

WORKERS' fight

5p

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**£100,000
NIRC FINE**

DEFEND THE

The fight against PHASE 3

AUEW!

EIGHTEEN MONTHS AGO, THE Tories' first attempt at a wage freeze was battered so hard by the miners that everyone forgot there had been a 7½% norm. Now the government has come back with a document which shows that it has learnt all the lessons of that defeat.

They have learnt that a hard and fast wage ceiling, with no built-in "special cases" runs the risk of coming up against the bitter opposition of determined sections of the working class. That is what happened with the miners, and the government were put in the position of taking on one section of workers acting as a whole. Once the miners had won, then no amount of claiming that it was a special case was could hide the fact that the freeze was dead.

Now the miners and other sections of militant workers are getting ready for more big pay claims. To save themselves from the humiliations of last year, the Tories have opted for a super-flexible type of wage norm, with the special cases catered for in advance.

At the same time they are trying to increase the rate at which employers invest, and they are passing this off as evidence that Phase 3 has no class bias.

Phases 1 and 2 were aimed at steadying wages at the expense of workers' wages, while all other cost factors remained uncontrolled. Wages were frozen while prices rose. But given the massive rate of price increases over the past nine months, the techniques of Phases 1 and 2 could only be temporary.

Phase 3 attempts to carry on

from where the previous methods left off. If the head of steam which has been built up under Phases 1 and 2 is too powerful then Phase 3 provides a road for retreat. It is also aimed at restoring the authority of the trade union leaderships by allowing some room for bargaining.

To give this flexibility the Tories have formulated a number of different provisions. After giving two options for deciding what the pay ceiling will be, the document outlines several ways in which they can be side-stepped:

"A flexibility margin of a further 1% ... for better use of manpower. Extra payments under new efficiency schemes ... Premium payments for 'unsocial' hours... Dealing with anomalies created

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THE LATEST DEED of the Industrial Relations Court would already be its last but for the pussyfooting of the leaders of the AUEW. £100,000 has been marked down to be robbed from the AUEW as a punishment for making official a strike against the victimisation of two shop stewards, Lindsay Greig and Ron Connor, who were sacked for trying to get union recognition. Unless the Union obeys the NIRC and calls off the strike, which would be a retreat on the basic issue of the right of workers to organise in a trade union, then the Court can gouge out more and heavier fines.

Sir John Donaldson, Grand Inquisitor of the Tory NIRC, can bring the AUEW to the point of bankruptcy in a short while — unless the labour movement intervenes to defend the AUEW.

This began at Con-Mech (Engineering) in Woking, Surrey, where an employer who lives mentally in the stone age refused to recognise or negotiate with a newly organised section of the

AUEW.

With outrageous arrogance he then sacked the two stewards who had politely asked him to negotiate.

The workers immediately walked out and the strike was recognised by the AUEW.

Then this employer, Mr. Robert Dilley, went to the NIRC, and the result is the £100,000 initial fine. Other fines, crippling fines, will follow if the Tories get away with it — because the Union, having refused to appear in the Tory court, ignored an order to end the strike.

If the union leadership doesn't now reply with a call for immediate national industrial action and demand that the TUC follows this lead, then it can only succeed in bringing continued boycott of the court into disrepute and make it appear to be the mug's game that the rest of the TUC says it is.

The policy of provoking and teasing the courts - which without industrial action is what the AUEW line comes down to - can produce the worst of all possible worlds.

A union which leads with its chin and doesn't use its fists is not very serious about the struggle.

But so far the leadership, while making a "be ready for action" call to the membership, has turned first to the TUC for its help. The same TUC which believes that the AUEW should drop its boycott tactic and appear before the court while continuing

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MIDDLE EAST WAR

Lies that hide Israel's Land-grab

AS THE WAR IN THE Middle East enters a new phase, with Egypt on the defensive, news-casters casually talked of Israeli troops 'entering Egypt'.

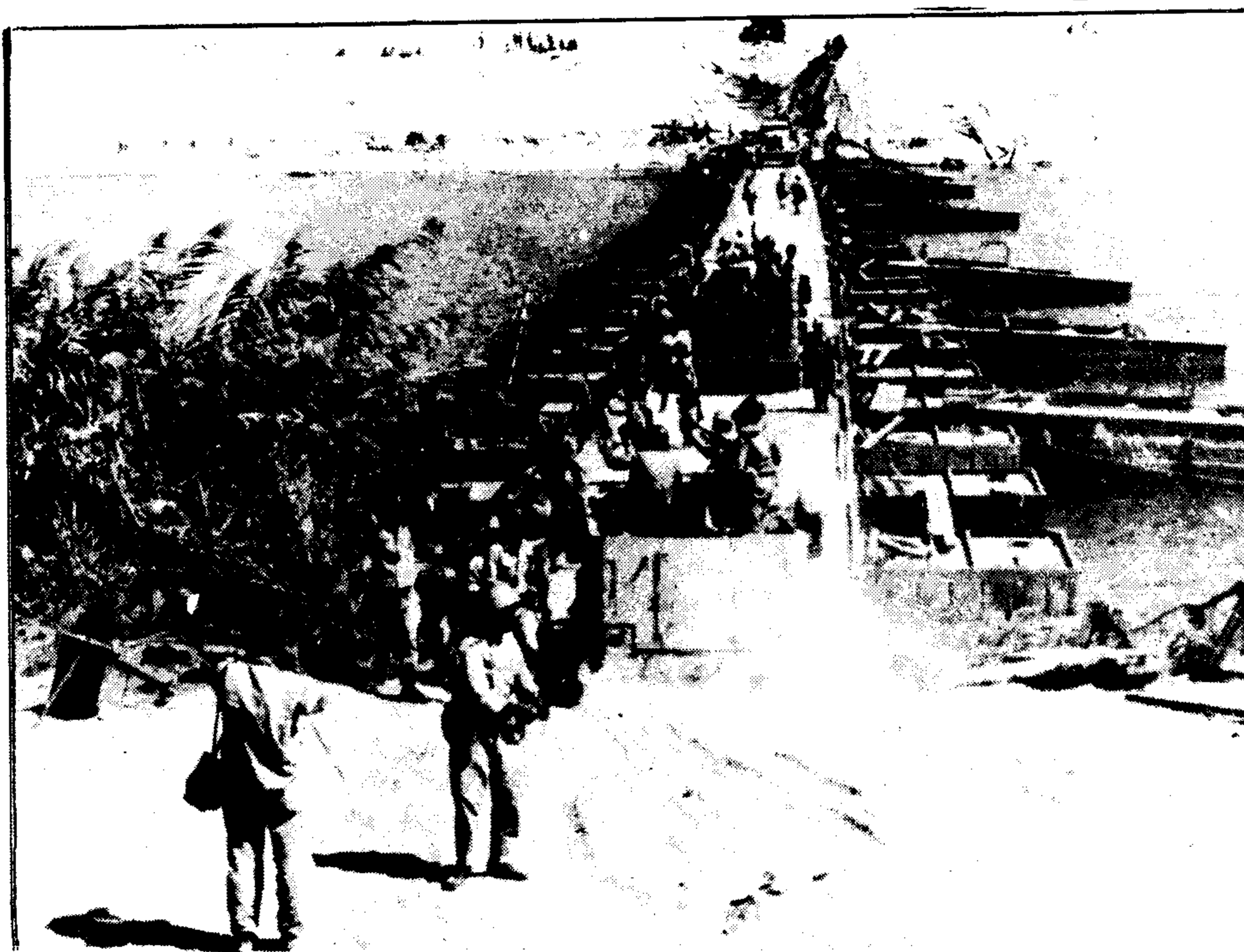
But the Israelis have been in Egypt ever since 1967, and in Jordan and Syria. And since 1948, the State of Israel has been officially usurping the land of another People, the Palestinians — so dispossessed by now that no journalist or newsman thinks to mention that their land has been 'entered'.

And, so dominating is Israeli propaganda in the minds of these purveyors of 'news', they actually had the nerve to talk of 'aggression' when Egyptian and Syrian troops crossed into parts of their countries which Israel grabbed in 1967 and refused to hand back since.

The years of relative peace since then have seen the Israeli state consolidating its gains and ruthlessly lording it as the 'invincible' power in the Middle East, dropping bombs and shells on people they made homeless in 1948 and then again in 1967, and sending free-lance murderers around the world to assassinate those Palestinians who still tried to fight their land.

Meanwhile, in the words of Egypt's Premier Anwar Sadat, "The world has fallen asleep over the Middle East. The Americans have left us no option..."

And socialists have no option in this situation but support for the armies fighting Israel, however limited their present aims.



Egyptian troops cross Suez Canal — into their own country...

Workers Fight

Dreamers – or Cynics?

IF A VISITOR ARRIVED FROM Mars a couple of weeks ago and happened to land at Blackpool, then he might be forgiven for thinking that the World is a very strange place indeed. He would have heard repeated promises to nationalise the commanding heights of the economy, observed an absolute famine when it came to actually naming the 'commanding heights' which were to be nationalised, and, acting the leading role in this scenario, just the same people who a few years ago were blazing the trail for present Tory policy with the introduction of prescription charges, wage restraint and 'In Place of Strife'. In fact the sudden swing in Labour Party policy is not so strange and represents very little in real terms. Instead of a policy for meeting the real needs of the class struggle, as it exists here and now, the conference consisted of a merging of the complete fantasy world of the Labour 'lefts' and the cynicism of the Parliamentary and Union leaderships.

The first two years of the Tory government saw some momentous, but partial and not very lasting, victories for the working class. Victories which not only shook the Tory government, but which for the time at least shook some union leaders out of their bureaucratic, routinist existence. But over the past year, with the Tory government's offensive treading the well worn path of wage restraint, victories have not been so easy to come by. The union leaderships, particularly those of the TGWU and AUEW have drawn back sharply from the mass forms of struggle which characterised the miners strike and the fight against the Industrial Relations Act. Instead they are looking towards another Labour government as the answer to the Tory attacks on the working class.

For Labour to pose as an alternative to immediate struggle against the Tory attacks, it is necessary that the Labour Party puts on its left face. But if the union leaders need the Labour Party, so also do the Labour leaders need the support of the trade Unions, who still hold the party's purse strings and a massive majority of votes at conference. Thus before the conference had begun, horse trading between parliamentary leaders and trade union leaders had already decided the main points of policy, including the ditching of the promise to nationalise the leading 25 companies.

A motion seeking to back up the clause in the programme about the 25 companies was decisively defeated and instead a T&GWU motion giving general support for public ownership was carried. Such a vague commitment to nationalisation no doubt brought a great deal of relief – not least to the original proposers of the 25 companies clause on the NEC.

Silence

To imagine that a government could nationalise the largest national and international firms in the country and give compensation is a utopian myth. The state is at this moment running at a deficit and this has led even such arch reactionaries as Enoch Powell to call for an increase in taxation. If Maplin and the Channel Tunnel go ahead then the deficit will be even greater and the £1,500 million which Dennis Healey talks of raising in increased taxes is a mere drop in the ocean when compared with the combined assets of such companies as BMC, ICI, Fords and GEC. For the Labour leaders such pious motions act as mere window dressing which can be brought out at conference and be put away the rest of the time.

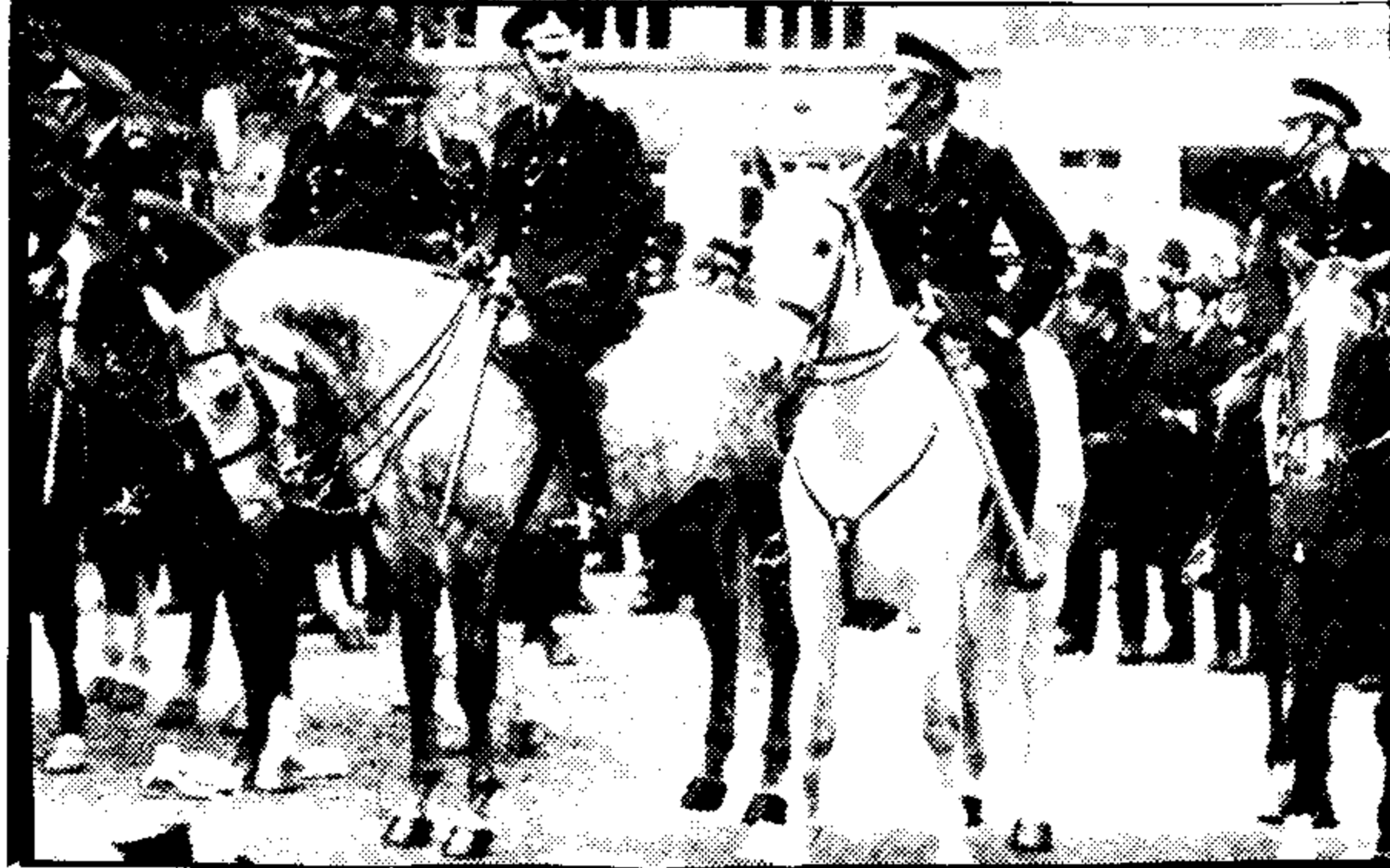
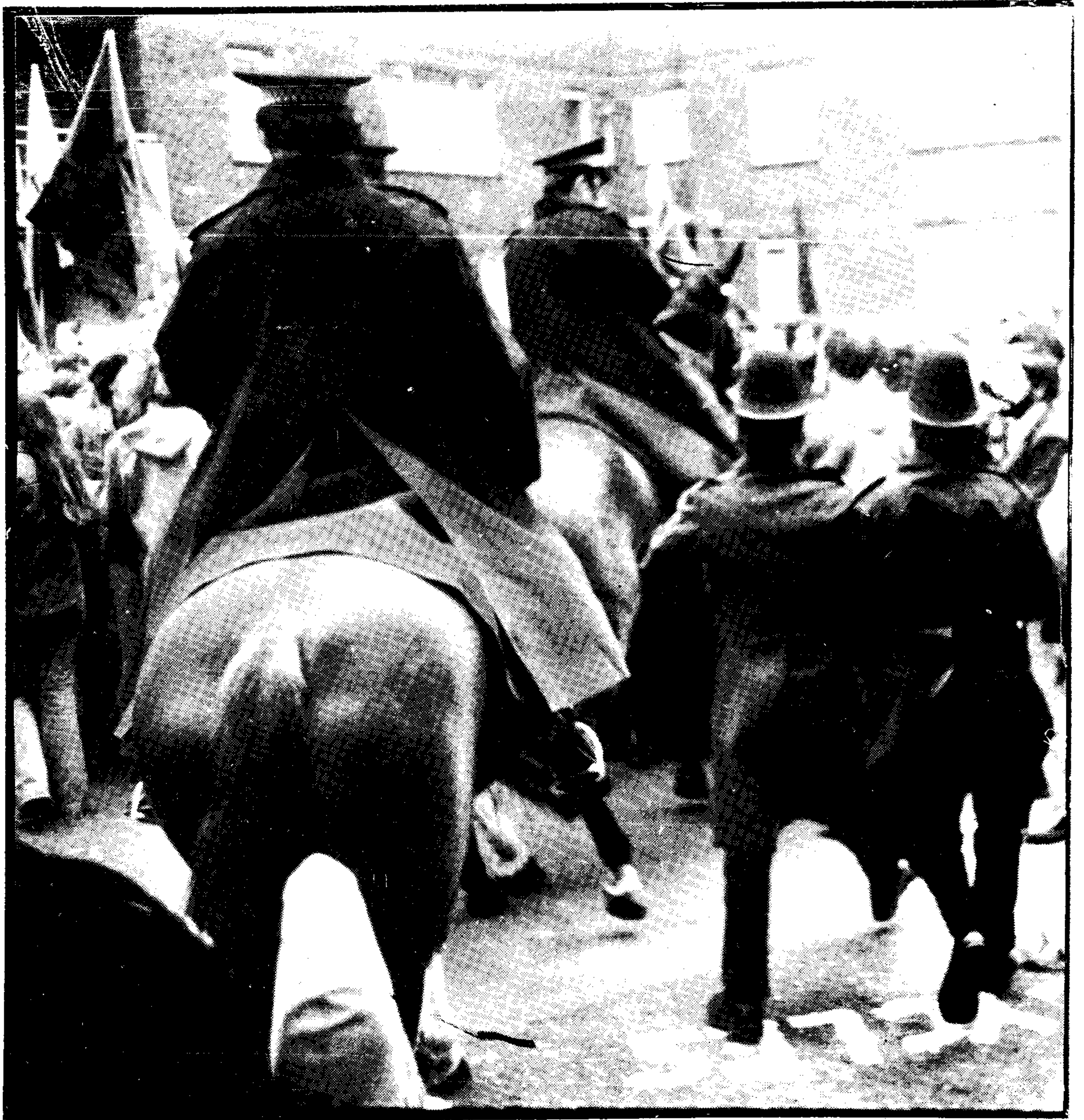
Nationalisation was presented as a magic potion which could answer all problems – if only the Labour Party formed the next government. In fact if we look at the record on nationalisation it is clear enough that it has served first and foremost the capitalist class. The industries which have been nationalised, have been those which are essential to the smoothing running of capitalism. Very often these industries were running extremely inefficiently under private ownership and taking them out of the sphere of competition was to the benefit of the capitalist class as a whole.

Nationalisation has provided industry with cheap steel, coal and transport. This time Wilson is probably most serious about shipbuilding, the aircraft industry, the docks and machine tools – all of which are either being run down, are making losses or in need of major reorganisation. And he is probably least serious about land and pharmaceuticals, the high profit areas included as examples of the "unacceptable face" of capitalism.

Thus the conference consisted of a bucketful of vague promises about a 'socialist' future combined with a deathly silence about the problems of the working class which are oppressing from all sides here and now. There was no mention of the Tory attack on independent trade union organisation. No mention of the North Wales 24 and the right to picket. No mention of the Industrial Relations Act.

But if nationalisation for the Labour leaders is just a question of window dressing, for the working class it is a real issue. As Socialists we are in favour of nationalisation right down to the last backroom sweatshop. And we are not just for the nationalisation of the 'lame ducks' but also of those sections of the economy where the profits are really made – in particular the finance companies and banks. But if nationalisation is not to be something other than a pipedream or a way of bailing out bankrupt firms then it must be without compensation.

Moreover if it is going to be of benefit to the working class then it must be under Workers Control. Workers in the nationalised industries are some of the worst off in terms of conditions and pay. Unless shop stewards committees have definite and wide ranging power of vetoing management decisions, then exactly the same conditions as under private industry will remain in the nationalised industries as every miner knows full well. Without these two conditions nationalisation is only of use to day dreamers and cynics.



AS WE CAME INTO Red Lion Square we were met by our wonderful British police. We stood fast as close as we could get and chanted our slogans.

After five minutes a mounted police sergeant, No. 898, took his right hand stirrup and started twirling it round like an armoured knight would twirl his mace and shouted "RIGHT LADS, LETS DISPERSE THEM" With that the horses advanced on us and the police on foot pushed us from right and left.

So we had police pushing us on three sides and Sergeant 898 twirling his stirrup. Naturally the weakest section

of the march was pushed off its feet and the rest of the march was desperately trying to avoid trampling them.

We reformed, and I took stock of the situation. There he was, No. 898, twirling his stirrup with a big grin on his face. Then I noticed a comrade bleeding quite badly from his cheek and nose. He pointed out his assailant to me, a young copper wearing a wicked-looking pair of gloves of very thin leather with thick corded seams on the back. (Anyone used to street fighting will tell you these will cut a person's face to ribbons). This copper was still standing there flexing his hands and pulling his gloves tighter, an evil smirk on his face.

One of the comrades on my left was taunting the police that if the National Front ever get to power the police would get good jobs as concentration camp guards, and some of them had just the right qualifications for the job.

No. 898 rode into action again. He booted his horse forward, grabbed the lad by his hair and swung him out of the crowd to another policeman who arrested him. No. 898 gave the demonstrators a big beaming smile, opened his hand and let a handful of hair flutter to the ground.

The comrade is charged with threatening behaviour. I never knew it was a threat to recommend someone for a job.

Meanwhile inside the Conway Hall the National Front meeting went on. The delegates were told that the membership was increasing by 400 a month and in the next general election they were planning to put up 50 or so candidates.

Stopping the Fascists – a vital task for ALL Socialists

ON SATURDAY, 13th October, about 1000 demonstrators marched from Lincoln's Inn Fields to the Conway Hall, where the National Front, Britain's largest fascist organisation, were holding their Annual General Meeting. The aim of the march was to stop the fascists meeting by whatever means were necessary.

In this aim the march failed. Predictably the Conway Hall was surrounded by lines of police and mounted police, who prevented the demonstration from getting within fifty yards of the meeting place.

An attempt to break through the police ranks failed and as is often the case, those who had come to get to grips with the fascists ended up fighting their protectors, the police.

After twenty minutes of intermittent clashes, during which the police backed their horses into the anti-fascists, the demonstration retreated and dispersed.

Arrests were few, mainly due to the discipline of the marchers who kept arms linked all the time. But amongst those arrested were Brian Grosan of the IMG and Andrew H. Mann of Workers Fight.

main groups supporting the demonstration.

Since neither was doing anything at the time of their arrest apart from standing in line it seems probable that the police knew whom to arrest before the demonstration even started. Certainly one comrade reports that he heard an inspector saying to his underlings and pointing; "I want that one, that one and that one."

Tactical questions apart, the failure of the demonstration could in no way be attributed to the efforts of those who organised for it. The organisation was initiated by the IMG who sent a letter out to all the left wing organisations calling for a united front. The invitation was taken up by Workers Fight and the Italian emigre organisation, 'Fight On'. But it was ignored in particular by the IS and the SLL.

On the march itself there was one IS banner present and the IS comrades seemed to be mainly concerned with selling their paper. The SLL didn't even show their faces.

Do these organisations think that the question of growing fascism doesn't concern them? Do they think that it is not an issue for the working class?

Or perhaps they think that attempts to stop fascist meetings and demonstrations are adventurous student pranks.

If that is their opinion then they would do well to look at the 1930's and the fight against Mosley. Mosley could not hold a meeting without it being interrupted and disrupted. He could not hold a rally without a counter march being organised.

It is true that the National Front is not yet as strong as Mosley was. It is true that the working class cannot be mobilised to stop the fascists to the same extent that was possible in the 1930's (although it should be noted that several trade union branches were represented on the march).

But the danger is still there and even if the National Front were a tenth of the size it is now the task would still be to smash it.

With this in mind the IMG and Workers Fight brought comrades from the North West and Midlands to help stop the meeting. IS and the SLL must have between them well over a thousand members in London. Did they think that the issue is so unimportant that they couldn't turn up to a demonstration on their own doorstep?

Dawn swoops, frame-up and Deportation — the tools of British Police repression

"Bomb factory" searches — cover for massive harassment

DURING THE period of late September, police and Special Branch have indulged in a frenzy of raids, searches and arrests. By using the excuse of searching for bombs they have raided houses and premises, not only in London but in other areas of the country as well.

The raid on the premises of Workers' Fight on 25th September was only one raid in a whole series. On the morning of the 20th, occupants of a house in the Westbourne Park area of London were awakened by a loud crash at the front door. Six men in plain clothes with torches then entered and searched the various flats in the house. The police found nothing and departed.

They had broken the lock on the door and entered a number of rooms without permission and without announcing who they were. Phone calls to Scotland Yard, made later on by the residents, received no satisfactory answers or apologies for the intimidating behaviour of the police.

Further raids followed. On the 29th, early morning raids were carried out on homes in Camden and St Pancras. The houses chosen included several occupied by squatters. 3 houses in Kentish town belonging to a community action group were also raided.

On a whole number of the raids doors were battered down before residents were able to open them. Police refused to identify themselves or even say what the object of the raids was.

At a massive swoop in the Charrington Street area it is estimated that about 500 police were used. 30 houses were searched but again nothing was found.

It appears that the police are using the excuse of searching for explosives to gather information on various groups and individuals. The actual searches were generally considered to be "pathetic". Certainly it seems the last sort of place to look for a "bomb factory" and if they had really thought to find one they would have searched a lot more thoroughly than they did.

Police harassment has not been confined to London. On October 3rd a coachload of militants from Colchester were returning from Shrewsbury after demonstrating their solidarity with the North Wales 24. They were stopped by the police and taken to Colchester police



station where they were interrogated till the early hours. Search warrants and charges were made out, they were released on bail and then their homes were searched. Police were obviously using the fact that a firebomb had been planted in Woolworths in Colchester recently as an excuse to 'check up' on these militants.

In response to the raids a demonstration was called by All London Squatters Federation and the London Ad-Hoc Committee for Defence of Civil Rights on Saturday 6th October.

This attracted approximately 300 squatters and militants. Led by a mock 'bomb' they marched from Charrington St to New Scotland Yard demanding an end to the current spate of raids and police harassment.

Coventry 7 on trial

MONDAY 8TH OCTOBER saw the beginning of the trial of the Coventry 7. These men, arrested in April, have been held in solitary confinement ever since. Over the past months the police have harassed and intimidated Republicans and their supporters in the Birmingham and Coventry areas.

The most recent arrest was that of Will Rees, the secretary of the Coventry 7 Defence Committee. This occurred on

the Friday night before a rally in Coventry Precinct on the next day in support of the Coventry 7.

On Sunday 6th of October a demonstration and rally was held in Birmingham and was attended by approximately 1,000 people, showing that the supporters of the 7 are not to be intimidated. Solidarity picketing of the court house will take place each morning.

E.H.

Colonels' victim "Undesirable Bomber" — Carr

A MASS PICKET stood outside Pentonville Jail on Friday October 4th to protest against the deportation order against a Cypriot student, Aristides Mouroskoufis.

Aristides Mouroskoufis is a 28 year old student from Limassol. In 1967, when the Junta of Colonels took power in Greece, he was a student in Athens. In October of that year the military court of the Colonels' regime sentenced him to 12 years' imprisonment for 'participating in an underground organisation and planning of bombings.'

He served 6 years of his 12 year sentence and was released last February after having been severely tortured.

After his release he applied to and was accepted by North London Polytechnic for a course, and all his papers were in order. But when on Sunday 23rd September he tried to enter this country the immigration officer told him that because of his activities "especially the planning of bombs, two of which exploded" Mouroskoufis was an "undesirable" and "not conducive to the public good."

He was taken to Pentonville to await deportation.

If he is deported to Cyprus,

he will have to serve two years national service in the Cypriot army whose many Greek officers are likely to give him a very rough time.

The sympathies and attitudes of the Tories are clearly exposed in this action. Without batting an eyelid they acknowledge the full legal force, methods and values of the military terror machine that rules Greece at the behest of US imperialism and the NATO alliance.

The fact is that the anti-bomber hysteria stirred up as a catch-all to net every oppositionist republican, anti-fascist and revolutionary, is now being extended to someone who has no links whatever with the struggle in Ireland.

Several Labour MPs including John Fraser and Shirley Williams have tried to get at least an extension of the detention order so that an appeal can be properly submitted.

Student and trade union organisations must bring maximum pressure to bear on the Government to release Aristides Mouroskoufis and allow him to study here. It is a small reward for the heroism of engaging in anti-Junta resistance.

London P.D. man gets 18 months for planted Cannabis

Statement by Peoples Democracy

ON WEDNESDAY 26th September, Eugene Mallon, a member of Peoples Democracy, was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment. His political involvement made it necessary for the forces of this 'liberal' state to dispose of him.

The methods used were typically underhand. On the anniversary of Internment in 1972 the Special Branch planted a "dangerous" drug on him — one and a half ounces of cannabis. This type of frame-up is doubly useful to the police; the deed is easily done, and it is well known that in Irish political circles drugs are very much disapproved of.

The purpose of this plant was therefore to convict Eugene and to smear his reputation.

Being innocent and having witnesses to back him up, Eugene chose to take his case to the Crown Court. (It is interesting to speculate whether, had he pleaded guilty, he like little Miss Rippon would have got off with a £20 fine.)

Farce

The trial was a typical farce. The two police witnesses contradicted themselves continuously in their evidence. But the Judge (a veritable pillar of Justice, one Solomons by name) chose to ignore this and concentrated his summing up on attacking Eugene's case.

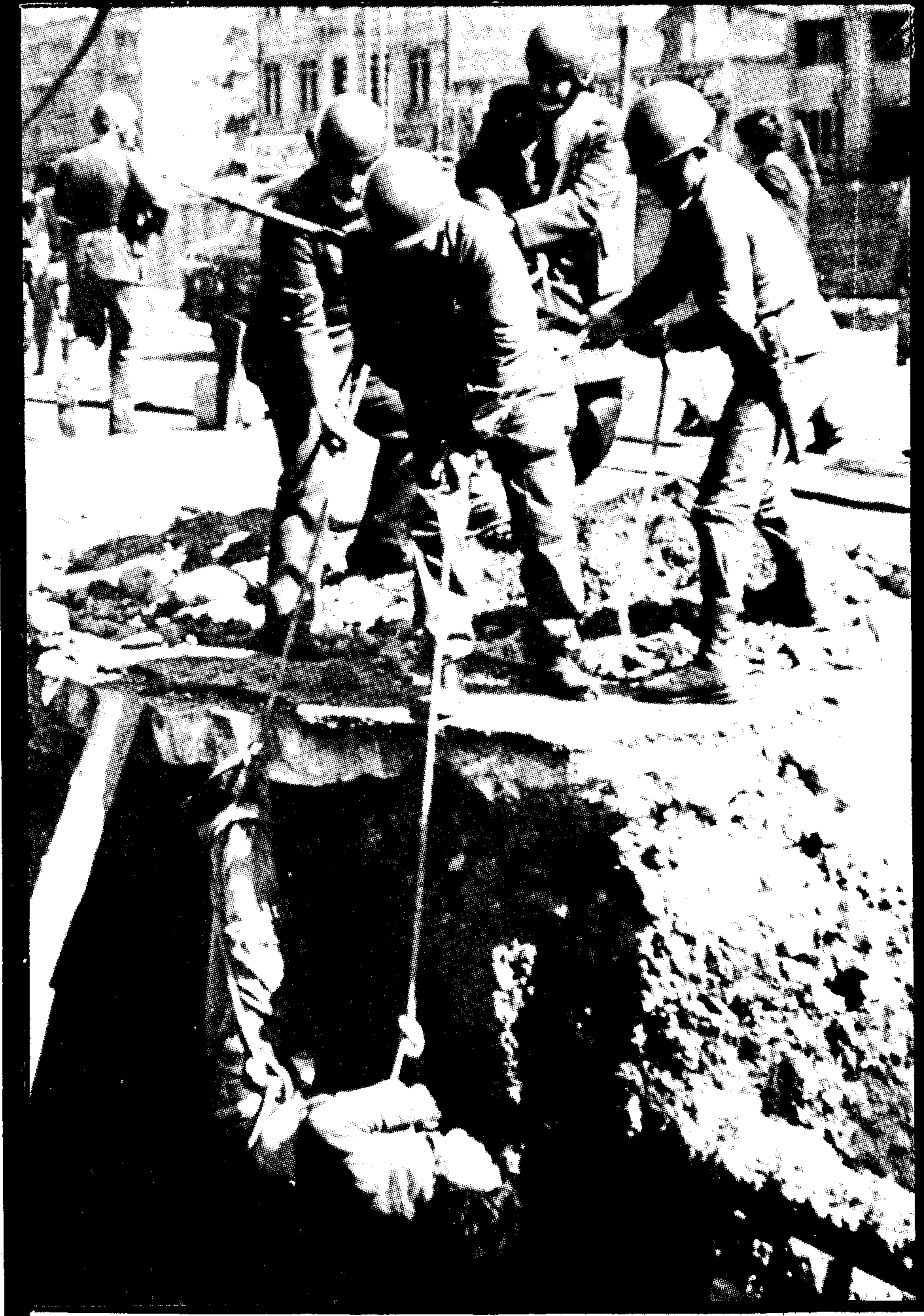
He dragged up such irrelevancies as that Eugene had "subversive" literature in his car at the time of his arrest (copies of Unfree Citizen, a PD publication). He slandered Peoples Democracy as a "contradiction in terms — an organisation without rules". He rejected out of hand the important evidence of one of Eugene's witnesses. He quoted large sections of Eugene's evidence out of context, thus making nonsense of it.

Finally, he proceeded to introduce a charge that the prosecution had not considered in their evidence, accusing Eugene of not only possessing the drug but of peddling it as well, calling this "aggravated possession" — a novelty in legal terms. After that, this paragon of fair dealing then proceeded to sentence Eugene to 18 months.

The usual sentence for this offence is a small fine or, more unusually, three months' jail.

Repression is breaking all bounds in this country, especially where the question of Ireland is concerned. An individual or organisation which speaks out against the establishment is likely to be in trouble.

Once an insidious form of repression becomes accepted, it is very difficult to fight it. Therefore we appeal to all individuals and organisations concerned by the growing wave of repression to do everything in their power to make Eugene's case widely known; this hypocritical travesty of Justice may yet, with enough publicity, be reversed.



[About a week after the bloody coup in Chile, the Peruvian revolutionist Hugo Blanco, who had been in exile in Santiago, was able to escape to Mexico. His exit was arranged by the Swedish government, which has offered him asylum. Blanco was accompanied by the Argentine Trotskyist Eduardo Creus and by a Brazilian comrade, Julião Borda. On September 28, they gave the following interview in Mexico City to a correspondent of *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Question. How extensive has the repression been in Chile?

Blanco. The military began their repression in advance of the coup, aiming to disarm and demobilize the people. They began raiding plants. For example, they raided an electronics plant in Arica in the North. In Santiago there were several raids, including one on a cemetery. All these searches were carried out under the cover of the so-called Arms Control Law, which was passed by the right-wing bloc in parliament at the culmination of the last offensive against the government in October 1972. The UP [Unidad Popular—Popular Unity, the class-collaborationist ruling coalition] did not actively oppose it, however. The UP deputies abstained and Allende did not veto it.

In the South, they raided the Lanera Austral factory, where they killed some workers. In the same area, the military launched a repression against peasants who demonstrated their opposition to the June 29 attempted coup. Some were dragged across the ground by helicopters or tortured in front of their families. Sailors who showed opposition to the coup were also tortured and imprisoned. All of this was part of the softening-up process that preceded the take-over. As a final test, in Santiago they raided the Cobre Cerillos factory in the Cordón Cerillos and the Sumar factory in the Cordón Vicuña Mackenna. Three days after these raids, they made their strike.

These escalating raids enabled the right to test the strength of the workers movement, its capacity to resist. They also started the process of selective

repression aimed at decapitating the workers movement and the left parties. The strongholds of the left in the factory belts, shantytowns, and schools like the Universidad Técnica were hit, and vanguard militants were seized and imprisoned. Throughout this first phase of the repression, the military and the police had the acquiescence of Allende and the UP leadership.

When they launched their massive terror on September 11, the military were also aided by the faltering defensive line of the UP government. The UP government had called on the workers to maintain a constant guard on the factories. They did not call for seizing the factories but only for guarding them. They meant that the workers should continue working for bosses and even imperialists and that after doing back-breaking labor all day, carrying out the UP's order to produce more and win "the battle of production," they should stay on at night doing guard duty. Obviously this meant that those who did stay were mainly the vanguard. Most of the workers tired of this. So that it was essentially the vanguard that was trapped in the factories when the military launched its attack.

Massacres

On the day of the coup, the military launched a massive strike against the factories and the shantytowns, seeking to massacre the vanguard. At the same time, they tried to round up all the leaders of the left parties as well as the UP ministers and deputies.

Next, the repression was directed against the intermediate cadres. The activists in the factories were fired, arrested, and murdered. The universities were closed. The University of Concepción, a well-known center of the far left, was shut down and formally abolished. The diplomas of its graduates were revoked. In the Universidad Técnica, the military carried out a massacre on the first day of the coup, slaughtering about 600 persons. There was also a massacre at the Instituto Pedagógico.

There are reports that every fifteen minutes a body is cremated in Santiago. Many persons have seen bodies lying in the street. Murders have been seen in broad daylight. For example, if someone goes out for bread or something like that, he is likely to be bullied by the Carabineros [Riot Police], and anybody who protests is simply shot down. There was one occasion when the Carabineros started beating people in a food line and when some persons objected, the whole line was slaughtered.

The football stadiums have been turned into gigantic prisons in Santiago, Concepción, and Antofagasta. The island of Quiriquina has also been converted into a prison. Innumerable military tribunals have been set up. There are ten in Valparaíso alone, for example. There are a lot of executions going on, and the junta is threatening to punish any kind of resistance with death. Any act of sabotage in word or deed is supposed to be punishable by summary execution.

An all-embracing campaign of intimidation against the population began at 3:00 p.m. on September 11, when the junta gave the order that everyone was to remain in their homes, that no one could be on the streets. Many people could not get home. For example, I had to walk thirty-five blocks to get to my home. The next day there was a curfew around the clock. It was only lifted on Thursday [September 13] at noon. The people were kept imprisoned in their homes. It was certain death to be on the street.

While the military held the population pinned down and atomized this way, they carried out almost indiscriminate mass raids. They broke into the houses of everyone who had been denounced by some rightist or another, beat up whatever persons they found, tortured the inhabitants in front of their families, shot some on the spot, and dragged others away to prison, where, needless to say, they continued torturing them. The troops destroyed everything they could not carry away. They were given free rein to take all valuables. This is the way the putschists egged on the soldiers to carry out the repression. They offered them booty.

The brunt of the repression was directed against the cordones [industrial belts] and the shantytowns. Massacres took place in the squatters' settlements of Lo Hermida, La Legua, and Nueva Havana. Many of the nationalized factories where organization of the workers had reached its highest level were razed. This happened to the Sumar and Cristalería plants in the Vicuña Mackenna Cordón and to the Cobre Cerillos plant in the Cerillos Cordón, as well as many other factories.

Eyewitness accounts of Chile bloodbath

Interview with Hugo Blanco, Eduardo Creus, and Julião Borda

The armed forces were turned into a murder machine. Many persons were killed immediately on being taken prisoner, or the next day, as it occurred to the military. The objective of the repression was to clear the left out of all the factories and centers, by killing them, driving them out, and arresting them. In this way the workers movement was decapitated.



Militant/Ben Atwood

BLANCO: 'We have to develop a worldwide campaign to restrain the repression. . . .

Q. What is the situation now of the political exiles who found refuge in Chile under the UP government?

Blanco. The campaign against foreigners is a very important aspect of the repression in Chile. Being pointed out as a foreigner, especially one from another Latin American country, can mean instant death. This campaign is obviously not the work of the Chilean bourgeoisie or the putschists alone. Most of the foreigners played no role in the government. This is obviously an action directed by the imperialists, by the CIA.

Chile has been turned into a trap. Or since the Chilean national army, they say that the country will be either the refuge of the oppressed or the grave of the free, perhaps we should say that it has been turned into a tomb.

Since Chile had opened its doors to political refugees, many revolutionaries were concentrated there. Mainly these were Brazilians. There were also Argentines, Uruguayans, Bolivians, Dominicans, Venezuelans, and others from the Central American countries. So the coup was an excellent opportunity for the imperialists to trap this entire vanguard. At the same time, it could piously wash its hands of the affair. The blame was on the junta. The imperialists and the other Latin American bourgeoisies could look on innocently. They were not the ones killing, jailing, and torturing this vanguard, only the Chilean junta. But this was really an international re-

pressive operation bourgeoisies, imperialists.

For example, the Brazilian government junta in this campaign that the persons who went to the objective of development. Thus, they blanché to murder and Brazilian companies.

There was an operation similar to the Nazis. Leaflets were planes and helicopters called on the all foreigners who to kill Chileans. Those who didn't like to run to the north and sic the military everyone they knew was a good pro arrested, especially army or the air force on the spot.

Q. What has the shown about the the ful road" to socialism?

Creus. This the much to do with struggle never stopped occupied factories took land without sion of the UP. On the rightists kept tack on the government the government lice to repress the ed to advance the ization. For example sions when the workers factories, it was the ment itself that cl other occasions, i ple in the shantytow ing for direct distr other supplies. Fir of the right escalat attacks on factory neighborhoods wh in office.

In this whole p the Communist an was to act as a b mobilization. Part the "dialogue" with campaign for pro not tell the worker to advance the p harder and harde tories that were s the imperialists.

Although the m offensive through government's term held back by the ships. When the r offensive in October, the masses in a s sition. The worker arm and talked al

fense committees. But the Allende government said that there could be no armed forces but the Carabineros and the military.

Q. Did opposition to this reformist policy develop in the Communist and Socialist parties?

Creus. In the CP I saw only individual dissidents. In the SP there were dissident currents but in the end they capitulated to their reformist leaderships. The real effect of these left currents was to reinforce reformism. Militant workers joined the SP in the hope that they could win it over to a revolutionary line and they became trapped in a reformist structure.

Q. How extensive was the resistance to the coup?

Creus. There was no organized resistance. The workers wanted to fight. But in the absence of a genuinely revolutionary organization there could be no organized resistance. There was some resistance by snipers. There was some resistance by groups besieged in places like the Instituto Pedagógico, but they were slaughtered. They tried to put up a fight in the Universidad Técnica, but they were massacred. There was resistance in the shantytown of La Legua, but there was a massacre there like the one in Lo Hermita.

Q. To what extent were the workers armed?

Creus. The left organizations had a lot of guns. But these weapons were not in the hands of the workers. They were kept in special arsenals by the leaderships. This was another aspect of the bureaucratic organization of the left parties. Even if the leaderships had wanted to arm the workers, there was no organization suited to this task. There was the case of the governor of Talca, for example. He wanted to resist and did put up a fight with some persons but it was only a small group.

It was no good having guns, if they were not in the hands of the workers. And there was no organization to enable the workers to resist in an organized way. So, the resistance was minimal, the amount of weapons in the hands of the workers was minimal. But with the proper organization, the resistance could have assumed gigantic proportions.

Soldiers

Q. Did any splits show up in the armed forces?

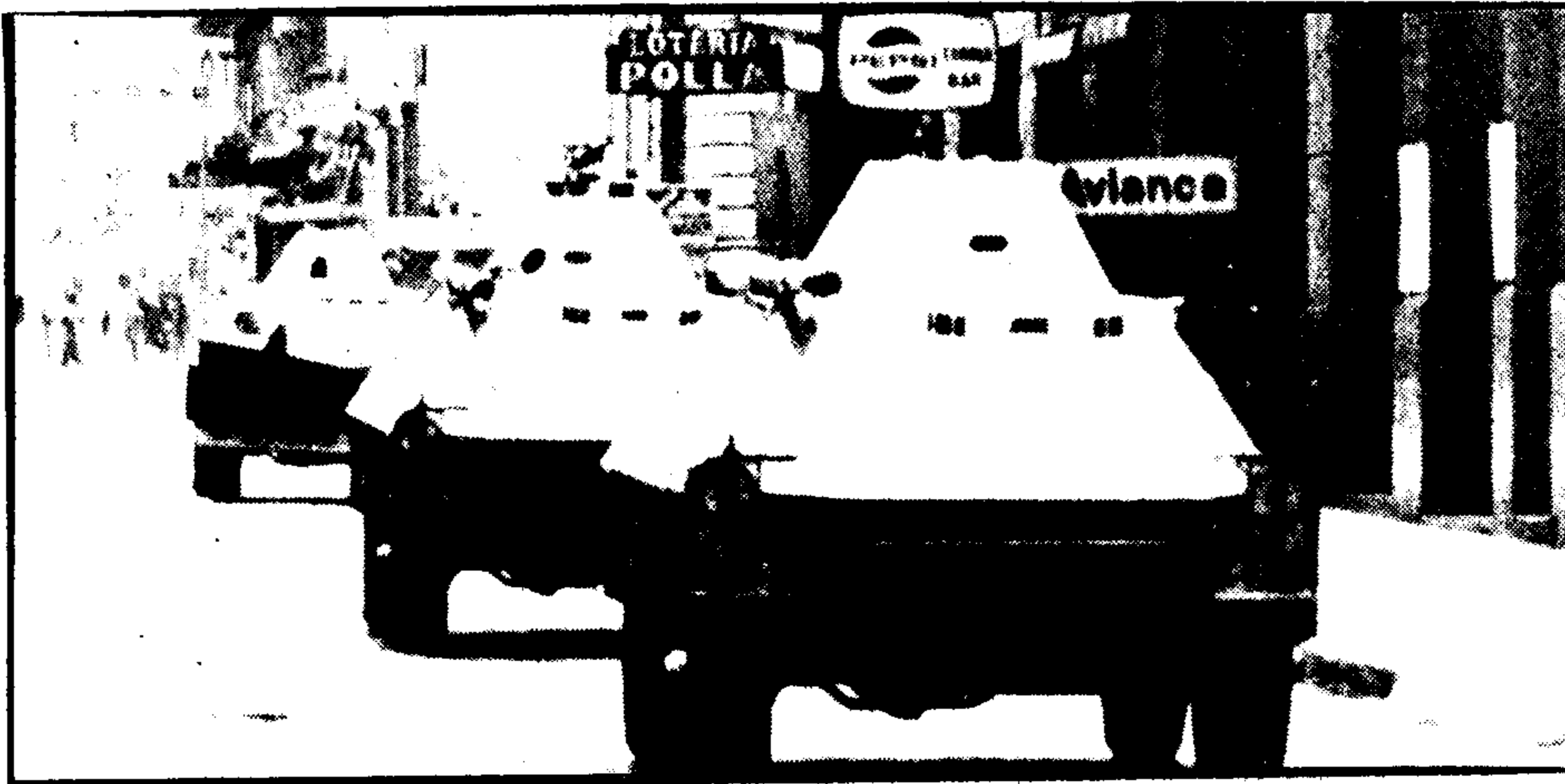
Creus. There were two types of opposition to the coup. There was a sector of the officers who were against the take-over. It was led by Prats. But it was very weak. Nonetheless, this division could have been exploited by the proletariat if it had had a really revolutionary leadership. A reformist leadership could not take advantage of it. When Prats told Allende that the only way out was to fire sixteen generals, Allende said he didn't have the strength to do it. So, Prats and the other anticoup officers had to resign.

The common soldiers were another

matter. Among them there were revolutionary elements ready to fight alongside the working class. There was murmuring in the armed forces against the putschist plans, rather than active opposition. In the absence of a revolutionary organization, such opposition could take only an isolated, atomized form. There was a case of a Carabinero who shot a lieutenant and a captain and called on the others to join him. But he was alone and so no one else followed him and he was killed. It is probable that such incidents occurred in many places but in a disorganized way.

The case of the sailors in Valparaíso shows how the reformists disorganized any opposition in the army. When the sailors manifested their disapproval of the June 29 coup and the military's plans for a take-over, the officers repressed them. And the government endorsed this repression. It approved it first by its silence and later explicitly.

Q. There are some elements in the U.S. Communist party that accuse



the revolutionary left of provoking the coup by promoting the nationalizations and a socialist policy. What is your opinion of that?

Creus. Those who provoked the coup were not the left, because the only thing that could have stopped the coup was the advance of the struggles of the working class, toward more nationalization, workers control, measures that would have strengthened workers power, including the arming of the proletariat. These measures, as well as encouraging the soldiers to resist the coup, are the only thing that could have blocked it. But instead of advancing this development, the UP leadership held all this back and even assisted the repression. So it is not the revolutionary left that provoked the coup but the reformist leaderships—fundamentally the Communist party, and also, of course, the SP leadership.

Q. What about the MIR (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria - Movement of the Revolutionary Left)? What kind of an alternative did it offer to the reformist leadership of the UP?

Julião Bordao: At no time did the MIR really seek to win the masses away from the UP's reformism. This is the key for assessing the MIR. In the period before Allende took office, the MIR's political line could be characterized as ultraleft. They raided

banks and did all the things that are called urban guerrilla warfare. But at no time did they try to win the masses away from reformism. Instead they threw themselves into vanguardist actions.

Then when Allende was elected, the MIR changed its line, but they really just turned the coin over. From a policy of urban guerrilla warfare, they turned to capitulating to Allende, essentially to an opportunist line. Although they retained their organizational independence from the UP, they were drawn in fundamentally behind its policy. The line of the MIR in fact became integrated with that of the UP. They launched attacks periodically on the UP, but the central aspect was their support for it.

That is, just as they did not seek to win the masses away from the reformists in the first phase of their activity, so they did not do so in the second. They tended in fact to support the left-wing of the Socialist party, helping it to keep the most militant workers from going beyond the framework of the UP.

Creus. As the comrade says, the MIR was unable to build an alternative mass leadership. It should be noted that the MIR did nominally have a caucus in the union movement, the Frente de Trabajadores Revolucionarios [FTR—Front of Revolutionary Workers]. But this was only an appendage of the MIR and suffered from all its defects. The MIR was essentially a bureaucratic organization and the FTR also suffered from this bureaucratism. It was impossible by such methods to organize an independent workers vanguard.

The social base of the MIR was first of all peasants and then the inhabitants of the shantytown belts around the cities. They had very little in the workers movement. This led them in an opportunist way to underestimate the cordones industriales, which were the vanguard of the working class. They put their emphasis on the comandos comunales, which combined the shantytowns and some other sectors and in which the workers were included but in a diluted way. No real comando comunal existed; there were only embryos that were not even on the level of the cordones. We were not against the comandos comunales, but we thought that the fundamental thing was to strengthen the cordones industriales, which should have been the axis of the comandos comunales.

Along with their opportunism, it should be noted that there were spontaneous and adventurist attitudes in the

MIR. At times they planned seizing factories and streets in sudden actions that were not prepared by previous mobilization of the masses and by discussion. This obviously led to failures. At times they tried to substitute the action of groups of their own members for that of the masses. For example, when they tried to take some factories back from the rightists who had occupied them while the workers were out, they wanted to have Mirista groups do it, instead of trying to organize the workers themselves, who were beginning to see the need to do this. This happened specifically in the AG factory.

As the comrade said, they failed to put up their own candidates in elections when they had the strength to do so. Instead they gave uncritical support to the leader of the SP left wing, Altamirano.

Q. What is the role of the fascist groups in the repression?

Creus. Everybody is calling the junta a fascist government. We don't think that what exists in Chile is fascism. I don't say this to try to prettify the junta any or to minimize its guilt. This does not mean that it is any less barbarous; it could hardly be any more barbarous. The fact is that if the military has not established a fascist regime, it is not because it doesn't want to. Fascism, as we define it, is a mass movement. It involves political gangs repressing the masses. But there are only the embryos of this type of fascist gangs in Chile.

At present, the repression is being carried out almost entirely by the armed forces. If the fascists have been involved in any of this, we have no news of it. On the other hand, the fascists are playing a role by informing on leftists and by offering the junta trucks and everything it needs. But the repression, the massacres, is being carried out by the armed forces.

Crushed

Q. How great a defeat do you think the Chilean workers have suffered? How soon will they be able to recover?

Creus. The working class has suffered a very grave defeat. The entire vanguard is being crushed. The leadership in the cordones and the left parties is being annihilated—not just the top leadership, but the intermediate leadership and now even the activists in the factories. The entire student body at the University of Concepción, for example, has fallen under the repression. It is a defeat from which it will take a long time to recover.

Blanco. This is a defeat of catastrophic proportions because it comes in the context of a series of defeats in Latin America. The coups in Uruguay, Bolivia, and Brazil, for example, have reinforced the reactionaries. Argentina is one of the few bulwarks left. In the present situation, it represents a great hope for a new rise in Latin America.

Q. What can we do outside Chile to help minimize this defeat?

Blanco. We have to develop a worldwide campaign to restrain the repression in Chile. In the first place, we have to stop the executions and killings, many of which take place every day. Secondly, we have to win more humane treatment for the prisoners and force the military to abolish its special tribunals. The demonstrations that occurred throughout the world in the wake of the coup had an immediate effect. A few days after the initial massacres, it was evident that they were trying to apply some restraint. So, I think that this campaign must be continued in order to save many lives from the slaughter that is going on every day.



"I HAVE BECOME absolutely convinced ... that the strongest counter-revolutionary party in Latin America is the Communist Party."

These are not the words of a Maoist or 'ultra-left' Trotskyist. They are the considered observations of a US embassy official made ten years ago in Uruguay. If, ten years later, that embassy official still wants some examples to back up his estimation, then he will find plenty by looking at the record of the Chilean Communist Party (PCCh) and the military coup which recently overthrew the Allende government.

The PCCh was one of the mainstays of the Allende regime. Today it lies in ruins. Its leaders are either in hiding, in exile or in prison; its members, who cannot hide so easily, are many of them dead.

And of course the defeat extends far beyond the PCCh itself. Trade unions are now illegal, Marxist literature is being destroyed and the reforms made by Allende's Popular Unity government now count for nothing.

In terms of human life it is still not possible to estimate the loss that the Chilean working class has suffered, but it is known that 500 Santiago workers at the Sumar textile plant alone died fighting on the factory floor, in hand to hand combat with the military.

Respect

Moreover Chile under Allende had become a refuge for thousands of socialists fleeing from the repressive governments throughout Latin America. The military junta is whipping up a 'foreign agitator' hysteria against these people and they face certain death if caught.

And yet right up to the time the troops appeared on the streets, the PCCh was actually placing the armed forces on a pedestal and proclaiming them the "workers' friends".

In the magazine 'World Marxist Review' a PCCh spokesman, Banchero, writes that "Bonds of cooperation and mutual respect have evolved between the army and the working class in the name of the patriotic goal of shaping Chile into a free and democratic land". This at a time when one coup had already been attempted by a section of the army and defeated, and when every informed observer knew that another was on the cards!

With its 100,000 members making the largest Communist Party in the Western Hemisphere, no party was in a better position than the PCCh to warn of the oncoming holocaust and mobilise the working class in preparation. But this it was unwilling to do.

Instead of attempting to take the situation in its own hands and mould the independence and organisation of the working class, it preferred to wait passively on events, clinging to the coat tails of Allende's government, of which it formed the right wing.

Disarm

But in one very important respect it was not passive. It actively opposed the self-arming of workers, and actively supported steps by the Army and Police to disarm them. "The enemies of the armed forces are in the reactionary camp" it declared, and claimed that by seeking to arm themselves, the workers would "drive a wedge between the people and the armed forces."

The Communist Party's disarming and misleading of the working class in Chile is not the result of the quirks or personalities of its leaders. The roots of its disastrous policy are to be found in the ideology of



The Communist Party of Chile

ARCHITECTS OF DISASTER

Stalinism and in particular the idea of 'peaceful coexistence' between antagonistic classes and social systems.

In the words of Hugo Blanco, the Peruvian Trotskyist who managed to escape the army terror in Chile, "Stalinism arose in the Soviet Union as a political expression of the bureaucracy ... created by Russia's backwardness, by the exhaustion of the people, and the isolation of their revolution... It knows that the triumph of socialism will sweep it away; it likewise knows that the triumph of bourgeois counter-revolution would mean its destruction. To prolong its existence it has to try to maintain the status quo."

The CP in Chile inherited its reformism, its illusions in the neutrality of the capitalist state, and fear of the workers' self-activity, from the 'counter-revolution' in the Soviet Union which placed a parasitic bureaucracy at the head of a workers' state. In the early 1930's the majority of the Chilean CP declared for Trotskyism, but the movement fragmented and since then the party has followed Moscow's orders to the letter.

In 1941, for example, when the Soviet bureaucrats needed an alliance with US imperialism, the PCCh denounced 'reactionary forces' for "discrediting the good neighbour policy of President Roosevelt by an anti-imperialist campaign".

It was US, and not German, imperialism which robbed Chile of her natural resources, exploited the masses and condemned the country to underdevelopment; yet the leader of that imperialism was praised by Chile's 'Communists' as "the world's greatest statesman."

While other western CPs have lessened their ties with the Kremlin, Chile's remains a model of orthodoxy. It supported the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, campaigned against Chilean recognition of China, and secured the banning of "L'Aveu," a revolutionary film attacking Stalinism — while at the same time allowing reactionary and fascist propaganda to flourish in Chile.

In domestic politics, it has always feared the combativity of the working class, acting as a break on radicalisation. It formed its first alliance with the Socialist Party (PS) in 1958.

By the 1964 elections the PS intended to run on a much more radical programme, so the

PCCh refused to form an executive with the PS if victorious, because the programme was 'too socialist'. Instead they were to support Christian Democrat Frei's 'Land Reform' measures, which only expropriated 2% of big landowners' estates, against Socialist Party criticism.

Finally the PCCh supported Allende's re-nomination as Presidential candidate in the 1970 elections. Allende was nominated against the wishes of the much more militant members of his own Socialist Party, only getting the nomination on the second ballot.

Another consequence of its fear of mass action is the attempt by the PCCh to substitute other forces for the working class, in order to attain what it conceives of as 'socialism'. In the general context of Latin America, the CPs look towards what are described as the 'national bourgeoisie' or 'progressive sector', who are supposed to modernise the country and free it from the grip of imperialism.

Fled

The role of the national bourgeoisie in leading this struggle is about as miserable as that of the 'Communist' Parties: it cannot lead a struggle against the very same imperialism which protects its interests by providing capital for investment or, when the need arises, military aid.

If its dependence on the national bourgeoisie's non-existent will to fight imperialism has made the Stalinists look stupid (particularly in Brazil in 1964, where the major spokesmen of the 'national bourgeoisie' literally fled the country rather than fight imperialism) the CP now foisted its attentions on the military.



Luis Corvalan, now Junta's prisoner. Socialists must demand his release.

Corvalan was to say in 1970 that the army "is not invulnerable to the new winds blowing in Latin America and penetrating everywhere."

While, it is true, the PCCh did not expect the army to carry out 'progressive acts' itself in Chile (though this is expected of them in Peru), it would nevertheless "assure the sovereignty, independence and dignity of Chile", and guarantee "our political process".

Any attempt to create a 'parallel army' — i.e. a workers' army capable not only of defending the workers' gains, but also of smashing the bourgeois state machine, and thereby establishing the prerequisites for the building of socialism — would be tantamount to "showing distrust in the army" (Corvalan).

Yes indeed!

The PCCh was therefore prepared to regard the state as neutral, and sow within the working class the idea that having gained governmental power, a socialist society had in fact already been established.

We have now witnessed how deceptive this was.

Now, after the defeat, has the PCCh assessed the part played by its own policies in that defeat? No! It, and its sister parties around the world, have been quick and loud in their explanation that, but for the outside intervention of the C.I.A., everything in Chile would still be hunky-dory.

Yet with this excuse for the defeat, we see the final hopelessness contained in its conception of the 'peaceful road'.

For the 'peaceful way to Socialism' firstly isn't peaceful, and secondly, its partisans don't even themselves believe that it can succeed in bringing in socialism. For as soon as Socialism was 'under way' the CIA would step in and nothing could be done.

As one Venezuelan CP deputy put it: "Do you realise what would happen if we took over? We'd either be invaded by the US Marines, which would not be bad from an international cold-war point of view (the statement is pre-'detante'), or we would have to nationalise the oil. But who the hell could we sell it to? We can't eat oil and Russia can't afford to feed us." Is it any wonder, with such a strategy that Castro once accused Krushchev of lacking Cojones (balls).

Now, reaction has triumphed in Chile. The spark of revolution which will ignite the continent will have to come from elsewhere. The Chilean experience, a replay in many aspects of past defeats, has taken place in a vastly different context from the Stalinist betrayals of the 1930s.

Cuba

Imperialism cannot keep the lid on Latin America. It cannot buy social peace there. It can only rule through naked repression. Yet it faces a highly combative working class and a peasantry hungry for land, and for these reasons can only contain these forces, not destroy them.

In 1959 the Cuban experience provided a great lesson for the masses in Latin America, demonstrating above all that imperialism can only be challenged and overthrown by force of arms, although developments since the Cuban revolution have shown also that force of arms in itself is not enough.

Allende attempted to 'liberate' Chile 'by using different means'. He failed. The lessons must be learned, and a revolutionary movement constructed, in the knowledge that the nonsense notion of Stalinism's 'peaceful road' must be rejected and destroyed.

Bas Hardy

MAIL ORDER MISERY

THE LANCASHIRE towns of Preston, Oldham and Bolton are the centres of one of Britain's most booming 'industries' — mail order. All the household names of mail order — Littlewoods, British Mail Order, and GUS — have their main warehouses in these towns.

Many readers will have seen the glossy catalogues of Janet Frazer, Shopping Post, John England and Marshall Ward, to name just a few. Behind the glossy image, however, lies an industry in which workers are poorly paid, overworked and badly organised, treated with a gruesome mixture of viciousness and paternalism by managements which provide appalling working conditions and reap enormous profits.

There are two large semi-monopolies which dominate the industry — Littlewoods (which includes also the Pools and the department stores), owned by the Moore family, and British Mail Order (BMO) whose fledgelings include GUS (Great Universal Stores) and Drivers.

In a town like Bolton, the mail order firms employ a large percentage of the female work force. Probably 10,000 work in

the industry, and on the whole about 70-75% of the workforce are women. Around the giants of BMO and Littlewoods a number of smaller, independent companies have mushroomed, latching onto a good thing.

Old mills

The decline of the cotton industry since the twenties in the North West has left the area littered with redundant old mills, and it was into these that the mail order firms have moved. They were large, easily converted into warehouses, and most of all cheap.

Many of the mail order warehouses in Bolton are still referred to as mills (Beehive Mill is one BMO's main warehouses, whilst Croal, Lincoln and Dove Mills are part of the Littlewoods empire).

Taking over and converting the old mills was fine for the bosses, but the results for the workers are not so good. Many of the mills are badly ventilated — hot and stuffy in summer, freezing in winter. Facilities can be diabolical, but even at the

Booming Sweatshops of the North West.

by John Cunningham

best of times the warehouses are deeply depressing places to work in.

Wages have slightly improved but are still scandalously low. Right now they are negotiating for around £20.30 for the lowest male grade at Littlewoods, whilst women on the lowest grade will get the princely sum of just over £16.45; and on reaching the exalted grade W3, they'll get all of £18.55 — to include the one-third towards equal pay allowable under Phase 2!

With wages at rock-bottom, profits are of course fantastic, and show no sign of levelling off. Littlewoods have sent out more catalogues this year than ever before. It is certainly no coincidence that John Moore, the virtual head of the Littlewood

empire, is also one of the richest men in Britain.

To add to the misery of the surroundings, the dull monotony of the work and the austerity wage packets, the mail order worker labours under a regime tightly designed to make people work as hard and as fast as possible. At Littlewoods, for instance, a bonus system operates which keeps workers on the go more or less all day and is structured so as to keep all workers on their toes — even those not on 'direct' bonus are affected by 'site bonus', which means they get an average of the bonus for the whole floor.

With bonus possibly making that all-important difference between a family sinking or just making ends meet, this degrading system keeps a tight hold, its presence felt like a thousand watching foremen.

Then there's the overtime — as if the hours weren't long enough and seem even longer. With a refusal to work over being frowned on (it's been known to lead to victimisation, too) overtime is virtually compulsory, and it's common to put in 2 or 3 evenings and a Saturday morning. For those with a family to keep, though, the compulsion lies in the abysmal basic wage packet.

Wages deducted

The work itself is boring and repetitive. Jobs include 'picking' which means going round picking orders off the shelves; pickers are set targets which must be reached or there is a **deduction** at the end of the week! Then there is packing: not so exhausting as 'picking', but it means being stood in one spot all day wrapping and packing the orders going out, with an extended visit to the small and dirty toilets virtually the only chance of a break and a sit-down in the long day.

For the men, the job mostly consists in moving boxes of goods from A to B, replenishing stock, etc. Not exactly inspiring either!

One final indignity are the searches, with the companies obsessive about what they call "security". One of the conditions of employment is that you are liable to be searched at any time. Security guards have the right to take anyone inside their office and search them completely, even if they're not going outside the building.

In these warehouses handling small valuable items, searching is very frequent — and very thorough.

And to watch over the work there are the supervisors, themselves watched over in a hierarchy which ends in the manager's office. And back from there come the orders: one of the things these workers find most annoying

is the way any individual is moved from one job to another and back, seemingly at will.

Against this background, perhaps the most obnoxious and despicable thing of all is the management's paternalism, particularly with the women workers who are invited to join in competitions to improve efficiency and even to enter the annual 'Miss Littlewood' or 'Miss British Mail Order' contests.

This whole set-up is nothing if not symptomatic of the non-union job. In fact, for years organisation in the warehouses was almost unheard of. In recent years, however, many have joined unions, mainly USDAW (Shop Workers). This is still not sufficient, as the conditions amply testify, and it's important that USDAW undertakes a really intensive recruiting campaign, especially in those places where unionisation has still barely taken root.

USDAW

Many workers still do not see the need for a union, and the lack of militancy shown by USDAW on pay and conditions only reinforces this attitude; for the members themselves, its appeals to the Pay Board and the Government only lead to demoralisation and defeat.

Nevertheless, there have been times when the workers have taken initiatives. On May Day, USDAW members in the Littlewoods warehouses in Bolton were all out. A few months ago, members and non-members staged a walk-out at Bolton GUS, and there has also been a full-scale strike at Empire Pools in Blackpool earlier this year.

What these workers need is above all confidence in their ability to win a fight: after living for years on the lowest wages going, there's certainly no shortage of strong feeling for a change. ■

LONDON TEACHER VICTIMISED

ON OCTOBER 9th, 100 London teachers picketed the headquarters of the Inner London Education Authority, over the case of Mrs. Dorothy McColgan.

Dorothy McColgan is a teacher of some twenty years' experience and a prominent member of North London NUT. Since June 1971 she has taught at Hungerford Infants School. The ILEA is now trying to stop her teaching there and shift her arbitrarily to another school.

When Mrs. McColgan asked for an explanation, she was told by the Education Officer that her opinions were "unacceptable to the Head" — who had, apparently, been enabled by a secret agreement to transfer her at any time without giving a reason.

Although it was admitted that she "works harmoniously with other teachers" and is "kind and gentle with children", her action at a previous school, when she was among teachers who pressed for an inquiry into irregularities, was enough to make her head wary of 'trouble'.

Then, according to the socialist teachers' paper Rank and File, "During the last school year Mrs. McColgan had a letter published in 'Contact', the ILEA journal, advocating greater democracy in schools. This persuaded Miss Robbins, Head of Hungerford Infants, to take advantage of the agreement (to transfer her) and she asked for Mrs. McColgan to be moved."



Undoubtedly Mrs. McColgan is being victimised. But the issues raised affect all London teachers very directly — quite apart from the need for solidarity.

The insecurity of teachers in London is built into the grading structure. Normally a new teacher will start as a temporary for a year and then apply to be put on the divisional staff, which supposedly means that you are guaranteed a job in the division in which you work. The final rung is to be 'assigned' permanently to one school, and therefore guaranteed a job at that school.

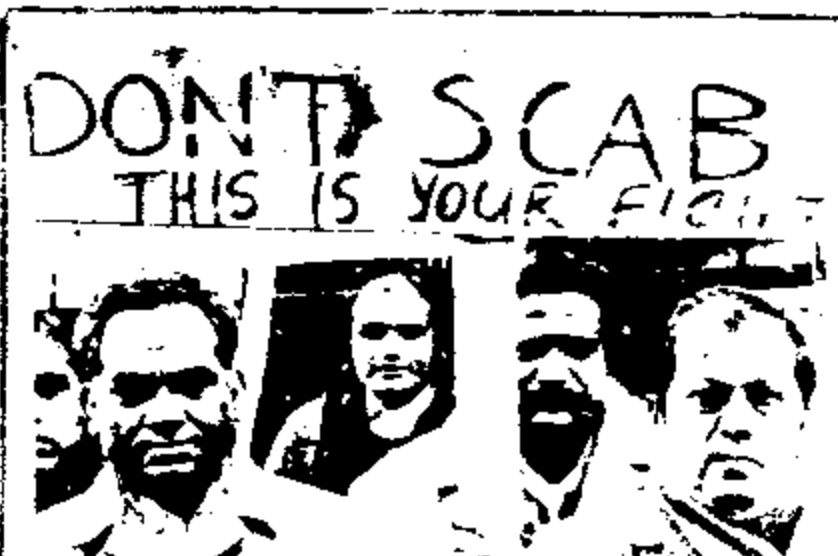
But this case demonstrates clearly that in fact no teacher is safe from being moved when and where the ILEA chooses, for Mrs. McColgan did in fact have a permanent assignment to teach at Hungerford Infants. But despite this the ILEA has resorted to a clause which is contained in all London teachers' contracts, which enables them to move a teacher from school to school just as they please.

It is now seven weeks since the beginning of term, when Mrs. McColgan was refused admission to her school. Since that time, because of her refusal to teach anywhere else, she has received no pay and neither has she received any financial help from the NUT.

The ILEA have picked on Dorothy McColgan because she is a militant. But the days when teacher militants were isolated are coming to an end. Teachers are beginning to show that they are no longer meek and mild and too concerned with their 'professional' status to defend themselves.

Accordingly a large group turned up to picket the school on the first day of term, and many more supported the ILEA picket. This fight must be maintained and won. If not, there is no assigned teacher who is safe from being moved.

Two Pamphlets from WORKERS' FIGHT

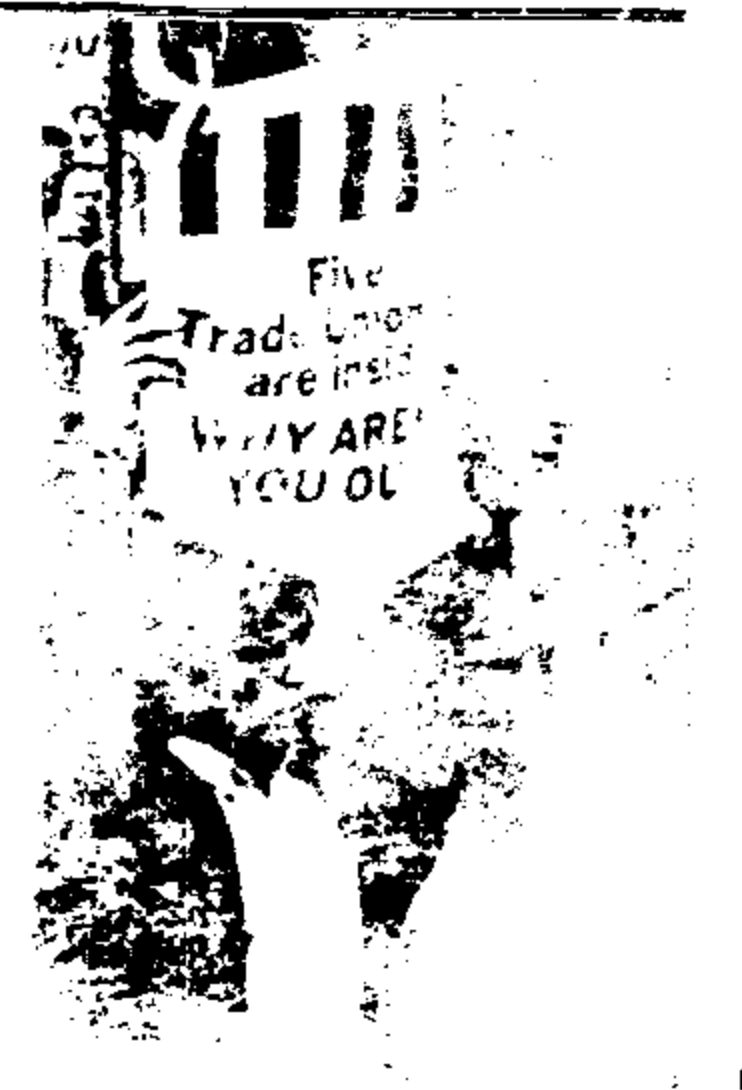


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Triumph Meriden sit-in told: A.U.E.W. Don't buy it - take it!

ON WEDNESDAY, 17th October, workers at Triumph Motorcycles Meriden occupied their factory in a bid to prevent a threatened closure and loss of 1500 jobs.

Triumph Meriden is part of the Norton Villiers Triumph combine which was recently taken over by the finance company Manganese Bronze. If Manganese Bronze have their way the same rate of production will be continued by transferring work to NVT (Wolverhampton), while the Meriden plant will be closed and the whole work force sacked by the beginning of February next year.

Already they have closed NVT (Andover), which is now a distribution centre, despite a six month work-in to save the factory. Now it is Meriden which is up for the chop.

Two weeks ago Meriden workers took the first step to save their jobs when they blockaded the factory while continuing normal working. The

gates were chained and no bikes were allowed out although the local management still supervised production. This move led to a meeting between the AUEW convenor, John McLoughlin, and the chairman of Manganese Bronze, Dennis Poore (who incidentally is on the board of 14 other companies).

Not surprisingly Poore's main concern was the bikes that were piling up outside in the rain. But as John McLoughlin told him, "you have already chucked 1750 people out in the rain without any protective clothing. What about that side of it?" When Poore was told that senior management would no longer be allowed inside the plant, he left the meeting saying that he would "TAKE ACTION NOW".



Dennis Poore

What he meant by that became clear on Tuesday 16th, when the whole work force was laid off. As usual the hard line of lay-offs was combined with the soft option. The management announced that if blockade was lifted then the redundancy deadline would be postponed from February to July.



Triumph workers and supporters at the Coventry precinct

But there are now 2500 bikes piled up in the yards and their value must be worth well over £1 million - a sum that even Manganese Bronze can't sneeze at. To throw away such a bargaining position for the promise of what would be at the most four months work would be suicidal.

Besides Poore hasn't been the only one to take action. Support for the Meriden workers is widespread and 2000 trade unionists turned up to demonstrate that support at a meeting in the Coventry precinct. Amongst those represented were the shop stewards committees of Rolls Royce and Jaguar Daimler. The speeches at the meeting however didn't at all reflect the kind of struggle that will be necessary

to beat the asset stripping of Manganese Bronze.

One idea which was pushed by the Labour MP for Nuneaton, Leslie Huckfield, was that a workers' cooperative should be set up in order to buy the factory. Where exactly the necessary £3 million is going to come from is less clear.

To throw away the control of the plant in the hope of raising enough money to buy it would be a recipe for defeat.

As John Fisher, of ASTMS, said on the demonstration: "You say you are proud of Triumph Motorcycles. You say it is your factory. Why then collect £3 million and give it to Poore? Go back to Meriden and take the factory, it is yours; you have been robbed for years".

Strikes for 24 call

FROM THE NORTH Wales 24 Defence Committee has come a call for industrial action in the event of any of the 24 being found guilty.

Additionally the Defence Committee will be calling further demonstrations in solidarity with the 24.

Obviously the success of the demonstrations in Shrewsbury, London and Glasgow on the opening day of the trial, on October 3rd, of these building workers arrested for taking part in flying pickets during last year's official national building workers' strike, has encouraged the North Wales Committee to ask for a stepping up of activity.

The Shrewsbury demonstration, attended by about three thousand workers and students from many different parts of the country and representing many different industries, had been given a big boost by the September 22nd meeting organised by the Liverpool Trades Council to Defend the 24. And now in London the Joint Sites Committee is setting up a Defence Committee.

Organisation of solidarity action and preparations for decisive action against judicial victimisation must continue. This issue is every bit as important as the jailing of 5 dockers in Pentonville in July 1972. The same response must meet any attempt to penalise any one of the 24, whether they are jailed or fined.

DEFEND THE NORTH WALES 24!



Defend the right to picket

PHASE 3

FROM p1

by the standstill. The threshold safeguard... further progress towards equal pay (and) certain types of London allowance."

But it would be wrong to think that these loopholes are just there to act as shock absorbers against the more militant struggles of the working class. They have two other purposes besides.

Firstly they allow the government to control and direct the flow of labour from one area or industry to another.

Secondly Phase 3 is aimed at reasserting the strength of the union hierarchy. During Phases 1 and 2 there was a serious undermining of the authority of the trade union leaderships. Many employers were ready to give the maximum which the pay code allowed and this cut out the need for negotiators, while 'lumps in the blanket' methods of pushing up rates through bonuses and piece-work could only be bargained for locally.

So paradoxically, up to now, Tory pay policy has resulted in a strengthening of shop floor organisation. A recent CIR report shows that there are twice as many shop stewards as the TUC thought there were.

To counter this trend Phase 3 not only seeks to limit the increases gained through piece-work but also shifts responsibility onto the union leadership. Union leaders are given a choice

of two systems:

"The maximum amount by which the average pay bill per head of the group may be increased in a twelve month period will be, under the first alternative, 7% of the average bill per head of the group for the preceding 12 month period; and under the second alternative it will be £2.25 per week per head of the group."

And within these limits the union leaders are given a high degree of control over how a pay award is allocated:

"It is for the negotiators to determine the appropriate increase and conditions of settlement within the limit and to decide on the distribution within the group, whichever form of the pay limit is chosen."

Thus the Tories plan that once the size of any pay award is established, they can shift the burden of how it is to be divided onto the unions leaders. If the Tories were successful in giving the union leaders the role of government brokers, it would lead not only to sectionalism, but it would also be a huge step along the road to integrating the unions into the state.

SWINDLES

On the other side of the plan is investment, with mounting pressure to invest since entry into the EEC, and optimism over expanding markets. A low rate of investment in manufacturing and high profits from land speculation and other such swindles has led the government to offer inducements to invest in manufacturing. State grants will be stepped up, the nationalised industries milked, to encourage the extra profits provided by wage restraint to be ploughed back.

Of course the two sides are not separate. For instance the

'unsocial hours' clause means an encouragement to shift-work, overtime and weekend working, and is partly intended to make up labour shortage to take up spare capacity.

We must defeat Phase 3! But we must realise that it is not going to be smashed the way an inflexible wage limit could be - by one group, like the miners in 1972, making a breach in it and the other weaker sections piling in after.

In this sense Phase 3 demands a longer struggle as it represents a much more serious threat than a "temporary" attempt to halt wages and increase investment in manufacturing industry. It represents an attempt - given the failure on the whole of the Industrial Relations Act - to restructure on a permanent basis the traditional methods of wage struggle and bargaining. It attempts to remould the unions to become organisations which decide how pay increases are to be divided and justified, rather than how much they are going to be. It attempts to substitute working class sectionalism for working class unity.

Phase 3 is like a productivity deal scheme. It is a trap. It is a net that the strong can swim through but the weak get caught in. In the long run, though, it is a trap for everyone - both strong and weak. Like the productivity deal it is based on peddling the employers' lies of there being a "national interest" or "cost to the nation".

In any case, all the soft sell is based on a gamble. If the relative economic upturn does not continue; if the world raw material prices do not stabilise - then we will be right back with the hard face of the Tories. All, once more, in the name of 'national interest'.

Thus the first step to defeating

to refuse it... "recognition". The AUEW is entirely right to continue to refuse recognition. But more is needed. It's no use "refusing to recognise" the right of a ravenous beast to bite your hand off. If he attacks you, then you must be prepared to DO SOMETHING to stop him. And it is no use appealing to Vic Feather's shadow, new TUC general secretary Len Murray, to do it for you - either to do it first or even to do it with you. They gave their answer long ago.

The AUEW must give a lead in action - industrial action which puts the gun to the head of the TUC leaders, and appeals directly to the rank and file for support.

Tens of thousands stopped work when the five dockers were jailed last year. The AUEW could call on these and others. Already transport, sheetmetal and other workers are supporting the mass picket of the plant, while messages of support and calls for action are pouring into the AUEW headquarters.

This case could be the turning point for a new militant assault against the Industrial Relations Act. But if the AUEW leadership fluff it and refuse to hit back it will become one more right wing argument against the AUEW policy and for the policy of the TUC - the policy of sitting up to beg in the Tory court and praying that a Labour Government gets in next time to repeal the Act and compensate its victims.

The AUEW has so far refused to beg. Now it must show that it knows how to bite. Hard.

So must the whole labour movement: ALL OUT IN SUPPORT OF THE A.U.E.W.!

Phase 3 is outright rejection of the whole principle of government control over wages and the whole principle of starting off with ideas like "the cost to the nation".

The solution to low pay is not through capitalist incomes policy. Phase 3 will actually make the position of the lower paid worse.

The TUC has been talking for years about a national basic minimum wage. Now it must be vigorously opposed to the Tory hypocrisy. We must fight to rally the whole labour movement - including the Labour Party - to the demand for a national basic minimum wage of £30 per week, with automatic cost-of-living adjustment.

One subsidiary demand not 'covered' in the Phase 3 document is on consolidation. Thus that at the end of the agreement any elements of earnings gained above the basic should be included in the basic. And attempts to consolidate now could shake the whole set of assumptions about costs that the Tories have made.

SOLIDARITY

The stronger sections of workers must not only push for their claims ignoring Phase 3 and rejecting its terms, but they must engage in active solidarity with the weaker sections.

We must remember our class is strong enough to win every fight if our full forces are brought into action.

We cannot afford another stain on our record like the hospital workers strike. We cannot allow the leaders of our unions to cut us off from engaging in active solidarity with other sections fighting Phase 3. Class solidarity is precious, but we can't afford to treat it like Sunday silver saved up for some "big day".