



# STRIKE COMMITTEES MUST CONTROL SUPPLIES

Industry is grinding to a halt; panic buying is beginning each day brings news of new strikes and further lay-offs. Millions could be laid off by the end of this week. The government is in a major crisis. Once again the pent-up anger and militancy of a section of workers, determined to make up for three years of rigid wage controls, has made itself explosively felt.

This time it is the turn of the lorry drivers, who have pressured the TGWU Executive into last week's unanimous vote to declare their strike official.

In giving official sanction for all-out action after rejection of a 15% pay deal, the TGWU leadership is once again stoking up the wages militancy that has spread like wildfire through every section of workers ever since the Ford workers crashed through the government's 5% limit.

There is no doubt that the example of the lorry drivers action—the scorn for the employers' 5% and 15% offers; the thoroughness and tenacity of the picketing; the solidarity shown by other sections of transport drivers; and the indisputable demonstration of the potential power of the working class—stands as a major motive force behind the growing moves now among public sector manual workers and nurses for all out strike action on their £60/35 hour week claim.

And it is in a bid to head off similar militancy among train drivers and railwaymen that ASLEF leader Ray Buckton is seeking a 10% productivity deal with British Rail management, rather than issuing a principled call to the other rail unions for joint action on a substantial wage claim.

But while employers large and small whimper and moan at their impotence in the face of the lorry drivers' strike, and join the Tory press campaign for new laws against trade union rights, workers face additional dangers within the labour movement itself.

On the one hand, they face trade union leaders who wish at all costs to preserve the reactionary Callaghan-Healey government in office, and who are prepared to compromise the independent struggles of their members to do so.

## Restricting pickets

This danger was shown clearly last week when TGWU General Secretary Moss Evans declared that he had no objection to the use of army scabs, and took the first steps to restrict the extremely effective, largely unofficially organised flying pickets.

On the other hand the Labour government, furious at the collapse of the 5% pay policy, is clearly prepared to use both troops and police violence against picket lines if this offers

a prospect of holding back the lorry drivers and deterring struggles in the public sector.

Under the guise of ensuring "essential supplies" Home Secretary Merlyn Rees has established a network of high powered regional "Emergency Committees"—reminiscent of the General Strike—combining civil servants, police and army officials.

They carry the renewed threat of army strikebreaking.

## Power of strike

But the power of the strike is shown by the fact that these committees are under instructions first of all to approach the local strike committees to allow supplies through.

In nearly every instance urgent supplies, including animal feed and medical supplies, are already being allowed through picket lines.

The element of control by the strikers is an essential development, through which workers can begin to recognise their power as a class and their ability to control society.

Any attempt by union officials to disband or weaken the operation of these committees must be resisted.

In many cases TGWU officials have proved themselves so incompetent at organising the strike that militant workers have occupied District Offices and converted them into ad-hoc strike headquarters.

This, too, shows the importance of such struggles for the political development of the working class, coming to grips with the inadequacy of its old leadership.

With the public sector workers (spearheaded by water workers in the North West) now posed with the need to undertake a similar scale of struggle if they are to win their £60/35 hour week claim, the crying need is to link up the lorry drivers' strike committees and

public sector stewards' bodies with full-scale *councils of action*.

Such councils of action offer the best means of drawing together on a local level delegations from all the organisations of the working class—strike committees, stewards committees, union branches, trades councils, workers political parties, tenants associations and other working class bodies, in the fight to strengthen and extend the pay

strikes.

Through councils of action mass pickets against military strikebreaking and joint committees to control the distribution of genuinely essential supplies and the running of emergency services can be organised.

With political questions brought to the fore by the Tory offensive against picketing and Callaghan and Healey discussing possible measures to stem the flow of wages struggles, councils



PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

of action provide an arena in which policies can be argued out to both develop the strikes and expose the role of the Labour and trade union leaders.

Even now Tory politicians like Peter Walker are declaring for support to Callaghan against the present pay strikes—fearing a Tory government might be returned under conditions where it could not govern.

"Left" wing Labour MPs like Dennis Skinner, who is making statements demanding Callaghan force the lorry bosses to pay up, must be called upon to take up a serious fight to force Callaghan—a proven scab—out of the Labour leadership.

## Political development

Were such a fight to take place in the Labour Party it would open up a huge political development in the workers' movement in which the whole question of an alternative programme capable of defending workers' interests could be raised by revolutionaries.

But if Skinner and his 'left' fellows continue to shy away from such a fight, they will reveal for all to see their failure to offer any real challenge to the open right wing.

This would come as no surprise. We have always insisted that a consistent struggle for the interests of the working class can only come from a revolutionary party aiming at the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a planned socialist economy.

The need for such a party now stands in front of every worker in struggle on wages, jobs or conditions.

The Workers Socialist League offers a programme and a perspective for building it.

## STOP CALLAGHAN'S TROOPS SCABBING!

# NOBODY PLEASED BY GERMAN OFFICIAL'S STEEL SELL-OUT

When Eugen Loderer takes his seat in the 'European Parliament', he will certainly be making speeches, fired with urgency and fervour, on the need for a 35 hour working week to destroy the evil of unemployment.

And every well-paid Social Democratic deputy will loudly applaud his passion and his rhetoric. With good reason.

For Loderer has a record second to none in fighting for this demand.

As President of IG-Metall, he was the individual most responsible for selling out the strike by steel workers which centred on the call for a 35-hour week.

It was Loderer who controlled the limitation of the strike as employers throughout the industry rushed to impose lockouts with the aim of dividing the union members.

## 'Victory'

And at the end it was Loderer who proclaimed as a 'victory' the deal which stated categorically that wage contracts were based on—a 40 hour week!

After a strike lasting more than six weeks, with 57,000 members called out in the later stages, the union's wage bargaining council voted to recommend a ragbag of concessions from the employers' federation—a 4% wage increase over 15 months, longer annual holiday, and 'free' shifts for workers over 50 and as compensation for night work.

Under the fiercely restrictive labour laws of West Germany just as a 75% majority was needed before the union was authorised even to prepare a strike, so a 25% majority in the compulsory secret ballot would have obliged IG-Metall to call an end to the strike!

But Loderer was narrowly spared such humiliation. 40% of the workers concerned voted to reject the deal, against 49% who agreed to accept the terms of the settlement.

Such a result is scarcely surprising, when a massive proportion of the membership was totally cynical as to the leadership's willingness to offer the employers any fight at all.

It was only last year, at IG-Metall's delegate conference that the union bureaucrats were defeated when they argued against the policy of a 35 hour week.

## Stockpiles gone

The final sell-out came just in the nick of time, as the dispute was about to take on far greater importance. With their stockpiles being rapidly eaten away, employers in the motor industry had already announced plans for short-time working.

Such an escalation would almost certainly have forced the Social Democratic Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, to intervene and so expose the supposed 'neutrality' of the state in industrial disputes.

The international character of the steel crisis has produced the same effects throughout the world, as capitalists attempt to cope with a slump in demand and a crash in profitability by imposing speed-up, redundancies and plant closures.

## 35 hour demand

In response to these attacks on jobs, workers in many countries have raised the demand for a 35-hour week. It was, this situation which made the strike such a fearful event for other steel employers, particularly in neighbouring France and Belgium.

But while employers have put up concerted resistance to the movement for a shorter



Schmidt with Callaghan—maybe discussing Loderer transfer bid?

working week, the 35-hour demand by itself is, as we have always argued, an inadequate basis for the fight of the working class to destroy unemployment.

The steel strike also raised other major political issues.

In passing the strikers exposed the bogus character of one major foundation of the supposed 'economic recovery' of West Germany.

Far from indicating a return of 'industrial confidence', the boom in steel orders last summer can now be seen clearly as the defensive stockpiling of other capitalists in preparation for the strike they felt to be inevitable.

The West German 'mini-boom' has its own mini-reality, but bourgeois claims that it heralded the end of their crisis have now lost all credibility.

## Support from Schmidt

Far more important, though, was the impact on the labour bureaucrats.

On television, Helmut Schmidt himself was forced to declare his support for strikes, as a part of the 'democratic process', while he pleaded for a

settlement. Employers indignantly responded by arguing that the lock-out was their contribution to this same process.

## Banned

Lockouts are banned by law in France and Italy; in many other European countries capitalists do not dare to use them against workers. But in West Germany they are fully legal under the repressive labour laws drawn up by the imperialist allies when they created the Federal Republic and reconstructed the union movement destroyed by fascism to act as a tool for class collaboration.

At the special conference of the SPD in December, resolutions were easily passed in support of the 35 hour week and condemning the use of lock-outs.

But the demand that federal deputies take immediate action to ban lockouts was heavily defeated.

Loderer himself, as president of the world's largest trade union, is not just an aspiring politician.

Through the West German state's machinery of 'industrial

democracy' and 'participation' Loderer is a 'worker-director' and even the deputy chairman of the supervisory board of Mannesmann—a steel producing firm!

But the growing disruption of 'industrial peace' in West Germany must be raising many doubts in the minds of the bourgeoisie as to whether Loderer and his companions still retain this power.

Within IG Metall, opposition to the leadership has grown and consolidated over the last year, despite fierce attempts at bureaucratic suppression.

## Words

But the problems of the working class will not be solved by the fiery words of left-talkers, any more than unemployment will be abolished by the limited and inadequate demand for a 35-hour week.

The crisis of proletarian leadership demands the building of a Trotskyist revolutionary party, fighting for the Transitional Programme to defend the working class against every form of capitalist attack and to advance its struggles towards the international victory of socialist revolution.

# CARTER, KREMLIN SWING BEHIND IRAN PUPPET

In the southern Iranian city of Shiraz last week demonstrators set fire to the headquarters of the hated secret police, SAVAK.

They were showing their contempt for the "promise" of the Shah's new Prime Minister, Shapour Bakhtiar, that SAVAK was to be replaced by "a modern security police".

The events of Shiraz also show new signs of the way in which the masses are establishing their own authority in the cities of Iran.

## Agents killed

There are growing reports of killings of known SAVAK agents. And in the oilfields and refineries, despite numerous reports of "agreements" with the bourgeois or religious opposition leaders to raise output, the workers are still refusing to produce more than a fraction of Iran's oil needs.

Despite the likely approval of the Bakhtiar government by the fake "parliament" and the Shah's forthcoming "holiday", capitalist and imperialist authority has continued to weaken.

Despite the verbal concessions made by Bakhtiar to Islam and anti-imperialism, the masses in the streets are more insistently than ever calling "Down with the Shah! Down with Bakhtiar!"

Both imperialism and Stalinism have rapidly changed their verbal positions on Iran in the last week.

## Reactionary

The Carter administration has welcomed (and perhaps made) the Shah's decision to leave the country and has given full backing to Bakhtiar's reactionary regime as the best short-term hope against revolution.

Carter has publicly warned the Iranian military not to stage a coup for the moment.

The Soviet Union has continued to follow the imperialists.

Having all last year condemned the mass upsurge as 'reactionary', *Isvestia* has (since the US backing for the Shah was modified) discovered that in Iran there is "a popular movement for freedom, democracy and national independence".

Moscow, too, is implicitly backing Bakhtiar.

Both imperialist and Stalinist



Bakhtiar

leaders are looking on in horror, and for the moment relatively powerless, as "stability" collapses in Iran.

The US has dismantled and removed some of its most sensitive military and espionage equipment in Iran and has been giving new public displays of support for King Khaled of Saudi Arabia and the Shah-protected Gulf Sheiks who tremble before the rise of the Iranian masses.

While power continues to shift towards the Iranian workers, peasants and students, they will not be able to exercise it more than fleetingly without the construction of a revolutionary leadership.

The consequences of the absence of a revolutionary programme and leadership will become rapidly more apparent as the would-be bourgeois and religious leaders of the opposition to the Shah prepare to try to divert and usurp the power of the masses to prevent it from destroying capitalism in Iran.



Carter with Khaled

The Ayatollah Khomeini has appointed a (still secret) "Islamic government" of which he would not be a member but the main power in the background.

He has hinted that he will return to Iran within the next few days, probably intending to coincide with the departure of the Shah.

At the same time the bourgeois National Front leader Sanjabi has declared himself ready to form the first post-Shah government.

These divisions among the opportunist misleaders both emphasise the need and create the opportunity for the building of a revolutionary leadership.

Such a party must be based on a programme of demands for full democratic rights, the destruction of the Shah's tyranny and the dissolution of his armed forces and secret police, the formation of workers, peasants, students and anti-Shah soldiers' committees which could form the basis of a workers' and peasants' government in Iran.

And in the imperialist countries like Britain the fight must be stepped up for union-organised backing of arms and other supplies to the dictatorship.

The Shah's army, which is undoubtedly preparing a political coup and a bloodbath at the right moment, is still supplied with the physical means to carry it out by the US and by Labour traitors in Europe like Helmut Schmidt, Callaghan, Owen, Mulley, and Judd. They should be thrown out of office.

# Major split in OCI's 'International'

The week 8-14 January was scheduled for a full meeting of the International Bureau of the Organising Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International (OCRFI) in Paris.

The OCRFI is the international grouping based on the large French "Trotskyist" group the OCI, led by Pierre Lambert.

## Healy

It was formed after the OCI split in 1971 from the International Committee which had until then been jointly dominated by the OCI and the British Socialist Labour League headed by Gerry Healy (now the Workers Revolutionary Party).

One of the complaints raised at that time by the

OCI against Healy was his refusal to implement democratic centralism in the running of the International Committee.

## Statement

Readers will be interested to learn therefore that a major split took place last week at the OCRFI meeting, after which the following statement was issued by the Bolivian Parti Ouvrier Revolutionnaire (POR); Politica Obrera (Argentina) and the Comité de Liaison des Militants Trotskyistes (Chile):

"1. The organisations Politica Obrera and Liaison Committee of Chilean Trotskyist Militants (LCMTC) have been expelled

from the Organising Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International without any type of political discussion, and under the accusation of being "provocateur guard-dogs of fascism".

2. The POR has walked out of the OCRFI with the following declaration:

"By a mandate of the last plenum of the Central Committee of the Bolivian POR, we make the following declaration:

Considering the methods employed in the discussion with Politica Obrera and in this very meeting of the International Bureau, characterised by their verticalism [verticalisme] and the substitution of administrative measures for the necessary political discussion, totally foreign to



Lambert

Trotskyism; these methods are related not only to organisational questions but above all principally to political aspects.

The norms which have come to be imposed in the OCRFI do not permit any genuine Trotskyist struggle in its ranks.

For these reasons the POR abandons this organisation".

9.1.79

Further details on the issues involved in this split are still emerging, and we are unable to report any formal statement on the question by the OCI leadership as we go to press.

INTERNATIONAL

# Kampuchea conflicts delight imperialists



At the end of December the Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea (Cambodia) permitted something which had not happened for nine years.

A party of foreign tourists—mostly capitalists from Thailand and a few journalists—were allowed for 45 minutes to visit the world-famous ancient temples of Angkor-Vat.

The tour was a conscious concession to the reactionary Thai dictatorship from whom Pol Pot hoped for material support against Vietnam's expansionism. But it was too late. This visit to Angkor-Vat was the last.

The lightning invasion—by the Vietnamese army and the scarcely more than symbolic forces of the Hanoi-sponsored Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation (KUFNS)—had already begun.

**Occupied**

And within a week the ancient temples along with virtually the whole of Kampuchea was occupied by Vietnamese troops in a full-blooded Kremlin-backed invasion.

The Pol Pot government and forces appear to have completely collapsed.

The vice-president, with Chinese diplomats and technical assistants, were ferried out in Thai helicopters and then put on planes to Peking.

The fate of Pol Pot himself remains unknown. One of the numerous rumours circulating in the last week suggested he was dead, another that he was in Washington!

What now seems almost certain is that the Peking bureaucracy intends to limit its immediate reactions to a serious set-back to verbal indignation and harmless ranting in the United Nations.

**Comic opera**

In the first days of the invasion the Peking regime seized some disputed islands close to Vietnam and since then it has reportedly massed its troops on the border.

But the main theatre of its activity has shifted 12,000 miles away to the UN Security Council in New York, the world centre of political comic opera.

There the Chinese Stalinist bureaucrats with their long-time protegee, the now hysterical Prince Sihanouk, have been exploiting their growing alliance with the imperialists to inflict some public diplomatic defeats on the Russian Stalinist bureaucrats.

**Debate**

China proposed a Security Council debate on the "unprovoked aggression" of the Vietnamese, in which Sihanouk could speak for the Cambodian regime which a week before had released him from detention.



ASEAN heads of state in conference

In spite of vehement hypocritical Soviet and Czechoslovak protests that this would be interference in Kampuchea's "internal affairs", China got the support of the imperialists and the debate went ahead.

The Soviet tactic was then to demand postponement of the debate until a representative of the Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation could arrive.

This, too, was rejected by the China-US-Britain axis and left the spluttering Soviet diplomats with a veto of any resolution as their only, and somewhat humiliating, way out.

**Transparent**

The tactic of the imperialists is transparent. They voted for the contest to take place and then stood back to let the workers' states draw blood from each other.

But the self-interest of these two parasitic bureaucracies comes before the defence of the historic gains of the working class against imperialism.

The Kremlin must be fairly confident that it has been successful in extending its political influence in South-East Asia at the expense of Peking and making a decisive response to the recent cementing of ties between China and the imperialists.

The Romanian Stalinist bureaucracy has come out against the invasion of Kampuchea by the pro-Moscow Vietnamese—in line with its recent opposition to Moscow on a number of other issues relating to the independence of the Stalinist bureaucracies from the Kremlin leadership.



Hua dancing in Rumania

Nonetheless, the Soviet-Vietnamese success in Kampuchea is already being exploited by the Chinese bureaucracy to boost its unprincipled search for allies among the reactionary regimes of the anti-communist Association of East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

This body called an emergency meeting last weekend to discuss the implications of the growth of Vietnamese power.

A separate regime has been set up in Phnom Penh by the KUFNS but it is clearly a puppet of Hanoi.

Also the country has been rechristened the

Democratic People's Republic of Kampuchea.

The Hanoi bureaucracy can now be expected to accelerate its plans for an Indo-Chinese federation with Laos (which it already dominates) and Kampuchea.

This, however, would be an entirely bureaucratic construction, very distant from the revolutionary possibility of a United Socialist States of Indo-China as a step towards a revolutionary socialist unification of all Asian countries and of the world.

One of the lessons of the recent events in Indo-China has been that it highlights the bitter contrast between the national rivalries of the bureaucratic parasites who rule all the workers' states and the gigantic potential which exists for the unification and mutual strengthening of those states which could be pursued by an authentically revolutionary leadership.

Instead of revolutionary socialist, internationalist unity, the existing bureau-

cratic cliques threaten to destroy all the gains made by the workers' states by a rivalry in which they vie with each other for the favours of the imperialists.

And then they fight out their battles in capitalists' forums like the UN so that inter-"socialist" rivalries become the imperialists' sport.

The masses of workers and peasants in Kampuchea and Vietnam can point the way towards destroying the bureaucratic obstacles to socialism by demanding the unconditional and immediate withdrawal of all Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea and by building in each area independent workers and peasants' soviets to combat the rule of the bureaucracy.

## 'Miracle' intervenes to stop dictators' war

In mid-December one of the many bizarre rumours circulating in Buenos Aires was that train loads of empty coffins were being sent to the southern part of the country.

They were presumed to be for the dead of what was then the expected war between the Argentinian and Chilean military dictatorships.

Last week both sides signed a declaration committing themselves to settling the issue peacefully.

What is the issue? It revolves around the two countries' rival claims to the possession of three small islands in the Beagle channel which separates the South American mainland from Tierra del Guego.

The islands are of no importance in themselves but they would be used as a benchmark for the division of territorial waters between the countries.

**Oil exploration**

That division, incidentally, decides where the Atlantic Ocean ends and the Pacific begins. It is not that abstract issue, of course, which has nearly caused war, but the consequences of the division for oil exploration and fishing rights.

It could have led to Argentina being forced to pass through Chilean waters to get access to one of its important naval bases.

About a year ago, an international arbitration panel headed by the British Queen, awarded the islands to Chile.

This was widely suspected of being a reaction to Argentina's claim to the British colony of the Falkland Islands, and it was rejected by the Videla junta in Argentina.

Videla, however, got the implicit support of Carter and US imperialism, as a result of the worsening diplomatic relations between Pinochet's regime in Chile and the Carter administration.

Pinochet's main ally in the

dispute has been the "communist" regime in Peking which has grown in warmth towards the butcher of the Chilean labour movement ever since he seized power in the coup of 1973.

The Argentinians have also pleaded the justice of their cause with the Peking bureaucracy, but to no avail.

Peking sees Argentina as being firmly in the camp of Moscow.

An enormous amount of its trade is now done with COMECON countries and both the Kremlin, bureaucracy and the Argentinian CP has supported Videla's bloody anti-

his rapidly increasing political involvement, sent his nuncio to mediate between the catholic military tyrants.

Like a divine Kissinger, the Cardinal shuffled between Buenos Aires and Santiago until he had devised a complex formula, on which both sides could at least agree to negotiate, and which involves some horse-trading of islands, an Argentinian maritime "corridor" to its naval base, and a new basis for demarking territorial water in which the disputed island would no longer be a reference point.

When hair splitting is involved, call in an expert!

But rumours of both Videla's and Pinochet's imminent replacement have been at least temporarily scotched by the war scare and the safe deliverance.

They have also tried to use the crisis to stifle more widespread opposition through the propagation of national fervour.

Pinochet has been negotiating for support from the Christian Democrats, some of whom have been flirting with the Stalinist-dominated Popular Unity.

It doesn't seem that much has yet come out of these talks. Videla, however, has been more successful.

**Fake "revolutionaries"**

Without even asking for it, he was given the support of the "revolutionary" Peronist guerrilla group, the Montoneros.

One of the Montoneros' leaders said in London at the end of last year that in the event of a war between Argentina and Chile they would support Videla.

So these fake "revolutionaries" come out in their true bourgeois nationalist colours.

There can be only one revolutionary position towards these two military dictatorships, which have both tried to physically destroy the leadership of the working class—the independent mobilisation of the working class for the complete overthrow of the dictatorships.

**Main obstacle**

And in a war, that position would take the form of revolutionary defeatism and the outright sabotage of the dictatorship's war effort by the working class.

It is the bourgeois nationalist reformist and Stalinist leaders in Argentina and Chile which are the main obstacles to the mass adoption of this revolutionary policy.



Videla

working class dictatorship since the day it seized power in 1976.

But it is not only into Buckingham Palace, the White House, the Kremlin and the Forbidden City that the Beagle crisis has intruded, but also more recently into the even more holy place of the Basilica of St. Peter's.

After the almost complete breakdown of bilateral negotiations between the dictators in mid-December, and the mobilisation and deployment for war of the two armies, God—or at least his elected official on Earth—arrived in the nick of time.

Pope John Paul II, as part of

# Lynch gang backs Mason's repression

The self styled "nationalist" Fianna Fail government in the Irish 'Free State' has stepped up its efforts to protect British imperialist occupation of the Six Counties.

Recent weeks have seen repeated statements by both Prime Minister Jack Lynch and Foreign Minister Michael O'Kennedy calling on British imperialism to take an 'initiative' in finding a political solution.

O'Kennedy has gone even further and last month tacitly defended the barbaric conditions inflicted by the British on 350 republican prisoners in 'H' Block of the Long Kesh concentration camp and in Armagh jail.

## PoW status

For over two years these prisoners have been refusing to wear prison clothing or do prison work in pursuit of their demand for the restoration of PoW status stripped from them by Labour minister Mason.

As a result they remain clad only in a single blanket, in unheated, unlit cells, and subjected to beatings and abuse by prison screws.

Yet O'Kennedy claimed that the struggle was simply being 'used' by the Republican movement for propaganda purposes. He went on to suggest that the consistent, widespread reports of systematic ill treatment of Long Kesh prisoners were



Fighting for democratic rights under the Lynch regime—a march last month organised by the Contraception Action Programme demanding free, legal contraception now.

untrue, stating that "any evidence of ill treatment of any kind" would be welcomed by him and "pursued as he had pursued such reports in the past".

Perhaps O'Kennedy should be referred to the recent report by two US congressmen which described conditions in 'H' Block as worse than those meted out to prisoners in "Saigon 1968".

Or maybe he should consult

Armagh jail chaplain An tAthair O Muiri, who has provided extensive documented accounts of ill-treatment, and who has pointed out that the blanket protest is:

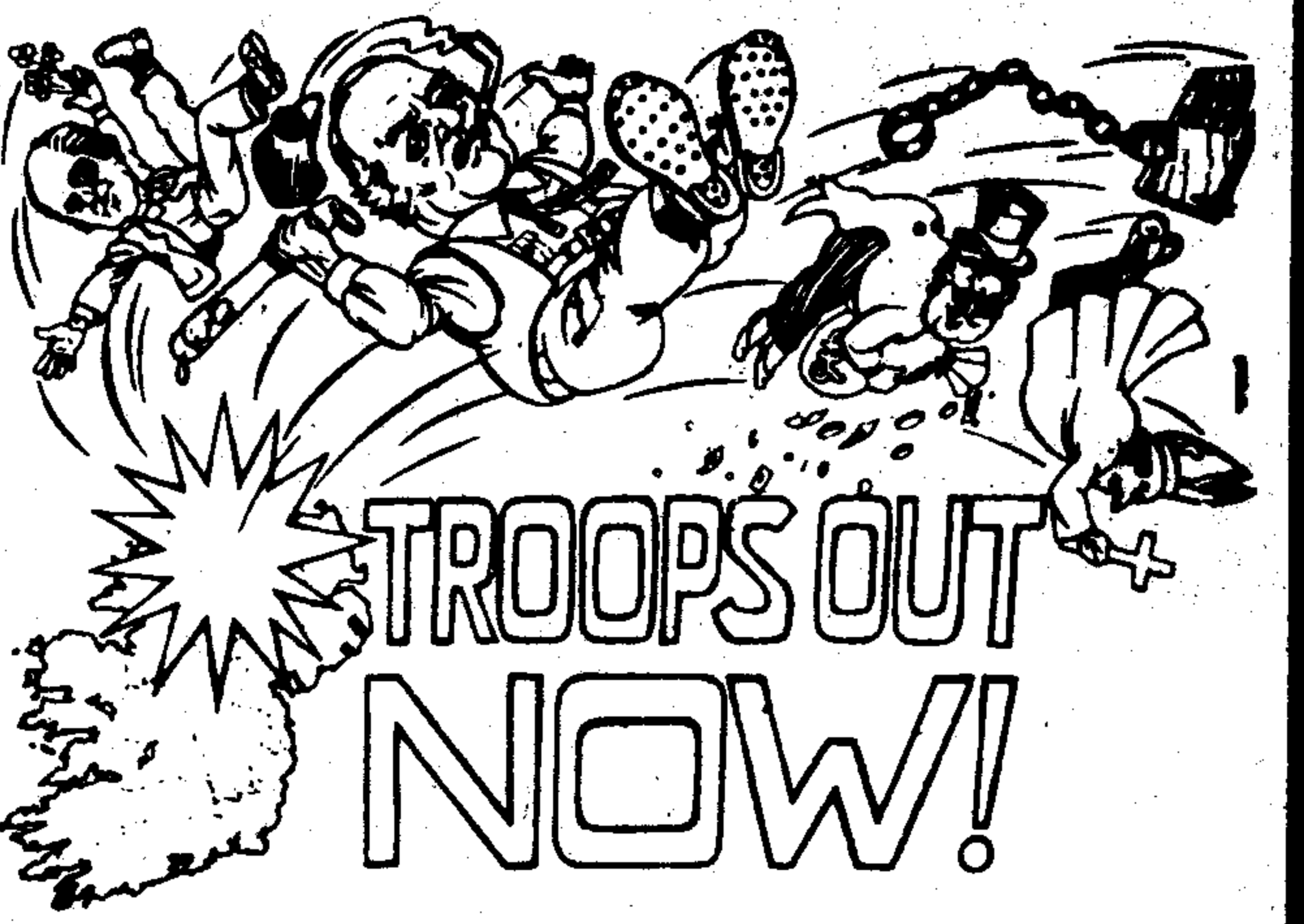
"one of the few forms of protest left to them against an administration which has deprived them of the ordinary necessities of life."

But of course O'Kennedy is not interested in the facts, but in curbing the latest republican

offensive against British imperialism and minimising its impact on the militant workers' movement in the 'Free State'.

And he is also anxious to prevent obvious analogies being drawn between the savagery of 'H' Block tortures and the brutal treatment of prisoners of war in the 26-counties, where frame-ups, forced "confessions" and prolonged periods of imprisonment without trial virtually equal the repression of

# IRELAND



the RUC in the North.

The Lynch government was hasty to condemn the IRA bombing campaign prior to Christmas—but is now seeking to cover its tracks by striking a verbally "anti-British" note, while steering well clear of any call for a united Ireland.

Lynch knows full well that the division and repression of the Irish working class by the British military occupation of the North is an essential element in the survival of his wretched bourgeois regime, which offers record rates of profit to imperialist exploiters, and record low living standards to the Irish working class.

So in reply to Mason's typically reactionary statement that the language of party politics in the occupied six counties is "still the political rhetoric of 10, 50 or 100 years ago", Lynch offered only the most timid opposition.

"It is easy for a person in Roy Mason's position to criticise others, but the fact is that the politicians in the North of Ireland have no forum within which to vocally and overtly represent their people."

"I would like it if the British government tried to establish an acceptable form of government."

The reality is that the problem in the six counties is

the same as it was 10, 50 or 100 years ago—the oppression of the Irish people by British imperialism.

No form of government established by the British oppressors—let alone one set up in the confines of the artificial six county sectarian statelet—can be acceptable to the Irish people.

## Withdraw troops

The only "political solution" that offers any way out of torture, barbarism and oppression is the immediate withdrawal of British troops and the establishment of a workers and farmers government which must carry out the nationalisation of Irish and foreign capital and the ending of all forms of national religious and sexual oppression in a united socialist Ireland.

These latest desperate joint efforts of both Lynch and Mason to contain the current IRA offensive shows that they stand in mortal fear of such a development.

Now is the time therefore for the British labour movement to make its voice heard, and to raise far and wide the demand for the removal of the pro-imperialist Callaghan-Mason, gang and the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

# Your legal rights stand in the way of their "justice"

"The existing law is excessively solicitous towards accused persons".

So says Sir Thomas Hetherington, Director of Public Prosecutions, in his submission to the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure.

This same Royal Commission has already witnessed the reactionary rantings of Metropolitan Police chief Sir David McNee, demanding a whole string of draconian police powers, which he admits they already exercise illegally.

## Anti-picket

But of course after hearing a few months ago from Sir David's notorious predecessor Sir Robert Mark that the police, weighed down with anti-picket assignments and escort duties for the National Front was too busy to fight crime, it should come as no surprise to hear from a top civil servant that the law itself now apparently stands in the way of "justice"!

Lessons from the ten year military repression of the six counties of Ireland are beginning to percolate through into the British legal system.

## "Suspects"

Hetherington focusses attention in particular on revising the law on confessions extracted from "suspects" under threat or inducement.

Such confessions should be ruled inadmissible only



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

if they were of a sort "likely to be rendered unreliable in consequence of that threat" or inducement, he suggests.

The likelihood of any confession being ruled inadmissible under such conditions is clearly minimal, with the scope for police frame-up correspondingly increased.

Hetherington also wants to offer police a further encouragement to beat up "suspects", by ensuring that:

"facts discovered as a

result of, and subsequently proving confirmatory of, an otherwise inadmissible confession should render it admissible."

As for the traditional formality whereby police are obliged to caution "suspects" before launching into interrogation, and to cease interrogation after a suspect has been charged—these should be scrapped, he suggests.

They are, in his words: "a hindrance to the interests of justice and ought to be abolished."

Clearly, then, in Hetherington's view, the "interests of justice" are identical to the interests of the police in securing high-speed convictions, regardless of the rights of their hapless victim—be he bank robber, dope smuggler, picket, unemployed youth or anti-fascist demonstrator.

This view is obviously shared by Home Secretary Merlyn Rees, who won the applause of the entire Tory press and the media with his spirited defence of the



PHOTO: John Smith, IFL

Police—encouraged to beat up suspects police at the Labour Party conference, and who has expressed interest in McNee's proposals for increased police powers.

## New submission

These proposals have now been extended by a new submission by the Association of Chief Police Officers, who favour new powers to compel wives and husbands to testify against their partners, introducing

the "right of appeal" for the prosecution if a defendant is acquitted, and stringent police checks on jurors to exclude anyone with criminal convictions.

The size of jury majority to secure a conviction should be reduced, the ACPO continues.

Prosecuting lawyers should be able to draw attention to the decision of a defendant not to testify in court, and defendants should be denied their right

to give their evidence last in the defence case, argue these defenders of democracy.

Lawyers, they argue, take a 'subjective view' in defending existing legal rights, since they make their living from court hearings.

The police, however, we are led to believe, are completely unbiased and objective in the matter!

## "Impartiality"

With similar laughable hypocrisy, which is so typical of British bourgeois 'justice', DPP Hetherington feels obliged to wind up his proposals by laying claim to "impartiality":

"I believe that my independence from political influences is a factor of considerable importance in maintaining public confidence in the fair and impartial administration of the criminal law."

## Clear warning

As an integral part of the state machinery of the ruling capitalist class Hetherington is no more politically "impartial" than the leader of the capitalists' main political party, Margaret Thatcher.

These pronounced new moves to the right by the state spell out a clear warning to every worker and youth: if a fight is not taken up now against the right wing Labour government and for the overthrow of capitalism, then even democratic rights you presently enjoy will be threatened!

# THATCHER IN BID TO SOUND MORE RIGHT WING THAN CALLAGHAN



'Maggie in a Muddle' was the headline of *Labour Weekly* following Thatcher's union-baiting interview on the ITV 'Weekend World' programme.

The editorial mildly chastised the Tory leadership for 'failing to learn the lessons of the fall of the Heath government'. (No doubt if Thatcher would only listen to the wiseacres at Transport House future Tory governments could sit more firmly in the saddle).



Thatcher

## Discomfiture

At a time when the right-wing traitors in the Labour government are confronted by a growing mass movement in the unions against the wage-cutting, anti-working class policies of the Callaghan-Healey gang, it is to be expected that even a paper like *Labour Weekly* will feel a little discomfiture at speaking too strongly on the anti-unionism of the Tories.

In fact, in a shamefaced way, the contradiction had to be recognised, thus we read: 'There have been disagreements (!), particularly over pay policy, and there are major problems on the industrial front at the

moment, but nothing like the problems the Tories would create'.

The message is simple: the working class must sit by and watch as troops are prepared to organise picket-breaking scab operations, since Thatcher would be 'worse'.

There is of course no doubt that Thatcher's ravings represent the response of the Conservative Party leadership to the increasing militancy of the working class. Realising the increasing inability of the union leaders to hold back working class action against wage control the Tories

have increased their turn towards reliance on the courts and the state machine to confront the labour movement.

As such, Thatcher's proposals are a declaration of war on the working class.

## Crushing blow

Were she able to stop social security payments to strikers' families, force in secret ballots for strike decisions, remove the right to strike for key sections of workers, and remove the 'legal immunity' of the unions (i.e. make it possible for employers to sue unions

for the damage to profits during industrial action), this would deliver a crushing blow to the independence of the working class movement in Britain.

## Prepared ground

Yet what *Labour Weekly* cannot say is that Callaghan has done everything possible to prepare the ground for such measures. If a Tory government is returned to power in the next election it will be thanks to Callaghan, and the working class movement would have to rely entirely upon its own organised strength to beat back the attacks of the ruling

class.

In fact workers would have to use the very weapons that it is at present using against Callaghan himself.

Thatcher was interviewed by a fawning admirer—ex-Labour MP Brian Walden—who did nothing to disguise his enthusiasm for state attacks on workers.

Walden, like Prentice, is distinguished only by the fact that he has not been afraid to openly declare the affinity of Labour's right wing to Tory measures. Yet, also like Prentice, he was allowed to sit in the Labour Party leadership until he

decided that he had no further use for association with the labour movement.

Today more clearly than ever, the fight to kick out this breed—Callaghan, Healey and their lackeys—is an imperative if the labour movement is to defend itself on any front.

This is what *Labour Weekly*, not to mention the 'left' Labour leaders who claim to oppose the government, will not and dare not say.

As a consequence this task of exposing and driving out the traitors falls to *Socialist Press* and the Workers Socialist League.

# Futile gesture by 'Low Pay' traitors

If you refuse to beat them, subsidise them!

That must be the perverted thinking behind the decision by leaders of public sector unions to place whole page adverts in *Labour Weekly* opposing the government's 5% pay limit and supporting the so-called 'Low Pay Campaign'.

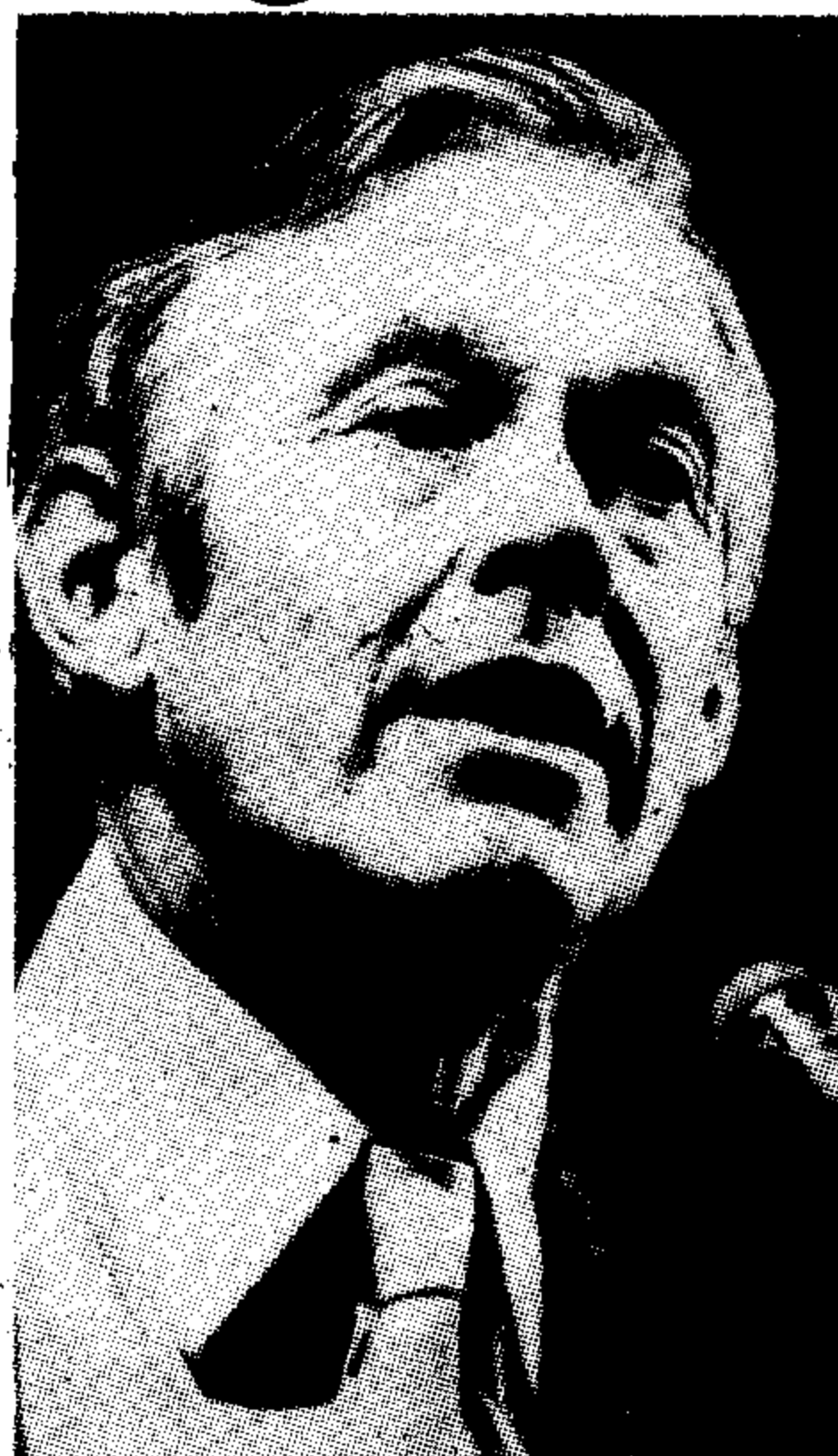


PHOTO: Laurence Spaham, IFTL

*Labour Weekly* of course has tirelessly touted the 5% pay policy week in, week out, and echoes every lying and reactionary statement by Labour leaders about wage increases supposedly causing inflation.

In the same issue of this

reformist house journal its chief sponsor James Callaghan presents his New Year message, in which he flatly opposes all forms of pay struggle:

"Let those who possess industrial muscle or monopoly power resolve not to abuse their great strength.

"Individual greed and disregard for the wellbeing of others can undermine and divide our society. It is not for Britain.

"Let us resolve to practise a greater sense of responsibility for each other and for those in need—the sick, disabled, handicapped, the elderly.

"And if we are to mean this, let us be prepared to put our money—and our taxes—where our mouth is".

Not a word of course about those in need including the low paid who, in the midst of crumbling social services savaged by Healey's spending cuts, have the arduous task of actually caring for the old and the sick.

On the contrary, last winter it was Callaghan, supported by *Labour Weekly*, who sent in the troops to smash the firemen's strike.

Now he is lining up these uniformed scabs to break any strike undertaken by low paid workers in the public sector.

Subsidising Callaghan's treachery by placing huge adverts in *Labour Weekly* (paid for with union funds) does nothing to win the struggle for the £60/35 hour week claim in the public sector.

But it does speak volumes of the political line and limitations of the public sector union leaders, and the need for a new leadership in the labour movement as a whole.

# PRESS GANG



Military beds in the emergency centres; starving animals on the farms; rotting food at the ports; waves of panic buying in the shops; owner drivers turned back at the picket lines:—with a carefully selected parade of images the press continues to mount the atmosphere of crisis and impending doom.

The front pages seem to be written as much for posterity as for current consumption. Headlines are extended; the sub editors search for a new expression of calamity; Labour rats are dragged out of the woodwork to denounce the pickets.

It is at times like this that the capitalist press comes into its own.

Radio 4 brought back Robin Day and turned over its news programmes almost

exclusively to increasingly reactionary demands for curbs on the right to strike and the right to picket.

Even as the press harangues the transport drivers, the newspaper owners keep their fingers crossed that the picket lines will make an exception for newsprint. The papers grow smaller and shriller by the day.

Yet despite the confident tones in which the newspaper editors print their editorials they seem unable to keep up with events.

The demands by Tories for repressive measures against strikers are overshadowed by the fact that the government is forced to turn to the TGWU bureaucracy to make deals over supplies.

That in turn is overshadowed by the action committee decisions in many cases to ignore Evans' dictates and decide for themselves which lorries will be allowed to pass and what constitutes an emergency.

This strength of the working class comes in the end to be realised by the press.

The *Daily Express* ended last week with a "Charter for Moderates" which sung the praises of the Tory front bench, but which recognises the facts of life—that such measures are more likely from the Labour government and the labour bureaucracy.

"Obviously the idea of picketing as 'peaceful persuasion' has become a sick joke in many cases.

"Obviously the TUC should be asked to crack down on intimidatory picketing. But if not the law should be defined more tightly and precisely, and the police ordered to intervene when things get out of hand...

"Meanwhile, judging from Chancellor Healey's remarks, it could be that the Labour government will come up with its own solution—if the party machine will allow it."



# CARWORKERS CONFERENCE

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

# 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 last 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 Burnham-Schachtman split from the American Socialist Workers Party in 1939-40 revolves around three major questions—none of which can be separated from the others.

These are: the question of Russia; the question of the party; and the question of philosophy.

Whilst none of these facets can ultimately be separated from one another, neither can they be understood except by initially examining them in turn.

## Background

First it is necessary to give a little background information on the participants.

James Burnham, a professor of philosophy, had come into the Trotskyist movement in 1934 when the Communist League fused with the American Workers Party to form the Workers Party of the USA.

Burnham had been a leading advocate of the fusion on the National Committee of the AWP.

Together with fellow professor Hook, he collaborated with Cannon in efforts to speed the unification of forces. Cannon in his *History of American Trotskyism* points out that "Burnham, as later events showed, wanted unification with the Trotskyists because he was then taking a step forward, getting a little bit more radical; he wanted to put his toe a little deeper into the icy water of proletarian politics while firmly bracing himself with his other foot, on the bourgeois shore."

Max Schachtman and Martin Abern on the other hand had been co-founders of the American Trotskyist movement with Cannon in the 1920s. Schachtman in particular had made an important and valued contribution to that movement in the early period.

## Pressures

The attitude they take to the Soviet state is one of the most rigorous tests of revolutionaries.

In analysing the contradictory reality of the Soviet Union, two conflicting



The signing of the Stalin-Hitler Pact

pressures make themselves felt.

The first is the tendency to view the continued existence of nationalised property relations in the Soviet Union, and the post-war extension of those property relations into Eastern Europe, as proof that there is no need to fight for the construction of independent revolutionary parties to accomplish a political revolution.

## Compromise

Such a view often extends to imagining that in some sense or other the Stalinist bureaucracy or a "left" section of it in the Soviet Union will reform itself.

As a result such a view drives those that defend it into a compromise and even a collaboration with Stalinism.

Its basic starting point is that in a two-colour world of 'blacks' and 'whites', the Soviet Union is—by and large—'white'.

Failing to grasp its contradictory nature, it is incapable of understanding the USSR or its bureau-

cracy. Leading advocate of this anti-Marxist, revisionist, position in the post war Fourth International was Michel Pablo.

## Public opinion

But the opposite pressure on the revolutionary movement is that from imperialism and bourgeois "public opinion", particularly as reflected within middle class elements in or around the revolutionary movement.

Noting correctly one aspect of the Soviet Union—its repressive, dictatorial regime in which the working class has no real political power—this current finds itself in accord with the view of imperialism, that the USSR is a dictatorship which cannot be defended.

Searching around for some argument on which to shore up this position, certain petty bourgeois forces have historically taken refuge in branding the USSR as no longer a degenerated workers' state, but one in which the gains of the 1917 revolution have been reversed, and a state capitalist regime instituted.

The Stalinist bureaucracy from this standpoint, is seen not as a parasitic ruling caste resting on nationalised property relations, but as a special form of ruling class.

Here, too, the attempt to view the world in terms of only two distinct colours, 'black' and 'white', leads to an opposite, but equally false, view that the USSR is totally 'black'.

In the period of the Cold War, when capitalist anti-communist propaganda reached its high point, this 'state capitalist' analysis provided the cover under which a group of renegade Trotskyists under Tony Cliff broke from Marxism and refused to support North Korea against imperialist attack.

## Workers' state

That group today lives on as the British Socialist Workers Party. It is this group which now most resembles the positions of Burnham and Schachtman, and their refusal to defend the USSR against imperialism.

The Left Opposition in the Russian Communist



Cannon in 1938

Party and later the Fourth International had stood by a position that the October Revolution created a workers' state in Russia.

And despite the deformations, distortions and crimes wrought by Stalinism it remained—albeit degenerated—a workers' state to be defended against imperialist assault.

The working class having seized power in November 1917, took ownership of the means of production from the bourgeoisie, establishing nationalised property relations.

## Bureaucracy

A new social order began to be created where production was no longer for profit.

It is not the place of this article to examine the reasons for the growth of a parasitic bureaucracy upon that new social order.

Among the key factors were the decimation of the working class, continued scarcity and the isolation of the revolution.

Trotsky's book *Revolution Betrayed* gives the clearest account. But a ruling caste, a bureaucratic clique did emerge. And it distorted and bent the form and content of the workers' state, so it became at first sight unrecognisable as a workers' state.

For the working class does not control or benefit from the social organisation of those states, indeed is oppressed by them.

## Alignments

Yet nonetheless there are gains contained within it which must be defended.

There were other pressures on Burnham and Schachtman. They were caught in the play of class forces which found its expression in new international manoeuvres and alignments.

Stalin, in August 1939, sought a bureaucratic means of "defending" the Soviet Union without mobilising the working class, and signed the notorious "Stalin-Hitler Pact".

This unleashed a great wave of anti-Soviet hysteria throughout the western capitalist countries.

Burnham declared: "It is impossible to regard the Soviet Union as a

workers' state in any sense whatever... Soviet intervention (in World War II) will be wholly subordinate to the general imperialist character of the conflict as a whole, and will be in no sense a defence of the remains of the socialist economy."

Trotsky in 'Again and once more again on the nature of the USSR' replied to this criticism by Burnham and Schachtman:

"When an emotion-mechanic considers an automobile in which let us say gangsters have escaped from police pursuit over a back road, and finds the frame bent, the wheels out of line and the motor partially damaged, he might justifiably say: 'It is not an automobile—devil-knows what it is.' Such an estimate would lack any technical and scientific value, but it would express the legitimate reaction of the mechanic at the work of the gangsters. Let us suppose, however, that the same mechanic must record the object which he named 'devil-knows what it is'. In this case he will start with the recognition that it is a damaged automobile before him."

## Different

So the Soviet Union Trotsky argues, is a workers' state in the sense that a damaged car remains a car.

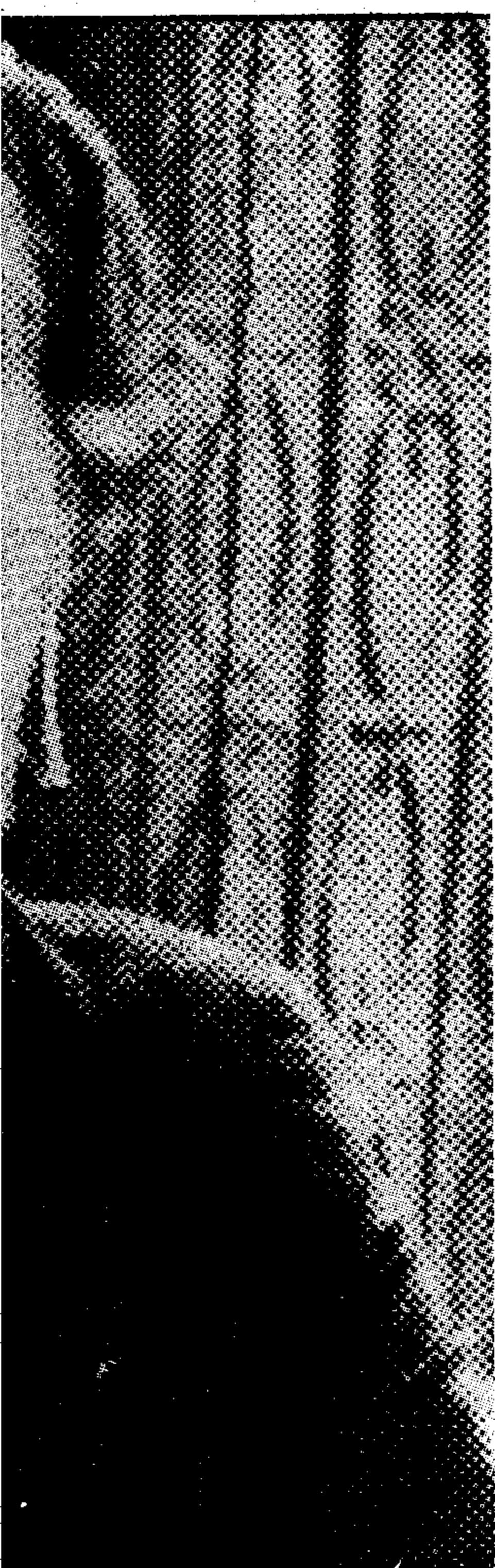
For Burnham and Schachtman, however, the approach was different.

As the Stalinist gangster perpetrated yet more abuse as the mangled machine became more and more unrecognisable—they finally threw up their hands in horror and said "It's not a car anymore."

The whole time they have been looking not at the contradictions beneath the surface but at how it appeared to them and now it appeared different.

Cannon analysed their position thus in *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party*:

"The crisis signifies the reaction in our ranks to external social pressure... More specifically, we say the crisis is the result of the pressure of bourgeois-democratic opinion upon a section of the party leadership.



Trotsky uses the analogy with a trade union.

"The trade unions of France, Great Britain, the United States and other countries support completely the counter-revolutionary politics of their bourgeoisie."

This does not prevent us from labelling them trade unions, from supporting their progressive steps and from defending them against the bourgeoisie."

Thus we understand the dual nature of trade unions. On the one hand they are the form of organisation of the working class.

**Distorted**

On the other hand they are simultaneously hampered, warped and distorted by their current pro-imperialist, reactionary leadership.

These two aspects exist side by side. We support the trade union movement against the employers—we support even Scanlon, Chapple, Jones etc., against attack by the state—yet we recognise that such leaders ally with the bosses and the state against us, and we fight within the trade

ideal party and ideal unions.

But until this happy moment arrives, they will, as much as possible, pout their lips at reality."

Trotsky argues that in fact were the bureaucracy to be driven out, the Russian proletariat would still find:

"... the nationalised means of production and the basic elements of planned economy after its victory."

This means that it will not have to begin from the beginning. That is a tremendous advantage!

Only radical dandies, who are used to hopping carelessly from twig to twig can lightmindedly dismiss such a possibility.

The socialist revolution is too tremendous and difficult a problem for one to lightmindedly wave his hand on its inestimable material achievement and begin from the beginning."

**"Radical dandies"**

The philosophical method of these "radical dandies" was a method which rejected the scientific basis of Marxism, rejected historical materialism.

For Burnham it is enough to say that things are like they are until suddenly, they are like something else.

He ignores the whole process of movement and development by which—to return to the earlier example—the motor car broke down.

He comes upon things without understanding their historical development—the processes and contradictions at work within them.

Trotsky says that these American 'radical' intellectuals:

"accept Marxism without the dialectic (a clock without a spring)."

This, he says, is because they are influenced by the dominating philosophical outlook of American thought—America the land of 'unlimited opportunity' that denies the class struggle and social contradictions as the moving force of development.

Trotsky points to the contrast between Burnham's wooden, formal impressions and Marxism:

"Dialectical thinking is related to vulgar thinking in the same way that a motion picture is related to a still photograph. The motion picture does not outlaw the still photograph but combines a series of them according to the laws of motion."

Burnham, however, was so aggressively attached to his collection of static, black and white, snapshots that he threw the motion picture out of the window.

**Interconnected**

So attitudes to Russia and attitudes to philosophy were interconnected—the one an expression of the other.

But why did Burnham in particular take this position?

And why did Schachtman, though not agreeing

the necessity of following party discipline.

They insisted that they be allowed to air their differences in public outside the party.

**Discipline**

As "radical dandies" they rejected the discipline of democratic centralism—a discipline Cannon explained thus:

"With the public press of the party, however, the situation stands differently. If democracy holds sway in the internal discussion, then centralism predominates in the public expressions and actions of the party."

"The public party press is not and cannot be an instrument of discussion under the control of a parity committee. It is, rather, an instrument of the party and its National Committee for the presentation and defense of the official position of the party."

"In the discussion bulletin the opposition can ask for equal rights with the majority, but the official party publications have the duty to defend the point of view of the party and the Fourth International until they are changed by convention or congress."

"A discussion in the pages of the official party publications—as provided in the forthcoming issue of the *New International*, for example—can be conducted only within the limits established by the majority of the National Committee. Whoever disputes this rejects the whole conception of a centralised revolutionary party."

"At the same time he negates party democracy by subjecting the decisions of a majority to the public attack of a minority at whim."

Thus in all three arenas the opposition were influenced by bourgeois

theoretical organ *The New International*, and embarked on an independent career along non-Trotskyist lines."

Burnham's defection from this new party a mere month later is a fitting epitaph.

"Of the most important beliefs which have been associated with the Marxist movement, there is virtually none which I accept in its traditional form."

He goes on to say:

"Experience and further study and reflection have convinced me that I have been wrong and Trotsky right on this score; that dialectical materialism though scientifically meaningless, is psychologically and historically an integral part of Marxism."

Burnham stood all on its head.

Yet from this major political fight in the early years of World War 2, we can reaffirm the significance and fundamental importance of dialectical materialism as a philosophical method upon which we continue to stand.



Schachtman

Only the method of dialectical materialism allows us to see the contradiction and process within all things.

And the Burnham-Schachtman split confirms the need to fight within the discipline of a democratic centralist party against the pressures from the ruling class which Burnham-Schachtman and their present day co-thinkers reveal.

This faction fight therefore drew out a series of questions which remain fundamental to the fight in today's class struggle to reconstruct the Fourth International on the basis of a practical and theoretical reaffirmation of its founding principles and programme.

Trotsky's polemics against Burnham and Schachtman published in *In Defence of Marxism* provide some of the most concise and accessible statements on the Marxist method of analysis—a method sadly thrown aside in the post-war period by the FI leadership headed by Michel Pablo.

The resultant crisis and split in the movement has never been resolved, and Pablo's methods have been continued by the leadership of the present day 'United' Secretariat.

**Adequate**

Our task as Marxists is not simply to assemble around us numerical forces, but to ensure that the revolutionary party that we build is adequate to the demands that will be placed upon it in the struggle for power.

The lessons of the formative years of the SWP offer us important assistance in fighting the present-day degeneration of that party and of the USFI leadership which it politically supports, and struggling for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International.

**Concluded**



Trotsky—fought "radical dandies"

That is our class analysis of the unrestrained struggle between the proletarian and the petty bourgeois tendencies in our party."

The Second World War, like the First, struck the world labour movement like a cataclysm. As Cannon put it:

"Weaknesses which remained undisclosed in time of peace are rapidly laid bare with the approach of war."

The weaknesses in this opposition group within the SWP emerged in their superficial failure to look below the surface of events.

Instead they insisted upon a formal 'black and white' analysis in their failure to understand the contradictory nature of reality.

They were unable to comprehend that because the Soviet Union entered into a clearly counter-revolutionary alliance with Hitler that did not mean that it was the same thing as Hitler.

**Method**

The weakness of the group was essentially in their philosophical method which Burnham explicitly expressed in his rejection of the Marxist method of Dialectical Materialism.

In insisting that the Soviet Union was either a perfect workers' state worth defending or had turned into something else no longer worth defending, Burnham was turning away from understanding the contradictory nature of the Soviet Union.

unions against those leaders and to overthrow them.

Not to do both things is to abstain from the battle to change the world.

The view that the trade unions really are only what the bureaucracy makes them is held by certain anarchists today, who for instance argued that the Grunwicks workers should have nothing to do with unions because the APEX leadership would sell them out!

**Idealistic norms**

Precisely and for this reason we do battle in unions.

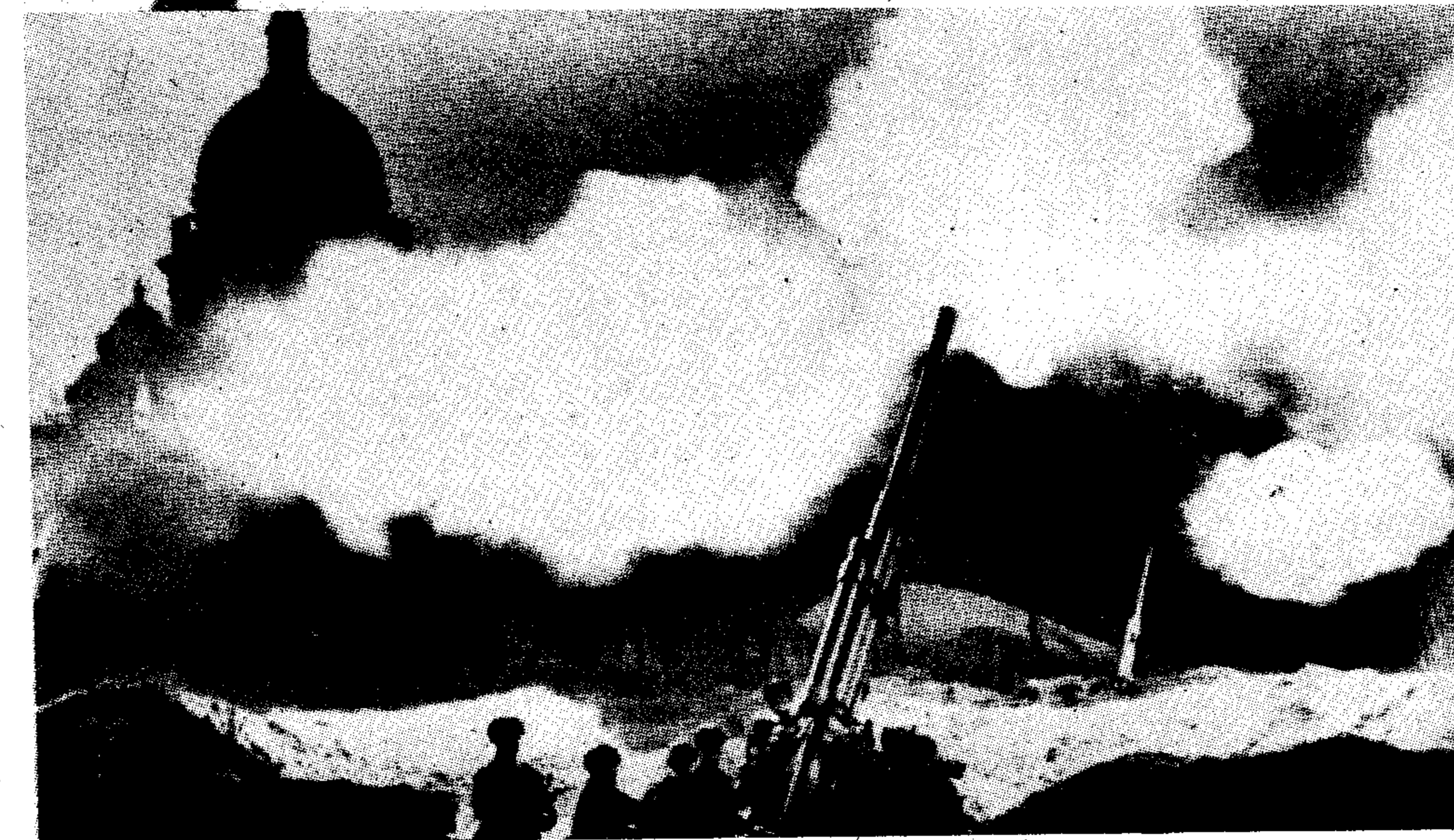
For this reason, also, understanding the contradiction, we defend the Soviet Union and battle for the political overthrow of its bureaucratic leaders.

Not to do so is to refrain from participating in the real world.

Trotsky puts it thus: "Idealistic, ultimatistic, 'purely' normative thinking wishes to construct the world in its own image, and simply turns away from phenomena which are not to its liking."

Sectarians, i.e. people who are revolutionary only in their own imagination, guide themselves by empty idealistic norms.

They say: "These unions are not to our liking, we will not join them; this workers' state is not to our liking we will not defend it". Each time they promise to begin history anew. They will construct, don't you see, an ideal workers' state, when god places in their hands an



The Battle of Leningrad—defence of the USSR was an immediate question

Burnham argued that:

"... so far as politics goes, it is the programme and the empirical consequences that follow from it which are fundamental in relation to the theory of the state, rather than the theory fundamental in relation to the programme."

"But there is no sense at all in which dialectics (even if dialectics were not, as it is, scientifically meaningless) is fundamental in politics, none at all."

"An opinion on dialectics is no more fundamental for politics than an opinion on non Euclidean geometry or relativity physics."

**Process**

Burnham rejects therefore any analysis of social reality which understands it to be always in a process of movement and change.

with his philosophical starting point, concede that philosophy was "unimportant"?

Burnham—a university professor, a professor of philosophy, lived and breathed in the sterile anti-Marxist atmosphere of the university—a totally petty-bourgeois milieu.

Burnham and Schachtman were content to debate in a propagandistic way within this arena.

Cannon's concern and that of the SWP majority was the building of a proletarian party. Trotsky had written in 1937:

"Predominance in the organisation of intellectuals is inevitable in the first period of development of the organisation."

"It is at the same time a big handicap to the political education of the more gifted workers".

Burnham and Schachtman did not accept this view. Nor did they accept



# How we fought BL's

Eighteen months ago Moss Evans and the leadership of every major union forced a national secret ballot on the workforce of Leyland Cars.

This ballot, aided by a massive press campaign in favour of a 'yes' vote, secured a claimed 97% turnout and a 2-1 majority in favour of three proposals:

\*Acceptance of company-wide corporate bargaining in place of plant-level bargaining, to be introduced in 1979.

\*Parity of wages for the same job in every Leyland plant.

\*A common November date for annual pay reviews in each factory.

The reason the ballot stipulated 1979 as the start of corporate bargaining was to give the impression that this major change was not to be rushed in.

But in reality the other two points stood in contradiction to a 1979 start to corporate bargaining.

## 'Parity' deal

This is because part of the 'parity' deal involved the payment of several lump sums of money to Leyland workers during 1978 while the new grading structure on which "parity" was to be based was worked out.

These "splash" payments were worked out on the basis of complete acceptance of the new grading structure.

If the November 1978 pay review had brought some plants larger pay increases than others, all the calculations preparatory to the introduction of 'parity' would have been messed up.

In reality the company had to ensure a common corporation-wide pay increase for November 1978.

So while Leyland workers



Cowley workers vote overwhelmingly for the £27 claim

thought in 1977 that they were voting to accept corporate bargaining in 1979, the majority of convenors knew full well that the company was planning to force it in a year earlier, in 1978!

Their collaboration with this fraud was made easier by the company's 'participation' set up, whereby convenors were bought off through lavish lunches and privileges, and persuaded that they had a

"common interest" with management.

Indeed top convenors spent the whole of the period from the ballot to November 1978 in talks with management on the proposed grading structure.

This was done by a "National Joint Negotiating Committee" (LCJNC) set up after the ballot.

The company plan was to work out the new grading structure and the rates of pay on

which 'parity' would be established, then add a 5% Phase 4 increase and obtain acceptance on a corporate level.

Every Leyland plant with the exception of Cowley was prepared to accept this manoeuvre.

But in Cowley there had been a principled opposition to the imposition of corporate bargaining which concentrates power in the hands of national union officials remote from and

in no way answerable to the shop floor in any particular plant.

Opponents of the plan pointed to the way in which corporate bargaining would further weaken the position of elected shop stewards and convenors, while strengthening the grip of appointed full time officials.

And they pointed also to a clause in the 1977 ballot which specified that "normal bargain-

ing arrangements" should remain in force in 1978.

On this basis a fight began for a plant level claim in Cowley.

The right wing leadership in the Cowley Body Plant attempted to head this off by passing a resolution at the 5/60 TGWU Branch accepting a corporate-level claim.

But in the neighbouring Assembly Plant a claim for a £27 per week increase, protected against inflation through a cost of living clause, and a 35 hour week, was submitted at plant level in August.

At first the company attempted to divert the claim to national negotiations.

## "Inevitability"

But the submission of the claim was coupled with the launching of a fight for a national policy of plant level claims by Cowley delegates on the Leyland Cars Combine Committee.

And while fighting for convenors to adopt this policy, meetings of Leyland workers and stewards began to be called in Birmingham by the ad-hoc body 'Leyland Stewards for the 1978 Review'.

The first of these meetings confirmed at once that the leadership of every Midlands plant had accepted the "inevitability" of a corporate claim.

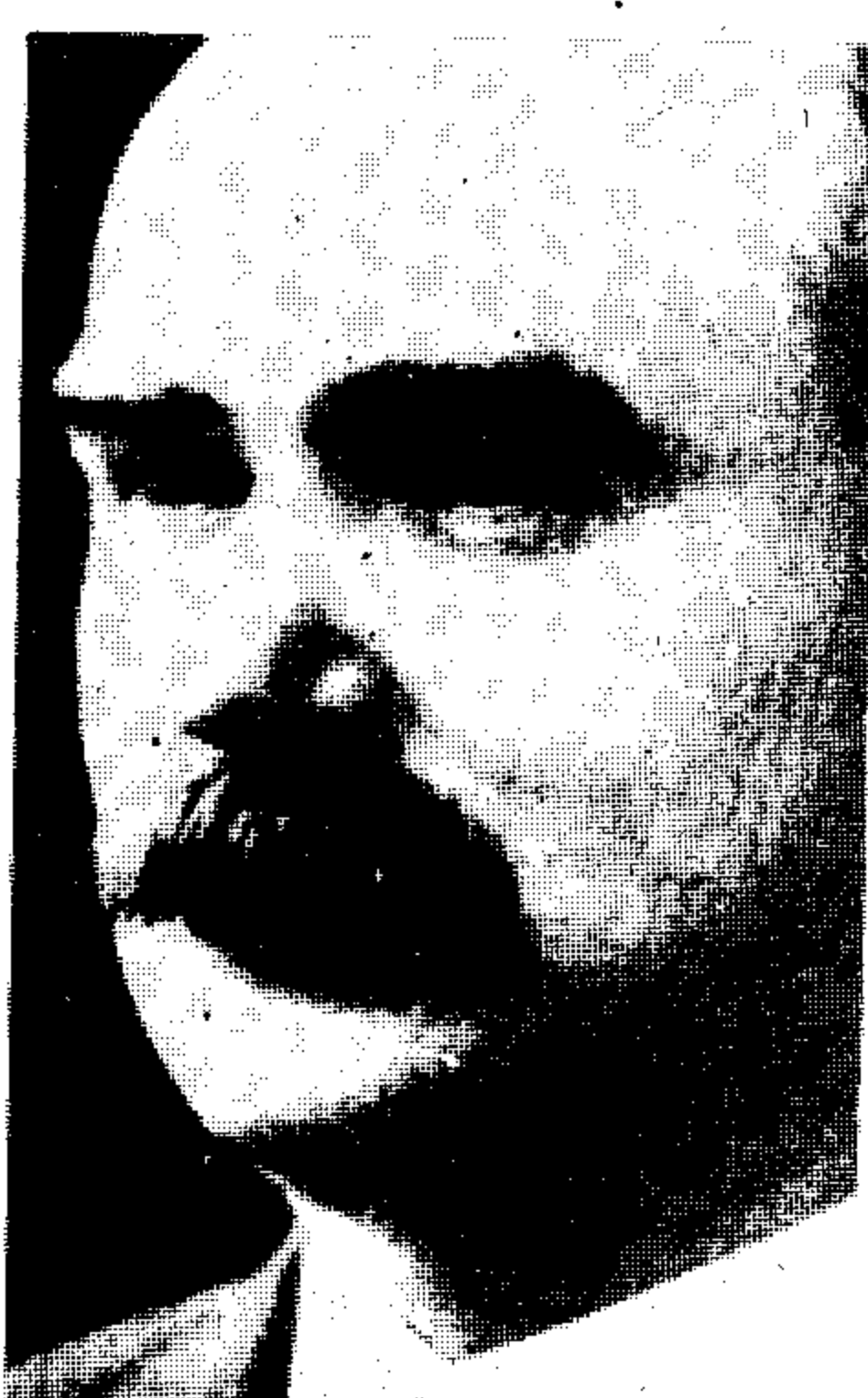
But it also revealed that all the 'left' groups claiming to offer a 'revolutionary' lead to Leyland workers had also accepted this as "inevitable", on the basis that they did not feel strong enough to change it!

The first argument was therefore whether we should abandon the 1978 review and wait for 1979 to come round or whether—as the Workers Socialist League members

# Letter: Don't forget Daniel De Leon



Lenin



Conolly

Certain of De Leon's ideas, again bear a resemblance to some of the later writings of Lenin—his theory of the labour aristocracy as expounded in "2 Pages from Roman History" and the functioning and role of the Revolutionary Party (See "Reform and Revolution") pre-empt, albeit in a crude way, the later theories of Lenin.

## Syndicalism

Around 1905, the year in which he participated in the founding conference of the IWW, De Leon began to embrace the philosophy of syndicalism (which he probably originally borrowed from the American syndicalists, Haggerty and Trautman and from contacts in France). It is probably for this that De Leon is best known. His advocacy, development and popularisation of industrial unionism struck a chord in many parts of the world including Britain, Ireland, Italy and Australia.



Eugene Debs

## Party

De Leon joined the SLP in 1889 and he was also the first Marxist to take to heart and implement Engels' observations on the necessity to 'Americanise the movement' (then dominated by German-Americans).

Over the years De Leon attempted to forge the SLP into a revolutionary party, although he did not succeed, he did approach, in a much earlier period, the Leninist conceptions of party organisation, democratic centralism, party control of its publications and party discipline.

Louis C. Fraina, (not Frainer), a former NEC member of the SLP, was a protege of De Leon's, and as you quite rightly point out a leading early US communist.

J.T. Murphy of the Shop Stewards Movement, James Conolly, Gramsci and others were all influenced by De Leon in one way or another (which doesn't rule out negative influences).

Lenin is reputed by a number of observers (e.g. John Reed) to have praised De Leon, though the remark that Lenin though De Leon was the only Marxist to add anything since Marx is (as far as I can see) based only on hearsay.

## International

Also in the international sphere, De Leon was well in advance of his contemporaries in his analysis of the growing routinism and accommodationism of the Second International. As early as 1903 De Leon criticised the German Social Democracy, the mainstay of the Second International, as having "... ceased to be a pace-setter for the socialist movement of the world". ("Review of the Dresden Congress"). In the same article he also describes Kautsky as one to "run with the hare and bark with the hounds"—a far-sighted observation when one considered Lenin broke definitively with Kautsky only some 11 years later.

## Sectarian attitude

There is much more that could be said of De Leon. Faults he most certainly had, but without a doubt he was a great pre-1917 revolutionary. Probably his greatest single fault was a sectarian and aloof attitude to the rank and file of the American Federation of Labour.

This and other errors



diminished his contribution to the movement, but nevertheless for many years he was a lone voice and without him the American movement would have developed differently.

That you do not even mention such a figure is a gross

failing on your part, perhaps if you publish this letter it will go some way to correcting the balance and bring to light the work of this important and often neglected revolutionary.

Comradely greetings  
John Cunningham

Dear Comrades,

While recognising the necessity for condensing such a broad topic as the "Birth of American Marxism", (*Socialist Press* No. 127) and recognising that in such circumstances omissions are inevitable, Graham Bond nevertheless makes a glaring error in his article. One of the most important of the early American socialists if not the most important, did not even warrant a passing mention. I refer to the head of the Socialist Labour Party, Daniel De Leon. This omission is all the more glaring when you also print a painting by Diego Rivera, which features as its two most central figures—Eugene V. Debs and De Leon.

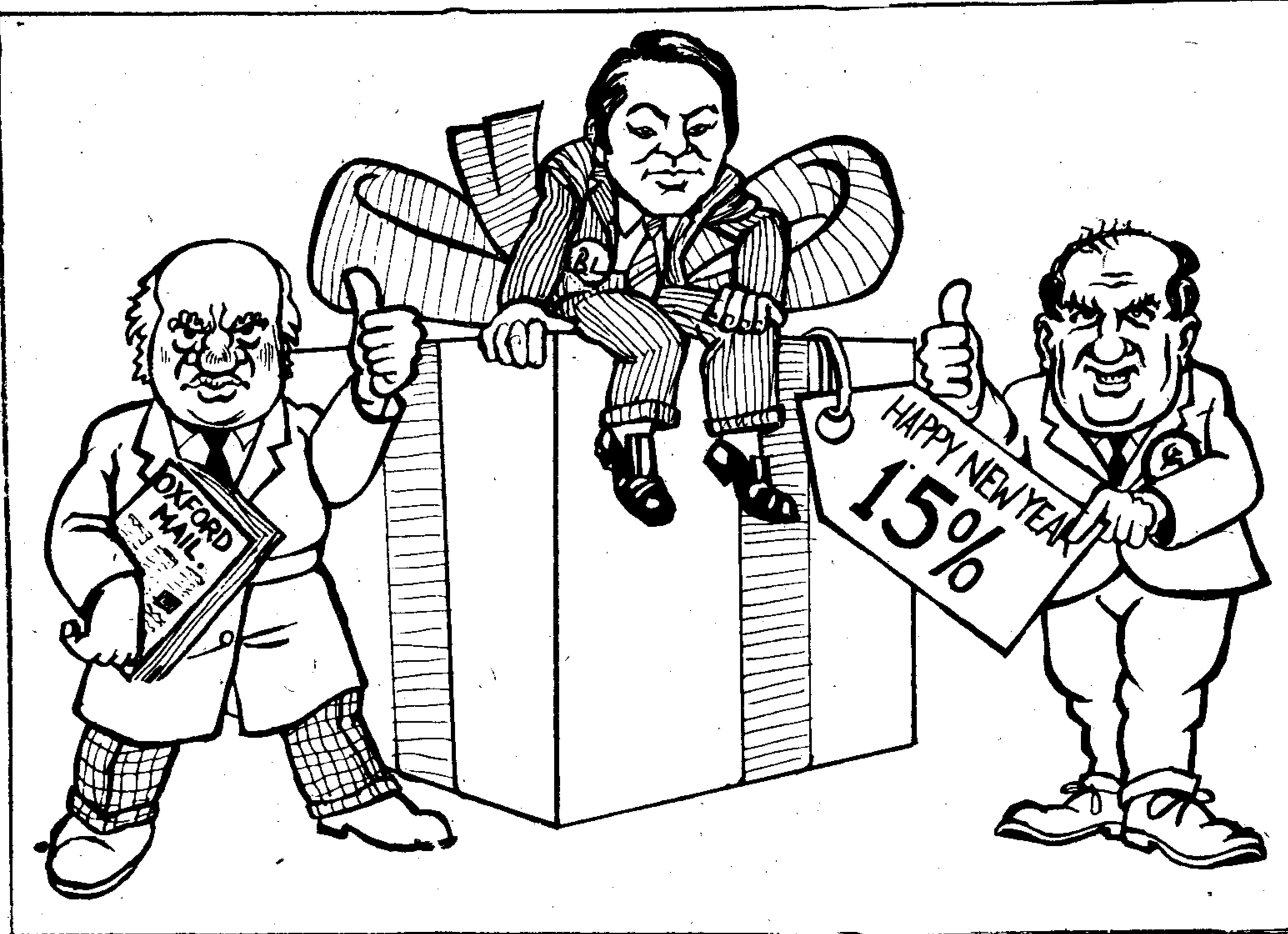
Of the two, it is De Leon who contributed most to the ongoing socialist movement, not only in the USA but in other parts of the world as well.

As the leading figure of the SLP until his death in 1914, De Leon wielded much influence,

Sheffield  
South Yorkshire  
Dec. 1978



# great ballot betrayal



argued—we should carry out a determined fight at once.

This ad-hoc body then produced a series of leaflets and held further meetings in which the strength of the fight in Cowley was used in a bid to persuade members in other plants to demand their convenors submit plant claims.

The leaflets also publicised the demands of the Cowley claim.

A battle on the Leyland Combine Committee had meanwhile led to a reluctant acceptance of the Cowley position, and an agreement that plant claims would be submitted.

## Resisting moves

And in Cowley itself Leyland management in the Assembly Plant climbed down and undertook to reply to the £27 claim at plant level.

This in turn rebounded inside the Body Plant, where the stewards changed the previous position, and submitted a similar plant claim.

But at the same time the right wingers and Communist Party members on the National Joint Negotiating Committee (which is made up of seven national officials and a clear majority of non-elected "delegates") were resisting the moves for plant bargaining.

So reluctant were they to submit plant level claims that in CP-led Longbridge the claim itself was only submitted seven days before the November 1 settlement date; at Rovers and Jaguars claims actually went in after the review date; and other plants never even submitted a claim!

The company gave plant-level replies to claims on 31 October. In each case the offer was 5%, conditional on all plants accepting it.

## Strike action

That afternoon a mass meeting was called at the Drows Lane Tractors and Transmissions plant, and a vote for immediate strike action was taken.

The militancy in this plant was intensified because their traditional October review date had been put back a month, while in Cowley, for instance, it had actually been brought forward from February.

This strike stemmed directly and solely from the principled fight for plant bargaining led from Cowley.

Its effect was immediate. Drows Lane supplies the whole of Leyland Cars and the following day sections of workers at Cowley were already being laid off.

But the weakness of the strike was that the plant leadership had not prepared the members for the kind of fight involved.

Convenor Arthur Harper



PHOTO: John Sturrock Report

Robinson

never argued against the principle of corporate bargaining, or presented any challenge to the company's routine argument that big wage increases would drive the firm into bankruptcy.

Indeed Harper himself had been for years up to his neck in the 'participation' set-up, and had accepted all the other plans of the company, thus confusing the workforce.

This weakness of leadership meant that after 2½ weeks of solid and devastating action, the strike was lost.

At Cowley, on the other hand, the leadership had planned and prepared a serious fight. A stewards meeting had been called following the company reply, and a mass meeting scheduled for the next week (the reply came on a Thursday).

But the immediate lay-offs caused by the Drows Lane strike made an immediate strike call impossible—since the plant was already closed and most workers receiving 80% lay-off pay at the company's expense.

The correct position taken by the leadership in these circumstances was to make a clear verbal statement of support for the Drows Lane strikers, and to meet on return to work.

This was passed at the mass

meeting held during the lay-off. The decision took into account three possible outcomes at Drows Lane:

\*The strike might have been victorious, paving the way for almost automatic action in Cowley.

\*There might have been a quick return to work as a result of weak leadership, after which a strike vote in Cowley would still be possible.

\*Drows Lane might be defeated after a long period of strike action closing the whole of Leyland. This would have brought a difficult period.

Another decision at the Cowley mass meeting was to put the plant claim through procedure. This was on the insistence of the AUEW, which threatened to split the membership if this did not take place.

## Back-stabbing

But at Longbridge the back-stabbing by the Communist Party, in the form of Derek Robinson, was taking shape.

At a mass meeting, held on Friday November 1, before any lay-offs began, Robinson put a resolution not for strike action but to give the company until December 1 to come up with a better offer.

This was no more than a conscious move to isolate the

Drows Lane strike.

When that strike came to an end the problem of proceeding with the Cowley claim was a difficult one.

WSL members and supporters in the Assembly Plant favoured the completion of a procedural meeting with management scheduled for two days after the return to work, in order to prevent a split with the AUEW, and for this to be followed by a mass meeting.

## Determined

In approaching such a mass meeting it would be important to take into account the impact on the membership of seeing the Drows Lane strikers—the most powerful section in Leyland—defeated.

A perspective going beyond simply a strike in a single plant in Cowley had to be presented if action was to take place.

We favoured combining this with putting Robinson on the spot at his December 1 mass meeting, by calling strike action in Cowley for that date and demanding Longbridge come out with us.

But the union bureaucracy and the Communist Party were determined to use the Drows Lane defeat to force through the company's original plans.

Immediately following the return to work an NJNC meeting was called, at which a grading structure was agreed as well as a 5% national pay offer and a deal offering parity payments financed by increased productivity and the axing of 7,000 jobs.

The speed-up and job cuts were also to pay for the nationally agreed increases in premium rates, substantially increasing night-shift allowances, which Leyland had been withholding.

The NJNC agreed to put this 'package' to a national ballot. A meeting of convenors was quickly called, and also endorsed the plan by a 3-1 majority.

Robinson then called off the



Evans

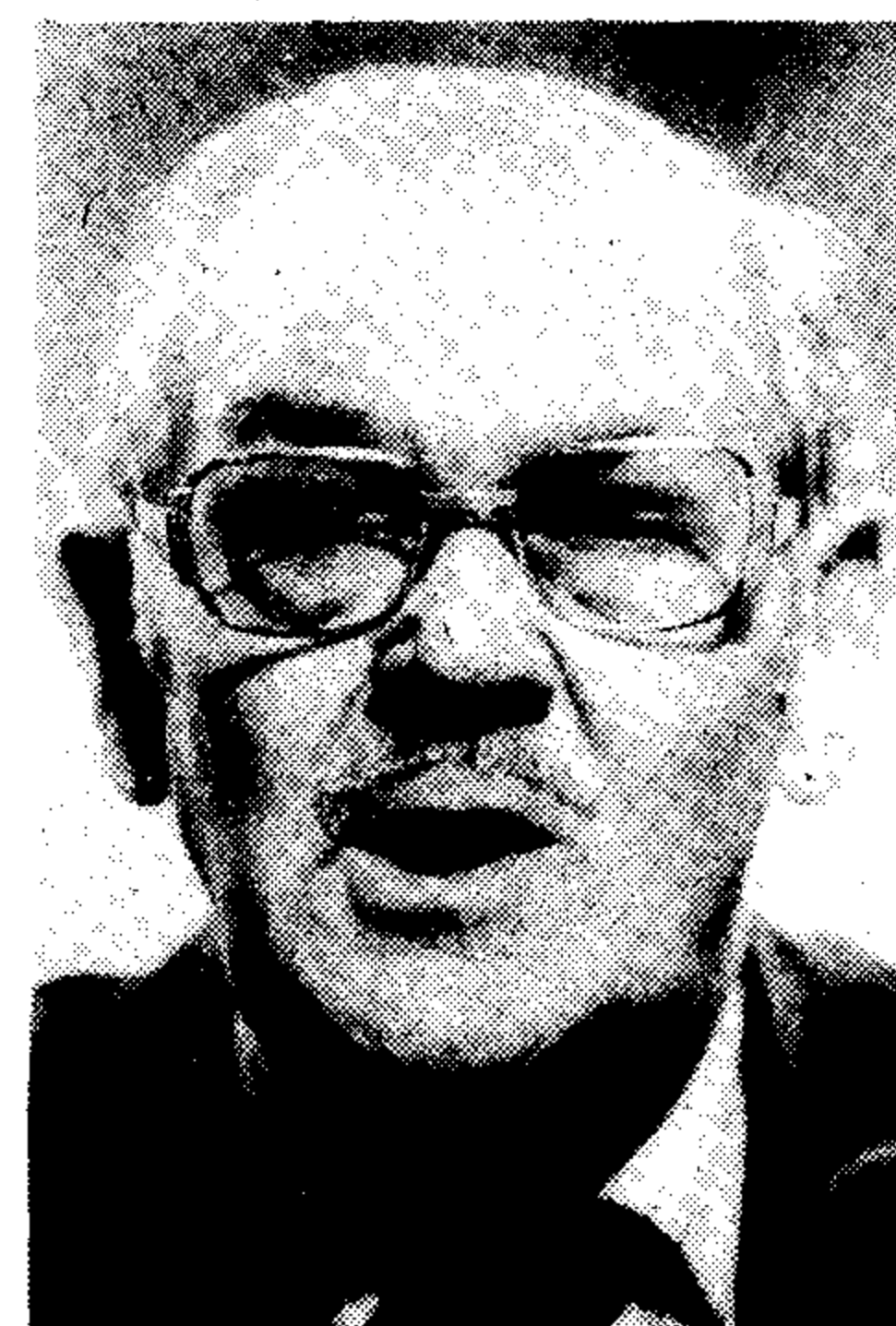


PHOTO: Lawrence Spatham IFL

AUEW leader Duffy

December 1 mass meeting at Longbridge, facing TGWU stewards in the Cowley Assembly Plant with prospect of total isolation.

## Leaflet

The next-door Body Plant would not even join the Assembly Plant in a boycott of the ballot. There was no choice but to go into the ballot and campaign for a 'no' vote.

Once more the lead to Leyland workers came through a leaflet from the 'Leyland Stewards for the 1978 Review'.

This leaflet focussed on the way the package had been foisted on the workforce.

It showed how all seven national officials on the NJNC—none of whom work in Leyland—had cast their vote in favour of a 'yes' vote, thus tipping the balance to 13-12 in favour.

And it showed how this recommendation had been rubber-stamped by a hopelessly unrepresentative convenors' meeting at which each convenor—whether elected by thousands or a handful of members—had one vote.

Throughout this struggle we as Marxists have seen each battle as only part of the overall war in defence of workers' indepen-

dent interests.

We recognised that there was a strong chance of a 'yes' vote in the ballot. And even while campaigning for a 'no' vote we began to prepare to fight the results of a possible acceptance—particularly the loss of jobs and the contentious grading structure.

Even before the ballot in the Cowley Assembly plant a mass meeting was held to urge a 'no' vote.

## Mass meetings

TGWU convenor Bobby Fryer declared that he would support any section defending its manning standards, and would oppose the grading structure—a policy the WSL supports.

In the Body Plant mass meetings of production workers and forklift truck drivers were held to oppose the grading structure, and most sections have fought any speed-up.

As a result in Cowley only a handful of the required number of job losses have been achieved.

## Conclusion

In short the fight against corporate bargaining in which we played a leading role created the conditions in which the Drows Lane workforce engaged in a 2½ week strike.

The defeat of that strike did not simply restore the company's position.

20,000 abstentions in the ensuing ballot, and a 2-1 majority of those voting showed that growing numbers of workers have become wary of the corporate bargaining package, creating fertile conditions for a fight against attacks on jobs.

Workers' attention has also been drawn to the way in which the 5% pay deal was railroaded through by officials and convenors while in Fords and elsewhere settlements of up to 15% have been won.

The crisis now faced by the company in implementing the parity plan means that workers are increasingly aware that they will in reality get only the bare 5% increase. Militancy on the shop floor is rising once again.

But most important of all, the struggle against corporate bargaining and speed-up has smoked out not only the right wing reformist union bureaucrats and convenors but also the Stalinists.

Derek Robinson's television interview welcoming the result of the ballot spells out the practical role of Stalinism to the entire Leyland workforce.

The real lesson of the ballot betrayal is the urgent necessity to build a revolutionary leadership in Leyland in opposition to all shades of 'participators' and collaborators.

This is the task undertaken by the Workers Socialist League.



# INDUSTRIAL NEWS

## WALK OUT ON WAGES

A pay strike by 2,000 GMWU members at the Leeds plant of Yorkshire Imperial Metals has halted production since an overwhelming vote for action on Monday 8 January.

Management had initially offered a miserable £2 per week on basic rates in response to the claim for 28%, a 35 hour week and improved holidays.

Talks with GMWU officials produced an

increased offer of £3.35 on the basic rate and a further £2.50 in a productivity deal—but this was rejected by stewards.

Their objection was not a principled refusal to negotiate productivity deals, but a specific objection to the nature of the deal on offer.

Their stand was subsequently endorsed by last Monday's mass meeting vote. But in the firm's Kirkby plant on Merseyside a wafer-thin 46 majority out of a 1,000-strong workforce

voted to accept a similar deal and are still working.

Leeds pickets have ensured however that no lorries have been passing in or out of the Kirkby gates, and efforts have been made to persuade the workforce to reconsider their decision.

Members of ASTMS, AUEW and UCATT in the Leeds factory are still at work—their pay reviews being negotiated separately—but are supporting the strike financially.

## BOOKSELLERS' STRIKE

After more than three months of sporadic strikes the TGWU/ACTSS members in London's Economists Bookshop decided last Friday in favour of all-out strike action in support of their demand for union recognition.

The management of the shop, jointly owned by the Economist magazine and the next-door London School of Economics, are holding out in spite of the union having majority support among the bookshop's dozen staff.

Shop manager Gerald Bartlett, a notorious anti-union witch-hunter, has insisted that the recognition issue should be decided by a ballot of the whole company, a deliberate manoeuvre correctly rejected by union members since the retail operation is geographically and organisationally separate and has traditionally been dealt with on its own.

The latest attempt to undermine the unionisation moves have been the announcement of a staff association and management posters, reminiscent of those nearby on the windows of

Garners Steak Houses declare its aims as 'fighting for democracy' and its members as 'proud to work here'.

A campaign into the publishing and print unions for blacking supplies and deliveries and help on the picket is an urgent priority.

Financial support should be sent to Helen Miller, c/o D. Cohen, the LSE Students Union, Houghton St., London WC2, from which address further information can be obtained.

# Why you should join the WSL

Quite frankly, we're unique!

We're the only movement that fights patiently and relentlessly for the building of a Trotskyist party capable of mobilising the working class in the struggle for state power and the establishment of a socialist society.

In doing so, the WSL alone does not shrink from head-on battles with the existing leaders of the working class—whether these be 'left' talking Labourites union bureaucrats, or Stalinists of the Communist Party.

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

struggle to grasp the need for socialist revolution.

For this reason, though we are smaller than some self-styled 'revolutionary' groups, the WSL has featured in the forefront of pay struggles in British Leyland, in the fight against the sale of jobs by TUC leaders, in the struggle against the cuts, in unionisation struggles, and in the fight against bureaucratic dictatorship within the unions.

This method of approach—rejecting any descent to simple trade union militancy, and any form of concession to the counter-revolutionary reformist or Stalinist bureaucracy—is of course essential for the working class not only in Britain but internationally.

In taking up international issues the WSL points out not only the obligation of British workers to support the Irish liberation struggle and revol-

utionary struggles such as those in Iran and Southern Africa, but also the necessity for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International as the organising centre of the world party of socialist revolution.

The WSL is not the biggest movement on the left in Britain nor is it the easiest to be a member of. But in its approach to both theory and practice it is the only really serious revolutionary movement.

When you look at the struggles now under way and the problems faced by the working class, the necessity for a principled leadership is unmistakable.

**WHY NOT JOIN US? Fill in the form below for more details, or approach your local branch, who will gladly supply more information about our programme, policies, and perspectives.**

## MORE DETAILS

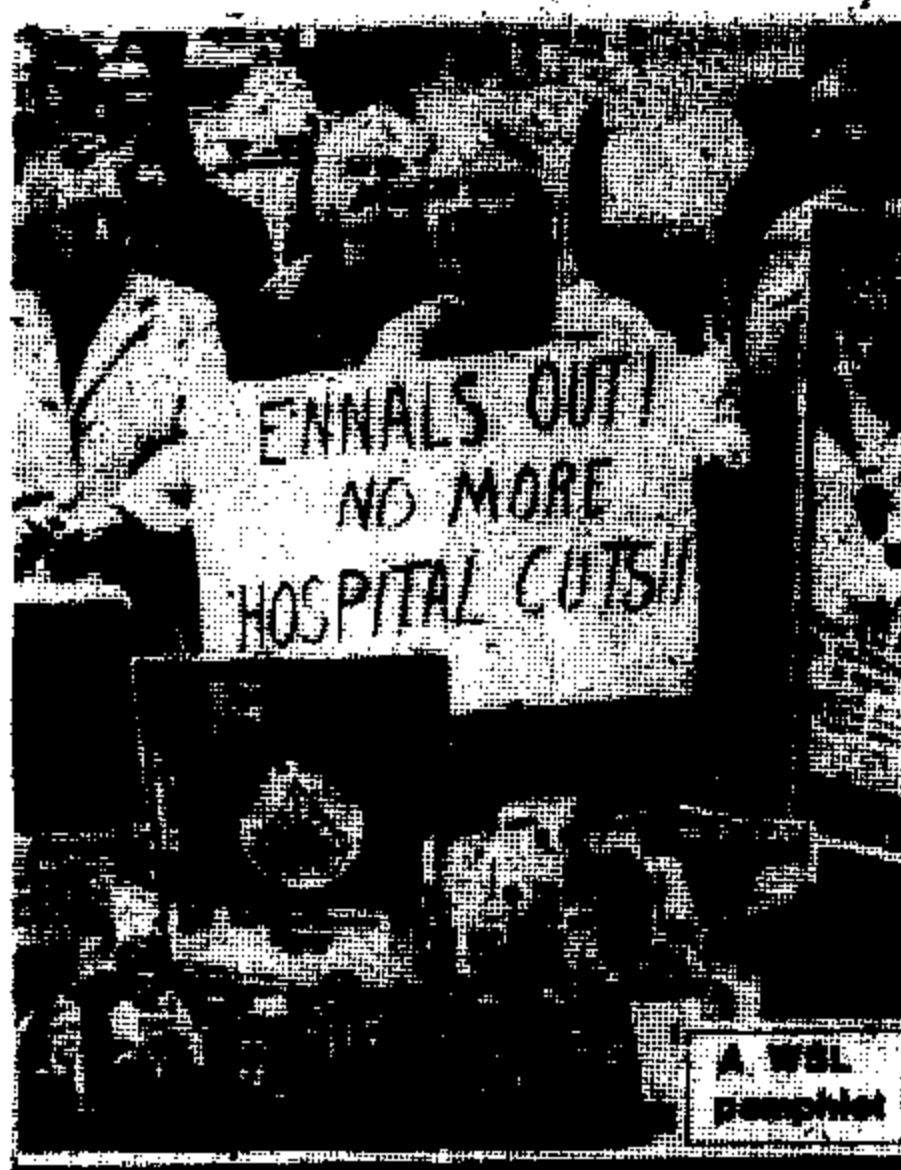
Please send me more information about the Workers Socialist League.

Name .....

Address .....

Send to: WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

### THE KEY TO THE CUTS FIGHT!



The booklet which spells out the policies necessary for all-out struggle against the cuts, drawing on practical experience at the EGA and the Oxford Nursery Occupation.

30p plus 10p p&p from the WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill London NW5 1HR.

# LEEDS SOCIAL WORKERS STEP UP STRIKE

Last Monday saw a determined move by striking social workers in Leeds to step up their two-month strike.

They came out on November 3 along with social workers in Sheffield, joining colleagues in London, Liverpool and Newcastle in the struggle for a regrading claim which stands in breach of the 5% pay limit.

### Successful

Initial moves to picket Merrion House, the main local government office in Leeds, were extremely successful. Refuse workers refused to cross the picket line causing piles of rubbish to mount and Public Health authorities to close the staff canteen.

But at the point where the closure of the whole building was a possibility, the Finance and General

Committee of the 5,000 NALGO branch under the guidance of Communist Party member Eric Cowin acted to ensure that the strike committee was taken over by a majority of non-strikers.

### 24-hour picketing

The committee then voted to lift the picket on the refuse, allowing the canteen to be reopened.

Steps have now been taken to repair the effects of this setback.

Last Monday full 24 hour picketing was implemented, and picketing of the Civic Hall—the main administration centre of Leeds Council—was begun.

Plans have also been made to call out local authority residential care

workers, and for a ballot for supporting action by the couriers who circulate internal mail within the offices.

### All-out strike

Already the partial blockade of mail has been quite successful and blacking of invoices and cheques has begun.

But after two months out, some members of Leeds NALGO branch are coming to the view that an all-out strike rather than these partial and inadequately prepared measures offers the most, if not the only, effective way of supporting the social workers.



Social Workers demonstrating in the early days of their struggle.

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

# Paint plant wins 14% pay rise

Blundell Permoglaze is a paint company with factories in Hull, Birmingham and Ireland plus depots throughout the country.

For a long time this company has paid low wages and has consistently managed to defeat any attempts by its employees to substantially improve their lot.

This has been changed recently in its Birmingham factory at Tyseley.

The Birmingham factory employs approximately 60 shop floor workers and 30 staff.

The staff are members of ACTSS, the white collar section of the TGWU and in their separate negotiations have accepted a poor pay rise of 9%.

The shop floor is 100% TGWU membership and have recently settled for pay rises of

By the Blundell Permoglaze work shop stewards

between £7.20 and £9.50 which is in terms of percentage 13%-16%.

This is a significant victory for a group of workers who have no great past record of industrial militancy.

The original pay claim was 25% and was submitted before Christmas.

Before the holidays the company replied with an offer of 9% with strings attached.

This was promptly turned down at a general meeting of the workers and a vote was taken to commence a work to rule and overtime ban from Wednesday 3 January 1979.

Upon our return to work after the holidays on 2 January the factory was found to be in a disgusting state with flooding from burst pipes and complete lack of heating.

The shop stewards decided to call an immediate general meeting in order to vote on a one day strike in protest at these conditions.

The subsequent vote was unanimous and there was an immediate walk out.

This action absolutely shocked the management as it was the first time that action of this sort had ever occurred in any of the factories of the Permoglaze paints group.

It was after this show of strength that negotiations

continued and also the work to rule was beginning to bite.

It was at this time that the management made threats of closure and attempted to intimidate the shop stewards with verbal abuse.

The stewards' response to this was to implement the work to rule all the more strongly and to gather the support of the shop floor by carefully explaining to each worker the importance of carrying on this action.

On Friday January 5, the management made an offer of 13% to 15% but with strings attached.

These included staggering tea breaks so that production would be continuous and painting the work floor when directed by the supervisor.

These conditions were unanimously rejected by the workforce and a vote was taken to continue industrial action until all conditions were dropped.

The shop stewards, upon reporting these results were surprised to find that management immediately agreed to withdraw these offending conditions.

The history and result of this struggle are an example of how if the working class are given a strong and principled lead, they can win disputes and substantially improve their lot.

# GARNERS STRIKE FACES OFFICIAL ATTACK

In the next few weeks leading up to the first anniversary of the Garners strike on January 27 the labour movement can expect a torrent of lies and distortions from the London Region leadership of the TGWU.

In a week where their 12 months of treachery has resulted in massive fines for supporters arrested on the picket lines, the Regional leadership has been desperately manoeuvring to split the Strike Committee and intimidate them into silence over Regional Secretary Staden's notorious agreement with the police limiting the picket line numbers to six.

A week ago last Monday, the Strike Committee, summoned to Regional Headquarters, suffered a ferocious attack from Secretary Staden.

This onslaught began with Staden (a Communist Party member) attacking the strike committee for issuing a bulletin after the mass picket on 8 December which criticised his secret agreement with the police which had led to the arrest of 14 pickets including Staden's fellow CP member, Brent Trades Council chairman Tom Durkin.

## Deal with police

He stated his position that the agreement with the police would stand, that the TGWU would not support anyone arrested on a picket line with more than six people on it.

This, he said, "included Tom Durkin or anyone else". In future the Regional Committee (meaning Staden and full time official Les Shorter) would block official support for policies not vetted by themselves.

He repeated the threat that the "union would reassess their support for the strike after the 27th."

The tactic is the traditional one of all bureaucrats.

They hope to gag the strike committee, control all propaganda, ensure that no one turns up on the 27th and then use that as evidence of lack of support for the strike.

Staden has learnt from the bitter experience of mass pickets on October 17 and 8 December that this intimidation has never been sufficient to control the Strike Committee in the past.

This time, however, he managed to split the Strike Committee with the discredited support of Strike Committee chairman Rachman, who argued that the Strike Committee itself had always supported the police limit of six.

This is a lie. From the Strike Committee meeting and their



PHOTO: Andrew Wliard, Report

1647 TGWU branch meeting at the end of March 1978, mass picketing on Saturdays has always been the policy of the Strike Committee.

But once enough confusion had been sown, the Strike Committee eventually split 3-3 on the issue.

Staden will now try to exploit his successful manoeuvre by calling off the mass picket planned for January 27.

He will use the same pretext that APEX leader Grantham exploited in August 1977 at Grunwicks, arguing that the Strike Committee backed the decision to call off the mass picket planned for August 8.

Unfortunately for Staden, this manoeuvre came too late to prevent the Garners Support Committee from issuing a leaflet, backing the mass picket and correctly condemning Staden's agreement with the

police.

The significance of last week's meeting is that Staden has now openly admitted for the first time that there is an agreement with police and that he is sticking to it.

We challenge Staden to publicly argue against a mass mobilisation on the 27th and defend in front of the labour movement the fact that he has sold the right to picket for arbitrary limits imposed by the police.

Those on the Strike Committee prepared to take up the fight against their own leadership to win this strike must now resolve the differences on the Strike Committee and continue their fight for a mass picket on January 27.

This must be seen as a basis to continue the fight for a national TGWU delegate conference and a major demonstration

on March 3.

The Strike Committee must take up Durkin (who has personally protested to Moss Evans over the Region's treachery) and demand he supports the call for a mass picket on 27 in the London District Committee of the Communist Party and the Greater London Association of Trades Councils.

In particular CP chairman Mick McGahey, who joined the picket line briefly last week, should state openly the attitude of his organisation on this question.

# NUJ ballots on 14.5% offer

NUJ members on provincial papers were voting as we went to press on a 14.5% pay offer from the Newspaper Society.

The pay deal which is graded to give rises as low as £5.17 to some trainees

and up to £18 plus for senior journalists in some offices looked almost certain to be accepted, despite a recommendation to reject from the negotiators.

The majority of journalists would receive half the £20 claim—which is still the biggest pay increase they have ever seen. The original offer was 5%, raised later to 7.8%.

But the strikers—after six weeks—also faced a second challenge.

Union negotiators had refused—correctly—to put any offer to the membership while the Newspaper Society was refusing to guarantee reinstatement of journalists and printers sacked in the dispute.

Bill Keys, general secretary of SOGAT and chairman of the TUC Printing Industries Committee summoned both sides to a meeting and drew up an agreement which guaranteed management the right to sack.

A clause was accepted by the NUJ negotiators that the Newspaper Society strongly urged its members to reinstate sacked workers—a phrase which will come as cold comfort to the 28 Nottingham Post strikers sacked and several trainees sacked up and down the country.

Moves are to be made at an Foc's meeting in London on Wednesday to have this Charter to sack thrown out and calls are being prepared to continue the strike—even if the wage deal was accepted—until the victimisations were removed.

## Crucial lobby

The date of the appeal against the sacking of Bill Tizzard, a steward at Hammersmith Hospital in London, has been set by management for January 24.

A lobby of the appeal beginning a 9.00 on the 24th at the hospital has been called by the Defence Committee, which was set up within the hospital to fight for Tizzard's reinstatement.

The sacking of Tizzard, which coincided with the sackings of the branch secretary and chairman at the nearby West London Hospital amidst a huge press witchhunt, must be seen as a major attack on trade unionism in the Health Service—timed to disrupt the forthcoming action on pay.

The campaign itself must be broadened to include the dismissed militants at the West London and the fight must be continuously taken up to force action from the NUPE bureaucracy who have the power to circulate branches, call a London-wide stewards conference and organise action for the reinstatement of the three trade unionists.

# LONDON NUPE ON BOIL

The struggle against low pay is reaching a high point in the London division of NUPE.

At a delegate rally called by the London Divisional Council on Thursday 11 January, at Conway Hall, speaker after speaker from the floor called for indefinite strike action from 22 January, sweeping aside the timid proposals for 'selective action' made by the NEC.

There was a clear indication that the strike on the 22nd will bring London's public services to a complete standstill, including a total stoppage by Ambulance drivers, who have scornfully rejected the Executive's plea to maintain emergency cover, and in one area have already begun a work-to-rule!

The staging of the rally,

attended by about 400 delegates was fought for by militants on the London Divisional Council, and was opposed at every stage by the Executive.

Already the Council has passed resolutions demanding that the NEC call for indefinite strike action, have successfully made the strike on the 22nd official in the London area and have established an inter-union strike committee.

The biggest danger now is that the Divisional Council rests on its laurels and allows the Executive to continue with its plans to betray the strike by allowing the action to fizzle out after the 22nd and settle somewhere in the region of 5%.

The concrete task ahead is to transform the militant mood of the rally into an all-out strike.

Members of all NUPE lay committees must force an

immediate recall meeting of the Divisional Council and fight for an official call to indefinite strike action, which it has the power to do.

The response to this call throughout the London branches will be immediate, and will quickly spread to other unions.

If this fight is not taken up, it will not only be a serious blow for the public sector pay claim—with repercussions in all four unions involved in the claim—but will also endanger the future independence of lay bodies such as the Divisional Councils from the full-time officialdom of NUPE and set back the fight against the bureaucracy for a firm, principled lead in the fight for the £60/35 hour week claim.

## FINES APPEAL

The police onslaught on Garners pickets is now taking a mounting toll in fines and costs.

Last week alone a strike committee member was fined £35 with £100 costs despite the clear evidence of three witnesses.

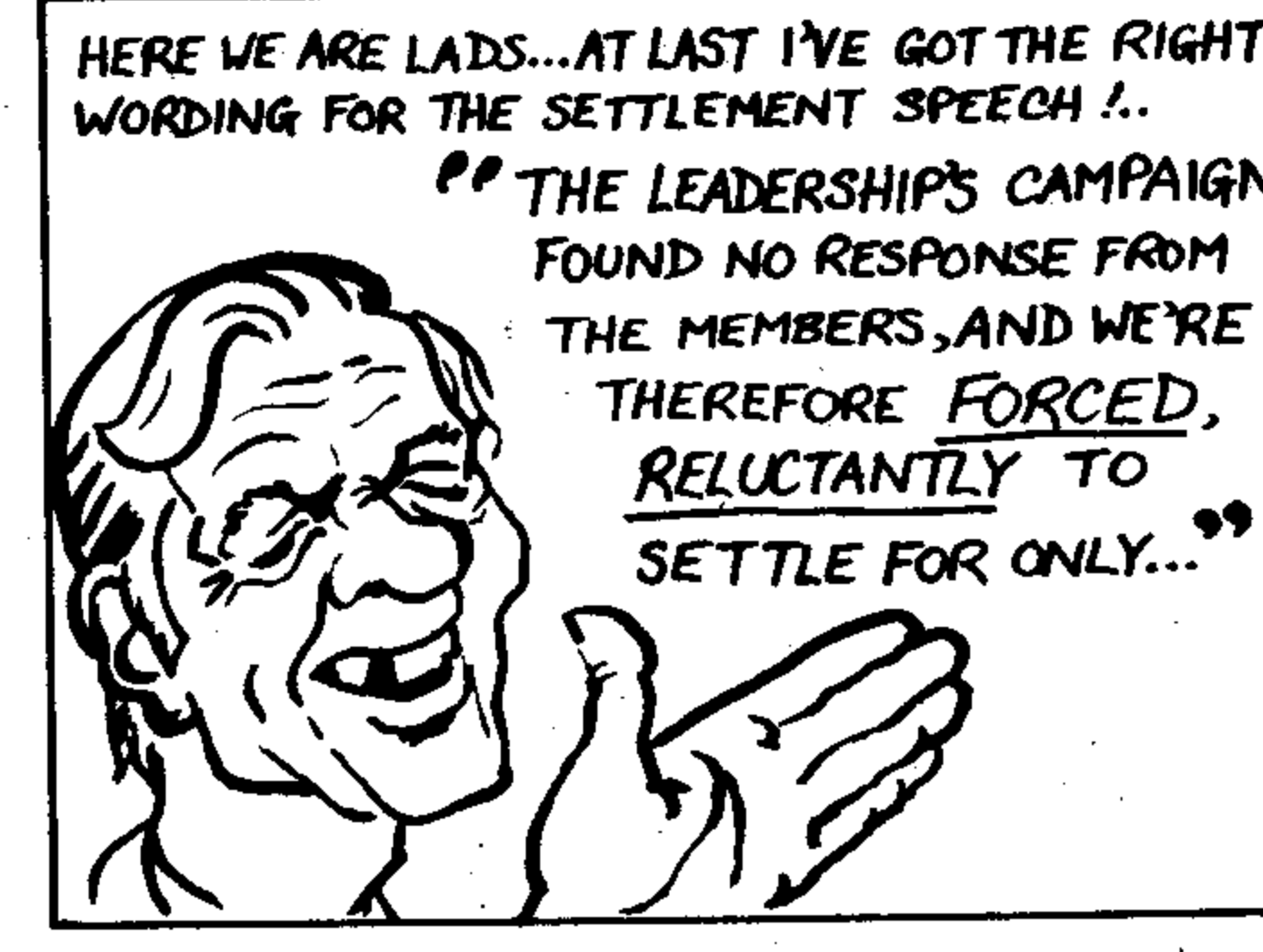
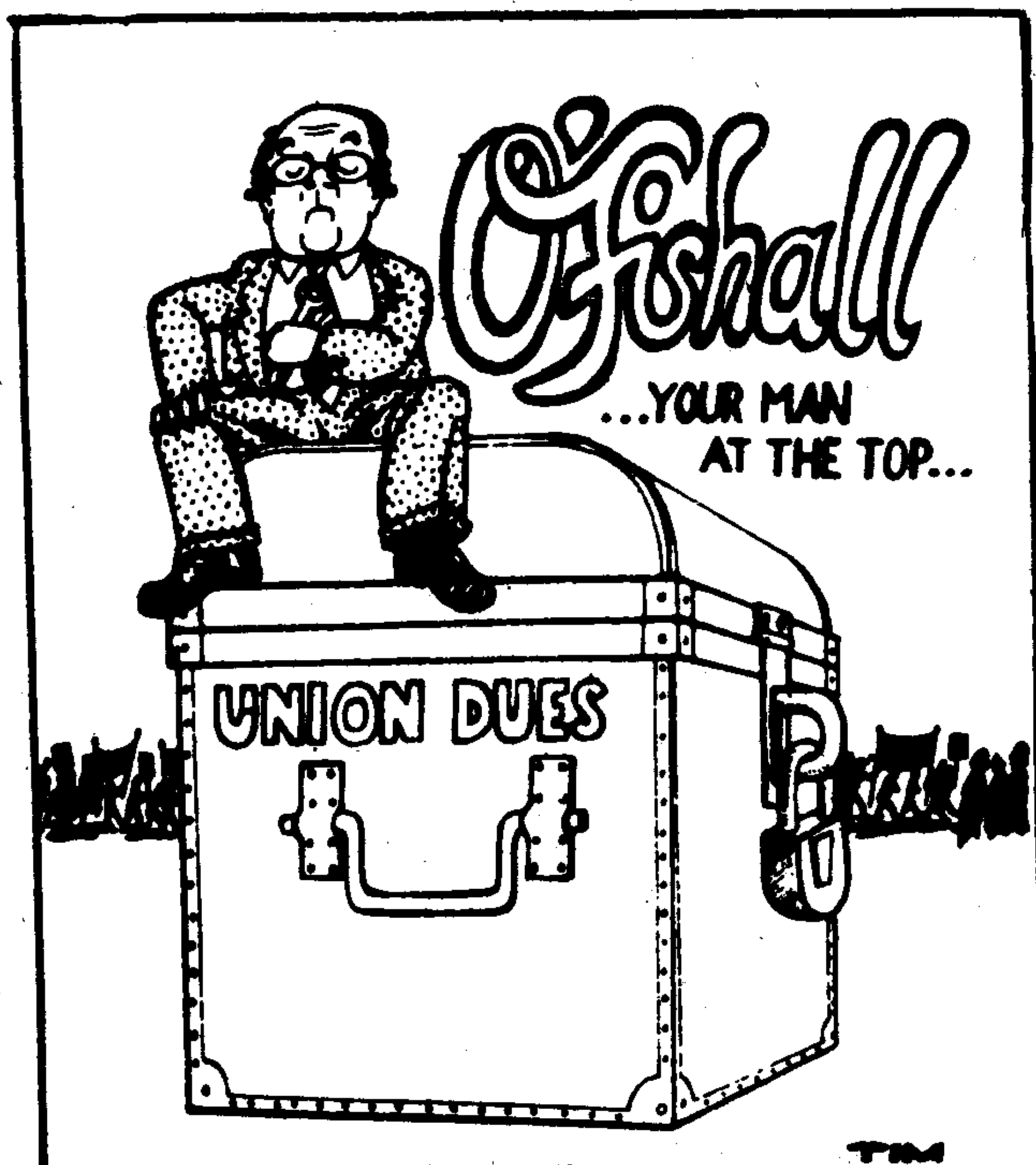
A WSL member found guilty of obstruction was fined a staggering £120. And on Friday police arrested a 15-year old youth.

WSL members alone, as a result of being the most regular supporters on the picket lines, now face fines totalling hundreds of pounds.

We are of course fighting through the London labour movement for adequate funds to be made available to support trade unionists fined for picketing at Garners.

But the problem is now urgent. Socialist Press therefore appeals to supporters and readers for donations to assist our comrades in paying these savage fines.

Donations should be marked Garners Fines Appeal, and sent to Socialist Press, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.



# SOCIALIST PRESS



## CP calls off Peru general strike

The Communist Party dominated trade union federation, the CGTP, called off last week's three day general strike after only a day.

The details of the background to this action by the Stalinist bureaucrats are not yet known—in particular the position of the other unions which supported the calling of the strike.

The CGTP is said to have "consulted" the other unions but there is no report of their reactions.

The mineworkers' union, FNTMMP, led by Victor Cuadros took part in organising the strike; but apparently few miners took action.

Nonetheless, Genaro Ledesma, the leader of the "Trotskyist" dominated parliamentary alliance, FOCEP, claimed that 90% of union members in the country had followed the strike call on the first day.

If that is true it suggests that the CGTP leaders may have called the strike off to avoid getting into a situation where the working class would be challenging the very life of the military dictatorship itself along with its nationalist allies of APRA.

It was the government which from a week before the strike recognised it as a question of life and death for its dictatorship.

The already practically mythical individual rights which remained were completely abolished.

Union leaders at all levels—possibly as many as 800—were arrested in the days before the strike, including the CGTP General Secretary Gustavo Espinosa and the president of the Maoist-led parliamentary group, the UDP, as well as numerous local militants.

And the government brought its troops onto the streets and announced it would shoot down all demonstrators, in which category would almost certainly be included strike pickets.

Several deaths of workers and numerous injuries were reported on day one of the strike on January 11.

The strikes, mass mobilisations and "Constituent Assembly" elections of last year showed that the politically and financially bankrupt military junta was close to collapse—that given decisive revolutionary leadership the mass movement could destroy it.

Last week's events make it clear at least that such revolutionary leadership has not yet been sufficiently built.

But the regime cannot draw much comfort from the events.

In its search of international loans it will be forced to go on introducing profoundly unpopular policies such as the sharp rise in the petrol price which nominally sparked off last week's general strike.

Within a few months it will face the choice of fulfilling its promise to give way to a democratically elected president or to reimpose a new military dictatorship which could be based on nothing but a bloodbath.

# JAN 22: COME OUT

# AND STAY OUT FOR

# THE FULL CLAIM!

There is now a massive upsurge of militancy amongst public sector workers as we prepare for strike action on our £60/35 hour week pay claim on January 22.

Throughout the country, branch after branch of NUPE, COHSE, TGWU and GMWU is voting unanimously for a complete stoppage on the 22nd, and the demonstration in London promises to attract tens of thousands of workers.

As workers who provide essential services to the community in local councils the health service and education we have suffered a drastic fall in living standards over the last four years through successive rounds of pay policy.

But now that Fords and other sections have fought the pay policy and won, we can see the 5% limit at its weakest stage.

### We can win

This is why we all know, that our combined strength can win a decent wage and smash through government pay restraint once and for all.

But this wave of militancy conceals many dangers and presents a clear choice to all serious trade unionists and militants in the public sector.

Is the 22nd going to be a token show of strength, a carnival day out in London with a few drinks and lots of rousing speeches?

Or is it to be the start of a determined programme of strike action to win the full claim for a £60 minimum basic wage and a 35 hour week?

Every worker who has observed developments during the firemen's strike and at Grunwicks knows that the Callaghan-Healey government can easily survive through a series of one-day stoppages and demonstrations.

### Emotional speeches

Along will come the usual Labour MPs with emotional militant left wing speeches

By WSL Public Sector workers



which somehow never end up in any real fight against Callaghan or Healey.

But at the same time the government is preparing a massive strike-breaking force of uniformed army scabs and "volunteers" to man ambulances, maintain services and physically attack picket lines.

Token stoppages and half measures are *not* sufficient to break the resolve of the Callaghan-Healey government and the powers of the state.

We must make preparations now for an *all-out strike of all sections* beginning on the 22nd.

The more branches that come out on indefinite strike action, the quicker and more decisive will be the victory.

### Strike committees

Striking branches must combine to form local strike committees to organise picketing and raise money on a local basis.

These strike committees should fight for support from local Trades Councils, Labour Parties and every workers' organisation.

They must combine with striking lorry drivers, journalists

and social workers to form independent councils of action in preparation for a full-scale general strike.

Moves along these lines are already being made in areas of London.

Those Labour MPs who claim to support us must be called upon to put their words into practice and lead a fight in the Labour Party to drive out the Callaghan-Healey leadership which is determined to smash our strike.

That way those are only pretending to support us can quickly be exposed.

### Our own leaders

But the biggest danger to such a public sector strike lies in our own leadership.

The Executive bodies of NUPE and the other three unions have been forced to call a Day of Action on the 22nd through fear of losing control over the membership.

Yet at this very moment when workers are responding to their call in enormous marches, they are preparing a historic sell-out.

They have refused to make the 22nd an official national strike, and have made no preparations for action after the 22nd.

They are also refusing to pay more than the usual £6 strike pay to sections who remain on strike—despite the raising of levies and the much publicised injection of funds into the so-called "Low Pay Campaign".

The most ominous sign of betrayal came when Alan Fisher appeared on television last week

saying that he didn't expect to win the full claim "all in one go"—which means he is already prepared to settle at the first offer above 5%.

### All for 50p?

So, if he is allowed to succeed the whole strike could end up winning an increase of about £2 a week—only 50p more than the £1.50 already offered!

Make no mistake. The public sector union officials are already writing their future speeches blaming the failure of the strike, and the miserable settlement they have in mind, on *us, the membership!*

There is only one way for us to fight this treachery.

There must be all-out strike action on the 22nd with no return to work until the full claim is met!

Build local strike committees and councils of action!

The strike against low pay is a strike against the cuts, and a victory will be the turning point in the fight to maintain health and social services.

The role of Fisher and other top union bureaucrats in holding back this pay fight spells out more clearly than ever the need to build a principled socialist leadership in the public sector with policies to defend both the interests of the membership and the public services themselves, against the cuts and attacks carried out by the Labour government.

See also: Cartoon, p.11 and Labour Party, p.5. More industrial news, page 11.

## FUND

Another good week for the fund with £132.50 arriving in the office in the last week to bring the total for January so far to £235.63.

However, the tendency is for the momentum to begin to wane as the month proceeds, so let's see if this month we can maintain the momentum and collect the full £600.

All donations should be sent to:

Socialist Press Monthly Fund  
31, Dartmouth Park Hill  
London NW5 1HR

## RR SOLD OUT

Last Monday the AUEW accepted on behalf of their 30,500 members at Rolls Royce an increase on basic rates of 1.8%.

This is a 5% offer which has the increase in overtime rates taken out of it.

The 1,500 workers at Barnoldswick who have been on strike for eight weeks have now been ordered back to work; and the rest of the work-force who have been on an overtime ban in their support have been ordered to lift it.

The Executive has said

that this is the "highest" increase that can be won in a firm that relies on government orders.

It is quite noticeable that there has been no press outcry at the decision of seven men to accept on behalf of 30,500.

This is because the decision goes the bosses' way.

It goes along with the televised statements of John Boyd, the General Secretary of the AUEW, who said that all strikers should get back to work—no matter what their claims.