 450, Doncaster 1,000, Hull 400, York 400.

At Bramcote near Coventry in the industrial Midlands, regular soldiers are kitting out all reserves who live in a 30 miles radius of the barracks, said to be 2,100 men in all.

Clearly trade unionists must view these developments with alarm—not forgetting the cash laid out to finance the exercise including a grant of £100 per reserve plus travelling expenses.

One Midlands newspaper estimated the cost of kit issued to be a further £102 per reserve.

Such mobilisations remind socialists that whilst the concept of waging class war is far from the thoughts of trade union bureaucrats, it is ever present in the minds of Tory politicians grown bolder on a diet of betrayals dished up by trade union and Labour Party leaders.

PRESS GANG



Yes we knew it. Only a week after the press predicted the end of democracy as we know it, the riots began in the House of Commons.

Labour MPs—looking suspiciously like a picket line—blocked the entrance to the House of Commons and Black Rod had to hang about at the entrance like a lemon.

This man sent by the Queen to tell the MPs to wind themselves up is surely a symbol of our democracy. If he can't even get into the Commons then what hope is there left?

After all he has been chosen to express the popular will hasn't he? Not actually elected of course. But definitely chosen.

It was a bit lightminded of the Daily Mail to remark: "Such high jinks are part of the parliamentary tradition reaching back to the time of Charles I".

That is hardly a serious attitude for a paper which sees a red menace in every corner.

Nor did it square with its front page story "Gang of two protest at Labour riot". (It is easy to forget that Shirley Williams was actually defeated at the last election and that the Gang of Three is itself partly an extra-parliamentary body).

But if the Daily Mail does

not know its duty, the Express can remind it.

Its leader "Mr Foot and his brawlers" condemned as "totally inexcusable" the rugby scrum formed by the MPs.

"That was not only an indirect insult to the Monarch herself, it was also a challenge to the authority of the Speaker and so to our parliamentary system and democracy."

The Guardian was not so much worried about Black Rod as about what Shirley Williams might think. (The Guardian is always worried about what Shirley Williams might think).

Centre Party

One of the reported links between a Gang of Three break-away 'centre' party and the Guardian is that the number of people who would 'buy' the former would be about the same as the numbers who buy the other).

It said:

"They ought to resist the temptation... to try to turn the Commons into a theatre of protest. To do so will deepen the suspicion, raised by Mrs Shirley Williams in Glasgow... that there is a developing streak of anti-parliamentarianism about some Labour MPs."

But of course that is nonsense. Occasional 'unparliamentary' outbursts are themselves part of the parliamentary tradition for those who have swallowed its seductive poison.

At any rate the Telegraph and the Sunday Times seemed less concerned with the events than with their possible effect on the hoi poloi.

Marches

The Telegraph said: "There is far too much talk on the Labour side about the public meetings they are going to call, the marches, the acts of political manifestation. Street politics are quite bad enough in the street: as a form of reasoned argument in Parliament they rapidly become intolerable."

The Sunday Times (its death throes seem to make it more pompous than ever) said:

"If the methods of the sit-in and the strong-arm picket line come to seem current, because not universally repudiated, then at the apex of national discussion there is a lesser value set on reason than on muscle; and the effects will flow downwards again into a multitude of lesser gatherings."

Who are those 'multitude of lesser gatherings'? They must be the working class!

BOLIVIA: THE BACK

JULY COUP

Unlike many previous military crackdowns on the hard and poor peasants, the brutal regime of General Luis Garcia July 1980 appears to have set itself the task of imposing a Chile-style defeat on the most basic organisations of the interview with an exiled member of the Bolivian Workers' Party in Madrid examines the political conditions that paved the way. The detailed political analysis put forward is not necessarily shared

It's clear that in order to reach a proper analysis of the July coup we have to understand the political developments of the previous two years. Can you outline for us the principal features of that period?

We have to start before the fall of Banzer (in August 1978) with the hunger strike of late 1977 and early 1978 that obtained the political amnesty and concession of elections.

The hunger strike, begun by four mining women, was a working class action, an independent action, at a time when the regime was in severe political and economic crisis.

Nevertheless, at certain moments in the previous seven years the working class had been fighting alongside the 'democratizing' faction of the bourgeoisie against dictatorship and for a general and unrestricted amnesty.

This partial victory was won in the spring of 1978, and won by the working class. But it also marked a period of displacement of the proletariat towards the politics of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie gained from the mobilisation which strengthened its electoralist strategy.

And the working class temporarily lost its political expression; it forgot its class independence in its support for formal democracy.

Thus, in the 1978 elections not only the majority of the workers but also most of the 'left' was to be found in the same trench as the 'democratic' faction of the bourgeoisie.

What, then, were the major forces in the 1978 elections?

The most important political formation was the Popular and Democratic Union (UDP), led by the veteran right winger Hernan Siles Zuazo, allied with the pro-Moscow Communist Party (PCB) and the petty bourgeois MIR.

This was a large front and played a major role. In face of the political diversion of the working class towards mere anti-dictatorial positions, the UDP's programme for a bourgeois democratic state won a majority of working class support.

Further to the right there was the old MNR, led by Victor Paz Estenssoro, who broadly represented the interests of imperialism.

In 1979 Paz was to acquire greater importance and under the Gueiler government his became virtually the official candidature. But in 1978 this role was played by General Pereda Asbun, who drew resolute opposition from the proletariat, to whom the UDP appeared the only alternative.

There were attempts to form



Miners at the Siglo XX mining camp: backbone of the resistance to the new dictatorship.



a left front but these failed since the masses, by virtue of the fact they supported formal bourgeois democracy, couldn't see the point of a front led politically by the working class itself.

Nevertheless, some groups tried to differentiate themselves from the UDP and formed the Revolutionary Front of the Left (FRI). These Trotskyists and Maoists used a miner's wife and a peasant to represent them in the election. But if we look carefully at their programme they didn't go beyond bourgeois democracy themselves and the FRI was only a popular front.

After the debacle of the 1978 elections, the fraudulent poll, Pereda's eventual coup and then his overthrow by General Padilla with the call for fresh elections in 1979 it would appear that conditions were auspicious for the parties of the left to perceive their error. What happened in 1979?

The left groups all remained submerged in electoralism. Only the Revolutionary Workers Party (POR) presented an analysis of bourgeois democracy and showed that it was utterly impossible for it to exist in a backward capitalist country like Bolivia, that the leadership of the oppressed nation and the masses is the subject of a direct confrontation between the

imperialist bourgeoisie and the working class.

Because capitalism is in its last phase, the proletariat poses an increasing threat to the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie.

The only alternative in the long-term in a backward country like Bolivia is either military dictatorship or a workers' and peasants' government.

The 'left' turned a deaf ear to this and threw itself with great energy into the elections.

Let us consider these forces in more detail. First, the pro-Moscow Stalinists who, as we know represent (at an international level) nothing less than the interests of the bourgeoisie.

In Bolivia the PCB also fulfills the task of interpreting and transmitting bourgeois interests.

Thus, it has consistently held the masses back and pulled them onto the electoral path.

The PCB is well represented on the COB (the Bolivian TUC) and this has made the task that much easier. The MIR, essentially a petty bourgeois force in both composition and programme, maintained a similar line.

The pro-Peking Stalinists—the PCBML—(Pekineses), while they tried to present themselves as being further to the left by creating the FRI, simply presented another version of petty bourgeois reformism.

Programmatically they stood in line with the PCB and the UDP and in 1980 they moved even further to the right, supporting Paz in the June elections.

These parties shared the erroneous belief in a stagist programme, which made their actions perfectly logical.

Of increasing importance in 1979 and 1980 was the Socialist Party—One (PS-1) of the late Marcelo Quiroga Santa Cruz.

The PS-1 made a great effort to form a left front to represent working class interests but it still failed to supersede bourgeois democracy and, therefore, failed in its task.

It was unable to see that the proletariat had to head such a front with an independent class politics.

The electoralism of the PS-1 was made overwhelmingly clear

by its leading role in the National Committee for the Defence of Democracy (CONADE), set up after the assassination of left wing editor Luis Espinal in April.

CONADE's activity was limited to organising the masses against the military and its only demands were for free and fair elections.

Against this, the POR fought for the creation of armed defence groups against the fascist terror. But such demands made only very limited headway within CONADE.

All the reformist and bourgeois parties were in it, including the right wing PRA of Walter Guevara. Eventually the PS-1's capitulation to CONADE's minimal aims lost it even its reputation of being on the left wing of the organisation; even the MIR was further to the left.

I should say that, contrary to some reports, the POR intervened in CONADE but never formally joined it and, in fact, left when it was required to sign the programme.

But here we are going too fast.

The most important thing to recognise at this point was that the electoralism of all the major political parties led directly to the chaos of November 1979.

At that stage the central government—presided over by Guevara who had been elected

by parliament—was highly unstable and threatened, on the one hand by increasing mass mobilisation and, on the other, by the military.

The eventual coup, headed by Natusch, was an act of desperation on the part of the armed forces in an effort to replace a thoroughly weak government, and the result was a further acceleration in the mobilisation of the masses.

Can we look more closely at the Natusch coup and its effects? It seems to have marked an absolutely critical point in the development of the class struggle over this period and has now been overshadowed by the successful Garcia coup.

The coup led to an extraordinary radicalisation of the working class and the peasantry, which drew in behind them many members of the urban middle class.

At this point the proletariat broke from its diversion towards bourgeois politics—as is very clear from the continuation of the general strike.

The masses held the solution to the crisis in their hands. However the leadership entered into a treacherous agreement with the army and parliament.

Lechin [leader of the COB] called the strike off; the miners and peasants rejected his call and continued. But the 'agreement' with the bourgeoisie which was the result of the crisis (and confirmed the immovable fidelity of the 'left' to bourgeois democracy) turned a potentially revolutionary situation into a partial victory for the bourgeoisie.

Natusch was simply replaced by a transitional regime (that of Gueiler); the right wing remained intact, and the military's aim to smash the working class definitively was unaltered. They continued to prepare for this.

I should stress the very important role played by the peasantry. Late in November, after the fall of Natusch, the peasants increased their mobilisation and re-established road blocks in demand for fair prices for their produce.

Meanwhile the COB had

actively demobilised the workers—and the result was a complete lack of co-ordination between the two sectors against Gueiler's economic package.

There was confusion and backslipping in the cities and the strike was restricted to the countryside.

Nevertheless, November had given us an example of how a worker-peasant alliance might operate. For example, in Colquiri the POR was able to achieve a local alliance which was firmly pledged to a proletarian programme.

November also demonstrated very clearly that the only way to defeat the *golpistas* (putschists) is the mobilisation of the masses against the reformist treacherous politics of the trade union leadership—not the actions of parliament.

The position of the COB was very clear—it refused to declare an indefinite general strike. Instead it announced the formation of a "Democratic Anti-Fascist Committee".

The POR fought for an immediate strike call, based on independent class positions; but all the left turned a deaf ear to this. It was only when the COB headquarters itself was attacked that they called the strike.

The effect of this period on the workers was enormous. When the POR later called for the setting up of anti-fascist defence committees there was a large response which derived directly from the experience of the struggle against Natusch.

In view of this and the long tradition of Trotskyism in Bolivia it is remarkable that there was not joint action between those parties claiming to be Trotskyist in order to build on the revolutionary mobilisation of the workers and peasants and break them from illusions in bourgeois democracy.

Yes. But you have to understand that almost all of the groups that claim to be Trotskyist have, in fact, completely abandoned the revolutionary programme.

They followed the line of the reformist parties.



Natusch



General Garcia



Siles

BACKGROUND TO THE

pressed Bolivian working class which came to power in a permanent and crushing working class. The following revolutionary Party (POR) way for such a coup. The by Socialist Press.



Mass meeting of Bolivian miners

have begun a massive purge in the public sector from directors of national corporations to rural school teachers.

Anyone with left connections is being fired. The dictatorship has decided to retain power whatever the consequences.

Faced with this situation the left in this country and apparently elsewhere too, while it calls for the overthrow of the dictatorship also demands the 'restoration of democracy'. At a meeting in London addressed by Domitila Barrios there was a banner saying 'Bolivia demands democracy'. Clearly the task of fighting for a clear break from bourgeois democracy is far from completed. Nevertheless, this still remains the most 'obvious' demand, the most popular and accessible point of mobilisation—however futile history has shown it to be for the neo-colonial countries. How, in concrete terms, are revolutionary Marxists to fight against it? What is the way forward in Bolivia?

We always run the risk of sounding repetitious on this point but, in view of the social and political cost incurred in my country by the failure of the left to learn this fundamental lesson, it has to be restated—there is absolutely no way forward for the masses with bourgeois democracy. None whatsoever.

What we must fight for is the political independence of the proletariat in the leadership of the oppressed nation. This does not mean we don't fight for democratic guarantees and liberties—of course we must.

Now, for example, the junta says the 1967 Constitution is in force. We must fight for the rights contained in that Constitution against the army's whim—which is what is actually what determines the parameters of 'politics'. At the same time we must build up the economic defences of the working class.

It's clear that Garcia is planning a political economy based on devaluation and with Bolivia's massive foreign debt, lack of reserves and falling production, this will fall on the working class.

Internationally, it is clear that the non-recognition of Bolivia by the USA is qualitatively different from that of oppressed nations, such as those of the Andean Pact.

Imperialism will always fulfil its historical role of denying oppressed nations their liberation. Thus the present conjuncture is only temporary. A Reagan victory would clear the path to recognition and support for a fascist government in Bolivia.

The revolutionary party must always maintain an anti-imperialist stance, under whatever conditions. When the US warned against a coup in the spring the POR maintained its independence and denounced both imperialism and the *golpistas*; now we will fight against both imperialism and dictatorship.

We do not take the same attitude towards the non-recognition of other oppressed nations, nor, of course, of the masses. We recognise that it is only through militant proletarian international solidarity that not only the Bolivian dictatorship but also the others in Latin America and elsewhere will be overthrown.

But such solidarity will only be constructed through the mobilisation of the working class in pursuit of its own objectives by revolutionary parties.

In this sense the coup in Bolivia is one more indication of the overwhelming need for the reconstruction of the party of world revolution.



Murdered by junta: Socialist Party leader Quiroga

Vanguardia Comunista first joined the FRI and then that broke up. Vanguardia Obrera, led by Fileman Escobar, went to the extreme of supporting the UDP in the last election.

The OST (Organizacion Socialista de los Trabajadores, linked to the Party Commission) also joined the FRI; but when Lechin retired from the race they were also forced to lend their support to the popular front.

Likewise the POR (Combate), the USFI's section. Again, having put all their faith in Lechin, they were totally disoriented when he withdrew.

Now, none of these groups emerged from a profound split in the POR although the Pabloites left as a result of the 1953 crisis. None posed an alternative programme—they all tall-ended behind the PCB and PCBM-L.

Only the POR which represents Trotskyism in Bolivia, continued to hammer away at the point that bourgeois democracy was a cul-de-sac and that the only way to orientate the masses towards their own objec-

tives was through the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Front (FRA).

Out of the ashes of November we had to fight to re-establish the FRA in order to unify the oppressed nation under the leadership of the working class.

If we move forward somewhat to the months before Garcia's coup, it appears that the POR had two distinct positions at the same time—one open, public and expansionist, the other effectively clandestine, orientated towards underground work. In terms of organisation alone this appears somewhat confusing but, perhaps more important, it seems to reflect the lack of a decisive political analysis.

Yes, of course that's how it appeared. But one must remember the very distinct conditions that obtained in the spring and early summer.

While the Gueiler regime nominally ruled the country it

became increasingly obvious that it was Garcia, as army commander, who was effectively in control.

We were on the verge of a coup the whole time and there were numerous false alarms. At the same time the reformists and the 'left' continued to mobilise for the elections.

There existed two very different possibilities and we couldn't say with confidence that one or the other would occur. When, in April, the military came into effective control, the POR called for the complete abandonment of electoral politics, and the organisation of the masses against fascism.

The 'left' paid no attention. We had to respond to that, even though we argued that a coup was extremely likely either before or after the poll. Moreover, we had to use the electoral campaign to show our position was right.

Therefore, we campaigned for a politically-motivated blank vote which not only repudiated reformism but responded to the

increasing degree of abstentionism evident after the failure of the 1978 and 1979 elections.

At the same time we continued to build defence committees and called for a general strike. The fact that the 'left' would have nothing to do with this meant that, in contrast to November, the July coup was faced with a disorganised and demobilised working class and peasantry.

But this was not the only difference was it?

No. There were several differences. Natusch lacked internal and international support. Externally, Natusch was completely isolated.

Garcia was also faced with international opposition—but he received direct help from the dictatorships of the Southern Cone. Not just recognition but material and ideological support.

We now know of the importance of the Argentinian 'advisors' and the paramilitary forces in the first days of the coup.

Natusch was not endeavouring to establish a Pinochet-style coup; but Garcia had planned one from the very beginning.

This was reflected in the lack of confidence in the Junior Officers, who were rarely used for important operations.

Also the social conditions were entirely different in July. The working class and peasantry was largely demobilised. In many areas there was no peasant resistance.

In the cities there was very tight control. The barricades lasted only two or three days. In the mines the resistance was of an entirely different character—the workers had no choice but to take up their arms and fight.

But in the towns the union leadership was effectively decapitated—the attack on the COB and, the killing or capture of the leaders indicated the intentions of Garcia from the very start.

The organisation of resistance around the mining areas and the extraordinary violence that this engendered made the opposition to the dictatorship

essentially proletarian in character, despite Lechin's treason in calling for an end to the general strike.

The miners showed enormous heroism in defending their workplaces and this, in the end, meant that they weren't smashed but were able to retreat with some guarantees.

Nevertheless they remain almost totally isolated from the rest of the population.

The offensive against the miners, the vanguard of the proletariat, was the armed forces' principal preoccupation; but they also repressed other sections in their endeavour to subdue the slightest manifestation of opposition.

These included the Church, the left and democratic parties, the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights. Their actions were typical of fascists and the cruelty with which they were undertaken was also highly characteristic.

I myself was arrested as they searched for the leadership of the left, detaining and interrogating as many people as they could.

Every day the Department of Political Order was full of political prisoners as were the offices of the General Staff at Miraflores and the Ministry of the Interior.

The whole offensive seemed to be modelled on Pinochet's, even down to use of the stadium.

It was all carefully prepared, they had learnt the lessons of November. They knew exactly what to do and how to do it.

It was crucial to the military to use Lechin as their instrument, he was key to demobilising the masses. His television broadcast calling off the strike was the culmination of his treacherous career; he is neutered as a political and union leader.

He said he would explain later but this has been met with widespread scepticism and the workers have been shown with the utmost clarity the reactionary role that the COB can play.

Of course, the impact is not restricted to workers. The paramilitary forces have been assisted by undercover agents who

The politics of Socialist Organiser



Dear Comrade Editor,
I would like to take up some of the points you made in reply to Cde KW's letter in SP221.

I consider that you are seriously wrong to state that "for *Socialist Organiser* the perspective is to map out a minimum basis of principled agreement for the formation of a left wing current within the Labour Party."

Firstly, *Socialist Organiser's* statement 'Where we Stand', which appears in each issue of the SO paper is very far from being a 'minimum basis'.

It states very clearly that "Our perspective must be working class action to raze the capitalist system down to its foundations..."

Tactics

While we may differ from the comrades of SO on points of tactics or emphasis, this gives us no right to distort their positions.

Secondly, the SO statement nowhere insists or even suggests that the Labour Party is the exclusive centre of struggle.

On the contrary, they make clear their orientation to the trade unions and to newly developing movements of women, gays, blacks etc and the Irish republicans.

They have also recently pub-

lished a very interesting broadsheet 'The fight for trade union democracy', which alone suffices to refute your distortions.

However, I think Cde KW is entirely correct to stress that the central question for Trotskyists now is the precise way to approach the huge left wing movement in the Labour Party, and here the experience of the SO comrades is valuable.

Their effective intervention into the Labour left is an example to those of us who want to see a genuinely mass socialist revolutionary movement.

They have been able to bring their views in front of very large sections of the Labour Party membership.

Other Trotskyists have been less successful in this direction and increasingly find themselves

in a marginal position relative to the Labour left wing.

The development of this left wing at the same point in time as the beginnings of mass industrial action against the Tories presents a real possibility of major political advance in this country—the possibility of an overthrow of a Tory government and its replacement by a workers' government formed out of the Labour left.

The possibilities for such a development are greater now than at any time in the history of the British labour movement.

It is to these possibilities that all serious socialists must turn their attention urgently, and in the process abandon the practice of attacking others for positions they do not even hold.

Fraternally
Ernie Stubbins
East London

READERS

WRITE

We welcome letters on any topic—preferably less than 400 words.



In their words ...

WHERE WE STAND — Socialist Organiser

"Organise the left to beat back the Tories' attacks!

No to attacks on union rights; defend the picket line; no state interference in our unions!

No to any wage curbs. Labour must support all struggles for better living standards and conditions!

Wage rises should at the very least keep up with price increases. The same should go for state benefits, grants and pensions.

Start improving the social services rather than cutting them. Stop cutting jobs in the public sector.

End unemployment. Cut hours, not jobs—share the work

with no loss of pay. Start now with a 35 hour week and an end to overtime.

All firms threatening closure should be nationalised under workers' control.

Make the bosses pay, not the working class. Millions for hospitals, not a penny for 'defence'. Nationalise the banks and financial institutions without compensation. End the interest burden on council housing and other public services.

Freeze rents and rates. Scrap all immigration controls. Race is not a problem; racism is. The labour movement must mobilise to drive the fascists off the streets.

Purge racists from positions in the labour movement. Organise full support for black self-defence.

The capitalist police are an enemy for the working class. Support all demands to weaken them as a bosses' striking force: dissolution of special squads (SPG, Special Branch, M15, etc) public accountability, etc.

Free abortion and contraception on demand. Women's equal right to work, and full equality for women.

Against attacks on gays by the State: abolish all laws which discriminate against lesbians and gay men; for the right of the gay community to organise and to affirm their stance publicly.

The Irish people—as a whole—should have the right to determine their own future. Get the British troops out now! Repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Political status for Irish Republican prisoners as a matter

of urgency.

The black working people of South Africa should get full support from the British labour movement for their strikes, struggles and armed combat against the white supremacist regime. South African goods and services should be blacked.

It is essential to achieve the fullest democracy in the labour movement. Automatic reselection of MPs during each parliament, and the election by annual conference of party leaders. Annual election of all trade union officials, who should be paid the average for the trade...

Socialist Organiser aims to help build a class-struggle left wing in the trade unions and Labour Party, based on a revolutionary socialist platform...

EDITOR'S REPLY

My comments in reply to KW's initial letter were designed to draw out the marked distinction between the task we set ourselves in *Socialist Press*—the elaboration of a full Trotskyist programme and the construction of a revolutionary Marxist Party—and the very different task set by *Socialist Organiser*.

"to help build a class struggle left wing in the trade unions and Labour Party based on a revolutionary socialist platform". (SO Sept 27).

Comrade Stubbins does not need me to remind him that a "class struggle left wing" is not a revolutionary party; nor is it a substitute for a party. And a glance at this revolutionary-socialist platform (reproduced below, for the information of our readers) shows that it is, as I stated, no more than "a minimum basis of principled agreement" for a broad-based left wing movement.

As such it achieves what it sets out to do: but it is by no means an adequate programme for a revolutionary party.

Transitional demands

It contains hardly any of the demands of the Trotskyist Transitional Programme. In particular it omits the call for a sliding scale of wages to keep pace with inflation; it nowhere calls for workers committees to fight to open the books of firms refusing wage demands or seeking to impose redundancies—thus omitting the fight for workers' control of production and for a workers' plan for the development of the economy.

The *Socialist Organiser* platform also fails to call for occupation of factories and public sector facilities threatened with closure; makes no demand for public service spending to be protected against inflation; calls simply for "support for black self-defence" rather than for workers' defence squads to defeat racist and fascist attacks; and maps out no perspective for uniting the struggles that emerge against the Tory government through the building of councils of action.

Thus the programmatic demands which lead towards the building of organs of dual power are left out altogether from the SO platform.

Indeed the platform even fails to call for action to bring down the Tory government—without which its call for "all firms threatening closure" to be

"nationalised under workers' control" appears somewhat forlorn—and little more advanced than the Labour Party's own vague commitments to nationalisation.

It is therefore not inaccurate to describe the militant, generally anti-capitalist, demands of the *Socialist Organiser* platform as a "minimum basis for principled agreement" for a left wing current—as distinct from an 'elaboration or popularisation of the Trotskyist programme.

Impact

This is equally true whether the demands themselves are raised in the Labour Party or in the unions.

It was not my intention to suggest that *Socialist Organiser*—for better or worse—directs itself exclusively towards the Labour Party—though its impact has been far more evident there than it has been in the unions.

My stress on the fact that the Labour Party—for all the changes that have taken place—is only one arena rather than the exclusive arena of the fight for socialist programme was in fact in reply to the assertion by comrade KW in his letter that:

"The central arena of the fight for a revolutionary programme must now become the Labour Party."

I pointed out that this is not the position of *Socialist Press*. The building of a new leadership capable in reality of leading a struggle to "raze the capitalist system down to its foundation" requires in our view the construction not simply of a broad "class struggle left wing" in the trade unions and Labour Party, but the building in the workers' movement of a revolutionary party, based on the full programme of Trotskyism, developed in the conditions of today's class struggle.

While broader groupings can therefore play a role in the struggle, the key issue for us must remain the qualitative one of building and training a Marxist vanguard that is equipped to fight the Labour and trade union bureaucracy.

Socialist Press is therefore seen by the WSL as an important means of working towards that objective. It is some of the positions that *Socialist Organiser* does not hold that are in our view central to the development of a revolutionary party in Britain and internationally.

'CALIGULA': OBNOXIOUS VENTURE

Reviewed by Stuart Sutherland



At first notice, a movie about the rise and fall of Caligula Caesar starring John Gielgud, Peter O'Toole, Malcolm McDowell and Helen Mirren and with a screenplay based on an original by Gore Vidal sounds very impressive.

One might expect it to be a brilliantly acted, if classical, look at the forces working in the Roman Empire to support, sustain and eventually discard one of the most unpleasant despots of even those harsh times.

It might even have risen to the heights of another attempt to film Robert Graves' fascinating book "I Claudius". At worst it could have been an epic of the "Ben-Hur" variety.

Unfortunately, even my worst expectations were exceeded.

This production manages the astounding achievements of both degrading everyone in it and flagrantly ignoring the historical and political context of the times it seeks to portray.

Scene upon scene of sexual activity is followed or associated with those of the most barbaric violence.

The two are always intimately connected in this film. These scenes are only ever used to titillate, to horrify and to pander to the most oppressive and reactionary sexual attitudes.

One gets no feel for the forces at work in the Roman Empire that led to Gaius Caligula attaining power, nor ultimately why he was deposed. The ending is as arbitrary as it is abrupt.

The key to the reason for this mess lies in that the other pursuit of its producer, Bob Guccione, is to emulate Hugh Hefner's "Playboy" magazine with his own tawdry version,

'Penthouse'.

'Caligula' seems to be an attempt to bring to the screen the sort of world that exists between the pages of these magazines.

Since the film's release Gore Vidal has dissociated himself from the screenplay and several of the actors want no artistic (sic) association with the final version.

Misunderstood

Moreover, Guccione doesn't want reviewers to see the film as he feels they won't understand it.

There is a suggestion that some particularly obnoxious scenes were inserted after the principals had acted their parts and left the production.

But once these scenes are removed there is virtually nothing left of the film. British audiences will be especially bewildered because although it

has been showing uncut for some time in Paris and the USA the version shown here will have cuts that will destroy whatever perverted sense there was in these foreign versions.

Just what sort of film did these stars think that they were to appear in? Didn't they read a screenplay?

One can only conclude that large sums of money were paid to secure the services of 'reputable' stars to give credibility to this noxious venture.

Only John Gielgud maintains a vestige of integrity.

Early in the film, weary of death, intrigue and perversion, he climbs into a hot bath with his wrists slit in order to commit suicide.

Malcolm McDowell, as Caligula, asks him what it is like to die, but gets no reply from Gielgud.

The rest of the movie is a sort of answer to this question.

Pacifist and superficial

JOHN LISTER reviews the best-selling Penguin collection of articles on disarmament—*Protest and Survive*. Edited by E.P. Thompson and Dan Smith, the book costs £1.50.

At every stage in this Penguin compilation of pacifist essays lies a contradiction—one that is summed up in the feebleness of the title: *Protest and Survive*.

The contradiction is that the book graphically and convincingly sketches the scale of the dangers posed to our very existence by the aggressive war moves of imperialism: yet its response to this is to look *not* towards the revolutionary overthrow of imperialism, but towards "protest" and pressure—in a vain effort to persuade the imperialist leopard to change its spots!

However well-intentioned they may be the book's panel of authors have therefore set themselves and their supporters the most impossible task of all.

Of the Thatcher, Carter and Reagan governments in 1980 we can only echo the views of Lenin in March 1917:

"To turn to this government with a proposal of concluding peace is equivalent to preaching morality to the keeper of a brothel."

Conservative

Lenin—in exile—laboured the point. He was arguing not only against professional pacifists but also against the duller-witted and most conservative of would-be revolutionaries, the "old Bolsheviks" who, led by Stalin, were at the time busily putting forward a false position in Russia itself.

"An appeal to the Guchkov-Miliukov government that it quickly conclude an honourable, a democratic and a beneficent peace is identical with an appeal of a good old village priest to the landowners and the traders that they lead godly lives, love their neighbour as themselves, and turn their right cheek when the left is smitten."

And to make the point unmistakable, Lenin declared in April 1917 that:

"There must be an exposure . . . of this inadmissible 'demand'—which can only sow illusions—that this government, a capitalist government, should cease to be imperialistic."

Protest and Survive, like many of the leaders of the newly revived Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, serves to perpetuate this same inadmissible demand.

It calls for protest action to persuade the capitalist governments of Britain and the USA that they should "cease to be imperialistic".

But of course the Thatcher, Carter and Reagan leaderships are in no way equivalent to the unstable Guchkov-Miliukov Provisional Government that had been swept to power following the February 1917 Revolution in Russia.

The US and British imperialists make no secret of their hard faced anti-communism, their reactionary politics at home and abroad, and their dedication to the preservation of private profit by any means available.

More inadmissible

The demand that these governments should cease to be imperialistic is—if anything—even more inadmissible now than the false position of the "old Bolsheviks" attacked by Lenin in 1917!

Indeed the doggedly pacifist positions of the authors fly openly in the face of the facts which they themselves place before us. Much of the hard evidence in the articles contained in *Protest and Survive* proves beyond doubt that it is the imperialists who are engaged in a deliberate escalation of the



PROTEST AND SURVIVE
 EDITED BY E.P. THOMPSON AND DAN SMITH

- Cruise Missiles
- Nuclear War in Europe
- Civil Defence
- Soviet Armaments
- US Military Plans
- War, Militarism and the Soviet State
- Britain's Tuppennyworth

"arms race", in a bid to gain a military advantage over the USSR.

In particular Dan Smith in 'The European Nuclear Theatre' demolishes some of the mythology of the NATO propagandists' statistics, and stresses that from the very outset it has been the USA that has set the pace of the nuclear build-up in Europe.

2-1 Superiority

Working from Western military sources, he shows that out of 11,000 nuclear warheads now in Europe only 3,500 are deployed by the Warsaw Pact, against 7,500 under NATO (US) command. Of the new build-up involving Cruise and Pershing 2 missiles, he states:

"NATO was not forced into the decision by the Warsaw Pact; it moved into it of its own volition . . . At one time NATO was happy not to have this new capability. Now it wants it. The comparable Theatre Nuclear Weapons on the Warsaw Pact side are today much the same as they have been for many years, but rather more modern. But with NATO we are dealing not with more modern versions of the same weapons, but with a totally new capability, and that means NATO's decision bears a particular burden of responsibility for the dangers we now face." (p.113).

Dan Smith avoids the more brazen attempts of some of the other authors to place an "equals" sign between what are generally termed the "two superpowers". But he, too, fails to recognise any distinction between the two main nations in confrontation.

Abstract

Pacifism, an abstract approach characteristic of the most confused sections of the middle class, thus emerges as a major diversion in the present struggle against war.

On the one hand, the pacifist approach fails to distinguish

between the nationalised property relations—the revolutionary gains of the international working class—that are defended by the nuclear weapons in the USSR, as against the private profiteering and exploitation that are defended by the growing nuclear arsenals of the NATO imperialists.

On the other hand, the pacifist approach heads its adherents completely away from any possibility of understanding the material basis of the present war drive.

War, as the famous saying from Clausewitz points out, is simply the continuation of politics by other means.

The aggressive nuclear build-up by the NATO alliance is no arbitrary whim on the part of a handful of crazed Pentagon or Whitehall generals.

Its roots lie in the struggle by capitalists to restore and increase their profits.

To do this they need to

increase the exploitation of the workers and peasants of the world. They cannot do so without encountering fierce resistance.

This is why the employers need to crush liberation struggles in the underdeveloped countries, which might otherwise topple dictatorial and military regimes and overthrow the domination of imperialist finance capital.

As they face up to this growing economic and political crisis, the imperialist leaders look with increasing anger and frustration at the huge areas of Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and Asia in which—along with Cuba—capitalist exploitation has been overturned.

Not only do such countries represent for the capitalists potentially vast untapped markets and pools of exploitable labour power, but they also represent a political challenge.

It is to the degenerated and

degenerated workers' states that the leaderships of anti-imperialist struggles look for material and political support.

In general the imperialists have learned in decades of experience that the Stalinist ruling bureaucracies cynically betray such struggles.

But the imperialists know also that, in seeking to preserve a stable political balance of forces on a world scale, the Kremlin leaders are quite capable, on occasion, of providing crucial assistance which—as in the case of Cuban troops in the Angolan civil war—can help turn the tide against imperialism.

Reinforce control

The drive to reinforce imperialist control over the neo-colonial countries is therefore integrally linked to a drive to militarily strengthen imperialism

itself in relation to the workers' states.

Carter, Reagan and Thatcher long to restore the situation where imperialism enjoyed unquestioned nuclear superiority over the workers' states.

Were they to achieve such a position they would at once exploit it to force home renewed attacks on the masses of the world.

This explains the significant change of US strategy that has taken place this year.

Preparations are being made for "limited" nuclear conflict between NATO and the workers' states. For this reason the US imperialists have begun installing a new range of 'counterforce' weapons.

These weapons—including Thatcher's £5 billion Trident submarines, the new US European, sub-marine based and aircraft launched Cruise missiles and the giant new MX missile system in the USA—are designed to offer US generals the chance to launch a "first strike" aimed at wiping out the Soviet Union's missiles.

The USA is not only way ahead in this lethal new technology, but also forcing the pace in installing and preparing the ground to use it. And the Thatcher government is eagerly backing each aggressive move.

Facts and figures

But while *Protest and Survive* offers us an impressive array of facts and figures that confirm this analysis; while it shreds the paper-thin pretexts used by the imperialists to excuse their war-plans; while it spells out the grisly fate that awaits us if these plans are not halted, it fails lamentably to offer the slightest perspective for action that might in reality prevent the danger of nuclear war.

This danger is rooted *not* in the existence of "two superpowers", but in the continued existence of *capitalism*, a ruthless, expansionist system of exploitation.

The danger cannot be overcome by utopian pleas to Thatcher and Reagan to scrap their weapons programmes, nor by the dangerous call on the Kremlin leadership to renounce the military measures that are necessary to defend the deformed workers' states against imperialist attack.

The danger can only be overcome through the mobilisation of the working class in Britain, in the USA and throughout the capitalist countries internationally in the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism and the various governments which defend capitalist exploitation.

Blacking

In Britain this means the fight in the labour movement for the blacking of all work on nuclear weapons and missile sites, linked to the mobilisation of mass action to bring down the Thatcher government and remove those Labourites committed to the defence of British imperialism.

It means fighting for a workers' government which alone can bring a forcible end to capitalist exploitation.

Protest and Survive, though well worth reading, takes us only as far as a partial glimpse of the problem: for a grasp of the solutions, a revolutionary party is needed.

Over one hundred thousand people on the October 26 anti-nukes demonstration showed they had reached at least the political level of EP Thompson and his co-thinkers: but if Thatcher is to be halted the task now is to win the best of these forces to an understanding of the need for class action to end the threat of war.

Read the book—and join us in the fight for socialism!





CPSA leader Thomas (left) with NUPE leader Fisher

'MILITANT' TAKES OVER CPSA BROAD LEFT

Last weekend's annual CPSA Broad Left conference in Leeds was always going to be a crucial test of the ability of the left within the union to draw out the lessons of this year's electoral disaster and of the Brixton dole office dispute.

In the event, the two-day meeting, attended by over 220 activists, was a frustrating mixture of naked electoral manoeuvring and frantic political debate.

The Militant group, with a solid phalanx of about 100 supporters, won virtually every significant vote and emerged decisively at the head of the Broad Left in CPSA, scarcely needing (but always getting) the support of the Communist Party faction.

Militant's leading left-talker Kevin Roddy is to be Broad Left candidate for the union presidency next year, and the whole Militant slate will form the bulk of National Executive candidates.

On the key issues facing CPSA members, such as pay, the cuts and victimisations, the only coherent opposition to Militant was provided by supporters of the Socialist Caucus, spearheaded by Steve Corbishley and Stuart McLennan—both of whom failed to get on the NEC slate (Corbishley was on the NEC last year and had consistently attacked the Militant, Communist Party and Tribuneite majority for their record in power).

The pay debate revolved around two emergency motions, formulated in the wake of Thatcher's public sector 6% incomes policy announcement. Predictably the windy, perspective-free resolution from Militant was adopted and a much tighter motion from

London Broad Left fell by the wayside.

A resolution from the Oxford Broad Left calling for a sliding scale of wages linked to inflation as assessed by elected committees of civil service trade unionists was passed—but as Ted Eames stressed in moving it, the important thing is to actually do something about it.

Socialist Press waits with interest to see if the CPSA's Special Pay Policy conference in January is bombarded with sliding-scale resolutions from branches with Broad Left leaderships.

Such a campaign is crucial now more than ever if the Pay Research Unit which Thatcher has jettisoned is to be replaced with a positive alternative.

A further example of the time-honoured division between those who stand for a principled fight in action and those who simply hope that the politics will somehow magically filter through without a struggle came in the debate on immigration laws.

The Oxford group proposed a motion calling for the CPSA members in the Home Office who actually implement the immigration laws, and further demanded that any Broad Left dominated NEC organise blacking of all such work.

The Militant offered to support it if the latter clause were

changed to "aims to organise blacking". Pointing to the immediate plight of immigrants such as Anwar Ditta and all those hauled in during police raids on whole factories, Marie Campbell correctly refused to accept any such amendment—and the resolution was duly defeated.

Another point of controversy was reached in the debate on resolutions calling for the CPSA to merge with the managerment's union—the Society of Civil and Public Servants.

Ignoring the clear example of NALGO, Communist Party and Militant speakers blatantly argued that such a merger would be a good thing because it would mean that they could link up with the various 'lefts' on the SCPS executive.

They spared no thought at all for the rank and file of the CPSA being asked to join forces with those layers responsible for pushing through the cuts and for victimising activists wherever they feel they can get away with it.

Militant also blocked a straightforward common-sense motion calling for an approach to the SWP's "Redder Tape" grouping for closer links on electoral and policy campaigns.

Never can there have been a clearer or more damaging case of sectarian blindness meeting sectarian deafness. The SWP have much to answer for in maintaining their members and

periphery outside the Broad Left, but the refusal of a series of Militant speakers to even acknowledge their existence let alone consider any joint discussions, was indefensible.

Ludicrous stunt

In electoral terms this means that the SWP will simply go ahead with their ludicrous stunt of putting up their victimised Brixton member Phil Corrdell for the union presidency.

The coming period is going to be a crucial one for CPSA activists. The fight on pay will be make-or-break, the government knows that only too well. If the pay struggle is sold out then the way will be prepared for even more cuts and the stepping up of the imposition of new technology.

Already management is growing more arrogant daily in its attacks on union activists, and Thatcher is preparing for a major onslaught on the facilities agreements for union representatives.

As ever the key question is leadership. At present Ken Thomas and the right wing 'moderate' puppets of the NEC are working overtime as a fifth column for Thatcher within the union.

CPSA members must take up an all-out campaign to expose this treachery and fight for the left to offer a coherent alternative.

Within the CPSA Broad Left we urge members to build the Socialist Caucus.

Militant will be very much

on the spot over the coming period. Any political tendency with their numerical strength and base in CPSA has a very real potential for achieving major gains in the current situation. But if the Militant continue on their present course then the CPSA rank and file will learn important lessons about the bankruptcy of Militant's adaptation to reformism.

One reason for the ousting of last year's left NEC was its failure to give any real lead on action against cuts and in support of members victimised for implementing union policy.

Preparation must begin now for the Special Pay Conference in January and for strike action to make whatever policy results from that meeting stick.

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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 the society, planned socialist

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.

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CPSA militant sacked

ON THE eve of the CPSA Broad Left Conference in Leeds, management stepped up their recent campaign of victimisations by sacking Lynn Hutchins—secretary of the Civil Engineers' Branch and chairperson of the London Area No. 3 Committee.

Lynn Hutchins' 'crime' was to refuse a management order to go to another office to help ease the work-load caused by recent cuts.

She correctly refused to work share in accordance with

national CPSA policy and was summarily dismissed at 4.30 pm on Friday 7 November, leaving no time to call a union meeting. Lynn, a non-aligned Broad Left member and campaigner for women's rights, addressed the Broad Left conference and an emergency resolution was passed demanding an all-out campaign for her reinstatement and for a united front battle against all the current victimisations (many of which are still centred on the Brixton Dole Office).

A campaign meeting has been called for this Thursday and the incoming Broad Left National Committee has been instructed to co-ordinate the fight (something it signally failed to do over Brixton).

The immediate objective must be to get all-out strike action by the Civil Engineer's Branch, with support from the NUJ members who share the same workplace.

Seamen fight sell-out

The decision by 13-3 of the National Union of Seamen's executive to allow Cunard to fly a "flag of convenience" on the 'Cunard Princess' and thus operate outside of union wage rates has been condemned by seamen all over the country.

The Cardiff branch of the NUS has passed a motion calling on the executive members who voted for the deal to resign.

A meeting of the London membership has passed a resolution which says "The union leaders succeeded in snatching defeat from the jaws of victory".

The leadership treped this sell-out at a time of tremendous national and international support. It is pretty clear that they will try to avoid any struggle on their wage claim for £3 an hour—in answer to which the employers have offered less than 10%.

LEYLAND

from back page

mass meeting. After a strong speech by Fryer for strike action, only seven voted against out of 4,500 present.

Many other plants emulated their previous votes. Swindon, where the vote switched from strike to acceptance was the only major plant to change its position.

As we go to press, everything now rests on Longbridge, where the decision was taken to hold a shop stewards meeting on Friday and delay the meeting until Tuesday of this week.

But on Friday morning it became clear that there was a danger of a major betrayal.

The Communist Party-controlled Longbridge works committee recommended to the shop stewards that the 6.8% offer be accepted.

They were however voted down by the stewards who decided to recommend strike action to the mass meeting on Tuesday.

Top level

Clearly what is involved is a top level decision of the Communist Party to join with the right wing and attempt to sabo-

tage the strike movement at its decisive stage.

Last Saturday's *Daily Mirror* summed up the situation with great clarity:

"Full time officials will be working overtime this week to prevent the strike taking place."

They should perhaps have said full time officials and the Communist Party.

Today's (Monday's) *Financial Times* speculates that Longbridge convenor Jack Adams will put the position of the CP and not that of the shop stewards committee at tomorrow's mass meeting.

Duffy at the same time has piled more pressure on the meeting with public statements urging AUEW members to continue working whatever the majority vote, and declaring that whatever happened he would not make a strike official.

Tonight, therefore, Thatcher waits to know if she will face an all-out battle with BL workers.

If Adams does put the works committee policy and obtain a vote for acceptance of the 6.8% she could be spared a confrontation which her government may not survive.

Flop for import controls demo

The Hosiery Union's plan to dock the fight against redundancies and closures in the industry by diverting workers into a 'Buy British' campaign got off to an extremely mixed reception in Leicester on November 12.

Official union forecasts over local radio of a massive 6,000 turn-out proved to be badly out of touch with the mood of the membership. Only about 2,000 turned out for this employer-sponsored 'import controls' jamboree.

This was despite a massive campaign in the local press in support of the march, open collaboration by employers who gave time off to workers on full pay to encourage them to attend, and a string of buses which ferried in workers from other areas.

Notably absent were the vast majority of the thousands of Asian workers who make up the bulk of the hosiery workforce in the East Midlands.

Clearly the shop floor workers were not as convinced as their official leaders about the generosity and good intentions of their bosses, including Courtaulds and Coates Patons [both multi-nationals] who have been carrying out the closures.

A contributing factor to the low attendance must, however, also have been the determined campaign carried out by the left at the factories in the weeks beforehand, spelling out the case against import controls.

On the demonstration itself, hosiery union officials fought desperately to suppress all reference to politics in the interests of their shabby alliance with the employers.

Political banners were outlawed, and the SWP's 'Right to Work' protest found itself removed from the main body of the march before it had even set off.

The only organised opposition to the march was, as a result, the contingent lined up behind the local Trades Council's Cuts and Unemployment Committee banner, which included Leicester South Labour MP Jim Marshall.

Slogans

They took up the slogans which had been proposed in the leaflet distributed by supporters of 'Woman Worker', women's paper of the Workers Socialist League and countered the official 'Buy British' theme with 'Fight unemployment—kick the Tories out'; 'Don't share the poverty—share the work on full pay'; 'Occupy, open the books—stop the cuts in jobs' and slogans against the use of import controls.

Despite frequent police harassment this political intervention clearly had an impact on the marchers, as became most apparent at the end-of-march rally.

To begin with there was sporadic heckling of even the hosiery union speakers.

NUHKW secretary, Harry Gibson, making clear where he stood, thanked the local bosses, (who have put 5,000 of his members out of work) for their "solidarity" (!) and was promptly followed by a woman hosiery worker who wanted to 'go back to when Britain was great', and ended with a rendition of 'Land of Hope and Glory'.

But even this sort of grovelling, nationalist claptrap failed to convince the assembled workers to greet Tory MP John Farr with enthusiasm.

When he rose to speak he was greeted with a torrent of boos, catcalls and fairly graphic suggestions as to how he might spend the rest of his day.

For almost five minutes the chairman, Leicester's Lord Mayor, struggled to get a 'democratic' hearing for Farr's special brand of 'Little Englander' imperialism, arguing that it wasn't a political meeting.

The audience didn't agree, and the Tory's badly mauled speech went largely unheard.

Despite this setback for the 'import controls' lobby there is little doubt that other union leaders, eager to duck out of a fight on jobs, will be tempted to jump on the same bandwagon.

It is, therefore, vital that rank and file militants take up every one of the arguments put forward, whether by employers or unions, left or right, on import controls now at shop floor level.

What is necessary now is the development of a layer of class fighters who can begin to win workers coming into struggle to a programme of demands which begins not from the interests of preserving ailing 'British' capitalism, but takes as its clear starting point the independent interests of the working class.

ASLEF: ALL OUT DECEMBER 1

Further indications of the way in which British Railways Board intend to honour the Tory government's new cash limits are emerging almost on a daily basis.

To take two examples; on the Southern Region no less than 140 stations are to close threatening hundreds of workers with redundancies if, as seems likely, they cannot be transferred to other depots.

On the Eastern Region, a leaked management document reveals that one-third of the suburban electric services on the "Great Northern" are to be axed, and forty workers face the prospect of redundancy at Kings

Cross in the near future. The impact of the economic crisis on freight haulage is beginning to be felt, especially at rail depots closely tied to the steel industry.

Within the next year, nearly all marshalling yards, where freight trains are made up, will be closed.

At an open meeting called by the Stratford branch of the train drivers' union, ASLEF, in East London, this desperate picture was reflected in the speeches from representatives of other depots in the London area.

Also present at the meeting was EC member George Saville whose contribution consisted of

bemoaning the "ignorance" of footplate staff and their reluctance to take any action, citing May 14 as confirmation of his view.

It was pointed out at the meeting that the responsibility to defend jobs and conditions on the footplate rested squarely on the shoulders of the EC.

The EC were attacked by one speaker for not mounting a "full blooded campaign" including mass meetings to build for strike action.

Ray Buckton, General Secretary of ASLEF, let it be remembered publicly, in the press, on TV and at this year's TUC that he would be in favour of strike action to defend the industry.

Privately, however, Buckton has stated to fellow EC members, that there is no chance of getting that action because "the men aren't interested". And he has done nothing to interest them in such a policy!

The Stratford meeting closed with a resolution, passed unanimously, urging the EC to call a one-day national strike on 1 December.

A one-day stoppage is totally inadequate to stop the management and the Tories—but it gives the members a chance to prove that they will fight.

Despite reservations therefore, Kings Cross ASLEF took up Stratford's call and sent in a similar resolution demanding strike action on December 1.

ASLEF branches must pass a resolution supporting the Stratford initiative, but demanding also that the EC make December 1 the start of a campaign including further, all-out, industrial action to defend jobs and conditions.

CAV jobs threat

After months of speculation and a couple of trial runs, the Lucas corporation has begun a major attack on jobs at CAV, Acton.

Figures given to a shop stewards' meeting include the following:

*In the electrical business the employer is demanding a cut of at least 60 direct workers, 116 indirect workers and 70 staff.

*Parts and Service workers are to be hit with a call for at least 50 staff and 16 manual jobs to be cut.

*Together with other parts of the business, something like 350 jobs are threatened across the site.

In addition to this there will be an enforced two-week shutdown at Christmas and most manual workers will be on a four-day week in January. The bulk of the electrical business will go on a three-day week in February.

In the first stage the company is asking for volunteers where they want to get rid of people. Those who may be tempted to take the money and run should first ask themselves where the next job is coming from.

As the crisis bites deeper more and more firms are either cutting back or closing down altogether.

Recently major local employers such as AEC, BL's plant at Park Royal and Firestones have closed, throwing thousands out of work.

Even the government's own figures indicate that unemployment will soon be 3 million—only a fool would willingly join them.

The work should be shared and the workers should receive full pay whether that comes from the company or the government. All this should be under the control of the shop stewards and not the management.

Redundancies affect not only those that go but also those that stay. As jobs and hours are cut, management is forced to impose speed-up and increased flexibility in order to maintain the level of production.

This is already the case in companies like Ford and BL. Sections must adopt the policy of not covering for those who leave and are not replaced and must avoid doing five days' work in three or four days.

Despite the gravity of the situation, the stewards seem to have had little, if any, discussion of the policies needed to save the jobs.

The JSSC must be a fighting body not just a channel through which management pass information to their employees.

Links must be made between the manual and staff unions in the plant to defend jobs.

Links must also be made with the unions in other Lucas plants such as the Gilling Factory which is due to close in March with the loss of 900 jobs.

At least one section has voted not to accept redundancies and to adopt a no cover policy. This example must be taken up on the shop floor and in the offices throughout the site. Any section taking action must get the full support of every other worker on the site.

Miners must say 'no'

Miners on 26/27 November are to be balloted on their 13% offer. The NUM Executive have voted 14-11 to recommend acceptance.

This has been termed a "sell-out" by Arthur Scargill and Mick McGahey—although Scargill's main proposal was that management and union jointly approach the government for more money: "I am convinced if we had done so there would have been much more money available."

The miners not only face a cut in the value of their wages but a large number of pit closures. To retreat now would strengthen the government and isolate the firemen.

Miners should vote 'no' and prepare to be the part of the fight not to beg the government for more but to bring it down!

WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE
Christmas Bazaar
Cowley Community Centre, Oxford
SATURDAY 29 NOVEMBER
12 noon to 4 p.m.

Cakes — Gifts — Books
Raffle — Bottles — Games — Refreshments
Plants — Refreshments
You name it, we've got it!
Donations and assistance welcome.

WSL

New Ambassadors Hotel
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6th Anniversary

Six years of the Workers Socialist League

RALLY

SATURDAY 6 DECEMBER 2.30 p.m.

Tickets £1.50 (£1.00 outside London in advance), unwaged 50p

New films on Ireland, El Salvador

Speakers from
Socialist Press
Red Youth
and the Trotskyist
International Liaison
Committee

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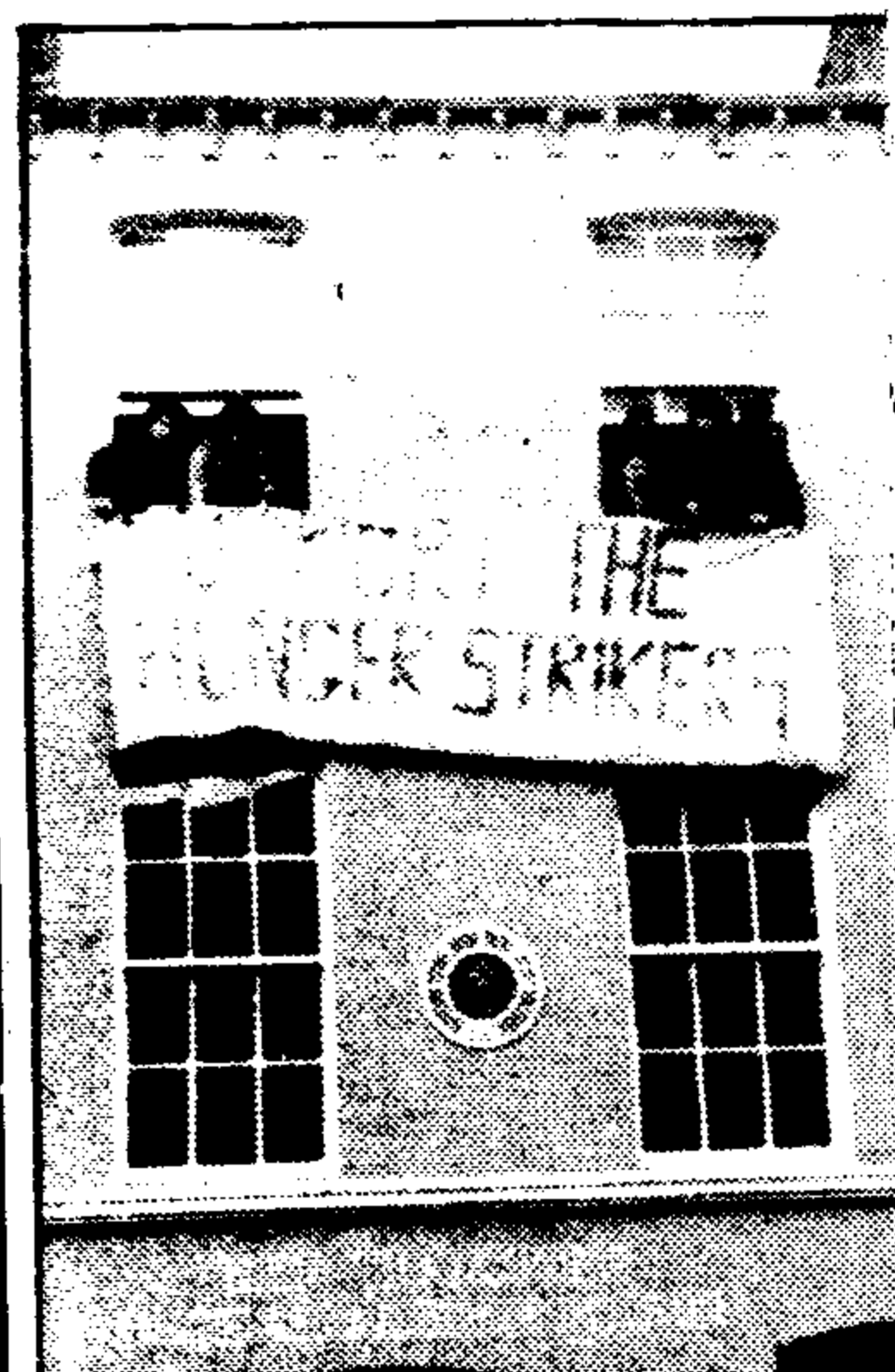
Special Fund

Well, November 15 came and went but we did not reach our target of the first £1,000 in our £1500 Special Fund.

In fact we fell short by £261.25, leaving us with a huge task ahead of us if we are to complete this fund as intended by the WSL 6th Anniversary Rally on 6 December.

We are asking all readers and supporters of Socialist Press to consider giving a day's pay to help us maintain the work of the paper in this crucial period of emerging struggle against the Tory government.

Send a donation to: Socialist Press Fund, BM Box 5277, London WC1N 3XX.



Irish TGWU office in Derry, where an estimated 10,000 people took part in protest strike action and a demonstration last Wednesday. 37 workplaces were involved.

A turn-out of only 2,000 people on last Saturday's national demonstration calling for a British withdrawal from Ireland underlined yet again the scale of the political task to be confronted in the fight for solidarity with the Irish people.

Conspicuously absent from the march were trade union banners and trade union officials. Eric Roberts and Clive Soley were the only Labour MPs who turned out. The remainder either support the military occupation of Ireland or couldn't be bothered to oppose it.

If ever there was an occasion when the struggle against imperialist oppression in Ireland might have been expected to

Hunger strike: force labour leaders to act!



attract a degree of support from humanitarian and 'liberal' forces it was Saturday's march.

Called and organised with the involvement of the Young Liberals, the demonstration also took place in the third week of a hunger strike to the death by seven republican prisoners in the 'H' Blocks of the Long Kesh concentration camp.

During the week it was announced that women republican prisoners in Armagh Gaol are to join the hunger strike alongside the protest of the men.

The prisoners are fighting for five demands which would effectively restore to them special category status as political prisoners. Special category

status was granted to republican prisoners by the Heath government in 1972 following a hunger strike protest—but was removed by the Labour government in 1976.

Since then the British government, the press and the prison screws have used every means at their disposal to crush the resistance of republican prisoners at Long Kesh who have refused to do prison work or wear prison clothing which they correctly see as an attempt to brand them as common criminals.

The women at Armagh joined the 'dirty' protest in February of this year.

The hunger strikes are a desperate move prompted by

the abject failure of the British labour movement to fight alongside the Irish working class for an end to British military rule in the six counties.

They have given an added lease of life to Charter 80, a grouping set up to champion the five demands of the prisoners "on a humanitarian basis".

Charter 80 has gathered the signatures of a handful of Labour MPs and some well-known union leaders.

Lawrence Daly and Mick McGahey (NUM), Ron Todd (TGWU) and Bob Wright (AUEW) are some of the more surprising names on the list—since they have never previously lifted a finger in solidarity with the Irish people.

But they now plainly regard their Charter 80 signatures as sufficient to salve their consciences while the hunger strikers starve to death: none of them mobilised contingents from their organisations on Saturday's march.

The need for active solidarity is now urgent. The hunger strikers—already dangerously weak—could be dead before Christmas. The Tory government will not be budged by a list of meaningless signatures.

Every trade union and labour movement body must be called upon to pass emergency resolutions in support of the hunger strikers' five demands, to mobilise fully for the December 7 national demonstration,

and to fight for such policies at local, regional and national level.

There is no groundswell of liberal sentiment that will shift the Tories on Ireland: only a fight by socialists for a clear stance in opposition to British imperialism can show the necessity of the British labour movement going beyond its present anti-Tory militancy to adopt a position of solidarity with the Irish people.

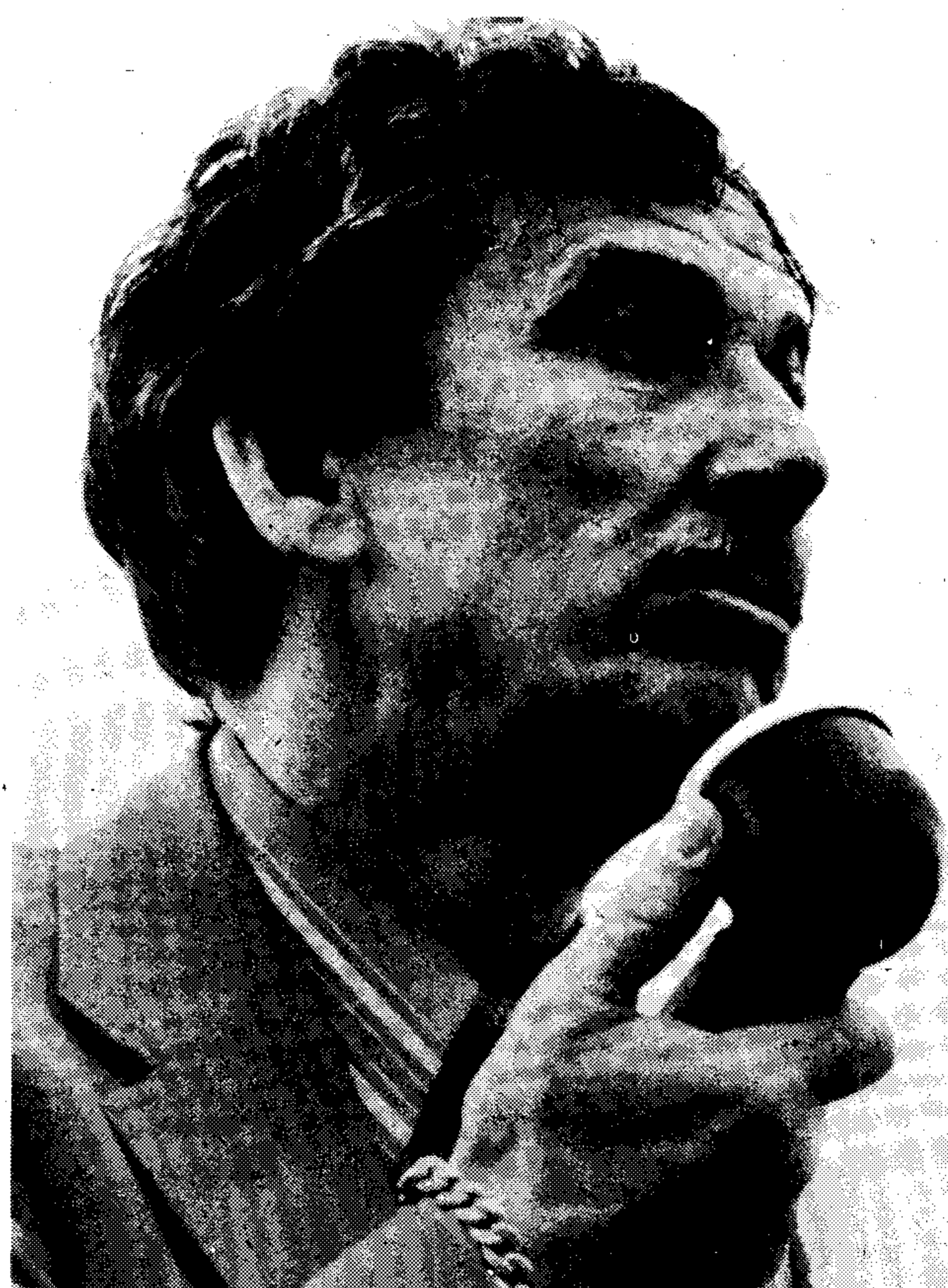
*Support the hunger strikers: Political status now!

*Troops Out Now! Allow the Irish people to determine their own political future!

*For labour movement action in solidarity with the Irish people!

Cowley workers reject sell-out

BL PAY FIGHT HANGS ON LONGBRIDGE



Hawley: he rules struggle for living standards out of order

"Both parties acknowledge their unique responsibility for the success and competitiveness of the sole major British car manufacturer... On this basis the National Union Officials recommend that the strike planned for Tuesday 11 November will not now go ahead."

This highly significant statement was issued by the General Secretaries of various unions after they had met Michael Edwardes on Wednesday 6 November to discuss the 42,000 to 21,000 decision by BL workers to strike against Edwardes' 6.8% offer.

They never so much as considered the £17.21 claim by BL workers. They were concerned only to honour the commitment which they have had since the days of Ryder to the success of BL management strategy.

The General Secretaries' meeting with Edwardes followed the scandalous decision of the BL Cars JNC a

few days earlier to break their mandate and enter into two days of fruitless negotiations on the company's spurious "bonus" scheme.

It was no surprise therefore that the JNC, having already collapsed in this way, overwhelmingly accepted the advice of the General Secretaries and agreed to recall the convenors conference for Friday November 8.

There, they recommended that the strike be called off in favour of two more days of talk about bonus—scheduled for Monday and Tuesday 10-11 November.

At the convenors conference there was little opposition to what was clearly a total capitulation to Edwardes.

On Monday November 10, before the start of the bonus talks, a meeting of 250 shop stewards from the TGWU and the AUEW from the Cowley Assembly Plant adopted almost unanimously a resolution which expressed their bitterness and anger at the actions of the JNC and the convenors meeting.

With this mandate behind them, the Cowley Assembly

Plant convenors started anew the fight for strike action to pursue the full claim.

When the bonus talks produced no more than the original offer—£1.25 guaranteed for 12 weeks—TGWU convenor Bob Fryer bitterly opposed the move by the right wing to recommend final settlement on Edwardes' unaltered terms.

He pointed out that the JNC represented only a minority view and therefore was not competent to take any decision which ran contrary to the 42,000 votes for strike action.

He was overruled by Hawley, and the JNC voted 14-12 in favour of acceptance of the 6.8%.

At the convenors conference on Wednesday November 12 JNC members were barred from speaking, allowing Hawley a free hand to press for acceptance of the offer. Challenges to the chair failed to change this ruling.

The convenors voted 2-1 to accept the recommendation. But an important point was achieved.

Due to the pressure of the

Assembly Plant resolution it was agreed to put the recommendation to recall mass meetings of members rather than simply go over their heads as had been originally intended.

The first mass meetings held on Thursday followed a similar pattern to the original votes.

Unanimous

Workers at Jaguar and Rover SD1 voted to accept the offer and Dreads Lane voted for strike action.

Cowley Assembly Plant stewards, meeting on Thursday morning, decided unanimously to recommend strike action to the membership and ask the members to endorse the motion of no confidence in the JNC and for a delegate conference to elect a new JNC.

On Friday morning the 11,000 workers in the Cowley complex voted overwhelmingly to reject the JNC recommendation and for strike action.

In the Assembly Plant the vote was stronger than the first

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