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to NUJ strikers
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STOP CALLAGHAN'S TROOPS SCABBING!

Build councils of action!

For the second winter running it looks as if the government will resort to the use of army scabbing to break a wages strike.

Lorry drivers by the thousand are still joining the growing national stoppage in support of their £65/35 hour week claim, even while petrol shortages from the tanker drivers' pay fight continue in much of the country.

The road transport strike, coupled to militant picketing of docks, factories and depots is bringing industry grinding to a halt.

The lorry drivers' action once more shows workers the potential strength of the trade union movement that has been held back by TUC leaders through three years of wage controls.

Strike breaking

And it confronts Callaghan and Healey with the need to use the army once more in its role of an organised strike-breaking force if they are to have a hope of stemming the wages struggle and holding millions of public sector workers within the 5% limit.

Since the eruption of strike action in Fords last year forced the union bureaucracy hastily to make an official strike call, the 5% pay limit and the trade union officials who have policed Phases 1, 2 and 3, have been under continuous pressure.

In the TGWU the growing frustration of lorry drivers met a response from the leadership, who called a national delegate conference on December 19. This conference decided that if a satisfactory offer were not made by the employers by 2 January, then strikes would begin on January 3.

Right wing officials

The subsequent movement has shown this militant decision working its way through the TGWU's largely right wing bureaucracy, threatening any who try to stand in its way.

Seeing these moves under-way, TGWU leader Moss Evans who had attacked the unofficial action by Texaco tanker drivers, has dropped his talk of "respon-



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Police have rehearsed picket-busting during the Grunwick mass pickets

sible collective bargaining" and made militant statements supporting the haulage drivers.

But Evans is stoking up further problems for himself. Because the more effective the strike is in shutting down the British economy the more Callaghan will feel duty bound to use troops to scab on the action.

The firemen's strike, and the development and training of the police Special Patrol Group as a specialist picket-busting squad (as seen and tested at Grunwick) are evidence that Callaghan will not shrink from direct strike-breaking.

New level

But army scabbing on the lorry drivers' strike would raise the struggle to a new level.

While many firemen were confused on the role of the troops, and generally did little to prevent them crossing picket lines, the lorry drivers' strike is a different situation altogether.

Essential supplies are in general being maintained now by lorry drivers' strike committees. Troops would be brought in and forced to cross picket lines in a move that could only be seen as strikebreaking.

Evans, along with the other TUC bureaucrats who scandalously sat back while army scabs attempted to break the firemen's strike, will be forced to take a clear position.

There can be no mistake. If the army is allowed to be used successfully in such an industrial dispute, the government has made no secret of plans to use

troops also against any strike by public sector workers.

But the TGWU alone with two million members has the power to defeat such moves, and should already be planning to enlist the aid of every other union in defence of the right to strike.

Blacking

Public sector manual workers and other sections with claims outstanding must be called on to come out now alongside the lorry drivers.

Any so-called "essential supplies" transported by army scabs must be blacked in every factory and workplace, and solidarity strikes and mass pickets called in preparation for a general strike if the troops are not withdrawn.

But already there are unmistakable signs that the TUC leaders would once again stand back and allow a Labour government to use troops against the unions.

Leaders of NUPE, representing 700,000 public sector workers have pulled back even from calling a one-day strike on their January 22 "Day of Action".

And progress on their £60/35 hour week claim—due to be settled last November—will not be discussed again until next month!

This leaves the lorry drivers isolated in the front line—just as NUPE leader Fisher left the

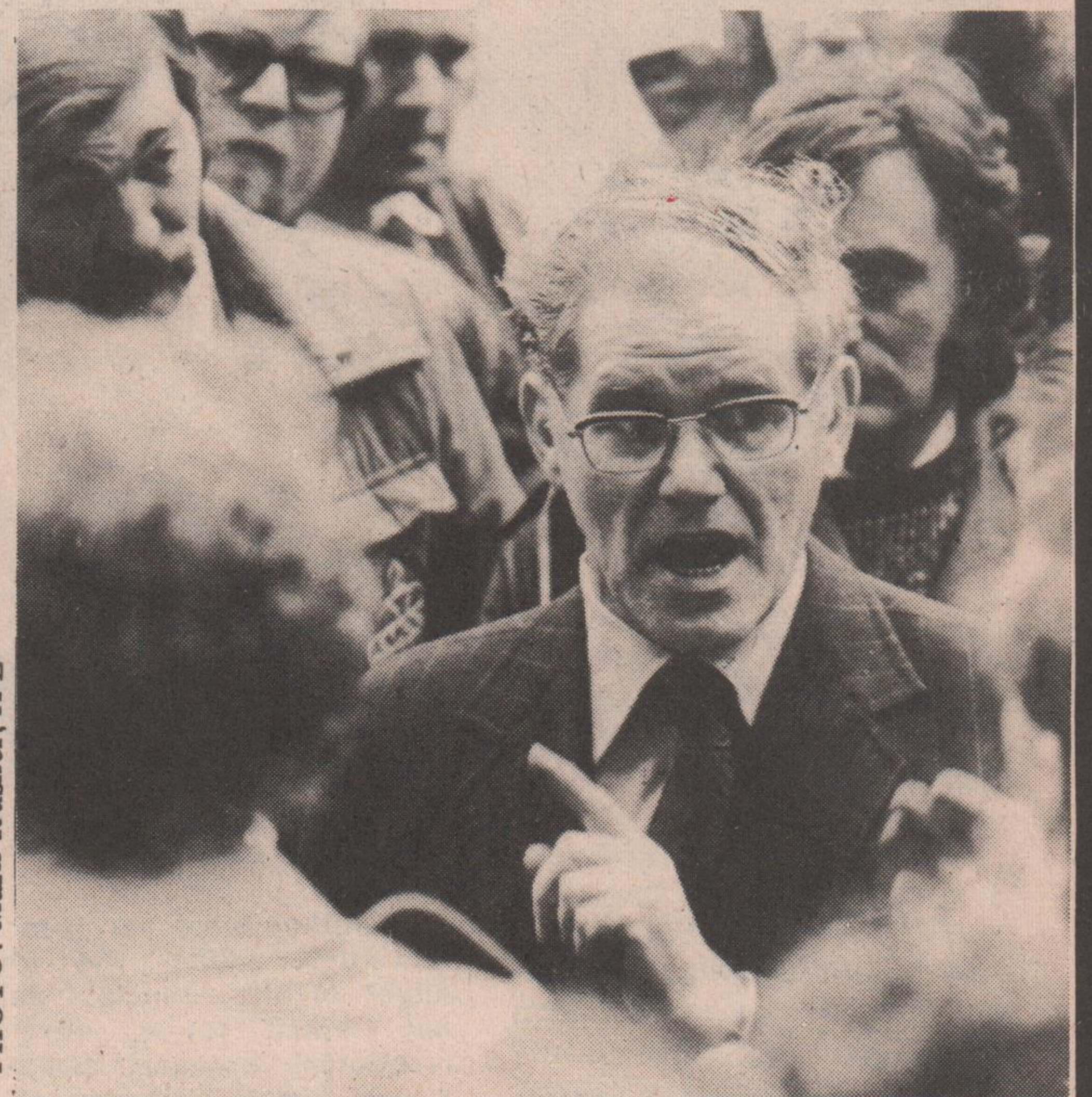


PHOTO: Mark Rusher, IFL

TGWU Road Haulage National Secretary Jack Ashwell

firemen to fight alone last winter.

Workers must place no reliance on such leaders to defend them from army black-legs. Steps must be taken on a local level to coordinate the most effective fight of those in struggle on pay.

In each area strike committees of lorry drivers, journalists and social workers should issue an appeal for delegates from union branches—particularly those in the public sector—stewards committees, trades

of food and supplies to essential services.

Journalists and strikers should also collaborate on the production of workers' papers to counter the lies peddled each day in the Tory press and reaching fever pitch at the present time as newspaper editors give vent to their hatred for workers striking to defend their living standards.

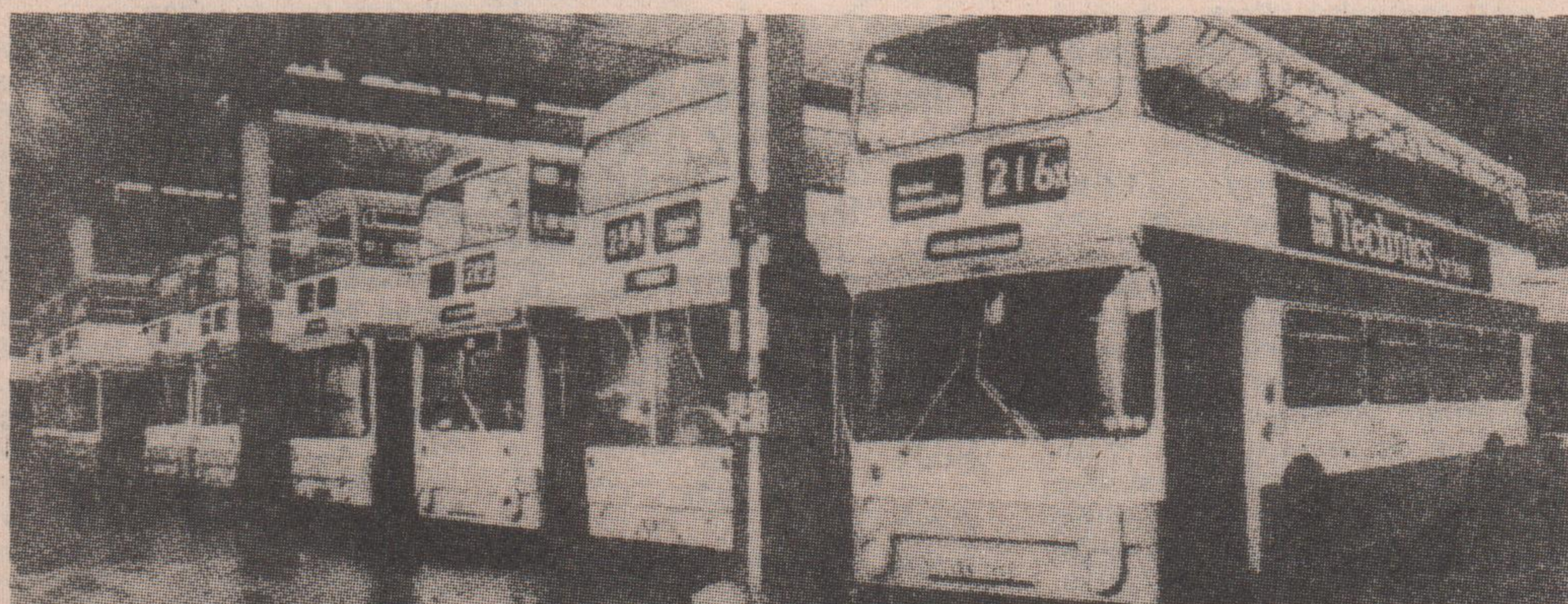
This Tory press offensive has linked up with Thatcher's latest efforts to whip up the middle class into a pre-election anti-strike frenzy.

Within the councils of action, revolutionaries would argue for policies that both develop the struggle and expose the role of the trade union and Labour leaders, whether right wing or "left".

In particular those "left" MPs such as Dennis Skinner that claim to support the pay struggle must be called upon not only to lend their weight to the fight for councils of action, but also to lead within the Labour Party a campaign for the removal of the strikebreaking Callaghan-Healey leadership.

Such demands show workers in practice the stark contrast between the left talk of these Labour opportunists and their refusal to fight the right wing.

As such they point to the need for the building of a principled, revolutionary party in the working class, as fought for by the Workers Socialist League.



Buses halted by shortage of fuel



PHOTO: Mark Rusher

Thatcher

councils, workers' political parties and other working class bodies, to form local councils of action.

Through such councils of action moves can be made to strengthen and extend the pay strikes, to organise mass picketing and set up joint committees to control the distribution



Carter thumbs up to China arms deal as Peking posters go on

President Carter has given Callaghan permission to sell Harrier jump jets to the People's Republic of China.

Callaghan has been allowed to announce this from his jaunt in Guadeloupe.

This will please such peace-lovers as Sir Frederick Bennett (Tory MP), Lords Chalfont and George-Brown (friends of the Shah of Iran) and Julian Amery who have set up a new club called the "Drunken Hare".

The name apparently comes from *Pravda's* description of Sir Neil Cameron (Chief of the Defence Staff) when he made his infamous anti-Soviet speech to Chinese tank commanders earlier this year.

Welcome support

No doubt the Chinese bureaucracy will welcome the support of such bastions of the ruling class.

It is certain that whatever use they put the planes to will not be disapproved of by these

defenders of capitalism.

Such planes can be used not only to deal with border clashes with the Soviet Union or Vietnam, but also to crush "internal disorder".

Clearly the bureaucracy is increasingly worried by the recent expressions of anti-bureaucratic feeling.

Although the high-point of the Big Character poster campaign in Peking seems to have passed, reports are still coming in of action against the regime.

A recent, staggering, strike of 50,000 "ruralised educated youths" sent to eight state farms in Yunnan was a well-

organised and disciplined event.

The 28 youth who demonstrated in Tien Anmen Square on 27 December also had well thought-out grievances against the local party leadership.

They appealed to Hua and Teng to sort it out.

Others, however, have had no illusions in the leadership as a whole and one very long poster in particular, by a Peking railway worker, is reported to have attracted special interest and approval from the crowds who read it.

It is a sustained argument for democratic rights and against bureaucratic control and

privilege.

"The state system of our country is practically the same as that of the USSR.

"This kind of state system is itself the origin of the birth of a bureaucracy and a bed of privileges.

"If we do not go on to a radical reform of this system... we may bring about a Soviet style of modernisation. Enrichment of the state, impoverishment of the people."

This railway worker, after making telling attacks on named Chinese leaders, goes on to make demands such as that all bureaucrats should be elected

and should be answerable to and recallable by the workers:

"No functionary should have a wage higher than that of a simple worker..."

"Thus the expenses of office of the mandarins will disappear along with the mandarins themselves..."

"I hold that the members of the party and the masses should be informed of political struggles inside the party, especially those which take place in the central committee."

This remarkable poster is one example of the increasing opposition which the bureaucracy is facing from socialists as well as from mobilisations of the masses.

The most important mobilisations reported so far have been the recent demonstrations in Shanghai.

A workers' demonstration on 29 December protesting at work conditions and wages was fired on by the police. One woman was reported injured.

An editorial in the *People's*

Daily recently called for an atmosphere in which the people dare to speak, criticise and debate:

"China's four modernisations must be accomplished by political democratisation."

Plainly it is hoped that a certain amount of 'letting off steam' will defuse the situation.

However, the Youth League journal observed that the "need for stability and unity" was even more necessary now that foreign trade was being developed."

The increase of trade with Europe, Japan and now particularly the US has been of major significance in the last year and Teng was named *Financial Times* "man of the year".

US businessmen are rubbing their hands with glee.

As Donald Regan, chairman of Merrill Lynch summed it up: "Any nation of over 950 million people growing at the rate of 18 million a year is a tremendous market."



Japanese trade minister Sonoda greeted in Peking



FT man of the year Teng Hsiao Ping

Spanish crises force election

Francoist Premier Suarez was virtually obliged to call a general election (scheduled for March 1) after the severe blow to his government's authority which the constitutional referendum turned out to be.

Under 60% of those eligible to vote said "yes" to the new constitution, which was designed to put a convincing veneer of parliamentary democracy over the furnishings bequeathed by Franco.

Stalinists

In its campaign for a "yes" vote, Suarez' Democratic Centre Union was joined wholeheartedly by reformist and Stalinist leaders.

They, too, have lost political face as a result of the half-hearted approval of the constitution.

Another blow has been the fact that neither the whole might of the Francoist police and armed forces, nor the reactionary demagogic campaign against terrorism of every major political party in Spain have been able to bring an end to the terrorist campaign of the Basque nationalists of ETA against the army and police.

Spectacular

Last week ETA scored its most spectacular strike since the assassination of Franco's No. 2 Admiral Carrero Blanco in 1973.

They killed the military governor of Madrid. And since January 1 they have killed police and army officers at the rate of one a day.

Although one of the alleged assassins of Carrero Blanco was murdered by government agents last month, ETA's active terrorists have in general successfully evaded the forces of

repression.

And that is partly because a large section of the working class have genuine sympathy for ETA's acts against the Francoist apparatus.

The events of November showed that a sizeable section of the bourgeoisie was—even before the referendum—unwilling to leave the state to the increasingly discredited "democratic" politicians.

It has become clear that the attempted military coup, which the government has tried to shrug off as a joke carried out by two or three demented officers, was in fact known about in advance by at least 400 senior officers, none of whom reported it!

They were presumably preparing to join it if success seemed possible.

The final element in the atmosphere in which the election will take place is the mounting struggle around the regime's proposal to continue with rigorous wage controls designed to cut real wages and over the enormous and still-growing level of unemployment.

So the calling of elections is the result of the extremely weak condition of the "reformed" Francoist state.

Problems

But the further attempt to produce a stronger government through democratic approval will also raise new problems for the Spanish ruling class.

In the first place it will bring the masses once more to the centre of the political stage and expose political leaders to their demands.

This pressure will be felt most acutely by the Stalinist and reformist leaders.

Communist Party leader, Santiago Carrillo, still supports an emergency government of national unity with the Francoists.

Socialist Party (PSOE) leader, Felipe Gonzalez, has been studiously ambiguous on this question but certainly wants to avoid being placed in a position of having to form a PSOE government with mass working class support.

The leaders of the main working class parties, therefore, will be seeking to maintain their consensus with the UCD while at the same time coming under tremendous pressure from their working class base to break with the bourgeoisie and adopt socialist policies.

Ecevit wins by 10 votes

A right wing motion of no confidence in Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit was narrowly defeated by 216 votes to 226 last week.

This gives a temporary respite to the crisis-wracked regime which both the fascists and the right wing parties are determined to see overthrown and replaced by direct military rule.

Massacre

Despite their talk, the fascists have no intention of removing Ecevit by peaceful, parliamentary means.

The recent fascist massacre of religious and national minorities in Karamanmaras shows the scale of the determination of imperialism and its chosen agents to secure a stable foothold in the Middle East as the upheavals in Iran continue to escalate.

This is why the latest trip by Ecevit's Finance Minister, touting an empty begging bowl around the western governments pleading for an emergency fund (between \$1 billion and \$15 billion per year for five years) to stabilise the economy has no chance of success.

Ecevit himself has met total failure in repeated similar tours.

The IMF and the imperialist nations—themselves confronting major economic crises—regard democratic rule in Turkey as an expensive luxury which they are not prepared to finance.

Fascists

Rather they look to the fascists and the military as the means to maintain capitalism in Turkey, by attacking the powerful Turkish

working class and seeking to destroy its organised strength as the only means to impose a new round of even more severe attacks on jobs and living standards.

Faced with this danger the working class can only fight back successfully by mobilising politically and organisationally against Ecevit's bourgeois government, its reactionary martial law crackdown, and its anti-working class policies.

The demand must be for a united front of working class parties and trade unions against the fascist-military onslaught, the building of defence squads to protect the working class and its organisations against violent attack, and the struggle for a workers and peasants government in Turkey.

Such a perspective is opposed by the existing leadership of the workers' movement—who remain in a bloc with Ecevit and the bourgeois RPP.

The building of a revolutionary party in Turkey based on the independent strength and interests of the working class is the vital task of the hour.

After six weeks of localised strike action, the Steelworkers of West Germany are now facing the latest and most serious threat of a sell-out by their leaders.

Last week Eugen Loderer and the other officials of IG Metall called a further 20,000 workers out on strike.

But they went on to a new round of intense negotiations with the employers with the eager mediation of the Labour Minister of the North Rhine-Westphalia state government.

In 15 hours of furious searching for a compromise, the union leaders completely abandoned their demand for a 35-hour week—supposedly the heart of the dispute on which there could be no compromise!

But Loderer came out of this session confident that he could sell the deal to his members.

The proposed settlement offers a tiny wage increase, with even smaller increases in holidays in compensation for unsocial shifts.



ETA terrorists continue to attack Francoist state functionaries

INTERNATIONAL



SWAPO BETRAYALS HELP S. AFRICA'S NAMIBIA STRATEGY

Part Two

The Namibian elections have been followed by what can only be described as farcical 'negotiations' between South Africa and the DTA over the holding of UN sponsored elections later this year.

A South African delegation which included Prime Minister P.W. Botha, Foreign Minister Pik Botha and Commander of the South African Defence Force General Malan met with the members of Namibia's so called Constituent Assembly "in an attempt to persuade them" to agree to UN elections.

Agreement

Surprise, surprise, the 'difficult negotiations' resulted in 'an agreement in principle' to plans for UN supervised elections.

The assembly accepted a resolution put forward by DTA chairman Dirk Mudge which set out a series of pre-conditions for acceptance of the UN scheme.

These include a deadline of 30 September 1979 for the elections and one of 28 January 1979 for an answer from the UN Security Council; no South African troops should withdraw from the territory before 'a complete cessation of hostilities; that the South African police retain responsibility for maintaining law and order, and that administrative and legislative power remain with the South African Administrator General until independence.

These pre-conditions, aside from the deadlines, do



SWAPO guerrillas

not cut across Security Council resolution 435 which sets out the election plan.

Thus the UN could easily

agree to the proposals and Secretary General Kurt Waldheim was quick to agree to them.

A further 'surprise' was

that the resolution did not make the conditions binding on the South African government and the UN recognition of SWAPO as the sole authentic represen-



SWAPO leader Nujoma

tative of the Namibian people was simply described as a 'serious irregularity'.

With such 'promising developments' imperialist talk of sanctions against South Africa can continue to be occasionally mentioned to keep the doubtful quiet and the road open for a 'satisfactory' solution.

The armed struggle had forced South Africa to soften its position but the antics of the SWAPO leadership has given reaction time to regroup.

In the face of the betrayals of the SWAPO leadership and the setbacks which these have led to it is absolutely vital that the struggle is taken up to build a genuine revolutionary leadership inside Namibia.

Guerrillism

In that struggle it will be necessary to guard against tendencies towards guerrillism amongst militants inside and outside SWAPO.

Armed acts divorced from a programme of democratic and transitional demands aimed at mobilising the mass of the oppressed can provide no progressive way forward.

Despite the immediately favourable conditions for the DTA it will inevitably face major problems.

The super-exploitation of migrant contract labour, for example will lead to major struggles by the working class.

Recently there have been strikes at the Rotsing and other mines.

Mobilise masses

Crucial to the struggle to build the Namibian revolution is the development of the programme and forms of organisation through which the masses can be mobilised and led in their day to day struggles—against migrant contract labour, against their pig-like material existence.

The political crisis facing the Namibian struggle is not merely compounded by a leadership tied to negotiation it is compounded by a leadership tied to imperialism. The way forward is not merely to build a leadership committed to armed struggle, it is to build a

leadership committed to the political independence of the working class.

It is to elaborate a programme and forms of action and build organisations which can lead the struggle against apartheid and capitalism in Namibia.

Now as the SWAPO leadership slithers along the path of betrayal, the extreme right uses the opportunity to organise and arm itself against internal leaders who despite many years of 'armed struggle' are left totally defenceless.

Defence

In the face of this situation a clear defence of the oppressed masses must be fought for:

*Root the armed struggle in the oppressed masses by developing workers' militia as part of a programme around which the masses can be mobilised. The first task of the armed struggle is the defence of the oppressed masses.

*Use the cadres with military training to build workers defence squads as units of that militia in Namibia.

*No negotiations with imperialism.

*No secret diplomacy.

*Councils of Action inside Namibia to mobilise against the South African/imperialist plans.

*Fight for a revolutionary programme of democratic and transitional demands:

1) Constituent Assembly tied to the demolition of the state apparatus.

2) Independent union and workers' committees.

3) Nationalise all multinationals without compensation under workers management.

4) Committees of peasants and agricultural workers—land to the peasants and agricultural workers. Smash reactionary tribal rule structures.

*Maximum material aid from the international labour movement. (In Britain remove Owen, imperialism's left-talking errand boy).

Correction to last week's article: Election results—DTA 41, Astar 3, three right wing parties—7 each.

White rats desert Smith



Black faces conceal white power

The acute crisis within the Rhodesian ruling class continues to be reflected in a mass exodus of whites.

Figures recently released show that in November more than 2,000 whites fled the country, bringing the net outflow for 1978 to 10,938.

The December figure is expected to exceed November's and the total projected fall in the white population during 1978 is at least 5%.

The 1978 total of under 4,500 white immigrants will be the lowest in over 25 years.

At the end of last month the joint Minister of Internal Affairs

Mr. Rollo Hayman resigned from the so-called transitional government accusing Smith of leading whites 'into a trap'.

In leaving the Rhodesian Front Party, Hayman said that his disagreement concerned the viability of the government which it is intended to set up after the April 20 elections.

Repression

The struggle of the Zimbabwean masses which first threatened racist power, forced Smith to resort more and more to military measures and repression.

Despite serious defeats when the Zimbabwean nationalist movements adopted a guerrilla strategy, mass struggle continuously re-emerged, providing the basis for a development of the armed struggle.

Internal deal

This forward movement then forced Smith to turn to an internal settlement alongside continued military response to the guerrillas.

Smith and his black collaborators have attempted to sell

the settlement to the masses on the basis that it would mean real changes.

But very few have been taken in.

Even less will they be taken in by the new constitution which changes the country's name to Rhodesia/Zimbabwe—and nothing else!

The elections, which it is difficult to see being effectively held given the current level of struggle, hold the prospect of black faces in government while whites retain the power.

Pressure from the masses is the only factor at present against a neo-colonial solution.

Perspective

What is necessary is a leadership able to warn against and resist such a sell-out, to stay independent of imperialism and to provide a perspective for the development of both the armed and the mass struggle.

In particular there must be a fight for the establishment of organs of workers' power within the liberated and semi-liberated areas.

This means the construction of a Trotskyist party.

Burntollet march: more policies less memories

The march last week from Toomebridge to Burntollet, organised by Irish left wing groups, should have been supported by every socialist and anti-imperialist militant.

But despite its exposure of the police/army repression in the six counties, the march also showed its weakness in its attempt under new conditions to relive the past, rather than point the way forward.

Ambush

The demonstration was called to commemorate the tenth anniversary of a march by about 100 students from Belfast city hall to Derry, which was savagely ambushed by Loyalist thugs and 'B' specials at Burntollet Bridge under the watchful eye of the RUC.

Under the conditions of 1969, with the growing mass mobilisation of the Catholic minority in the struggle for civil rights and against national oppression, this brutal attack helped shatter a period of reactionary political 'truce' between the O'Neill regime at Stormont and the bourgeois



The 1969 ambush

and petty bourgeois "leaders" of the Civil Rights movement.

The anti-imperialist movement grew and provoked splits and crises in the Stormont regime.

But a great deal of water has flowed under the bridge since then.

Successive Loyalist regimes have run into crisis and collapsed, and direct military rule has been imposed by the British imperialists.

The nationalist population has undergone a ten-year long experience of British army repression and

the failure of both protest politics and terrorist tactics to dislodge British rule.



The Provisional IRA, emerging as the armed defenders of the Catholic community against Loyalist attacks, has once again attempted to substitute individual, clandestine acts of guerrilla warfare for the necessary mobilisation of the Irish and British working class in the struggle to drive out the occupying army.

These tactics are currently taking the form of a campaign of bombings and shootings, both in the occupied six counties and on the British mainland itself.

Changed conditions

There is no "truce" for a new Burntollet march to disrupt. The political conditions in 1979 are entirely changed.

The need is not for heroic token gestures by small numbers of individuals but for a strategy to mobilise the Irish working

class in the struggle against national oppression and capitalist exploitation through a programme combining democratic and transitional demands.

Newly fused

But this is lost on the newly-fused Irish Pablotie grouping People's Democracy (which now includes the formerly independent USFI grouping 'Movement for a Socialist Republic', but currently stands outside the USFI).

Leaders of People's Democracy were in the forefront of the original Burntollet march—and cherish hopes of history repeating itself.

The anniversary march was therefore called in an attempt to achieve some form of 'unity' with the republican movement, around the formally correct slogans of 'Political status for republican prisoners', 'Troops out now, and 'End repression'.

Despite these limitations it would have been correct for Irish socialists to give the march critical support.

In the event, the 150-strong march was supported only by the Irish left—the IRSP, the Socialist Labour Party, the Trade Union Campaign Against Repression, and People's Democracy.



CARWORKERS CONFERENCE

Support is coming in for the conference for car and component workers to be held by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement in Birmingham on January 20.

Delegates will attend from Fords, Vauxhalls and Chrysler as well as delegations from a number of the BL plants.

The agenda will include discussion on the CDLM car industry statement—which was issued with the call for the conference—

and reports from the delegations present.

The CDLM is particularly keen that other groups working in the car industry attend and present their perspectives.

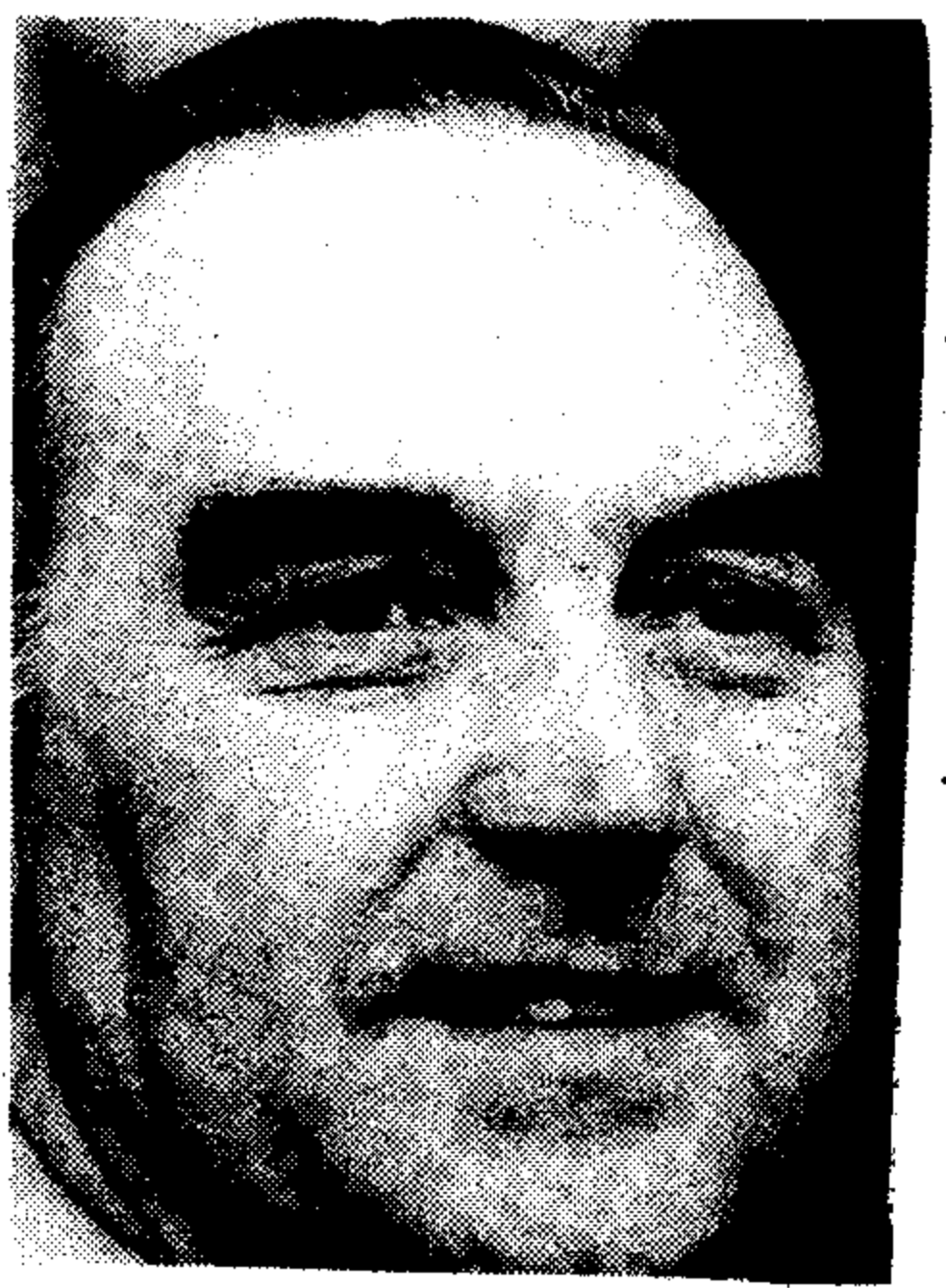
The main purpose of the conference will be to stimulate the broadest possible discussion on the problems of leadership in the car industry.

This includes examining the problems created when employers claim they have no money and union leaders acquiesce with this by dropping claims and pledging cooperation in closures and rationalisation.

THE CRISIS IN THE MOTOR INDUSTRY Called by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement

Saturday January 20th, 11 a.m.—5 p.m.
Digbeth Civil Hall
Birmingham

Full details from CDLM, c/o 37, Birchfield Close
Blackbird Leys, Oxford



Mason

Against such forces were ranged the full weight of Mason's repressive apparatus—determined to divert them from their chosen route.

The resulting clashes last week, in which marchers were forced off the road menaced and shot at by a gun-toting Loyalist fanatic certainly indicated the continuing repression of the Catholic population.

But they were, however, a pale echo of the events of 1969, and could not be expected to trigger off similar developments to those ten years ago.

The anti-imperialist struggle in Ireland has an important and a courageous history.

But what is needed now is a turn to the building of a revolutionary party that directs the Irish working class to look forward to socialist revolution rather than back to past glories and defeats.

PRESS GANG



Among the more beneficial effects of the drivers' strike has been the halting of paper supplies to some of the national press.

The Daily Mail, Mirror, Express and Sun were among those last week forced to contain their angry wailings within thin covers after they ran short of newsprint.

Editorials in many of the papers have been the verbal equivalent of the panic buying which gripped the petty bourgeoisie as soon as the strike started. Hysteria has been the key note of the day.

The Star—the latest and possibly the shoddiest addition to the capitalist poison sheets—was in little doubt. Over a front page story full of dubious speculation it placed the unequivocal headline 'Send in the Troops'.

Perhaps by chance and perhaps not this clarion call shared the front page with a picture of Prince Andrew carrying a double barrelled

shotgun. He was—on this occasion—only murdering pheasants.

The Daily Express best expressed the hysterical mood on "the lorry men's strike that is hitting every person in Britain" under the headline 'Has everyone gone mad?'

Of Moss Evans the Express wanted to know "what the hell is he doing about exercising some control over his men?"

Rising to a crescendo through a phony appeal over pensioners "struggling in the snow seeking the means of keeping body and soul together" the Express builds to its apocalyptic conclusion.

"The awful question is: Can this country any longer be governed sensibly? Clearly Mr. Moss Evans and other union leaders destined for the House of Lords have no control over members who run wild . . .

"The answer, of course, is that some day, somehow, someone has got to cry halt to the ruthless strike

weapon that threatens to destroy us all.

"Particularly the wildcat strike, that evil resort of dangerous men who refuse even to listen to their own elected leaders.

"The alternative does not bear thinking about.

"We already have chaos. Out of chaos comes anarchy. And anarchy leads to the destruction of all we value most.

"TIME IS ALREADY RUNNING OUT. HOW MUCH LONGER MUST WE GO ON DESTROYING OURSELVES?"

From the tone of that editorial not a lot longer. The drivers can be certain that they have the power to write their full claim to the employers. The press can already see the end of the world.

Now is the time for striking drivers to counter this poison by turning to the striking journalists with calls to turn their strike papers into organisers for the working class.

Fighting Labour's right wing

An interview
with
Keith Veness



Keith Veness, a long-standing active militant in the Labour Party, was expelled from North Islington in 1976 for attacking the local MP, Michael O'Halloran in a community newspaper.

Following protests to Transport House by four constituency parties and prolonged campaigning on this and other alleged malpractices in the notorious party of MP O'Halloran, Bill Jones, Transport House full timer, was designated to attend GMC meetings and more recently to act as chairman.

His report on the party has never been published.

Socialist Press interviewed Keith Veness in order to report on the struggle in North Islington but also to highlight his approach to that fight.

Much of the interview centres on differences between the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory, of which Veness is a member, and the WSL, with regard to the fight in the Labour Party.

Veness for instance clearly has an ambivalent attitude towards the Labour 'lefts'—distinguishing in a quite artificial way between the old guard 'lefts' such as Ian Mikardo and the new, noisier, variety such as Dennis Skinner.

Yet repeated incidents since Skinner's election to the Labour NEC have demonstrated that his political backbone is no less flexible than that of Benn or Mikardo whenever a showdown with Callaghan is posed.

Veness also claims that the SCLV has a "hard" programme which deters many 'lefts' from giving it support and refers especially to its demands on Ireland.

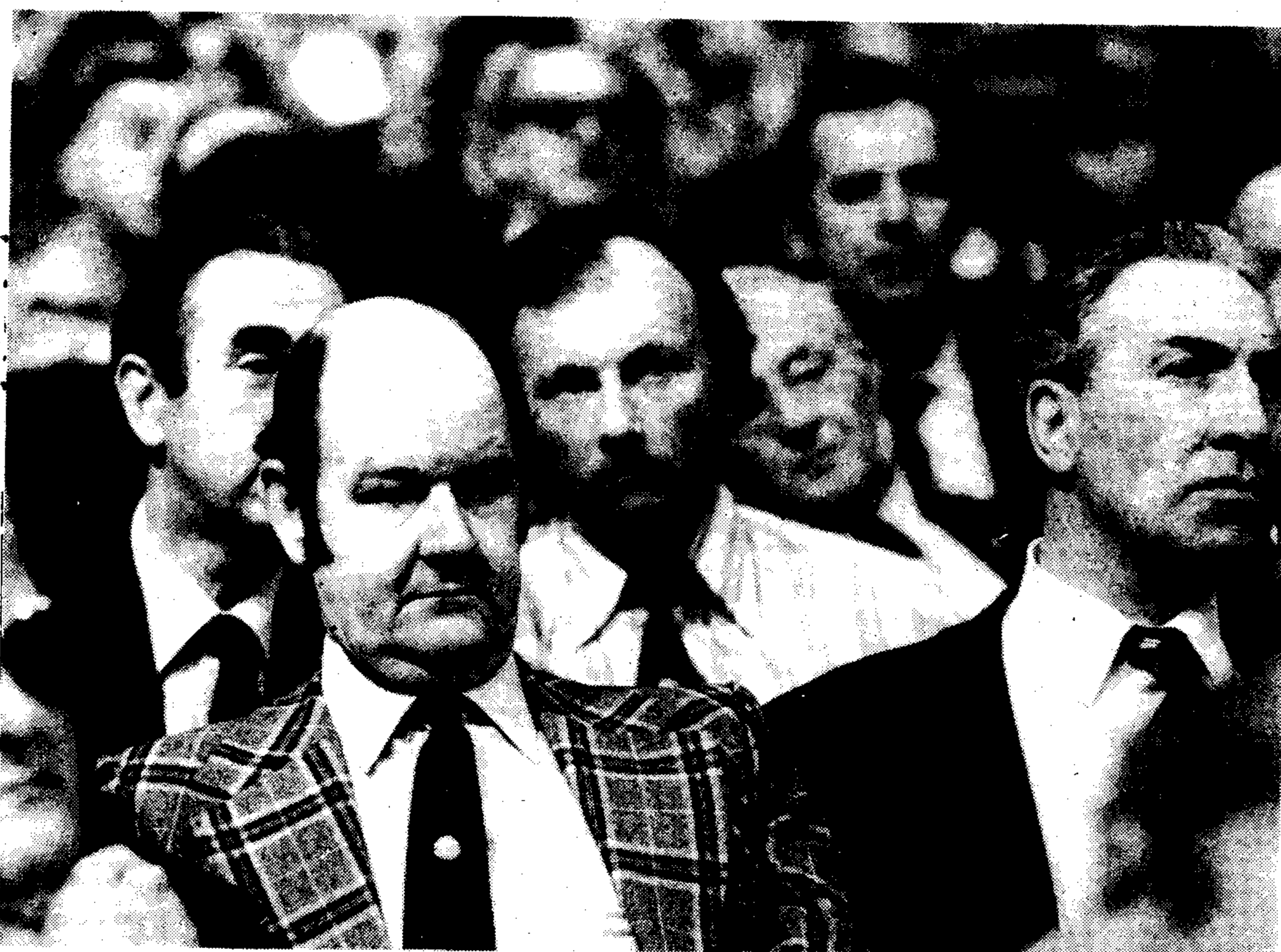
But he does not explain why Yorks NUM leader Scargill is allowed to declare verbal support for the SCLV while the SCLV itself makes no demands whatever on Scargill to fight for the removal of butcher Mason as MP for Barnsley.

Thus although the SCLV programme is largely non-contentious, *Socialist Press* has centred its criticisms on the way that programme is used in the fight to expose the 'lefts' within the Labour Party.

Since the interview was conducted, North Islington Labour Party has in fact been 'adjourned' until discussions have been held with the NEC.

This was the decision of the GMC reconvened in December, at which attempts were also made to remove Bill Jones from the chair physically.

The ward AGM's due in January, have all been cancelled.



Labour conference delegates

What happened after your reinstatement?

The NEC ratified my reinstatement in July, although it only passed through the GMC in November.

In September the GMC sought clarification and in October it said I must reapply as a new member.

In November, amidst uproar, Bill Jones chairing the meeting, said he ruled me a member 'as an EC instruction'.

This ruling was challenged and only supported by a minority—well over half the delegates voted against.

There was such a hubbub that the meeting couldn't continue—Bill Jones had to close it.

What is the significance of the expulsion for the general fight for socialist policies?

In North Islington terms it's tremendously valuable in making people aware of what's going on. It's alerted people to corruption in a way nothing else would.

It's also shown up the way the expulsion procedures need reforming.

It's taken 2½ years to get

reinstated from a not unsympathetic NEC.

You must retain the right to be a member pending appeal/NEC ratification. As it is you could be prevented from standing as a councillor, for instance, through the delay.

It's also shown North Islington to be more and more out of step with the general radicalisation going on in the Labour Party.

This is clear from Annual Conference—other delegates are much younger and put forward different kinds of policy.

Don't you think the slowness of the NEC to act came from their fear of a strong left alternative in N. Islington?

No, it's rather that the NEC are afraid of upsetting the status quo.

It comes from the parliamentary tradition, the belief of the left in the possibility of gradual change, their unwillingness to use tactics the right would have no hesitation in using against them.

They really believe that the right to elect the leader of the party at Conference will be won by degrees.

You don't see the left as scared by the impetus of a real fight to throw out the right wing?

It may be true of the Mikardos—not the Dennis Skinners. In fact without a sharp immediate fight you won't be able to remove the right—nor in fact to mobilise support to do it.

What do you see as the key questions to take up in the Labour Party now?

The key question is accountability. The machinery to get rid of an MP is tremendously cumbersome.

You won't be able to choose the best people—it shouldn't require a vote of no confidence.

You can't begin to fight for what you want if you still have representatives who have no intention of carrying out the decisions.

Conference decisions mean nothing because they're ignored.

Where is the 'sharp immediate fight' then?

The immediate question is the return of a Labour government.

Why do you support SCLV rather than the Socialist Press line of fighting for the kicking out of the Callaghan/Healey leadership?

I'm not against removing Callaghan and Healey.

The SCLV aims to unite various left groups in the Labour Party for a positive, socialist vote for the Labour Party.

It's an attempt to fight those on the left who abstain or work separately—to force them to take a position.

The return of a Tory government would be an enormous setback—you wouldn't get any clarification in the Labour Party then.

Don't you see it as around the strikes actually going on and coming up against the pay policy and redundancies, etc., and to link that to the fight to throw out Callaghan and Healey?

That assumes all the splinter fights can be brought together. I don't think they can.

As long as there's a Labour government it's quite clear where everyone stands—but it won't be if the Tories get in.

At the moment no one doubts that Callaghan is on the right.

What is your opinion of Socialist Press policies on the Labour Party?

Your programme is determined by what you do.

The crucial question is what

you do in practice—you've got a passive view.

It's necessary not just to denounce MPs but to organise to kick them out, to get candidates who will fight for alternative policies, and for an alliance of forces to achieve that.

There's nothing in the SCLV campaign that *Socialist Press* could disagree with—if there is you should say so.

We regard SCLV as too blunt-edged. It lacks that 'sharp immediate fight'.

SCLV organised far more meetings than you around Fords, and around Brick Lane against the ANL.

It was SCLV that put forward the resolution against the 5% at the Labour Party Conference and for the abolition of all immigration controls, against the sus charge, and for self-defence, against fascism.

It's the first time in 20 years that the debate on race has moved to the left, and that's because the people speaking were those who'd been involved in the front line.

That forced the exposure of Alex Lyons who's always been paraded as a left on race.

He landed up saying every village in Bengal was teeming with people ready to come here.

SCLV is central in the Hackney and Tower Hamlets Defence Committee—Patrick Kodikaree is one of our members.

Only a few hundred rather than 2,000 would have marched against the fascists while the ANL were off at their carnival—if it wasn't for us.

Then why didn't you fight to set up defence squads in the

East End—which the WSL fought for and campaigned for in a number of ways?

We did organise defence in Brick Lane—the march was it.

The majority of Bengalis believe in the police and were asking for more police protection and visiting the Bangladeshi High Commission—that was the level.

You're only going to build defence squads out of the successful defence of the area—flushing out the NF.

SCLV had a much better record than anyone else.

But the Bengalis—especially the youth—were already calling for and carrying out self defence. The crucial fight was to force the local Labour parties and trade unions to take that up—to build systematic defence squads—lists of volunteers ready to come out at any time.

We also disagree with the way SCLV embraces the lefts rather than exposing them. The revolutionary strategy involves breaking the working class from the 'lefts' as well as from the right.

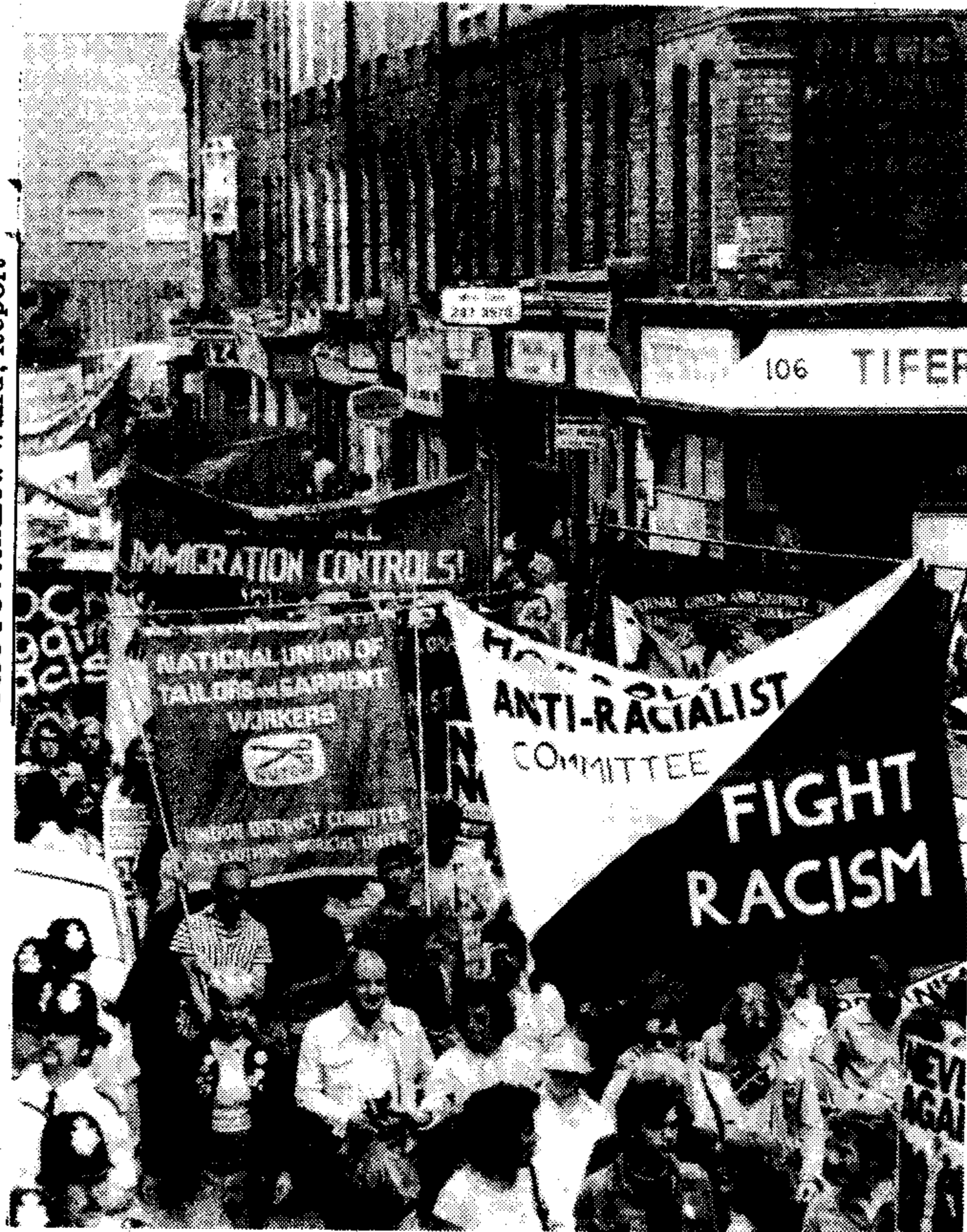
Yes, of course, but you have to mobilise people round a particular campaign—you have to have an organisation.

Not many lefts do support the SCLV because it is so hard—e.g. on Ireland.

It is our method to put these people on the spot, and that's not something tacked on to the end of the programme—it's the core of it.

The key question is whether it's possible to form an agreement on a minimal programme to unite the forces to carry this out.

SCLV thinks it is—but evidently the WSL doesn't. That is what we have to discuss.



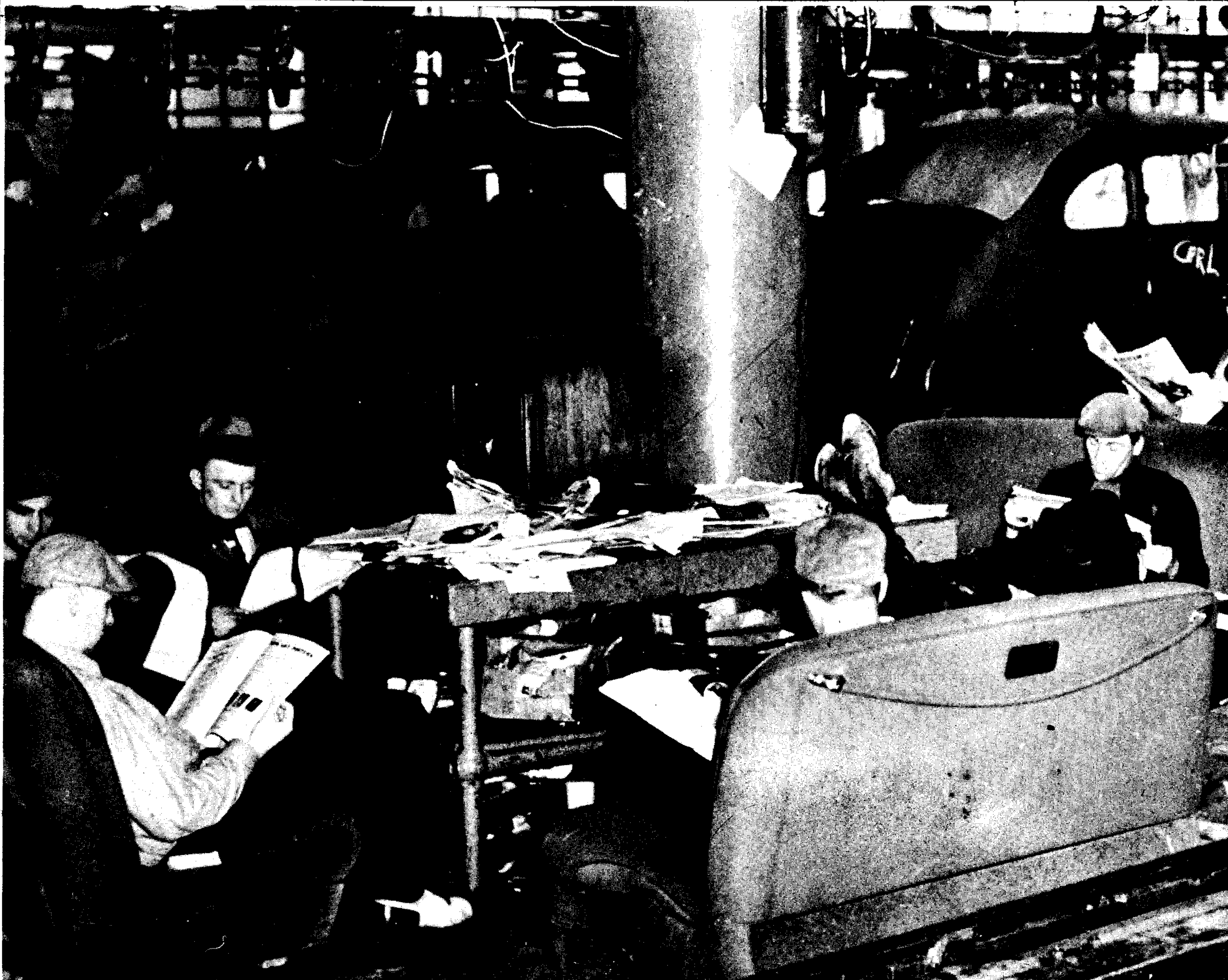
Anti-fascist demonstration in Brick Lane

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Sit-down strikers take it easy inside a car plant

THE BIRTH OF AMERICAN MARXISM

1978 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the emergence of the Trotskyist movement in the United States. The Socialist Workers Party which today claims to represent that tradition offers no more than a hollow mockery of the fighting spirit of that early movement. This article is the sixth in a series of seven being published by *Socialist Press* which examine the early history of the SWP, the party so central in the 1930s to the launching of the Fourth International.

"The task of the revolutionist—even if the march of events obliges him to work in the same organisation with the reformists, those political exploiters of the proletariat—consists not in taking the attitude of a disciple and of pretending to maintain friendship toward the agents of the bourgeoisie but of opposing, as clearly, as harshly, as unremittingly as possible the opportunists, the patriots, the absolutely bourgeois 'socialists', before the reformist masses". [Trotsky: *Crisis in the French Section*].

In October 1934 Trotsky convened a Plenum of the International Communist League (the embryonic Fourth International) to discuss the 'French turn'.

This was the name given to the tactical manoeuvre through which the French Trotskyists were to enter the Socialist Party (SFIO) in order to work within the left-wing of social democracy.

Their objective was to win those elements who opposed the Stalinists and who could be broken from

reformism to the revolutionary programme of proletarian internationalism.

Principled line

Trotsky himself was prevented from attending the Plenum (held in Paris) by close police surveillance, but the man he chose to lead the fight for a principled line on the entrant tactic was US Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon.

Cannon succeeded in putting to the Plenum a resolution entitled 'The Present Situation in the Labour Movement and the Tasks of the Bolshevik-Leninists', which effectively

answered the sectarian critics of the 'French turn'.

The degree of Cannon's success can be seen in the bitterness with which Molinier (leader of one faction in the French section) referred to "the secret diplomacy carried out here by your representative Cannon" in a letter to Trotsky.

Cannon's role in 1934 is vital to an understanding of the formation of the Workers Party in America at the end of 1934 when the US Trotskyists fused with the American Workers Party (see last week's *Socialist Press*).

And it is also central to

understanding the tactical entry into the Socialist Party in the US in 1936.

Before going into the details and consequences of the entry into the American Socialist Party it is necessary to answer two questions.

What were the objective conditions in the struggles of the working class in America at that time, and what was the nature of the Socialist Party itself in the mid-1930s?

The world crisis of capitalism, known euphemistically as 'The Depression', had hit the American working class most severely of all.

Wage cuts

Unemployment fluctuated between 17%-22% of the workforce.

Wage cuts were common as the capitalists attempted to introduce work sharing with loss of pay. Speed-up, mechanisation and mass redundancies were rife.

Violence by the bosses and wholesale indifference and corruption on the part of union leaders ensured that a mere three million workers were unionised in 1935 (out of a possible 35 million).

Faced with this situation a tide of working class militancy began to gather strength.

The great Minneapolis strikes of 1934 (in which the Trotskyists had played a leading role) were among the first indications.

Torrent of strikes

Then a whole torrent of strikes and occupations in 1936 and 1937 showed the pent up frustration and the determination of the working class to fight.

The old American Federation of Labour (AFL), long since fossilised into bureaucratic impotence, was challenged by the new Congress of Industrial Organisations (CIO).

By 1940 nearly 11 million US workers were

unionised.

Many of the political conscious layers of militancy rejected the ingrained Stalinism and degeneration of the American Communist Party.

But the newly-fused Trotskyist Workers Party was still tiny and only just turning to mass work after several years as a pure propaganda group.

This leads to the second question—the nature of the Socialist Party.

The Socialist Party split twice, in 1919 and 1921, as part of the development of the Communist Party.

Its membership dwindled and it degenerated into one of the world's shabby expressions of social democracy.

But as the Third International became more and more discredited in the eyes of the international working class and the malignant tumour of Stalinism spread into the affiliated CPs, the reformist parties began to attract new members particularly amongst youth.

Militancy

In America this was coupled with the objective conditions of a rising tide of militancy. As Cannon explains in his *History of American Trotskyism*:

"As the Communist Party became more and more bureaucratized, as expelled more and more honest workers and closed the door to others, the Socialist Party began to experience a revival.

"Its loose and democratic structure attracted whole new stratum workers who had never before been in a political movement."

By 1933, the Socialist Party had over 25,000 members and had developed an increasingly active centrist left wing.

Even during the creation of the Workers Party late



Union management thugs beat up a union organiser in Detroit, 1937



Sit-down strikers in Flint, 1937.

1934 Cannon was looking ahead to the question of entry into the SP:

"Even though we had formed a new party, and had proclaimed it as the unification of the vanguard, we realised that we could not ignore . . . this new movement, these new elements of strength and health and revolutionary vitality."

The Workers Party was too small to attract whole layers directly, so, in Trotsky's words:

"The Koran says that the mountain came to the prophet, Marxism counsels the prophet to go to the mountain."

Sectarians

In fighting for the tactical line of entrism Cannon and Schachtman had to contend with sectarian elements within the Workers Party itself.

With Trotsky's help, they successfully geared the party membership to an orientation into the organisations of the working class.

The simple alternatives posed by Trotsky in *It is Time to Stop* ring through Cannon's arguments. The choice was clear. Either the movement could go "forward to a wide arena of the Fourth International", or "backward to small circles stewing in their own juice".

The small circle within the Workers Party which rejected the idea of entrism formed around Oehler, Stamm and Zack.

Barrier

They were incapable of recognising that the growth of a left wing in the SP represented a real barrier to the development of the Workers Party.

Cannon and Schachtman were for getting inside the SP, exposing the treacherous fakery of the leadership of the left wing (who, much to Cannon's disgust called themselves the 'Militants!')

and removing the SP as a force to be reckoned with.

By October 1935 the Oehlerites were an isolated group, driven to breaches of party discipline by Cannon's vigorous campaign to educate his party on the political questions involved in the question of tactical entry into the Socialist Party.

Expelled

They were duly expelled whilst the work of building the Workers Party went on, though with a watchful eye kept on developments within the SP.

In December 1935 the "seething cauldron" of the SP finally boiled over in a direct left-right split as the new generation of party activists clashed with the die-hard bureaucrats.

Cannon and Schachtman recognised the critical nature of the situation. As Cannon put it, the Workers Party must:

"seize the opportunity before it slipped away, take a step forward by effecting a fusion of the Trotskyist workers with the militant rank and file and young people in the SP who had at last the subjective desire to be revolutionists and who were moving in our direction"

Before the entry could be effected, however, there were two stages to be gone through.

Firstly another battle within the Workers Party, this time against Muste, the former leader of the American Workers Party.

Muste's objections to the 'French turn' in America were a product of organisational fetishism. He could not bear to see the party he had helped create liquidate itself in the SP.

Lost support

Such a complete lack of any tactical awareness soon lost him support in the party which had become tempered in the fight

against the Oehlerites. When Muste was exposed as unwittingly tail-ending a group of Stalinists in Allentown he was finally discredited.

Driven out of politics by the sharpness of Trotskyist criticism, he renounced Marxism and regressed to the leadership of a pacifist Christian group—much later to reemerge in protests against the Vietnam war.

Colourful

The second stage before entry was the actual negotiations with the leadership of the SP 'lefts', a group for whom Cannon reserves his most colourful prose:

"the negotiations with these papier-mache heroes were a spectacle for gods and men . . . I believe in all my long and somewhat checkered experience I never encountered anything so fabulous and fantastic . . . They were ignorant, untalented, petty-minded, weak, cowardly, treacherous and vain"

Finally negotiations were concluded with the SP's leading figure, Norman Thomas, who had just managed to oust the old guard right wing from the party leadership.

Thomas was a faker of the worst kind, a man of whom Trotsky somewhat charitably said, "He calls himself a socialist as the result of a misunderstanding."

Thomas was no political innocent, however. He exacted a high price for allowing the Trotskyists to enter the SP.

Give up paper

The Workers Party had to give up its paper *The Militant* and its magazine *New International*.

They had to join as individuals rather than as an organisation, making it appear that they were dissolving their party.

Cannon, however, correctly saw all this as a tactical question, not a matter of wooden principle—"we had been too long in the Lenin school for that".

At the final conference of the Workers Party in March 1936 the decision to enter the SP was formally ratified.

Critical moment

The most important step towards building a revolutionary party in the US had been taken, and taken, in Cannon's estimation, at a critical moment when the already disintegrating SP stood to lose its best workers and youth either to syndicalism or to the Communist Party.

These workers and youth were the layers the Trotskyists aimed at in a year-long campaign carried out with boundless energy and commitment. This was the year 1936.

A strike wave was sweeping America as the CIO emerged; in France there were a whole series of massive strikes; and in Spain the Civil War was beginning.

Advice

Trotsky kept in close touch with Cannon throughout the period and consistently gave advice on tactical questions.

Within the SP the ex-Workers Party faction concentrated on four main issues: the organisation of the Trotsky Defence Committee to counter the slanderous frame-up of the Moscow Trials; the Spanish question; the great California seamen's strike; and the question of the need for a Labor Party in the US to represent the independent interests of the workers.

And the work on the seamen's strike established a significant cadre on the western seaboard.

The Trotskyists in California set up their own paper *The Socialist Appeal* (the official SP organ was *The Socialist Call*).

This was supplemented by a weekly *Labour Action*. As the SP leadership and right-wing became increasingly disturbed by all this, and the Stalinists quailed, Cannon and Schachtman organised a national *Socialist Appeal* Conference on the programme of the Fourth International.

Suppressed

This move provoked Norman Thomas and his cohorts of reformists and talkers to suppress *The Socialist Appeal* and start the process of expelling the Trotskyists.

Trotsky himself, just as in his advice to the French section on their work within the SFIO, counselled Cannon not to be unnecessarily provocative, but at the same time, to go onto the offensive wherever possible.

A system of duplicated letters took the place of a newspaper, and by the time Thomas and his fellow "democratic socialists" tried to pass a "gag law" suppressing all internal discussion of controversial issues the Trotskyists were ready to confront them head-on.

Growth

The ex-Workers Party cadres and the layers drawn towards them during the period of entry were bureaucratically expelled in

time as a serious obstacle to the US working class.

With its best elements gone, it rapidly declined even further into a purely bourgeois formation, and Norman Thomas became a political joke, patted on the head by the capitalist press each time he stood for the Presidency (six times in all!)

The effectiveness of the Trotskyists' entry job on the SP is attested by Thomas' own biographer, Murray Seidler:

"The Trotskyites did succeed in doing real damage to the SP. When they entered it some hundred persons belonged to their sect; but when they were expelled they took with them over a thousand."

"Especially disastrous was the Trotskyites success in drawing many of the party's younger people into their fold".

Even anti-Trotskyist historian Daniel Bell in *The Development of Marxian Socialism in the US* is forced to admit the "Cannonites" success, especially in New York, California and Chicago.

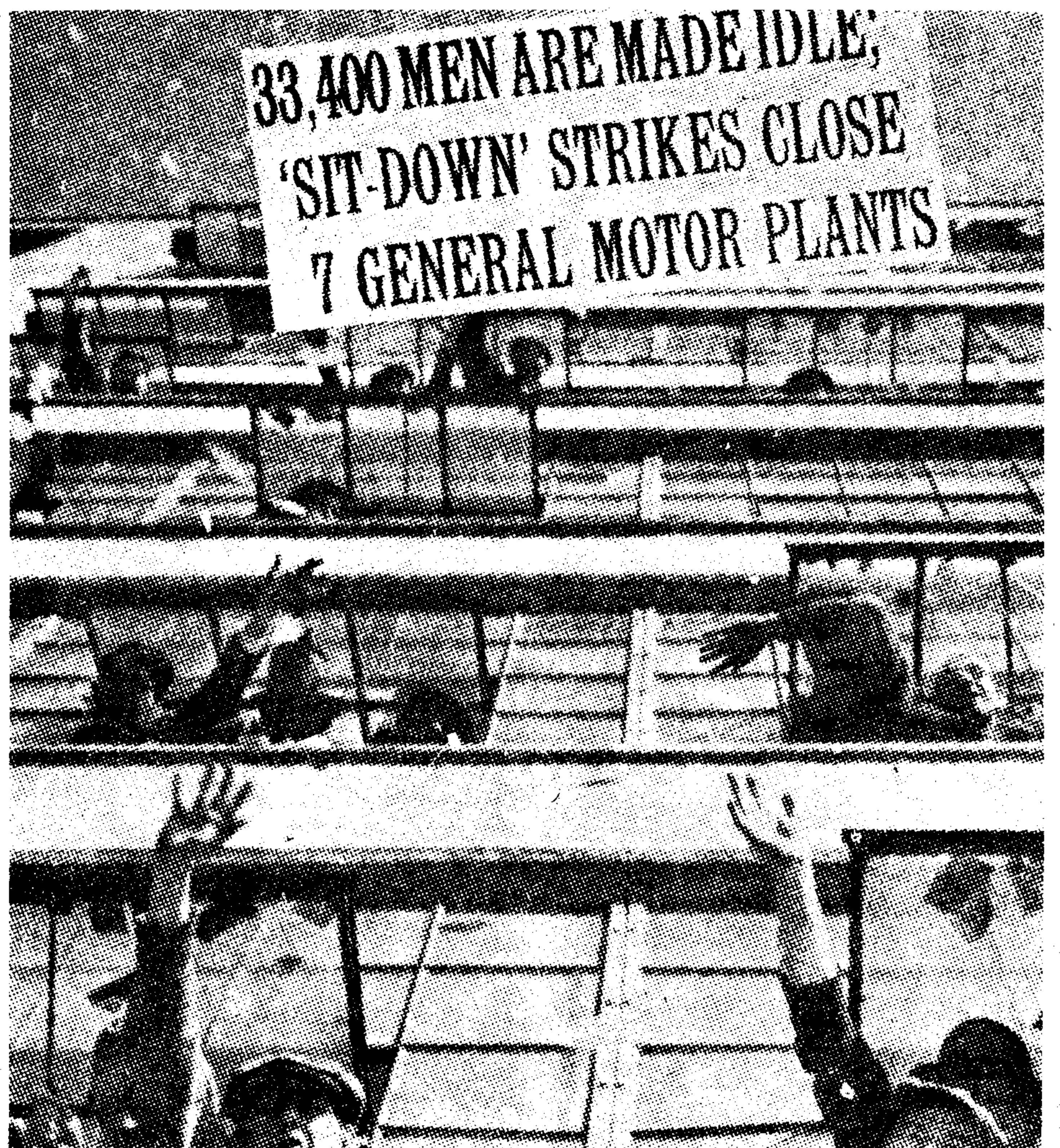
Conference

On December 31 1937 a "Conference of the Expelled Branches" was convened.

From this the Socialist Workers Party was formed on January 1, 1938 as dominant section of the Fourth International.

The post-war degeneration of the American SWP into its present morass of reformism, civil libertarianism and opportunism is another story.

In 1938 its formation represented a massive gain



General Motors was unionised in the wave of sit-down militancy.

On each of these issues with the exception of the Labor Party question, the US Trotskyists were able to make important gains.

The Trotsky Defence Committee, assembled through contacts from around the SP, dealt a major blow at the Stalinists, who were themselves hoping to recruit from the SP left-wing.

Exposed

On the Spanish question the "Cannonites" were able to expose the bankruptcy of the SP leaders' support for the loyalist government of Spanish 'left' Socialist Largo Caballero.

June and July 1937.

The 15 month entry into the SP saw the Trotskyist grouping grow from a couple of hundred to well over one thousand members.

Mistakes were made, certain comrades had over-adapted to centrist elements within the SP and certain opportunities for mass work had been missed, but important gains had also been made.

Sections of politically conscious workers and youth (virtually the entire SP youth in fact) were expelled and won to Trotskyism.

Moreover, the SP itself had been removed for all

for the international working class, its cadres still undergoing the continuous tempering in theoretical and practical struggle that is necessary for the development of a principled revolutionary vanguard.

That tempering process was to continue with a further internal fight, this time over the nature of the Russian state.

This will be the subject of the concluding article in this series.

CONCLUDED
NEXT WEEK

Nursery care: vital for women and under fives

Part Two

By Mary-Ann Todd

Fight for NUPE'S Under-Fives Charter

- * Fight for a national plan for under-fives services.
- * Fight for a massive expansion of education and day care places.
- * Fight for an end to low pay in the nursery service.
- * Fight to restore the cuts in nursery building.
- * Fight for under-fives facilities to be available on demand, free of charge.
- * Fight to base the expansion of services on nursery centres.
- * Fight to abolish the NNEB and create an integrated training scheme for all under-fives workers.
- * Fight to provide pre-school facilities with flexible hours to meet the needs of working parents.
- * Fight for local councils to draw up a development plan for all under-fives services.
- * Fight to change the law on childminding and registration.
- * Fight for one Government department to have responsibility for under-fives services.



National Union of Public Employees

In 1949 there were 900 day nurseries providing places for 43,000 children under five years old.

In 1975 there were only 540 nurseries, offering 26,000 places, despite the fact that the same period has seen a dramatic increase in the numbers of women who work.

Such figures give a hint at the chronic decline and acute crisis in the provision of state care for the under-fives.

They are included in a 127-page TUC working party report *The Under-Fives*, published in 1978.

The report is of considerable importance in highlighting the plight of both the under-fives, and of the millions of women who in the traditions of the bourgeois family are supposedly responsible for their upbringing.

This two-part review of the report will examine some of the facts and figures presented in it, and go on to look at some of its 64 recommendations in the light of the practical record of the TUC and Labour leaders in the fight for women's rights and for the extension of the social services.

The onslaught on nursery education brought about by the Labour government's savage public spending cuts has led to a proliferation of privately-run play groups.

The TUC Report shows that from a mere 500 such playgroups in 1965 the figure had mushroomed to over 10,000 in 1976, not including those organised by charities such as the Save the Children Fund and the NSPCC.

Parents pay an average of 35p per session for these playgroups, which attract minimal support from social services and local authorities (66% received grants of less than £50).

The result is that "voluntary" help is expected of parents—thus creating hostility towards working mothers—in order to compensate for lack of cash.

State-run day nurseries on the other hand provide a restricted, means-tested service for priority cases only, offering no educational stimulation.

"A service for the poor becomes a poor service".

Inflexible

And the state-run nursery classes offer only short, inflexible hours of education, making no allowances for working mothers, and offering no facilities for under-3s.

The Report examines the drawbacks of workplace nurseries in a section written very much from the standpoint of union bureaucrats who refuse to challenge the management's "right to manage".

Workplace nurseries, says the working party, enable the employer to offer lower rates of pay to women workers, and to threaten to withdraw facilities at times of industrial action.

The trade union movement has 'no control of standards' in

such nurseries, since the premises are owned and staff paid by the employer.

Workplace nurseries can be closed when women are made redundant from the workforce, or as part of cost-cutting measures in the public sector, the TUC working party bleats.

Every one of these arguments relates to the calibre of trade union leadership in the workplace.

If workplace nurseries were fought for and defended by convenors and union officials as an essential aspect of working conditions they would be no more easily taken away than tea breaks, sick leave or company overalls.

By-product

And the closure of nursery facilities following mass lay-offs of women workers would be no more than an additional by-product of the refusal of union leaders to defend jobs against speed-up and redundancy.

The Report states that there are currently 70-90 company nurseries, mainly in engineering and textiles, each providing places for 20-40 children—though two have closed since the Report was printed!

By far the biggest area of existing provision for the under-5s is the army of registered and unofficial childminders.

In 1975 there were nearly 30,000 registered childminders, with a further 500,000 children estimated to be in the care of unregistered minders.

Cheapness

The cheapness of this system for employers and the state—childminders are paid by the individual parents—means that the government has encouraged it.

The TUC Report states: "The inadequacies of childminding are glaring and deplorable, and therefore it is highly



PHOTO: Laurence Spelman, IFL

Fisher

irresponsible to base child care programmes on an expansion of this facility."

Recommendations

Low rates of pay mean that additional children must be taken on if the childminder is to make a living wage without charging prohibitive rates.

In the light of this whole situation, the Report makes a long series of "major" and other recommendations, though it is stressed that the document is only a "consultative" document.

The introduction to the Report states that:

"They (the TUC) will give consideration to action on the Report's recommendations after it has been considered and discussed throughout the movement..."

Cutbacks

In the meantime NUPE, in a series of advertisements in *Tribune* and publicity posters, has already claimed to be campaigning for what it terms a "Charter for the Under Fives", summarising the main recommendations.

But what is the reality? In a period where the acute crisis of British capitalism has produced wholesale cutbacks in the public sector, and in particular in the nursery sector, what chance is there of the gentle argument and logic of this Report having the slightest impact on government policy?

None whatever. The kind of truly socialised child care towards which the Report's recommendations aspire cannot

be provided under capitalism, which is both unable and unwilling to expand the productive forces to the point where the individual family unit is rendered obsolete.

The actual cost of the TUC's 'major' and other recommendations would be vast—though the benefits to women would also be dramatic.

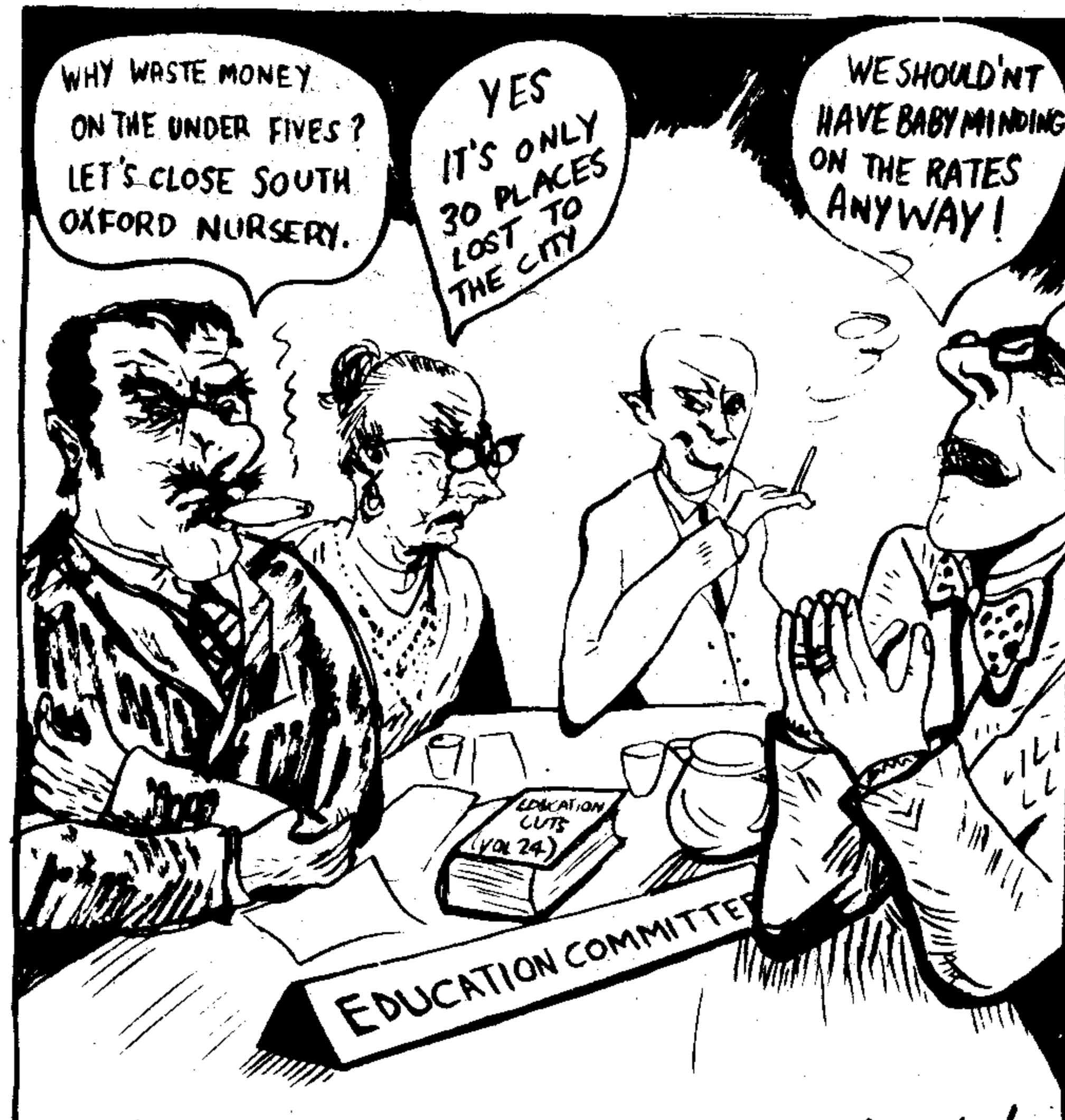
So how can TUC leaders, who are even now calmly permitting the closure of existing children's hospitals, children's homes, hostels, schools and nurseries, wage any serious fight for the progressive changes outlined in this Report?

The answer is, of course, that they cannot. And they are so embarrassed by this contradiction that the Report itself—far from being a campaigning document—has been effectively buried by the trade union leadership, except in instances where 'left' bureaucrats such as Alan Fisher wish spurnously to parade themselves as champions of women's rights.

It is therefore essential that trade unionists rescue this Report from bureaucratic oblivion and launch a major fight for action both to defend the existing service and to implement its proposals.

Obstacles

In doing so they will encounter the type of obstacles put in the way of the Oxford City Nursery Campaign in its struggle last year to prevent the closure of South Oxford Nursery, where 30 full time nursery places and the jobs of nursery teacher, assistants and dinner helper were at stake.



don't let them get away with it!
DEMONSTRATE!
outside South Oxford Nursery School
off Speedwell St. Tuesday March 21st.
3 p.m.

Poster produced by the Oxford City Nursery Campaign during their occupation of the South Oxford Nursery last year

The Campaign centred on an occupation of the nursery by parents and supporters. It provoked a blaze of publicity in which union officials fell over themselves in efforts to pose as militants.

One exception was the local NUPE, NUT and NALGO leaders—and Labour MPs and councillors should also be put on the spot at such meetings with demands that they take a clear stand against the cuts, and outline a programme of action to achieve the "Under Fives" Charter".

They reached the point of almost promising supporting action until a NUPE branch meeting actually called for immediate discussion on such a strike, and urged a district executive meeting to discuss it.

Guided by Anderson, the district committee decided that the form of action against cuts should be—a branch circular!

This token protest strengthened still further the resolve of the Tory council to carry through its programme of cuts.

But such betrayals have not stopped NUPE, NUT and other bureaucrats from professing their support for nursery education.

In fighting for every union branch to immediately order copies of the TUC Report and organise discussion on it, workers should also fight for branches to invite speakers from the Oxford Nursery Campaign (which can be contacted at 7, East St., Osney, Oxford).

Union branches should not stop at merely endorsing the general recommendations of the NUPE 'Under Fives Charter', but should proceed to organise public meetings or

estates and other working class areas to discuss the local requirements for nursery care, the present shortfall in facilities, and the fight against planned cutbacks.

Union officials—particularly NUPE, NUT and NALGO leaders—and Labour MPs and councillors should also be put on the spot at such meetings with demands that they take a clear stand against the cuts, and outline a programme of action to achieve the "Under Fives" Charter".

Action

An indispensable starting point for this is action to prevent further deterioration in existing services.

This means action to:

*Oppose all cuts and closures.

*Open all new nursery schools.

*Defend threatened services by occupation coupled to supporting strike action.

*Open the books of local authorities to show profiteering of private firms—which must be nationalised.

*No use by private sector of public funds, premises or equipment.

*Set up local trade union enquiries into facilities for children—with parents and workers to assess demand, and defend and fight for improvement of services.

*Effective organisation of unions involved in under 5s provision, in particular NUPE.

CAN UNITY MONGERS BE REVOLUTIONARIES?

By Mark Hyde

There are growing indications that the complete inability of the International Marxist Group to offer a serious orientation to those of its members working in the trade union movement or to build a genuine working class cadre is producing a crisis of perspective within its ranks.

But even some of the more serious elements within the IMG still see the problem as simply one which could be resolved by the IMG leaders shifting ground and adopting a proletarian orientation.

Even if such a shift were to occur, however, it would simply transfer the superficial approach, adventurism and opportunism of the IMG to a new—and less congenial—territory.

Alien methods

It would do nothing to tackle the fundamental political weaknesses of the IMG leadership, which have developed historically, and which can only be resolved in the process of a thoroughgoing *break* with the methods and attitudes of the past.

The IMG is the British representative of the 'United Secretariat of the Fourth International'.

This group traces its origins to the tendency led by Michel Pablo which split the Fourth International in 1953.

The leaders of this tendency have consistently applied a method alien to the Trotskyist programme upon which the Fourth International was founded in 1938.

This method boils down to a perpetual search for 'unity' behind forces other than the working class led by a revolutionary Trotskyist leadership.

Over the years many new 'vanguards' behind which unity should be sought have been discovered and touted by the Pabloites—the Yugoslav, Chinese or even Kremlin Stalinists, the Castroites, black nationalists and radical students to name but a few.

'Progressive'

Today even a reactionary nationalist development of Stalinism known as 'Eurocommunism' has been hailed as representing 'progressive' trends within the working class.

A basic problem with this never-ending adaptation is that a crisis arises each time the new-found allies and 'strategies' fail to deliver the goods.

Thus the IMG and its co-thinkers have never fully recovered from the results of the USFI's adventurist guerrilla warfare line which led to a



Trotsky—flexible on organisational questions, rigid on programmatic principles

debacle in which many of the USFI's Latin American sections were annihilated.

On another level, it presents difficulties for those who have uncritically enthused over the 'revolutionary' role of the Cuban military in Africa when this same force turns its guns upon the workers and peasants fighting for their freedom in Eritrea.

'Socialist Unity'

In a different form this same process is working through in Britain, where the IMG has been pursuing 'socialist unity' through a paper especially established for the purpose—*Socialist Challenge*.

The main line of this orientation has been to take a sundry collection of centrist groupings—hostile to Trotskyism—present them as 'revolutionary', and then seek 'unity' with them.

The immediate objects of the IMG's affections have been the semi-anarchist 'Big Flame' outfit and a discussion circle of cast-offs from the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) called the 'International Socialist Alliance'.

State of coma

The former grouping cannot even stomach association with the IMG's verbal 'Leninism', while the latter has long been in

a state of coma bordering upon death.

Further, the biggest organisation on the IMG's list of 'revolutionary currents'—the SWP—seems as far from reach as ever.

This is a particularly sorry tale of unrequited love since Tariq Ali, John Ross and other IMG leaders have crawled on their bellies through mud to win the favours of Mr. Tony Cliff and his "rank and file" pals at the *Socialist Worker* offices.

'Hats Off to the SWP' cried one *Socialist Challenge* editorial. IMG members were even obliged to participate with the SWP and act as their political attorneys in leading the infamous 'Anti-Nazi Carnival', when thousands of youth were diverted to a pop jamboree in South London while the fascist National Front was allowed to march virtually unhindered into the East End.

Hard world

It is a hard world in which such spineless sycophancy wins no reward.

With such a track record it has become increasingly hard for the IMG leaders to concoct 'theoretical' rationales for their policy.

John Ross has nevertheless persisted to churn out a steady stream of apologia—the most recent being a piece in *Socialist Challenge* entitled "Can only Trotskyists be revolutionaries?"

Using clipped and warped extracts from Trotsky and James P. Cannon, Ross sets out to 'prove' that his undignified antics and flabby opportunism have something in common with the revolutionary traditions established by Lenin and Trotsky.

Ross asks 'whether non-Trotskyist, or even non-Leninist political forces could genuinely be considered revolutionary?' . . . and (naturally!) answers *yes*.

Distinction

Even this way of posing the question illustrates the degree to which Ross has taken flight from Trotskyism, since Ross clearly makes a distinction *between* Leninism and Trotskyism, whereas in fact the continuity of Leninism runs *exclusively* through Trotskyism.

But such 'blunders' are small when compared to the downright dishonesty employed. Skipping from one of Trotsky's works to another Ross attempts to use the method of isolated quotations to make Trotsky appear a thinker after his own image.

Thus we are presented with Trotsky declaring his readiness to:

"work hand in hand with other truly revolutionary factions".

But the quotation is left incomplete and thus clouds over the essential thrust of Trotsky's perspective.

Trotsky actually goes on to say:

"But they (the Trotskyists) categorically refuse to adapt their policy to the psychology of opportunist cliques and to renounce their own banner".

In fact the article from which this extract is taken is entitled 'Labels and Numbers' and is concerned with the exposure of French centrist leader Marceau Pivert who made a profession out of blurring over the sharp and decisive question of the revolutionary party and the revolutionary programme.

Programme

It was aimed against precisely the method espoused by Ross and his collaborators like Ernest Mandel, (who has declared his readiness to drop

the 'label' of the Fourth International at some stage in the future for the sake of 'unity'.)

Despite numerous erudite references in a few hundred words to virtually every political tendency under the sun Ross shrewdly avoids mention of the actual *programme* of the SWP, 'Big Flame' and the rest.

He does admit in passing, however, that in the 1930s there were organisations which Trotsky castigated and exposed for their inveterate centrism—organisations which:

"supported collaboration with bourgeois parties in Popular Fronts . . . capitulated before imperialist wars, and displayed the real characteristics of centrists—vacillating in the material clashes of class forces between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie."

It would be undiplomatic for Ross to mention in this context the SWP's capitulations—and those of its forerunners.

Opposes struggle

Cliff's group, of course, capitulated in the 1950s before the attacks of imperialism on the Korean masses when it refused to support either side in the Korean War.

It has taken its course to a conclusion in subsequent years and today is ready (as is the IMG) to flirt with the Stalinists, Liberal lords and bishops in the modern mini-Popular Front—the Anti Nazi League.

Today the SWP opposes outright the struggle of the Trotskyists for the demands and method of the Transitional Programme in the trade union movement. But to Ross such questions of programme are mere detail . . . a sectarian quibble.

The WSL is of course ready to work hand in hand with *truly* revolutionary factions and seek fusion with them . . . but not to work with centrists on the basis of rejection of the programme upon which the Fourth International was established.

The entire practice of Trotsky in relation to the Bordigists and other tendencies cited by Ross was to test them out through a struggle on programme, methods and tactics—never to merely declaim in favour of unity at all costs.

It was the *experience* of this that led Trotsky to proclaim in 1938 that the Fourth International—the Trotskyist movement—was the *only* revolutionary current:

"The Fourth International . . . has no need of being 'proclaimed'. It exists and it fights. Is it weak? Yes its ranks are not numerous because it is still young. They are as yet chiefly cadres. But these cadres are pledges for the future. Outside these cadres there does not exist a single revolutionary current on this planet really meriting the name."

(Transitional Programme)
Ross attempts to explain



James P. Cannon.



Mandel

away this explicit statement that the Fourth International alone represents the continuity of revolutionary theory and practice by claiming that it was no more than a correct "statement of fact" at the time.

But the statement does not appear in some passing article—it is written into the Transitional Programme, which sets out to lay down *general* lines of approach to what is described as "a pre-revolutionary period of agitation, propaganda and organisation."

To assert that Trotsky's concluding remarks on revolutionary continuity were valid only in 1938 raises the question of the validity of the remainder of the Programme some forty years later.

Neither distortion of Trotsky's struggle for Marxism, nor quotes from Cannon in 1963—a time when he was hell-bent upon stressing 'unity' for the sake of unprincipled regroupment with the Pabloites—will however solve the problems of the IMG.

A result of this has been that a substantial section of IMG members now adhere to a tendency associated with John Strawson—at one time a member of the WSL before his expulsion for undisciplined actions detrimental to the functioning of our movement.

Many IMG members are quite publicly critical of their leaders and of the orientation of their movement, and naturally seek out any current within the IMG which claims to stand for a return to Trotskyism.

Stands on fence

But Strawson is of course incapable of going to the roots of the crisis because he rejected the struggle to understand the nature of Pabloism while he was a member of the WSL.

As a consequence, his grouping stands on the fence, making some formally correct criticisms of some of the more openly liquidationist policies of Ross and Co. without being able to draw the requisite political conclusions.

As such it stands as an obstacle to political clarification of serious IMG members.

IMG members who seriously wish to build a genuinely Trotskyist movement in Britain and internationally should demand a full discussion of the perspectives and policies for the reconstruction of the Fourth International put forward by the WSL.

The solution cannot lie in bemoaning the IMG's lack of proletarian orientation alone, nor in waiting for a miracle at the next USFI World Congress, nor in continual apologies for the leadership, but only through a sharp political struggle, in which Pabloite opportunism is rejected in favour of the principles and method of the Transitional Programme.



The ANL pop concert



NUPE NEC SAY 'NO' TO STRIKE

The National Executive of NUPE has refused to support the recommendation of its own Labour Party sub-committee that the national action called for January 22 should be a day of strike action.

Instead they are calling for the usual 'Day of Action' and lobby of Parliament.

No plans

Not content with this, it is reported that the NEC has made no firm plans for the continuous strike action it has been promising by key sections of members, said to include porters and delivery men at town halls, dustmen and water workers, and Central Sterile Supply Departments and catering workers in hospitals.

No date has been published for the start of such action and there is no further NEC meeting until February!

Worse still, and contrary to expectations, it now seems that if those workers

selected do go into action on behalf of the rest of the members, they will still only get the usual £6 strike pay.

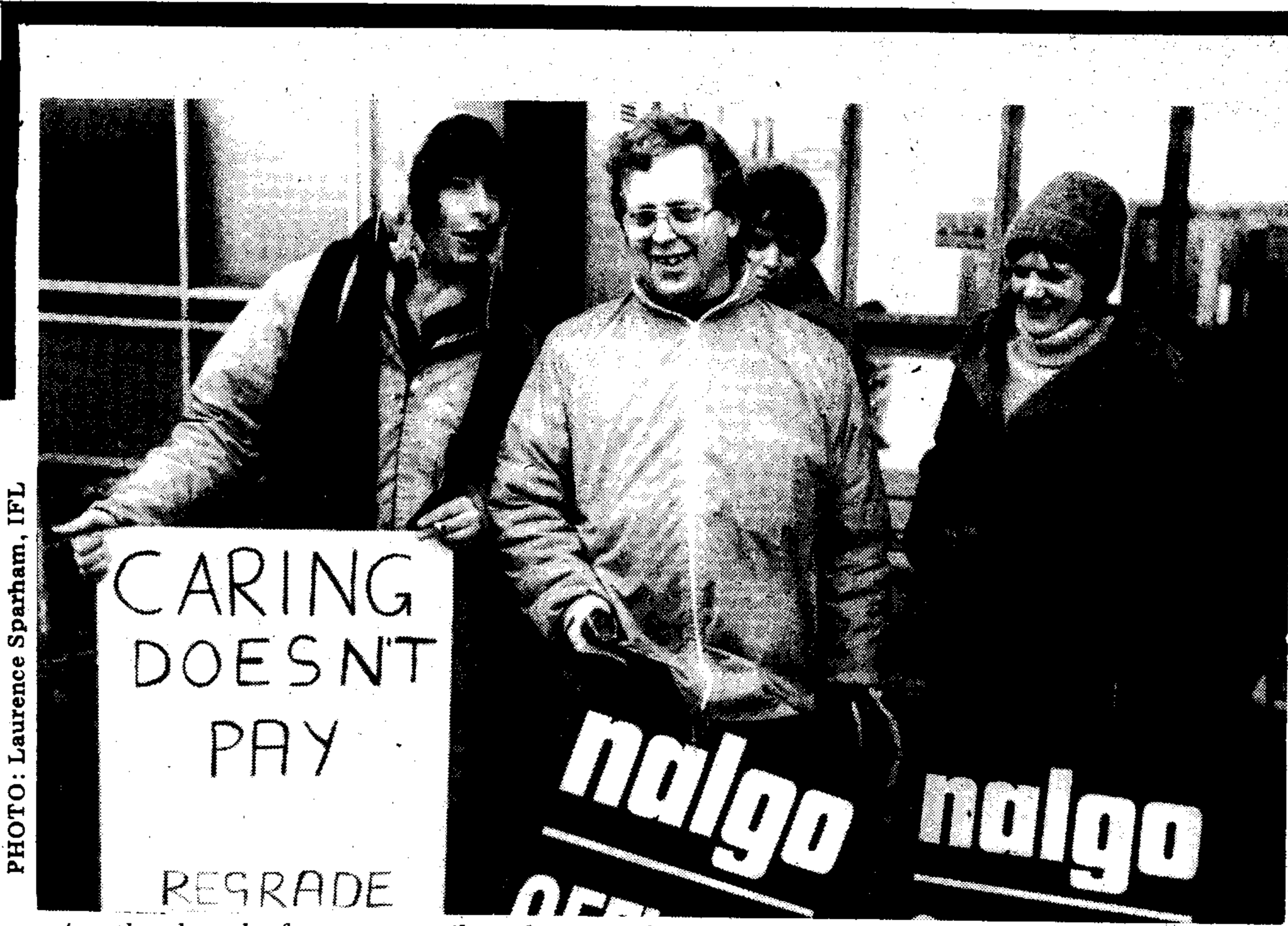
The levy (of 1p per hour per member) that the NEC plans to raise will be used to pay this £6, thereby avoiding any depletion of union funds, and not to provide the strikers with an adequate level of strike pay.

The outcome of the dispute has therefore been left entirely to local leaderships, working against difficulties imposed by their own union.

In London, a special "rally" has been called—ostensibly to assess the strength of support of mem-

bers. This meeting starts at 7p.m. at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square. At this meeting it will be necessary to take up a sharp fight against the abrogation of leadership by the NEC, and to continue to urge militant sections of workers to take strike action on January 22, and stay out.

If only one borough were to give such a lead it would be possible to take the initiative entirely away from the discredited leadership and spread the action into an all-out national strike for the full £60/35 hour week claim.



Another largely forgotten strike—the marathon struggle by social workers, seen here picketing in Warrington

Garners 1 year on

On January 26 1978, 84 workers from Garners Steak Houses were sacked for demanding recognition of their union, the TGWU.

To commemorate this year on strike for a basic right, the strike committee has called for a day of picketing on Saturday 27 January.

The Greater London Association of Trades Councils has been asked to cover their usual restaurants and all trade unionists are called on to assemble at the Oxford Street branch at 12 noon or at the Haymarket at 6 p.m.

A massive turnout on this day is essential to keep up the pressure on the owner Margolis and on the

very worried scabs.

Many of these have expressed to the pickets their wish to be represented by the union.

Over the last week four people have been sacked and have gone to the union office to express their willingness to fight alongside the strikers.

The anniversary picket is not of course a celebration.

Scandal

It is a scandal that the TGWU Region 1 leadership has not seen fit to win this strike months ago.

It rests in their hands. Although Sid Staden, Stalinist secretary of Region 1 is reported in the *Morning Star* as saying that it is the union, through the strike committee, which is running the strike, the Regional

Committee has refused to implement any of the strike committee's demands.

Strike pay

When the strike committee called for payment to the strikers of £36 per week, to be raised if necessary by a levy, the Region gave £6, a handout of £10 and at Christmas the pay was put up to £12 "as long as the money lasts".

Then officials turned on the strikers and demanded to know why *only* half had been able to stick out for a year!

When the strike committee called for all trade groups to adopt a restaurant to picket once a week plus mass pickets on a Saturday, Staden made a secret agreement with the police to limit pickets to six.

Arrested

Trade unionists have been arrested as a result, including Brent Trades Council President Tom Durkin (in whose defence a picket is being mounted at Bow Street court at 10 am on 10 January).

Staden now claims TGWU members will not picket Garners since they are afraid of getting arrested!

Nor has the strike committee's call for blacking of all supplies been taken up decisively.

Meanwhile Garners' boss Margolis totters on with the assistance of major hotel owners and is even opening a new restaurant in Upper Regent Street on 15 January.

The recent increase in violence reflects the desperation of the management and the scabs.

But if any worker thinks that Margolis will reward him for his slavishness he is in for a nasty shock.

Changed rotas

Now that the tourist season is dead, Margolis has changed all the staff rotas so that they work all day instead of just at busy periods on a sort of shift system.

This is designed to drive people off, so that they leave at a time when Margolis wants to shed labour.

The campaign to win the strike and to force the union leadership into action will continue with the Day of Action on 27 January, a demonstration planned for early March and the fight for a national TGWU delegate conference.

1979: TIME YOU RESOLVED TO JOIN US!

Before you throw away last year's diary, just stop and look back at the record of the Workers Socialist League over the past twelve months.

Every day of every week our members have been in the vanguard of the struggles against capitalism and its agents in Britain.

The political leadership and practical support given by the WSL have been crucial to workers fighting in a massive range of struggles.

*We have played a leading role in the campaign to defend the 'Cowley 9' from victimisation by the TGWU bureaucracy.

*Our intervention in British Leyland has helped bring the break-up of worker participation, and gave a national lead in the fight against corporate bargaining, the 5% limit, and massive speed-up and sackings.

*Our movement has been at the forefront of support for unionisation struggles at Grunwick, Garners and elsewhere.

*WSL policies have strengthened the fight against the cuts—in the South Oxford

Nursery occupation, in the London hospitals and in other areas.

*As growing numbers of youth have moved into politics, the WSL has supported the building of the Socialist Youth League and its monthly paper *Red Youth*.

*1978 has seen fresh theoretical work on Ireland—with the publication of a major series and regular coverage in our press along with *Irish Perspectives*.

*Other issues on which we have fought for international solidarity include struggles in Iran, Eritrea, the Middle East and Africa as well as repression in Latin America.

*We have published, 'Communists' Against Revolution, a major theoretical book, and extensive coverage of so-called 'Eurocommunism', in a full year of our weekly paper.

No other movement can boast such a proud and principled record.

All these achievements have not come about by magic or by accident.

Strength

To make this impact, our comrades have been guided constantly by the strength of

our programme and by the confidence that only the policies we put forward can answer the objective needs of the working class.

It is those strengths and the discipline of a revolutionary organisation that will carry our work forward to new levels and into new areas in 1979.

The WSL is not a large organisation, yet we have been able to achieve all this already with our severely limited resources.


More support

But to extend that work even further, nationally and internationally, we need more support and more members.

So we're asking our regular readers to make a *real* New Year's resolution this year, and think hard *why* they have not joined us before?

What reason can you have for holding back?

If you're seriously prepared to fight against imperialism to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, then there's only one place where you belong—inside the WSL, working with us to reconstruct the Fourth International.



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An Open Letter to all NUJ strikers

Sunday 7 January 1979

By Peter McIntyre, FoC at the Oxford Mail and Times (in a personal capacity)

The NUJ strike—now into its sixth week—stands poised on the threshold of a giant step forward in the pay, confidence and experience of provincial journalists.

The strength and willingness of the membership to fight has been rigorously tested and that test has been decisively passed.

The test of the leadership has however revealed dangerous weaknesses which will inevitably sell the strike short if they are not quickly combatted and overcome.

Last week's meeting of FoCs in London showed in its sharpest form both sides of this equation.

Unlike other meetings of FoCs held before the strike began there was a united sense of determination. Calls to ballot for a return to work were few and far between and poorly received.

Extension

The strongest applause came when David Solomons, FoC at Bristol, called for the extension of the strike to Fleet Street and when Bob Hayward, chairman of the strike committee at the *Birmingham Post and Mail*, called for the expulsion from the NUJ of all blacklegs.

Solomons is a good example of someone who has shifted ground through the strength of the strike. At earlier meetings he had opposed the strike vigorously.

The success of the Bristol chapel in halting production of the paper had swung him behind militant policies to win it.

With such a strong determination to fight on for £20 a week why was it then not possible to leave the meeting satisfied that there was no danger of collapse and concentrate solely on combatting the employers, police and scabs lined up in front of us?

I was, so far as I know, the only FoC to abstain on the vote on the final resolution and I did so on the strength of chapel resolutions which pointed to serious acts of betrayal by the leadership.



PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

NUJ leaders had to be pushed to call strike action

When the vote was taken it was presented as a vote to stay out. TV cameras were ushered in and a solid forest of jubilant hands were raised. No amendments or alternative resolutions to the motion tabled by the strike leaders were allowed.

The resolution itself was scarcely mentioned. Indeed union president, Denis McShane, in urging FoCs to give it unanimous backing, called for a *stepping up* of picketing and was cheered for his pains.

What then does the resolution say? In its key passage it calls for an end to effective picketing.

"The Industrial Council regrets the negative attitude of the Newspaper Society towards attempts to resolve its current dispute with the NUJ. In particular it regrets the failure to

re-open negotiations without preconditions; the failure to react positively to the NUJ suggestion that picketing be reduced as a gesture to allow negotiations to resume, or to consider a third party to assist in reopening negotiations."

The £20 claim is not mentioned. Instead the resolution refers only to 'decent pay levels', leaving the way open for a settlement of anywhere down to half of the claim.

This wording was no accident. The Provincial Newspapers Industrial Council spent several hours labouring to give birth to its five paragraph mouse.

"Respectable offer"

Don Sutton, chairman of the Provincial Newspapers Industrial Council, said his aim was to bring "a respectable offer" from the employers.

The General Secretary, Ken Ashton, sounded as uncomfortable as he looked, as he heaped the responsibility for winning the strike squarely onto the backs of the membership.

But the really conscious element among the leadership—McShane—exemplified the duplicity of the platform speeches.

Incredibly he told delegates that "even if you go back tomorrow" there would have been a victory because the NUJ would have proved it could maintain a strike!

The reality is that it would have jeopardised another strike

for the next decade and tied provincial journalists to miserable wages for longer than that.

He was cheered for saying that he could understand the desire to expel the scabs but gave no commitment to support such a move.

There was, from several speakers from the floor, an attempt to combat the content of the resolution and the weak-kneed posture adopted day in, day out, by the leadership.

Journalists Charter

But these protests were not channelled into any effective opposition.

Journalists Charter—the body which claims to organise rank and file opposition in the union—has launched no campaign against either a reduction of the claim or the reduction of picketing.

Such a reduction would have a shattering effect in Bristol, Uxbridge and other places where papers have been closed by determined picketing, as well as on chapels such as Northampton where small numbers of members have mounted 24 hour pickets.

It would be seen as a prelude



Peter McIntyre

to calling off the strike whatever the result of negotiations and would remove all pressure from the employers.

Arrests

It would strengthen the hand of the police who have been breaking up picket lines and arresting members all over the country. Ten members have been arrested at High Barnet in North London alone, three here at Oxford and more throughout

the country.

The FoC's meeting in Conway Hall has shown that strength from the membership is not on its own enough.

Chapels must call now for a new FoC's meeting at which policies will be discussed and motions from chapels taken.

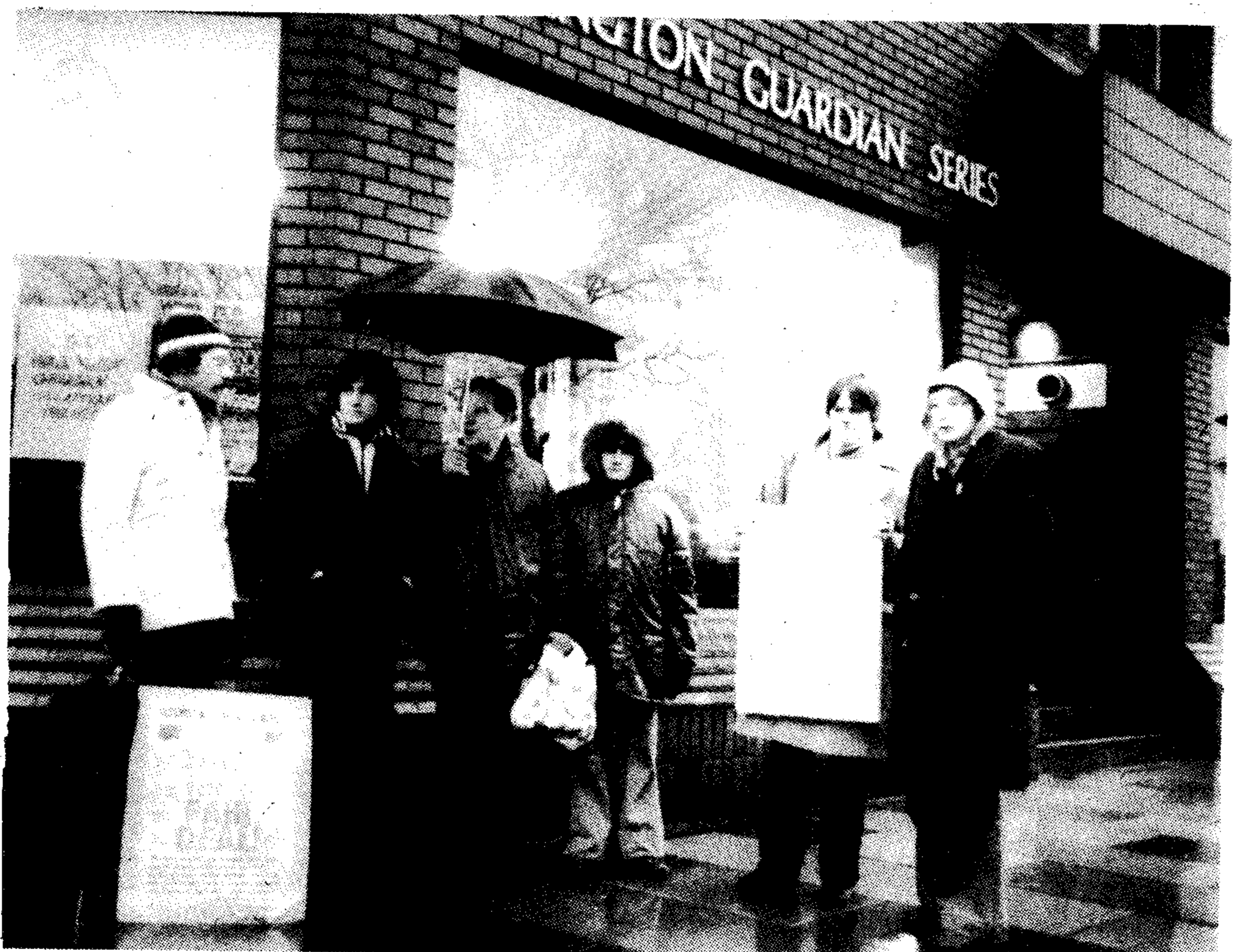
If the right to sabotage this strike is not swiftly removed from the leadership that sabotage will take place.

No compromise

This is no time for soft words and compromise. Chapels must demand a reversal of the policies which were passed at Conway Hall but whose sentiments are not shared by those who voted for them.

The Oxford chapel refused to hand management a letter from the General Secretary containing the offer to reduce pickets. We do not agree to any such thing. Nor is the Oxford chapel prepared to settle for less than the full claim.

Members in support of these policies—and in support of a strengthening of the strike—must call for meetings of their chapels to demand a new delegate meeting to put such policies into effect.



Pickets at the Warrington Guardian

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

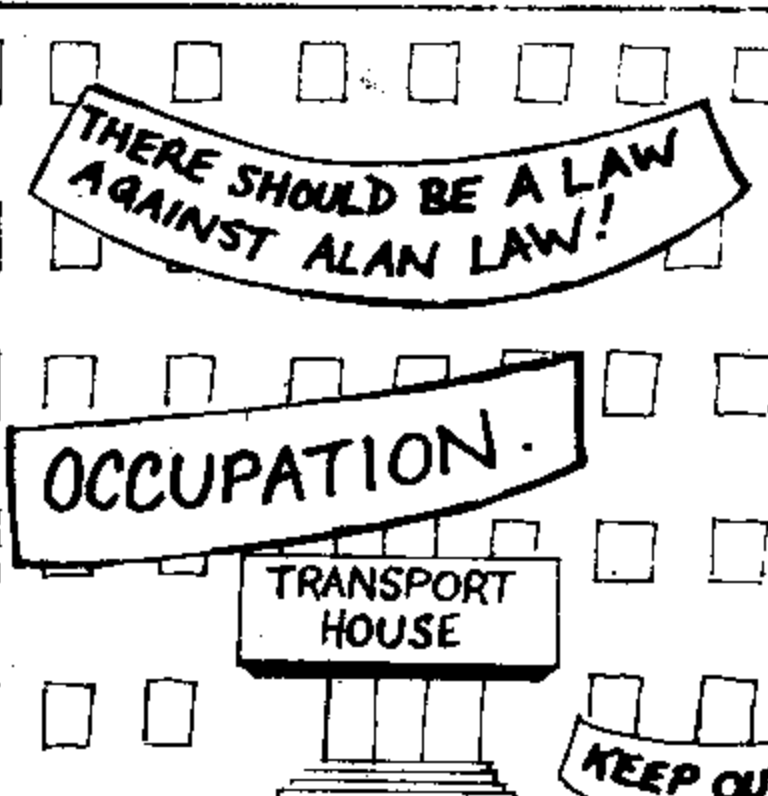
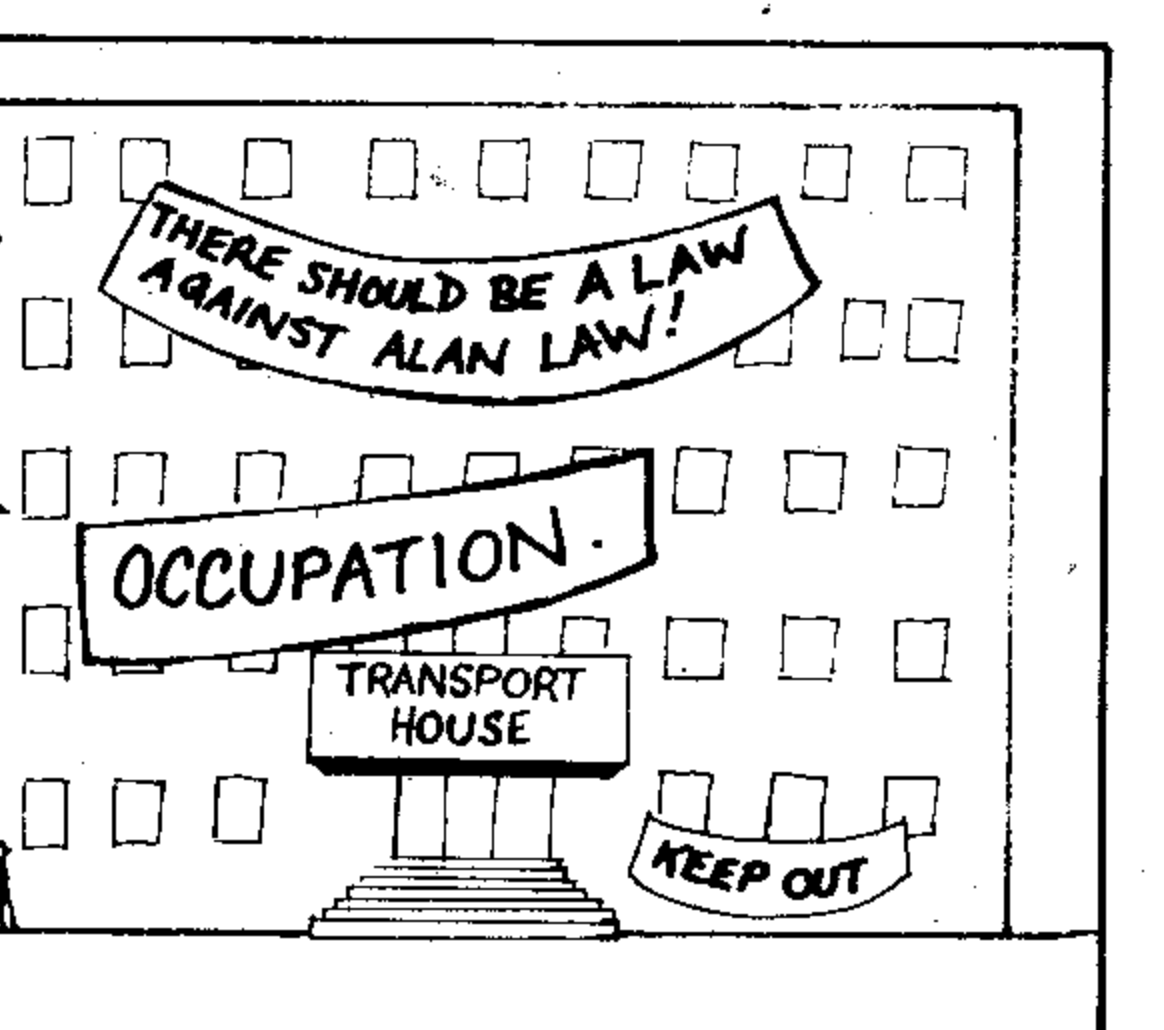
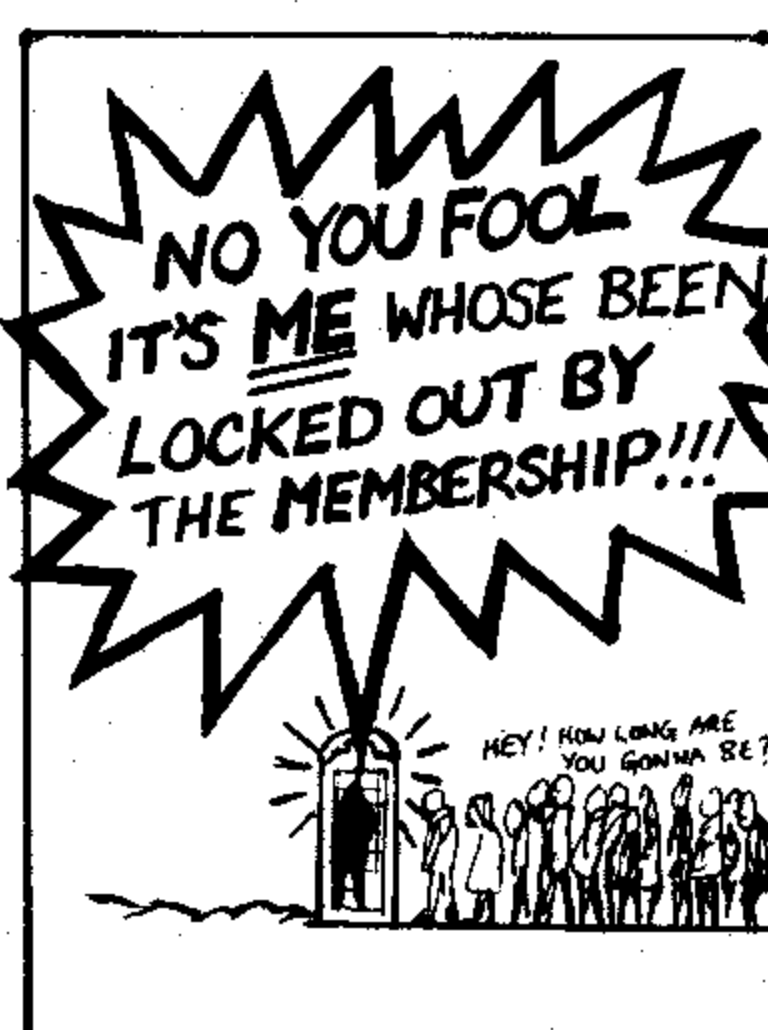
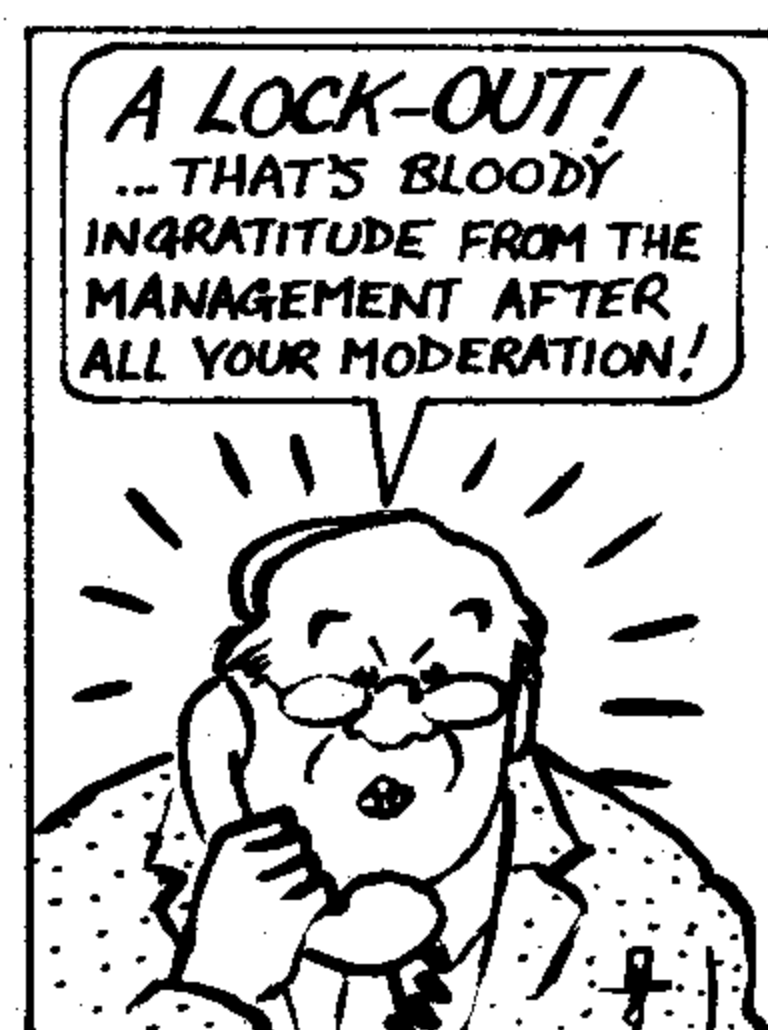
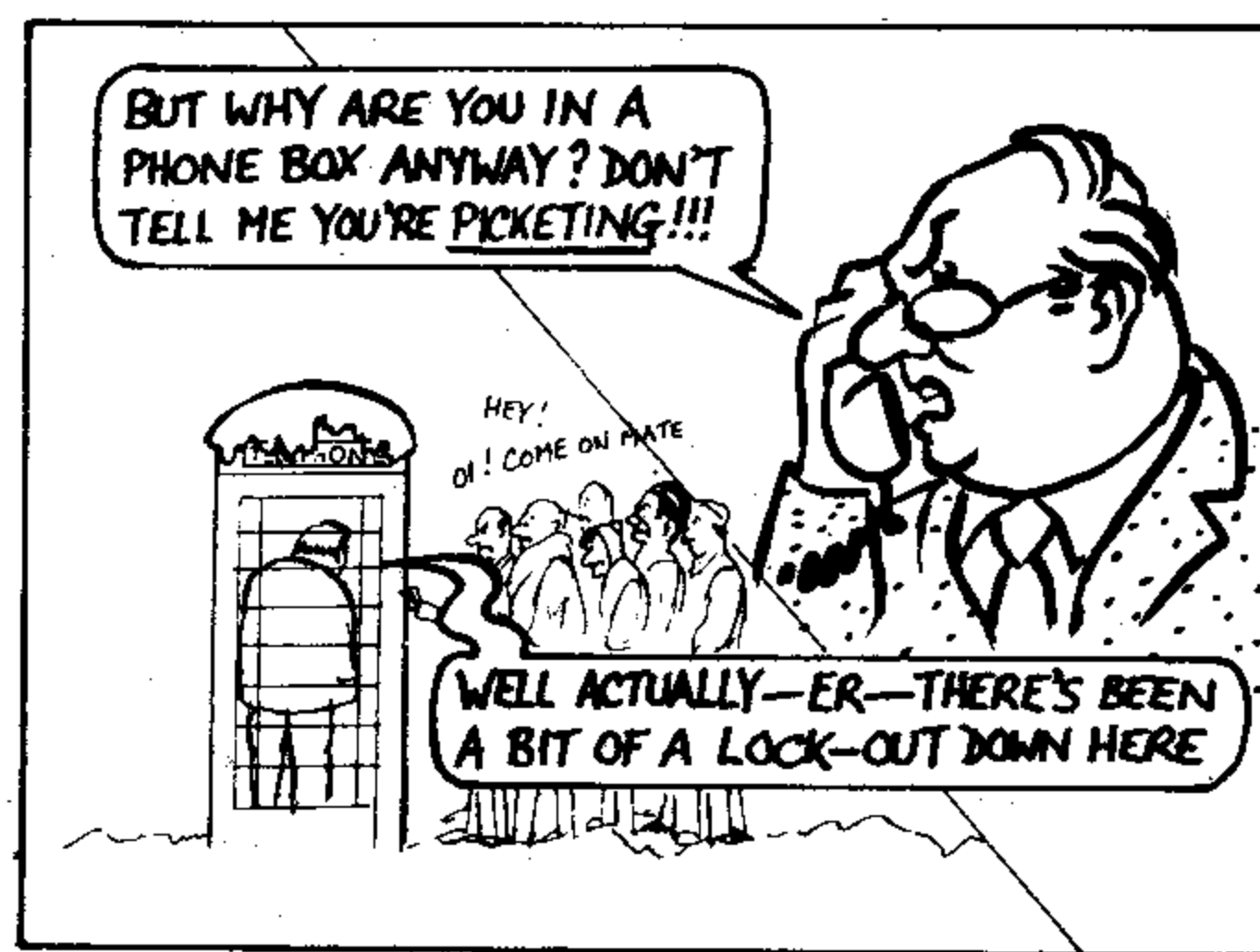
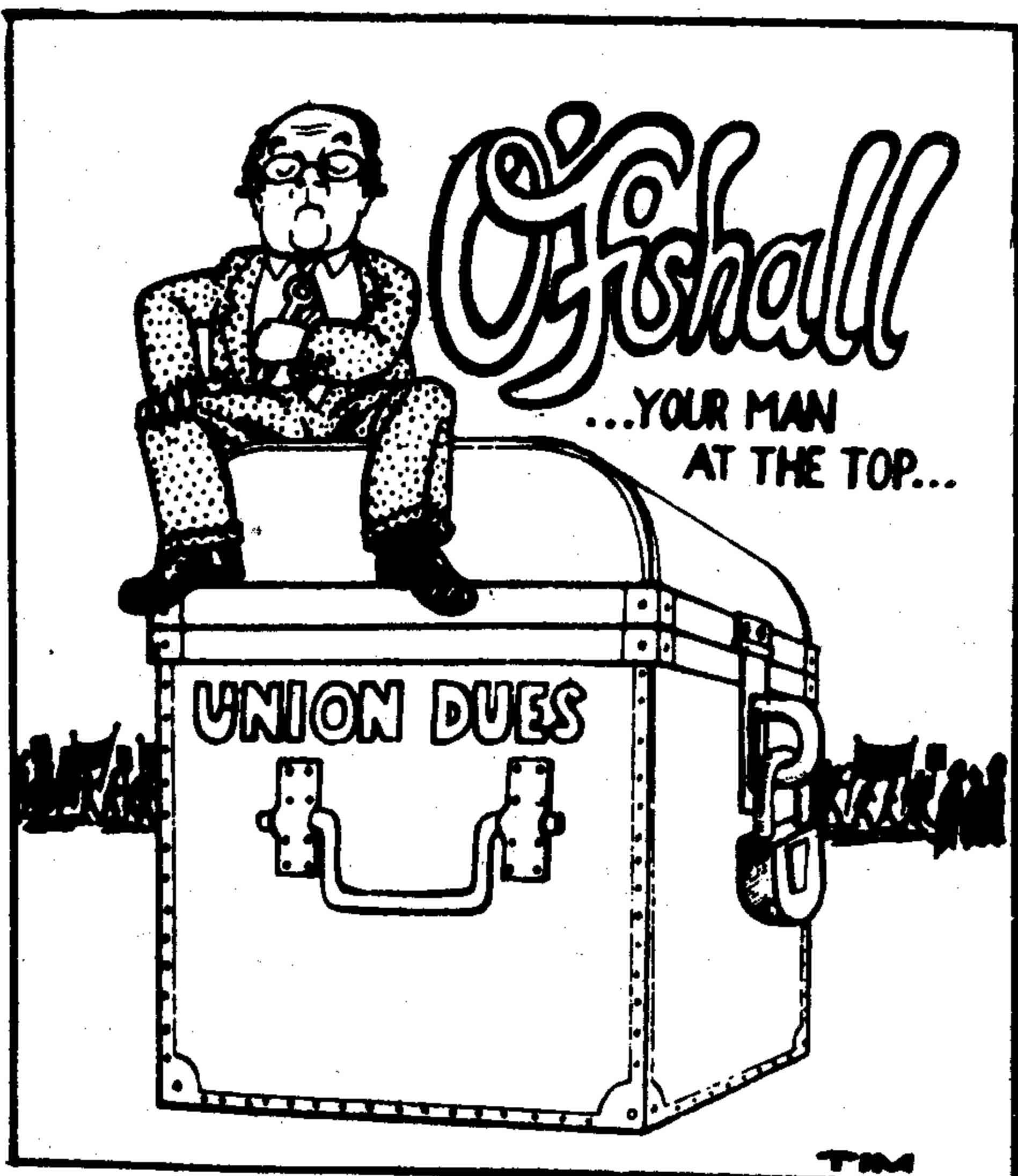


McShane



Ashton

PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL



SOCIALIST PRESS



SHAH MUST GO-



Hanoi invaders out of Cambodia!

After a lightning-fast invasion by the Vietnamese army thinly disguised as the "Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation", the Kampuchean government headed by Pol Pot has been driven from the capital Phnom Penh.

No radio broadcasts from Pol Pot's forces had been heard for 48 hours as we went to press, and Vietnamese claims that the whole country had fallen under the control of the "United Front" seem to have some substance.

The desperate but determined move by the Vietnamese Stalinists to crush the rival Kampuchean bureaucracy is further proof of the lengths to which these parasites will go in stifling all forms of opposition.

Suppression

In this respect the invasion is an echo of the Kremlin's brutal military suppression of political opposition in East Germany (1953) Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968).

Even while themselves seeking out reactionary deals and diplomatic alliances with capitalist regimes throughout South East Asia, the Vietnamese Stalinists have attempted to buttress their internal position by unleashing pent-up age-old national prejudices in this move to crush their smaller and weaker neighbours and instal a puppet regime.

Lack of resistance

The lack of serious resistance to the Vietnamese invasion of a country that fought tenaciously for years against the full might of US imperialism is an indicator that Pol Pot's authoritarian regime enjoyed little popular support.

The way in which they evacuated the towns and forcibly dispersed the working



Vietnamese soldiers guard Cambodian PoWs.

class among the peasantry was simply a part of a chaotic economic policy that caused still further disruption in the backward economy left behind by imperialism.

Although private ownership of land had been ended, and agriculture collectivised, the adventurist abolition of currency meant that villages were forced to become self-sufficient isolated units, and development was stifled.

Nationalism

The Kampuchean Stalinist leaders used anti-Vietnamese nationalism as a means of deflecting internal opposition and were driven to repeated attacks on Vietnamese border areas.

This instability, combined with acute internal economic crisis within Vietnam itself and fears that the Peking Stalinists might consolidate an anti-Soviet anti-Vietnamese military and political alliance with the Kampuchean leaders seems to form part of the background to this war between rival Stalinist regimes.

Meanwhile the Chinese bureaucracy, though not openly allying with Pol Pot, has stridently attacked the invasion, and massed troops on the Vietnamese border.

Former Cambodian leader Prince Sihanouk has been released from house arrest in Phnom Penh to give Peking press conferences calling for UN troops to intervene against the invaders.

Peking's new-found allies in the US administration have also opposed the Vietnamese invasion.

The Soviet leadership, on the other hand, has warmly welcomed the destruction of what it calls the "fascist regime" in Kampuchea, but also suggested the UN may take a hand in finding a solution.

One thing, however, is clear. Those Kampuchean peasants who obviously welcomed the Vietnamese forces as a relief from the rigours of the Pol Pot regime will soon find their illusions crudely shattered.

The answer to their problems is not to exchange Pol Pot for Giap, Giap's puppets in the "United Front" or any other Stalinist bureaucracy.

Political revolution

A revolutionary leadership capable of the political overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy and opposing its reactionary, nationalist attempts to build "socialism in a single country" offers the only way forward in Kampuchea and in Vietnam.

Such a political revolution will be impeded unless the invading army of the Hanoi Stalinists is withdrawn from Kampuchea.

With imperialism forced to speculate, powerless, from outside as these struggles take place, the biggest danger to the Kampuchean and Vietnamese masses is that the national rivalries of their Stalinist leaders may strengthen the hold of imperialism over the rest of South East Asia, prolonging the isolation and deformation of these new-formed workers' states.

U.S. AGREES

The revolutionary events in Iran have continued to accelerate.

But, even though the tyrannical Shah is—apparently on US imperialist advice—packing his bags, the extraordinary mass movement which began a year ago is more than ever in need of a new revolutionary leadership.

New bourgeois premier Shapour Bakhtiar failed to find enough collaborators to fill a Cabinet but has nonetheless had his rump government sworn in by the Shah.

Lacking policies which would meet any of the democratic demands of the masses, Bakhtiar has tried to claim that the Shah has in effect surrendered political power, and that for the first time in 25 years Iran is ruled by a civilian.

The demonstrations of January 7 and 8 with the slogans 'Death to the Shah' and 'Down with Bakhtiar' have already shown that the masses regard such a claim as laughable. Bakhtiar has claimed that martial law will be ended in Shiraz on January 9 and progressively thereafter in other cities.

He has also promised a series of show trials for corruption of 30 former officials of the Shah including a former Prime Minister, implying that the trials will be followed by executions. Even if Bakhtiar lasts long enough to hang a few scapegoats, he is likely to be only setting a precedent for his own eventual fate as mouthpiece for the Shah.

The latest demonstrations,



Victim of Iranian army violence

however, also emphasised the potentially fatal handicap of the revolutionary upsurge of the masses—the absence of a revolutionary socialist leadership.

The two separate days of mourning, strikes and demonstrations last week were organised partly in competition by the bourgeois National Front and the Shi'ite Moslem religious leaders.

It is hard to judge their relative success since large sections of the masses are taking action every day.

Strikes go on

The imperialists may gain some comfort from the divisions between these leaders but the continuation of strikes is causing them severe concern.

Carter is supporting the Bakhtiar government, which has said that one of its first objectives is to end the strikes.

But US Energy Secretary James Schlesinger at the same time rattled the US sabre by publicly advocating "steps to shore up" Iran and other oil producing countries of the Gulf against what he alleges is Moscow's "exploitation" of the Iranian unrest.

In fact the Soviet bureaucracy have in the last few weeks done nothing but add to their long record of betrayal in Iran.

Until the last few days, Soviet news media have referred to the mass movement against the Shah as *reactionary*.

Qualified

Only when the Shah's fall began to look inevitable, and the imperialists began to look more coolly on their ally, did the Stalinists in Moscow begin to qualify their implicit support for the tyranny.

And the still weak pro-Moscow Iranian Communist Party (the Tudeh Party) has strengthened the would-be bourgeois leaders of the mass movement by holding to a treacherous policy of forming a Popular Front government with capitalist parties.

Strike shakes officials

The votes for strike action by lorry drivers in Scotland and large parts of England caught several trade union bureaucrats with their 'left' credibility seriously exposed.

Scottish TGWU bureaucrat Alex Kitson tried to halt the movement suggesting that Scottish lorry drivers had 'jumped the gun'.

In a desperate attempt to retrieve the position he made a hurried retraction in Saturday's *Morning Star*, claiming that this darling of the Broad Left had been "misquoted".

Voted down

In Birmingham, TGWU official Alan Law who built his reputation as a militant within the trade group representing lorry drivers, attempted to argue that the strike should be deferred until a final stage of procedure had been exhausted—only to be voted

down. A group of drivers promptly invaded his office and occupied it, demanding his replacement as their official.

Ballot

This came after a week in which the Department of Public Prosecutions decided not to proceed further on ballot irregularities in which Law admitted personally

casting votes for many of the 4,500 members of the (now divided) 5/35 Branch.

The lorry drivers are clearly in a very strong position to fight for their claim.

But the danger of a sell-out of the interests of lorry drivers will continue to exist until the likes of Law and Kitson are removed and a principled revolutionary leadership is built in their place.

FUND

The December Monthly Fund closed with a rather disappointing £504.65—well short of our usual achievement. Our thanks to those who did contribute, including a group of supporters in Castelford who sent in £24.

The January Fund has got off to a good start—£103.13 in the first week. We must ensure that we do better this month. Our intrepid knitter has donated a further £10 and this sort of initiative can surely be taken up by other readers and supporters of Socialist Press.

All donations should, as usual, be sent to:

Socialist Press Monthly Fund

31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

WSL Public meetings

AYLESBURY

The Fight Against Wage Control

Thursday 18 January at 8.00 p.m.
Oddfellows Arms

LEEDS

The Social Workers Strike

Wednesday 24 January at 8.00 p.m.
Trades Council Club

OXFORD

Leyland Ballot Betrayal How did Leyland get their vote?

Friday 12 January 8pm
East Oxford Community Centre

COVENTRY

Leyland Ballot Betrayal How did Leyland get their vote?

Sunday 14 January at 7.30 p.m.

Swanswell Inn (opposite the Old Fire Station, near Pool Meadow Bus Station)

CLASSES ON MARXISM

WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE OXFORD

A series of classes on "The Fight Against Capitalism"

East Oxford Community Centre at 8.00 p.m. on the following Sundays:—14 January; 21 January 4 February; 18 February; 4 March.