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**SPAIN:
LESSONS OF
THE COUP
BID
Pages 4-5**

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TURN BUDGET FURY INTO ACTION!



There could scarcely be a working class man or woman who was not enraged at last week's savage Tory budget.

Howe's latest package sets out coolly and deliberately to plunder the poor, pillage the pensioners, clobber the claimants and milk the middle class. His proposals will add £5 per week on average to the cost of living, bring a new wave of inflation, recession and redundancy, and signal still more sweeping cuts in housing, social services and education spending.

It is a brutal onslaught carried out by a class-war cabinet representing the bankers, speculators, asset strippers, aristocrats and spivs that make up the British ruling class.

It is an attempt once again to drive up their rate of profit at the expense of the vast majority of working people.

This is how it was recognised at once by shop floor workers in a blast of almost physical hostility and anger. But this anger has found no echo from the leadership of the labour movement.

Instead of pointing towards a fight with the Tories, TUC leader Len Murray has looked once again towards a political alliance with the employees in the CBI!

Behind the scenes, the TUC has been conducting regular discussions with the CBI for some time in an effort to cajole them into making a joint appeal to Thatcher for a package of reflationary policies.

No resistance

While the talks have gone on, the same employers have thrown thousands of trade unionists onto the dole queues with no union resistance.

The impact of the Budget now seems likely to further cement this unholy alliance of union bureaucrats and exploiters as both seek means of pressurising Thatcher on the one hand while on the other preventing the mobilisation of the working class in action that could defeat the government.

Of course it is true that in the face of the recession in Britain and world wide the capitalist class itself is divided on the way forward. But this

does not mean that workers should support one side against the other.

Thatcher's monetarist strategy is divisive: it necessarily means bankruptcy for whole sections of weaker employers—in the ruthless search for profitability by the strongest.

The scale of the recession itself has made more and more employers begin to fear that the monetarist policies they once applauded will soon drive them out of business.

This is the main reason for the splits and divisions within the Tory Party as a whole and even within the Cabinet.

The CBI and the "wet" Tories do not disapprove of Howe's attacks on the working class. They oppose the fall in profits and wholesale devastation of private industry in the recession.

Conned

Some Tory MPs also fear that the impact of further spending cuts will antagonise layers of the middle class who were conned into voting Tory by glib advertising in the last

election.

A number of "wets" have now emerged as open critics of the government, and one shire Tory, Christopher Brocklebank-Fowler, has taken the astonishing step of announcing that he will not stand again as a Tory MP.

Within the Cabinet "wets" such as James Prior have begun to conduct a feeble Tory version of the fight for accountability.

Such developments grab the headlines. But they offer workers nothing.

The government is reeling—still light-headed after its defeat by the miners—but it still needs to be knocked out.

Michael Foot and Labour's right wing leadership have begun drawing up a package of measures in case there is an early General Election.

And of course Foot has challenged Thatcher to call an election.

But neither he nor his Shadow Cabinet cronies have ever questioned the "right" of Thatcher to remain in office until 1984.

And they oppose working class action to force this government out of office.

So do the TUC leaders. Indeed, even while Howe was finalising his budget attacks, TUC leaders were taking steps to restrict their April "week of action" against the government to a "week of activity"—in which not even one-day token strikes will be called.

These labour movement leaders live in fear that if workers were given a lead to action now, they would soon see that they have the strength not only to crush Thatcher but also to sweep aside the gang of right wing bureaucrats within their own ranks who oppose the socialist policies necessary to resolve the crisis.

Prepare action

They are right to be afraid. That is why *Socialist Press* has stressed the necessity to prepare for all-out working class action to bring down this hated government.

Anger at the Budget must now be channelled into all-out action to defend jobs, social services and living standards.

This means:
*All out action by civil servants and other sections of

workers in struggle over wages. New claims to include catching-up increases and a cost-of-living clause to protect against inflation.

*Rate and rent strikes to defeat the massive increases caused by Heseltine's cuts.

*Strike action and occupations to stop the cuts in health, education and social services.

*Occupation and blacking action to defend industrial jobs against closures and redundancies. For work sharing on full pay!

*Prepare for general strike action to bring down the Thatcher government!

Royals pay rise

CASH LIMITS for public sector pay: cash limits on housing, hospitals, schools and universities. But the sky's the limit for Tory essentials—military spending and the royal family.

Howe's figures make it clear that the government's 6% limit on public sector pay settlements does not apply to the armed forces, who can have whatever figure their review body cares to recommend.

Meanwhile the royal family have managed to negotiate a 19% pay hike for themselves—jacking up the Queen's wages to a cool £3,260,200 in 1981, the Queen Mother's to £286,000, the Duke's to £160,000 and Princess Anne taking a nosebag with £100,000 in it.

CUTS CONFERENCE: 21 March, LONDON Details, see page 9

NO RECOGNITION TO BOLIVIAN JUNTA!

Committee for the Defence of Democracy in Bolivia
1, Cambridge Terrace,
London NW1
3 March 1981

Comrades,

While attention following Thatcher's visit to Washington has quite correctly been centred on the escalation of Cold War threats and the redoubling of the barbaric offensive against the struggle for national liberation in El Salvador, we would like to bring to your attention one unforeseen side-effect: the increased likelihood of recognition of the Bolivian dictatorship by the Reagan administration and the Tory government, following in its footsteps.

Until now Reagan has been prevented from backing the Junta led by General Garcia and established following the bloody coup of July 17 last year, because the US Drugs Enforcement Agency has given publicity to the fact that leading members of the military regime are

deeply involved in cocaine trafficking.

This has meant that the Junta has been unable to renegotiate Bolivia's massive \$3.8 billion external debt and flounders on the very of bankruptcy.

However, on 27 February Garcia moved to clean up his image by firing the two leading drug smugglers in the cabinet: Colonels Luis Arce Gomez (Minister of the Interior) and Ariel Coca (Minister of Education).

Wall St.

They have been replaced by men no less right wing (civilians with strong connections with Wall Street) but less renowned for their dealings in narcotics.

With the return of Arce and Coca to their natural terrain of directing repression the way is open for recognition when, in fact, nothing has changed.

The report of the recent

Amnesty International mission to Bolivia corroborates the assertion that repression continues on a massive scale: the entire country lives under a state of siege and a dozen people a week are shot simply for breaking the curfew, all independent trade unions are outlawed and replaced by government-appointed 'coordinators'; of the political parties only the fascist right may work openly; the mines continue to be infested by troops (several regiments), and the slightest evidence of criticism (even from the Church) is dubbed 'subversive delinquency'.

The consequences of this are now well-known: arrest, torture and summary execution remain a daily occurrence.

On 15 January nine members of the Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR) were captured, brutally tortured and then assassinated with the regime making little effort to cover its tracks. This is,

though, only one instance among many.

Moreover, on 9 January the regime, in an effort to lay the basis for a close relationship with the IMF, introduced an economic 'packet' that removed the subsidies on a series of basic necessities, increasing inflation by around 100%, and froze all wages—except those of the military who have had three rises in the last year.

Strike

The workers' response to this exceeded all expectations, with a 48-hour strike in the mines and the major factories of La Paz and Cochabamba.

Moreover, there is now a Front for Clandestine Trade Union Unity (FUSCLA), established on 16 December as an underground continuation of the COB (the outlawed national federation) with the support of workers' delegates from the PCB, POR, MIR, and PRIN.



Cocaine Colonel Arce Gomez

The FUSCLA calls for 100% wage rises, the establishment of a sliding scale of wages, return of the miners' radio stations, full rights of assembly, speech, and trade union activity.

This reorganisation of the labour movement stands threatened by the renewal of imperialist support for the dictatorship and we believe that every effort must be made to isolate the Junta, including pressuring the Tory government to withhold recognition.

We would, therefore, ask for your support in publicising the threat of recognition and build-

ing a campaign against it within the British labour movement.

Carrington has written to Tony Benn that the reason for withholding recognition is the suppression of democratic liberties. He must be kept to this and not allowed to repeat the policy applied to Chile and Argentina under the spurious excuse that the 'cocaine dealers' have gone and all is now well.

*Down with the Bolivian dictatorship!

*No recognition!

*No arms!

*No trade!

RCT CONFERENCE: NO WAY TO BACK IRISH STRUGGLE

The TUC's bureaucratic proscription of the conference on Ireland called by the Revolutionary Communist Tendency's "Smash the Prevention of Terrorism Act Campaign" must be condemned throughout the trade union movement.

It is part and parcel of the dictatorial methods used by the union bureaucracy to keep the labour movement chained to pro-imperialist, bi-partisan policies on Ireland.

The Workers Socialist League reiterates its active and unconditional opposition to such intimidation.

But neither did we give practical or political support to the RCT's conference. In fact we are strongly critical of the way it was called and the methods of the RCT.

By pursuing an adventurist, elitist policy, the RCT leave anti-imperialist forces within the unions open to victimisation and potential exclusion from working class organisations.

Deaf to all but sectarian self-interest, the RCT promote from a position of weakness, hopeless clashes with the reformist bureaucracy to 'prove' the Labourites and Stalinists are class collaborators.

Mousetrap

By staging artificial confrontations they aim to 'expose' and dispense with the workers' official leaders—Ireland is the cheese and the RCT is the mousetrap.

To complete this simple-minded schema, those on the left who reject such futility are of course summarily dismissed as accomplices of the pro-imperialists.

Explicitly rejecting the hard task of taking workers through experiences against their present leaders from which they can draw strength and make a development, the RCT substitutes short cuts and exemplary actions such as last Saturday's conference—supposedly to galvanise the masses from their stupor.

While it may salve the RCT's conscience, uncommitted militants gullible enough to fall for this demagoguery will end up only isolated and demoralised.

This petty bourgeois, propagandist playing at politics smacks more of the Red Brigades than Leninism. It is a mere variation on the methods of their former comrades in the SWP, whose stunts on the Irish war have included throwing horse shit onto MPs from Parliament's public gallery.

The RCT initiated this conference with no attempt at discussion with others who might have given support.

Much worse, they even chose not to organise it through a trade union body but their own SPTAC, giving their party address for contact.

With a full scale media witch-hunt inevitable, this can only be seen as deliberately opening the door for a TUC attack and positively inviting disaffiliations.

The experience of the dis-

affiliation of Tameside Trades Council last year has clearly taught the RCT leadership nothing.

The WSL, who virtually alone, consistently supported the defence campaign, fought against bitter RCT resistance to turn that into a genuine class-wide campaign against the TUC.

A resolution to this effect was carried at the Tameside conference and then forgotten.

The RCT's infantile inability to understand the labour bureaucracy, typified by their identification of the Labour Party with the Tories, turned that struggle into a self-righteous talking shop.

The RCT's heroic gestures and single issue mentality sees a solution to every problem as simply running up the red flag—or on Ireland more accurately a green flag as they boast of giving the IRA uncritical support.

They end up letting the reformists off the hook. And the only winners in this game are the enemies of the Irish people.

PTA RENEWED

Labour MPs embarrassed at the continuing flow of arrests of innocent Irish men and women under the so-called Prevention of Terrorism Act have been forced into a mealy mouthed Parliamentary protest.

The latest figures show that over 5,000 people have been detained under the PTA in the last seven years—only 70 of whom have been charged with offences under the PTA.

Some 249 have been charged with other offences: and 240 people have been simply excluded from Britain without ever being brought before a court.

The Act was rammed through Parliament by Roy Jenkins as Home Secretary of

the Wilson government in 1974. Since then it has been backed by both Tories and Labour MPs.

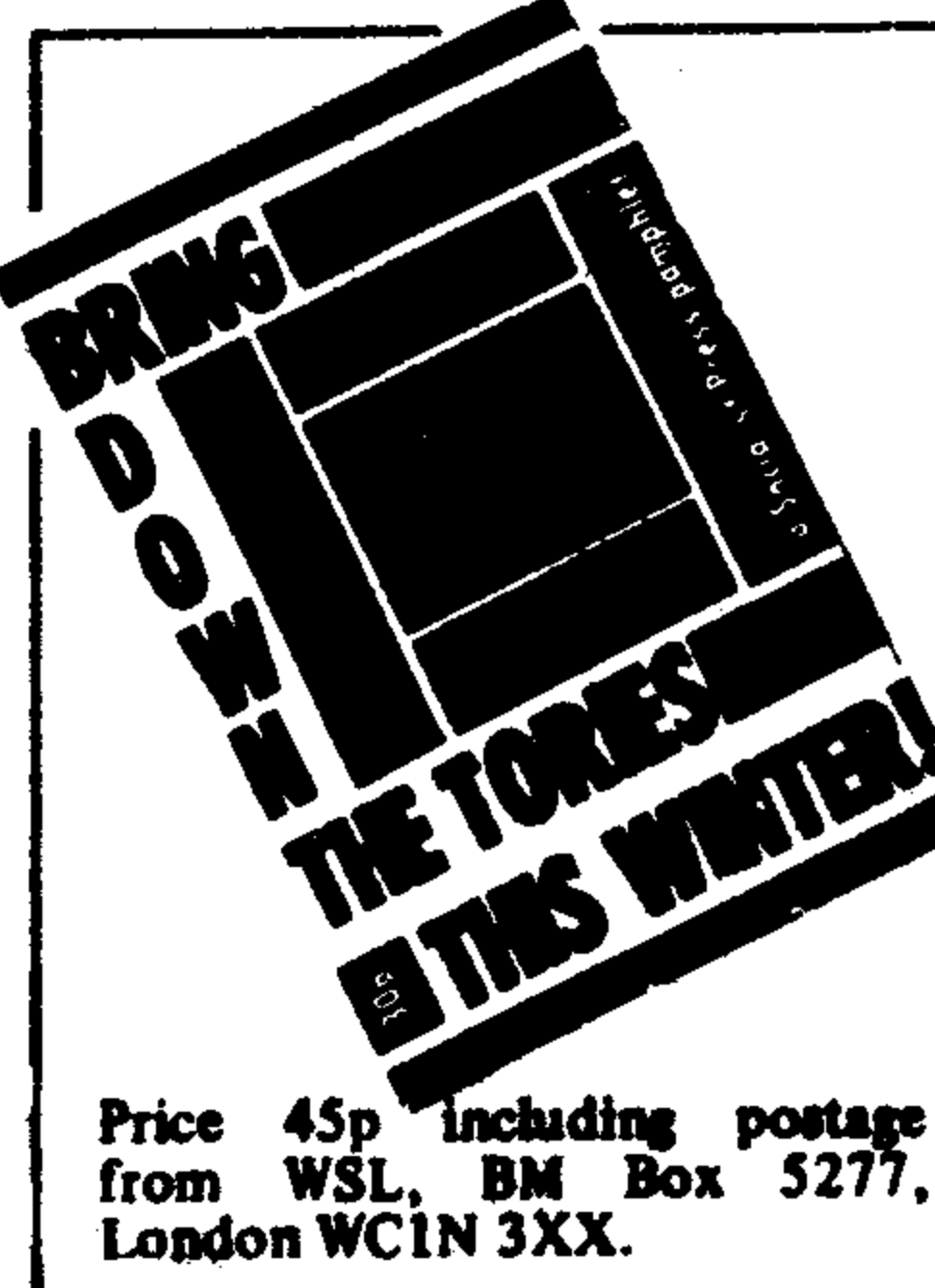
But last week the PLP's Home Affairs group unanimously recommended that its renewal be opposed.

This is not because of any shift of sympathies of Labour MPs towards those fighting British imperialism. Home Affairs Group chairperson Alex Lyon pointed out that the group wished to see the legal proscription of the IRA continued.

But they argued that the Act's impact on other civil liberties was unacceptable.

This view however is not shared by their fellow Labour MPs—who have decided simply to call for a review of the PTA and its workings.

minority of left MPs will carry the banner of opposition to the PTA as a vestige of independence from the reactionary "bilateral" policy on Ireland.



IN BRIEF

EL SALVADOR

As Reagan's US administration steps up its military aggression in El Salvador, it appears that the propaganda war against the supposed flow of Communist arms to the left wing guerrillas is beginning to bear some fruit.

The Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, which clearly has been conveying a measure of support to the Salvadorean rebels, has begun to draw in its horns.

Not only have repeated statements been made giving assurances that the flow of arms will cease, but the FSLN has now issued instructions that Sandinista speakers abroad should not even address solidarity rallies on El Salvador—for fear that the US imperialists will cut off \$75 million in aid.

DEMONSTRATION

US Hands off El Salvador

Saturday 4 April 1981

Assemble 2.00 pm.

The Plain, Oxford

Evening Social

Called by Oxford Latin America Committee

POLAND

The Polish union Solidarity decided to call off a 24-hour general strike in the industrial city of Radom after securing the resignation of the local Party secretary, governor and police chief who were responsible for beatings against workers in the 1976 strike wave.

SPAIN

General Alfonso Armada, former Spanish Deputy Chief of Staff and aide to King Juan Carlos has now been charged with military rebellion.

He has been under arrest since February 26 and will go to court martial at an indeterminate date.

But since his trial will be conducted by officers of equal rank it is highly unlikely that any severe punishment will be meted out—if indeed the trial ever takes place.

CND Labour Movement CONFERENCE AGAINST THE MISSILES

Saturday March 28, at UMIST Students' Union, Manchester.

Up to 2 delegates from labour movement bodies. Details and credentials from; CND, 11 Goodwin St, London N4.

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SOCIALIST PRESS

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RIGGED 'INQUIRY' WON'T REINSTATE

THE EIGHT!

Strike now to stop Edwardes!

Zimbabwe: workers' party needed

By Jim Farnham

In Zimbabwe over the past few weeks, several hundred guerrillas, workers and youth have been killed during fighting between ZANLA and ZIPRA guerrillas.

Many more have been killed at the hands of Smith's Rhodesian African Rifles, sent in by Mugabe to maintain 'law and order'.

Smith's airforce was put on the alert by Mugabe, ready to bomb the camps into which Nkomo and Mugabe had ordered the guerrillas as part of the imperialist Lancaster House settlement.

The deaths of these people, and the confusion and frustration which gave rise to the fighting are the results of the class collaboration politics which Mugabe and Nkomo have followed.

Not so long ago, Nkomo and Mugabe stood on a common platform, as leaders of the Patriotic Front, announcing that the combined forces of ZANLA and ZIPRA would soon be liberating Salisbury and Bulawayo.

At the same time, they were both involved in secret negotiations with the imperialists to work out a deal whose aim was simple class collaboration.

The imperialists demanded a guarantee from the PF leaders that they would defend private property and hold back the struggle which was set to escalate amongst the masses in the urban areas, in exchange for a PF majority in the government.

Believed

The masses of Zimbabwe followed, fought for and voted for the PF because they believed that it would create a government which met their needs and which would carry out the reforms and socialist policies which Mugabe and Nkomo espoused whenever they faced the masses.

But under the new government, the capitalist state remains by and large intact; property remains in private ownership; martial law has been extended; there is widespread poverty, unemployment and hardship.

The masses of Zimbabwe are coming up against a bosses' government which tramples on their needs.

Increasingly, Mugabe's government bases itself not on the guerrillas, or the masses who voted for it, but on the capitalist state machine.

Mugabe's 'cure' for all the suffering and oppression which has been created by the capitalist drive for profits is to call for more capitalist investment and promise more capitalist profits.

He has even put into his cabinet some of those same bosses who for 15 years supported Smith's terror against the masses they exploit.

Mugabe's policies of class collaboration make his government more and more a hostage to the capitalists, a greater and greater obstacle to the struggle of the masses.

Imperialist deal

Every day the working masses from whom the petty bourgeois nationalists and Stalinists of the PF drew their support are experiencing what the 'freedom' and 'liberation' promised to them by the PF actually mean, now that PF leaders head the government.

Nkomo and Mugabe, having dutifully completed their part of the imperialist deal continue to stand united from time to time.

They are united in ordering Smith's old army to attack guerrillas; in ordering Smith's police to attack strikers; in advising their supporters to remain patient; and in ensuring that they remain patient—at gunpoint.

And while the hardship of the masses continues, sections of the petty bourgeois leadership are dividing up the spoils which imperialism has allowed them, moving into their new houses, with their fat salaries and their privileges.

Reality

Every day, the reality of class collaboration is being exposed before the eyes of thousands of workers and militants.

That is leading to a growing anger directed at the govern-

ment—but it is also leading to frustration and confusion which are inevitably being misdirected in all directions and manipulated by opportunists who oppose Mugabe's reformism while maintaining their own.

And while this frustration and confusion is deepening amongst the ranks of the oppressed, the forces of reaction, saved from a mounting confrontation by the Lancaster House deal are growing stronger and bolder, as Mugabe comes to rest on them more heavily.

Working class

Socialist Press has consistently pointed to these dangers and criticised the class collaboration politics of the PF leaders.

We have argued that the forces fighting Smith must be brought under the leadership of the working class, and called for the building of the independent organisations of the working class.

We have put forward policies based on the independent class interests of the working class.

This is because we stand on the politics, method and strategy of the Trotskyist Transitional Programme which argues that in the epoch of imperialism—of capitalist decay—no genuine lasting reform can be granted by the capitalists.

This does not mean that we stand opposed to the struggle for reforms and partial demands. It means that we recognise that the struggle for them, if it is to be consistently carried through, can only be won behind the leadership of the working class.

The situation in Zimbabwe today is a direct confirmation of the Trotskyist position on the struggle for democratic rights and reforms in the imperialist epoch.

And it is burning proof of the need to address the tasks which Trotskyists recognise as crucial in every situation:

- *to build the independent organisations of the working class;

- *to build a working class leadership, behind which to rally all oppressed people;

- *to build the independent politics and party of the working class.



Mugabe

ZIONISTS DRAW COMFORT FROM REAGAN VICTORY

As the June 30 election date approaches, desperate attempts are being made by newly appointed finance minister Yoram Aridor to 'buy' the Israeli voters.

Tax cuts on cars, televisions and electrical items, linked with new loans schemes for housing and many other proposed tax concessions are a last-ditch attempt to restore popularity to Begin's reactionary Likud government.

As is often the case in periods of capitalist crisis any short term gains may well be overshadowed by further deeper economic collapse in the near future.

Some comfort

Despite their world record inflation and gloomy emigration figures, the Israeli Zionists will have gained some comfort from the election of Reagan.

Himself a well-known 'hawk' Reagan is surrounded by Zionist advisors, and in the words of the PLO, "the Palestinian people and the PLO are expecting a hard time ahead."

As reported in *Socialist Press* the plan for a Rapid Deployment Force able to intervene against liberation struggles in

the Middle East is an important part of a general aggressive turn by the US, sharpening up many policy ideas previously floated by the Carter regime.

The US government is very much alive to the strategic value of the last third of the Sinai peninsula—which Israel is due to hand back to Egypt in April 1982.

This chunk is the site of three airfields, and the US may be set to pressure Egypt into accepting a large American military presence in the area.

It has been suggested that this area could well be a possible staging post for the Deployment Force.

Israel is of course in favour of this option which would strengthen even further their embrace with the US imperialists.

These developments are linked to the general interventionist US policy against national liberation struggles throughout the world, which is most starkly shown in El Salvador.

Reagan is attempting to make a stand at a time when world capitalism is in crisis and when such military campaigns can only be financed by swingeing attacks on the working class. Cuts in the US, designed to

release surplus funding for military expansion will stoke the class struggle.

Thatcher's fawning support for Reagan was brought down to earth last week by Defence Secretary John Nott who made it plain that a British contribution to the proposed Rapid Deployment Force would need to be cheap, small and probably little more than a political token of support.

European governments are constantly aware of the combativity of their respective working classes and it is partly this which accounts for the lack of enthusiasm in some governments for Reagan's confrontationalist rhetoric.

The defeat of Thatcher by the miners and water workers will not have gone unnoticed.

We must recognise that the US operates from a position which has weakened since the Second World War—as demonstrated by the inability to intervene in Iran and Nicaragua.

Now is the time to press home the offensive against

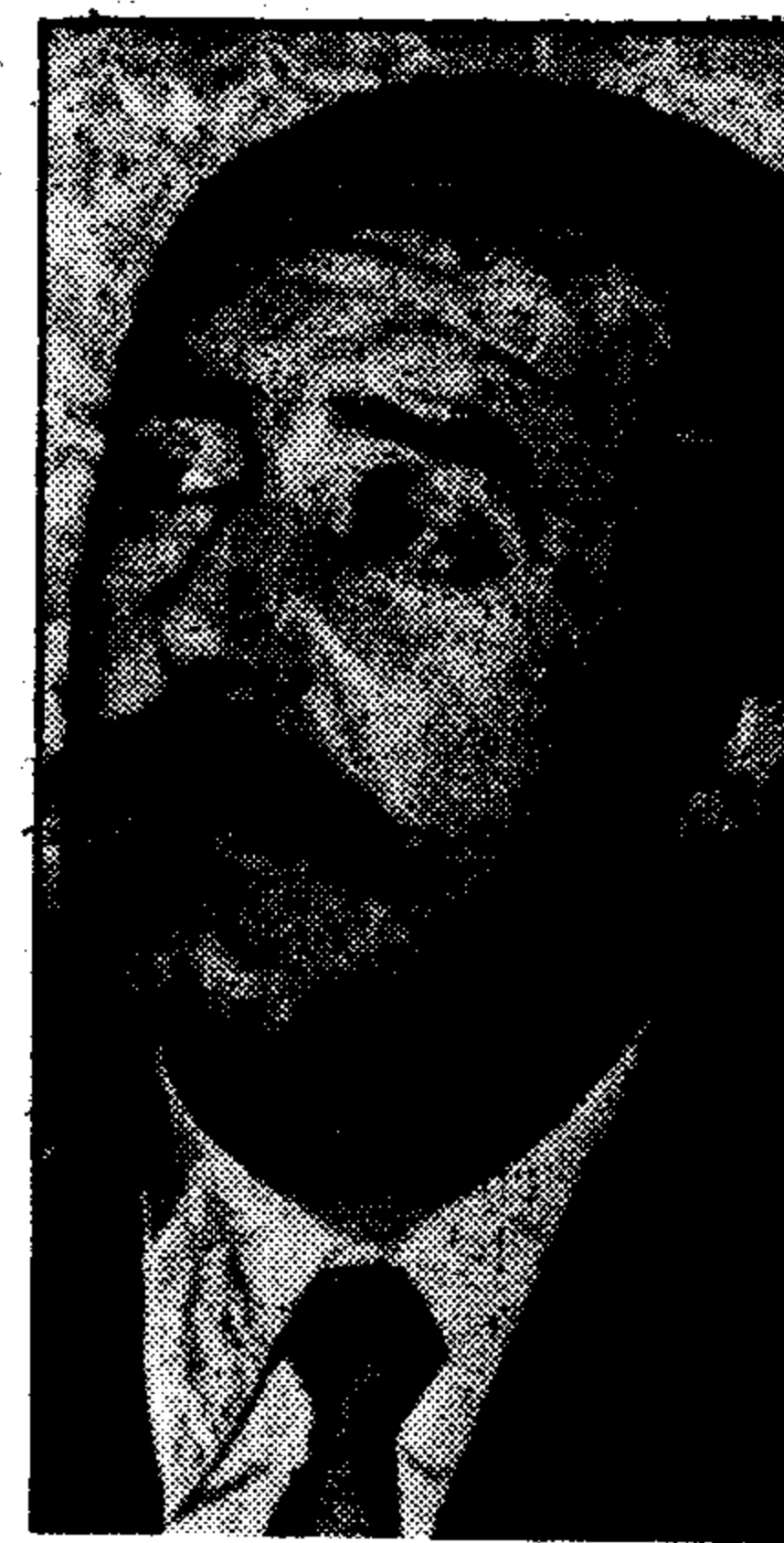


Homeless Palestinians in Israel

imperialism. Support for the Palestinians and the political defeat of Zionism in the British labour movement will be a strong

contribution to the liberation struggles throughout the world bearing in mind the fact that the racist state of Israel is totally reliant upon outside military and financial support for its existence.

LESSONS OF THE SPANISH COUP BID



Tejero - led the raid on the Parliament: now a fascist folk-hero.

HENRY PHILLIPS, just back from Madrid, sums up the outcome of the February events.

So everything in Spain is back to normal after the dramatic coup attempt of February 23 and 24.

Just as normal, the government is in the hands of the main right wing party, the Centre Democratic Union (UCD)—now led by Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo whose vote of confidence was so rudely interrupted by Civil Guard machine gun fire.

And, just as normal, this is a government which lacks authority and whose timidity and internal divisions are only too obvious.

Many UCD MPs have demonstrated their desire to form a coalition with the Socialists which Calvo Sotelo totally rules out.

Though Calvo Sotelo asserts that he is not going to govern with the sword of Damocles over his head, it is clearer than ever after February 23 that, if he doesn't look upwards before every move he makes, at least he looks over his shoulder at the Francoist army.

Almost every day Calvo Sotelo is obliged to announce that there is no military pressure on him.

But another thing which is plainly back to normal is that every Spanish barracks is full of officers who—at the drop of a three-cornered hat—would support a military coup if they thought it could be successful.

They will have no problem in inventing a pretext since another thing which continues as normal is the continued terrorist campaign of the radical Basque nationalist group ETA-militar against the forces of state repression.

Since the relative impunity with which ETA-M has been able to shoot down police and army officers is one of the main reasons given by the military officers who want to justify the seizure of power, Calvo Sotelo tried to demonstrate his concern by rushing off to the Basque country as soon as another police commissioner was shot dead by ETA-M last week.

ETA-M has stepped up its campaign since the failed coup—partly to distinguish it from the Politico-Military faction of ETA (the so-called "poli-milis") which reacted to the coup by releasing the three foreign Consuls it had kidnapped and declaring a unilateral and unconditional ceasefire.

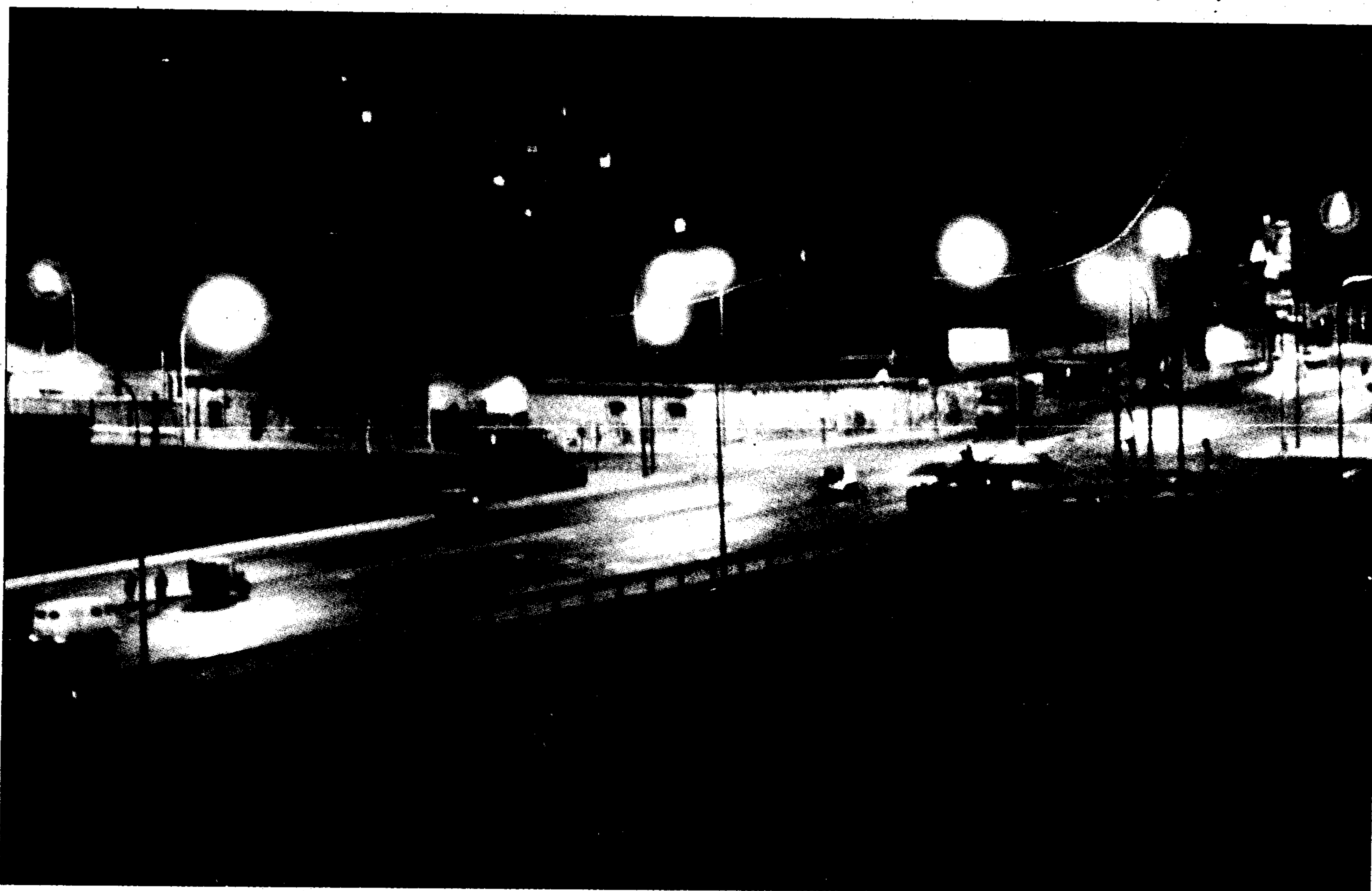
Released

Everything is also back nearly to normal in the army and the Civil Guard. Most of the members of the Civil Guard who invaded the Parliament building have been released and are now back at their posts.

The authorities say they were merely obeying orders: in fact they had volunteered to participate in an action "to save Spain".

Only their leader, Lt-Col. Tejero is detained along with four generals (including Milans del Bosch and Armada) and 20 or so other officers and a handful of ultra-right civilians, former officials of Franco's bureaucracy.

Their "detention" according to *El Pais*, the main bourgeois newspaper in Spain, means that for the most part the officers are simply confined to their



Tanks on the streets of Valencia

comfortable quarters in various military barracks, allowed complete freedom to receive visitors and communicate outside.

They are being treated, *El Pais* also reports, like heroes.

Their role, and the coup as a whole, is to be examined by a secret military tribunal.

Cover-up

What is planned, of course—as everyone realises because it is another part of what is normal in Spain—is a cover-up of the fact that plans for a coup were almost certainly participated in or known to the majority of the top echelons of the military, and probably also to the King and the leading politicians.

Such a cover-up is designed to bolster the myth that the army and police leadership can be divided into a pro-coup minority and a democratic, constitutional majority.

Everything which has been revealed since the coup attempt (mostly in the bourgeois press since government sources are virtually silent) suggests that it was in no way on principle that the majority held back from supporting the coup—but rather a tactical decision.

It is thus clear that the forces leading towards a military coup remain as strong as ever and have even been strengthened by recent events.

It is not so much the Spanish capitalists as a whole who are supporting the coup.

Bureaucracies

The main employers' organisation, the CEOE, in fact declared itself fairly early against it.



Arm in arm "defending democracy"—Francoist Manuel Fraga and leading Stalinist Camacho

Most of the Spanish bosses still hope to be able to control and exploit the working class with the aid of the Socialist and Communist bureaucracies which lead the workers' organisations.

And in the aftermath of the coup attempt the bosses got a lot of gratifying evidence of the extent to which the labour

bureaucracies are prepared to make abject concessions under the threat of a coup—though this too is normal enough behaviour for them.

During the coup attempt the main workers' unions, the Workers Commissions (Communist) and UGT (Socialist), urged workers to 'stay calm'

and not go on strike.

And after the coup was over they called off strike after strike on wages and other issues so as to avoid "provocations" which would give offence to the generals.

This is just what most labour leaders did in Chile in 1973.

Despite all this class

collaboration—which led Workers' Commissions leader Marcelino Camacho and scarcely reformed Francoist Manuel Fraga to march arm in arm through Madrid in support of the Constitution and the King—there are already sectors of the Spanish capitalist state who are disillusioned with the brief experiment in "democracy".

Unemployment

This sector can only grow as the crisis of capitalism becomes more acute.

It is the enormous level of youth unemployment in Euskadi for example, which is one of the factors making for the mass support for ETA-militar, whose militant nationalist campaign is so offensive to the armed forces.

As a result of the massive growth of resistance to the Francoist dictatorship among the working class, the youth, the intelligentsia and the petty bourgeoisie, Spain's rulers had no option but to grant concessions to this movement.

But at every step along the way they tried to limit the concessions and maintain continuity with the Franco dictatorship.

Bequeathed

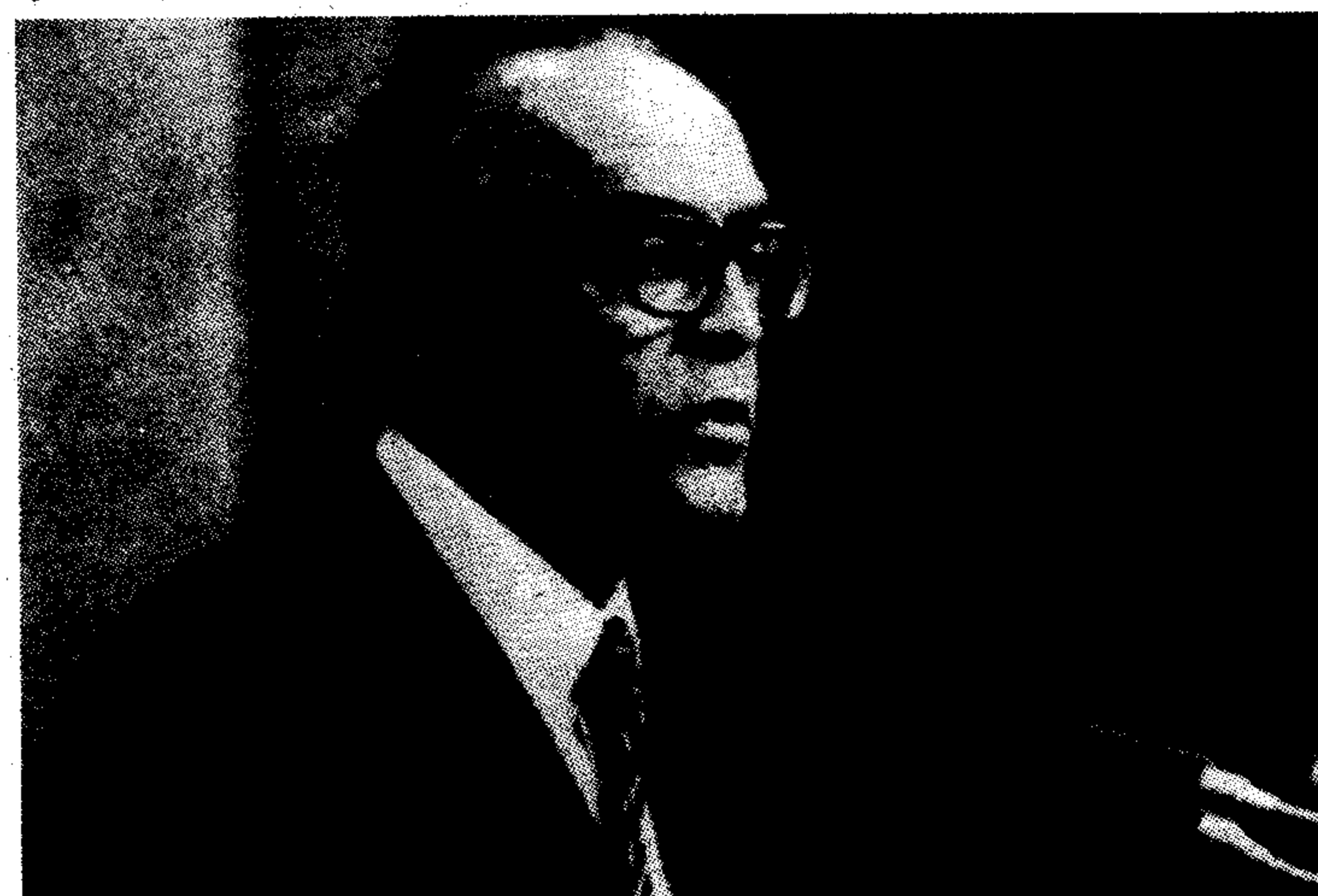
This explains the importance of the monarchy and Juan Carlos (who was, of course, elected or chosen by nobody, but bequeathed as head of state by Franco personally).

Sections of the bourgeoisie thought their interests would be served by introducing a form of bourgeois democracy and tying their fate to their fellow capitalists in the rest of Western Europe.

The central contradiction has



Civil Guard commander Aramburu hurries to the Parliament to quell the rebellion. What will he do next time?



Calvo Sotelo

been that they were obliged to attempt this manoeuvre under conditions of rapidly deepening economic crisis, under conditions where the bourgeoisie of other advanced capitalist countries were moving not towards democracy but away from it.

The Spanish bourgeoisie were trying to change horses in mid-stream—and the stream was a raging torrent.

They were only too aware that in material terms, because of the economic crisis, there was little their "democracy" could offer to the hungry workers.

Tentative

Workers had to be given some democratic rights: but they could not be allowed to use them to make gains.

This is why the manoeuvre of 'democratisation' has been carried out so tentatively by Spain's rulers.

Although the state is officially a bourgeois parliamentary democracy, the apparatus of the Francoist dictatorship has—with few exceptions (like the old vertical "trade unions")—remained untouched.

Of course, all parliamentary forms of rule have a repressive apparatus behind them—and there are few nations where the leaders of that apparatus have never seized political power or come close to it.

But the difference in Spain is that the Army, Civil Guard and national armed police are led by officers who regarded it as *natural*—in many cases as heaven-ordained—that they should monopolise political power.

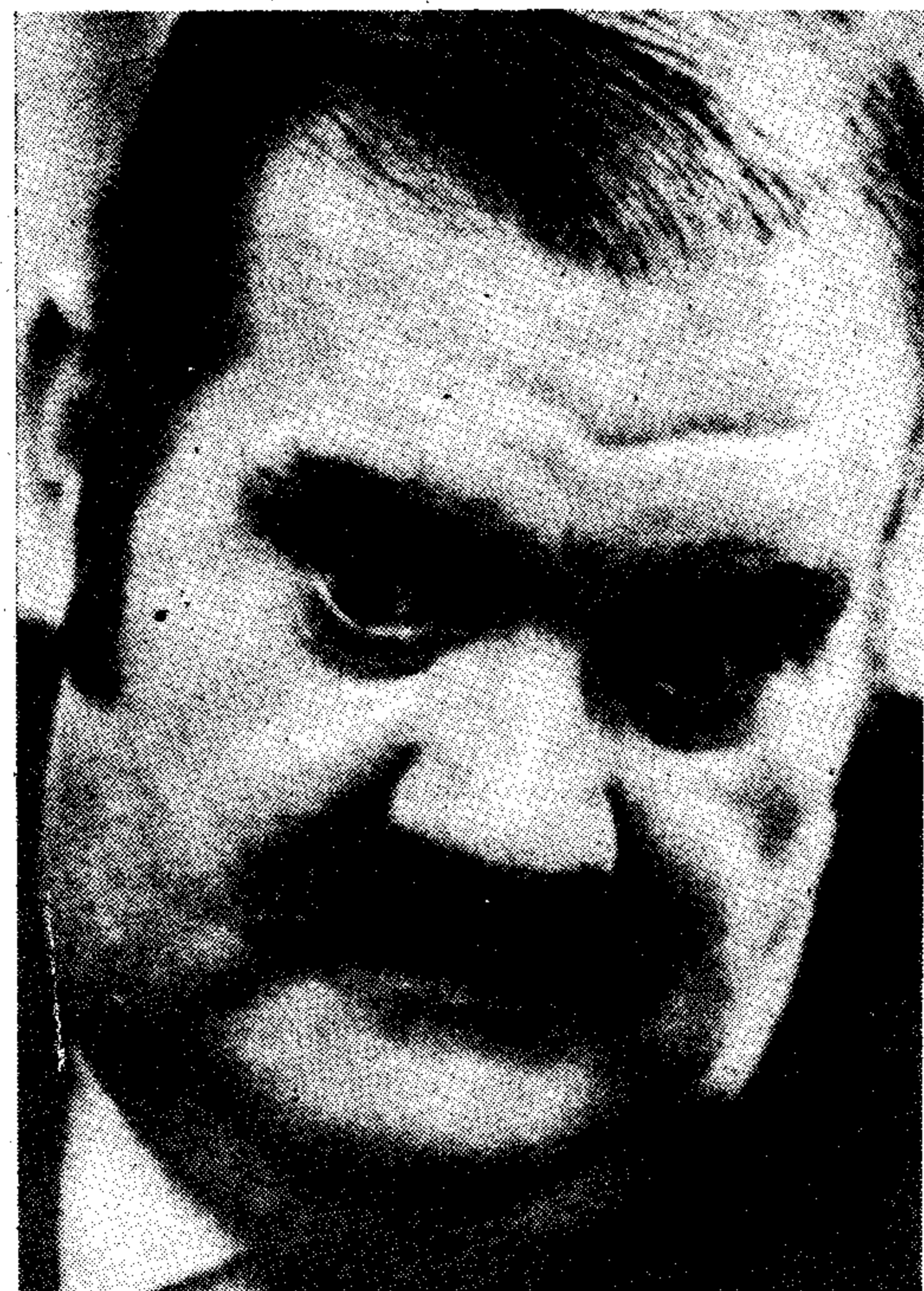
The "democratic" bourgeoisie have not dislodged this military caste—and that is not so much because they haven't been able to or because they haven't wanted to risk the political consequences of trying to do so.

Pinochet

Many of the more openly dictatorial generals have been forcibly retired: but others rise to fill their place.

In Chile, General Pinochet rose to the top of the army as a result of purges of his superiors who were believed to be insufficiently constitutionalist.

It is not the capitalist class which at present is in the vanguard of the moves towards military dictatorship in Spain, but this vast military caste which is the other legacy of Franco and whose privileges and prestige have diminished sharply even through the very



Garcia Carres, one of the civilian conspirators: a former leader of one of Franco's corporatist "unions"

limited democratisation which has taken place.

The failed coup led by Generals Milans del Bosch and Armada has served as a dress rehearsal for the real thing—which February 23 so nearly became.

The military will have now learned to their own satisfaction that, unless a major political change takes place, a coup will not be met by well-organised, instantaneous general strike and other action by a united front of workers' organisations.

By contrast, the far right has taken the attempted coup as a cue for a wave of action and provocative mobilisations.

Slogans in favour of Tejero have appeared painted on walls everywhere.

The fascist MP of Fuerza Nueva, Blas Pinar, has publicly hailed the attempt and has said that since the arrest of the generals "the prisons have been converted into temples of glory".

The old Francoist and still semi-official newspaper *El Alcazar* has also praised the objectives of the coup.

The strengthened position and arrogance of the extreme right should provide a terrifying lesson, too, to the Spanish working class. There is very little time to develop the necessary united front actions if the next attempt at a coup is not to



Juan Carlos chatting 3 years ago with General Milans del Bosch - now confined to barracks.



Socialist leader Felipe Gonzalez congratulates the King



ETA politico-militar declare an unconditional truce after the coup attempt.

be successful.

There were immediate calls for general strike action when the news of the coup broke—for instance, from a number of revolutionary socialist groups and from the CP in Euskadi and in Catalonia.

But these calls were either isolated from the mass of the working class or, in the case of the CP, almost immediately revoked in line with the central party line which was "Stay

quiet and trust in the King".

But when democratic rights, even as limited as now exist in Spain, are supposed to rely for their defence on Bourbon monarchs installed by military dictators, it is time for a massive political turn in the working class movement.

Aside from the building of a united front which breaks from the right wing bourgeois UCD, the preparation of a general

strike, and propaganda in favour of the dislocation of the Francoist armed forces, there is a specific concrete demand around which a movement for these objectives can be built.

This is the demand for an open public tribunal called by organisations of the workers' movement and the radical nationalists designed to uncover the designs of the military caste and the bourgeoisie.

This would help to

strengthen the preparedness of the working class.

And it would also help to expose the fatal weakness created by the reformist and Stalinist leaders.

They call for all the facts to be revealed—but demand that that should be done by the military investigator appointed by the government!

Both Felipe Gonzalez, leader of the Socialists and CP leader Santiago Carrillo have more or less echoed the call of the new UCD Defence Minister that the enquiry into the coup shall not be converted into a "witch-hunt" against the armed forces.

If Spain is "back to normal", that fact should be taken as a last minute warning siren by the labour movement.

It is only Trotskyism, the transitional programme and the strategy and understanding of permanent revolution which can provide the perspectives to meet those tasks.

By taking up the struggle to build Trotskyist parties in every country and reconstruct the Fourth International as the authoritative world party of revolution, we will be able to prove the positions of Trotskyism correct not—as now—largely by the betrayals of the masses at the hands of the Stalinists and reformists, but by the development of the socialist revolution in every country.

LAMBETH AND THE FIGHT TO DEFEAT THE TORIES

As Labour councils up and down the country decide on rate levels for the coming financial year the question of how to respond to Tory attacks on local government finance is sharply posed. *Socialist Press* has consistently argued for a policy of mobilising the working class behind Labour councils in a confrontation with the Tories. But some of Labour councils have argued for raising rates in order to 'buy time' to prepare a movement against the Tories. Lambeth council leader TED KNIGHT is recognised as expressing this view most consistently. *Socialist Press* supporters KEITH WHITE and IAN SWINDALE recently interviewed him. The third and final part of this interview is printed below together with a comment from *Socialist Press*.

KW: There's quite a movement building up in Camden against their decision to go for cuts in the face of the government's threats. How will you seek to link up to that movement and bring that struggle into the Lambeth labour movement?

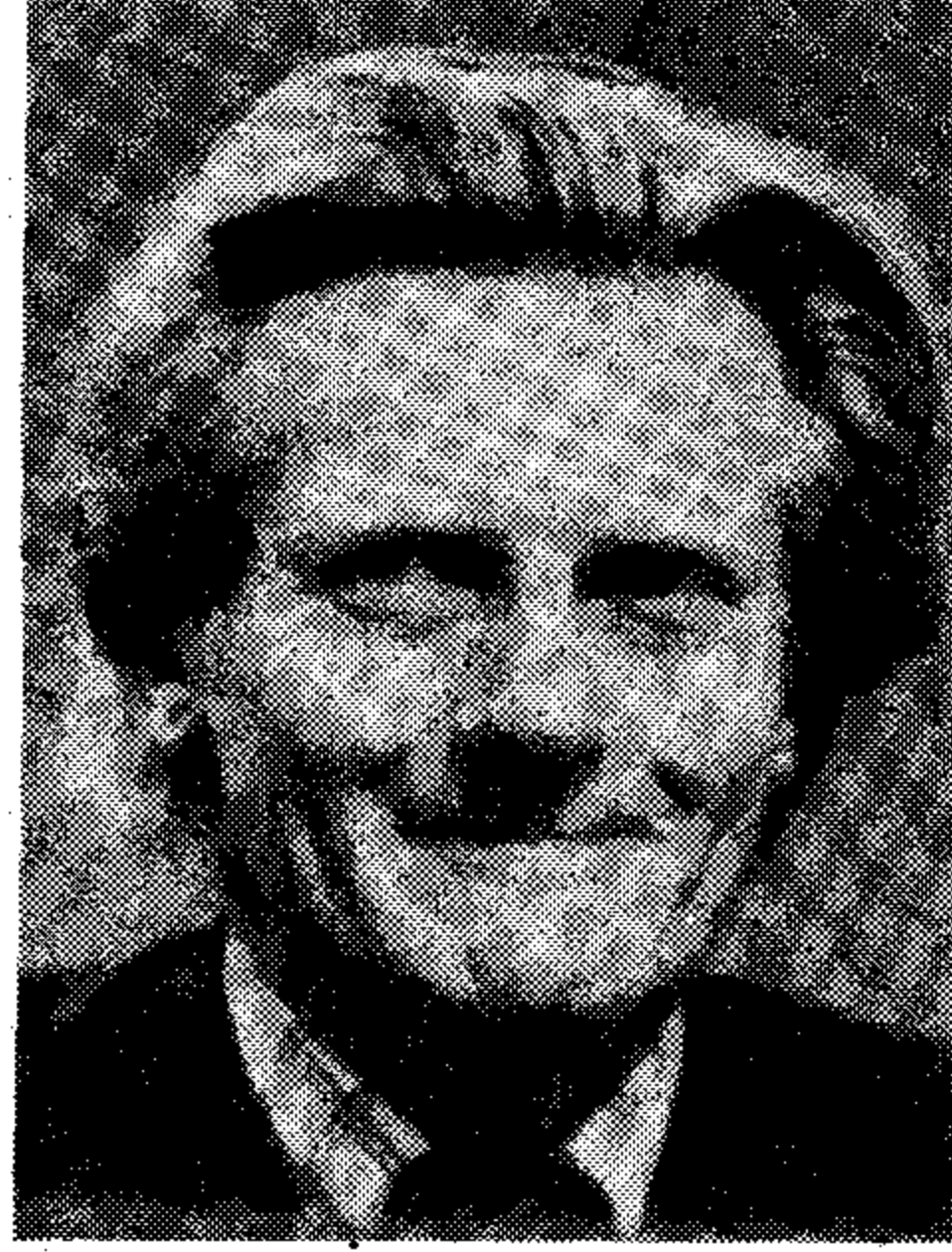
TK: We have been working in various ways with the people in Camden for some time, building workers in particular. The shop stewards movement within the Direct Labour Organisation have been trying to build a London-based fight on these questions to link up with the Camden workers. The Camden workers didn't think it was going to happen, basically, and therefore there were some difficulties in convincing them that this is how the fight will take place.

I think now that they've had the experience that we will be able to have that link both at trade union level and local councillor level, Labour Party level, and we will try to link that to the London Labour Parties and at councillor level we will work closely with the councillors that are in opposition to the right wing of the Camden council.

So in all ways we are attempting to develop. We are using the Camden experience here in our discussions, in our public meetings.

It's a continuous interaction of experiences that's taking place. But I don't think there's any straightforward straight line development.

It's not possible because you've got all sorts of situations even at London level. I mean while we've got the situation of the big reaction in Camden, you've had a similar situation in



Heseltine

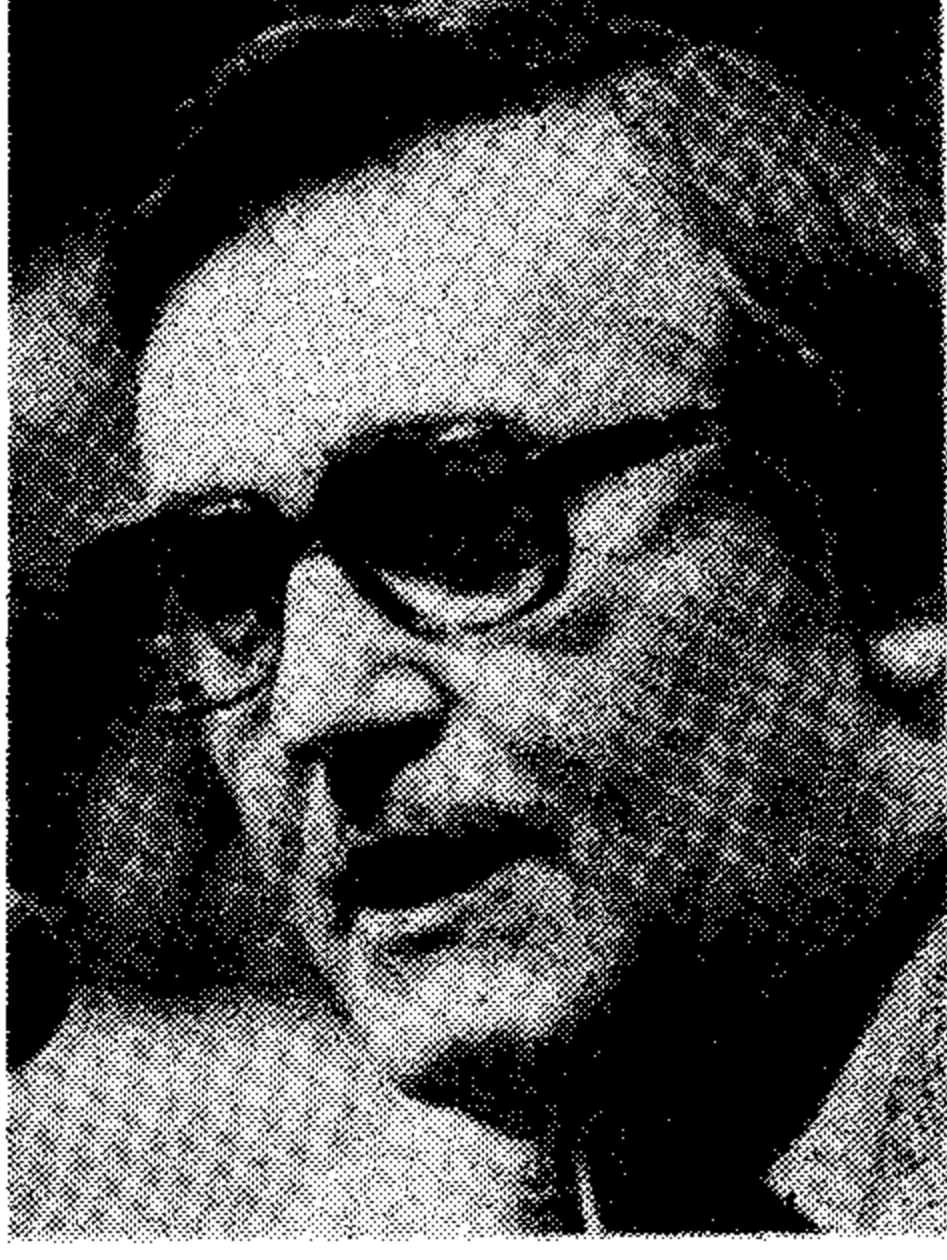
Southwark. 450 jobs have gone in Southwark. There was no such reaction. The same has been applied in Islington where there's been a development in the Labour Party it hasn't been able to draw on wider support outside.

I think it's developing and will develop over the next period and we will make a contribution to that but we intend to be here to make it.

I think that is the difference between our line and your line.

Six or seven Clay Cross I don't think is a very constructive contribution to any development.

IS: So you don't think there are any circumstances under which that sort of confrontation with the Tories would be feasible? If it isn't with six or seven,



Knight

then presumably it isn't with ten or a dozen or twenty?

TK: Well I heard Alan Thornett's speech at the Lambeth conference. I knew what the argument was that he was presenting, that you want a series of such confrontations.

I don't think that will be the way it will develop. It's hard to speculate on circumstances. There may be a set of circumstances, a relationship of forces, but I think they need evaluating. I think the last thing we want are people plunging forward merely to say the Charge of the Light Brigade is sufficient, even applauding it at the conference. We've got enough martyrs in the labour movement not to just willingly walk comrades into that situation without a proper evaluation of the balance of forces.

I don't think what's required at the present moment are martyrs. What's required are people working consciously to

mobilise, and the view that you can only mobilise providing that you are prepared to sacrifice your leading forces I think is something that the history of the labour movement doesn't bear out.

KW: Where councillors or Labour Parties fail to get implemented rate increases sufficient to protect services against cuts, do you think they should go for direct action against their local council and try to get local trade unions to strike, as suggested by the NEC?

TK: Well the NEC has never suggested that we mobilise strikes.

KW: It's resolution on cuts actually said that the working class must be prepared to use its industrial action to defend...

TK: Well that was the motion that was put by Lambeth at the Special Conference. I think that what we were talking about there was the need for a national struggle in defence of services and where we would expect the TUC to throw their weight behind that struggle.

And we had a situation here where our own trade unions have taken strike action in defence of services but in isolation there are limitations and regrettably we didn't see a widespread development.

I don't think anybody was anticipating major national struggle in the week of action, but I think we have posed the issues. The question is that in order for that to be successful

you can't have a situation where you just have isolated individual struggles.

In fact, our argument has been against that all the time.

The motions passed at the first Lambeth conference in my view will fragment the struggle.

The tenor of them was that when the cuts take place, you must take industrial action to defend that situation.

Their argument was that because the stages of financial degeneration in each local authority are at different stages, therefore you can't have a co-ordinated struggle.

Well, it's nonsense. What will happen—we've seen it in London—Wandsworth, we've seen the situation there where the Wandsworth trade unions have basically accepted it. Now they actually went out on strike for a few days, but the victory they won was that there would possibly be no enforced redundancies.

So you know there's a limitation in the isolated struggles. What was required there was the whole of the trade unions to come to their defence. At this stage that development hasn't taken place.

KW: Have you any more plans for calls for coordinated action of the sort of that week of action?

TK: No, I think our own trade unions would want to wait and see the way developments take place outside of Lambeth before they take further action of that nature. They will be waiting for Leyland workers, perhaps, to

come out in struggle in defence of the social wage in their area and possibly other sections of workers coming out with them.

I think they'll see a link up there with that situation. What our workers did was to show their concern. They believe that it is possible to wage a struggle, but it has to be on a wider front than an individual borough—that isolated to an individual borough it will be defeated.

And that is certainly not an experience that will be repeated without a much clearer evaluation of the balance of forces.

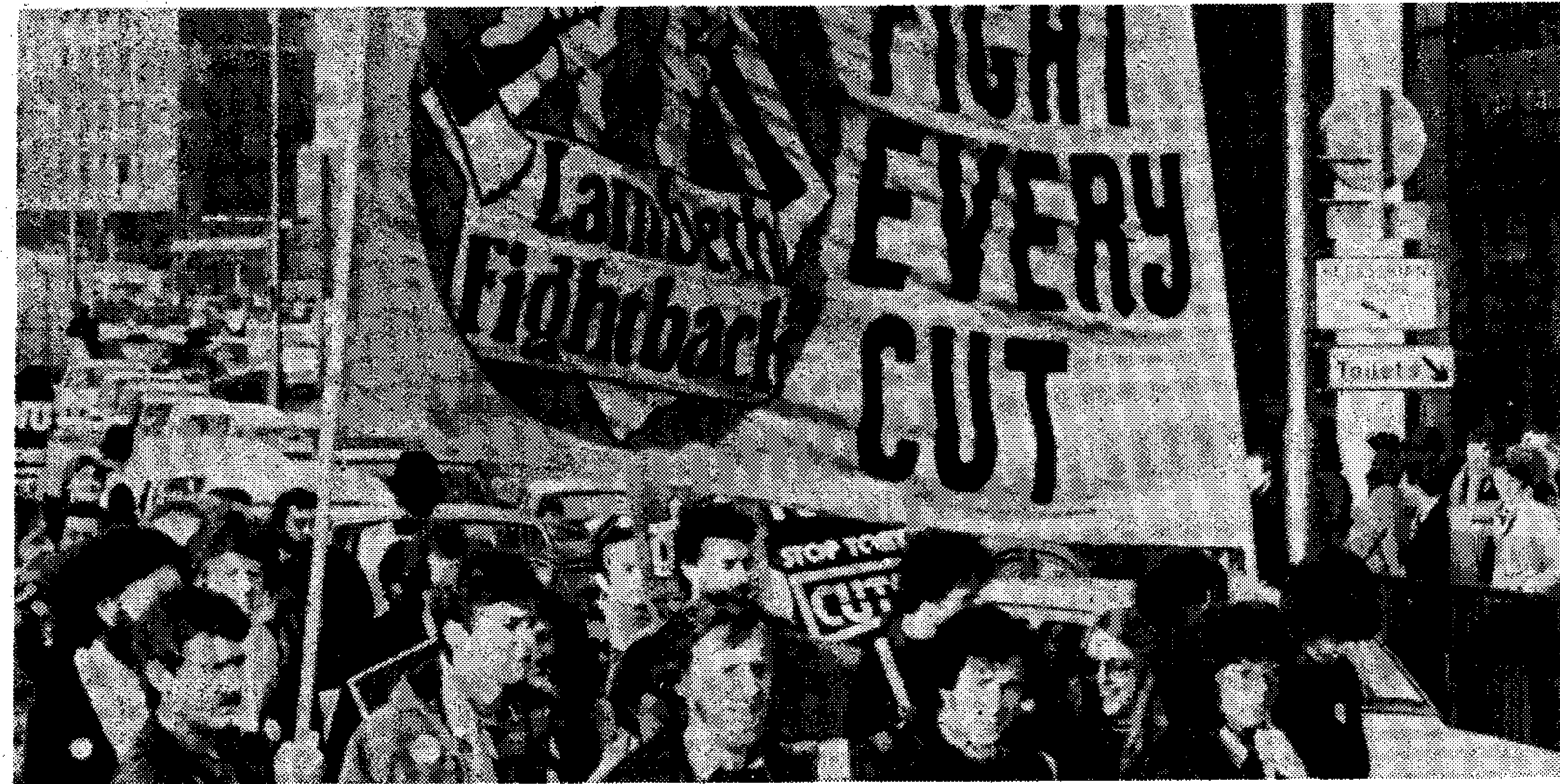
IS: The problem of talking about sections of workers like BL coming out, it seems to me

... **TK:** No, I meant there, in relation to situations where you have large concentrations of the labour force I think local government workers would be looking for support for their actions from such larger sections of organised workers.

I think they'd be looking for a closer relationship between organised forces within the movement to see whether it is possible to widen the base of that struggle.

IS: Do you think that Labour councils like Lambeth have a role to play in fighting to develop that because the lead obviously isn't going to come from the TUC at this stage?

TK: Well I think we have and we are, yes. But I don't think that the Labour councils alone can do so.



We reply:

Our assessment and perspective for the fight against the cuts is very different from that outlined by Ted Knight.

Our policies do not take as their starting point the obvious problem of isolation of any council that defies Heseltine's ultimatums on spending.

We start from the necessity for action to defend the jobs, services and living standards of the working class—and the necessity therefore to find ways and means to build a movement to prepare such action and break down the isolation of sections of workers and Labour Councils that lead it.

While we recognise the obstacles erected by the leadership to action by the unions, we see the need to

rather than accept these obstacles.

Ted Knight of course points to the fact that Lambeth Labour Group convened last November's national conference and a recall conference in January, held marches, and supported a week of action called by Lambeth trade unionists.

He argues correctly that even in going as far as this Lambeth has gone further than most in campaigning against the cuts.

But the fact is that useful though these activities have been, they have been limited in scope and seen by both Knight himself and by the Lambeth councillors as purely subsidiary to the business of balancing the council's books.

seriously suggested that Lambeth council should dig in and confront the Tory government, his fellow councillors have very much allowed him to make his left speeches and ride his hobby horse of protest—confidently believing that at the end of the day he would emerge with a package of cuts and rate increases that would keep the Tory wolf from the door.

Indeed during the three weeks we have been publishing this interview, Knight has produced and secured acceptance of a budget outlining a 10% cut in council spending, alongside further increases in rates and rents for workers in Lambeth.

Only four Labour councillors voted against this budget from the position of opposing both cuts and rate and rent increases.

with the majority of Lambeth councillors who have consistently opposed action to fight Heseltine.

From being the spokesman of the left he has become the prisoner of the right wing.

And in the process he has also helped create an angry, reactionary backlash on the rates question—without offering any serious perspective for those workers who want both to defend local services and to oppose rate increases.

In this respect the Lambeth experience highlights all of the weaknesses of postponing and postponing a fight in order to "buy time".

The fact is that Lambeth council was taking a far more radical stand against the Tories 15 months ago—when Thatcher had just been elected with an unopposed majority and

and weakened on its economic and political policies.

Socialist Press of course has never advocated the wilful creation of martyrs or "kamikaze" tactics in the labour movement.

But we have insisted that the time-honoured technique of "passing the buck" for action on the cuts is a recipe for disaster.

While Knight blames union leaders and other Labour councils for not supporting him, union leaders and other Labour councils will now cite Knight's retreat as a basis for their own betrayals.

This vicious circle can only be broken when someone takes a stand. Howe's latest budget shows that if that stand is not taken, then the cuts will continue to be even worse than the cuts already imposed.

Indeed Knight's new cuts are only one third of the amount Heseltine is demanding be cut.

In today's conditions of unprecedented hostility to the Tory government, there is a real opportunity to build a movement in opposition to both cuts and rate/rent increases.

So far Knight has retreated all down the line. If he seriously wants to build the resistance he must first show some himself. It is not too late to fight.

Insofar as Knight or any left Labour councillor takes up a fight to defend workers' jobs, services and living standards we will seek in every way to extend the action and defend them against Tory reaction.

But insofar as they act as the hirelings of Heseltine, cutting services and raising charges, we must find ways to mobilise full-scale resistance to their attacks, as part of the fight to bring down the Thatcher government.

CHILD CARE: THE SERVICE CAPITALISM WON'T OFFER

Nursery campaigner Ann McKinley explodes the myth that even the most 'progressive' capitalist societies provide adequate childcare facilities.

Today many other countries especially in Western Europe, are held up as being ahead of Britain in child care provision and legislation for women.

While this might seem to be the case, a closer look is needed to show how inadequate that provision really is.

It is also important to see that, as the crisis of capitalism deepens on a world scale, gains that have been won are taken away from women in these countries as well as in Britain. Sweden.

Sweden has always been seen as the country whose legislation for women's rights is well ahead of any other. Legislation is one thing, but providing adequate facilities to go alongside it is another.

Maternity leave for both parents is 180 days on 90% pay and 60 days per child per year temporary leave on 90% pay.

The most recent Swedish legislation, which came into force on 1 January 1979, gives all parents the right to a six hour working day until their



child reaches 8 or a full leave of absence until their baby is 18 months—but with no financial compensation for lost earnings in either case.

In 1977 women represented 43.9% of the Swedish workforce and 66% of mothers of pre-school age children were working.

Emancipation

Sweden was seen as one of the first countries to see female emancipation as part of the general debate on human rights. In 1968 a Swedish economist was telling the United Nations that its national income could be increased by 35% if the unused labour potential of

women was fully used.

This of course did not take into account the cost of providing under 5's provision for working women. Indeed, even now only 22% of under 7's receive care, although Sweden has set itself a target of providing places for all those that want it by 1986.

It was important during the post-war economic boom to get as many people as possible out into the labour market.

This fitted in well with the reformist ideas of the 45 year period of Social Democratic government which ended in 1976. The government planned nursery facilities, and women were encouraged to go out to work. But those facilities have

not materialised.

The local authorities provide day care centres for pre-school children which are run by trained personnel at a ratio of one for every three children in the infant group.

They also employ day mothers who are housewives, often with their own children. In either case the parents pay the local authority according to their means, and the day mothers receive their salaries from the authority plus a monthly allowance for toys.

However, in one area there is a two year waiting list for local authority care. For a town with a population of 117,000 there are only just over 2,000 places and about 3,500 on the waiting

lists. It's the same all over the country.

And as the economic recession begins to bite in Sweden the plans for expansion are dropped.

France is also heralded as way ahead of its time.

Maternity leave for the mother only is 16 weeks on 90% pay, with 26 weeks for those with three or more children. There is an optional two years unpaid leave for either parent.

In 1977, women represented 39.2% of the French workforce and there were 50.1% women working.

Although pre-school provision is 79.6%, this is for children under six, and while it might be a remarkable quantitative achievement, its quality is far from satisfactory.

Staff/child ratios in nursery schools are between 1:40 and 1:45, and the Minister of Education announced that by 1980 these would be reduced to 35!

The nurseries' "full day" is six hours—which doesn't fit in with a working day of 8 hours or more.

Only 20% provide some sort of care before and after the nursery day as well as lunch, which means arrangements have to be made by parents of the other 80%.

On top of these problems, children in France do not attend school on Wednesday afternoons. There has been a campaign for more flexible work schedules, part time work,

Wednesdays off and the 35 hour week.

Although management is hostile to any decreases in work time it is ready to seize upon all possible 'redistributions' of work time which are likely to increase productivity.

At first reluctant about flexible working hours, management quickly understood that they too could benefit—large decreases in absenteeism, increases in production (an average of 15%) less overtime and increased difficulty for unions to organise in the workplace.

Such advantages couldn't be ignored, and, acting on the basis of experiments in West Germany and Switzerland, bosses soon became advocates of flexible working hours.

Women with their double workday were management's first guinea pigs and could only be pleased by the new step which "allowed" them to better reconcile their various obligations.

The demand for Wednesdays off for working women is full of pitfalls as it sidesteps the question of adequate child care centres. Some women in France are saying 'no' to the 'freedom' offered by companies and demanding a sufficient amount of day care centres with qualified personnel.

They are not looking for 'readjustments' of their various obligations and constraints but a way of shedding them.

Continued next week

BLOOD RED ROSES

Review by Donald McVicar

John McGrath's latest production, "Blood Red Roses" has just completed a short season at the Citizen's Theatre in Glasgow.

It is, like all of the presentations of the 7:84 Company, an avowedly political work, attempting, as the programme notes say, "to present the realities of working class life and history directly to working class audiences." (The title '7:84' derives from the fact that 7% of the Scottish population owns 84% of the country's wealth).

The play, in a series of short scenes, presents the life of Bessie McGuigan, a Clydeside militant.

We see her from her early days in the Highlands, the daughter of a soldier wounded in Korea, growing up to become a convenor of a large factory in East Kilbride.

There are her battles against the power of a multinational corporation, her successes and her eventual defeat with the closure of the company.

The story follows her victimisation when she tries to get a job at an engineering factory in Glasgow and ends with a reaffirmation of her determination to press on with the struggle against the class enemy.

Anyone familiar with the history of trade unionism in the West of Scotland will catch echoes of industrial battles and skirmishes over the last two decades—particularly the strikes and eventual shutdown of the BSR factory in East Kilbride and the fairly recent victimisation of a female militant who tried unsuccessfully to hold on to her job at Rolls Royce in Hillington.

Woven in with this story of Bessie's industrial battles is her personal life: her marriage to Alex McGuigan, the shop steward at the East Kilbride factory who draws her into the Com-

munist Party; his decision to take up the position of a full-time union official; their drawing apart and separation.

The final irony is that when Bessie turns to the union for help against victimisation it is her erstwhile husband who is called in to rationalise the refusal of the predominantly male workforce to back her reinstatement.

Didactic

Of her two daughters, one is determined not to become involved in working class politics and the other joins the SWP, denouncing the Stalinist betrayals of the movement to which her mother belongs.

The play is thoroughly didactic, arguing out some of the essential contradictions in the British trade union and labour movement.

Above all it shows the dichotomy between the enormous capacity of the working class to struggle to defend their jobs, wages and conditions and, on the other hand, the failure to realise this potential in political terms, in the construction of a movement capable of mounting a serious challenge to the capitalist system.

Because of this strongly polemical approach, the play lacks that element of entertainment which enlivened earlier works of McGrath such as "The Games A Bogey" which was based on the writings of John McLean.

There, the political message was presented in a lively manner, using the techniques of the music hall revue. Perhaps McGrath felt that times are too serious to merit a similar approach. Whether or not a more naturalistic approach to political issues is the more effective medium is a debatable proposition.

Not that the play is without humour. There are some gloriously funny scenes as when the local clergyman gives young Bessie and her fellow pupils a long lecture on the beauties of married life and the subordinate status of woman, delivered with the usual string of boring Christian homilies, to be brought to an abrupt conclusion by Bessie's apt remark, "Shite".

It is more pessimistic than McGrath's earlier works. In the notes to the play McGrath even bemoans that:

"The struggles of the working class to protect the advances made in their standards of life go on. But they have suffered, are suffering serious setbacks. And militancy in those struggles—particularly industrial militancy—is now out of fashion."

All this sounds rather curious in the immediate aftermath of the bloody nose which the miners have just delivered to the Tory government. But it is at a deeper level that McGrath is pessimistic.

Little difference

Throughout the play, between each scene, a narrator appears who announces the year in which the scene is taking place and which government is currently in office, making it plain that there is little discernible difference between successive Labour and Tory administrations.

At the same time the struggles of Bessie and her fellow workers proceed whichever government is in office and the gap between the industrial militancy of the class and the betrayals of Labour in power become more marked as the plot unravels.

The highest political level which Bessie and her daughter reach are the Communist Party

and the Socialist Workers Party respectively, both of which, whilst channelling their industrial militancy down blind alleys, fail to confront the major political issues. The contradiction at the heart of the play cries out to be resolved—industrial militancy confronting political stultification.

Central problem

The play's penultimate scene finds Bessie and her daughter watching the 1979 General Election results on TV and bemoaning the victory of Thatcher, blaming it upon "the erosion of class consciousness".

But that does not approach the central political problem, that a revolutionary socialist movement, about which McGrath is obviously passionately concerned, can only be built by taking the struggle for working class leadership directly into the heart of social democracy, hastening its ideological and organisational demise.

We can only hope that McGrath will explore that vital theme in his future productions.

Where do "The Blood Red Roses" come in? As the programme notes explain, they are "the Redcoats, the English—or should I say the British soldier", dominating over the Empire for centuries and Scotland as part of that Empire.

Larger struggle

But they have been replaced by a new overlord, American imperialism which closes factories and townships in a trice, and commands "long black hulls (which) glide underwater out of the Holy Loch, full of terrible destruction, quiet as the grave."

The nationalist element, so evident in McGrath's earlier

works, especially "The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil", is now subsumed in the larger struggle of the international working class against imperialism on a world scale.

McGrath is certainly endeavouring to confront the major dilemmas in the working

class movement.

In so far as he continues to seek to penetrate these issues and present his findings dramatically we shall all be the richer for that.

National Child Care Campaign

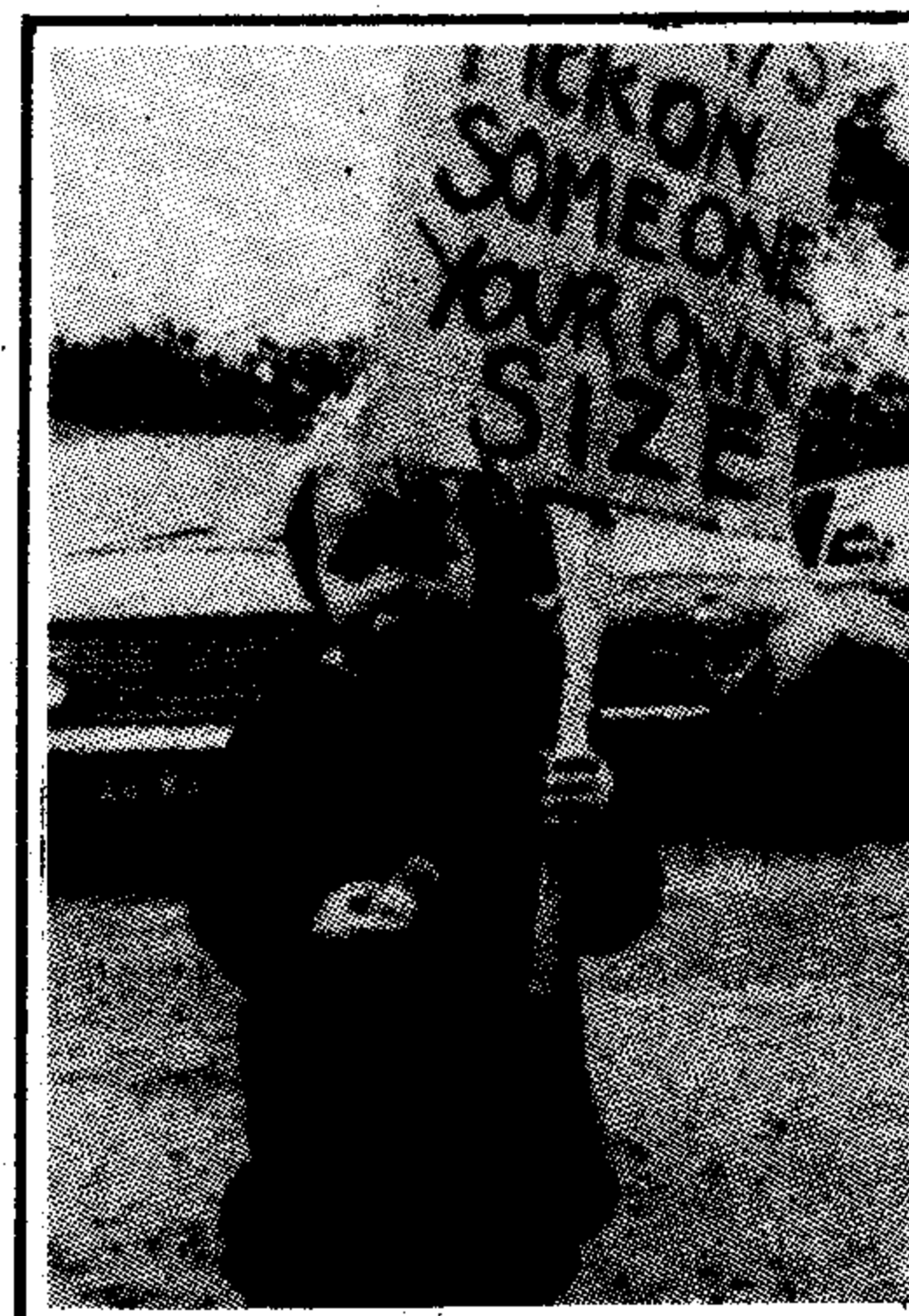
AIMS AND ACTION CONFERENCE

Redfield School
Blackbird Leys, Oxford

Saturday 11 April from 11 am. to 5 pm.

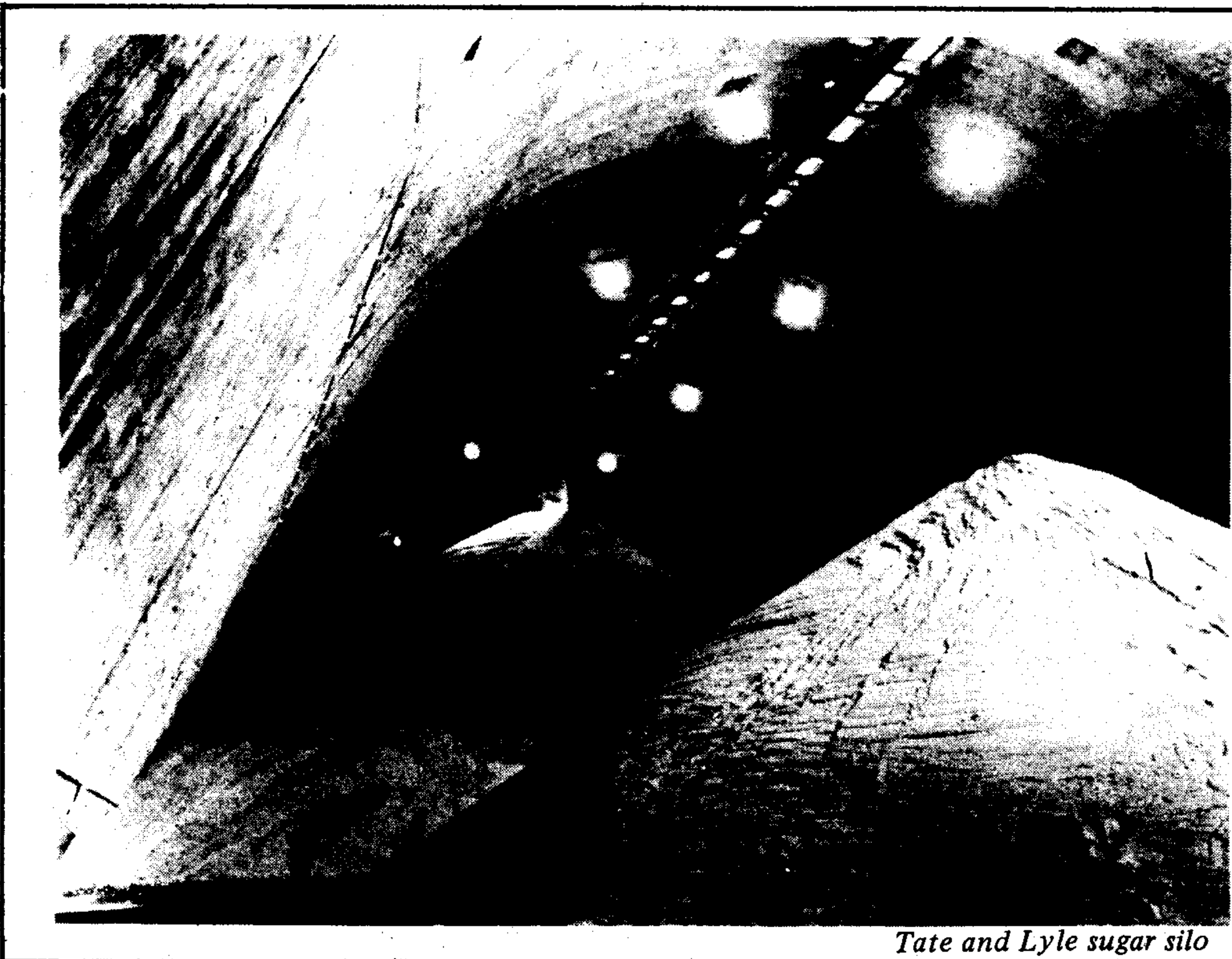
Delegates from labour movement bodies— £2.50
Unwaged £1

Creche provided



"The aim is to force the state to run the services we need. Many unions — NUPE, NALGO, NUT, etc., cover all sectors in the social and educational services, and their union officials must be forced to act in support of policies already accepted against the cuts..."

So states this vital booklet 60p plus 15p p&p from NCCC, c/o Surrey Docks Child Care Project, Dockland Settlement, Redriff Rd, London SE16.



Tate and Lyle sugar silo

STUC plans 2-hour strike

Action to change the government's course or action to force a general election is the question which should face the Scottish Trades Union Congress when it meets in Rothesay on 20-24 April.

Whether Congress will be in a position to come to a clear decision is questionable as the standing orders committee are asking in many cases for the compositing of resolutions which take contradictory stands on this question.

Pressure

In the section on the economy, a TGWU resolution calling for pressure to be brought on the present government to pursue alternative economic policies and an AUEW resolution calling on the government to change the direction of its policies are being asked to composite with an ASLEF resolution calling for a "massive campaign to mobilise affiliated unions to combat these policies and to create conditions for the return of a Labour government committed to socialist economic policies."

The STUC General Council obviously want to avoid the issue of confronting the Tory government. However, given the number of resolutions on the agenda calling for such action they will find this difficult.

Organisations asking for action to enforce a general election will hopefully stand up to pressure from the Standing Orders Committee and insist their position is put to the conference.

Building mass action against the government in the localities is one way of ensuring the issues of working class leadership are not avoided at the STUC Congress. The TUC week of action will only be built if action is taken at local level.

The STUC are contributing to the week of action by recommending a two hour stoppage from 3.00 p.m. on Wednesday 8 April!

Retreating

Instead of building on the one-day strike of 14 May last year, the General Council are retreating to a 2 hour call for action at a time when growing opposition to government is apparent in every workplace and every community.

The recommendation for a two-hour stoppage is to be put to a shop stewards conference in Leith Town Hall on Saturday 21 March.

The campaign has to be built now to ensure that call is at least extended to a one-day strike and seen as the launching point for a campaign to bring down the government.

Protest strikes hit docks

Three consecutive 24-hour strikes have left the port of Southampton strike bound as militant dock workers build up support for their 1981 pay claim.

The 2,000-strong workforce took immediate unofficial action after rejecting a derisory 9% pay offer and further meetings between union leaders and the employer have been cancelled.

The British Transport Docks Board (BTDB) have issued a direct ultimatum to every worker—either work normally or not at all. Dockers' leader Ritchie Pearce (TGWU) revealed that the men were sent home on Friday within minutes of their refusing to give these assurances.

This provocation means that workers now face an indefinite lock-out by the employer.

Although called around the pay issue, the strike reflects workers' deep hostility to the continuing run-down of this nationalised industry.

The denationalising Transport Act intends to transform the BTDB into a new British Ports Company with private capital having a 50% stake and overall control.

The Southampton port made a surplus of £13 million last year and is clearly seen as a main target for these vultures.

Workers know that this will mean wage cuts and demands for higher productivity. They also know they face an Edwardes-type confrontation too.

Only if they extend their strike action throughout the BTDB can workers win their pay claim in full. Only if they seek a programme of action throughout the BTDB can they defend their jobs and conditions.

*Demand TGWU and NUR plan blacking actions.

*For renationalisation of any denationalised docks.

*Open the books of the employers to elected committees of trade unionists.

School cleaners fight cuts

The dodges and manoeuvres used by the local leadership of the GMWU to head off any serious struggle against the cuts being imposed by the Humberside County Council were highlighted at two meetings of manual education workers in Hull.

At the Hull Education Branch 5 school cleaners meeting held on March 3 over 200 cleaners and college staff attended.

The meeting was informed of the extent of the cuts and redundancies in the Hull division of the Humberside County Council.

Adamant

All negotiations were over, and the County Council were adamant and would not be moved from their decision to implement cuts which would mean the loss of 200 manual jobs in Hull schools commencing on 15 April.

The union leadership gave details on how and where these cuts would take place, but gave no indication that they were going to give any lead in opposing these attacks.

When the Regional Organiser was asked from the floor what he was going to do about it, he replied:

"What is more to the point what are you going to do about it?"

GMWU shop steward Margaret Nix, a *Socialist Press* supporter, pointed out that most of the members present were not activists and were asking for some kind of leadership from the platform.

This was followed by an embarrassed silence and when it became apparent that no leadership was forthcoming, Nix moved a motion calling for all-out strike action as being the only way to fight the cuts.

No venue

This was seconded and was well received by the membership.

It was quickly pointed out by the platform that the decision to call strike action could only come from a mass meeting of all members of the branch.

When Nix called for a meeting of the whole membership, the platform got around this by saying there was no venue large enough to accommodate all the membership!

After some wrangling it was agreed to call a mass meeting of all the school cleaners and College staff.

This meeting was held on 9 March with over 400 members in attendance.

The Regional Organiser went through the same rigmarole, spending well over an hour giving details of how, when and where the cuts would take place.

When the meeting was finally thrown open to the

Fighting to save sugar jobs

Joint work by supporters of *Socialist Press* and *Socialist Organiser* at the threatened Tate and Lyle plant on Merseyside has begun to challenge the sabotage by the GMWU bureaucracy, through a campaign of leafletting and paper sales outside the factory.

The first mass meeting saw GMWU regional official Tony Humphries cynically refer to previous defeats of campaigns against Merseyside factory closures, and divert the eager enthusiasm of the workforce into a hopeless binge of protest and lobbying.

Church leaders were shanghaied into this farce along with Liberal council leader Sir Trevor Jones (who is himself currently sacking 3,000 council workers and even six workers from his own small business!)

In the event, however, Thatcher refused to even see the lobbyists, referring them contemptuously to her Agriculture Minister Walker.

Even after this sharp slap in the face, the "Action" Com-

mittee is still talking to the company and the government rather than occupy the refinery.

Two WSL leaflets have been put into the refinery attacking the role of Humphries and the GMWU bureaucracy.

On Friday 6 March supporters of *Socialist Press* and *Socialist Organiser* handed out an open letter to Humphries, to workers on the morning shift and also at the shop stewards meeting later in the day (where Humphries was collared by a young *Socialist Organiser* supporter and personally handed the leaflet).

Accountable

Not content with this, the youth proceeded to take him up on some of the points in the letter, in particular on whether he was accountable to the membership or the bureaucracy!

Humphries, nervous, ruffled and on the defensive, managed to blurt out that he would carry out the decisions of the Action Committee "even if this meant burning the refinery down!"

Then recovering somewhat from his disarray, he countered,

saying "Anyway, what do you do?"

The youth said, "I was made redundant". Moving in for the kill, Humphries said "Why didn't you fight to save your jobs?"

"Because we did not have a strong union" replied the youth, triumphantly!

The open letter was followed up by another leaflet into the mass meeting scheduled for 10 March entitled "Ten questions for Tate and Lyle workers to ask the 'Action' Committee and Tony Humphries at today's mass meeting".

It concentrates on demands for occupation, blacking action and a national conference of shop stewards in the sugar industry to draw up plans for the occupation of all threatened refineries at BSC and Tate and Lyle, coupled with supporting strike action throughout the industry.

It also calls for a joint occupation committee with Courtaulds, the council works department (who face 3,000 sackings) and the docks where 1,000 voluntary redundancies are being sought.

Anti-NATO vote

In a major victory for the left, the Labour Party Scottish Conference, on a card vote, adopted a resolution calling for British withdrawal from NATO.

The resolution, from Lothian Regional Labour Party, is an important step in the campaign to reverse the Labour Party national conference decision, taken last year at Blackpool, to stay in NATO.

However the left were narrowly defeated, again on a card vote, in an attempt to make local councillors accountable to their local parties.

In this vote the TGWU delegation abstained.

Had they voted for the resolution, which was defeated by 362,000 to 294,800, it

would have been carried.

It was widely rumoured at the Conference that Alex Kitson had argued strongly inside the TGWU delegation meeting that the union should oppose the resolution on accountability.

This position is very different from Moss Evans' speech to the Wembley Conference—in which accountability was the keynote to his support for the NEC proposals on the electoral college. He strongly advocated accountability for everyone—except himself!

Kitson's right wing stance on accountability also stands in marked contrast to his more public statements on the conference floor regarding using TGWU strength to fight for the saving of the Talbot Linwood car factory.

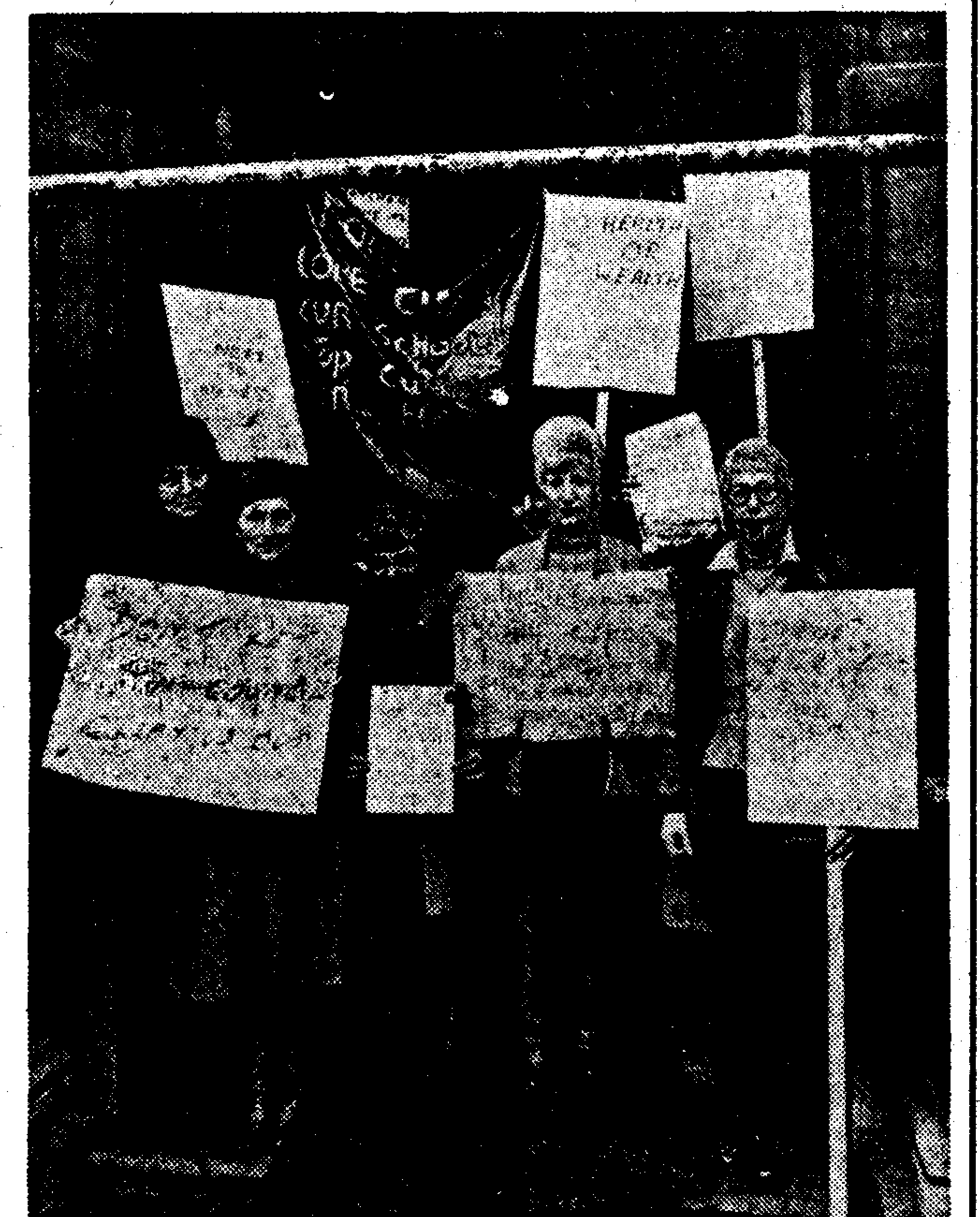
Talbot workers should take warning of the difference between the public face and the private.

Tony Benn, in addressing the conference as a fraternal delegate, warned of moves within the British establishment to set up a national government.

They now want to get rid of Thatcher but stop the Labour Party coming to power he said.

He argued that such a national government would have as its priorities a maintenance of missile systems and defence expenditure, and keeping Britain within the EEC.

The media can be relied upon to build up support for such a coalition government, he claimed, in the way they built the pro-Common Market campaign.



platform were quick to seize on it as a lifeline saying that there could not be a decision taken on strike action which would involve members not present such as caretakers and kitchen staff.

She twice tried to move the

motion saying they, the cleaners, would give a lead, but was blocked by the chair.

It was finally agreed to call another meeting of the whole membership as soon as possible. The union also agreed to lay on two buses for the lobby.

Camden councillors climb down

By Graham Shurety

The majority on Camden's Labour Group have got their reactionary package of rent increases, job and wage cuts through the Council.

The collapse of the ten rebel

Ansells sell-out rejected

Attempts are still being made by the TGWU officials and Allied Breweries management to force 600 Ansells workers to accept the closure of their brewery in Aston, Birmingham.

A section of the workers are being offered jobs in beer distribution instead.

This closure threat is a direct result of the way the economic crisis is affecting beer sales.

The brewery employers need to inflict a major defeat on one of the best organised breweries to force through wage cuts and speed up throughout the industry.

So far the 600 workers have stood firm. They rejected the latest management/union formula on alternative jobs and redundancy pay—conveyed in a management-run ballot—by a majority of 4-1.

A new attempt at a negotiated settlement is to be made on March 16.

Unfortunately the bargaining position of the brewery workers has been undermined by the limitations they have placed on their own action.

Following the practice of an old agreement, they have adopted a policy of not sending pickets to breweries outside Birmingham.

This has allowed Ansells to supply its pubs in Birmingham from a source in London and has prevented solidarity action at Burton on Trent which is Allied Breweries major Midlands production centre.

But the possibility of total victory remains. Many pub managers, the clerical and distribution staff and all major breweries are organised by the TGWU.

Only the union leadership and the unwillingness of Ansells workers to break from them lies between them and a victorious struggle.

'No' to occupation

Socialist Press supporters leafleting the Courtauld plant at Aintree, Liverpool, last week were pleasantly surprised when a member of the Action Committee stopped on his way into work, and invited them to the next meeting of the committee, the following evening, where he said we would probably be "most welcome".

Despite our immediate response that we were not Courtauld workers and, therefore, had no business being at such a meeting, he persisted with his invitation and we humoured him by turning up.

Arriving early, we explained to those present what had happened; they asked us to sit in and wait for the rest to arrive, in an amiable way.

After the convenor and TGWU official, Bobby Lamb had arrived, we were asked to re-explain our presence for their benefit.

In contrast to the friendly and polite response earlier, we were bluntly told to leave—as we were not Courtauld workers!

But before this happened a few snatches of conversation between Action Committee members revealed the state of affairs within the plant.

left wing councillors has inflicted a real setback on the cuts struggle in the borough.

Last Thursday evening an emergency rate fixing meeting of the council at last ratified proposals to fund their cuts programme with a 42% rate increase.

By stitching up a deal with the ten left councillors, who had so far stood on a principled opposition to the leadership's betrayal, the majority were able to break through the stalemate of the previous council meeting and impose this savage programme on Camden's working class.

'Unity'

The week following the abortive rate fixing meeting on March 4 had been characterised by desperate attempts by the Labour leadership to cobble together some basis of unity with the left.

Having failed to buy the

Tories' votes by introducing £2.2 million cuts, Shaw, Mills and Bethal (the right wing leaders of the group) saw that any further concessions to the Tories would leave them dangerously isolated in the Group, Labour Party and wider labour movement.

As a result, on Monday evening at a special Labour Group meeting a deal was finally struck between left and right on the Council.

The left councillors agreed to support the leadership's budget proposals on three conditions:

1) The payment of the "Camden supplement" on the wages of some manual workers will be absorbed into the new national award. But it will be restored and backdated—if the High Court rejects the District Auditor's claim that the payments are illegal.

2) £2½ million will be procured from the sale of a prime development site in the borough. A major proportion of this will go towards providing

work in the building department while voluntary redundancy goes ahead.

3) The £2½ million cuts suddenly introduced at the last Group meeting would be withdrawn. Services would be maintained by a mysterious raiding of the "balances and contingency funds" contained in the budget.

Pleased

Leading 'left winger' Neil Fletcher was quoted in the local press as saying, "We've done very well and are pleased with the outcome. The Labour Group as a whole should now be prepared to unite."

But the left councillors have sold their votes and their political credibility for nothing. They are now fully implicated in the Council's anti-working class policies.

Rent demands for increases of £3.50 and upwards have already gone out to tenants.

This is to be coupled with a £2.50 increase on heating

charges and a 42% rate increase in a savage attack on council tenants.

1,500 NUPE workers will still have their wages frozen for two years (and who really believes that the bourgeois High Court will allow back payment of the supplement?).

And 600 jobs will still be axed in the Direct Labour Organisation. The fact that work on two estates in the borough can now be restarted is little more than a face-saving device protecting the Council from pressure to introduce compulsory redundancy.

The only concession that the right wing leadership has made is to withdraw its last minute proposal for £2½ million cuts.

But these were only introduced in an attempt to buy the Tories vote and having failed on that score their withdrawal has bought the support of the ten left councillors.

By this disastrous climb-down these councillors have seriously undermined the possibility of a united struggle

by trade unions, tenants associations and Labour Parties against the Tory government and the Council leadership.

The task of leading the fight within the Labour Party falls on the shoulders of the Camden Labour Left.

Having fought to win support for the stand of the left councillors, it must now publicly disassociate itself from their capitulation to pressure from the right wing.

Urgency

A no rate increase/no cuts position has to be raised with more urgency than ever before.

The Camden Labour Left has to support and help initiate rent strikes and industrial action which challenges the Tory policies of the Council.

The door must remain open for any left councillor who will repudiate their mistaken actions of last week, and commit themselves to a real fight.

But, with them or without them, the fight must go on.

Cuts Conference

POLICIES TO STOP THE CUTS

Called jointly by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement and Socialist Organiser

Saturday March 21 from 10.30 am. to 5.00 pm.

Islington Central Library, Holloway Road, London N7

Details and credentials from: SO/CDLM Cuts Conference, c/o 66 Brookesley Street, London E3.

Pergamon strike wins support

Nine members of the NUJ remain sacked by millionaire Labourite Robert Maxwell for taking official strike action at his Pergamon Press offices in Oxford.

The NUJ chapel was called out after months of fruitless dealings with Maxwell had failed to secure any meaningful negotiations on the pay and conditions embodied in the Pergamon house agreement.

An NUJ survey shows that only three out of 57 comparable publishing firms pay lower wages than Pergamon. The chapel is demanding a 28% pay increase, a 35 hour week, and improved holiday, sickness and maternity benefits.

The strike has won immediate support in the local labour movement. A public meeting called in Ruskin College was attended by over 50 trade unionists and a Trades Council-backed support committee has been established.

Within the Labour Party local wards are beginning to voice their support for the strikers—a profound embarrassment to Maxwell who sits on the Oxford GC.

The chapel is seeking to ensure the immediate blacking of Pergamon journals by NGA and other print and distribution unions, and the blacking of supplies and services to the company's Headington office.

Messages of support and donations are urged from all labour movement bodies—to be sent to the Strike Committee c/o 5 Union Street, Oxford.

MEANWHILE, in London 65 journalists at BPC have been temporarily reemployed by Maxwell after a three month occupation of their offices.

But the arrangement lasts only two weeks, while Maxwell finalises plans for BPC, of which he has just become the proud owner.

Print unions have agreed to a total of at least 600 redundancies in BPC's various print shops, including 400 sackings at Sun printers, Watford.

The NUJ members at BPC face a further round of struggle if they are to press home their fight against redundancies.

morale of the rest of Merseyside workers.

These bitter experiences have reinforced less militant and cynical elements both at Courtaulds and at Tate and Lyle.

Whatever else may be said, it seemed premature to call for immediate occupation at this meeting, although it was obviously necessary not to leave it too late.

There seems to have been little attempt to campaign and prepare the membership for such a call.

Why was no-one from Gardners and the pits invited to speak at the mass meeting?

Why was there no attempt to form a joint action committee with Tate and Lyles, council workers and the docks where there are also massive redundancies?

Why was no attempt made to break down the crippling sense of isolation and impotence by demanding that Lamb and the TGWU national officials organise immediate blacking of Courtaulds nationally, to bring it to its knees?

Even at this late stage, those principled stewards who were behind the occupation must not despair.

They must step up the campaign and wait for a change in the current mood of their members.

Scotland: Labour's backlash

Socialist Press has given much attention to how to fight the public service cuts which the Tory government are attempting to enforce.

Quite rightly the effects of any rent and rates increases on working class living standards has been given equal weighting as the need to maintain services.

However in Scotland much more needs to be done in winning the argument on whether to fight the Tory government measures.

The right wing backlash was seen at the Annual General Meeting of Stirling, Falkirk and Grangemouth Burghs Constituency Labour Party.

The retiring chairman, John Wyles, was not seeking reelection. The left candidate to replace John Wyles was his fellow Stirling District councillor, Michael Connarty.

The right wing packed the meeting and put forward Tom Simpson, who has had a chequered career of public scandals in the Scottish labour movement.

Despite this he won the vote for chairperson and the right wing went on to throw out all left candidates from posts within the executive.

The Stirling-based left, stretched by the campaign to maintain local authority services and building the unemployment campaign had not mobilised for the AGM.

With Regional Councillors facing reselection meetings this coming year for the 1982 Scottish Regional Council elections, the right wing organised.

An unofficial meeting was held in the TGWU District Offices and a typed list of right candidates drawn up. Their organisation proved effective in the short term.

The lessons for the left are that action against the cuts, action against unemployment, public mobilisations, public debate are all very well.

However the fight within the structures and organisations of the Labour Party and the trade unions must go on.

To ignore this part of the fight is to hand back to the right wing all the public platforms and policy-making bodies without even a fight.

CRAMP GUILTY

Charles Cramp, the freelance photographer hired by the Daily Mail last summer to provide photographs of members and supporters of the WSL for the Mail's series of witch-hunting articles, has been found guilty of bringing the NUJ into disrepute.

Cramp refused to identify himself as a press photographer when challenged to do so by Alan Thornett. And when Thornett then grabbed his camera to remove the film, Cramp responded by threatening him with a gun!

After inquiries by both the Oxford Branch and the union's National Executive, Cramp was last weekend found guilty by 10 votes to 5 and censured for his actions.



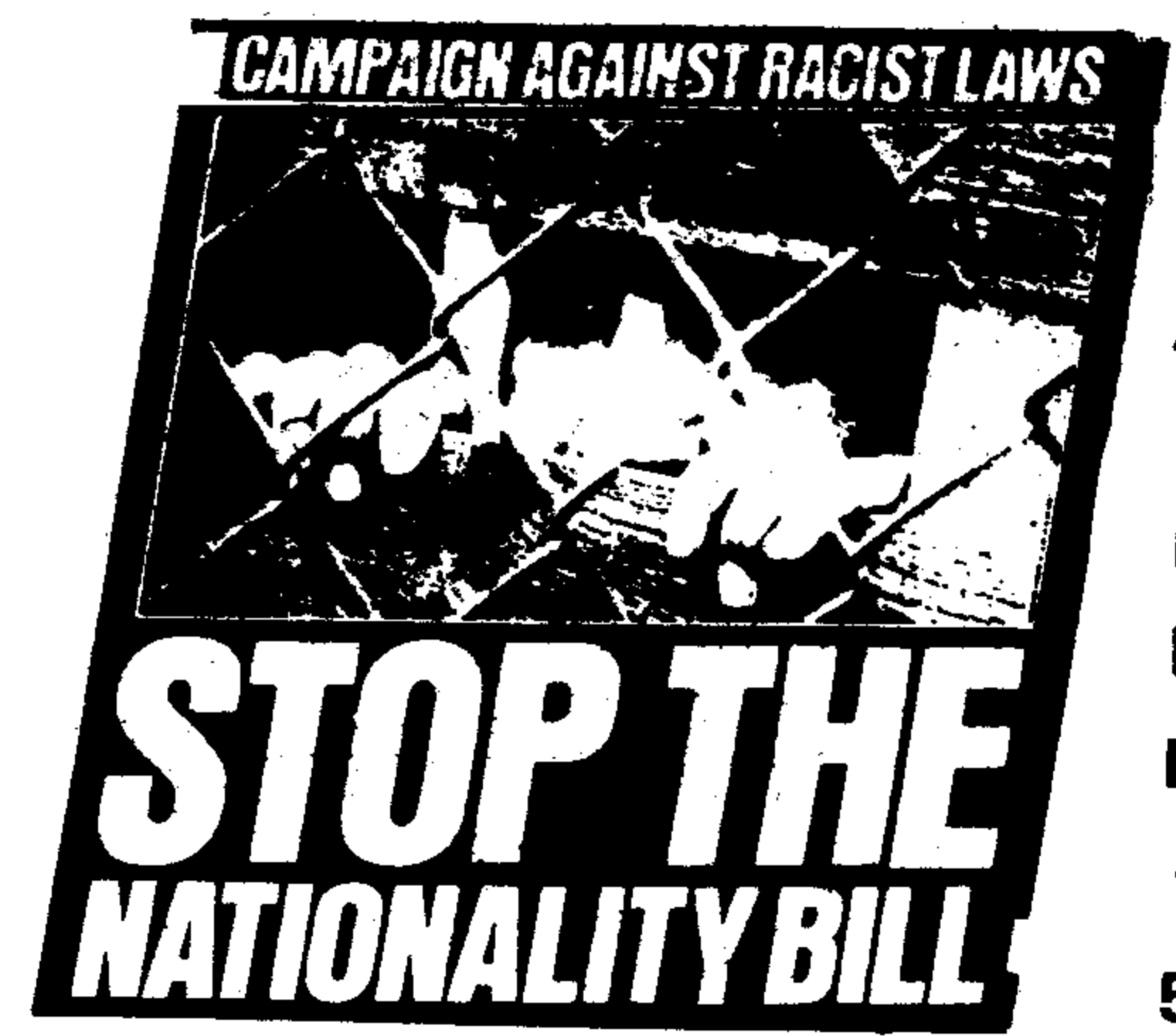
Please send me more details about the Workers Socialist League.

Name

Address

Send to: WSL, BM Box 5277, London WC1N 3XX.

SOCIALIST PRESS



Demonstrate
Against
Immigration
Laws
Hyde, Park,
London
1 p.m. Sunday
5 April

Civil servants feel their strength

A huge wave of solidarity strike action by 100,000 civil servants last week forced management to climb down from threats to discipline four clerks in the Customs office in Liverpool.

The clerks had been threatened with suspension for blacking work covered by the action of Irish Customs staff.

Once again the civil servants have glimpsed their own potential strength in a dispute which has mobilised militancy in previously quite dormant layers.

A further side of this strength will be seen this week as Inland Revenue staff begin an all-out strike at the two main computer centres at Cumbernauld and Shipley.

Cut off

This action—if not circumvented by emergency banking procedures—could cut off the flow of up to £1.5 billion per week into the Treasury.

But it is becoming increasingly plain that to conduct the pay battle with such partial tactics is a recipe for a long and confusing dispute, when an all-out stoppage could quickly bring the Thatcher government to its knees.

The militancy of civil servants should not be switched on and off like a tap by national union officials.

Local strike committees of the nine unions should begin to

take a grip on the course of the action and force the pace.

The unions have the power to win. But their leaders have yet to show that they have the will to conduct a gloves-off fight with this vicious government which is hell-bent on axing still more jobs in the civil service.



Pickets during last week's day of action

DON'T LET IRISH PRISONERS DIE!

Amid a deafening silence from the Tory press and mass media, Irish republican prisoner Bobby Sands has now been 2½ weeks on hunger strike in the Long Kesh concentration camp.

He is demanding recognition

as a political prisoner—a prisoner of war in the struggle against British imperialist rule in the occupied six counties of Northern Ireland.

He has now been joined in his struggle by Francis Hughes, and other republicans are thought likely to join the hunger strike as it develops.

But the British press is using the tactic of silence in an attempt to minimise the impact of the struggle on British workers who are also faced with the need to fight the same Thatcher government.

Indeed direct ruler and torture chief Humphrey Atkins has been told by both the Tory cabinet and leading Labourites not to mention the hunger strike in Parliament lest it attract publicity to the case.

The Labour and trade union leaders have for years maintained a guilty silence on the barbaric military repression meted out to the Irish people by the British army in the six counties.

They will gladly cooperate in attempts to hush up the bitter struggle by Bobby Sands and the prisoners in the 'H' Blocks in Long Kesh for recognition as political prisoners.

It is up to rank and file trade unionists and socialists to raise a campaign of solidarity throughout the labour movement.

Pickets, protests and demonstrations should be organised in support of the hunger strike in every area.

Don't let Bobby Sands die! Join his fight against the Tory government! Political status now! Demand the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland! Self determination for the Irish people!

Labour moves on Ireland

One of the most important developments in the Labour Party over the last year has been the rapid growth of discussion on Ireland and in particular of the Labour Committee on Ireland.

The annual conference of the LCI on 14 March reflected this development. 60 delegates attended representing regional organisations in Scotland, West Midlands, East Midlands, Greater Manchester, the South West, South Wales and London.

The greatest success of the LCI to date was discussion achieved at the Labour Party conference and the degree of constituency support that this revealed.

This is now being followed up in areas like the West Midlands where Birmingham District Labour Party have adopted a model LCI resolution as its resolution to the Regional Labour Party conference.

One weakness of the LCI over the last year was the unwillingness of the leadership to fight for the statement of aims adopted at the founding conference which calls clearly for immediate and unconditional British withdrawal from Northern Ireland.

However the statement of aims remains unchanged after

the conference and it is to be hoped that the new National Council will base its work on these principles.

Over the next year the LCI must start to make an impact in the trade unions who have a decisive say in Labour Party conference policy.

The outgoing National Council has made provisional arrangements for a national labour movement conference on Ireland on June 5. This is a most important initiative which it is essential that all readers of *Socialist Press* take up in their trade union and Labour Party organisations.

Political status

A resolution was also passed committing the LCI to supporting the renewed struggle by republican prisoners for political status.

The LCI remains a coalition of people with views on Ireland ranging from immediate withdrawal to a commitment to start discussions on a process of withdrawal, but it has proved its right to existence by its success in bringing the Irish question before layers of workers who have never considered it before.

That is why socialists should continue to see it as a necessary and useful vehicle for work on Ireland.

HERALDING A NEW ERA OF POVERTY

Huge attacks on local authority services—among which education seems certain to be the main victim—are implicit in Chancellor Howe's Budget proposals announced last week.

His figures include a 5½% cut in local government spending, on top of the cuts already made. Thousands of teachers and other workers in education seem certain to face compulsory redundancy if these cuts are carried through.

And even worse could be in store if the subsequent proposals from Treasury minister Nigel Lawson are implemented.

Lawson grabbed the headlines by talking on ITV's World This Weekend of a possible pre-election tax cut of 3p in the pound on income tax.

But he was less anxious to publicise that this would require an addition £6 billion in public

spending cuts—administering a death blow to many tottering social services.

Meanwhile as workers, unemployed, housewives, youth and pensioners count the cost of Howe's measures, it is plain that the burden is designed to fall mainly on the poorest.

Pensioners and claimants face a boost in inflation well above the pitiful increase in their benefits—while many of them become for the first time liable for tax as a result of Howe's decision not to raise personal allowances.

All in all, the Low Pay Unit estimates that 1 million additional low-paid workers will now be caught in the tax net.

And the way Howe has raised his additional money means that a two-child family on £75 per week faces a 6% increase in taxation.

A family on £125 is hit by 4½% increase in taxation, while the £30,000 a year couple faces a tax increase of only 2½%.



Lawson: planning new cuts

FUND

"Dear Editor, Just to show what we think about the latest Tory budget we decided to send in an extra donation to the monthly fund. Please find enclosed £103.60. From Coventry WSL". That was the pleasant surprise that greeted us as we opened the mail this week. We think it is an example that should be emulated by readers and supporters up and down the country. If you can't make it quite as much as our Coventry comrades we'll settle for less.

Together with other contributions, the Coventry donation brought the fund so far this month to a healthy looking £422.35. But as usual, we must not allow ourselves to get complacent if we are to complete our target on time.

Show your hostility to the Tory Budget in a constructive way and send us as much as you can afford. Our address is:
Socialist Press Monthly Fund
BM Box 5277, London WC1N 3XX