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SWP's long
struggle
against
Leninism
Centre Pages

Somoza doomed but who will take over?

In the last week the diplomatic intrigues to remove dictator Somoza and salvage Nicaragua for imperialism have been feverishly pursued.

The war, of course, continues unabated and even the mandarins of Washington accept that it will determine the political future of the central American state.

This is why the US rejected Somoza's offer of resignation last Friday which was made on the condition that the US continue to pour funds into the National Guard.

Such a course of action could only deepen the war—with or without Somoza.

A State Department official said: "One side is negotiating, but we are not".

The US imperialists may well have given up trying to cajole Somoza but they are now working overtime on the new provisional government recently established by the Sandinistas (FSLN).

A whole series of plans have been cascading down upon this bourgeois body in an effort to wean it from the 'Marxist' elements of the FSLN which obviously still influence the armed struggle.

The first effort was a pompous and idiotic 'constitutional settlement' not dissimilar to that put forward for Zimbabwe by the imperialist powers last year.

This was rejected out of hand because it was dependant on Somoza's agreement.

Now the provisional government has denounced a new US effort to persuade "moderates and businessmen" to break with it.

The Nicaraguan capitalists cannot afford to break with the FSLN at the moment; indeed their alliance with the reformist Tercerista wing seems to be consolidating rapidly.

However, the downfall of Somoza will compel them to call an immediate halt to mass mobilisation and the revolutionary movement.

Despite continued anti-yankee invective there is a real danger that the junta will accept US intervention in one form or another in order to rid itself of Somoza, which it has already declared is its prime objective.

Such a situation may be brought about under cover of a military stalemate.

But it is clear that the junta remains a capitalist body, dedicated to the exploitation of the masses and palpably incapable of instituting the vague and grandiose reforms it has touted about.

As each day passes it becomes clearer that the departure of Somoza is not the end of the struggle but the beginning of new struggles which must continue until they achieve the overthrow of capitalism in Nicaragua and the establishment of a workers and peasants government.

REJECT THATCHER'S FRAUD! LINK WAGES TO PRICES!



In a desperate bid to con the British working class into accepting a drastic cut in real wages in the next year, the Thatcher government is preparing to rig the Retail Prices Index by leaving out the soaring price of petrol and heating oil.

They hope that the resulting bogus figures will persuade workers to submit wage claims far below the real rate of inflation.

This plan was brazenly revealed last week during the Tokyo summit, at which leading capitalist heads of state debated ways of foisting the cost of the oil crisis onto the world's working class.

Thatcher eagerly took up the proposal from a major speech by former Labourite Roy Jenkins, now President of the Common Market Commission.

Higher prices

Jenkins stressed that while it was "essential" that the real cost of dearer oil was passed on in higher prices, it was equally essential to prevent workers from obtaining wage increases big enough to compensate for these price rises!

Living standards must fall for "everyone" in the Western countries, he declared.

But of course the term "everyone" conceals the real content of the plan.

The capitalist class, top managers and professions will of course continue to benefit from huge salaries, unlimited dividends, Tory tax hand-outs, expense accounts and lavish "perks"—while the full brunt of the current tidal wave of price increases, social service cuts and mass unemployment falls onto working class families.

Thatcher's plan to rig the Retail Price Index would have a particularly immediate and drastic impact on pensioners. Howe's budget severed the link between pensions and average wages—substituting a simple link with the Retail Prices Index.

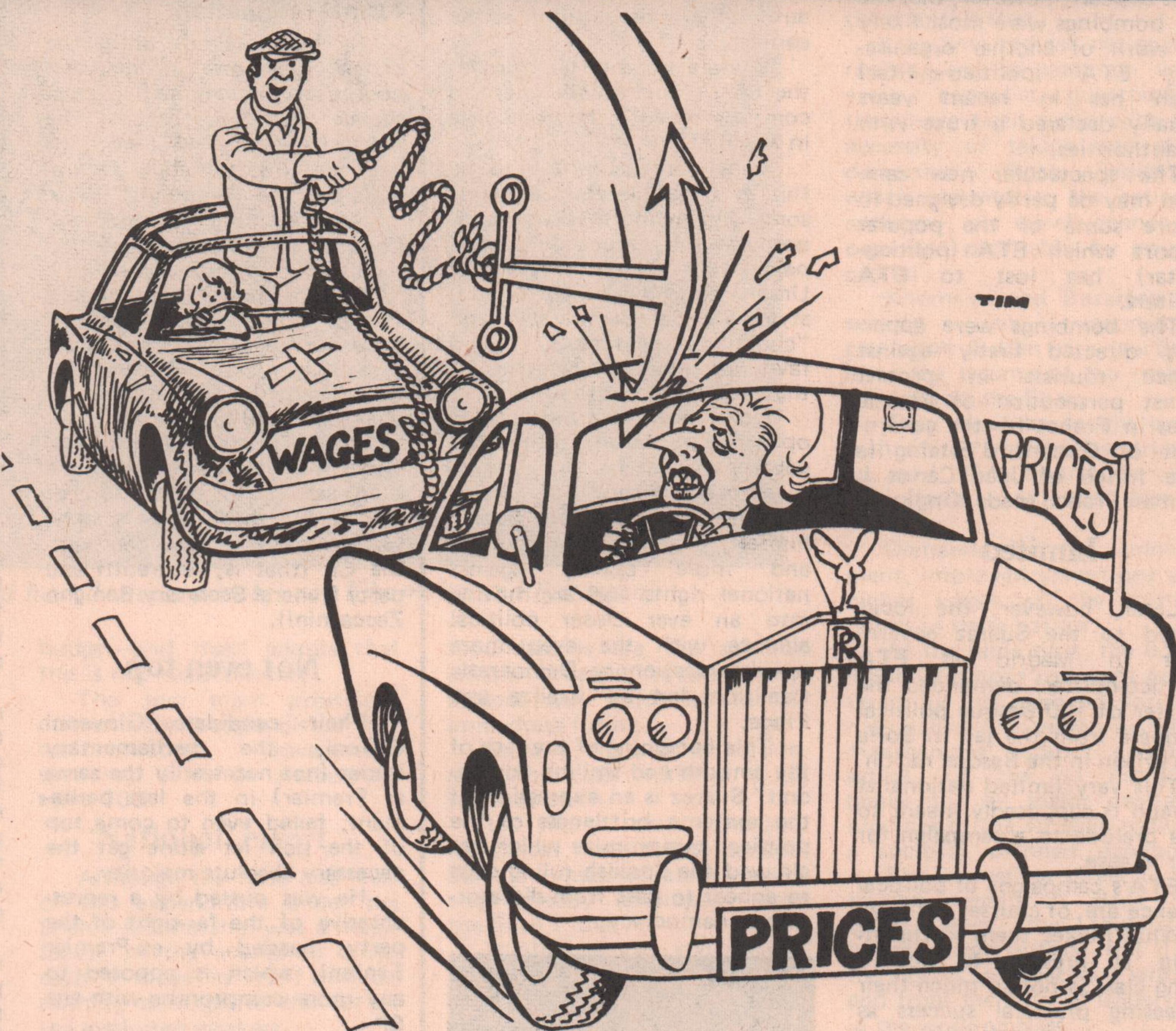
Any move to exclude fuel costs from the Index would therefore leave pensioners high and dry as the cost of living races way ahead of their incomes.

Small savers

And thousands of other small savers and pensioners with index-linked incomes would also lose out hand over fist.

This might create such an outcry that Thatcher could tactically retreat from changing the RPI. But let there be no mistake.

TGWU must take the lead in defence of living standards



retreat from changing the RPI. But let there be no mistake.

The essential question for the Tories—as it was in three years of wage controls under the Labour leaders—is to force the working class to carry the whole cost of the economic crisis.

Only in this way can they hope through increased exploitation to restore the profitability of British capitalism.

Their allies in such an offensive against the working

class will be those wretched union leaders who time and again argue that workers should respect the 'viability' of the employers and restrict their own demands accordingly.

All such policies—which lead only to poverty and unemployment must be rejected. Workers must take action to defend real wages against inflation through cost-of-living clauses.

But the open discussion of government plans to cook the official figures pinpoints the

inadequacy of the Retail Prices Index as a basis for workers to calculate the real cost of living.

As a sum total of the price of a huge range of goods and services—from absurd luxuries to household soap—the Index fails to account for the fact that a disproportionately large proportion of a worker's pay packet goes on essentials such as food, clothing, travel and housing—the cost of which tends to rise faster than luxury goods.

Last week's *Daily Telegraph* shopping basket, for instance, registered a 12% increase in food prices in the last six months—an annual increase of over 24%. And this is before the new fuel prices and EEC price increases make themselves felt!

Add to this the fact that as Tory cuts in local government spending begin to bite, the present local variations in council rents, public transport costs, rates, etc., will grow even wider. Various services will be axed altogether, bringing additional costs to working class families.

In short the only way that the real increases in workers' cost of living can be calculated is not through the abstract and selective government figures publicised by the mass media, but through the setting up in each area of elected committees with the task of working out a workers' price index.

Housewives

In setting up such committees local union branches or shop stewards' committees must take steps to ensure that they include representatives of housewives, claimants and pensioners.

The help of experts sympathetic to the labour movement should be enlisted, and unions must be called upon to make their research facilities available to such price committees.

The figures produced will show unmistakably the pace at which workers' living standards are being attacked by the Tory government, and spell out to workers the urgency of waging a fight for cost-of-living clauses in all pay agreements to provide each month full compensation for inflation as shown on the workers' price index.

The TGWU Biennial Delegate Conference will next week discuss precisely such a policy—which two years ago won the support of a third of the conference.

By voting for it, and fighting for its inclusion in pay claims, delegates can give a lead to the whole working class, strike a major blow at the Tories' strategy, and show their determination to defend their members' living standards.

* Defend living standards! Wages must be protected by cost-of-living clauses in all agreements!

* Build workers' price committees!

* Prepare mass action to bring down this Tory government of employers and bankers!



INTERNATIONAL

Turkey's desperate political crisis

The government in Turkey led by Bulent Ecevit remains in office by virtue only of boycotting parliament.

Meanwhile the right wing opposition—including the fascist NAP—remains a single vote short of the 226 needed to overturn Ecevit.

This cliff-hanging situation has arisen as a result of the defection of several MPs from Ecevit's Republican People's Party and some independent cabinet ministers—all of whom have joined the opposition.

The opposition has shrewdly pressed not for motions of confidence in the government, but for censure motions aimed at exposing the corruption of various government ministers.

A month ago this forced the hasty resignation of the social security minister; now the minister of Customs and Monopolies faces the same treatment.

It is in defence of him that Ecevit is forced to the humiliating tactic of boycotting Parliament.

But behind these farcical proceedings lies the deadly serious political crisis that threatens Turkey with a military-fascist dictatorship.

Ecevit clings to office through boycott of parliament

Ecevit's government has proved itself unable to resolve the country's economic crisis. He has finally complied with IMF demands and imposed a 13% devaluation in the Turkish lira—but the capitalist class has no confidence that he will foist the full burden of this onto the Turkish working class.

Strikes

Indeed strikes have already begun against this latest attack, which will drive inflation far above its present 20% level.

The capitalist class fears an extension of these initially isolated strikes—and is financing the activities of the growing fascist movement as part of

their strategy to crush the organised working class.

The fascist NAP—with 1 million members—is continuing its campaign of terror against the labour movement and national minorities. An average of two to three people are shot dead every day.

Despite Ecevit's talk of the army preventing such actions, the martial law regulations leave the fascists a free hand while violently repressing the left.

Not a single left wing paper is allowed to publish in the martial law areas—which include all the main working class concentrations. Strikes and demonstrations are under strict police and military scrutiny and open to fascist attack.

Once again the working class

is paying the price for the reactionary policies of the Popular Front—the attempts by Stalinist and reformist leaders to fight fascism through alliances with "democratic" capitalists.

In Turkey, both the reformists and the Stalinists remain tied completely to Ecevit and the RPP, proclaiming the government to be "democratic" even as its martial laws crack down on the working class.

Jailed

Only recently leaders of the left wing union confederation DISK and the Turkish Labour Party were jailed for a month following their speeches and calling of marches on May Day.

Yet still these leaders refuse



Turkish police arrest young militant

to break from Ecevit or to mobilise the vast untapped strength of the labour movement in struggle to confront and defeat the fascists.

Meanwhile the imperialists bide their time, awaiting the moment to replace Ecevit with a dictatorial regime that will support their moves to stabilise the Middle East in the wake of the Iranian revolution.

The Turkish workers' move-

ment has no interest whatever in defending the Ecevit government. But it must organise and mobilise to defend its independent organisations and living standards.

This means breaking from the RPP and fighting for a united front of workers' organisations to form workers' defence squads that will defeat the fascists.

Basque struggles expose Spain's "democracy"

The Basque question has again become the dominant political issue in Spain.

This is not only because of the insistent demands almost unanimously raised by the masses of Euskadi (the Basque provinces) for autonomy or even independence.

It is also because the Basque question daily shows up the superficiality of Spain's "democratisation" since the death of Franco.

It stimulates demands throughout the country against the Madrid-dominated Spanish state so treasured by Francoists.

The astoundingly successful assassination campaign by ETA (militar)—the most active and militant wing of the Basque national liberation movement—has exposed the popular hatred for the Francoist police and armed forces.

This hatred has been revealed by the electoral advances of Herri Batasuna (the electoral front supported by ETA (militar) in the recent elections—a clear statement of mass support for ETA's pinpoint terrorism which has despatched over 30 officers of the repressive state apparatus this year.

Militant mass demonstrations in Euskadi against the central government have in the last few months become almost a daily event.

Murder

And after the police murder of an anti-nuclear demonstrator in Navarra a few weeks ago a brief but almost universally followed general strike showed the strength of working class loathing of the Francoist authorities and intensified demands for the withdrawal of all central government forces from Euskadi.

Last week the issue dominated the front pages of Europe's capitalist newspapers as a series of bombs exploded in Spain's main tourist centres—actions which were attributed to ETA.

On the face of it this was a surprising change of tactics compared with the recent traditions

of ETA (militar) which have been to focus all terrorist actions onto individual personnel of the police and army.

It appears, however, that the new bombings were most likely the work of another organisation, ETA (politico-militar) which has in recent years virtually declared a truce with the authorities.

The spectacular new campaign may be partly designed to restore some of the popular support which ETA (politico-militar) has lost to ETA (militar).

The bombings were apparently directed firstly against French tourists in protest against persecution of Basque exiles in France by the government of Giscard d'Estaing (a close friend of Juan Carlos I, the man Franco made King).

Limited

Later, however, the focus shifted to the Suarez government in Madrid as ETA (politico-militar) demanded the transfer of 100 Basque political prisoners from the jail in Soria to a prison in the Basque region.

This very limited nationalist demand is supposedly meant to be a prelude to a campaign for their release.

ETA's campaigns of political violence are, of course, not new.

What makes them so threatening at present to Spain's ruling class is not so much their increasing practical success as the way in which they are increasingly linked to mass mobilisations in demonstrations or strikes.

Probably only a minority of the mobilisations are initiated by the ETA leaders themselves who, despite their talk of "socialism", tend to be rooted in the methods of petty-bourgeois political elitism.

Many of the mass mobilisations are relatively spontaneous.

Virtually all of them are opposed by the local leaders of the main Spanish workers' parties, the CP and the PSOE, as well as by the powerful bourgeois nationalists of the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV).

The PNV looks on with especial horror at the present situation: on the one hand a mass movement which it cannot control and on the other hand a central government which everyday shows itself a little more hostile to any form of Basque (or Catalan) autonomy.

Suarez' latest delaying manoeuvre is to place the matter in the hands of a parliamentary committee which will come up with a diluted scheme for autonomy in the autumn at the earliest.

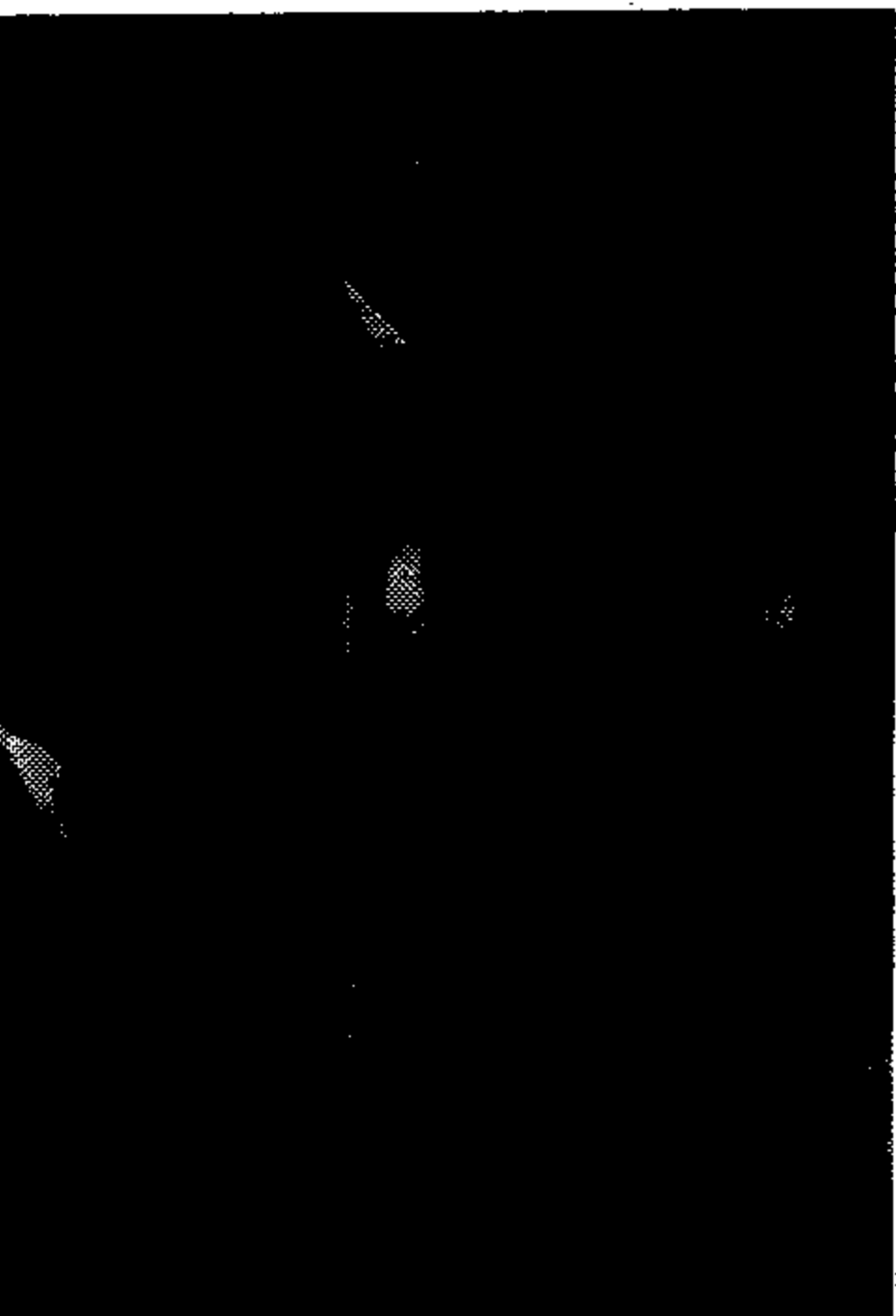
These are the bitter fruits of the PNV's abject willingness to compromise with the Francoists in Madrid.

They were encouraged to see this as a feasible route towards some convincing mask of autonomy by the presence in Suarez' party (the Democratic Centre Union) and government of self-styled "social democrats" and "christian democrats" who favoured liberal treatment of the national minorities.

Now, however, there is an open and public rift in the UCD government itself.

Those with the purer Francoist pedigrees, like Suarez himself, are coming out more and more openly against national rights and are moving into an ever closer political alliance with the even more openly reactionary Democratic Coalition led by Areilza and Fraga.

This hardening of the face of the smooth and smiling "democrat" Suarez is an expression of the extreme brittleness of the political compromise which has allowed the Spanish ruling class to appear to pass from dictatorship to democracy.



Right wing leader Areilza

ITALIAN BOSSES IN DILEMMA

Last week Giulio Andreotti's caretaker minority Christian Democratic government finally ran out of pretexts to delay its formal resignation.

It had waited until the official positions in the two houses of parliament had been shared out as before the indecisive June 3 elections between the Christian Democrats and the Communist Party.

And it hung on until the Christian Democrats had elected their parliamentary leadership.

This second preliminary showed how far away was any hope for the Italian capitalists of finding a stable replacement to Andreotti's series of governments since 1976.

The Christian Democrats' leadership elections resulted in a sharp setback for the sections of the party which favours some sort of parliamentary deal with the CP (that is, Andreotti and party General Secretary Benigno Zaccagnini).

Not even top

Their candidate Giovanni Galloni, the parliamentary leader (not necessarily the same as Premier) in the last parliament, failed even to come top of the poll let alone get the necessary absolute majority.

He was ousted by a representative of the far-right of the party, headed by ex-Premier Fanfani, which is opposed to any more compromise with the CP.

Italy's real political crisis, a crisis of bourgeois authority, opened many years ago.

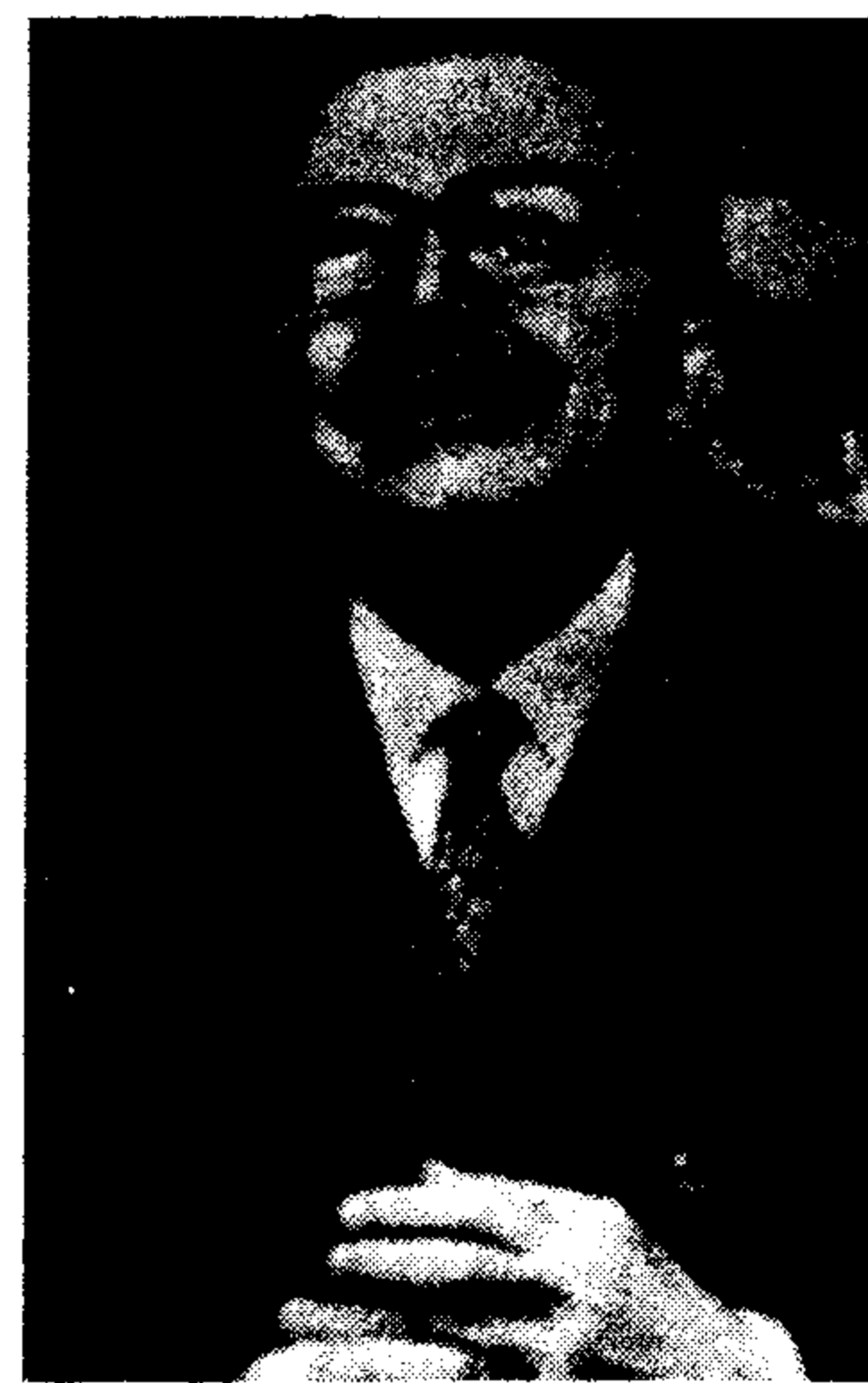
The latest formal crisis began last week and will now develop with the effort to find a government which can gain a sufficient parliamentary majority.

Half of the Christian Democrats are now vehemently rejecting a deal with the CP.

The CP itself is insisting that if it does not have Cabinet Ministers it will stay in opposition.

Square root

And, with none of the smaller parties in between



Andreotti—seeking guidance?

(Socialists, Social Democrats, or Republicans) apparently willing without the CP to take responsibility for keeping the Christian Democrats in office, a new formula looks about as difficult to find as the square root of minus one.

The crisis of Italian parliamentary democracy, which reflects the latent explosiveness of the underlying class conflict, may now be such that neither of the dominant political parties can be permitted to divert, and perhaps not even to be part of the next government.

Ironically the only formula which can stave off total political crisis in the short run, may be for the government to be led by, and perhaps even composed by, the parties which gained least votes in the general election.

Decided to die

While some political commentators are congratulating themselves on devising this elegant solution of an imaginary government to lead Italy, few of them are offering suggestions as to what politician could pull off such a delicate trick.

Three months ago they would have suggested Republican Party leader Ugo La Malfa. He, however, when

presented with the same challenge before the elections, wisely decided to die of a heart attack.

In the face of this crisis the CP leaders seem as paralysed as those of the bourgeois parties.

Evaporating

Beyond mouthing their demand for a broad class-collaborationist coalition, they are unable to take any initiatives without losing even more of their mass base which, as the election results showed, is already evaporating especially among the young.

The working class, however, is more insistently demanding that the political paralysis is ended.

Last week the Stalinist-led CGIL trade union federation could no longer avoid calling a long-delayed demonstration of metal workers in support of wage demands which were due for settlement nearly a year ago.

The CP leaders weakness in the face of mass pressure was shown by the turnout of 200,000 on a demonstration they had tried to keep as small as possible.

Physical violence

It was also shown by the fact that their only answer to the growing number of "autonomist" workers (independent of the CP) who wanted to join the march was to instruct the stewards (working in close collaboration with the police) to keep them away with physical violence.

Dozens of autonomists were injured in this scandalous onslaught.

At the end of his speech Luciano Lama, the CGIL's veteran General Secretary was rushed off to hospital with what was rumoured to be a heart attack, later stated to be heat-stroke.

It was in fact more likely blind terror at the sight of so many workers demanding that their organisations lead a fight against Italy's rotting capitalist structure.

INTERNATIONAL



Dominica crisis spurs on Caribbean force

Following the downfall of the second Caribbean government this year, the smaller islands are planning joint security measures in an attempt to preserve their shaky regimes.

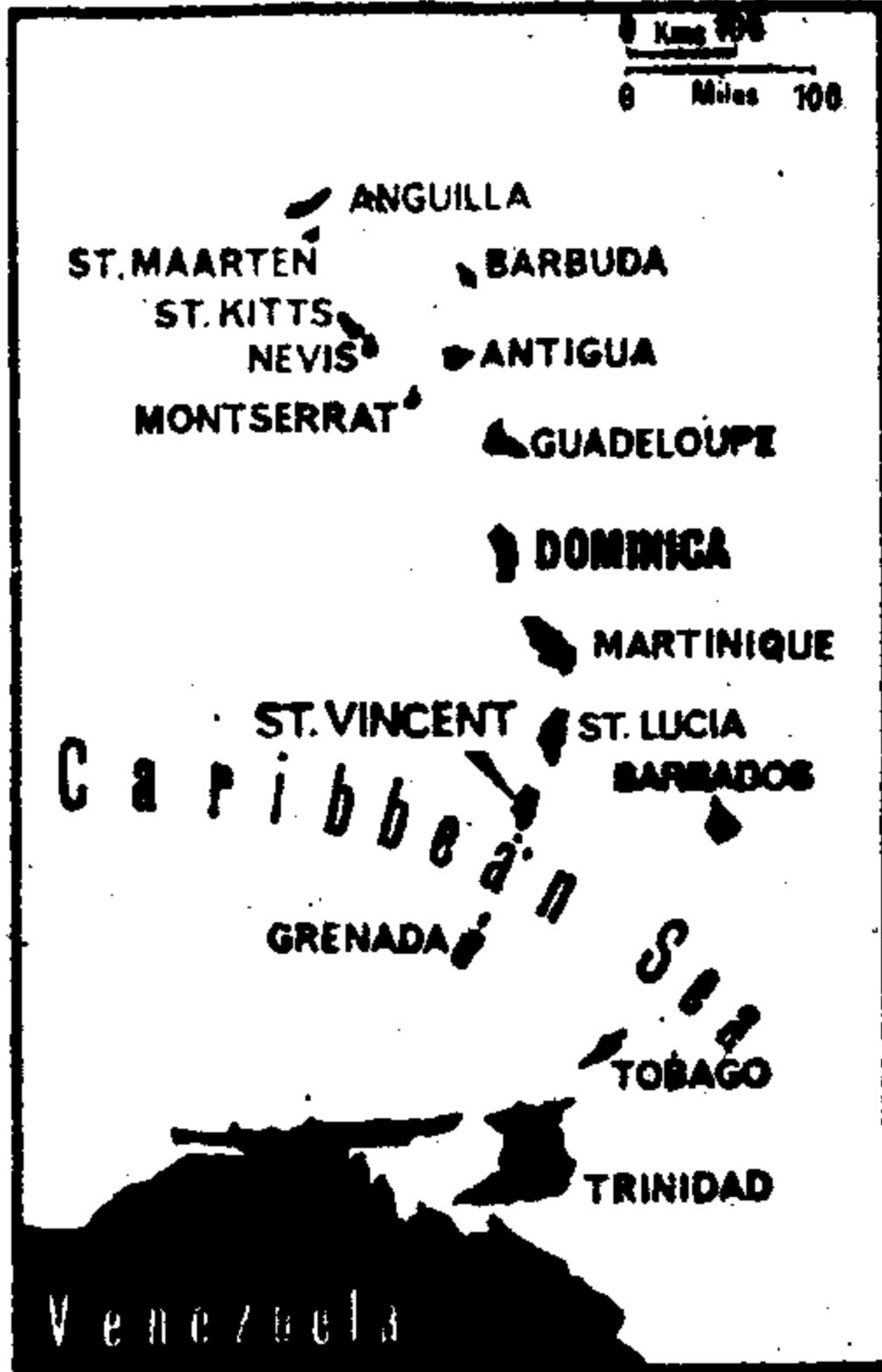
The overthrow of the Gairy regime in Grenada earlier this year appears to have prompted a speedier conclusion to discussions aimed at setting up the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

Cabinet status

One proposal is for the establishment of a regional police force of 120 under a Commissioner General who will be given the status of a Cabinet minister by all the islands involved.

Most of these islands have radical or socialist groups similar to the New Jewel Movement which overthrew Gairy in Grenada and the aim of the regional police force would be to prevent such groups from attempting to follow the example of Maurice Bishop's New Jewel Movement.

Such a force, however, will come too late to save Mr Patrick John who has finally been replaced as prime minister of Dominica.



As the head of the reactionary Dominican Labour Party government, John was attempting to introduce legislation to limit the right to strike and tighten the libel laws.

General strike

Massive demonstrations in which a man and a baby were killed by police gave way to a four week general strike in an outburst of discontent which brought together all sections of Dominican society.

During the strike

Desmond Trotter, the well-known radical who was framed for murder five years ago and sentenced to death until an international campaign won him a reprieve, managed to escape from jail amidst the confusion.

Lasted one day

A former member of John's government, Mr Oliver Seraphine, who resigned to set up his own political party after hearing of links between the government and South Africa, has been appointed the new prime minister and will head an administration of various parties until fresh elections are organised.

The departure of the island's President, Mr Fred Degazon to Britain at the height of the crisis prevented John being immediately replaced since nobody had the authority to appoint a successor.

The next President, Sir Louis Cools Lartique only lasted a day, resigning after demonstrators attacked his home.

Eventually a President was successfully appointed and he in turn appointed Mr Seraphine as prime minister.

Post union bales out Lynch government

The strike by Irish postal workers was called off by union leaders last week after nineteen weeks.

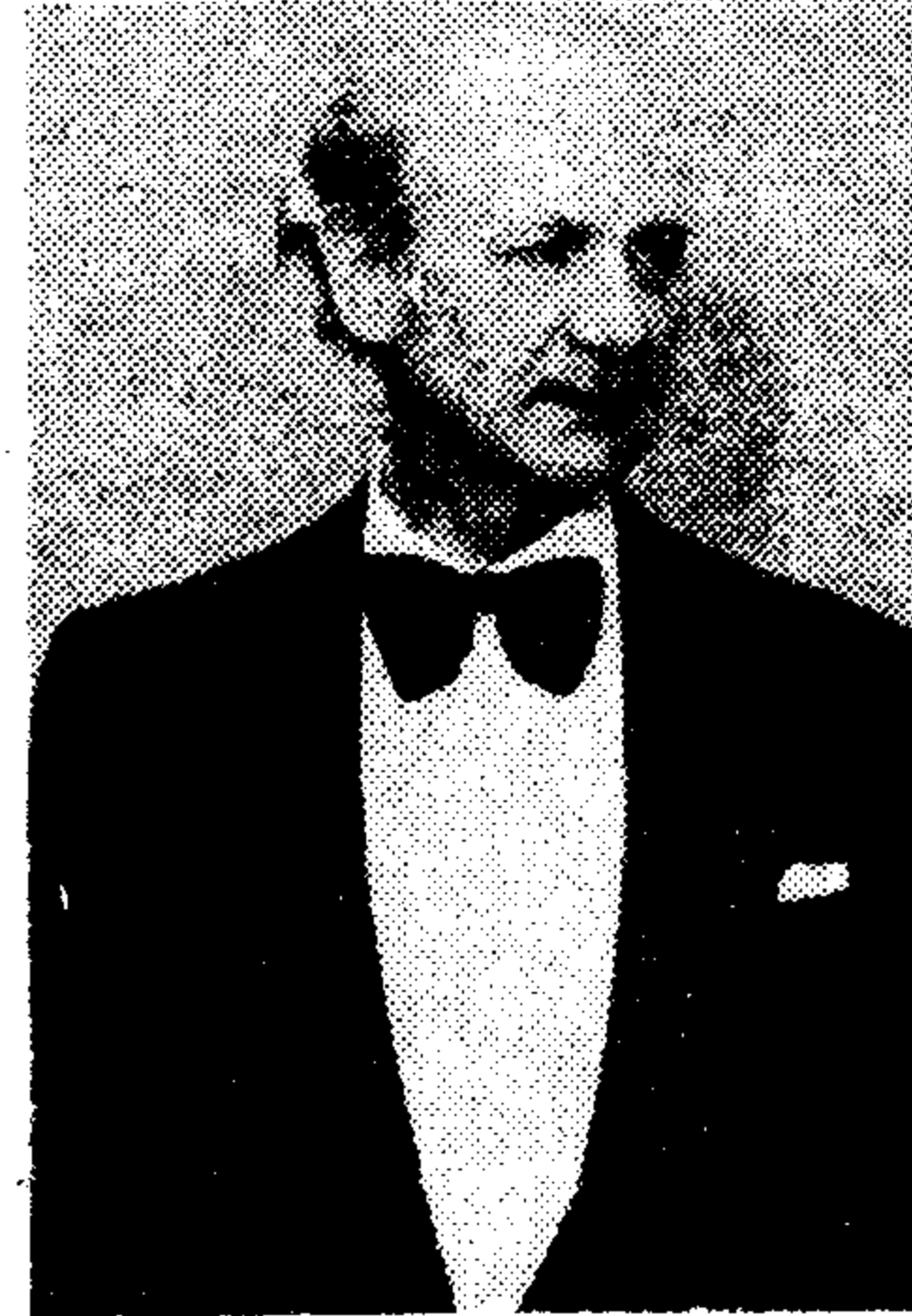
The sell-out was a move to bail out the Lynch government.

The union leadership accepted an offer of 15%, with a 12% increase for clerical workers, against a 37% claim.

On the spot

The deal came at the end of several days talks between Irish Posts and Telegraph Minister, Faulkner, and the industrial relations committee of the Irish Congress of Trades Unions.

The deal hatched up at these talks was then accepted by the executive of the Post Office Workers Union.



Lynch

The determination of the ICTU to bring the massively powerful strike to an end was due to the fact that the labour bureaucrats are now firmly on the spot over wages.

Having rejected the 'understanding' proposed by the Lynch government in

the hope that Lynch would offer them something a little more saleable, the ICTU leaders were faced with a unilateral 7% pay ceiling from the government.

The first challenge to this pay policy is likely to be 55,000 building workers who have put in a 25% pay claim.

Action by other powerful sections of workers over pay would bring to an end the isolation the postal workers have faced through the nineteen weeks.

Carbon copy

The Lynch pay policy is almost a carbon copy of the ill-fated Phase 4 of the Labour government in Britain, complete with 'sanctions' on contracts against employers who settle outside it.

The Irish economy is in crisis with the pound falling lower against sterling and interest rates jacked up by between 1¼ and 2½%.

Inflation is rocketing and the growth rate promised at 6.5% this year, has been downrated to 5%.

The first indication that the ICTU and UPW leaders were preparing to call off the action—which has brought post and telephone services to a halt in the Republic—came with the calling off of a march by the Dublin Trades Council in support of their demands.

Militancy

The last march called by the trades council against tax increases was massively supported and caused a virtual one-day general strike through Dublin.

The AUEW had proposed a one week general strike in support of the POWU—a move which reflects the militancy within their own ranks over wages.

Warning

In Ireland, as in Britain for the whole period of wage controls, union leaders who were unable to come out clearly against strikers, have isolated each strike by refusing to allow the struggle to become generalised.

For whatever bureaucratic reasons their call had been made, the AUEW had effectively challenged that policy and cut across scabbing that had started on the Post Office strike, for example by the ETU which had instructed members to deliver electricity bills.

The betrayal of the postal workers is a warning to other Irish workers who are preparing to fight over wages.

Leadership

The warning is not that they should not fight, but that they need a political leadership which will not stop short of challenging the government's ability to govern.

To create such a leadership a major battle is now needed against the union leaders, who act as that government's agents.

IRAN WORKERS MUST REJECT KHOMEINI'S "COUNCILS"

The Shah may have temporarily escaped death by assassination in Mexico.

But the risks which he runs in his luxury-lined exile bear no comparison with the dangers confronted by the exploited masses of Iran.

Formerly oppressed by imperialism through the tyranny of the Shah, the workers and other oppressed classes in Iran now face the monstrous threat of counter-revolutionary dictatorship from Khomeini and his 'Revolutionary Council'.

The Islamic regime has proclaimed the formation of local councils throughout the country, with strictly limited powers and jurisdiction.

Opposition

This move is an obvious, forced response to the continuing demand for greater democracy, and an attempt to establish local bases of authority for the Khomeini regime.

The councils are designed to counter-balance the continuing strength of the factory committees and strike committees.

As such they stand in sharp opposition to the necessary demand that soviets of workers power be built from these existing organisations of independent working class strength.

At the same time, the limits of the councils' authority is nakedly exposed by the continuing repression of the national minorities who are demanding the right to self-determination, through autonomy within or independence from the Iranian state.

At present it is the Arabs in Khuzestan who are experiencing the sharpest edge of Khomeini's 'freedom from tyranny' with attacks from the armed forces and 'revolutionary guards'.

As media censorship is enforced, the rights of political freedom of expression and organisation are violently denied to the left wing opposition. Members and supporters of



Shah's troops could not hold back Iranian masses: can Khomeini and Bazargan?

the Fedayeen, the HKS (Socialist Workers Party, jointly formed by the USFI and OCRFI), and even the Stalinist Tudeh Party are beaten up on demonstrations by reactionary thugs, and arrested without charges or trials by the 'Revolutionary Committees' and their henchmen.

In this prolonged crisis of intensifying repression, another area of struggle is developing.

Economic demands of course played a major part in the overthrow of the Shah. Exaggerated by the policies of his tyranny, the world economic crisis of capitalism struck heavy blows against the working class in Iran.

Political forms

Many thousands of industrial workers were engaged in strikes last year which began with claims for higher wages and improved working conditions, then rapidly developed into directly political forms of action.

Now, cloaked in its necessary secrecy, the 'Revolutionary Council' has prepared its first

budget—and itself admits that this is not 'revolutionary'.

The two main provisions concern state expenditure and nationalisation. Government spending is to be slashed by some 30%.

'National' effort

Although the form and level of this expenditure under the Shah's dictatorship was a major factor in the economic crisis, such a move in itself will do nothing to improve the lot of the exploited workers.

On the contrary, it is designed to stabilise the economy for capitalist development. Even then, it can be effective only if the cost is borne by the workers, peasants and petty bourgeoisie.

It will not be long before Khomeini and Bazargan issue rousing appeals for a 'national' effort to resolve the crisis while they seek to impose 'austerity' measures mirroring those of every other capitalist government.

Policies for wage-cutting, increasing productivity and reducing manning levels through

redundancies are the solution which these 'revolutionary' leaders will hold out in the immediate future.

Equally, the planned nationalisations have nothing to do with socialism.

In many cases (notably insurance), they simply consolidate the massive state ownership already developed under the Shah's rule.

In other sectors, state ownership is proposed where the previous owners and managers have fled the country, and production is either at a standstill or at present controlled by the factory committees.

Total threat

Of course there is no intention of allowing workers' control, let alone workers' management in these concerns—quite the reverse, for the bourgeois and Islamic leaders are fully conscious of the total threat this would pose to their power.

The 'Revolutionary Council' is partly motivated by this threat and partly by a design to

increase its control through such economic influence.

But above all, it is the economic factor which has driven them to this step.

Like any 'radical' nationalist regime, and in common with every capitalist government, they have been faced with the necessity of taking into state ownership those industries which are vital to the national economy, yet which cannot be organised profitably by private capital.

Khomeini and Bazargan are seeking to reconstruct capitalism in Iran on a new basis after the trauma of the revolution against the Shah.

They must be fought every inch of the way in the struggle to end the oppression and exploitation of the Iranian masses.

Demands for full employment, improved conditions and higher wages will be starting points in these battles.

At the same time, the bogus 'nationalisations' must be countered by the demand for the nationalisation, under workers' management without compensation, of the oil industry, banks and all major capitalist holdings in the struggle to build a socialist planned economy.

The immediate threat to the Iranian revolution does not come from the imperialist power ranged outside, but from the forces of reaction within, and from the crisis of leadership in the working class.

Unity behind Khomeini can lead only to a massive setback and bloody defeat for those forces who fought so heroically against the Shah for their liberation.

The fragile gains already made can be secured and developed to a far higher level only by the independent strength of the proletariat, uniting all the oppressed masses behind the banner of its class dictatorship, and organised in its struggles by the leadership of a revolutionary party armed with the transitional programme for socialist revolution.

Give troops a chance —pleads Heffer



Eric Heffer has spoken out on the question of British imperialist troops in Ireland.

But he did not call for their immediate withdrawal.

Rather he complained about the use of disciplinary measures against soldiers serving "under a strain" in Northern Ireland.

What they need, declared Heffer, is not disciplinary action but a bout of hospital treatment or of removal from Ireland.

That, presumably, should put them on their feet again, ready to gun down Catholic workers and youth, kick in front doors and carry out their general duties of intimidation of the nationalist population.

'Trade union'

Heffer's concern for the plight of these armed thugs of British imperialism is not matched by any interest whatever in the plight of the Irish people.

He went on to propose that members of the armed forces be allowed to form a "trade union" of their own outside of the TUC—along the lines of the Police Federation!

And he was at pains to stress that he did not want to "undermine" the Forces.

In this reactionary stand Heffer speaks for the whole of Labour's so-called 'left' wing,



all of whom as reformists accept the continuation of the repressive machinery of the capitalist state.

As a former minister under Harold Wilson, Heffer gave his tacit support to the Labour government's policy of military repression in Ireland—a stand echoed by fellow Tribune Stan Orme, who actually took on a ministerial post in the Northern Ireland office.

Labour's most prominent "left" careerist Tony Benn also happily sat alongside Ireland

torture chiefs Merlyn Rees and Roy Mason throughout the life of the Labour cabinet, and has yet to declare even verbal opposition to the role of British imperialism.

And even those few Tribunes that have spoken in support of the withdrawal of British troops have refused to fight for removal of the pro-imperialist Callaghan-Healey leadership.

But Labour's 'left' is not at all reluctant to call for a change of leadership in the Tory party.

Last week saw the sickening spectacle of Heffer and Walsall Tribune David Winnick urging Whitelaw to take over the Tory leadership from Thatcher.

Whitelaw of course was also Tory torture chief in Ireland under Heath.

Last week he vigorously defended the role of the SPG murderers in the Southall riot and refused to call any form of public inquiry into the killing of Blair Peach.

Incapable

But Heffer cringingly suggested that "in the interest of the country" Whitelaw should be Tory leader. "Provided we still have a Tory government it might not be such a disaster", he declared.

The real disaster for the workers' movement is not that this or that individual Tory spearheads their attacks on living standards, but that the Labour leadership—'left' and right alike—is incapable of leading the slightest principled fight against British imperialism.

This crisis of leadership can only be resolved through the exposure of Tribune poseurs like Heffer and the construction of a revolutionary party to lead the struggle in defence of jobs and living standards.

Tribunite blocks troops out call

'The immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all British troops from Ireland: self-determination for the Irish people as a whole; PO'V status and release for all political prisoners . . .'

... so read a resolution from the Richmond Town ward of the Barnes and Richmond Constituency Labour Party submitted to its General Management Committee on June 18 for discussion for the Labour Party's Annual Conference.

The resolution had the unanimous support of the Ward, which had held such a position for over the previous year.

However its first attempt to win the General Committee to

these policies had fallen heavily and predictably the second discussion was heated.

However the final voting revealed a split vote of ten votes for and ten against.

But Tribune vice-chairman Walter Wolfgang refused to make a casting vote and so the resolution fell.

However, the Richmond Town Ward will not be deterred and will prepare for the next fight on this crucial question.

Its ordinary motion calling for a demonstration demanding the disbanding of the Special Patrol Group and a workers' inquiry into the death of Blair Peach was not taken as an emergency item at the GMC meeting and will be a subject for discussion at the next.

SWP's non-political 'rank and file' offers no lead in fight against Tories

More than 1,000 trade union delegates packed New Century Hall, Manchester, for the largest conference the Rank and File group has ever called.

Called "Defend Our Unions" the conference had struck a chord inside militant sections of the working class, as well as with left facing sections of the petty bureaucracy.

SWP leaders, boggle-eyed at the numbers hailed the conference an outstanding success.

Weak

Yet if the political level at which the conference was called was low, it had plunged lower still by the time it wound up.

The overwhelming conclusion to come from the conference was that the working class is weak; that it is itself to blame for being weak; and that what it requires is "more old fashioned trade unionism".

To this end the conference endorsed a Rank and File Code of Practice containing trade union demands on blacking, picket lines and accountability, all of which become strike committee policy within hours of most disputes starting.

Accolade

Speaker after speaker—all, bar one, hand picked—attacked the rank and file for not fighting and stressed the need to persuade more workers to fight.

Phil Gilliat, from the Sanderson's Strike Commit-



Sandersons mass picket last October: now Gilliat refuses to call another



Gilliat

tee, was given the accolade of opening the conference. In tones of cynicism and despair he brushed aside complaints about union leaders, insisting that the fault lay in "ourselves". "Our own failure to fill the gap left by the union officials".

Gilliat, who has led the Sanderson's struggle for two years, did not specify these

failures. When a mass picket was called, large numbers turned up. No further mass picket has been called by Gilliat, because to do so would bring him into direct conflict with the TGWU bureaucracy.

When blacking was ordered by the bureaucracy it was enthusiastically carried out by the rank and file and the employer was ready to settle. It was called off prematurely, not by rank and file workers, but by the bureaucracy. That is why the strike is still on. That is why the fight for recognition has not been won.

Distortion

The most conscious distortion came from Arthur Todd from the Dunlop Speke strike committee—who referred to the disaster that has overtaken workers

there as a 'Pyrrhic victory'.

Vaguely he referred to wrong policies. He managed to avoid the word occupation once in his whole contribution and then made the staggering assertion that at the end of the 'community pickets' (which he did not criticise) the committee found itself leading only 150 workers—"the real trade unionists".

The other workers then, whose jobs had been thrown away by Pemberton, Todd and the rest of the leadership, were presumably to blame for having recognised that there was no campaign to defend their jobs left.

Other speakers, some of them much less consciously diverting from the fight, took their cue from the leadership at the conference. More organisation was the complete substitute for politics.

If the major strikes of last winter were referred to at all it was in the tones of mourning for the 'weakness' of the membership—who were in fact 1,000 times more developed than many speakers at the conference.

'Unwinnable'

Most speakers referred to Garners. None mentioned that the conclusion that the Garners' strikers themselves had come to was not to blame the rank and file but to blame the union leadership and call for their replacement.

Nor was it mentioned that the SWP leadership had abandoned the strike as 'unwinnable' at the end of last year.

The resolution put to the



TGWU bureaucrat Todd: behind sell-outs at Garners and Sandersons.

conference had been sent out so late that many delegates—and perhaps most—had at best received it on the day before the conference.

Yet while the resolution had not been voted on by branches, amendments were only acceptable if they had. Two which arrived on the day of the conference were ruled out of order.

So was a third from the USDAW Manchester packing branch of the Co-op put forward by ICL supporters, which had arrived in time, but was said by the chairman Dick North, to be too complicated to discuss.

This position was decisively overturned by the conference in the only sharp vote taken.

When two points of policy from the resolution (which was never read out) were put, the conference overwhelmingly carried a position against import controls.

What became clear was that the Rank and File

organisers, presumably making deals with Stalinists or Tribunes, were prepared to manoeuvre to prevent that vote being taken.

A call for the opening of the books of companies to rank and file committees was lost clearly but not heavily.

It is no surprise, of course, that the conference was led so firmly away from politics. That is the politics of the SWP through and through.

The working class does not need more rank and file 'old fashioned trade unionism'. It needs revolutionary politics which are not limited to anti-Tory tirades and which put forward a consistent struggle against the labour traitors in the trade unions and in the Labour Party.

Militancy without politics offer no way forward for workers.

What makes this conference different is that it is clear that the leftward turning layers within the working class are in severe danger of being kidnapped by the SWP who will inhibit and divert their development.

When one delegate launched a tirade against Lenin, Marx and Trotsky he was greeted with indulgent laughter from the SWP leadership. In reality he caught the spirit of the conference.

If the IMG seek unity with such an organisation then those of their members who are serious about building a revolutionary party should be aware that this unity is the opposite of revolutionary politics.

WHY HAVE OPEC LEADERS SPURRED ON CAPITALIST CRISIS?



Iranian oil worker
The acute problems of such a strategy under conditions of runaway inflation in the capitalist world economy were highlighted by the mounting crisis of the Shah's regime in Iran. Spending oil revenues like water, the Shah attempted a simultaneous strategy of fostering domestic technology and industry and the construction of a massive and lethal military and police machine capable he hoped, of repressing revolutionary movements not only in Iran but throughout the Gulf.

Saudi Prince Fahd
capitalist oil monopolies cashed in profitably on an abundant oil supply, which kept crude oil prices depressed. The upheavals in Iran underlined the impossibility of the regimes in the oil states continuing effectively to subsidise Western capitalism at the expense of their own political stability. At the same time the three-month stoppage in shipments from Iran dramatically reversed the world supply situation from surplus to shortage, creating conditions for price increases.

Instability

The huge strains this created within the economy of even the world's second largest oil exporting country were fundamental root causes of the growing mass movement that led to his violent overthrow earlier this year.

And the new instability of the area, the economic political and military blows the Iranian revolution struck against imperialism, have forced the other Middle East oil states to look to their own domestic problems.

Even Western estimates show that, in the years 1974-78, the price of oil rose by only 16%, while the price of goods imported to the oil states from Western manufacturers—and essential both for "defence" and for modernisation projects—rose by 50%. OPEC economists claim that the real increase was far more than this.

Thus the real value of oil revenues fell dramatically in those four years—while Western

latest round of price increases. The Saudis feel unable either to 'go it alone' and massively increase supplies to the Western countries, or unilaterally to hold down their own prices. The actions of these oil producers are therefore both a part of and a response to the growing world crisis of imperialism.

The OPEC price rises and the resulting inflation and plunging living standards will now spur on the headlong rush towards world recession: such a recession will of course itself cut back demand for oil.

But the political and economic pressures within the oil states will also intensify—and are unlikely to allow even the most craven reactionary regimes leeway to make concessions.

Within the capitalist countries themselves, of course, workers face not simply the effects of the OPEC increases but the speculation, manipulation and profiteering of the oil monopolies that have compounded the crisis and created selective "shortages" as a pretext for maximising prices.

This, on top of the Tories' taxation policies has effectively doubled petrol prices in Britain in the last few months—while OPEC prices have risen only by 50%.

But it is wrong to dismiss the whole oil crisis as simply a "plot" by the oil monopolies or a fabrication by the capitalist press.



Capitalist leaders Schmidt and Ohira, forced to pay more

The Iranian events have simply brought rroward the oil shortage that was in any event expected to occur in the mid 1980s.

As such they have highlighted the anarchic and destructive nature of the capitalist system.

Planned economy

The capitalists now prattle about "going nuclear and crash research into solar energy."

But it is clear that the only way in which the world's working class can avoid a savage recession—throwing further millions into unemployment and poverty and posing the threat of imperialist war—is through the struggle in every country for the building of a revolutionary leadership that will fight for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a workers' government.

Only such a government, based on the development of a socialist planned economy can take the necessary steps to conserve and plan the use of energy, assist revolutionary movements in the Middle East and elsewhere and seek out trading relations on equal terms with ex-colonial countries that can provide the basis for defending and improving the living standards of the world's working class.



Last week some of the world's most reactionary leaders got together in two summit meetings.

One was the Geneva meeting of ministers from the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), where feudal sheikhs and military dictators agreed an average price increase of 15% on crude oil.

And the other was the Tokyo summit of the seven leading imperialist heads of state, where ludicrous and unconvincing efforts were made to create the impression that capitalism could 'plan' an answer to the oil crisis through common consent.

The imperialists' common determination to foist the effects of the oil crisis onto the working class and the workers

and peasants of the colonial and semi-colonial countries is of course no surprise.

But what is less obvious is why the reactionary oil states—many of which, especially Saudi Arabia, are dependent upon imperialist military and political support—should have embarked on a new round of price increases that can only hasten the coming world slump and further weaken imperialism.

The fact is that their domestic strategy for countering the growing anti-imperialist movements in their own countries depends upon a shrewd use of oil revenue both for the bolstering of state repression and for cosmetic schemes designed to provide marginal economic reforms and employment for increasingly restive workers and peasants at home.

CLASS LAW IN ACTION IN LEICESTER

WOMAN WORKER

Women's paper of the Workers Socialist League

Available price 6p plus 7p p&p from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

woman worker

New paper gives a lead to women's fight against Tory attacks



With the jailing of a second anti-racist by Leicester magistrates in cases arising from the demonstration against the National Front's April 21 march, the question of the defence of the labour movement against the attacks of the Tory state machine has now assumed critical importance.

Bill Hemmings, one of Leicester's growing number of young unemployed last Friday joined Yorkshire miner Martin Hughes in prison facing a three month sentence for using threatening behaviour on the streets of the city.

The magistrates would no doubt justify this piece of legalised savagery on the grounds that Hemmings, like many other

working class youth, has had previous encounters with the police and courts.

Let there be no mistake however: this was class justice of the first order.

The capitalist courts are there for only one purpose: to defend private property and the rights of all those who preach the gospel of exploitation, privilege and prejudice.

For this reason there was no murmur of disquiet from the assembled dignitaries who graced the magistrates' bench, about the invasion of the city on April 21 by over 4,000 armed thugs drawn from all parts of the country.

They roamed the streets for seven hours indiscriminately wielding truncheons and riot shields, accompanied by alsatians trained to attack and maim.



Police in action in Leicester on April 21

None of this was apparently considered threatening behaviour even after the clubbing to death of Blair Peach by this same armed mob in Southall.

And lest there were any lingering doubt that this attack was directed specifically against the working class, both the chief victims of this vicious law of the Tory jungle, Hemmings and Hughes, were young workers: whilst throughout the trials there has been a steady stream of acquittals involving students, drawn from the middle class.

This is no reflection on the determination of students to fight racism and the Tories, but rather a reflection of the real hatred felt by the ruling class for working class militants, particularly the youth.

In this situation with the police and SPG increasingly taking on the role of para-

military strike breakers and goon squads it is vital that the question of labour movement defence against these attacks is openly debated.

The Leicester April 21 Defence Committee is absolutely correct to see the central fight now as not just a financial one, but as a political one, to win labour movement support.

Their decision to call for a demonstration on July 21 around the slogans "Drop the Charges—Disband the SPG" must be supported by all trade unionists and Labour Party members who wish to defend the independence of the labour movement.

But for such a campaign to succeed, it needs to draw in not just individual militants, but must also be directed towards settling accounts with the right wing labour leadership who played nursemaid to the infant SPG and towards compelling the trade union leadership and the recently vocal 'lefts' around Benn, to make a stand.

For this reason, the call from the Defence Committee for Arthur Scargill to align himself with the demonstration and speak from the platform in solidarity with his jailed fellow Yorks miner Martin Hughes must be echoed throughout the labour movement and particularly in the coalfields.

Scargill, who overruled even NUM legal assistance to Hughes must be pressed to actually mobilise the strength of the miners' union around the defence of the Leicester 87.

This was the lesson of the Pentonville 5 and Scargill, Benn and all the other 'lefts' know it only too well.

THE SWP'S LONG FIGHT

"For Marxists in advanced countries, Lenin's original position can much less serve as a guide than Rosa Luxemburg's, notwithstanding her overstatement on the question of spontaneity."

(T. Cliff, *Rosa Luxemburg*, 1959).

"However, whatever the historical circumstances moulding Rosa's thoughts regarding organisation these thoughts showed a great weakness in the German revolution of 1918-1919."

(T. Cliff, *Rosa Luxemburg*, [2nd edition] 1968).

Those like the leadership of the International Marxist Group who peddle the idea that the SWP's stated commitment to a 'democratic centralist party' can be taken for good coin are playing a dangerous game.

They are aiding Tony Cliff and his fellow SWP leaders in their attempts to systematically revise and destroy all the gains of the Trotskyist movement.

It is not good enough for the IMG to accept the self-proclaimed "democratic centralism" of the SWP and put forward a few mild criticisms of the lack of the 'democratic party'.

It is necessary to probe the whole basis of Cliff's understanding of Leninism.

Programme

While it might even be correct under certain circumstances to maintain unity with those who hold a different view of Stalinism—if a firm common programme is established, agreed and kept to by all concerned—it is *not* legitimate for Trotskyists to unify with those who reject *everything* in the Leninist/Trotskyist tradition except a few surface 'agreements' with Lenin.

For us it is necessary to examine claimed adherence to Leninism both theoretically and practically. The SWP fails both these tests.

At the head of this article we quote the 1st and 2nd editions of Cliff's pamphlet on Rosa Luxemburg. The second quote comes after the IS/SWP conversion to 'Leninism'.

As we showed last week, the Cliff group adapted to anti-communism in the late 1940s and split with Trotskyism on defence of North Korea against imperialism.

But by the 1960s it felt able to take a position of defence of North Vietnam.

The key to this change was of course rooted in the changes in petty bourgeois "public opinion"—particularly that amongst students who enthusiastically supported the Vietnamese revolution.

Adapted

It was the May/June events in France 1968 that led to a change in attitude on the part of Cliff to 'Leninism'.

The lack of a party to challenge the existing mass leaders was so glaring that even the most blind centrist was forced to see it.

Cliff adapted to this by changing his mind—though giving no explanation of the changes cited above.

Of course recognition of the need for some kind of party does not solve the problem of what *kind* of party is needed.

In this article we propose to show that the IS/SWP conception is in no way Leninist.

When we consider the revolutionary party we are, of course, considering the central question facing revolutionaries, i.e. how to construct one.

What we think about this today comes down to us from the whole history of the Marxist movement.

Decades of struggle

Our theoretical conceptions of the revolutionary party are the result of decades of struggle. They are not the product of a few months' reflection in a library.



Luxemburg

libraries.

We can therefore only give a brief outline of the main issues—an outline designed to prompt further study.

Ramblings

There are many quotes we could select from Cliff's voluminous ramblings on the subject. We have selected the one which follows because we think that it is representative of his thinking.

"Revolutions do indeed start as spontaneous acts without the leadership of a party . . . However after being triggered off by a spontaneous uprising revolutions move forward in a different manner . . . the October revolution was not a spontaneous act but was organised in practically all its important particulars, including the date, by the Bolsheviks . . .

"Nowadays everyone pays at least lip service to the need for political preparation but in fact substitutionism [sic!] is still rife on the revolutionary left.

"It needs to be emphasised and re-emphasised that, in Marx's words 'the emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class itself' . . .

"But the rejection of substitutionism in no way involves rejecting the necessity for a revolutionary workers' party. The working class is a product of capitalist society. Its consciousness and militancy and understanding is necessarily extremely uneven.

To act, even in sectional struggles, it requires organisation. For it to act as a class for the biggest aim of all, the taking of power and the socialist reconstruction of society, the most conscious and confident workers must be welded together.

"They are the actual or potential leaders of their fellows . . . This union of these advanced workers is the revolutionary workers' party . . . In times of crisis workers . . . respond to some leadership or other . . . In the absence of a revolutionary party led by the more advanced workers, the mass of the working class will follow or acquiesce in some other kind of lead. The vacuum has to be filled . . .

"Of course the revolutionary party also needs tradition and theory. In other words its cadres need to have absorbed some of the lessons of past workers' struggles nationally and internationally.

"To weld together a broad layer of advanced workers this tradition must to some extent be passed on to them . . .

"Working class consciousness cannot be genuine political consciousness unless the workers are trained to respond to all the needs of the class . . .

army officers, managers, lawyers and so on, are subjected to an intense education process which is as much ideological as technical.

"But it is very dangerous to see the party's job as mainly that of teacher. The main job is to give a lead.

"To do this effectively the party militants must listen, must be sensitive to changing moods among their fellow workers, must know how to link the aspirations of workers to the central political aim. In short they have to learn from their fellow workers as much—or more—as they have to teach.

To repeat, the job is to lead and to lead you have to thoroughly understand those you are leading. Leadership is a two-way process.

" . . . The job of the party leadership is to generalise the experience of the party militants and to lead them as they lead their fellow workers.

" . . . Many (on the left) see the party leadership as the repository of doctrine, of theory, of organisational skill and knowledge. Of course it has to be all these things to some degree. But mainly it has to be the most apt learner, the most sensitive ear and the firmest will."

(T. Cliff, *Portugal at the Crossroads*, International Socialism 81/82, September 1975).

An understanding of the nature of class consciousness and its development is central to solving our task of transforming the working class in Marx's words 'from a class in itself to a class for itself'.

This means raising workers to a level where they recognise and are able to carry out their historic task of liberating mankind.

The dispute we have with the IS/SWP is one which in its essentials was fought out by Lenin in his battle against the Russian 'Economists'.

Basic required reading for those who wish to lead our class today is Lenin's pamphlet *What Is To Be Done?*

Consciousness

Writing of the relationship between spontaneity and consciousness he says:

"Strikes occurred in the seventies and sixties . . . and they were accompanied by 'spontaneous' destruction of machinery etc . . . The strikes of the nineties revealed far greater flashes of consciousness, definite demands were advanced, the strike was carefully timed, known cases and instances in other places were discussed, etc.

Taken by themselves these strikes were simply trade union struggles, not yet Social Democratic [revolutionary] struggles . . . the workers were not and could not be, conscious of the irreconcilable antagonism of their interests to the whole of the modern political and social system, that is, theirs was not yet Social Democratic [revolutionary] consciousness.

" . . . The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness."

(*What Is To Be Done?*)

Lenin goes on to stress that:

"Working class consciousness cannot be genuine political consciousness unless the workers are trained to respond to all the needs of the class . . .



Massive demonstration in Lisbon, May Day 1975. Spontaneous militancy was not enough to . . .

violence and abuse no matter what class is affected—unless they are trained to respond from a Social Democratic point of view".

(*What Is To Be Done?*)

Careful reading of Cliff's quote alone will show that for the SWP the political preparation for revolutionary struggles consists essentially in generalising the *existing* struggles and "linking" advanced workers in a force that can fill the "vacuum" when the opportunity exists.

Necessary battle

Cliff specifically rejects the necessary battle with the *false*, bourgeois, trade union consciousness which spontaneously exists in all sections of the working class, whether they be 'advanced' or backward.

By placing the emphasis on simply 'learning from the workers' and giving only the most cursory attention to trans-

mission of the theoretical and programmatic heritage of the communist movement to those workers who come into conflict with reformism he opens the way to the opportunism for which the SWP is so well known.

What did Lenin have to say about the ideological struggle?

" . . . all worship of the spontaneity of the working class movement, all belittling of the role of the conscious element means . . . a strengthening of the influence of bourgeois ideology upon the workers. All those who talk about overrating the importance of ideology . . . imagine that the labour movement pure and simple can elaborate and will elaborate an independent ideology for itself, if only the workers 'wrest their fate from the hands of the leaders'."

" . . . There is much talk of spontaneity. But the spontane-

ous development of the working class leads to its subordination to bourgeois ideology."

(This, Lenin said, "was shown by the history of all countries".)

Indeed Lenin went further than this and argued that:

"The theory of socialism, however, grew out of the philosophical, historical, and economic theories elaborated by educated representatives of the propertied classes, by intellectuals.

"By their social status the founders of modern scientific socialism, Marx and Engels, themselves belonged to the bourgeois intelligentsia.

"In the very same way, in Russia, the theoretical doctrine of Social Democracy arose altogether independently of the spontaneous growth of the working class movement; it arose as a natural and inevitable outcome of the development of

AGAINST LENINISM

Part 3
of a series
by Keith White



...le capitalism
thought among the revolutionary
intelligentsia."

This did not mean of course that the workers themselves would have no part in creating a socialist ideology:

"They take part however, not as workers, but as socialist theoreticians . . . in other words they take part only when they are able, and to the extent that they are able, more or less, to acquire the knowledge of their age and develop that knowledge."

"But in order that working men may succeed in this more often, every effort must be made to raise the level of consciousness of the workers in general; it is necessary that the workers do not confine themselves to the artificially restricted limits of "literature for workers" but that they learn to an increasing degree to master general literature. It would be even truer to say "are

PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report



SWP 'Rank and File' Conference 1977: no fight against trade union consciousness

not confined". . . because workers themselves wish to read and do read all that is written for the intelligentsia and only a few (bad) intellectuals believe that it is enough "for workers" to be told a few things about factory conditions and to have repeated to them over and over again what has long been known".

(What Is To Be Done?) (Emphasis added).

Members of the IS/SWP might argue that their socialist propaganda is the ideological struggle Lenin argued for and that the charge of Economism against them is misplaced.

Manifestation

However, Lenin understood that the concentration on the economic struggle was actually a passing manifestation of what was an opportunist method.

Lenin argued that the fundamental significance of Economism was that it provided:

"a theoretical basis for their slavish cringing before spontaneity. It is time to draw conclusions from this trend, the content of which is incorrectly and too narrowly characterised as Economism".

(What Is To Be Done?)

The SWP's connection between socialist ideology and trade union militancy is neatly summed up by Paul Foot.

"We have to weave our socialist ideas into action—wherever the battle between the classes is being fought. Militancy is a million times better for workers than apathy (which is usually called moderation).

Militancy makes workers strong and confident, apathy makes them weak and obsequious.

But militancy on its own can also be defeated. It can be isolated, not just from other workers' militancy, but also from the ideas about a socialist society which are by far the greatest inspiration to keep fighting.

. . . For once the idea of a socialist society . . . gets among the people . . . then there is no letting what can happen." (While the Tories shriek . . . Socialism has the answer).

Here Foot displays the most abject worship of trade union militancy—whatever he might say to the contrary.

For him there is no connection between today's struggles and socialism save the abstract intellectual inspiration of a vision of what life might be like in the indefinite future.

No attempt

Foot, Cliff and the SWP make no attempt to direct the struggle consciously in the direction of socialism through demands which pose the question of power.

This is because a revolutionary programme and transitional demands that prepare and mobilise workers for socialist revolution would conflict with the present consciousness of the working class.

The opportunist retreat of the IS/SWP's forerunners of the late 1940s has now led them to a distortion of Lenin's theory of the party after a period of rejecting Lenin altogether for many years.

'Misunderstanding'

Because the SWP sees no need for a political struggle to develop and train workers in conflict with mere trade union militancy it rejects also the Leninist concept of party membership.

In reviewing Cliff's book on Lenin Duncan Hallas says:

"In passing there are two misunderstandings about the 'What Is To Be Done?' type of organisation which require brief comment; one is comic the other is tragic.

The comic misunderstanding used to crop up every now and then in disputes about recruitment.

It is that the reason Lenin favoured restricted membership was to ensure a 'high political level' amongst the membership so that everything could be most democratically decided and the leadership subjected to more effective control by the membership.

A more absurd proposition would be difficult to imagine." (International Socialism, 79, p.18).

Well Hallas has made the position clear for us. He thinks Lenin's views on the party membership and of course those of Trotsky are "absurd".

Participation

The issues that led to conflict between Lenin and Martov on party membership at the 1903 conference and brought the historic split between counter-revolutionary Menshevism and Bolshevism are worth repeating.

Lenin argued that party membership had to be limited, to include only those individuals:

"who recognise the party's programme and support it by material means and by personal participation in one of the party's organisations".

Martov said, however, that members should accept the party programme but need only support it:

"by regular personal association under the direction of one of the party organisations".

The argument was not over who wanted a 'big party' and who wanted a 'small' one: it was over the necessary membership qualities and disciplined structure for the carrying out of the required political tasks.

Martov . . . wanted a 'broad' party which would simply reflect the existing views of the entire class.

"Our party is the conscious spokesman of an unconscious process".

Lenin disagreed with this: "The need to safeguard the firmness of the Party's line and the unity of its principles has

now become particularly urgent.

For, with the restoration of its unity, the party will recruit into its ranks a great many unstable elements whose number will increase with the growth of the party."

(Second Speech in the Discussion on the Party).

Hallas and Cliff claim that the real reason for Lenin's policy was that the party had to operate under conditions of severe repression. Any serious reading on the subject shows this to be rubbish.

Lenin saw the rules he fought for to be an aid in fighting political opportunism wherever it arose—yes as an aid in defending 'doctrine and theory'.

Cliff is fond of arguing that in 1905 Lenin called for the party to "open its gates wide to workers". He also quotes Lenin to the effect that:

"The working class is instinctively, spontaneously Social Democratic".

Minimal basis

However Cliff—like other opportunists before him—conveniently misses the rest of Lenin's comment which reads:

"and more than 10 years of work put in by Social Democracy has done a great deal to transform this spontaneity into consciousness."

Today the SWP sets out to recruit workers on a minimal trade union basis.

It sees its role as "linking up" trade union militants, providing them with leaflets and simplistic arguments to use against the right wing and the employers.

Its membership requirements are non-existent and its 'theory' is kept out of Socialist Worker and confined to the pages of its theoretical journal, Socialist Review.

SWP members often attack Socialist Press for its 'unreadable' articles.

Like Lenin we see the necessity for developing politically educated worker members.

Our comrades have to sell Socialist Press and cannot get away with ignoring theory and firm political principles.

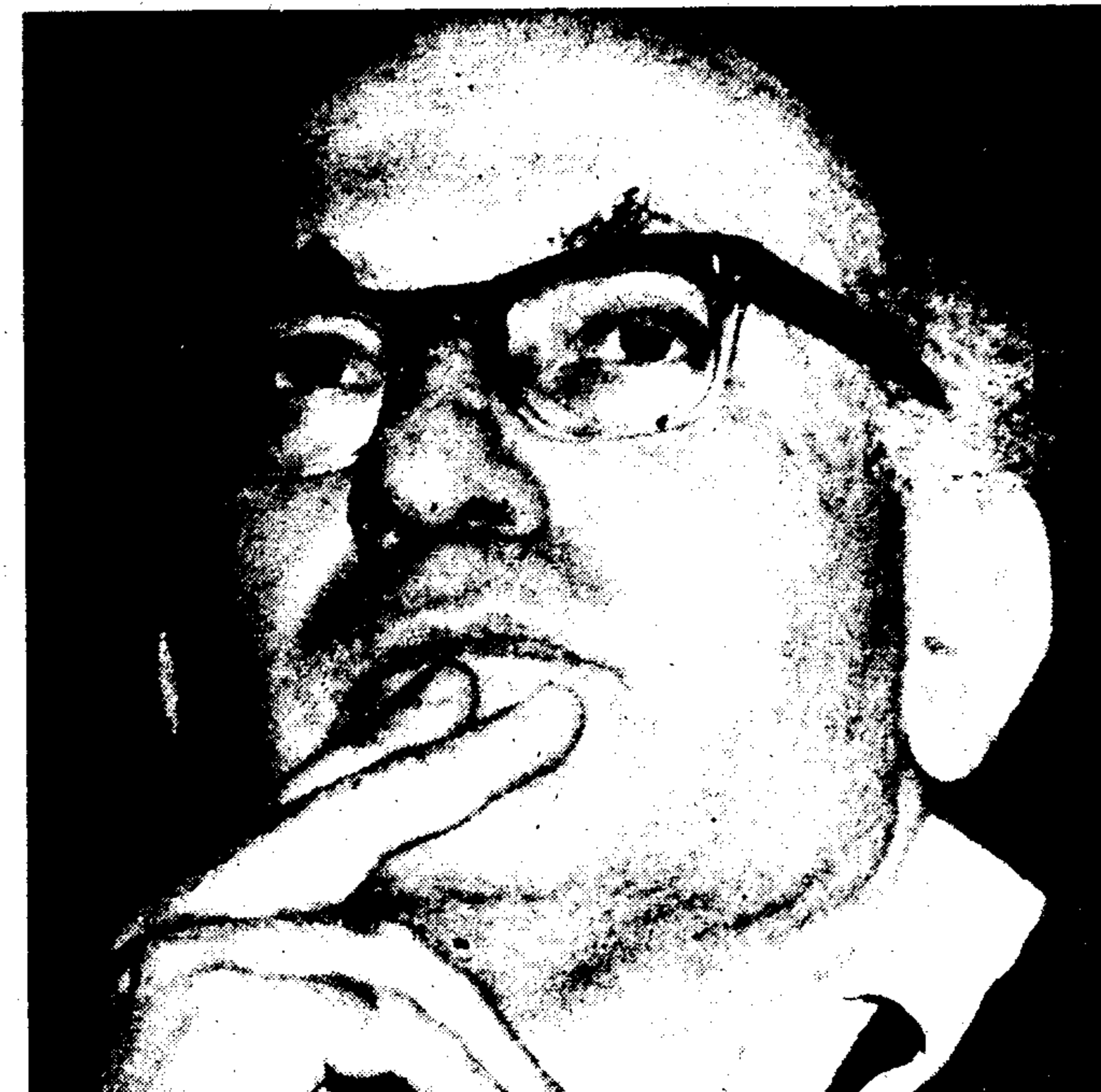
We fight to develop our members as Marxists not just good trade unionists.

And, of course, although we have our fair share of trade unionist tendencies in our membership our experience is that workers given a consistent lead take theoretical questions seriously and work hard to develop as Marxists.

Worker Marxist

It is no accident that the WSL and the SLL/WRP before us are the only tendencies to successfully resist the pressure of the traditions of the British working class and develop a cadre of worker Marxists.

This is because we start from the necessity of fighting on programme and a principled political basis against the



Cliff

reformists in the workers' movement.

This means combatting the spontaneous trade union consciousness in the working class at large reflected in mere militancy, and in struggling to expose the treachery of the reformist and Stalinist bureaucracy in the labour movement which fights tooth and nail to restrict workers in struggle to the limits of capitalism.

Expulsions

That fight which Tony Cliff calls substitutionalism, enables the WSL to have political discussion on programme and perspective which involves the whole membership.

We have never expelled any opposition movement and we never would for their ideas alone.

The IMG place great stress on the lack of a democratic element in the SWP's democratic centralism.

But it is the politics of the SWP—confining "theoretical" and programmatic decisions to a leadership elite, excluding members from serious discussion—which has resulted in its lack of democracy.

The lack of a political membership means that disputes and opposition to the line decreed by Cliff, Foot and co. must be settled organisationally—by wave after wave of expulsions.

But equally important to assess are the actual breadth of differences between the leadership and the forces which came out of IS from the left.

Those forces, in however inarticulate a way were fighting for the traditions of Trotskyism

against centrism. The battles fought there were battles where class lines were drawn.

If the IMG was arguing for a principled Trotskyist position there is no way they could co-exist with the SWP leadership.

In the next article we will see how the WSL conceives of the struggle for leadership and socialist consciousness.

We will contrast this with the practice of the SWP, showing how their opposition to a scientific programme and a struggle against the present leadership of the working class inevitably leads them to a capitulation to the reformist bureaucracy.

We will also show why the IMG prefers the practice of the SWP to that of the WSL.

Implications

IMG members should consider very seriously the implications of approaching the SWP for a joint organisation when the whole theory and practice of the SWP is consciously anti-Leninist.

The revolutionary party must be above all conscious.

Those who claim to be Trotskyist must show what they have in common with the SWP centrists.

A future article will continue the critique of the SWP theory of the party by examining their concept of "internationalism" and their total rejection of the struggle for the Fourth International.

Continued next week



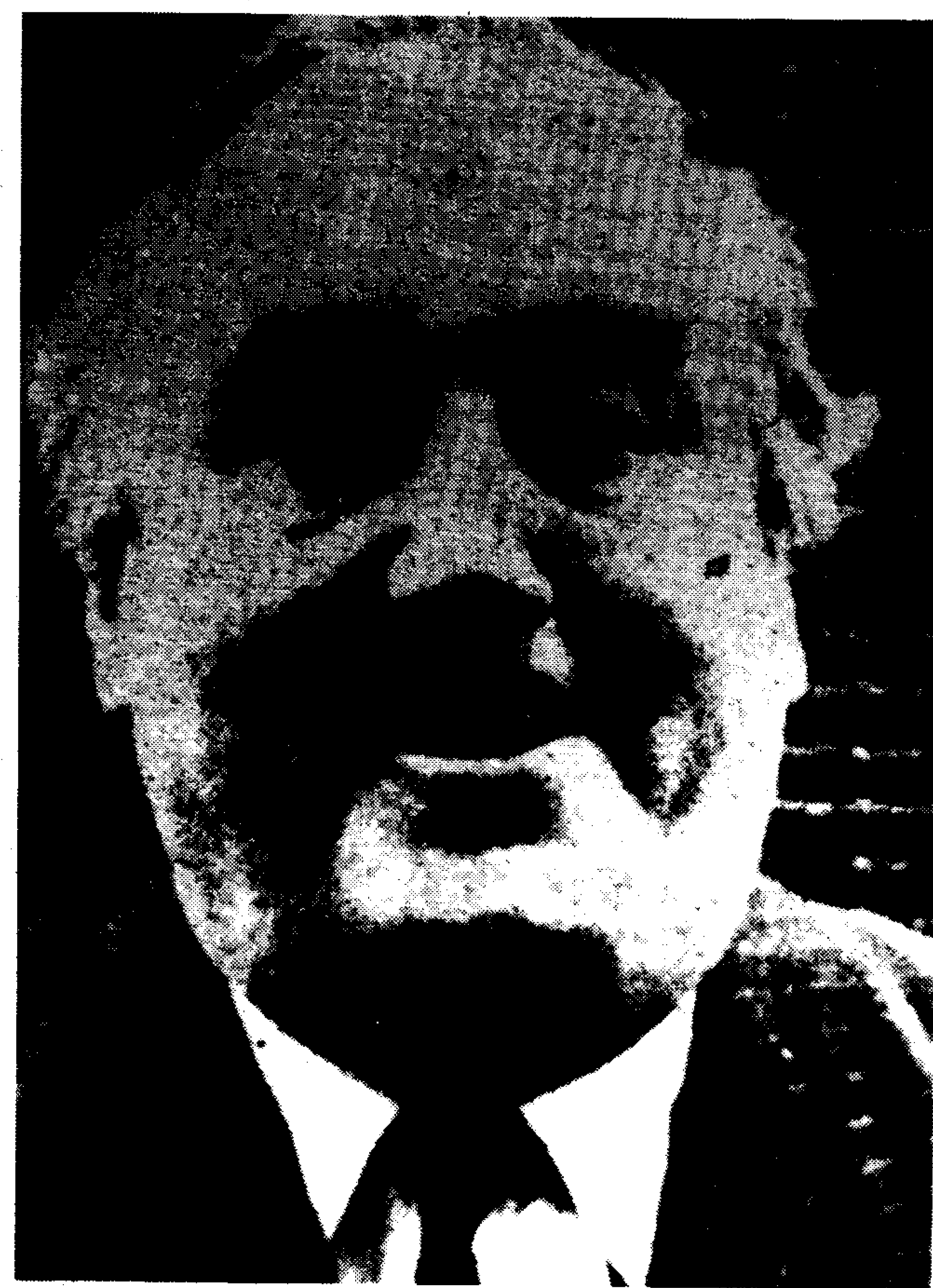
Lenin

'Just keep off the streets'...

By Johnny Byrne



Anderton



Tory 'law and order' boss Whitelaw

Every year thousands of working class men, women and youth take a decision to join an organisation dedicated to the smashing of workers' organisations.

They are trained to harass youth, blacks, strikers, demonstrators and anyone who is considered a potential threat to the smooth administration of capitalism.

They are those most backward and brainwashed layers of the working class who form the bulk of the police force.

They are the most valuable layers to capitalism because they are needed to physically beat, arrest and punish those class-conscious militants who are prepared to challenge the rule of the state.

But as capitalism lurches from international crisis to international crisis the state needs its increasingly well-paid muscle to be directed by a fully conscious leadership.

Thus the last decade has seen the emergence of a band of police commissioners and chief constables who

are among the most politically shrewd and powerful of all the elite groups in society.

Through their astute manipulation of their own forces, their contact with the rest of the legal apparatus, their links with politicians and their access to the media, these men are able to exert a strong and consistent right wing pressure on society.

Fascist

In many cases the nature of this influence is actually fascist in both application and conception.

The spectacle of Greater Manchester's Chief Constable, Anderton, mobilising thousands of police to escort NF thug Martin Webster on a lone march in 1977 sums up quite succinctly the role the police play in nurturing capitalism's final solution.

Last week's press conference held by Metropolitan police chief Sir David McNee to launch his annual report showed clearly that police leaders feel increasingly able to be brazen about their political views:

"If you keep off the

streets of London and behave yourselves, you won't have to worry about the SPG".

Not that the SPG has any qualms about whether people are behaving themselves or whether they are on the streets or at home!

On the same day James Anderton (McNee's equivalent in Manchester) burst into print with a carefully timed call for "work camps" for "marauding gangs of youth and men".

Anderton, who since his days with Thames Valley Police has always had a reputation for anti-trade union and anti-youth views, went on:

"Wretched offenders like these, who take the fullest advantage of every meek response to their abominable conduct, should be placed in penal work camps where through hard labour and unrelenting discipline they should be made to sweat as they have never sweated before and remain until their violence has been vanquished by penitent humiliation and unqualified

repentance".

Anderton clearly owes his rhetoric to both the Old Testament and Mein Kampf!

Further evidence of the conscious manoeuvrings of such men emerged in a little reported conference last May which drew together all Chief Police Officers, the Association of Municipal Authorities and the Association of County Councils.

A key speaker was Albert Longharne, Chief Constable of Lancashire.

He voiced the opinions of the police chiefs when he called for "a fully national police force" to give "cohesive command" in times of widespread unrest:

"I accept the term 'police state' is an expression of potential abuse in English. In Europe, however, the term is usually a technical one".

Most of the conference was spent in detailed discussion of the effects on public order of increased unemployment and industrial unrest.

Each chief constable singled out so called

"political violence" as the new threat to "ordinary decent citizens".

The pin-up boy for these ambitious and ruthless men is of course Sir Robert Mark, the Metropolitan Police Chief from 1972 to 1977.

Mark worked his way up from mortuary guard in Manchester to Chief Constable of Leicester in 1957.

After ten years he went to London as Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and spent the next ten years building a previously unparalleled record of union-bashing, immigrant-harassing and political intervention.

Smokescreen

All this was cloaked in a smokescreen of police reform, busting his most blatantly corrupt officers and generally philosophising on all aspects of life as if Plato and Superman had merged in one smart blue uniform.

Having, resigned over a lukewarm attempt by the government to introduce

token civilian representation on police complaints boards Mark has since used his position to do everything from advertise tyres on television and set up dubious charities to pontificate on law and order in the capitalist media.

His autobiography *In the Office of Constable*, published last winter is a very revealing document, if you can put up with the nauseating self-inflation and bitterly anti-working class politics.

He describes the young copper's life, concentrating on 'getting plenty of arrests' ("usually from the ranks of the unemployed") breaking a man's legs to get him in the police van.

He tells of beating a suspect unconscious so that they had to swathe the man in bandages when he went to court the next day so that the judge wouldn't see he was still unconscious.

But these are just the trimmings, anecdotes that anyone who has been on a picket line or a march on an anti-fascist demonstration would be able to top.

Nicaragua: the limits of Sandinist

A review of 'Nicaragua—Free Country or Death'.



Sandinista guerrillas on the rooftops of Matagalpa

This film, made in close collaboration with the Nicaraguan Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) and released this year, gives an account of the history, training and present activity of the Sandinistas.

A brief historical section shows that the FSLN trace

their history to the armed struggle led by the peasant Augusto Sandino between 1927 and 1933 against the direct interventionist forces of the US Marine Corps.

When the Marines left in 1933 they had assured the victory of Somoza Senior (father of the present dictator) over the peasant-based struggle.

Until the time of writing Nicaragua has suffered the

consequence of that defeat, which was followed by Sandino's death at the hands of the regime.

The sections of the film dealing with the training of the guerrillas shows why the Somoza regime, despite having a highly-trained US-equipped army, including an elite guard of 4,000, has been unable to defeat the latest offensive.

Armed with an assort-

ment of western arms, the guerrillas are shown undergoing rigorous and realistic training.

The fact that the film does not try to disguise the 'rawness' of the recruits reinforces the seriousness and dedication of the guerrilla training programme.

However, the part of the film dealing with ideological and theoretical work of the Sandinistas is not reassuring.

Moral terms

The struggle against Somoza is presented largely in moral terms.

Somoza is compared to Hitler several times. The impression is given of a crusade against an evil alien force.

This perspective is reinforced by the lack of any political programme. The only concrete policy mentioned is land reform.

The clear impression conveyed by the film is that the Sandinistas have not developed any political programme and practice beyond that of their inspiration Sandino fifty years

ago.

This programme is limited to that of national revolution and independence carried through by peasant revolt. The film itself provides evidence of the practical consequences of this political bankruptcy.

In footage shot in the cities during and after the offensive of September last year the absence of any teenage youth is striking. The commentary explains that they have all been killed.

The September offensive brought a huge response from urban youth. But when this military push from the countryside was repulsed, the Sandinistas were forced to withdraw—leaving the youth, unorganised and unprotected, to the mercy of the National Guard, who wiped them out.

Armed struggle

Clearly, in any fight against a regime such as Somoza's, where his power rests exclusively on the army, the question of the armed struggle is central.

The Sandinistas are driven to learn the lessons of the anti-imperialist struggle empirically.

Their political programme is that of the peasantry. Their personnel as shown in the film are either peasants from the country or petit-bourgeois from the towns.

Generalise

They have had to develop the struggle—to generalise the struggle into a civil war—the hard way.

It is usual when reviewing a film like this to end with a call for the building of a Trotskyist party, part of a world revolutionary party.

Only such an organisation is capable of carrying the struggle so heroically started by the Sandinistas, through to a victorious conclusion.

Watching these brave men and women standing around discussing the "revolutionary content" of the New Testament with two Catholic priests brings



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

The meat of the book comes out in the open political statements (of which there are many, even though Mark spends a lot of his time asserting that the police are 'non-political').

He clearly regards the Labour Party as being dangerously radical, though he spells out in detail the kind of collaboration that went on with Wilson, Jenkins and Rees.

Those fighting for Irish liberation are according to Mark "intellectually subnormal . . . common criminals

. . . seedy, cowardly degenerates".

He describes how the police can be used more efficiently and consistently to break up strikes.

At the same time Mark rejects a Tribunite's vain call for the police to assist pickets in exercising their legal right to stop vehicles in order to talk to drivers as:

"an inexcusable requirement for the police to abandon the impartiality in industrial disputes to which they have always been dedicated".(!)

It was Robert Mark who revamped and redirected the SPG, which had been set up in 1965 by Chief Superintendent John Gerrard.

Mark visited Northern Ireland and was thrilled by the activities of various "special tactical squads".

Killing

From February 1973 when Mark approved the SPG killing of two unarmed Pakistanis occupying the Indian High Commission, the Special Patrol Group has become an increasingly important strike force for the state.

Its most public activities have included Grunwicks, anti-fascist demonstrations, the smashing of the Huntley Street squat, the Notting Hill Carnivals and (most recently) the murder of Blair Peach and the maiming and beating of countless people in Southall.

In the last seven years the SPG has made nearly 400,000 "stops and searches"

Out of this number only 6% have been arrested. And only a tiny proportion of that 6% have ever been convicted.

Sinister

Nor is this only a London phenomenon. Other forces are rapidly developing their own squads, the most sinister of which is Anderton's paramilitary TAG (Tactical Aid Group).

It is not difficult to predict the continued escalation of political intervention by police chiefs.

The election campaign was carried on against a backdrop of fascist provocation and the militant response by youth, Asians and blacks.

In this atmosphere the 'law and order' rhetoric of James Jardine (Chairman of the Police Federation) was included almost verbatim in the Tory manifesto.

Robert Mark thundered out his anti-socialist propaganda almost daily, demanding more legislation to curb the unions and comparing the relationship between the unions and the government as "not unlike the way the Nazi Party seized power".

Meanwhile Allan Goodson, Chief Constable of Leicester, was defending his brutal deployment of 5,000 police to protect a Nazi march with the argument that "we fought two world wars to preserve the right of free speech".

Faced with this rising tide of reaction and shrewd construction of power bases, the labour movement's leadership has again

revealed its critical weakness.

Reformists of all shades in the Labour Party and the unions have proposed whole packages of measures designed to 'democratise' the police and change such minor aspects as complaints procedures.

A new law, here and there, is presented as the cure-all. Labour 'lefts' now popularly call for the disbanding of the SPG and for 'public' enquiries.

Dangers

But revolutionaries must spell out to the working class that no reforms will change the police or reduce the dangers posed by the McNees, the Marks and the Andertons.

Independent workers' inquiries must be built to investigate the activities of the police at all levels.

PHOTO: Mark Rusher, IFL

As well as fighting for the disbanding of all groups like the SPG, the revolutionary programme must include the disbanding of the entire police force.

The police have always been and, in bourgeois society, will always continue to be the physical agents of workers' oppression.

Workers defence

Only by building workers defence guards can the threat from fascists and the capitalist state be smashed.

As Trotsky wrote in *The Transitional Programme*—"The bourgeoisie is nowhere satisfied with the official police and army".

The bourgeoisie needs a fascist card to play in the last resort, and in Britain today that card is hidden up the sleeve of the top echelons of the police.

guerrillaism



Somoza's National Guard on the streets of Managua

home that need in an extremely forceful image. Revolutionary will is at present tragically combined with political bankruptcy.

This film confirms the belief that Somoza can be overthrown. But it does nothing to reassure the

viewer that what replaces that barbaric regime will be in the interests of the peasantry and urban poor whose sacrifices and struggles have been responsible for that revolutionary act.



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report



Close cooperation between police and army in 'anti-terrorist' operations

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

This Weighell's on fire

Chrysler workers defy blackmail

SERTUC talk-shop gives no lead on nursery cuts

The most interesting feature of Saturday's South East Region TUC Conference on the Under Fives (attended by nearly 120 delegates) was the spectacle of Jack Dromey (SERTUC Secretary) and the Communist Party desperately manipulating the speakers' slips to prevent any speaker from the Oxford City Nursery Campaign challenging the talk-shop atmosphere that pervaded the whole conference.

After much loud talk from Stalinist Tess Gill (NCCL), Carol Bailey (from the working party on the TUC Under Fives Report) and Tribune MP Reg Race on the effect of the cuts, the platform took a clear decision to stifle attempts to inject programme and political analysis by the Oxford Campaign—the one organisation there which represented a real struggle against the cuts.

TGWU resolution

A resolution to the conference from the Cowley Assembly TGWU 5/293 branch was eventually heard, though Dromey made no reference to it in his summing up.

The motion called for the setting up of similar conferences in each area covered by SERTUC, for full discussion of the TUC Report throughout the labour movement and for support for any action such as occupations and strikes in defence of threatened nursery facilities.

In presenting the motion Fred Carmichael spelt out his branch's policy on nurseries, shooting out of the trees the platform's line that there is no working class support for nursery education and that what was needed was a campaign to "educate" the "male chauvinist" and "backward" British worker.



Demonstration outside the occupied Oxford nursery class

Earlier the delegate from West Ham Trades Council, Pru Chamberlayne, had brought out the need to unionise women workers and nursery nurses in particular—attacking Dromey and the SERTUC bureaucracy for their role in the Grunwick and Garners unionisation struggles.

Nearly every other contribution, however, skirted around the key questions of tactics and class perspective.

Embarrassment

Dromey and Gill had the occasional embarrassment of the odd speaker demanding some more concrete action proposals, but by and large they managed to keep politics out with practised skill.

It was only at the end that they were forced to take a speaker from the Oxford Nursery Campaign after delegates' patience with the blatant manoeuvring had finally been exhausted.

Ted Eames, delegated from the Oxford NUT branch, set the question of cuts in the context

of the crisis of capitalism and argued for a linked strategy of occupation supported by strike action in defending existing provision.

Occupation by itself is no guarantee of victory, only the withdrawal of labour by the unions concerned can force local and central government to back down.

Eames also made the point that campaigns must fight for elected committees of trade unionists and parents to investigate all aspects of spending on education, to expose the way that banks and private supply companies leech off the public sector.

The blindingly obvious problem is that of leadership.

"Wrong policies"

Reg Race belatedly attacked the Labour government's record on the cuts and on nurseries, but put it all down to "wrong policies".

At the same time the SERTUC bureaucracy is clearly unwilling to do more than pass

out token propaganda on the whole question of nursery education.

Dromey in his summing up made the astounding declaration that, "no group of workers comes to SERTUC, asks for support and doesn't get it" (the effect of the double negative in this sentence is certainly food for thought).

He implied that SERTUC would back actions against the cuts in every way possible. Dromey must be taken up on this at the first available opportunity.

But without a principled fight for a programme of action all his huffing about "winning the battle of ideology within and without the trade union movement" must stand exposed for the diversionary rhetoric it is.

After this conference it is vital that all areas organise their own local meetings and that they should focus sharply on the tactics necessary to fight the Tory offensive on cuts in jobs and facilities.

A nifty manoeuvre, coupled with routine 'left' rhetoric enabled railwaymen's leader Sid Weighell to duck out of fighting for a £65 minimum wage in next year's pay review.

At the NUR conference at Paignton last week, Weighell laid on a blustering speech, ostentatiously refusing to talk to the Thatcher government.

The Tories and the unions do not even speak the same language, declared proletarian Sid.

But he combined this phoney 'left' stance with a vigorous witch hunting attack on those sections of workers that took strike action last winter and defeated the labour government's pay policy.

And he renewed his denunciations of free collective bargaining, and advocacy of wage controls.

In similar fashion, Weighell's move to knife the £65 claim was glossed over by 'left' rhetoric.

He argued that with inflation already predicted to be over 20%, it would be wrong to "pin negotiations down" to demanding a rate of pay which might not be adequate by next April.

While the lowest grades require a 37% increase to reach the £65 basic, others would need only 9%, he argued.

And he reiterated his perennial empty threat to take action to cut the volume of overtime worked on the railways and fight instead for British Rail to end the scandalous practice of leaving an estimated 10,000 vacant jobs unfilled.

The NUR conference voted 47-30 to reject the £65 target with corresponding rises for higher grades—and left next year's claim to Weighell's tender mercies.

Railway workers beware!

JOIN OUR FIGHT AGAINST TORIES!

Returned to office after five years of Labour betrayals, the Tory government has immediately begun wielding a sharpened axe on jobs, conditions and social services. Trade Union rights face imminent legal attack. Prices are already beginning to rocket upwards.

Plum sectors of state industry will be handed to the Tories' profiteering big business backers; and the pay rises to police and armed forces mark only the prelude to increased state violence against pickets and anti-fascists, and an intensified army crack-down in the occupied North of Ireland.

The Callaghan-Healey leadership has made it clear that it will oppose any perspective other than settling down and meekly accepting five years of Tory devastation.

And, though they have once more dusted off their near-forgotten "socialist" speeches, Labour's "left-wing" MPs have continued to duck away from any fight to remove Callaghan.

TUC leaders, too, have set out to establish a basis for collaboration with Thatcher and the Tory cabinet, paralleling their anti-working class alliance with Wilson and then Callaghan. But the working class has experienced and overcome such betrayals before—to topple Heath's union-bashing government in 1974, and smash through Callaghan's reactionary Phase 4 of wage controls in a series of monumental pay battles last winter.

These experiences are not dead. They point to the way that jobs, social services and hard-won union rights can be defended against renewed Tory attacks.

But a principled, revolutionary leadership is needed if the Labour traitors, the TUC collaborators and their hangers-on in the Communist Party are to be exposed and pushed aside, and the mass struggles mobilised that can defeat and remove the Tory government.

Such a leadership must fight day in and day out for a programme of transitional demands which, starting from today's conditions and today's consciousness within the working class, lead workers to grasp the necessity for socialist revolution.

And in taking up democratic demands—such as an end to racial and sexual discrimination, it must show the crucial role that must be played by the working class as the only consistently revolutionary class capable of leading the struggle for the emancipation of mankind.

And it must fight on an international basis—mobilising solidarity for anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggles—whether in Ireland, in Southern Africa or elsewhere throughout the world, and drawing strength and political lessons from revolutionary upheavals such as that which ousted the hated Shah in Iran.

This means fighting for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International.

This method of approach, rejecting any descent to simple trade union militancy, or concessions to any wing of the labour bureaucracy, is the method fought for by the Workers Socialist League.

The next period will see major class struggles in Britain. A principled, Marxist leadership is essential. Our movement though strong in programme remains small in numbers.

JOIN US and take forward the struggle for socialism!

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Victory at Economist Bookshop

After being on strike since December 15 last year the TGWU/ACTSS members at the Economist Bookshop have won their demand for union recognition.

Last Friday, Directors of the London School of Economics, the bookshop's part-owners finally agreed to the strikers' terms, having backed down on a series of conditions that were preventing a final settlement.

The principle of collective bargaining rights for union members, which had been bitterly resisted by management for so long, had earlier been conceded.

Faced as they were with the accumulated effects of daily picketing and partial but significant blacking of supplies from book publishers, the owners decided to cut their losses, since the strikers' determination showed no outward sign of flagging.

LSE reps Yamey and Roberts (well-known 'industrial relations' academic), who signed the union agreement were forced to swallow what had become a seemingly endless stream of learned 'reasons' why they could never give in.

This diatribe had, to the strikers' credit, been patiently fought against point by point, basing themselves at all times on what was in essence denial of the right to organise.

In general, student support for boycotting the shop remained strong throughout and valuable help was given by fellow trade union members in Dillons and Blackwells book-sellers.

A boost has been given to all those, particularly in such low-paid industries who are fighting to extend unionisation and who increasingly come up against employers more determined than ever to resist.

TIMES CHANGE

The dramatic shift in the management's position at the *Times*, which has led to widespread expectation that the papers will be back on the streets by September, came after a collapse of solidarity by the petty shareholders in the company.

But it has exposed what has been the real position for months. That the *Times* print unions are not fighting for the defence of all jobs.

A week ago the NGA had virtually thrown in the towel by advising their members to get other jobs.

But the shareholders meeting was a significant blow to Lord Thomson, who expected applause for the stand he has backed.

While the institutional shareholders sat mute, the small shareholders, who represent that

slice of arrogant capital so virulent in their anti-working class demands, laid into Lord Thomson.

Why were they losing £1.7 million a month? Why had the *Times* gone it alone? Why were there no moves to resolve the dispute?

Solidarity with the big bourgeoisie had vanished. Behind it lay only a winged band of snipers revealing all the least pleasant side of their nature.

Lord Thomson, shaken by the meeting, immediately sought a 'new initiative'.

The offer from the management to discuss direct input while the papers are back on the street is a climbdown on its most fundamental point of strategy.

But no print union member should be blinded to what that conceals in the print leadership.

From the first days of the dispute the NGA has stuck only on direct input, not on the new technology.

The cut in jobs now proposed by management and almost certain to be agreed by NGA officials is not going to be as dramatic as once appeared.

It is nevertheless a savage cut in jobs which the chapels would have resisted strongly if they had been proposed from the beginning.

Little relief

For workers at the *Times* there is little relief to be found in the management climbdown.

When the talks are over the *Times* management will still be seeking the same objective. Meanwhile the NGA will have demoralised the workforce by accepting major losses of jobs.

They must be resisted on a programme which challenges the right of management to cut any jobs, and which builds towards a new leadership in the union, prepared to fight for the defence of the working class on a revolutionary platform.

Pergamon workers fight Labourite boss

Rober Maxwell is known as the boss of Pergamon, the publishing company with a multi-million pound turnover that has been the subject of Department of Trade investigations.

The company is notorious in the Oxford area for its low rates of pay and arbitrary sacking of employees.

Robert Maxwell however is also a member of the General Management Committee of Oxford City Labour Party!

The 42-strong chapel of the National Union of Journalists at Pergamon (one of three unions at the Oxford offices) have been on strike since Monday to back

the demand for the reinstatement of a member sacked just before the end of her six-month probationary period.

Recent recruitment to the NUJ in the marketing department was followed by the company issuing notices of dismissal to two active new members of the union.

Reassessment

After chapel demands that procedure be followed, Maxwell verbally withdrew these notices a fortnight ago, pending a "period of reassessment".

Although the Chapel had voted at once to give notice of

strike action, NUJ full-time National Organiser, Gary Morton offered to the chapel no alternative perspective to that of the company and even suggested that any strike action should be delayed until two victimised workers were out of the door.

Last Friday Maxwell personally confirmed one of the sackings.

This is an important dispute for publishing and print workers and for the whole future of the NUJ, NGA and APEX at Pergamon.

The strike also raises the need to campaign for Maxwell's expulsion from the Labour Party and ASTMS.

STL strike: new threat

The strike by 20 workers at Selected Toys Ltd at Didcot took on a new dimension last week.

After Friday afternoon's meeting with STL boss Young and ACAS, TGWU District official Phil Eynan decided not to hold a report-back meeting until Monday evening. He said that he expected a call from Young on Monday.

But on Monday evening Eynan told the strikers more or less the same as a week previously. He urged the strikers to return to work.

One striker who challenged this said they had come out on principles but if Eynan had his way they would be returning for nothing.

Eynan declared it was "sometimes best to sacrifice principles", and that if any were sacked Young could be taken to court for unfair dismissal!

It was best to "play Young at his own game", he said.

Young's "game" is 18 years of vicious exploitation of youth, women and men workers.

Pushed for decision

The Branch Secretary then suggested the strikers make their decision on the picket line when all would be there.

But Eynan rejected this and pushed for a decision there and then.

After 1½ hours Eynan got his victory and reluctant hands went up for a return to work.

On the picket line, on Tuesday morning, however, strikers queried what they should do if none of the strikers were sacked while the victimised five workers in whose support they had walked out remained sacked.

Could the five continue picketing and asking other unions not to cross the picket line while their own members were crossing it?

The problem was answered at 9.30, when the strikers attempted to return to work.

Young would only let two in

and informed them that at 12 noon on Monday the firm had gone into voluntary liquidation.

He advised them to look for other jobs.

The national press had appeared on the picket line that day and reports were given in the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Telegraph*.

Slave wages

The *Daily Mail* article was headlined 'Slave wages'. Young stated in his interview while sipping a glass of wine:

"I am past retiring age and I have enough to live comfortably".

One of the workers dismissed was also past retiring age. She received two weeks' holiday pay of £15, and one week's wages of £10—obviously not enough for her to retire comfortably.

Voluntary liquidation does not necessarily mean that the company is bankrupt.

In Wednesday's *Oxford Mail* Young stated:

"I am not insolvent as the rumour says. I have gone into voluntary liquidation. I can pay out £1 in the £ in full and I shall do so."

In fact voluntary liquidation is a ploy that Ward of Grunwick tried to use in the early days of that strike.

Young has merely handed his books to a firm of accountants (which can be his own) to look at his assets.

This could take several weeks by which time Young hopes the picket line will have gone.

Production

Meanwhile orders and production are continuing although only 10 workers are still in the factory—some of whom are office staff and management.

Eynan finally appeared on the picket line on Friday—no doubt because the question of occupation had come to his ears and on Thursday the TGWU Regional Office in Southampton had been rung by one of the strikers demanding representation.

Eynan, like Young, is also encouraging the strikers to find other jobs.

He has promised the picket line will be kept up by supporters from Reading until the factory closes.

Strikers could soon be forced into looking for employment as since the dispute started they have not even received the TGWU's meagre £6 strike pay.

Occupying the plant and opening Young's books to the strikers is now necessary.

Meanwhile support of the picket line and their strike fund is essential.

Donations to the STL Strike Fund should be addressed to Brian Grimes, 97, Wessex Road, Didcot.

LEYLAND . . . CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

ment's unilateral "productivity criteria" should be achieved, and the second that the factory concerned should accept the new grades in totality.

Management announced that once the productivity requirement was achieved, (which it now has been in 6 or 7 plants) then they would begin banking the new rates on behalf of each individual worker.

The money would only be paid out once the grading was accepted.

This has meant that as time goes on an increasingly large sum of money is available once the grades are accepted.

In the Cowley Assembly Plant last week management utilised the summer holiday period to try to stampede workers into accepting the grades.

Workers in varying grades in the plant now have a lump sum of up to £250 to come in back pay.

Local press and radio began announcing that this cash could be in the holiday pay packets if the stewards would get the new grades sorted out.

This produced an immediate reaction. A wave of strikes swept the factory.

But the strikes were not, as

management had hoped, simply demanding the money; the strikers proved to be hostile to the new grading system itself.

At a TGWU mass meeting of the day shift last Friday, attended by about 3,000 workers, plant convenor Bob Fryer received massive support for the hard line he presented of total opposition to the proposed structure.

Management are in a crisis. But they will not give up easily.

They have put years of working into trying to create a rigid centralised bargaining structure in order to get complete control of wage rates.

And they have an ally in the leadership of the craft unions, who have been pressing since the toolmakers' strike for higher differentials between craftsmen and the production workers.

But the production workers are in no mood to accept down grading.

Pressed forward by the impact on wages of the budget, petrol prices and inflation the mood is for action.

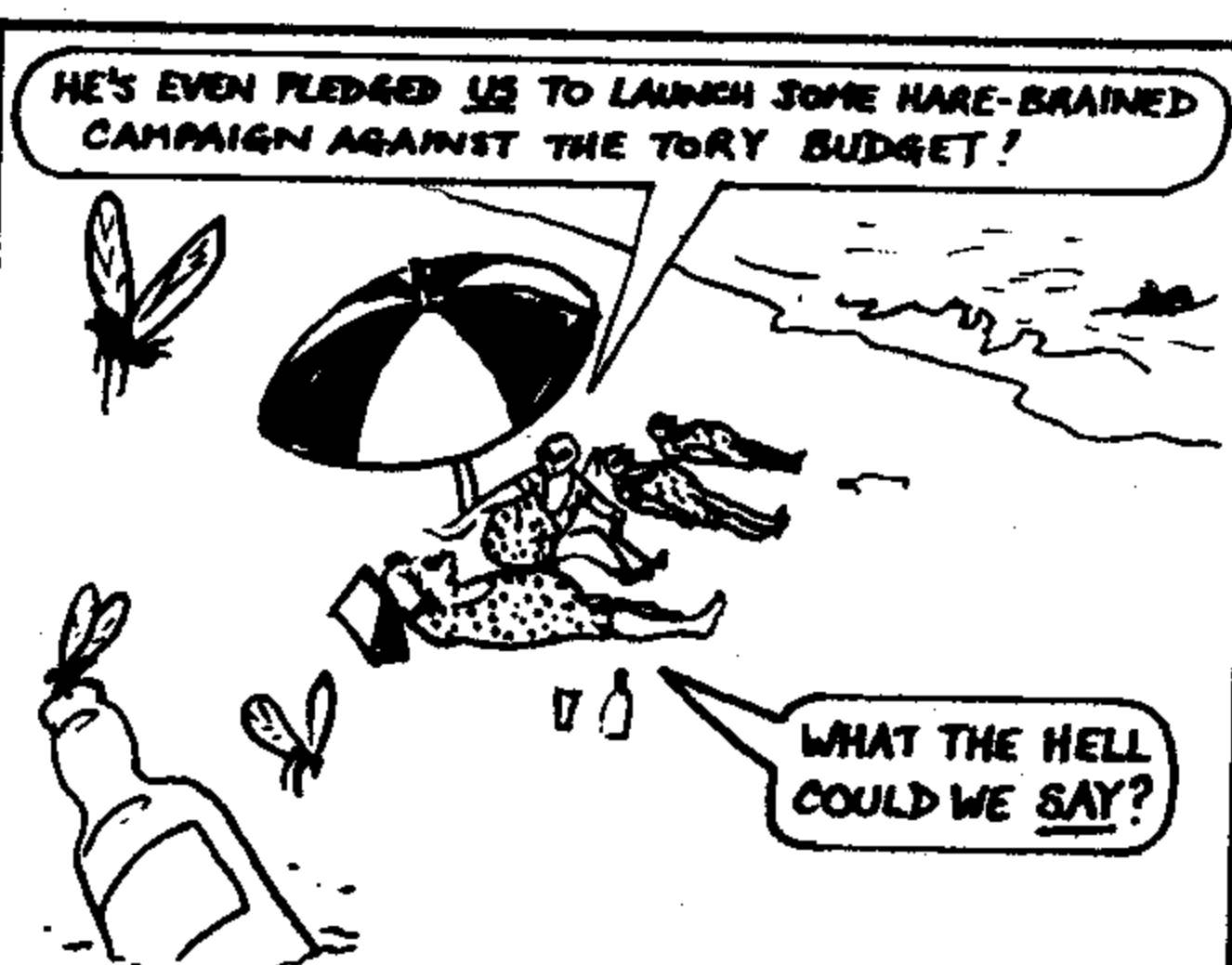
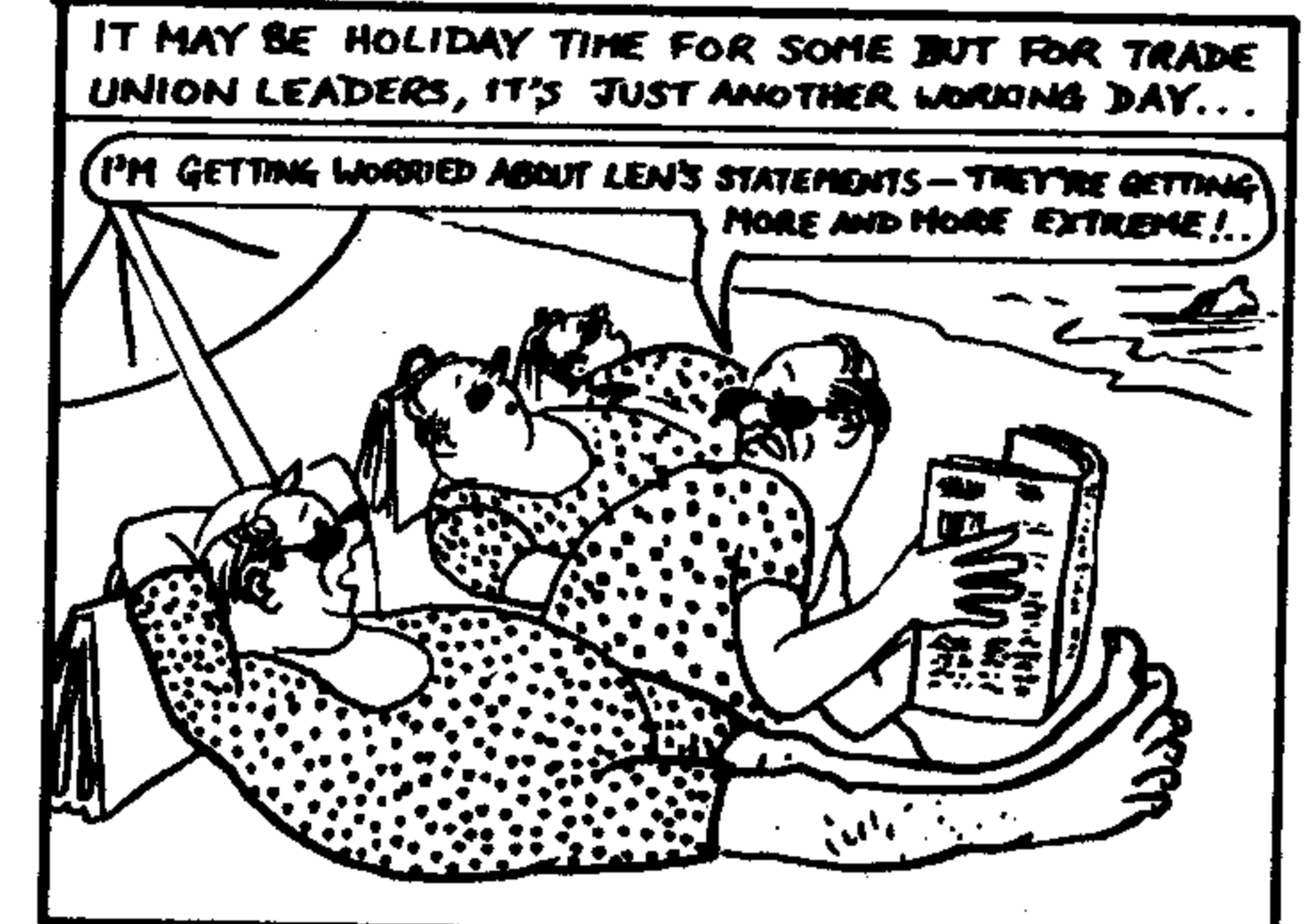
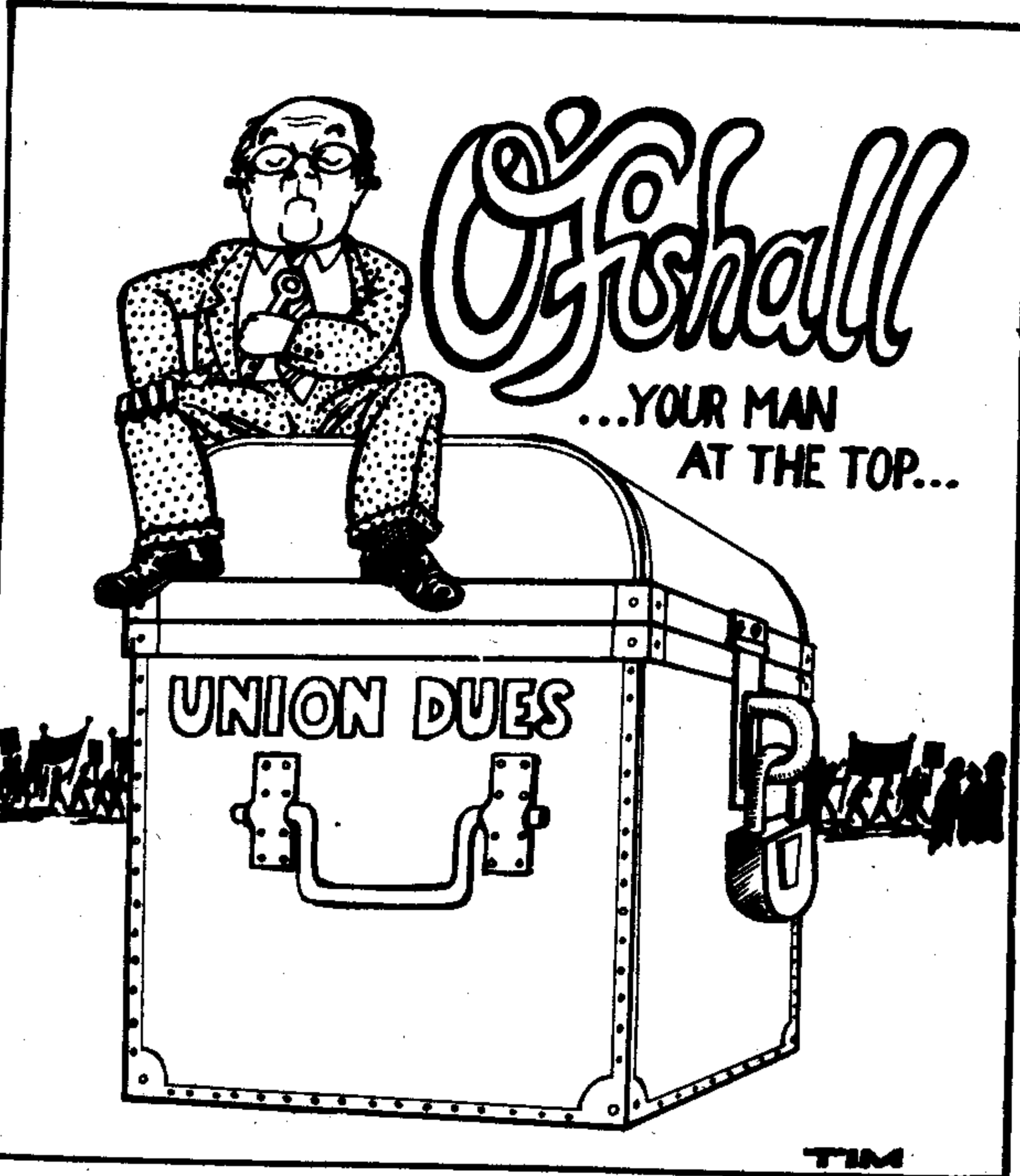
This week the Leyland Cars Joint Negotiating Committee is to take a "final decision" on the grading of production workers in the Swindon Body Plant.



Leyland boss Edwardes

There is little doubt that the outcome will be to put them into grade 3.

If this is the case the period following the summer holiday break is likely to open a period of sharp struggle in BL.



SOCIALIST PRESS

Tokyo-summit for nothing

WSL Summer School

The WSL is holding its annual international summer school from July 21 to July 29 inclusive. The school is open to members and supporters of the WSL.

This year we are extending a special invitation to ex-members of the WRP—both those who have been the victims of recent expulsions and those who have found themselves outside the WRP in various ways over the past few years due to the political degeneration of the movement and the increasing bureaucratisation of the internal regime.

Today, in the most fertile conditions for revolutionary work, the WRP has reached its deepest stage of political degeneration. Its heritage has been liquidated by its leadership.



The WSL now represents the most developed expression of the continuity of the strengths of the IC tradition and the fight for the Trotskyist programme—its principles and method—developed over the last 4½ years.

One of the tasks of the summer school will be to deepen our understanding of this development as a basis for the struggle to reconstruct the Trotskyist Fourth International.

The main presentations will include: Political Economy; Dialectical Materialism; the International Committee; the USFI; the OCI; and the development of the WSL as an International Tendency.

Write for the agenda of the school plus the practical details. Accommodation will be provided with meals at low cost.

Details from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill London NW5 1HR

FUND

OUR WORST WEEK YET! Only £12 has come in for our Special Fund in the last seven days. We are still, therefore, struggling to reach the half-way stage in the £2,500 fund with only four weeks to go.

The Oxford Summer Fair this coming weekend and the London Fair the following weekend should give our fund a big boost, but we still depend on our readers and supporters to help us reach the target on time.

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

Oxford tote winners: 24.5.79, 11-22 036, 195; 1.6.79, 6-24. 314

WORKERS MUST ACT TO BACK ZIMBABWE STRUGGLE



In response to the stepping up of British Tory government aid to the white racists in Southern Africa, Anti-Apartheid called a demonstration on June 30.

The march was in defence of

the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe and against the recognition of the Smith-Muzorewa regime installed under the "internal settlement".

Anti-Apartheid, and its backers in the Communist and Labour Parties, had failed to

mobilise seriously for the demonstration and a high proportion of the 2,000 marchers had been mobilised by left-wing organisations.

The main sponsors of the march also showed that they had no political answer to the urgent need for British labour movement support for the national liberation struggle in Zimbabwe.

No practical suggestion for labour movement action was made from the platform.

'Left' Labour MP, Joan Lester, called for emphasis on "keeping the issue clear" and "explaining what is taking place".

She bashed the Tories while hypocritically covering up the way in which the Labour government, in which she was a Foreign Office minister, paved the way for today's Tory policies.

Labour may have opposed the "internal settlement"—but only because they wanted an equally undemocratic "external solution" to set up a black neo-colonial regime.

The two speakers from the Patriotic Front showed that essentially the PF leadership, too, looks for a negotiated external settlement with the imperialist countries.

The ZAPU speaker called frequently for the "joining of hands" to get rid of Smith and Muzorewa—but did not utter a word about "revolution" or "socialism".

He looked for help to the "progressive forces" of the United Nations, the Commonwealth and the Organisation of African Unity.

The ZANU speaker used the words "revolution" and "social-

ism" in almost every sentence but presented no concrete demand or suggestion to the labour movement in the imperialist countries.

The closest thing to a concrete demand came from Abdul Minty, of the Anti-Apartheid executive, and it expressed an attitude which is the opposite of proletarian internationalism.

"We need it!"

He protested against the Tory government's measures which will help to supply oil to South Africa when "the price is going up and we need all the oil we can get."

The chauvinism of this remark is typical also of the "disinvestment" campaign so beloved of the Labour 'lefts' and the CP.

The liberation struggle in Zimbabwe will not be materially assisted by moral sympathy for the petty bourgeois nationalist leaders or by chauvinist calls on the Tory government and appeals to the United Nations.

This is the politics of Anti-Apartheid and its Zimbabwe Emergency Campaign Committee, which is backed by the Labour Party, the Communist Party, the SWP and the IMG.

Real solidarity requires a concrete programme of independent labour movement blacking of supplies to the racist regimes in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa.

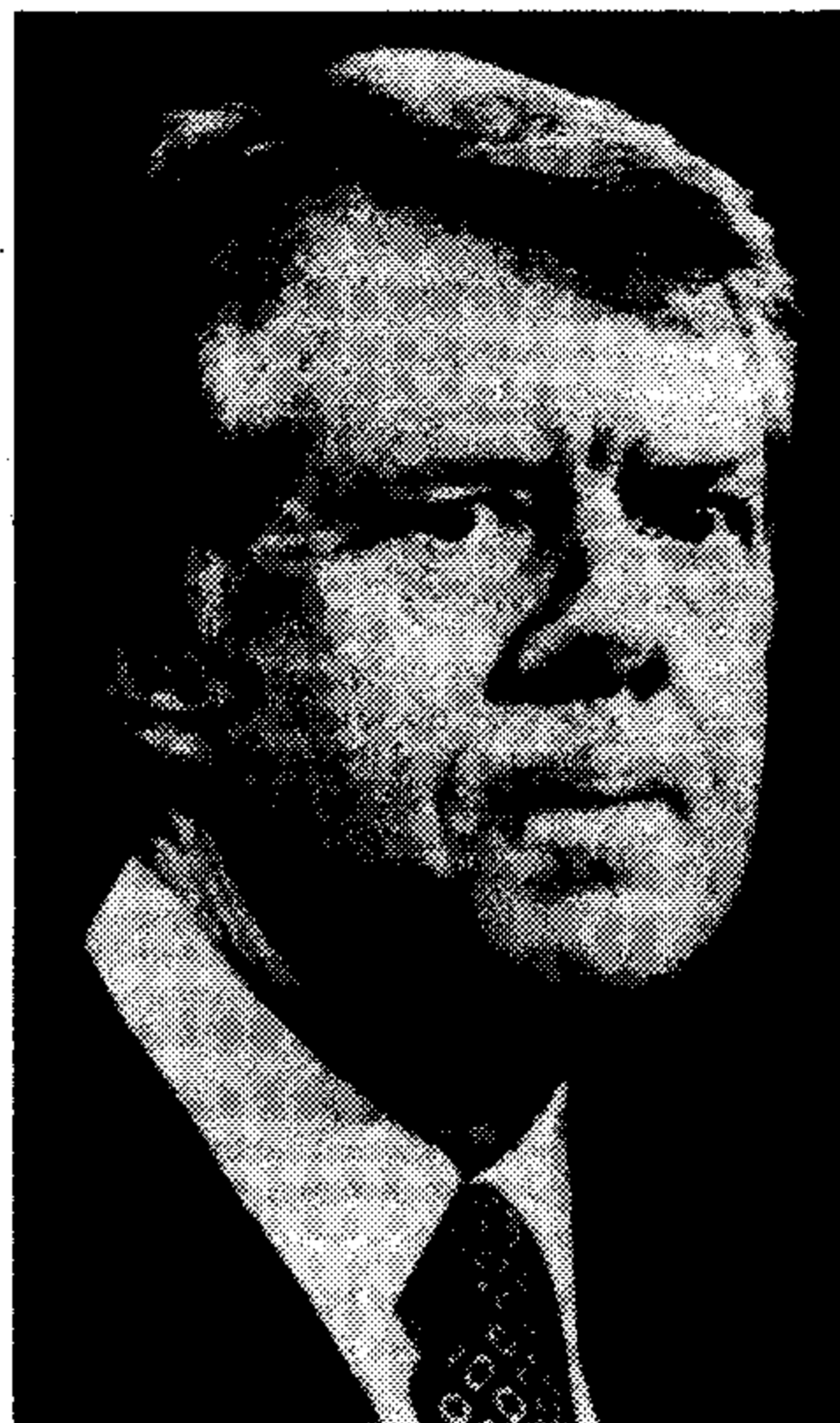
It requires also the building of a revolutionary socialist party in these countries to lead the fight for social revolution against both internal and external "settlements".

Protected by a massive force of 34,000 armed police and rooftop snipers the political leaders of the world's seven major imperialist powers last week exchanged notes on the mounting international recession.

What they could not offer each other was any serious hope of a way out of the insoluble contradictions of the capitalist crisis.

Instead the final communique spluttered its rage at the latest round of OPEC price increases and made a vain attempt to find a formula for a cutback in oil imports to 1978 levels.

Behind the blather about solar energy, "going nuclear" and "far reaching changes"



Warmonger Carter

however each capitalist leader was well aware that the latest phase of the crisis will mean the devastation of whole areas of industry, huge new unemployment and plunging living standards in their own countries.

And the wholesale misery and suffering that will be caused by the crisis in the semi-colonial countries will trigger intensified struggles for national liberation, alongside the inevitable resistance of workers in the advanced capitalist countries.

Divisions and rivalries over oil quotas along national lines between capitalists—each seeking to maintain their own profits at the expense of their competitors—bring the prospect of all-out trade war, even while the US imperialists prepare for a 110,000 "unilateral strike force" designed to move in and secure oilfields in the Middle East.

No solution

There is no planned solution possible to the world-wide crisis of capitalism, which is in essence an anarchic, unplannable system that functions solely on the basis of private profit.

The international working class must look not to the Tokyo summit or any other such charade for answers to their material problems—but look instead to the struggle for the building of revolutionary parties to lead the world struggle for socialism.

LEYLAND'S PARITY PLAN IN CRISIS

British Leyland's controversial new grading structure due to be introduced into their car plants by 1 November this year has run into problems.

The scheme, which is

endorsed by the national officers of all unions in BL and is enthusiastically supported by the leaders of the shop stewards combine, is designed to facilitate a centralised wage bargaining structure completely controlled by the full time officials.

Management sneaked the new grading structure through a secret ballot last year as part of a package of so-called "bargaining reforms" which they attached to last November's annual wage review.

Now the 100,000 workers involved, covering 34 plants, are beginning to realise the implications of the management proposals.

At the end of last year a structure was set up by the national officials to introduce the new grading.

A central job evaluation committee was formed, mainly composed of people supporting the scheme, and job evaluation exercises were initiated in the various plants under the control of plant committees.

At the same time a so-called "grading panel" slotted 60 main job titles into 5 grades which they termed "bench mark jobs".

These "bench marks" although theoretically subject to the process of the job evaluation exercise, have been regarded by management as non-negotiable.

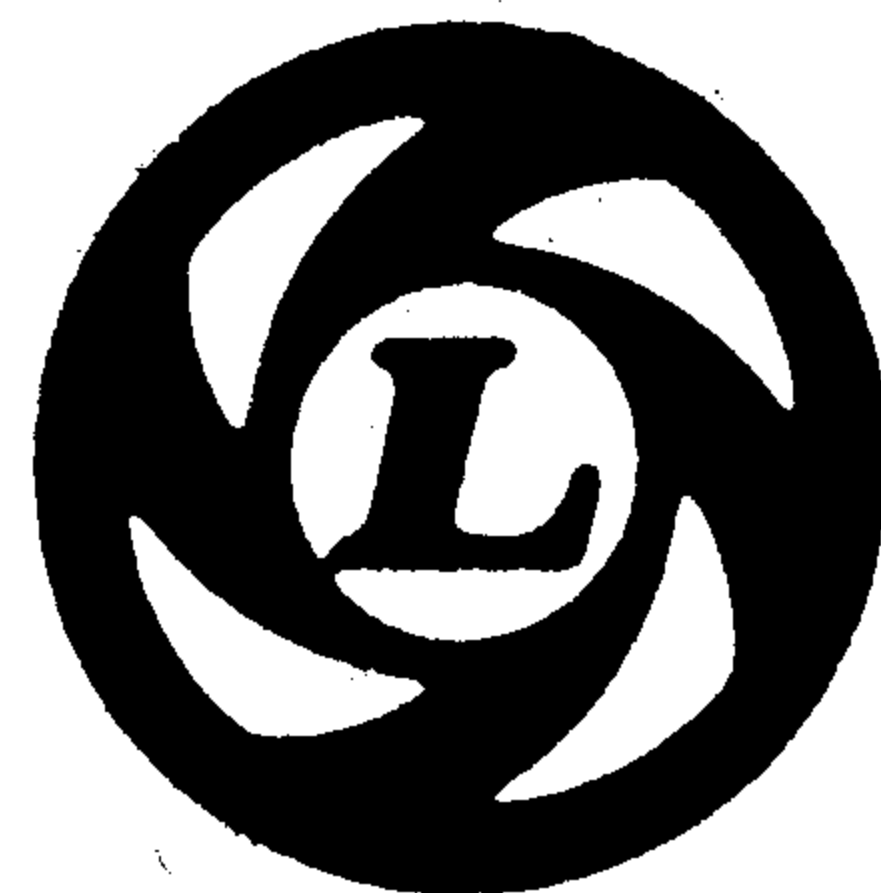
They are very controversial. Production workers, for example, who comprise two-thirds of the labour force and who in many plants are currently in grade one, go down into grade three.

Storemen, storekeepers and fork lift drivers go down to grade 4.

BL's plan has been to get this in by bribery.

They have outlined a so-called "parity" scheme by which they would pay new rates of pay (presented as part of last November's review) when two conditions were met.

The first is that management



SUMMER FETE
Saturday July 7 from 12 to 4 p.m.
Cowley Community Centre
Cowley, Oxford
Cakes * Plants * Games
Bargains * Fortune teller * Refreshments
Organised by the Oxford Area Workers Socialist League

Summer Fayre
Saturday 14 July
Lyndhurst Hall
Warden Street
Camden
(Near Chalk Farm Tube)
Jumble, Games, Food Prizes, Plants and more
Organised by London WSL