

# SOCIALIST PRESS



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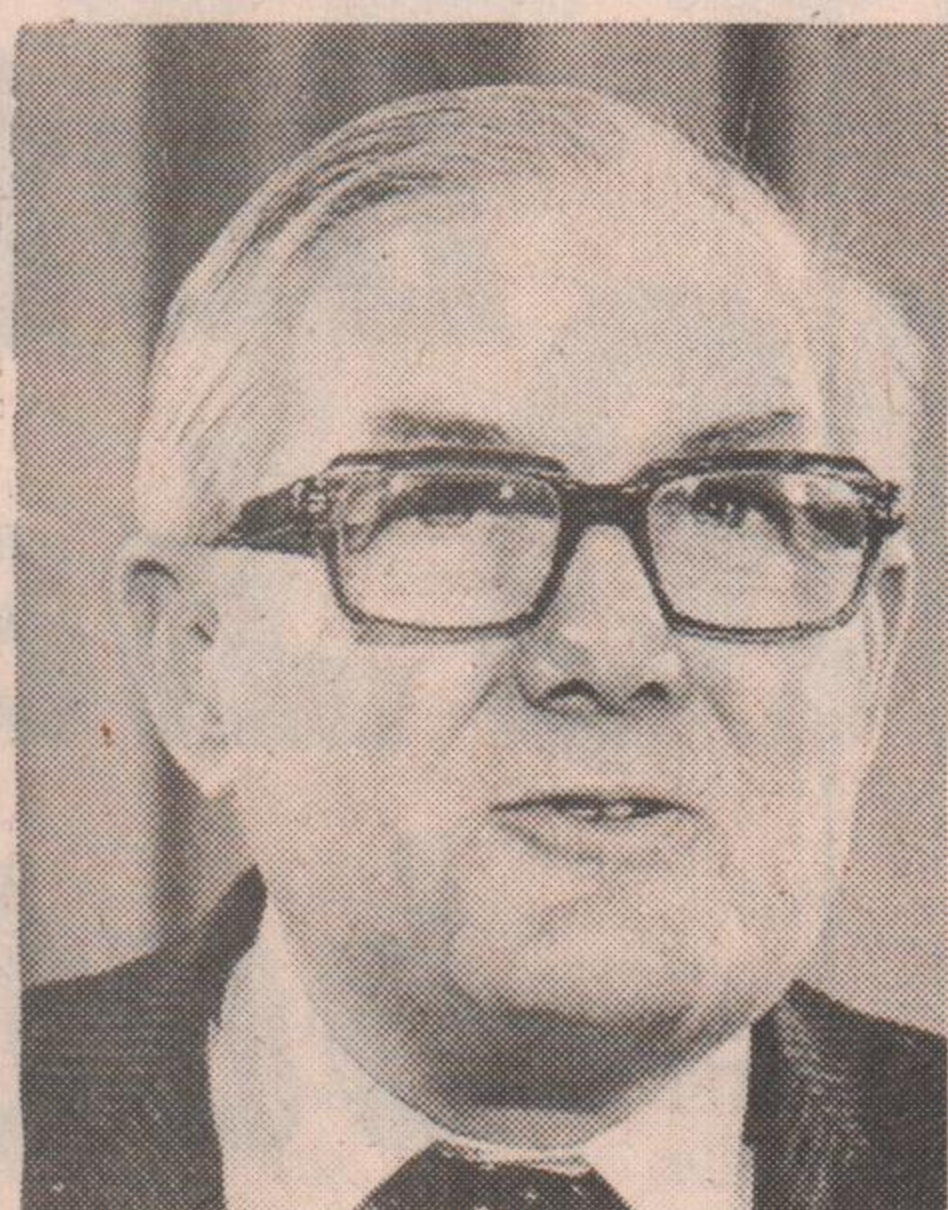
## 'Lefts' collapse on Labour Manifesto

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PHOTO: Andrew Wiard, Report

# BL PAY STRIKE SHATTERS ELECTION TRUCE



Callaghan

they will strike if it is introduced.

But pressed by their members to fight for more money, the Craft Committee has now defied a monumental and vicious witch-hunt—much of it centred on Edwardes' description of Fraser as a 'wrecker'—and called the strike, supported by about half of BL's craftsmen.

The strength of the strike is the craftsmen's willingness to fight for wages, their refusal to link pay to increased productivity, and their determination to negotiate for themselves and not leave talks in the hands of officials.

But their weaknesses are also real. They fail to answer Leyland threats to close down sections of the firm.

And their failure to name a specific pay demand has left the way open for the employer to use their strike to force the new grading structure on the rest of the workforce.

Certainly the scale of scabbing on the strike by managers, technicians and engineers on its first day, together with the threats to sack skilled men at Llanelli and a lock-out at BMC Service in Cowley suggest a determined company bid to stand firm

### Open the books

We say that the threat to close factories must be answered by the demand that BL open their books to elected committees of trade unionists to expose the profits being made off their backs by private suppliers and the banks.

If the motor industry under capitalism cannot maintain its workforce, the answer is that the whole industry should be nationalised, without compensation under workers' management.

This, not Labour's talk of NEB investment, is the only perspective to save jobs and move to a planned socialist economy.

### Picketing

Meanwhile the Craft Committee must sharpen up the strike by reversing its "no picketing" decision, and by naming a clear figure for their wage claim.

The key question remains the building of a revolutionary leadership in British Leyland and the labour movement as a whole.

The strike by half of British Leyland's skilled workforce, begun in the teeth of opposition from the employer, the press, union leaders and Labour ministers, is a blow at the election plans of the capitalist class.

They, like their servants in the Labour leadership, wanted voting to take place with strikes—which are open evidence of the class issues involved—tucked neatly out of the way.

Instead, 4,000 craftsmen could halt production in Britain's major car firm, while 4,000 workers at the Perkins engine plant also engage in militant action on their wage demands.

### "National interest"

The more workers fight in this way for their independent class interests, the more the myth cultivated by both Callaghan and Thatcher of some common "national interest" is exposed—and the more the election emerges in its real context, as a debate between Tory and Labour leaders on how best to further attack workers' living standards and drive up profitability.

It means that every Labour candidate can be put on the spot by workers and called upon to declare where they stand on these struggles to defend living standards, and on socialist policies in opposition to Callaghan's platform of permanent wage controls.

But the Leyland strike also has major implications in relation to BL chairman Edwardes' plan of linking up with the Japanese firm, Honda, as a desperate answer to the crisis of the British motor industry.

### Tamed

Honda clearly want to be assured that the Leyland workforce has been tamed, shop-floor organisation weakened, and levels of exploitation driven up.

This requires the forcing home of company-wide bargaining on pay and conditions, placing them in the hands of national union officials.

To ensure that adjusting wages to a common level is self-financing, Leyland, with the full backing of union officials and convenors has for three years been dangling "parity" as a carrot while pressing for productivity increases and cuts in the workforce.

Meanwhile as the value of wages on the shop floor has plunged under wage control, militancy has risen.

This has driven Roy Fraser's toolroom committee—which led a four-week strike two years ago—into a tight corner.

Having tried every let-out, and now strengthened by an alliance with other skilled workers, the new Leyland Craft Committee has found itself still denied negotiations with management.

Management, for its part, has eased some of the productivity criteria to the "parity" payments, but refuses to deal separately with the craftsmen or to pay the money until a contentious five-grade national pay structure is agreed.

Several other sections—particularly production workers and fork-lift drivers at Cowley—are so hostile to this grading structure that they have said

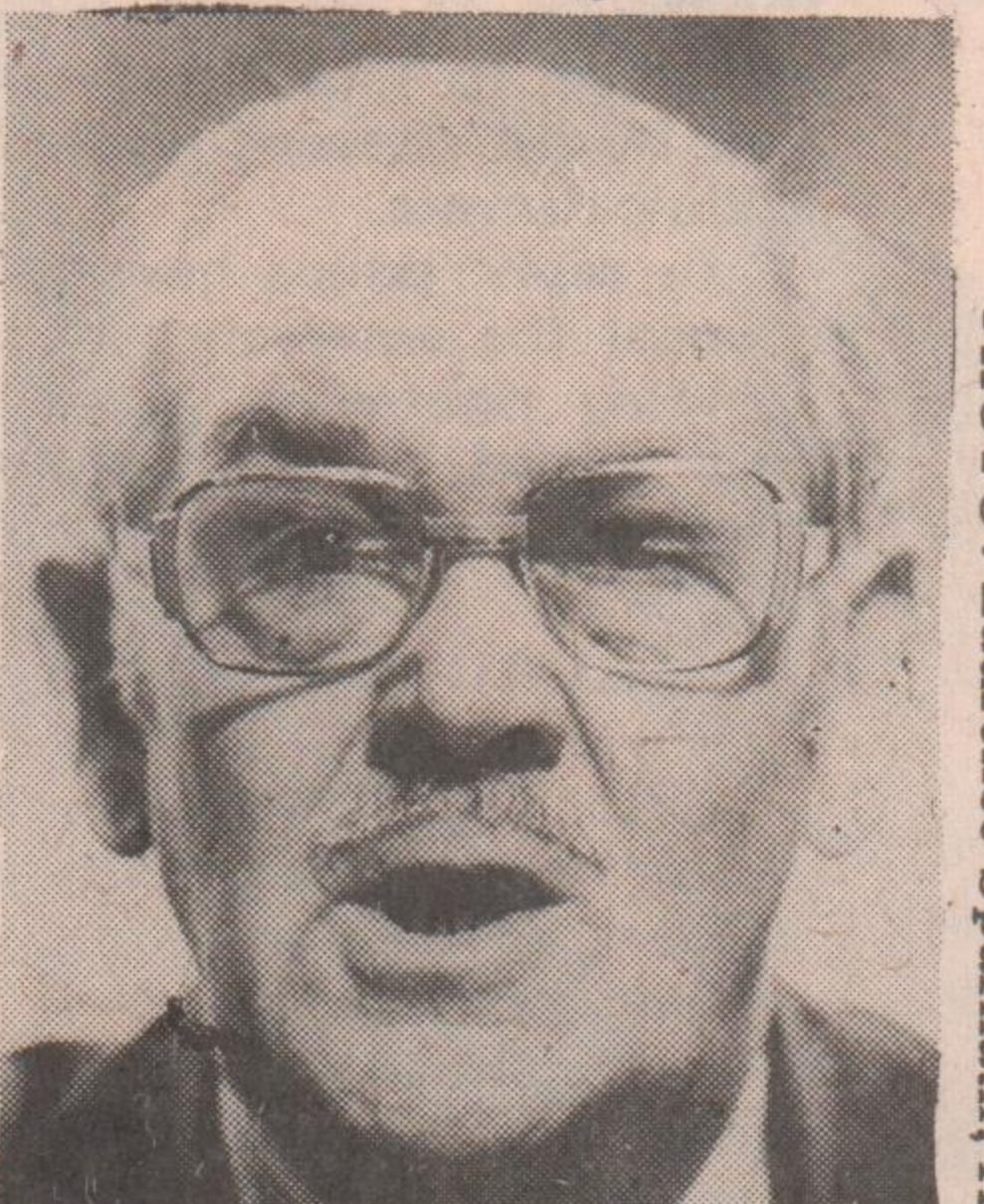


PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFIL

AUEW leader Duffy—threatens Fraser with discipline under rule.

# Court points pistol at unions



Lord Denning

The Court of Appeal last week unleashed a further attack on trade union rights when it upheld an interim injunction against the National Graphical Association and ordered the union to pay £80,000 costs.

The injunction bars the NGA from pursuing its national campaign of blacking advertisements from firms whose adverts continue to appear in the anti-union Nottingham Evening Post.

The NGA and SLADE are fighting for union recognition at the Post, while the NUJ is fighting for the reinstatement of 28 journalists who were summarily sacked by management for taking part in the journalists' pay strike (see page 11).

### Weapon

The Court of Appeal judgement is a major weapon in the hands of T. Bailey Forman, the management at the Post. But it has much wider and even more serious implications for the labour movement as a whole.

Three points stand out in the judgement delivered by Lord Denning, Master of the Rolls:

\*The fight for union recognition at Nottingham was *not* in his view, a trade dispute, and therefore the union was not entitled to immunity for its actions.

This of course raises the question of whether any solidarity action in support of union recognition struggles cannot be ruled illegal.

\*He went on to proclaim that: "It would be contrary to

principle that a union should seek to outflank ACAS and seek to obtain recognition by industrial strength."

This astounding declaration would, if accepted by the trade union movement, effectively close the door to unionisation in whole areas of industry.

### No powers

ACAS, of course, not only diverts from action to enforce union recognition, but, as the Grunwick case proved beyond doubt, has no powers whatever to make an employer concede.

Denning's attempt to suggest that involvement of ACAS is a legal precondition to taking industrial action to force recognition is thus a major attack on the independence of the trade unions.

\*He went on to describe the gaggle of press barons and anti-union employers that had brought the action as an "innocent third party" to a dispute, which he felt could be seen as not really about recognition but simply an attempt by the NGA to damage T. Bailey Forman for "what it regarded as anti-union activities".

In reality the press, owned and controlled almost exclusively by the capitalist class, is a major weapon for them in attacking the freedom and strength of the trade unions.

### Tools of bosses

Far from the NGA "pointing a pistol at the head of innocent parties", the courts, as tools of the capitalist class, have over the past 15 months established a

succession of precedents which threaten basic union rights.

Courts have stripped the UPW of the right to black mail to South Africa or mail to Grunwicks; the NUJ has been denied the legal right to black Press Association copy in support of NUJ members on strike there; and TGWU lorry driver Reg Fall was even barred from picketing fellow lorry drivers outside United Biscuits in January's haulage strike.

The NGA is ideally placed to fight this latest attack. Its power as a union is enormous—and print workers have long been part of the backbone of the labour movement.

### Handed over

But sooner than shut down the Fleet Street presses and fight, calling on the labour movement for support, and Labour leaders to defend the unions, the NGA bureaucracy are tamely handing over £80,000 and basic union rights to the bosses' courts.

Nothing could point more clearly to the bankruptcy of the present leadership of the trade unions and the necessity for the construction of a revolutionary leadership, if even the most elementary rights are to be defended.

# Perkins blockade

THE MASS picketing and huge barricades outside Perkins diesel engine plant at Peterborough signal the emergence on the pay front of the big battalions of the engineering industry.

7,000 manual workers are on strike. Aching from three years of wage control, they are demanding a package worth in the region of £30 a week increase, and have already rejected an £8-£10 management offer.

3,000 white collar and skilled staff were advised by management not to cross the elaborate barricades that blocked the five entrances to the plant on Monday morning.

Pickets are saying they are prepared to stay out six months if necessary. But long before that this strike could provide the initial baptism of fire for a new, anti-union Tory government.



Socialist Youth League members from London and Oxford marched on the demonstration against SUS organised last Saturday by the LPYS.

# FRANCO'S MEN SLEEP EASY DESPITE ELECTION REVERSES

Within a few days the Mayoralty of Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao and of all Spain's major industrial cities will pass from the hands of appointed Francoist functionaries into those of people persecuted and in some cases imprisoned by Franco's dictatorship.

The new incumbents will be in the main members of the Socialist Party (PSOE), the Communist Party and in a few cases Basque or other nationalist parties.

Premier Adolfo Suarez' Francoist Democratic Centre Union (CDU) won twice as many seats nationally as the PSOE in Spain's first municipal elections since 1933.

## Majorities

But the PSOE and CP together won majorities of councillors in virtually all the big cities.

It is these councillors who will now elect the mayors.

But most of Franco's officials can still rest easy in their beds.

Because the prospective Mayor of Madrid, Enrique Tierno Galvan has said time and time again the PSOE will be "gradualist" and that

"there will be no purges in the City Hall".

And there are clear signs that the PSOE and the CP will set out to ensure they do not govern the cities alone, but search out some sort of coalition or similar agreement with the UCD.

## Share of spoils

The CP (which has more councillors than the PSOE in only one city) is insistently demanding a share of the spoils of office while the PSOE remains aloof.

Already there are strong indications that the masses, especially in Euskadi (the Basque region), expect the representatives they have elected to use their new positions against the central government of the UCD.

And the new Suarez government announced and ratified by parliamentary vote last week against PSOE, CP and Basque nationalist votes, has shown that it is preparing for increasingly sharp conflict with the masses.

As Franco's municipal mayors step into well-compensated retirement, his trusted servants still hold on to office in Madrid.

## Fascist general

The hated Francoist civilian Interior Minister, Rodolfo Martin Villa, has

been replaced by an experienced fascist General of the Francoist provincial police force, the Civil Guard.

And the Armed Forces Ministry remains in the hands of army General Gutierrez Mellado.

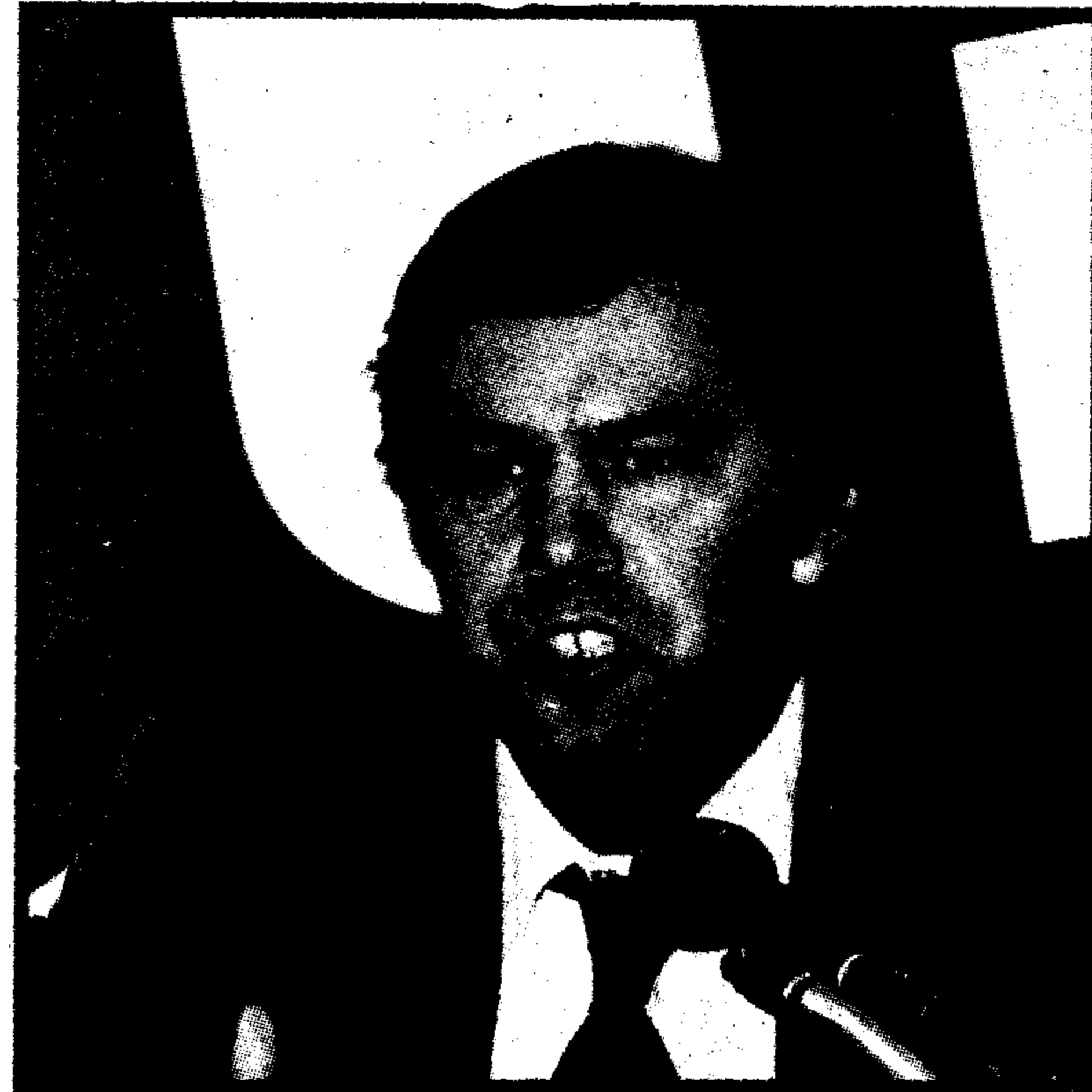
Suarez' strategy is to show the more die-hard sections of the military hierarchy that their recent thoughts, and occasionally actions, about staging a military coup to restore Francoist authority is unnecessary.

He has ensured that Franco's Generals—for whom no one cast a single vote in Spain's recent orgy of "democracy"—remain in the most powerful posts of the government.

The stage is set for immense new clashes between the regime and the organised working class.

The government is preparing to launch new economic attacks to solve the continuing crisis of Spanish capital; to resist any serious attempt by national minorities to gain the right to national self-determination; and to meet resistance to these policies by the traditional Francoist measures of batons and bullets.

That, despite the Socialist and Communist mayors, is still the reality of Suarez' "democracy".



PSOE leader Gonzalez.

## Butcher hangs butcher

While capitalist heads of state wrung their hands and trembled at the prospect of future mass upheavals in Pakistan, former President Bhutto was rapidly and furtively hanged last week, on the orders of military President Zia.

Bhutto was an ideal candidate for hanging—not by dictator Zia but by a workers'

court. He had marked his period in office by a massive spate of bribery, corruption and embezzlement, along with the imprisonment, torture and murder of his political opponents, and brazen ballot rigging.

In 1973 the total of Bhutto's political prisoners was estimated at 20,000. Bhutto's "Defence of Pakistan Rules" allowed wholesale arrests without proof, and jail without trial.

His followers were given carte blanche to harass and intimidate opponents. In one incident, the 70 year old former President of the Multan Bar Association was stripped naked in public and beaten.

## Only party

These tactics helped ensure that Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party remained the only mass political party in Pakistan.

But when army leaders, headed by Zia, staged their coup in the midst of mass struggles against Bhutto's ballot rigging in 1977, this political monopoly became as much a liability to Bhutto as a source of strength.

Because while the Zia regime risked mass resistance if it chose to execute Bhutto, as long as he remained alive he was seen as a political focus for any potential opposition.

It was this fine calculation which caused Zia's long delay before giving the hangman the go-ahead.

Since that point mass resistance to Zia's vicious Islamic dictatorship, triggered by the execution, has produced pitched battles between demonstrators and police in Rawalpindi, Lahore and Karachi.

In the forefront of the demonstrations have been thousands of militant women, subjected to intensified repression by Zia's recent reactionary Islamic decrees.

In reply police have helped sponsor the emergence of club-wielding right-wing gangs who have joined them in violently attacking anti-Zia forces.

## Economic crisis

With his government completely isolated from any mass support, a raging economic crisis fuelling further struggles, and the ever-present probability of having to contain national struggles by the Baluchis or other oppressed nationalities imprisoned within Pakistan's imperialist-drawn borders, Zia's main hope of survival now rests on the total absence of any independent leadership for the toiling masses.

## Turkey cashes in on Iran crisis

The overturn of Iran as a bastion of imperialist power in the Middle East has focussed growing attention on the chronic economic and political dislocation of Turkey.

Western bankers who previously scorned appeals for loans from Prime Minister Ecevit have begun to take a fresh interest in propping up the tottering economy.

Last week saw the signing of a \$250 million loan from the nervous Saudi Arabian regime, eager to avert mass struggles in what has become a crucial strategic country.

No doubt imperialist chiefs will hope that a large chunk of such loans will be spent refurbishing Turkey's armed forces: an American report describes the navy as "mainly rejects" and the air force as "barely 50% operational".

## IRAN...

Cont'd from back page

vote, with 98% of those voting in favour of the "Islamic Republic" and only 1% of the abstainers being political abstentions.

After the demagogic and fraudulent poll the Ayatollah Khomeini declared the "Islamic Republic", one of the first effects of which was the reactivation of the revolutionary courts over which Bazargan's government has no control but which it managed to persuade Khomeini to suspend a few weeks ago.

In the last few days at least 30 former officials of the Shah's regime, including his Prime Minister for 13 years Amir Hoveyda, have been executed following summary trials.

There are some signs that this revolutionary justice might once again be turned by the reactionary religious leadership against "moral deviants" and "communists" who have become the standard scapegoat of the Islamic authorities.

The pro-Moscow "Communists" of the Tudeh Party, however, may be protected from this by their increasingly abject grovelling before Khomeini and Islamic reaction.

The Tudeh called for a yes vote in the referendum and immediately after Khomeini's declaration of the "Islamic Republic" the Tudeh's mighty patron Leonid Brezhnev (who had armed and defended the Shah) sent a telegram congratulating the Ayatollah on the occasion and assuring him of the Soviet Union's friendship.

The counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism in Iran thus persists beyond the fall of the Shah whose dictatorship the Stalinists helped to prolong.

The left-wing Marxist-Leninist and Islamic guerrillas, the liberal bourgeois National Democratic Front led by Mossadeq's grandson and virtually all the nationalist organisations in Kurdistan, the Turkoman region and elsewhere called for a boycott of the elections (which makes Bazargan's claim of 1% political abstentions totally unbelievable).

But despite that correct position none of these organisations can offer the revolutionary leadership needed even more urgently by Iranian workers and their allies.

Such leadership can only come from building a Trotskyist party which can link today's fight for democracy and better material conditions to the struggle for the working class to take power.

# New clampdown on Chinese opposition

"It is forbidden to provoke trouble by resorting to demagoguery among the masses or to hurl false and defamatory accusations".

"It is also forbidden to put up posters, wall newspapers or other placards or slogans on the walls of the streets, public buildings and other places, with the exception of places reserved for this use".

"Forbidden in all circumstances are posters, notices, books, magazines, albums, photographs and cards which go against socialism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the leadership of the CP, Marxism-Leninism and the thought of Mao Tse-tung or which reveal state secrets."

## "Clean up"

This communique, adopted by the revolutionary committee of Peking, was followed by a city-wide "clean up".

It follows similar measures taken in Shanghai a month ago. The text reveals that there has been a great deal of agitation.

The numerous occupations of offices in factories and government bodies by angry workers and peasants was said to threaten their

normal operation.

Also, central committee documents were being 'leaked'.

The crackdown has been aimed particularly at trying to head off a repetition of the last three year's demonstrations on April 5.

This year the anniversary of Chou En-lai's death coincides exactly with the Day of Celebration of the Dead.

## Supervision

The demonstrations in Tien An men Square went ahead under very heavy police supervision.

The end of the so-called "liberalisation" period has also been characterised by arrests of oppositionists.

Four activists in the Alliance of Human Rights were arrested on 4 April as they were putting up a poster in the centre of Peking.

Two Agence France Presse correspondents who witnessed the arrests and had got as far as copying down "The enemies of democracy have begun to attack" were dragged away by the police.

They claim that they were insulted and accused of "poking their noses into Chinese political business".

It is estimated that about a dozen involved in the



Demonstration in support of Hua in 1976: now opponents face clampdown

liberalisation campaign are in prison.

Many of these groups—and there are now six "underground" journals circulating in Peking—have begun to make correct criticisms of the CP leadership and have directed against the bureaucracy.

Some, like Ren Wanding, have even made accurate assessments of the motives of the bureaucrats:

"If the authorities are taking up the question of democracy, it is because of the present economic difficulties in China".



US envoy Vance with Saudi ruler Fahd

# IRAN REVOLUTION CASTS A LONG SHADOW

Nobody should believe that the treaty recently signed by Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat will usher in an era of peace in the Middle East, or anywhere else for that matter.

In fact, the effect is quite likely to be the reverse.

Since the downfall of the Shah of Iran political and military alignments in the Middle East have been in the melting pot.

Fear of further such mass movements has been the force driving Carter, Begin and Sadat closer into each other's embrace.

Every despot in the area, (and there are many), has also suddenly begun to feel nervous of his position.

### Luxury

The Saudi regime, for instance, decided in the aftermath of the mass overthrow of the Shah that it couldn't afford the luxury of Saudi troops in the Lebanon, and immediately began preparations to bring them home.

Fighting between South and North Yemen, near neighbours of the Saudis provided the immediate reason.

Likewise Syria has begun preparations to withdraw troops from the Lebanon and re-position them opposite Israeli troops on the Golan Heights.

### Redeployed

Here, the immediate reason was furnished by Sadat's "separate peace" with Begin, a natural conclusion of which will be that Israeli troops are redeployed away from the Egyptian front (where they are being replaced by American weaponry given as part of the "peace" package) and used against the other Arab states.

The net effect of all these troop movements, if carried through will be to leave the Lebanese government exposed and without an army at a time when rank and file Palestinian

guerrillas, strengthened by the Iranian events, are particularly combative, and at a time when the Israeli government can use this as an excuse to pay some attention to its northern front.

Further Israeli incursions into the Lebanon can be expected as the Israeli government beats a temporary retreat on the southern front.

### Cheap labour

Meanwhile, Israeli officials have expressed their wish to open their borders with, and step up economic links with Egypt.

This will guarantee a new flow of cheap labour for Israeli capitalists and a market for their products.

This is an extension of existing Israeli policy in the area, reminiscent in some respects of South African policy vis-a-vis the Bantustans.

Egypt, on the other hand, is now at the receiving end of increased aid from the US, and also stands to benefit from increased trade with both Israel and the rest of the imperialist world, given that the Egyptian government can now break

formally with the notional "Arab Boycott" of all companies which trade with Israel.

It remains to be seen whether, or not the other reactionary regimes in the area can hang together long enough to implement any sort of boycott against Egypt.

Sadat at least must believe that, even if they can, he stands to gain more from a deal with the Israeli and US governments than he does from pursuing a policy of half-hearted confrontation.

Meanwhile the fear of an extension of the Iranian revolution has created some strange bedfellows.

It has driven the Ba'athists of Damascus and Baghdad back towards each other in search of comfort.

### Understanding

It has forced the Iraqi and Saudi regimes to renew their military understanding.

The first fruits of that strengthened agreement have already been seen in their defence of the reactionary Yemen Arab Republic.

Above all, that fear presided over every session of the Arab League's Baghdad summit.

The Arab leaders knew how the example and support of the Iranian revolution would spur on the determination of the Palestinian people to win their liberation struggle.

### Detest

They also knew how deeply the masses in their own countries identify with that struggle, and how violently they detest the treachery of Sadat.

The Arab League had to be seen to do something. But they know that the boycott of Egypt is no more than a fraud.

Before he signed the peace treaty, Sadat had already pledged his lifelong service to the imperialist powers.

When the Iranian forces withdrew from Oman, Sadat immediately sent in Egyptian troops as a gesture of good faith to suppress the liberation struggle in Dhofar.

Every minister in Baghdad knew as well as Sadat that the US imperialists and their allies would,

exchange, protect Egypt against the effects of any movement by the other Arab states.

The Palestinian liberation struggle will not be won by any number of boycotts or other actions from the Arab nationalist leaders.

The workers and peasants of Iran have clearly shown the way—only mass mobilisations of the oppressed classes can lift the yoke of imperialism in the Middle East.

But already those workers and peasants who formed the driving force of the Iranian revolution have come into conflict with their new leaders.

### Bigotry

The latest struggles of women, the struggles of the Kurds, Turkomenis and other oppressed nationalities for their democratic rights, have all been in opposition to the religious bigotry of Khomeini and the bourgeois nationalism of Bazargan.

Inevitably such leaders will attack and betray the masses whose strength brought them to power.

The problem is not confined to Iran; it is the central problem which faces the whole of the international working class.

Just within the Middle East, the "left" bourgeois nationalists in Baghdad slaughtered thousands of militants from the Iraqi Communist Party and brutally deny the Kurdish people their right to self-determination.

### Support for Amin

The "socialist" regime of Gaddafi's military dictatorship is even now protecting with its troops that reactionary butcher Idi Amin.

Arafat and the petty bourgeois nationalist leadership of the PLO itself struck a huge blow against the Palestinian revolution when it surrendered bases in the Lebanon to the Arab League and the United Nations.

As revolutionary communists we do not attempt

to conceal the true character of such leaders. Unlike the 'Marxists' of the Workers Revolutionary Party, we do not latch on to certain aspects of their words or actions and then give them uncritical support.

### Solidarity

We, of course, declare our unconditional solidarity and give our full material support to all those people fighting against imperialism.

But we recognise that the needs and aspirations of the workers and peasants in the Middle East can be won only by a struggle against such traitors within the fight for a new revolutionary leadership. Our task is to build such parties and reconstruct the Fourth International.

The liberation of Palestine will not be won by Arab League boycotts, but by mobilising the masses throughout the Middle East on the basis of a socialist programme that can meet their needs.

The Palestinian revolution will not be led to victory by the bourgeois nationalist leaders of the PLO, but by a new Trotskyist leadership armed with the programme, method and experience of the communist movement.



Arafat with Khomeini

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# Tory return will not aid Irish struggle

The nauseating spectacle of Labour's entire National Executive standing for a minute's silence in honour of dead imperialist spokesman Airey Neave last week fittingly summed up the Party's unashamedly reactionary position on Ireland.

Not one of the NEC—which includes ageing LPYS chairman and 'Militant' supporter Phil Frampton—has at any point shown a glimmer of solidarity with or concern for the dozens of Irish workers gunned down, or the hundreds tortured, framed-up and imprisoned by Roy Mason's brutal military terror in the occupied six counties of Ireland.

## Long Kesh

The NEC has remained supremely unconcerned at the valiant three-year struggle by 400 republican prisoners in the

Long Kesh concentration camp, who are fighting under the most appalling conditions for the restoration of Prisoner of War status stripped from them by Mason in 1976.

And there has been no sign of any fight by the NEC members for the repeal of the so-called "Prevention of Terrorism Act which has been used to detain without charge over 3,500 mainly Irish people.

## Squalid record

This squalid record of Labour's oppression and repression in Ireland has already begun to bear fruit in the emergence of widespread hostility to Labour among Irish workers—a hostility which opportunists within the Liberal Party have not been slow to exploit.

The Young Liberals clearly hoping to net added votes for their adult colleagues in Britain's second-string capitalist

party, have given notice of a demonstration on August 12 calling for a British withdrawal from the North of Ireland.

Prominent Liberal politician Cyril Smith is among those that have already signed the declaration for the demonstration. Top Liberal John Pardoe has also spoken in favour of British withdrawal.

There is speculation that this two-faced and populist policy—while Liberal leader Steel holds the line for existing British imperialist strategy in Ireland—was a factor in the big swing towards the Liberals in the Edge Hill by-election.

## Shysters

But while the Liberals struggle to tart up their party's image as a group of corrupt, unsuccessful business shysters, other political groups are intervening on the Irish question against Labour in the General Election.

The Irish Civil Rights Assoc-

iation has declared its intention to stand candidates against Labour in marginal constituencies, and to urge Irish people elsewhere to abstain.

The Irish National Party has also already completed a manifesto calling for a British withdrawal—but combining this with a reactionary anti-abortion stand.

## Labour movement

The way forward in the struggle to force British troops out of Ireland centrally requires the mobilisation of the British labour movement in opposition to the Callaghan-Healey-Mason leadership.

To allow the re-election of a Tory government—however much this is the result of Labour's policies—would not only impede this struggle but would undoubtedly, in the wake of Neave's execution, maintain and even strengthen the repression in the six counties.

This is why Irish workers must not be diverted off into single issue protest votes, but

# IRELAND

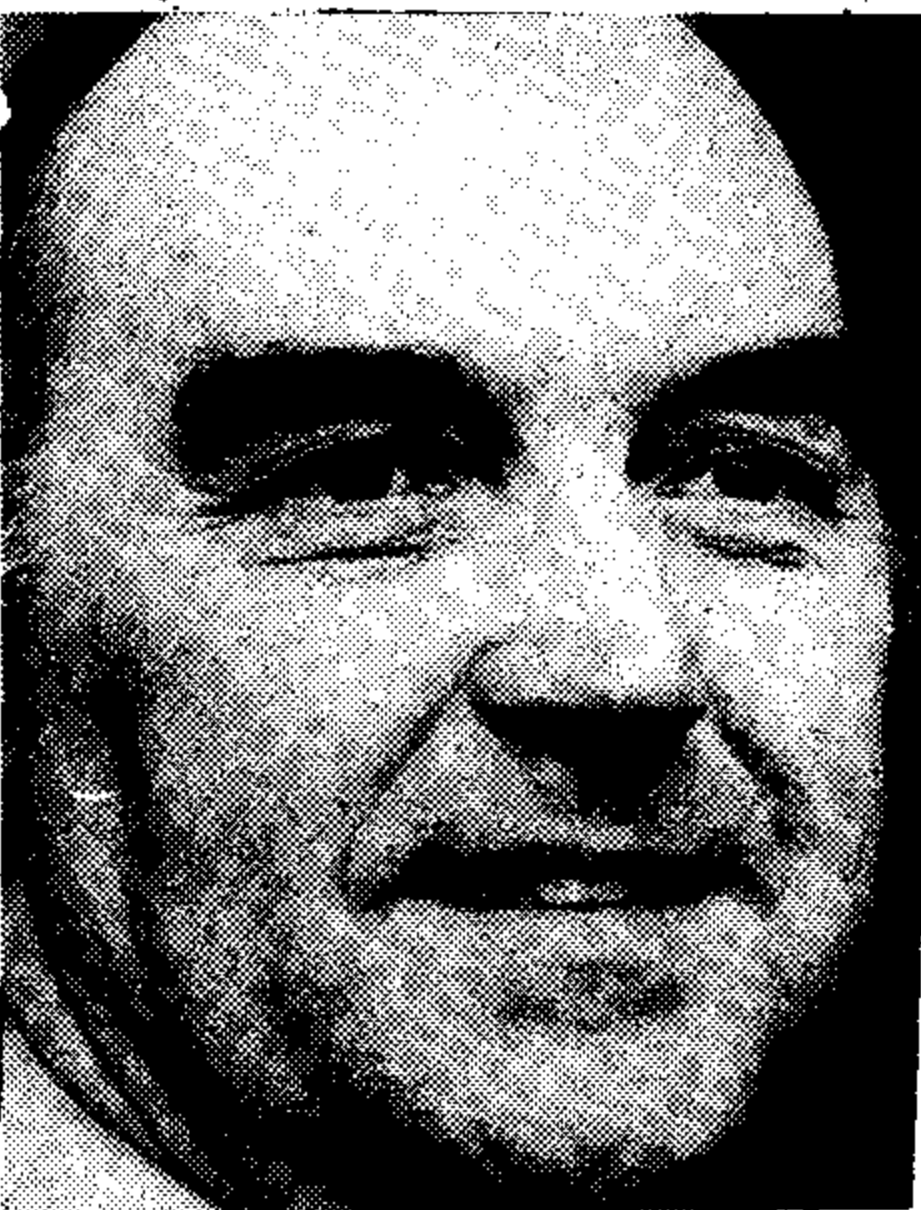


PHOTO: Derek Speirs, IFL

Mason

join with their English brothers and sisters in the fight to return a Labour government and build a socialist alternative to the present pro-imperialist Labour leaders.

## Labourite calls for death penalty

HARRY GOURLAY, Labour MP for Kirkcaldy has launched his election campaign in fine Tory style—calling for the death penalty for terrorists. In a hysterical outburst he declared that: "One must accept that they act like madmen. In such circumstances the penalty of capital punishment would be more fitting than an attempt at rehabilitation."



PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

March backs H Block prisoners

# Thatcher's man sharpens his axe

While Chancellor Healey's proposed 1979 Budget was turned by events into simply a routine "care and maintenance" motion placed before a dying Parliament, the same will not be true of the real Budget that will follow the election.

Indeed if the Tories come to power workers will swiftly taste the bitter reality underlying Thatcher's cant about the "spirit of enterprise".

Attacks already partially launched by Labour Chancellor Healey will be carried through ruthlessly and swiftly.

One of the first moves of likely Chancellor-to-be Geoffrey Howe will be to slash the 83% rate of tax paid by top managers and directors.



Howe

The Tories intend to cut this rate to as low as 60%—funneling huge amounts of extra cash into well-lined management pockets.

But scarcely any cut is likely in the basic rate of income tax—the rate that actually affects the working class.

The tax perks for top bosses will most likely be paid for by increases in VAT or other indirect taxes, which of course are paid by workers in purchasing everyday necessities.

The first Tory budget would almost certainly also declare a new, savage programme of cuts in public spending, which will begin to bite home a year later.

In fact the only promise being made by Tory spokesmen is to cut taxes. They remain diplomatically vague about precisely which areas of public spending they will cut in order to pay for such concessions.

But we know that two areas—arms spending and the police force and "law and order" apparatus—are not only immune from cuts but destined to receive added millions of government money.

## £1.5 billion cuts

Already Howe has declared that the government's spending programme is £1 billion too high. His initial cuts could amount to well in excess of £1.5 billion, throwing thousands more onto the dole queues and further destroying health care, education, housing and social services.

Nor should there be any illusions that these cuts will be in any way compensated by any increase in real wages.

Inflation is already on its way upwards, and will rise faster still under the impact of the oil price increases to come; and the Common Market's lunatic agricultural policy—which the Tories will defend to the hilt—will ensure spiralling food prices for the foreseeable future.

Indeed the more exposed is the anarchy and colossal waste of the EEC agricultural policy—which last year spent £5 billion in "destroying mountains of 'surplus' foodstuffs in order to keep prices high—the more tenaciously top Tories come out in its defence.

## Sabotage

Last week saw Peter Walker—a surviving relic of the Heath era—blaming Labour leaders for the widespread popular hostility to the EEC in Britain, accusing them of "sabotage".

He called for an all-out effort by Tory campaigners to revive "the hope and the vision" which he claimed was reflected in the 1975 referendum.

Translated into practical terms, this means that the Tories will continue to force British workers to help foot the huge bill for the EEC's wanton vandalism and price-fixing.

In every respect the re-election of a Tory government would represent a major setback for the labour movement—a setback prepared by five years treachery and Tory policies under a Labour government.

# Get officials off our

# Letter backs!

Dear Editor,

This is my analysis of the fight for the £60 pay claim for brothers and sisters working in the Health Service, especially the hospital workers.

The ongoing action, which we had been told, we would be fighting for, was for a 35 hour week and four weeks holidays.

I would like to comment on this at this point.

I believe that even though the "official bodies" said they would fight strong and hard to try and get these conditions, they seem to have lost sight of these things.

At this point of time, eight to ten weeks after the Day of Action, our members are now bewildered at the turn of events since then.

I firmly believe that we have now been left in limbo, or some place known as 'no man's land', and that the paid officials of this and other unions which were involved in this dispute have misdirected the members of their unions.

From the beginning, we were not given any clear indication as to where we were going.

As far as I, personally, am concerned, whenever I tried to get information or a direction from any of our officers I simply could not get any.

The General Office at Stockwell may quite easily not have been there.

For days on end I myself tried to get in touch with any officer at Stockwell, and was persistently told they were "not available" or they were elsewhere.

This, I presume, will be readily denied by the officers.

If not, then we shall in all probability get the usual spiel, claiming that they are "overstretched" and so busy they find it difficult to

fulfil their declared commitments.

If this is so it is not time to have some other tier of officers to liaise with the branches?

Even when officers do condescend to come to meetings with shop stewards and secretaries they try to make the shop stewards look like children who should not be so naughty and must now listen to Papa.

I feel the time has now arrived, that we who are the union should tell our paid employees to "stand up and be counted" and to take forward the policies which the members are asking them to implement.

It is also time for certain lay officers to run the branches for the benefit of all their members and not for the chosen few.

If Branch Secretaries believe in what they are about, they must realise that the Branch to which they are elected must come first because members put their trust in them.

If they feel they must wheel and deal and spread themselves in other areas, then for the sake of their members, they should relinquish their positions and resign.

quish their positions and resign.

Then at least someone else who would have the members' interests at heart, might get the chance to do something constructive for them.

I will finish by saying to these people, stop climbing on the backs of ordinary working people to further your own interests.

If you can't help your members, then please move on!

Yours fraternally,  
Tom O'Regan  
NUPE Branch Chairman,  
Kensington, Chelsea  
and Westminster  
South District  
Health Branch.

The record of the public sector union leaders during the recent dispute has clearly shown their unwillingness to lead a serious fight for the full claim.

The Workers Socialist League is convinced that rather than appeal to such 'leaders' to make way for those who will fight, only a most determined effort to expose these bureaucrats in front of their membership coupled with a political programme around which the membership can be mobilised will create the conditions for their removal.



PHOTO: Mark Ruster, IFL

NUPE members lobby during low pay struggle

# Manifesto- proof of 'left' prostration

If the British working class now faces the acute danger of the return of a Tory government, a major share of the responsibility must fall on the shoulders of Labour's spineless 'left-wing'.

After five years of tamely endorsing every spending cut, wage cut and closure, allowing Callaghan's Tory policies to alienate and demoralise thousands upon thousands of Labour supporters, the 'lefts' last week put the seal on their achievements by accepting Callaghan's anti-socialist manifesto.

Echoing the disastrous Wilson manifesto of 1970, which ushered in 3½ years of the hated Heath government, the Callaghan manifesto can also be paraphrased as "Life's better under Labour; don't let socialism ruin it".

It offers workers only more of the same policies that have slashed living standards, jobs, social services and democratic rights, and lost by-election after

by-election over the last five years.

**Out** are: free collective bargaining; nationalisation; any reversal of public spending cuts; any commitment to defend the unions against legal attack, and any pledge to abolish the House of Lords.

**In** are: further job-cutting collaboration between Labour leaders, union officials and employers; empty pledges on health and education; talk of unworkable price controls; further repression and continued direct rule over the occupied six counties of Ireland; cynical pledges to raise child allowances, pensions, and burial grants; defence of Labour's appalling record.

## Parliamentary road

The Labour Party has of course never pretended to be a revolutionary party.

In place of the independent mobilisation of the working class in struggle for its class interests it has consistently argued for peaceful, parliamentary reforms within capitalism.

But the chronic economic crisis of British capitalism, and the commitment of the entire Labour leadership to preserving the profitability of private industry, now means that this reformist party is sent into the 1979 election by Callaghan, stripped of even the promise of any worthwhile reforms.

Why have the 'lefts' not come out openly in opposition to this?

The press reports of Friday's "Clause V" meeting on the Manifesto draft went to great lengths to suggest that there was "intense", even "bitter" debate over its contents. Some even suggest that Callaghan made some—undisclosed—concessions!

Yet in essence there is no real difference in approach



Heffer

between 'left' and right wing reformists. Both stand in fear of the independent strength and mobilisation of the working class. Both see the road to "socialism" as an exclusively parliamentary road.

From this standpoint, any attempt by socialists in the Labour Party to "rock the boat" or challenge Callaghan on the eve of an election is seen by both 'left' and right as unthinkable sabotage of Labour's chances at the polls.

In reality such a struggle would attract thousands of workers seeking a fight against Callaghan.

## Tory logic

But of course while the logic of Callaghan and the Labour right wing is unashamedly and consistently the Tory logic of defending capitalism and making it profitable—through using the mechanism of class collaboration in place of Tory

confrontation—the 'lefts' have no such coherent position.

Because they oppose any full-scale mobilisation of the working class in struggles to the forcible expropriation of capital, but still seek credibility from militant sections of workers the 'lefts' have attempted to cook up an "alternative" position which is actually little different from that of Callaghan.

## "National interest"

Their continuous nationalist call for import controls to "save jobs" in Britain at the expense of workers in other countries in effect lines them up alongside the weakest sections of the employers and creates—rather as Callaghan tries to create it—the illusion of a cross-class "national interest".

Their call for additional government spending through the National Enterprise Board is also a continuation of the Wilson/Callaghan strategy of huge subsidies for private industry—which can be carried out only at the expense of social services.

## No alternative

With no alternative strategy, and no coherent programme, the 'lefts' can do nothing but collapse at each decisive confrontation with Callaghan.

Their capitulation on the Manifesto confirms once again that the 'lefts' offer no ready-made alternative leadership within the Labour Party.

The struggle to defeat the Tories, return a Labour government and fight for the removal of the Callaghan leadership and the building of an alternative socialist leadership must therefore be carried out against many of these 'left' fakery.



# Royals lose out on pay

The Royal Family have come out of the current pay round worse off than NUPE members—they have received a mere 8.9%!

The deal, negotiated without a strike, gives the Queen £174,000 extra to take her annual state income to £2,134,000.

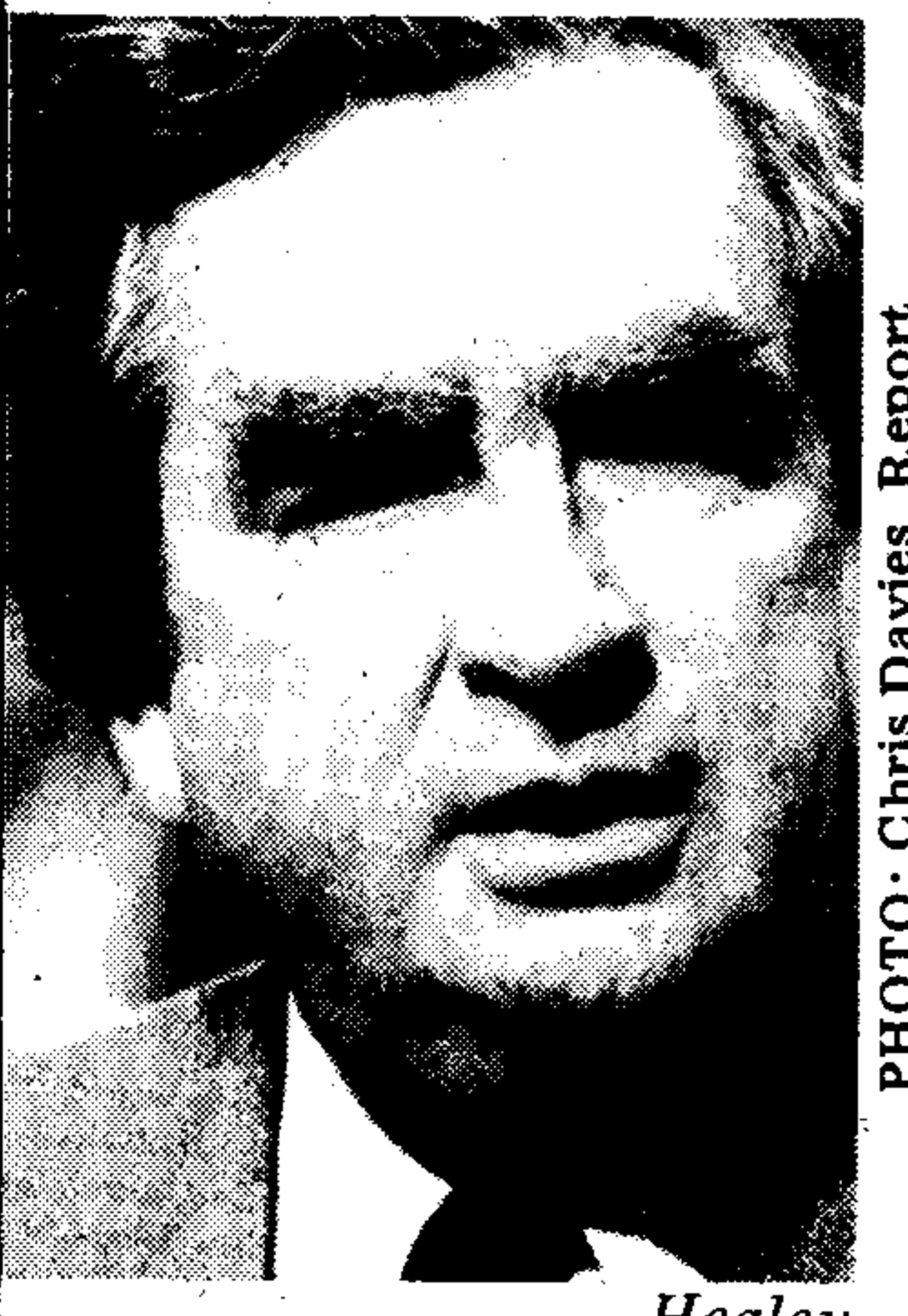
Her husband, who also 'earns' wages from the state, gets an extra £4,500 to take his pay to £98,000 a year. Her mother gets £200,000, a rise of £25,000 and her sister £64,000, a rise of £5,000.

All in all, members of the Windsor family will get an extra £211,500 this year, making a new total of £2,609,200 or the equivalent of roughly 52,000 NUPE members' full wages for a 40-hour week.

None of the royals has received £1 on account of any comparability exercise, which surely could have been set up—comparing their income with the Shah of Iran.



What? Only 8.9%.



Healey

PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

# Tory policies create housing crisis

Five years of anti-socialist Labour government have wrought havoc with housing.

Indeed 1978 saw less starts on new houses than any time since the Heath government. And only 130,000 houses were completed—the lowest total for five years.

1979 promises to be little different. The first two months show that the figure for both starts and completions was 20% lower than the same period of 1978.

The employers' federation, the National Council of Building Material Suppliers, expects the marked downward trend to continue for at least three years.

One reason for this fall back is the government cuts in spending on housing in the public sector.

These would of course be stepped up if the Tories return, pledged to increase sales of council housing and cut public spending on housing.

But another reason is the galloping prices of houses on the private market, which have shot up almost 33% over the last 12 months, pushing the average price of a house over the £20,000 mark—preventing many working class families from ever hoping to buy a house.

Building society chiefs now expect house prices to rise by another 20% in 1979.

The housing crisis is just another of the bitter fruits of Labour's five years of

collaboration with private enterprise—in particular the major building contractors, and giant building materials suppliers whose profits continue to rise while more and more workers find themselves unable to afford a roof over their heads.

The struggle to force the

expropriation of these profit-hungry giants and for workers' management of the huge fund monopolised by the building societies and used to perpetuate the capitalist stranglehold on house building is inseparable from the fight to kick out the crypto-Tories in the Callaghan-Healey leadership.



PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

# PRESS GANG



When the toolroom workers launched their strike which ultimately sparked off the Labour/Liberal coalition in 1977, sections of the Tory press defended them in a backhanded kind of way.

Seeing in the toolmakers lever for the Tory policy of "paying our key people more" (usually meaning by this managers and professional staff) the press gave them a curious image, half hero, half villain.

In particular Roy Fraser was pointed out as a reasonable man. Pictures appeared of him mowing his lawn; articles about the ordinariness of his house and domestic life.

Today the stakes are higher. The strike takes place as the capitalists hope to govern in their own name under their own flag.

The prospect of coming into office in the middle of

a complete Leyland shut-down is disheartening.

Fraser has therefore been subjected to a witch-hunt comparable only to those usually aimed at strike leaders a thousand times more radical.

Edwardes handed the press the ammunition, saying "I have a very real query whether Mr. Fraser is a

representative of his colleagues, or a wrecker".

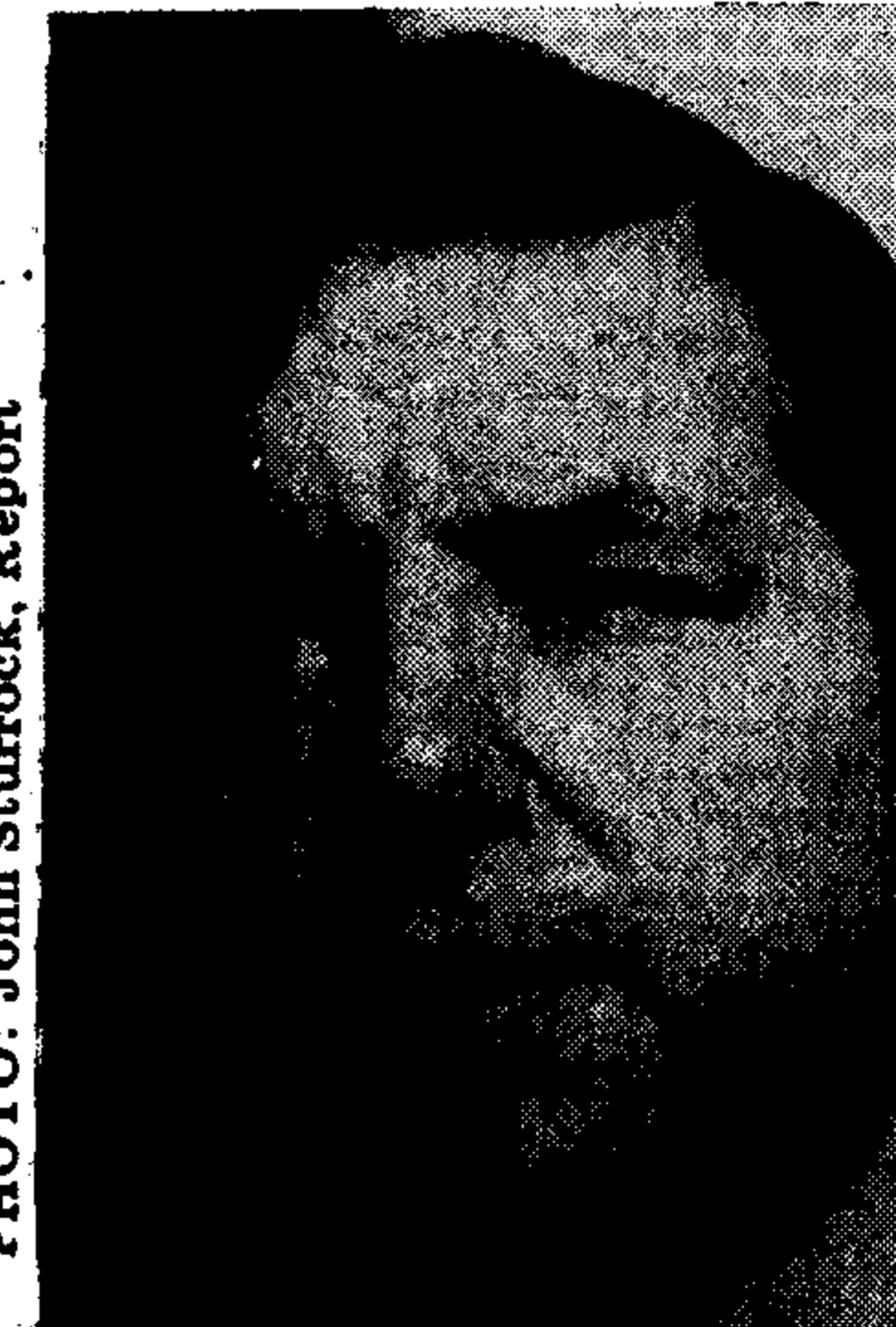
This started the attacks. Long articles printed warnings from one Leyland manager after another about the imminent collapse of the company.

Other articles claimed that the strike is aimed at finishing off the AUEW as well as Leyland.

Fraser has been presented as the cause of the strike, a ruthless man determinedly dragging unwilling skilled workers out on strike.

We have serious differences with Fraser (who has actually called off the strike umpteen times and who would no doubt settle for a reactionary wage structure) but he must be defended against these attacks.

By lying over the support the United Craft Organisation commands, the press has used a conscious campaign of propaganda to prevent the strike going ahead.



Fraser

PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

# LABOUR'S LONG CATA



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

The present Labour government first came to office in March 1974, after Heath's hated Tory government had been driven out of office by the miners while attempting to impose a third phase of statutory wage controls.

Workers correctly saw the Heath government—with its anti-union laws, social service cuts, soaring prices and rents and mounting dole queues, as the main enemy.

But five years of Wilson/Callaghan in office have proved that the reelection of a Labour government is not in itself a means of defending the working class. The essential question is the exposure of the reformist leaders in the eyes of the workers' movement and the construction of an alternative revolutionary leadership.

Below we catalogue just some of the major turning points in which the pro-capitalist role of the Wilson-Callaghan governments has been starkly revealed.

**March 5 1974** Wilson government elected, pledged to carry out "a major shift in the balance of wealth and power in favour of working people and their families".

But his cabinet includes Roy Jenkins, Reg Prentice, Shirley Williams, Callaghan and Healey, along with the garnish of supposed 'lefts' Benn and Foot. Foot welcomed by Tory press as a "most imaginative choice" as Employment Secretary.

Tribunite Stan Orme given key job in repressing Irish working class.

**March 6** Wilson's cabinet welcomed by millionaire merchant banker Rupert Hambro:

"I do not think we will find ourselves thrown into the terrible horrors of nationalisation or pulling out of the Common Market."

The *Financial Times* pointed out:

"Labour is faced with the unpleasant task of trying to induce a sharp reduction in real incomes over the next 12 to 18 months in order to make resources available for the balance of payments."

**March 12** Wilson's Queen's Speech drops all Labour's nationalisation pledges, and decides to keep Tories' Pay Board functioning along with Heath's Phase 3 pay limits. Tories and Liberals express approval.

Speech evades specific proposals to repeal Tory Industrial Relations Act and Housing Finance Act.

'Shrewsbury 6'—Building workers' pickets jailed by Tories on frame-up charges—left to rot in prison.

**March 26** Healey's first Budget confirms Tories' massive £1,200 million public spending cuts; borrows \$2,500 million from international bankers. £500 million allocated to food subsidies—propping up profits while giving illusion of lower prices.

Budget also raises electricity charges, rail fares, cost of telephone, stamps, confectionery, petrol, alcohol

and cigarettes. No tax on wealthy. Income tax up.

**March 28** AUEW fined £47,000 under the Industrial Relations Act—bringing total fines against AUEW to £208,000. Fine includes £217.50 to recompense Con Mech management for financing Spanish holiday for three scabs and their families!

Still no moves by Labour government to repeal the Act.

Labour NEC asks government to squash £7,000 surcharge on Clay Cross councillors who defied Tory Housing Finance Act—to no avail.

**April 1974** Labour government agrees to sell warships to Pinochet dictatorship in Chile.

**April 9** Threat by Industrial Relations Court to seize entire assets of AUEW in retaliation for its refusal to pay £47,000 fine.

Foot still makes no move to repeal the Act.

**April 23** Foot, speaking only 6 days before AUEW assets due to be seized, tells union's National Committee to go to the Tory Court!

**May 8** Anonymous donor pays AUEW fine and costs as national engineering strike call receives overwhelming response. Strike called off. But NIRC scheduled to hear claim for £3 million damages against TGWU on July 15. Foot belatedly and inadequately moves to repeal I.R. Act and replace it with new laws.

**End of May** Nurses take up industrial action against continuation of Tory Phase 3 pay laws—attacked by Alan Fisher as "irresponsible, amateur adventurers". Eventually their action secures "special case" rise in late July.

**June 1974** Irish republican Michael Gaughan allowed to die in British jail on hunger strike sooner than transfer him to jail in the six counties.

**June 12** TUC leaders declare support for voluntary wage restraint to follow the end of Heath's Phase 3—the "social contract".

**October 1974** Labour reelected.

**November 1974** Former Labour minister Stonehouse vanishes in a cloud of criminal fraud and scandal, to reemerge an open Tory.

**November 12, 1974** Healey's second budget: "aimed at improving profitability and liquidity in the company's sector and shifting resources from consumption into investment and exports."

Total financial benefits to companies estimated at £1.5 billion in 1975.

**November 1974** "Prevention of Terrorism" Act rushed through parliament in the wake of Birmingham pub bombings. This 'emergency' measure has been renewed each year. 3,500 mainly Irish people held, dozens banned or deported, under it.

**November 1974** Chrysler announce redundancies for 7,700 white collar staff.

**January 1975** Imperial typewriters announce closure—3,000 jobs to go.

**February 1975** Industry Bill to set up National Enterprise Board—centred on class collaboration and 'participation'—with jail penalties for trade unionists who reveal 'confidential' details to their members.

**March 1975** Troops sent to scab on Glasgow dustmen's strike.

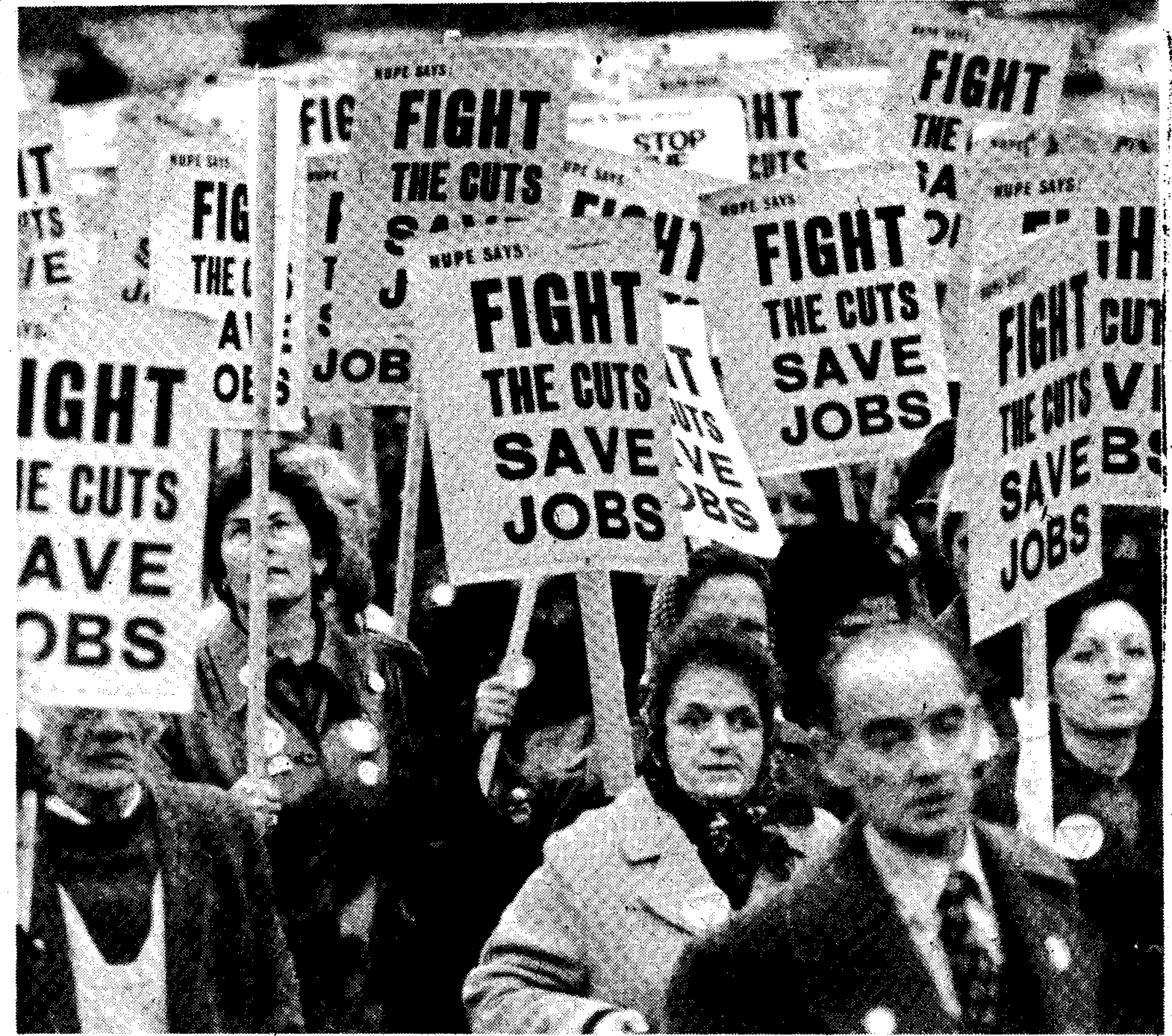
TUC formally abandons Shrewsbury 2. Ryder Report on British Leyland.

**April 1975** Budget outlines a further £1,000 million cuts 1975-76, and £3,000 million more for 1976-77.

Taxes up; VAT up; alcohol, cigarettes and road tax all up in price.

Subsidies on food, housing and to nationalised industries all cut.

**April 1975** Special Labour Party conference votes 2-1 to campaign for a 'no' vote in the Common Market referendum. Wilson ignores



The huge November 17 1976 march opposing Healey's spending cuts

it and throws Party machine into 'yes' campaign alongside Tories and Liberals.

Anti-market 'left' minister Eric Heffer sacked by Wilson. BSC management demand 20,000 redundancies: but shelve the scheme after union leaders sign deal pledging speed-up and worsening of working conditions.

Unemployment reaches 950,000.

**June 1975** Railwaymen's strike threat produces 30% pay settlement.

Healey openly threatens to use "Tory policies" if a new, tighter 'social contract' not accepted.

**July 1975** Unemployment climbs over 1 million.

Jack Jones railroads fraudulent scheme for "flat rate", "voluntary" pay limits through TGWU conference. Within hours, Healey has declared state control of wages—top increase to be £6. He says:

"We must accept a 10% cut in the standard of living and public expenditure. The alternative [!] is to crawl to the IMF and accept the terms they impose upon

us."

**July 1975** 160 Labour MPs and 14 ministers sign a motion defending Prentice against moves to oust him as MP for Newham N.E.

**August 1975** Closure plans in steel industry, textiles and engineering to slash over 4,000 jobs.

**September 1975** Clay Cross councillors sued for £63,000 for defying Tory Housing Finance Act—government refuses demands to lift the fines.

**October 1975** Government accepts Parliamentary Select Committee recommendation to restrict abortion rights.

**November 1975** Chrysler crisis No. 1: government turns down offer of Chrysler boss John Riccardo to pay £35 million to get rid of the British operation; instead Industry Secretary Varley pays out £162 million to persuade Chrysler to stay on—with the loss of 8,000 jobs.

Healey offers "letter of intent" to IMF in exchange for £1,000 million loan.

**December 1975** Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts come into force—little impact in improving women's relative rates of pay or furthering struggle for equal rights in employment.

**January 1976** Unemployment tops 1½ million.

**February 1976** Talks begin on Phase 2 of wage control. "Prevention of Terrorism" Act stepped up. Frank Stagg dies on hunger strike demanding transfer to prison in the six counties.

**March 1976** 37 Tribunite 'lefts' abstain in a vote endorsing Healey's planned £3,000 million package of cuts, producing a temporary defeat. But the same 37 then troop loyally into the lobbies to support a vote of confidence in the government's "economic policies"

—and the cuts proceed.

Wilson resigns—and not one of the 37 abstainers is willing to run for the leadership, leaving Wilson's henchmen Foot and Benn to pose as "left wing" challengers.

Political status stripped from Irish prisoners of war by "tough guy" torture chief Roy Mason.

**July 1976** New budget on eve of Phase 2 makes £1,000 million more cuts.

**August 1976** Phase 2—4½%.

**September 1976** TUC threatens to expel Seamen's Union and Jones threatens organised TGWU strike-breaking if NUS proceeds with threatened strike against Phase 2. NUS leadership, despite mass working class support, climbs down.

**October 1976** Labour Party conference votes to endorse public spending cuts and wage controls.

**November 1976** Courtaulds plan to axe seven factories, cutting 4,000 jobs.

By-election defeats in Labour strongholds Walsall and Workington.

**November 17, 1976** Massive 80,000-strong demonstration against Healey's public spending cuts—restricted to one-off single issue protest by union bureaucrats. In not one instance have union officials taken the initiative in calling for strikes or occupations to stop the cuts. Result: thousands of jobs and important services lost.

**December 1976** Strikes 'break out' against 4½% pay limit in Midlands engineering plants Rubery Owen and Salisbury Transmissions—first signs of a big wave of resistance on pay.

**January 1977** Court rules that UPW has no right to black mail to South Africa. Start of new legal offensive against unions, at first spear-headed by NAFF and tacitly endorsed by government.



January 22, 1979: biggest stoppage on wages since 1926

# ALOGUE OF BETRAYAL



Police clear route for scab vans on Nottingham Evening Post picket line. Now the courts have acted to ban solidarity blacking.

PHOTO: Andrew Wiard, Report

**February 1977** Former CIA agent Phillip Agee and journalist Mark Hosenball deported without trial or charge by Home Secretary Rees on prompting of CIA. Aubrey, Berry and Campbell arrested and charged under the Official Secrets Act.

**June 1977** Mason announces intensified repression in occupied Ireland—SAS murder squads enlarged.

**July 1977** TGWU conference, reflecting mood in working class, throws out Jones' plan for Phase 3—an "orderly return" to free collective bargaining.

**August 1977** Queen visits the occupied six counties, congratulating torture chiefs and military rulers.

**September 1977** Total ban on marches in Thameside prevents anti-fascist mobilisation—to be followed by similar moves elsewhere.

Owen's reactionary Anglo-American plan for preserving capitalist stability in Rhodesia announced.

**October 1977** Hounslow Hospital work-in ransacked by management vandals. Health union leaders do nothing.

**October 1977** Labour Party conference another non event. No challenge whatever to the Lib-Lab coalition. The *Daily Telegraph* pointed out that: "the left does not want to chance its arm by endangering the new-found unity in the party in the run-up to the election."

**November 1977** Merlyn Rees's SPG thugs go on rampage against Grunwick mass picket—250 victims need medical treatment: 113 arrested.

**November 1977** Firemen's strike: Callaghan calls in army scabs for eight weeks. TUC—'left' and right alike—holds back struggles to allow firemen to fight alone. Then openly accepts 10% limit.

**January 1978** Amid revelations of big business plots to finance a coalition between the Liberals and Labour, the Liberal Party votes to renew the coalition deal, confident that it excludes socialist policies.

**February 1978** Thatcher launches her offensive on immigration aimed at whipping up racist votes from middle class and backward workers: Callaghan offers her joint talks on the "problem".

Labour NEC reveals its "left-wing" plan for unemployment—to cut it to 750,000 by 1981!

**March 1978** Labour's General Secretary Ron Hayward boasts that Labour is the party of 'law and order'.

All demonstrations are banned in London for two months to restrict anti-fascists.

**March 1978** Labour 'lefts' join with Tories in racist proposals from the Commons Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration.

**May 1978** 2,000 police break up May Day demonstration called by Leeds Trades Council.

*The Leveller Peace News* and *The Journalist* fined for naming 'Colonel B'.

**May 31 1978** Liberals decide to break coalition deal after the end of Phase 3.

**July 1978** Police pay to go up by 40% as a reward for strike breaking activities—but Phase 4 revealed as 5%.

**August 1978** Metropolitan police chief McNee calls for swinging new police powers—favourably greeted by Home Secretary Rees.

**August 1978** Government tax increases on North Sea oil monopolies—supported by Tories!

**August 1978** Chrysler crisis No. 2: having soaked up £162 million of government cash, the British operation is flogged off to Peugeot—endangering more jobs and remaining securely in private hands.

**September 1978** Bingham Report, though a whitewash

makes it clear that Wilson and subsequent government ministers knew of manoeuvres by British firms which ensured sanctions-busting oil supplies to racist Smith regime in Rhodesia. No action by Labour 'lefts'.

**September 1978** Callaghan pulls back from expected October election.

**September 1978** Owen steps up public support for Shah of Iran after thousands of demonstrators shot down by troops.

**September 1978** Ford strike leads massive wave of offensive struggles against Phase 4 pay limits: to be followed by bakers, journalists, lorry drivers, public sector and civil servants.

**October 1978** Labour Party Conference throws out 5% pay limit—but no opponent fights for removal of Callaghan-Healey leadership. Reselection of MPs blocked by Scanlon flouting AUEW mandate.

Tribunite 'left' Heffer sums up for NEC motion, advocating greater support for 'law and order'.

**November 1978** Queen's speech debate sees Callaghan attacking trade unionism. Lib-Lab coalition now replaced by squalid deal with Ulster Unionists—promising additional MPs to Westminster from the "province", and Scottish and Welsh Nationalists, with plan for devolution referendum.

**November 1978** Trade Secretary Edmund Dell resigns—to return to his merchant banking job!

**November 1978** Thorpe murder hearing partially lifts the lid on the nature of the Liberal leadership—Callaghan's chosen coalition partners—and their links with the Labour leaders.

**December 1978** Callaghan defeated in Parliament in bid to enforce sanctions on firms which pay in excess of

5% limit.

In new precedent, court rules "secondary blacking" of Press Association by NUJ to be illegal.

**January 1979** Strength of lorry drivers' strike action whips Tory press into a frenzy of anti-union propaganda, Callaghan joins in—declaring his willingness to cross picket lines. He is followed in this 'stand' by most of his cabinet cronies.

Court rules against "secondary picketing" of United Biscuits by transport drivers. Another firm seeks damages from "secondary" pickets.

**January 19th** Picket killed by scab lorry driver in Scotland.

**January 22nd** 80,000 public sector workers join a huge demonstration through London to back their £60/35hour week claim. Though "selective action" they are confined to by their leaders breaks through the 5% limit, it leaves them, with a 9% settlement, worse off than a year ago.

**February 1979** Barbaric "virginity tests" revealed to be carried out by immigration officials at Heathrow on Asian women.

**February 1979** Court rules to deport Astrid Proll—alleged terrorist—to West Germany where she faces brutal imprisonment and likely death at hands of prison authorities that have already murdered members of Baader-Meinhof gang.

**February 1979** Mason publishes four-page broadsheet to "answer" IRA campaign on conditions inflicted on republican prisoners of war in Long Kesh concentration camp.

Two SAS thugs to be charged with murder of 16 year old John Boyle last year.

**February 1979** The *Concor-1at* appears. This is a TUC-Government agreement to implement Tory policies against union rights and to

impose permanent wage controls: it is signed by TUC leaders with no mandate whatever from their members.

**February 23 1979** Civil Servants stage Day of Action. Callaghan, Owen and Foot are among the ministers who ostentatiously cross picket lines.

**February 1979** 'Shankill butchers' jailed: one turns out to be a member of Ulster Defence Regiment.

**March 1979** Devolution referendum brings massive defeat in Wales and bare majority in Scotland—heralds new crisis in Labour's deal with nationalists.

**March 1979** Furore grows over RUC's systematic torture of republican "suspects" in Castlereagh interrogation centre. Publication of Bennett Report followed by Mason's claim that it "clears" the RUC!

**March 1979** Devoid of any pretence of socialist policies or reforms, Callaghan launches electioneering attack on costs of Common Market agricultural policy.

**March 28 1979** Collapse of squalid deals with nationalists and Ulster Unionists brings government to brink of defeat in Parliamentary vote of confidence: tipped over the brink by SDLP hack Gerry Fitt and Independent MP Frank McGuire who abstain over Callaghan's refusal to sack butcher Mason.

**March 31 1979** International Day of Action on abortion rights. Healey's cuts have limited right to abortion on the NHS. Tories would cut back further still.

**April 1979** Building on precedents of rulings against UPW, NUJ and TGWU, court fines NGA for blacking advertisers who continue to use scab Nottingham *Evening Post* as part of struggle for union recognition.



Foot

**February 1977** Wave of unofficial strikes against Phase 2 reaches BL plants including Longbridge and flows into BL toolroom strike. Threat to sack all 3,000 strikers, endorsed by Scanlon, leads to spontaneous moves towards national strike by AUEW skilled men. Scanlon howled down by toolmakers.

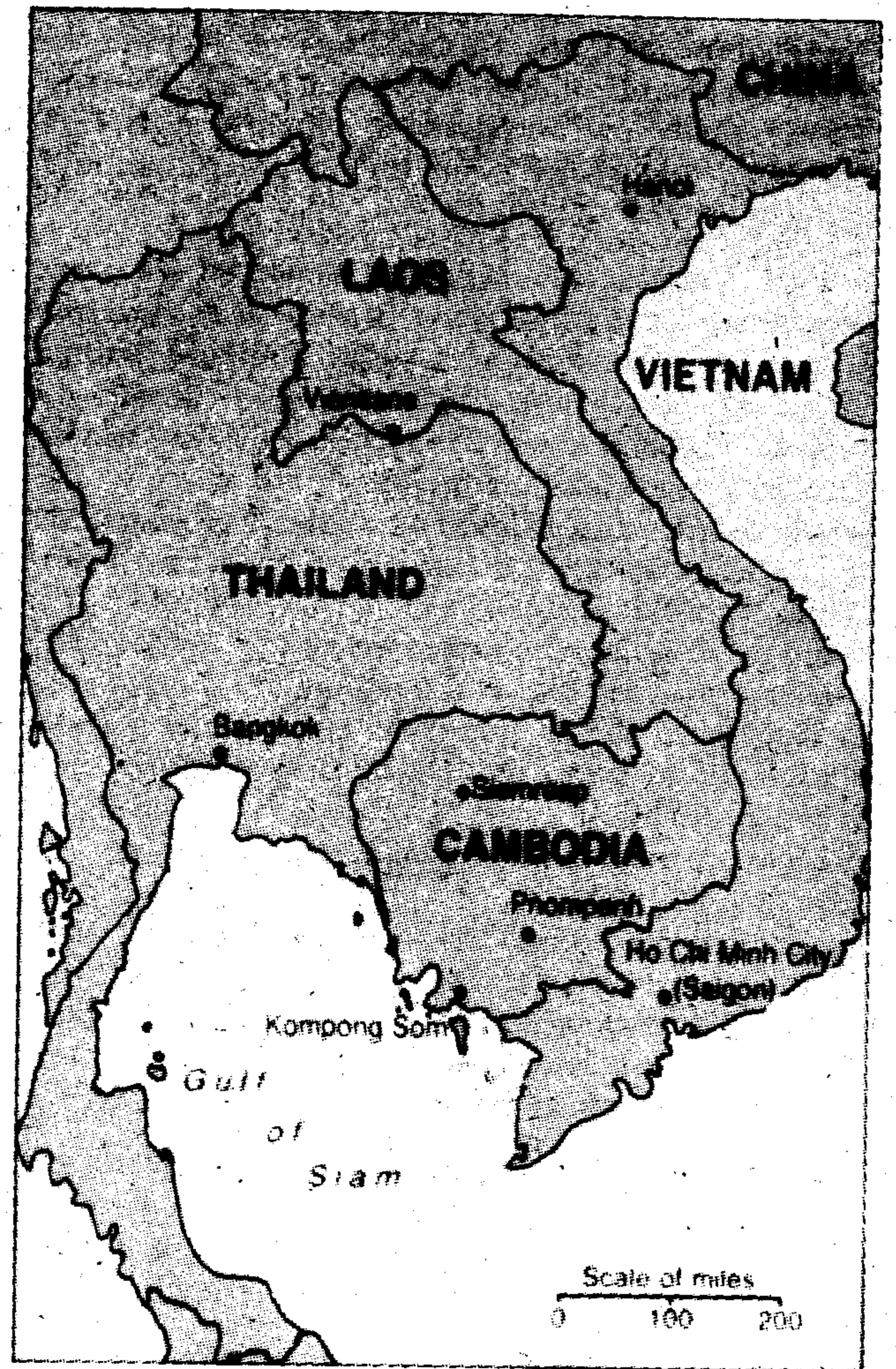
**March 1977** Callaghan forms coalition alliance with Liberals to get through Parliamentary vote of confidence and proceed with Phase 2 and Phase 3 of wage control.

**April 1977** Major unofficial strikes against Phase 2 at Heathrow Airport and Port Talbot steelworks. Healey unveils Phase 3—a 10% increase in earnings, meaning only 5% on the basic rate.

**Summer 1977** Escalating police violence against Grunwick mass pickets.

# 'United' Secretariat divided over Indochina wars

By John Parker



**'The Militant has something different to say about what's happening in Indochina'.**

With this modest claim, the US Socialist Workers Party grotesquely understates its remarkable position on the wars in south-east Asia.

An analysis does not become 'true' simply by differing from the assessment produced by the bourgeois media. That is an entirely secondary question.

A Marxist analysis of any political development is rooted in a scientific understanding of the dynamics of world history and the class struggle.

But the SWP's lengthy arguments on the recent conflicts between Kampuchea, Vietnam, and China are not grounded in this method.

The "theoreticians" of the SWP cavort before their audience like a band of trapeze artists.

They seem constantly on the verge of falling to the ground with a sickening thud. But in swinging from one dizzy perch of idealism to the next they clutch desperately at a bar of orthodoxy that prolongs their antics and contortions.

It's magnificent, but it's not Marxism.

## State capitalist

The Pabloite leaders of the SWP who claim that Cuba, under the bureaucratic dictatorship of Fidel Castro, is a 'revolutionary' workers state, tell us that Kampuchea, under the bureaucratic dictatorship of Pol Pot, became a *state-capitalist* regime, a hybrid of dubious origin.

The merit of this quaint position, based, in essence, on a combination of petty bourgeois moral revulsion at the atrocities carried out by the Kampuchean Stalinists, is that it enables the SWP leaders to dodge the thorny problem of analysing a war between deformed workers' states.

But if the SWP has "something different to say", then the same is true of all the various sections of the so-called 'United' Secretariat of the Fourth International.

## Each one different

According to extracts from their press published in *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor* (February 12) every one of them has something different to say—each presenting a completely different analysis of this major war!

Thus Britain's Tariq Ali writes in *Socialist Challenge*:

"While the Vietnamese were clearly involved in removing the [Pol Pot] regime, there is no doubt that the Cambodian United Front for National Salvation does have local support..."

But his Swedish comrades weren't so sure:

"What is not clear is whether the new regime has broad support..."

As for whether or not Kampuchea was a workers state answers ranged from 'yes, through 'maybe'—but nowhere showing the SWP's categorisation.

The German International Marxist Group describes the war as one between "non-capitalist states"; the Spanish Revolutionary Communist League (LCR) goes further and talks of:

"the first time since the invasion of Czechoslovakia in



Pol Pot

**1968 that two workers' states have confronted each other militarily in a war of occupation."**

Strangely, in view of this comparison, the LCR goes on to defend the invasion!

The Mexican Revolutionary Workers Party is far more guarded, however, and talks of Kampuchea as "a country where capitalism was being swept away..."

No scruples whatever are to be found in the Japanese section, however, which enthusiastically hails the invasion and the establishment by Hanoi of a puppet regime in Kampuchea as "a new advance of the Indochinese Revolution".

Demonstrating unmistakably its illusions in the supposedly "progressive" character of the Hanoi Stalinist regime, the Revolutionary Communist League claims that:

"the emergence of a fraternal [!] unified force in the three countries of Indochina will advance liberation struggles

in East Asia!"

The RCL suggests that this "unified force" (of Stalinists) should now:

"jointly grapple with the challenge of setting up a Socialist Federation of Indochina, which includes the perspective of winning a revolutionary victory in Thailand."

A score sheet of the various USFI sections and sympathisers quoted in *Intercontinental Press* shows the following: open supporters of the invasion—Japanese, British, Danish, Spanish, and Mexican sections; those conversely calling for Vietnamese troops out of Kampuchea—German, Belgian, (implicitly) Australian, Swiss and French sections; while those taking a "neutral", non-committal position included Sweden and Austria.

## None agree

This sorry line-up certainly confirms the SWP's boast of "having something different to

say".

Indeed none of the USFI groupings argue the same line as the SWP.

The confusion and disarray of Pabloite forces is once again shown to be at its greatest when major events actually demand a prompt response and a clear analysis of Stalinism.

For the SWP, however, the analysis of Kampuchea as a state capitalist regime has distinct advantages.

It enables them, as is the habit of Pabloites, to "take sides"—unambiguously backing the Vietnamese Stalinists without dropping the veneer of "orthodox Trotskyist" criticism of the Hanoi regime.

## No proof

*Militant* was now able to claim without a shred of proof that the Vietnamese Stalinist bureaucracy:

"militarily aided indigenous oppositionists in Kampuchea against a capitalist, counter-revolutionary government that threatened the Vietnamese revolution".

And, retrospectively, a glowing light was shed on the recent process of bureaucratically organised expropriation which marked the assimilation of southern Vietnam into the deformed workers state already existing in the north, while a thick shroud was draped over the nationalisations in Kampuchea.

At each stage, the SWP was guided—subconsciously or cynically—by the factional need to remain true to its past errors.

The historical process in south-east Asia, and its continuity today have been reshaped to conform with the distortions already accepted by the SWP in its 'analysis' of the origins of the deformed workers states in Eastern Europe, Asia and—above all—Cuba.

## Lurid scenario

Once the Chinese bureaucracy had entered the centre of the stage with the invasion of Vietnam, then a further line of argument had to be strengthened.

The SWP accordingly produced a lurid and unsubtle scenario in which US imperialism featured as the malevolent puppet-master, manipulating all the strings in order—by an undisclosed route—to destroy the gains of the Vietnamese revolution.

For all the truth behind this picture, the SWP has carried its denunciation of US foreign policy almost to the pitch of hysterical paranoia.

Beneath their frenetic anti-imperialism, there lies the yawning chasm of the SWP's abysmal failure to understand Stalinism, particularly in its post-war development.

Of course it is only imperialism which stands to gain in the long-run from conflicts between the workers' states.

## Contradictions

But that is not to say that every such conflict springs from a plot orchestrated by the Pentagon.

The rivalries between the different national sections of the Stalinist bureaucracy spring inevitably from the essential contradictory character of Stalinism as a force resting on the distorted gains of the

October Revolution and its later bureaucratic assimilations, while it negotiates for its survival with the forces of imperialism.

It is the objective pressures at work in this situation which have brought, for instance, the Romanian bureaucracy into conflict with its Kremlin sponsors as it struggled to preserve its own parasitic existence in the face of growing working class militancy.

Similar pressures have borne the mass European CPs along the road of 'Eurocommunism' towards increasingly open collaboration with their 'own' bourgeoisie in hostility to dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states.

## Unresolved

To present such developments as being in any way 'progressive' is a complete betrayal of the struggles of Trotskyism against the bureaucratic degeneration and counter-revolution within the first workers state.

But the positions held by the USFI on 'Eurocommunism' have their origin in the partial and unresolved conflicts over Stalinism which have marked the post-war crisis of the Fourth International.

The positions adopted on the invasions in south-east Asia are also the outcome of the same confusion.

There was no progressive content of the invasion launched by the Vietnamese bureaucracy. The Hanoi Stalinists were not acting to defend the gains of the Vietnamese revolution against the threat of a restoration of imperialism in Kampuchea. There was no such immediate threat.

On the contrary, the Viet-

namese bureaucracy acted to defend its *own control* of those gains, by suppressing the troublesome independence of its neighbouring parasitic colleagues.

Above all, the Vietnamese Stalinists moved to pre-empt the dangerous possibility of the Kampuchean workers and peasants rising up against the barbaric repression unleashed by their bureaucratic masters.

Above all Hanoi feared that the Pol Pot regime's vicious methods might produce a revolutionary response which could inspire the workers and peasants of Vietnam to challenge their native Stalinists.

In true counter-revolutionary fashion, the parasites of Hanoi answered this threat with the military might of the Vietnamese army and a group of pliable dissidents from the Kampuchean bureaucracy to usurp the political opposition to Pol Pot.

This action has served to consolidate their political dictatorship within Vietnam.

At the same time, whatever temporary relief it may seem to have brought from the sufferings inflicted by Pol Pot, the invasion placed a new obstacle before the workers and peasants of Kampuchea in their task of political revolution.

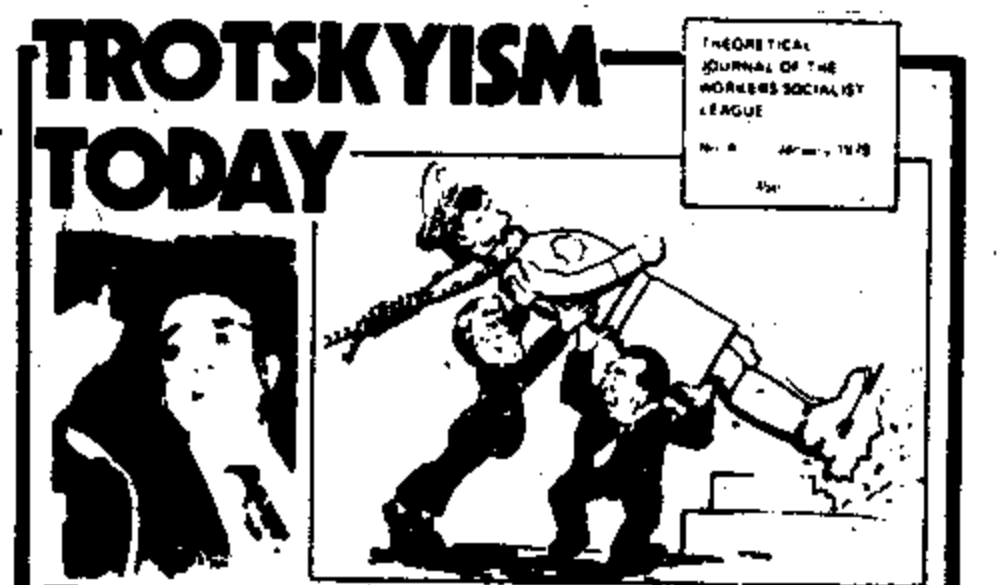
For that task a Trotskyist leadership with a clear analysis of the nature and role of post-war Stalinism is essential. Such a leadership can only be built in the struggle to reconstruct the Fourth International on the basis of the method and principles of the Transitional Programme.

## Concluded

# Trotskyism

# Today

Articles include:  
\*Mandel's dance with Stalinism.  
\*The US SWP 40 years on.  
\*The Significance of the Transitional Programme.



INSIDE: • Mandel's dance with Stalinism  
• The significance of the Transitional Programme  
• The US SWP 40 years on.



Available, price 45p plus 15p postage from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.



Khmer Rouge refugees in Thailand after Vietnamese invasion



# NATSOPA chiefs lived it up on members' subs

## Accountant's report tells of Swiss bank accounts, property deals and wine bills



PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFT.

Owen O'Brien

The Governing Council of the print union, NATSOPA, is taking legal advice on whether to sue the former General Secretary, Lord Briginshaw for the return of money owed to the union from property deals conducted while he was in office.

This step follows two investigations by auditors into the financial affairs of the union which show that property deals lost money for the union while making apparent handsome profits for former officers.

Other cash was placed in two Swiss bank accounts and the union also appears to have been dealing in platinum ingots, Krugersands and gold sovereigns.

Some of these deals were made without the knowledge of the executive council.

### Expensive wines

Investigations by union members also showed union cash spent on foreign travel, expensive wines and dining out at the Savoy.

So far attempts to raise the matter openly in the union have been blocked by the present General Secretary Owen O'Brien.

Last year O'Brien labelled those who were demanding to know the truth about the financial state of the union as 'wreckers' whose objective was to destroy NATSOPA.

His attitude echoed that of Lord Briginshaw himself who, five years earlier, warded off inquiries by characterising them as "vindictive and anti-socialist attacks" launched by "Trotskyists".

Two articles have now appeared—one in the *Observer*, the other by Christopher Hird and Patrick Wintour in the *New Statesman*—based on one of the accountants' reports which has been circulated to the top echelons of the union.

Meanwhile NATSOPA chapel officers at the *Observer*, who successfully opened some of the union books to their scrutiny, have been barred from further investigations, threatened with disciplinary action by the union, and banned from talking to the press without executive authority.

O'Brien walked out of a London machine branch meeting after it refused to accept his ruling that the matter could not be discussed.

According to the *New Statesman* and *Observer* the auditors' report from Baker Sutton includes the following deals.

### Property

In 1972 Briginshaw was authorised to sell London union properties in Blackfriars Road and Meymott Street.

During 1972 and 1973 three properties were sold to a Ms Christine Dolores Dawes for a total of

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report



NATSOPA members march against Times closure threat

£255,000 in two separate deals.

But on each occasion, on the same day that she signed the contract to buy, Ms Dawes signed separate contracts to sell the properties to other companies for more.

The total she received was £338,000 which is £83,000 more than she had paid to the union.

### Higher prices

This was not simple misjudgement on the part of the union leaders. In both cases the eventual buyers had offered to buy direct from the union at the same higher prices that Ms Dawes received.

Nor did Ms Dawes keep the money for herself.

She paid £78,775 into a trust, which in turn paid it to Joan Wing, a national officer of NATSOPA—who just happened to be the common law wife of Lord Briginshaw.

She, (Wing), made out personal cheques to Briginshaw, Arthur Davies, assistant secretary and Alf Skinner, the union's financial secretary.

### £80,000 lost

To sum up this slightly bewildering deal, the union lost more than £80,000 through not selling directly to the eventual buyers—and the vast majority of that money was channelled back into the private bank accounts of union officers!

Briginshaw told the accountants that this was a move to create a 'shadow' union with separate funds in case NATSOPA's assets were seized under the Industrial Relations Act.

If this interesting expla-

nation is true it is a pity that neither the then President, Lloyd nor the special committee set up to investigate the possibility of forming a shadow union was informed. Swiss banks.

Over a number of years almost £16,000 was paid into two Swiss bank accounts. When it was brought back to Britain (in suitcases in cash!) it should have shown a profit of £4,844 due to the higher value of the Swiss franc.

Only £1,102 can be traced as having gone back to NATSOPA as an 'anonymous donation'.

The rest, according to Briginshaw, was used to pay the Swiss agent and "political and trade union purposes".

He said they had been considering opening a convalescent home in Switzerland!

Nothing of this was authorised by the executive council and none of the other cash has been traced.

### Union officials

Officials' salaries were kept secret from the members. The *Observer* machine room chapel officers discovered that O'Brien earned just under £12,000 a year. His expenses bill for only two months was £1,300.

Between them, union officials claimed £3,000 expenses in January 1978.

This included a £117 wine bill and trips to Malta, including one for O'Brien and his wife.

Giving what appears to be the standard NATSOPA explanation for foreign travel, O'Brien said the union was thinking of open-

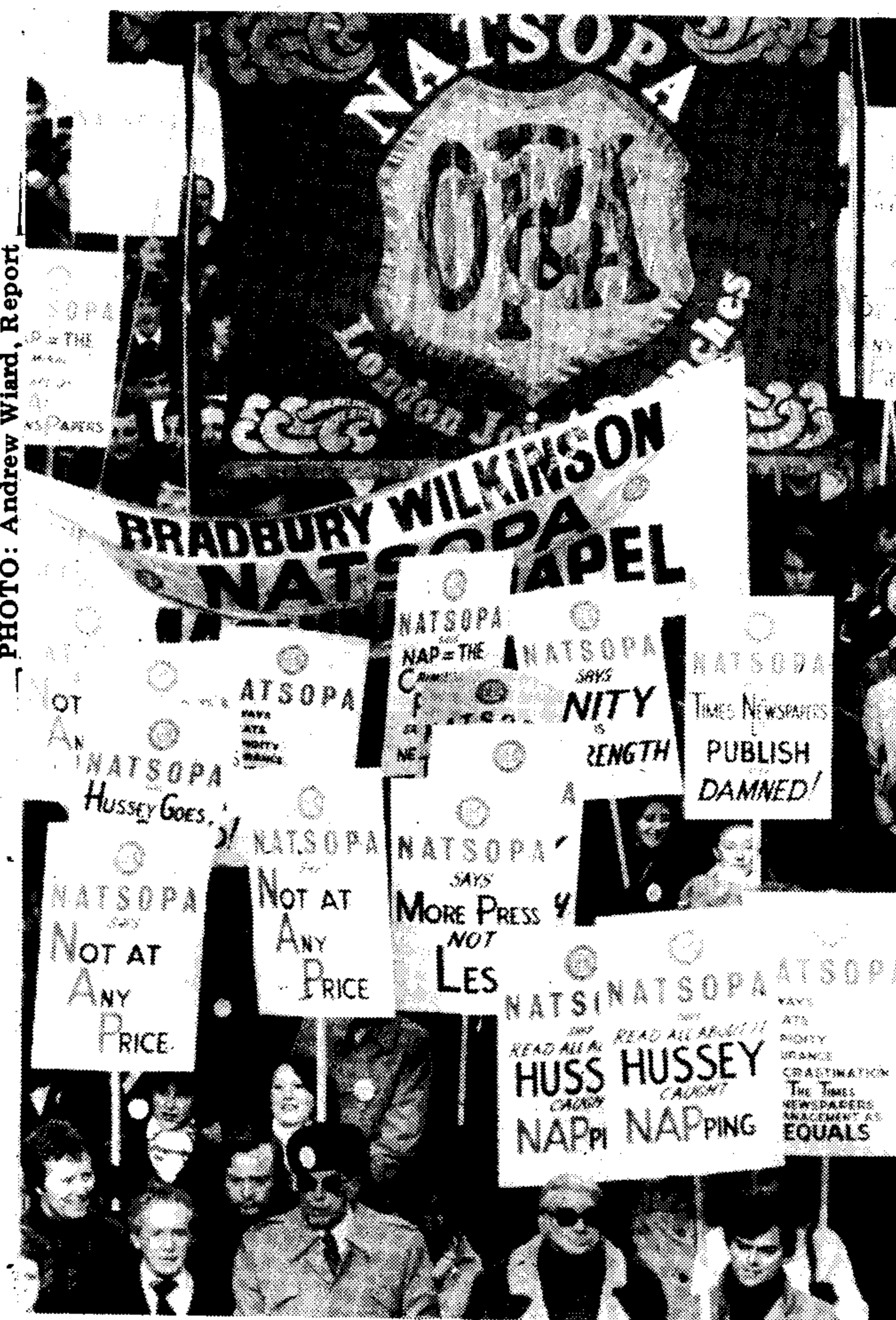
ing four convalescent homes in Malta.

Skinner, who had by this time (1978) retired, still appeared to be on the payroll. O'Brien receives a union car and a car allowance.

### £12 a bottle

Wine and restaurant bills were paid (six bottles at £12 a bottle). Bills were claimed from the Savoy, De Quincey's and Simpsons in the Strand (more convalescent homes?)

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report



### Pension Fund.

In 1977 the Pension Fund showed a deficit of £781,000. One quarter of its assets were used to supply officials with cut-price mortgages.

Its speciality seemed to be lending money to officials to buy houses which they then sold back to the pension fund.

On more than one occasion the property was then left empty by the fund and then sold at a loss.

The result: well satisfied officials.

The pensions for officials are made up of 5% from their salary topped up by 19% from the fund. Briginshaw gets a pension of £400 a month, inflation proofed.

### Examined books

Skinner received a £22,000 golden handshake when he retired.

None of this would have been revealed but for the determination of the NATSOPA machine chapel officers at the *Observer*.

According to the *New Statesman* account, they made several visits to the union HQ demanding their rights under rule to examine the books, until finally banned by O'Brien.

No doubt it was their frustration and anger at this move that led them to take the union to court last year in a case which gave them the right to call in accountants.

But the wrongness of that step should now be clear to them. In place of a broad campaign throughout the union to expose the corruption in NATSOPA there will be a court action conducted by the union leadership against individuals.

The independent mobilisation of the membership is essential in this struggle to clean up the unions and a turn to the courts is a breach of principle which could have disastrous results.

Corruption and class collaboration go hand in hand.

Collaborators accept the politics of the capitalist; corrupt dealers accept their methods of making money.

A campaign is therefore urgent inside NATSOPA linking the financial wheeling and dealing to the suppression of democracy in the union and the policies of job cutting accepted by the leaders (not least at the *Observer* itself where one fifth of the members lost their jobs).

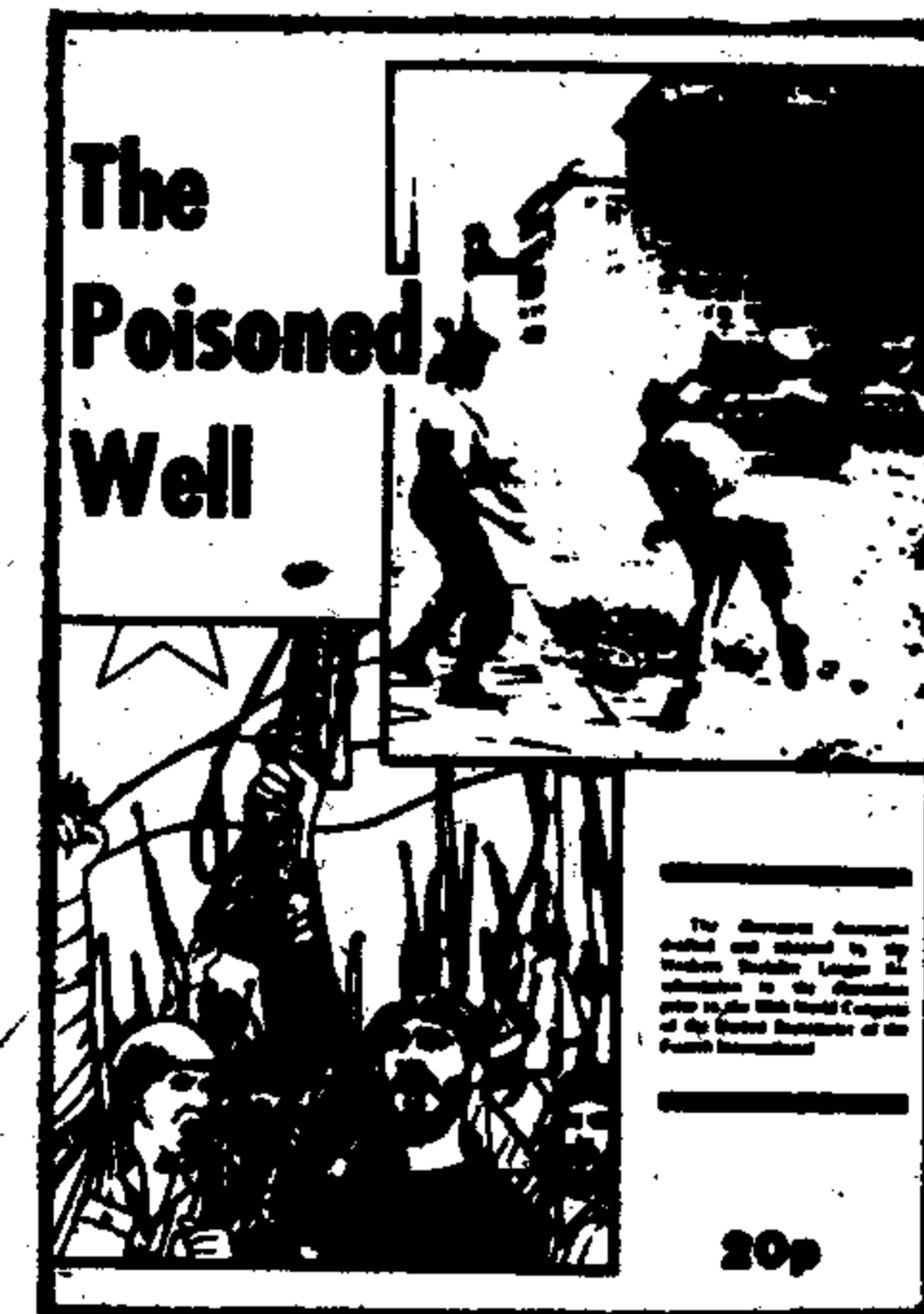
This broad political campaign to drive out the leadership cannot allow any place for Tory courts.

At present the press is relatively silent and witch-hunts have not begun (no doubt because the employers have always found Briginshaw and O'Brien reasonable to deal with).

But that will change. At some point the press will turn on the union as a whole and the courts will be itching to intervene in a material way to attack the union.

An independent campaign within the union itself to bring out the truth must be launched.

Accountancy must become the servant of the membership not its weapon. The weapon is the membership itself.



NOW OUT! The WSL discussion document adopted for submission to the USFI Xth World Congress. Price 20p plus 10p p&p from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

# INDUSTRIAL NEWS

## Fight sabotage of Civil Service claim

Last Monday's strike of over 450,000 civil servants was a historic day of action for the British workers' movement—bringing forward into the pay struggle thousands of white collar workers who had never before taken strike action.

Alongside the CPSA and SCPS, which had formed the backbone of the action so far, the Inland Revenue Staff Federation (IRSF), the Civil Service Union and the Institute of Professional Civil Servants (IPCS) came out.

Even the elite First Division Association—only representing civil servants on more than £10,000 per year—joined in the strike.

The action took place despite sabotage attempts by IPCS General Secretary Bill McColl who organised the eleventh hour secret meeting between Prices Secretary Hattersley and five of the nine union General Secretaries.

At this meeting Hattersley improved the government pay offer from the original 7% now with more in April 1980 to 9% now, and the remainder "phased in" in increases in August 1979 and April 1980.

### Split ranks

The five General Secretaries swallowed this offer and split ranks with the larger CPSA and SCPS on the very eve of the 2 April strike—but found it impossible to convince their members to accept Hattersley's sell-out proposals.

Threats from the CPSA and SCPS to pull out of the Whitley Council pay structure, combined with rejection of the offer by the executive committees of the five unions led by April 6 to a joint agreement between all the unions to press for an improved offer.

An indication of the pressures on these bureaucrats was provided by the scale of the response to the strike call. In Leeds over 4,000 civil servants walked out, mounting large picket lines on Inland Revenue offices, DHSS offices, the Health and Safety Executive, Ordnance Survey, and the British Library at Boston Spa, where a 30-strong picket was assembled.

### Demonstration

A demonstration of 750 civil servants marched through Leeds, to a meeting addressed by CPSA, SCPS, and IRSF speakers and by Garth Frankland of the British Library IPCS.

CPSA official Diane Warwick attacked the government's "clumsiness" over the pay deal, and the manoeuvres of Bill McColl.

But she offered no lead on how to defend civil servants against suspensions arising from solidarity action and attacked unofficial strikes.

Garth Frankland read out a telegram sent by his section committee that morning to the IPCS National Executive, condemning the secret deal and calling for an all-out fight on the full pay claim.

He explained that the problem of leadership was central to winning the claim.

The NEC had tried to leave union members in the dark on the claim—offering no figures or information: but the last union meeting had voted 200 to 8 for the strike, and over 300 had stopped work—97% of the membership at the Library.

Frankland urged other IPCS branches present to consider putting down emergency motions to the union's conference demanding the removal of McColl.

### Concordat

But he also pointed out that McColl's betrayal is paralleled by CPSA leader Ken Thomas, who had actually signed the Concordat.

"The General Election is the best time for fighting our dispute", said Frankland. "Every MP must be put on the spot over our claim". His speech won loud applause.

Civil servants, now in the front line of resistance on pay, must step up their fight in the



CPSA leader Thomas

weeks ahead: whether Callaghan or Thatcher is elected, only the most determined action will win their justified 25% pay claim.

April 2 showed that civil servants have the "muscle" to win: but the events prior to the strike shows that they have a leadership reluctant to fight.

Key political lessons must therefore be learned in the weeks of struggle to come.

## Teachers face pay crunch

The Easter Conference of the National Union of Teachers begins at the weekend.

Pay will be the number one issue on the agenda.

The official union policy remains a demand for an overall 35% increase in salaries (though, as usual, weighted to benefit the well-heeled headmaster and senior teacher scales against the generally younger classroom teachers).

The 35% represents the sum necessary merely to restore, not increase, the buying power of teachers' salaries to the point achieved by the Houghton award of 1975.

It is already clear that Fred Jarvis and the NUT tops have no intention whatever of seriously fighting for an increase which remotely approaches 35%.

The Burnham Committee, which negotiates teachers' salaries has improved its pitiful 7.7% offer to around 9%.

While declaring this to be 'unacceptable', and producing volumes of glossy propaganda 'proving' the justice of the teachers' case, not a single move has been made towards action.

Even the wretched 'contingency' plans of the National Executive—the most radical of which are withdrawal from lunch-time activities and selective half-day strikes—have not been implemented.

Instead, the leaders—who have paved the way for defeat by allowing their members to cross picket lines in the public sector low pay strikes—are look-

ing for some kind of 'comparability study' or some kind of 'staged increase', with a few promises which they can present as some kind of 'concession' to teachers.

Teachers are a section of professional workers who as yet have little experience of mass struggle.

At the NUT Conference—whether or not an 'acceptable formula' on pay has been reached at the eleventh hour, Jarvis and Co. want to make sure things stay that way.

The various 'left' oppositions in the union, such as the IMG-backed 'Socialist Teachers Alliance' and the SWP's 'Rank and File' offer no serious alternative to this betrayal, and have restricted their campaigns to more 'radical' versions of the bureaucrats' essential strategy.

### One day

In a recent election address an STA candidate for a national office issued a manifesto calling for "one day national strikes, if necessary" (!)

Only the Workers Socialist League teachers have campaigned for a policy which represents a clear break with harmless protests: full national strike action and inflation proofed wages based on the union's own figures.

Where this policy has been fought for it has received a response, but it comes sixth out of nine salaries resolutions in the pre-Conference prioritisation.

(A Socialist Press 'Conference Special' will be distributed and a Conference report will appear in next week's issue).

## CP winds up student Broad Left

Shirley Williams' announcement of a 14% increase in the student grant is timely on two counts.

Firstly, she no doubt hopes that the announcement of the increase, (considerably more than last year) will win a few student votes; but secondly it comes just before the NUS conference, at which the Broad Left will be called upon to defend their record over the past year and to stand for re-election.

The increase, which is always presented to the members of the NUS as a fait accompli over which they have no control, compares with a 26% claim.

The other major demands of the NUS grants campaign (for full grants for all students over the age of 16 and for an end to the means test) have been ignored.

Nevertheless at the April conference the grants issue will be overshadowed by two main questions: one formally on the agenda and the other not.

The first is the debate on the Constitutional Review.

The Broad Left are trying to introduce changes which will strengthen the Executive's hold over NUS at the expense of members, and to weaken the democratic structure of local student unions.

For instance, the proposals, if adopted, will restrict the freedom of constituent organisations to choose what issues are discussed at each of the two national conferences each year.

### More difficult

It will be more difficult to call an emergency conference.

At a local level, student unions will be encouraged to invest decision making powers in "Student Representative Councils" (delegate bodies) and so weaken the sovereignty of general meetings.

WSL students will be campaigning at the NUS Conference for a rejection of the whole Constitutional Review Body report.

NUS cannot be turned into a militant and democratic union by any amount of constitutional tinkering—least of all when this is directed by the Broad Left.

The second issue which is likely to create a great deal of interest at the conference is the announcement of the demise of the Broad Left and its replacement by a new "democratic alliance".

This move, which has already been announced in the *Morning Star*, is the culmination of the Stalinists' "democratic strategy" in NUS.

This "strategy" consists of building an alliance with the Tories in order to hold back militant struggles to outweigh the left.

In the past this has meant the wholesale adaptation of Tory policies (for instance the proposals on student union autonomy embodied in the Constitutional Review).

### Votes for Tories

It has also meant Broad Left members voting for Federation of Conservative Students candidates in Executive elections, thus guaranteeing them a place.

The steady rightward shift of the Broad Left as its "popular front" policies have developed has alienated many student militants and caused splits within its ranks.

The establishment of this new organisation, which drops any pretence of socialism, will undoubtedly exacerbate that crisis, creating the conditions for a fight to build a principled revolutionary leadership among students.

# WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN US

Whichever way you look at the struggles and problems now facing the working class throughout the world, one thing stands out above all: the necessity for a principled leadership capable of leading the struggle for state power and the establishment of a socialist society.

The massive revolutionary upheaval that has now toppled the seemingly impregnable might of the Shah of Iran and which is now already coming into conflict with the restrictions placed upon it by its Islamic "leaders" serves as a vivid reminder that socialist revolution is not only possible, but essential if the apparatus of capitalist repression and exploitation is to be destroyed once and for all.

But such a revolution requires a conscious Marxist leadership. And the fight to construct such a leadership is inseparable from the fight in the day-to-day struggles of the working class internationally for the principles, method and demands of the Trotskyist Transitional Programme. The Workers Socialist League has time and again proved to be the only movement in Britain that fights patiently and relentlessly on such a perspective.

We alone are the movement that does not shrink from even head-on battles with the existing leaders of the working class — whether these 'leaders' be open right wingers, 'left' talking Labourites or Stalinists of the Communist Party.

Of course this policy has made us no friends in the trade union and Labour bureaucracy, or amongst the opportunists and centrists of the British 'left'. But it has meant that the WSL has consistently offered the most powerful lead to workers in struggle.

The strength of our movement lies precisely in our rejection of any attempt to find "short cuts" around the necessary fight to construct a Marxist leadership in the working class.

In each struggle we set out to prove to workers both in theory and in practice the necessity of a new, revolutionary leadership and for a programme of *transitional demands* which, starting from today's problems and today's consciousness within the working class, lead



workers in struggle to grasp the need for socialist revolution.

This is why the WSL has featured at the forefront of pay struggles in British Leyland and the public sector, in the fight against redundancies and closures, in struggles against the cuts, unionisation fights, and the fight for democracy in the labour movement.

This method of approach — rejecting any descent to simple trade union militancy or concession to the labour bureaucracy — is of course essential not only in Britain but internationally.

In taking up international issues in the labour movement the WSL stresses not only the obligation of British workers to support the Irish liberation struggle and revolutionary struggles such as those in Iran and Southern Africa, but also the necessity for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International as the organising centre of the world party of socialist revolution.

The WSL is not the biggest movement on the left in Britain; but its approach to both theory and practice make it the only really serious revolutionary movement.

### WHY NOT JOIN US?

Fill in the form below for more details, or approach your local branch, who will gladly supply more information about our programme, policies, and perspectives.

## More details

Please send me more information about the WSL.

Name .....

Address .....

Send to Workers Socialist League, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

# Support Garners May 5 Action Day

As the Garners union recognition strike drags on through its fifteenth month the leaders of the TGWU Region 1 have moved more openly than ever to the selling out of the struggle.

This week the Strike Committee's demands for a May 5

**Dunlop  
-buck  
passed  
back**

In a shrewd move, the TGWU General Executive Council last week threw the ball of defending Dunlop's threatened Speke plant firmly back into the court of the local "Action Committee".

The GEC voted to give official backing to any action taken by the "Action Committee" to save the jobs.

But there should be no mistake about the motives behind this almost unprecedented blank cheque for official action.

The last thing the GEC wishes in the midst of an Election campaign is a full-scale occupation of the Speke plant or any serious industrial action to stop the closure, scheduled for April 19.

They feel confident that local convenors, and GEC chairman Stan Pemberton, who heads the "Action Committee" will continue along the futile road of token protest they have followed so far.

Indeed this Committee has shown itself willing to occupy main roads, London side streets, management offices, Radio Merseyside studios—occupy ANYTHING other than the doomed factory!

Needless to say such gimmicks have attracted uncritical praise from the Socialist Workers Party which last year extolled the very mass meeting that knifed any prospect of occupation at British Leyland's Speke plant.

The facts are clear: Dunlop will certainly close in one week unless the Action Committee uses the power now in its hands and organises a full-scale occupation in Speke, calling for solidarity strikes by TGWU members throughout the tyre industry in their support.

Any other form of "action" at this stage is no more than a hollow fraud..

Day of Action and a national delegate conference of the TGWU on the strike were explicitly rejected by the bureaucracy.

The pitiful and treacherous excuse of 'needing to work for the General Election' now stands as the small coin of every Labour faker who wishes to sabotage the fight for basic rights.

At the Stalinist-dominated Greater London Association of Trades Councils on Saturday, the chairman, Coles, excused a future sell-out by saying:

"If the T&G is looking for an excuse to call off the dispute the shouters and hecklers (at the Hyde Park meeting on 24 March) gave them a good excuse."

He followed up with classical witch-hunting:

"We are well aware of certain groups in the support committee who have a political axe to grind".

The Strike Committee, despite the decision of the Regional Committee decided last Monday to proceed with a further Day of Action on May 5



and a TGWU delegate conference on June 16.

The campaign for the Day of Action and the Conference and other initiatives which draw attention to the role of the TGWU's traitors should commence immediately.

The task of every TGWU Branch must now be to rally round the Garners strike at this critical moment.

TGWU Branches should

demand that the Regional Committee reverse its decision not to back the Day of Action and Delegate Conference.

\*Support the May 5 Day of Action.

\*Support the June 16 TGWU Delegate Conference.

Further information from the Garners Strike Committee, 12/13, Henrietta Street, London WC1.

# Nottingham adventure ended by scab violence

At lunchtime last Saturday some 30 NUJ and other union members occupied the offices of the Nottingham Post.

The delegation demanded to meet Managing Director Christopher Pole-Carew, to press for reinstatement of the 28 NUJ members sacked for joining the provincial journalists' national strike last December.

## Assaulted

Apparently first agreeing to a meeting, Pole-Carew rounded up 15-20 scabs and security men and led them in carrying out a violent eviction.

Although none of the delegation offered violence many were assaulted, several being

pushed to the floor before they were beaten up.

An ambulance subsequently took NUJ Regional Organiser M. Bower to hospital with a suspected broken nose.

## Ill prepared

Ill-prepared for organised violence and led without previous briefing into this adventure by Bower and NEC member Aidan White, the delegation avoided being drawn into an all-out brawl despite repeated assaults and withdrew shouting the slogan "Reinstate the 28".

The eight policemen present, who had announced they would be observing that no more than "reasonable force" was employed in the eviction, disappeared at the first signs of violence.

Militants angered at this violence organised against trade unionists must nevertheless recognise that this adventure was a diversion from the policies needed to reinstate the 28 and combat a vicious anti-union employer with a long record of smashing union organisation and forcing through new technology on his own terms.

## Sheriff

Pole-Carew is in addition in charge of the employer Newspaper Society's New Technology Committee and was recently appointed Sheriff of Nottingham.

Saturday was planned as a "mass picket" but the NUJ's organisation had been less than 100 were mobilised.

The NEC has only half-heartedly pursued a campaign of mass pickets, and, via print unions, blacking of the Nottingham Evening Post and of companies advertising in it.

At a meeting of the South Midlands Area Council only five days earlier it was not even clear to all delegates that the NEC was calling for a mass picket.

## Conference

Some branches and provincial newspaper chapels haven't even received the last two issues of the strike bulletin.

Now, two weeks before the NUJ's Annual Delegate Meeting, it is vital to prepare to raise these points at conference and to support calls for strike action throughout provincial newspaper chapels.

There is an emergency resolution from Coventry branch to this effect.

# TGWU Region 5 plots new expulsion

The TGWU Region 5 Committee has embarked on a new witch-hunt.

This time it is against two members of the 5/35 drivers' branch in Birmingham, Mick Reagan and John Groves.

During the lorry drivers' strike these two were involved in an occupation of the TGWU offices in Broad St. in protest against lack of leadership from their official, Alan Law.

Law arranged a phoney deal with Midlands road hauliers to keep the Midlands lorry drivers out of the dispute.

Under this deal the Midlands men would have automatically got the best settlement agreed anywhere in the country.

## Best organised

But since the 5/35 members are the largest and best organised in the country, this would have been a severe blow to the strength and unity of the strike.

It was correctly thrown out by the Midlands lorry drivers.

Although the occupation of the union office was a badly planned publicity stunt without the authority of the branch the move by the Regional Com-

mittee for the expulsion of Reagan and Groves is a flagrant diversion from the real issue, which is the undemocratic and divisive actions of Alan Law.

And there is a more sinister side to the moves as well.

## Revelations

"By chance", the two members moved against were not the most prominent in the occupation at all, but just happen to be those behind the revelations of Alan Law's election malpractices, and the cover-up deal in which the 5/35 branch was split into four as a price for silence.

At its last meeting the 5/35 branch voted to condemn the latest witch-hunt, in spite of determined efforts by local officials to prevent this.

But there is a danger that the campaign against the expulsions may be waged through press exposures which would only play into the hands of the regional leadership.

What is needed is a defence campaign within the union, which can focus on the political nature of non-elected Regional Secretary Brian Mathers and the Region 5 committee, and the



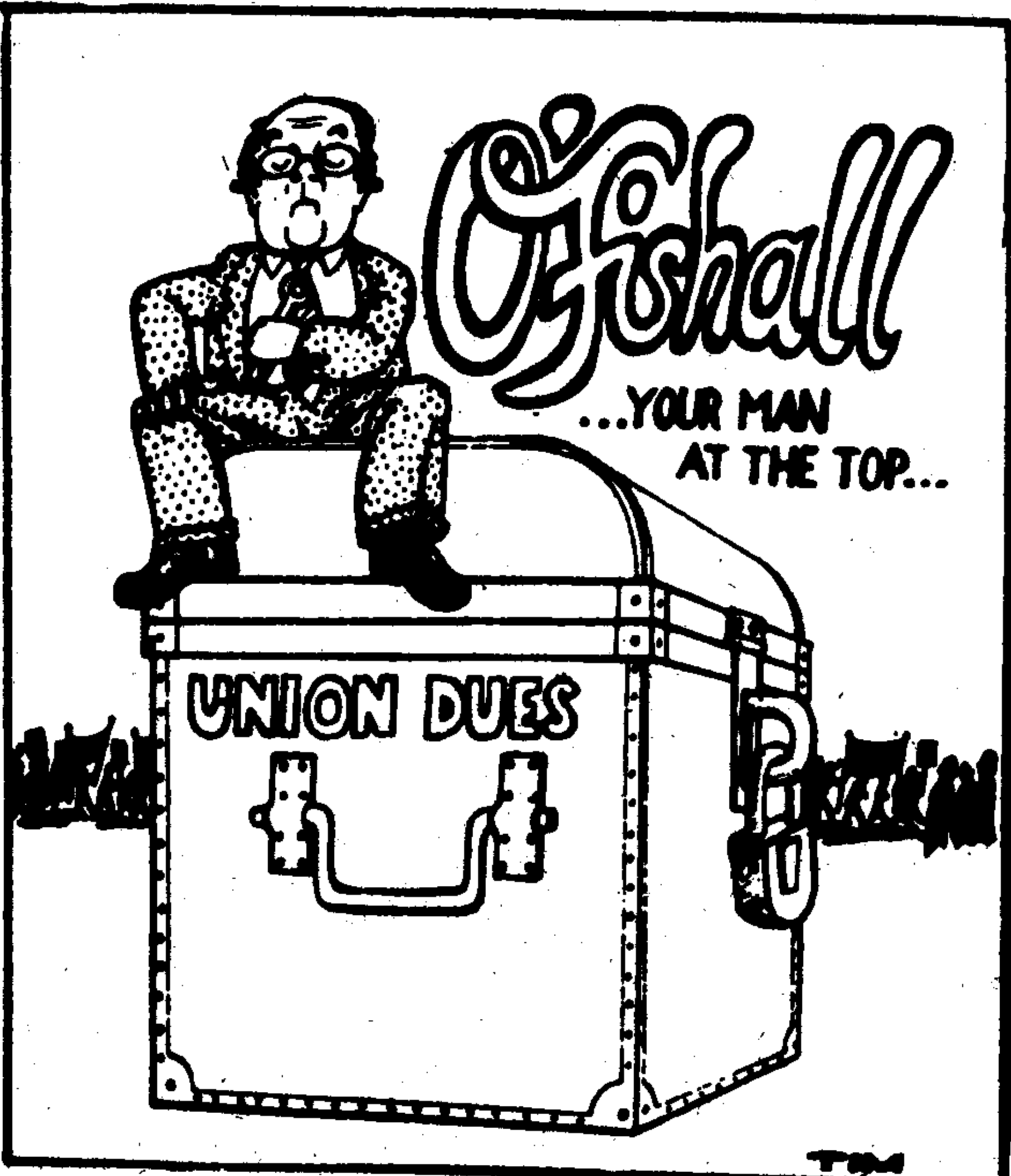
Region 5 Secretary Mathers (left) and Chairman Davies—on the witch-hunting trail again

reasons for the continuing series of witch-hunts on which they have embarked.

All their witch-hunts are designed to destroy any centre of lay member power which could hamper their freedom to

make any deals they like with the employers.

Any fight against the witch-hunts must therefore come within the broad perspective of the need to throw out the existing leadership of Region 5.



# SOCIALIST PRESS



## Prison thugs get off with a warning

Prison warders who organised a mass beating of Hull prisoners—including several Irish republicans—after riots at the jail in 1976 were told they were men of good character who had made a substantial contribution to the prison service and were freed last week.

Eight warders were convicted of conspiracy to assault prisoners, nearly three years after the beatings took place.

### Real crime

But the judge at York Crown Court—Mr. Justice Buchan—told these thugs that their real crime was that they had "played into the hands of wicked people" who would 'gloat' at their conviction.

Their sentences were suspended prison terms of between four and nine months—little more than a warning not to get caught again.

And the Prison Officers Association immediately made a plea for the warders to keep their jobs.

The case has parallels with the RUC brutality partly revealed in the Bennett report; the state's public disapproval is the same in both cases.

### No political status

Hull jail was used to keep many IRA prisoners convicted of bombings and other offences but denied political status.

Brutality by warders to such prisoners is well known and widely practiced.

The riot was sparked off after the beating up of a prisoner.

Inmates of the prison broke into offices and opened their files, revealing that false reports were sabotaging any hopes of parole.

Half the jail was burned down and warders were kept at bay for more than two days. The army and Saracen armoured cars were called to the prison.

In the aftermath 120 warders took their revenge, singling out Republican prisoners for beatings in their cells and making prisoners run a gauntlet of boots and fists and trying to force prisoners to drink tea with urine in it.

### Cover up

A determined cover up followed the beatings. Once police investigations started four months afterwards, prisoners were shuffled around the country to prevent them being interviewed, detectives received threatening phone calls and, on one occasion, prison warders threatened to prevent police getting in to see the governor.

Of the eight thugs eventually convicted one had been a warden of Long Kesh, another had been a boy soldier, a third had been in the police force, a fourth had been turned down by the police and a fifth had been in the navy.

# Freedom fighter

## hanged

The South African racist state last Friday claimed another victim—Soloman Mahlangu.

He was hanged despite worldwide protests from—amongst others—the United Nations General Assembly, the Commonwealth, President Giscard d'Estaing of France, West German Foreign Minister Genscher and British Foreign Secretary David Owen.

Mahlangu trained as an African National Congress freedom fighter after the Soweto events of 1976.

In June along with two comrades he returned to South Africa and they were intercepted by racist police.

One escaped, another Mondy Motloung shot two of the white police dead.

### Tortured

Mahlangu also escaped but was arrested later when he tried to find out what had happened to Motloung. He was tortured, tried and convicted of murder and refused the right of appeal.

Motloung received severe brain damage as a result of police torture and was held unfit to plead.

Despite the fact that this was officially the first political execution for 15 years Mahlangu's judicial murder was

in fact one of a long series of political killings in South Africa including that of Steve Biko last year.

### Shah's friend

Owen, imperialism's left-talking errand boy (and friend of the 'Shah' of Iran) who tours Southern Africa urging the liberation forces to come to a negotiated agreement with imperialism also has the nerve to demand a reprieve.

He does so because he thinks this much-publicised judicial murder does nothing to help the interests of imperialism or his own liberal image if it was carried out without his protest.

It should have been clear from the start that if Soloman Mahlangu's life depended on the sort of campaign mapped out by the Anti Apartheid Movement and the African National Congress then he would inevitably hang.

The South African government do not respond to telegrams. But this kind of protest was the focus of the ANC and AA campaign.

### Independence

Solidarity must start from the independent mobilisation of the working class which alone has the power required for effective solidarity.



Pass law offenders in South African jail

A first step could usefully be the launching of a campaign for the cutting off of all supplies to the South African Embassy and a campaign for the rooting out and expulsion of the hundreds of South African secret agents operating freely in this country.

### Nothing to say

No comment on Mahlangu's judicial murder could be allowed to pass without reference to the policy of the organisation which trained him.

The ANC has nothing to say about the systematic work necessary to prepare the mobilisation of the black workers around an independent working class programme.

The focus of their 'strategy' is elitist, more often than not adventurist, armed struggle.

The flower of the black

working class youth are urged to leave the country, train as guerrillas and return to carry out hopeless military acts.

Armed struggle in South Africa must be posed first of all as defensive action linked to a strategy of actually organising and politically directing the working class.

For the ANC it is seen as both a catalyst for sparking off struggle and as a form of "pressure" on the South African state.

If Soloman Mahlangu is not to have died in vain then those like him, those prepared to give their lives to free the masses from capitalist and racist oppression, must seek another road.

That road is the building of a South African Trotskyist party on the basis of a struggle around an independent revolutionary programme.

# Stalinists back Islam

"At present we need a powerful army more than we need bread".

That was the view last week of Iranian Premier Mehdi Bazargan—a man who is personally not short of bread but still desperately lacks bodies of armed men under his control to impose the semblance of capitalist order on the revolutionary ferment in Iran.

His chief need for the recon-

struction of the bourgeois army (which largely collapsed in the aftermath of the fall of the Shah) is to control the lightning growth of national movements for self-determination.

The Islamic regime's fear of the break-up of the unitary state is magnified by the fact that together those whose nationality is not Persian make up the majority of Iran's population.

In the past week new nationalist demonstrations and armed

clashes with the regime have been reported from Kurdistan in the west.

In the north-east a state of virtual war exists between the Turkoman people and Bazargan's depleted army.

### Military means

The regime, saying it accepts a degree of autonomy but no separatism, has threatened to use "all necessary military means" to crush the Turkoman revolt.

Mass action in support of national self-determination has also been reported from Baluchistan in the south-east and in Kuzistan in the south.

Bazargan also needs his army to assert the power of his capitalist regime, concerned above all

to rescue the profitability of capital in Iran.

This means opposing mounting militant demands for jobs by the millions of unemployed Iranian workers, and also attempting to shift the balance between the feeble power of his official state apparatus and the enormous strength of his patron Khomeini who bases his would-be religious dictatorship on the armed "Khomeini committees".

In this internal battle Khomeini's power was boosted once again by the farcical referendum of March 30, which Bazargan, despite earlier publicly-voiced doubts, was obliged to adopt as his own.

There was, Bazargan announced, a 92% participation

Cont'd page 2 col. 6

## FUND

Our £2,500 Special Fund starts with £110.00 in the first week including £25 from supporters in Denmark and £10 from supporters in Mozambique. Although the end of July may seem a long way off the weeks will quickly pass and no time should be lost in taking up the fight to raise the target.

Meanwhile the regular £600 monthly fund must not be neglected. The March Fund closed at £602.93 and the April Fund has got off to a good start with £179.90 in by April 9.

London and Oxford supporters are running regular totes. The winner of the London April tote is card number 102 and this week's Oxford tote was won by card number 343.

All donations to the Special Fund or the monthly fund should be sent to: Socialist Press Fund, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

**WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE**

Public Meeting

*Labour's Record on Ireland*

Thursday 19 April  
7.30 p.m.

Lyndhurst Hall, Warden Road, Kentish Town

**Leicester Trades Council**

Mobilisation against National Front march

No platform for fascists

April 21, 1975

Assemble at 12.00 noon at Victoria Park, London Rd., Leicester.

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