

# SOCIALIST PRESS

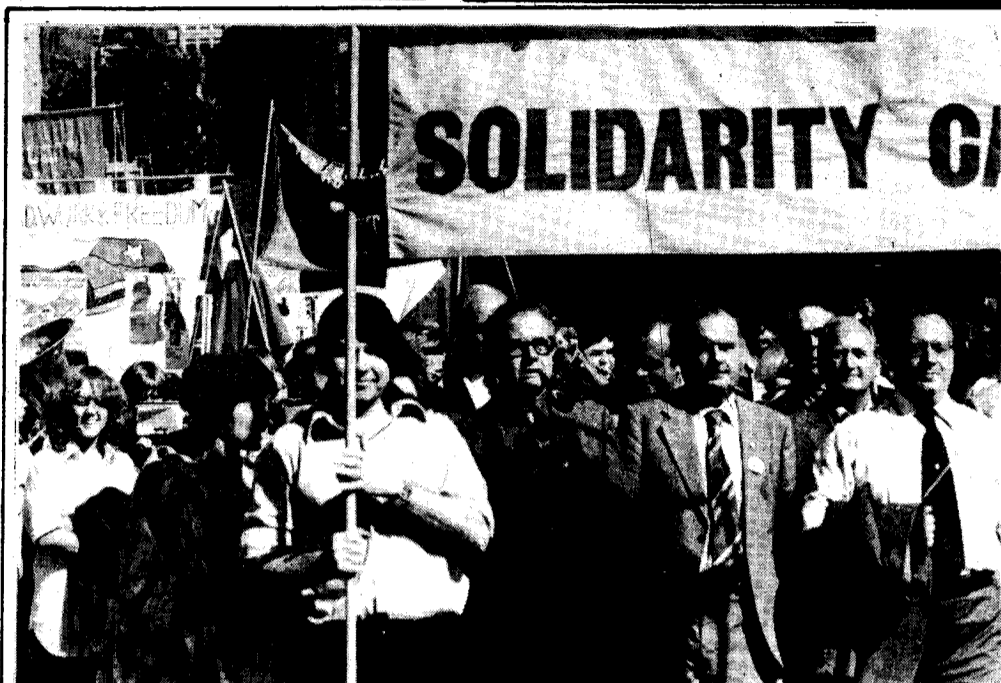


## CUTS FIGHT

pp 5, 6, 7

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# LEYLAND: OCCUPY TO SAVE JOBS!



Evans (right) with a bevy of bureaucrats on the September 16 demonstration



## BL workers must learn the lessons of Speke

## TGWU must black Chile Minis

Last week's decision by British Leyland (BL) chairman Michael Edwardes to shut down factories at Canley, Park Royal, Abingdon and "major parts of Castle Bromwich" raises with new sharpness the crisis of leadership facing all BL workers.

The closures are a part of a concerted drive by BL management to cut manning levels and force through speed-up throughout the corporation, at a total cost of at least 25,000 jobs over the next two years.

Last week, after the ritual statements of 'shock' and outrage by top union officials, BL's TGWU convenors met in Birmingham and voted to resist Edwardes' latest attack, pledging support for any plant that opposes closure or the transfer of work.

### Record

But the real record of BL convenors and union officials in defending jobs and hard-won working conditions over the last few years should give workers no grounds for confidence that any such fight will take place.

Leading figures from BL's Combine Committee hand in hand with national union officials have:

\*Entered willingly into Leyland's reactionary "workers' participation" set-up, through

which leading stewards have at every level been sucked into deeper collaboration with management in imposing speed-up and arguing the need for sacrifices on the shop floor to make the corporation "viable".

### Fingered

It was a "participation" committee that fingered the Triumph plant at Speke in Merseyside for closure last year—and leading Stalinist convenor Derek Robinson from Longbridge who ensured that Speke workers were steered away from the vital policy of plant occupation;

\*Assisted management to railroad through its corporate bargaining set up, which has eroded the power of shop stewards by eliminating plant-level claims and negotiations and placing this power in the hands of national officials;

\*Scabbed on strikes by tool-room workers in 1977 and 1978 which attempted to break through the straightjacket on wages imposed by the Labour government and BL management;

\*Stood alongside managers and applauded Edwardes' initial declaration of February 1978 in which he spelled out his strategy of restoring profitability to the corporation at the expense of its workforce.

### Not equipped

With a record like this, such leaders are scarcely equipped to lead a struggle now to defend jobs.

Already a key sign of a miserable betrayal is visible in the behaviour of Canley's right wing convenor Eddie McGarry, who apparently left the TGWU convenors' meeting before the proposed closure of his plant was even discussed.

McGarry of course distinguished himself during the struggle over the closure of the Speke plant in 1978 by carrying a decision that Canley would accept work transferred from the threatened Merseyside plant.

This treachery was exploited to the full in the winding up speech by Derek Robinson at



The banner of the threatened Park Royal plant stewards' committee, is a familiar sight on Stalinist-dominated lobbies and marches against unemployment. Will they lead a fight to defend their own jobs?

the Speke mass meeting which finally abandoned any fight against the closure.

The TGWU convenors' decision to back any plant which fights closure or the transfer of work is an obvious reflection of mounting shop floor militancy.

But it also spotlights the central question for BL workers: the first task is to get action in the threatened plants, around which solidarity action can be fought for.

No faith whatever should be placed in the coalition of Stalinists and right wingers that dominate the Combine Committee—nor in the 28-man "emergency committee" that was set up last week by Confed officials to hold back concerted action against Edwardes' attacks.

The crucial issue is to demand that mass meetings are held at the threatened plants and at once adopt the policy of occupation to prevent closure or redundancies—a policy that was never even put to the Speke

workforce despite weeks of bureaucratic protests and rhetoric!

Linked to the fight for occupation must be the fight for supporting action throughout BL and the engineering industry.

The basis for this can be clearly established through the election in each threatened plant of trade union committees to fight for the opening of BL's books and those of its suppliers.

This will reveal just exactly who profits from the low-wage exploitation of the corporation's 100,000 manual workers, and what further plans are in store for those workers not on Edwardes' list for closures and redundancies.

Such an investigation would show the way in which private suppliers, contractors, dealer networks and agencies, the banks and large trusts feed off the supposedly unprofitable "nationalised" BL operation.

On the basis of such infor-

mation workers who occupy threatened BL plants must fight for solidarity strikes and occupations throughout the motor and component industries, pointing out that there is no protection for any carworkers' job without the nationalisation of the whole automotive industry, without compensation under workers' management—a perspective that demands the removal of the job-slashing Tory government.

### Collaborators

No such fight will be forthcoming from the proven scabs and collaborators who head the BL Combine Committee.

BL workers who wish to defend their jobs and working conditions will need to develop a new, principled leadership, committed to the struggle for their independent interests.

The Workers Socialist League is fighting to construct just such a leadership.

The sixth anniversary of the military coup which overthrew the Chilean Popular Unity government was marked by a Chile Solidarity Committee march and rally in London last Sunday.

A large number of exiled Chilean families joined with delegations from trade unions and political parties in a demonstration nearing 3,000 strong, which included national banners of a few of CSC's affiliated trade unions.

As with similar protests in the past five years, the organisers' dominant slogan was "the people united will never be defeated", roared most enthusiastically by the numerous contingents from the Communist Party.

It was an ironic and poignant reminder of how little the catastrophic end to President Allende's "people's peaceful road to socialism" has changed the disastrous Popular Front strategy of the reformists and Stalinists.

Workers Socialist League members and supporters, in sharp contrast, shouted calls for an end to Popular Frontism and for labour movement blacking of all Chilean trade.

Predictably, neither political point was even referred to in the Trafalgar Square rally.

TGWU leader Moss Evans employed similar rhetoric, and referred to the support from his union for the previous week's token Chile boycott organised by the ICFTU.

He made no comment on the recently announced deal between the junta and BL for 2,000 Minis which will involve TGWU labour from the Longbridge factory and on the docks and is a ready made candidate for the necessary blacking action which the TGWU has consistently refused to implement.

Leyland boss Edwardes: his plans set out to implement Tories' rationalisation strategy.

## INTERNATIONAL

# Zimbabwe: the search for a bourgeois answer

Ian Smith and Bishop Abel Muzorewa could be seen relaxing over the first weekend of the Zimbabwe constitutional conference as they participated in religious rites on the Sunday.

But the next day, they were back at the devious games of diplomacy—a more bracing form of bourgeois hypocrisy than Christian piety.

There are now two new draft constitutions before the Tories' conference to gain an imperialist settlement of the war.

## Hard line

The Patriotic Front has put forward the latest 'hard-line' proposals, which make no provision for reserved 'white' seats in the new parliament, and rule out any 'blocking powers' (effectively, a built-in power

of veto) to the white racists.

There is not even a specific guarantee to protect private property against the threat of state ownership or other forms of expropriation.

This 'uncompromising' position was wheeled out in response to the Tories' plan for removing the 'unacceptable' aspects of the existing 'internal settlement'.

In an ambitious bid to unite all the delegations behind a paper agreement, and so isolate the militant forces within the Patriotic Front, Carrington has produced a 'moderate' proposal to fit the tone of the conference.

The Tories' document refines away the grosser 'anomalies' of the Smith-Muzorewa constitution to leave a capitalist parliamentary democracy, with specific guarantees to preserve the interests of the white settlers.

The 'special provision for minority representation in Parliament' is to be achieved by giving whites the option to enroll on a voters roll confined to whites and electing only white members, as against the 'common voters roll'.

No specific numbers have been attached as yet to these bizarre arrangements.

## Jockey

The conference has of course already proved itself to be an occasion where delegates proclaim unyielding principles in fiery speeches while they negotiate amongst themselves and jockey for position.

Nkomo and Mugabe have so far preserved a common front, and it is the Salisbury delegation which has been struck by divisions.

On the one hand, Smith and the white settlers have professed outrage at the proposals from the Patriotic Front, and even alarm at some of the Tories' suggestions.

One of the major difficulties with which Carrington has to deal is the problem of persuading the Tories' racist 'kith and kin' to take the wider imperialist view, and not plunge the whole of southern Africa even deeper into the cauldron of instability by concentrating on their own narrow interests.

## Troubles

At the same time, Muzorewa is encountering troubles in his delegation from the Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole.

Sithole has been at pains to distance himself from the official leaders of the delegation, without cutting himself off irrevocably.

Such manoeuvring is characteristic of all these parasitic opportunists.

One massacre more or less makes little difference to the progress of these unprincipled exchanges.

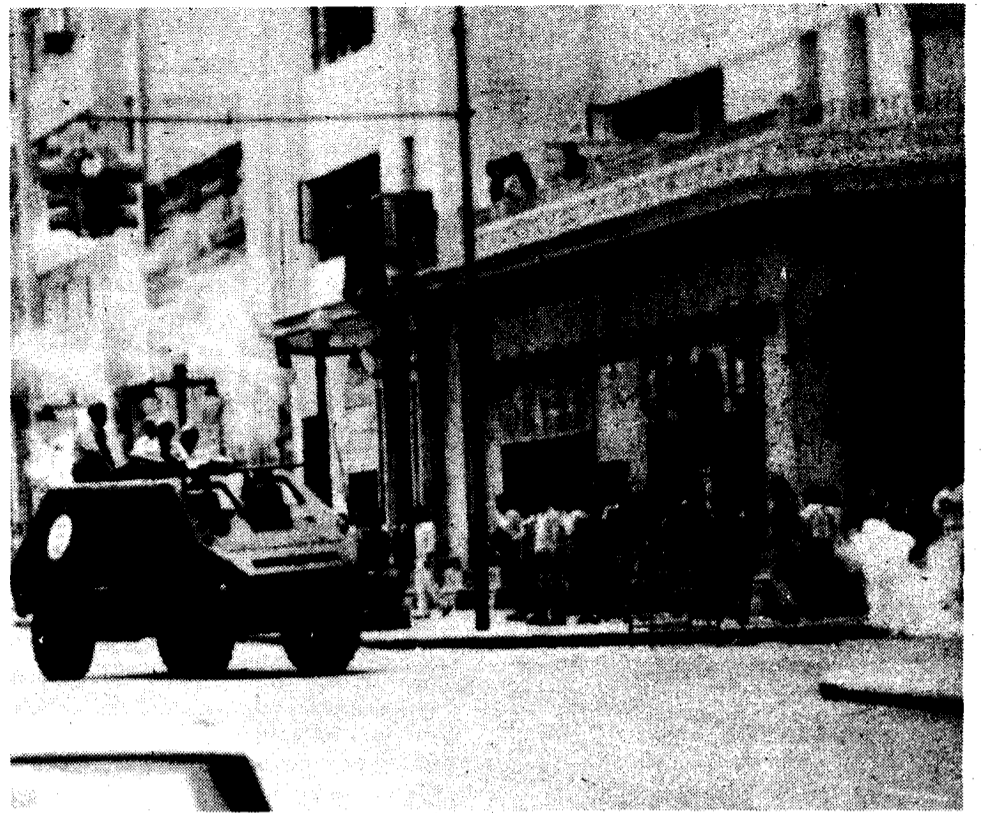
The heavy raids into Mozambique by the Smith-Muzorewa forces underlined the reality of the struggle as the constitutional conference opened.

The combination of guerrillaism with diplomatic bargaining cannot bring a solution to the demands of the masses of Zimbabwe.

## Bankrupt

Such bankrupt politics can at best result in a bankrupt parliamentary democracy.

The struggle in Zimbabwe is not to determine how many seats the white racists should be granted in a parliament, but to determine the future of socialist revolution in the whole of southern Africa, against the attacks of the imperialists and their settlers, and the betrayals of petty bourgeois nationalism.



Troops attack demonstrators in Peru

# PERU TEACHERS FACE ARMY VIOLENCE



Hunger striker Hugo Blanco SUTEP is now just as much the freeing and reinstatement of its members as the original wage claim.

The strike of the Peruvian teachers union SUTEP has now entered its fourth month and in the last ten days intensified action has thrown the military government of Gen. Morales Bermudez into crisis.

This strike, which began on 4 June, is the second in 18 months by SUTEP, which, with 120,000 members is the largest union in Peru.

In May last year the teachers came out for 81 days in demand of substantial pay rises and the immediate release of members jailed for political activity.

## Killed

Now nearly 1,000 members have been jailed, at least 5,000 sacked, and two teachers killed in demonstrations.

Since the Peruvian economy entered severe crisis in late 1975 real wages of teachers have fallen by 44% and a teacher who has worked for 15 years earns an average £50 a month.

Over this period some workers have suffered a fall of up to 70% in their pay, a situation that has been

greatly aggravated by the terms imposed by the IMF for financial relief to the beleaguered regime.

Public sector borrowing has been slashed and now only 45% of the economically active population is fully employed.

Naturally the cutbacks were particularly severe in education with class sizes rising to around 55 children and some 60,000 teachers permanently out of work.

The rapid growth and militancy of SUTEP has been met with outright repression.

The government has refused to recognise the union unless all local and national leaders are approved by the Ministry of Education and funds are controlled by the government itself.

Teachers are deprived of social security benefits and have no job security whatsoever.

Furthermore, both last year and this SUTEP demonstrations have been viciously attacked by the police and army. At least 50 teachers are now in hospital as a result.

Thirty-three educational establishments have been closed and over 20 head-teachers fined. The issue for

## No funds

This is a particularly difficult struggle because the union has no strike fund at all and is entirely reliant on financial and political solidarity of the union movement and the left parties.

SUTEP itself is greatly influenced by the Patria Roja Maoist group but geographical dispersion and the rise of the left in recent years has meant that no single political party is properly dominant.

This is clear from last week's hunger strike in support of SUTEP which was joined by the aged Communist Party leader Hugo del Prado as well as Hugo Blanco, member of the Constituent Assembly and leader of the 'Trotskyist' FOCEP front.

## Militancy

It is clear that the organisational strength and mass support for the teachers has not only thrown the Morales regime onto the defensive but also revitalised the militancy of the Peruvian working class which over the last two years has come out on several general strikes and shown utmost resistance to the 'Revolutionary' military regime.

The overriding issue now is that of political leadership of the mass movement—a major challenge for Trotskyists who, as in Bolivia, have a significant popular base on which to build and fight for a revolutionary programme.

## Is Carter still in the running?

1980, is the bourgeoisie's only real hope of a President capable of placating a militant working class and at the same time serving the interests of crisis-ridden US capitalism—Senator Edward Kennedy.

Kennedy's skilfully shaped 'radical' image and the mythology of his dead brothers are prime assets in his present preparation: but crucial is the opportunist relationship towards him shown by the bureaucratic leadership of the US labour movement, who remain almost without exception tied to the coat tails of the capitalist Democratic Party.

## Pay deal

A sign of this collaboration was given by the eleventh-hour pay deal tentatively struck last week between autoworkers' leaders and General Motors management—which, if endorsed, will be the model for contracts throughout the US auto industry.

Though no details of the deal have yet been released, it was clearly in the interests of both the Democratic Party and car industry bosses that a major pay strike should be avoided at all costs at this critical point of time.

It remains to be seen if US auto workers will go along with this obliging attitude on the part of their union leaders, or follow the example of the miners last year, and throw out the proposed settlement.



Sports lovers, many American workers and sections of the US capitalist class will no doubt unite in rejoicing at President Carter's decision to continue jogging after his collapse last week.

Sports lovers will cheer Carter's courage; workers will see the possibility of getting shot of a President who has unleashed 13% inflation and mounting recession in tandem with wage controls; and many top US employers would no doubt welcome a conveniently tragic and sudden exit from the scene by Carter well in advance of the embarrassing proceedings of ditching him as the Democratic Party's presidential candidate next year.

Because one thing is certain—popularity figures now well below even Nixon and the most hated of previous US Presidents, and with absolutely nothing to offer, Carter if he survives his exertions is locked on course for electoral disaster. Meanwhile in the wings, limbering up for the running in

## Defend Iranian socialists!

Fourteen members of the HKS (Socialist Workers Party) face the death sentence or life imprisonment. Send telegrams demanding their release to: The Iranian Embassy, 16, Prince's Gate, London SW7



# INTERNATIONAL

## Back stage manoeuvres behind Indo-Chinese fighting



Khmer Rouge guerrillas originally welcomed into Phnom Penh in 1975

War, famine and political oppression—these are the dark shadows across Indochina today—as they have been now for forty years.

One of the reasons for the leap in the price of gold in Hong Kong two weeks ago was the widespread rumour that hundreds of thousands of Chinese troops were milling on the Vietnamese border, preparing to "teach Hanoi another lesson."

Two months ago Hanoi had to deny strenuously that it was about to launch an invasion of Thailand, whose right-wing military government was allegedly collaborating with the forces of Kampuchea's ousted Premier Pol Pot.

Whether these specific threats are real or imagined they reflect the fact that no-one believes that peace has come to the Indochinese peninsula even for a short time.

Since Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea in December 1978, and the installation of a Vietnamese puppet (FUNSK) regime in Phnom Penh led by Heng Samrin and Pen Soran, three guerrilla wars have continued in the Kampuchean countryside.

### Three armies

Heng Samrin and the Vietnamese occupying forces continue to face armed resistance from three different guerrilla armies.

One is the Khmer Rouge, headed by the ousted CP leaders Pol Pot, Khieu Sampan and Ieng Sary.

Another is the far right-wing Khmer Serai (white Khmer which includes remnants of the reactionary regime of General Lon Nol which fell in 1975); and the other is the "neutralist" Khmer Sereika, said to be allied to the old head of state Prince Sihanouk.

So four successive regimes in Kampuchea continue to fight for power.

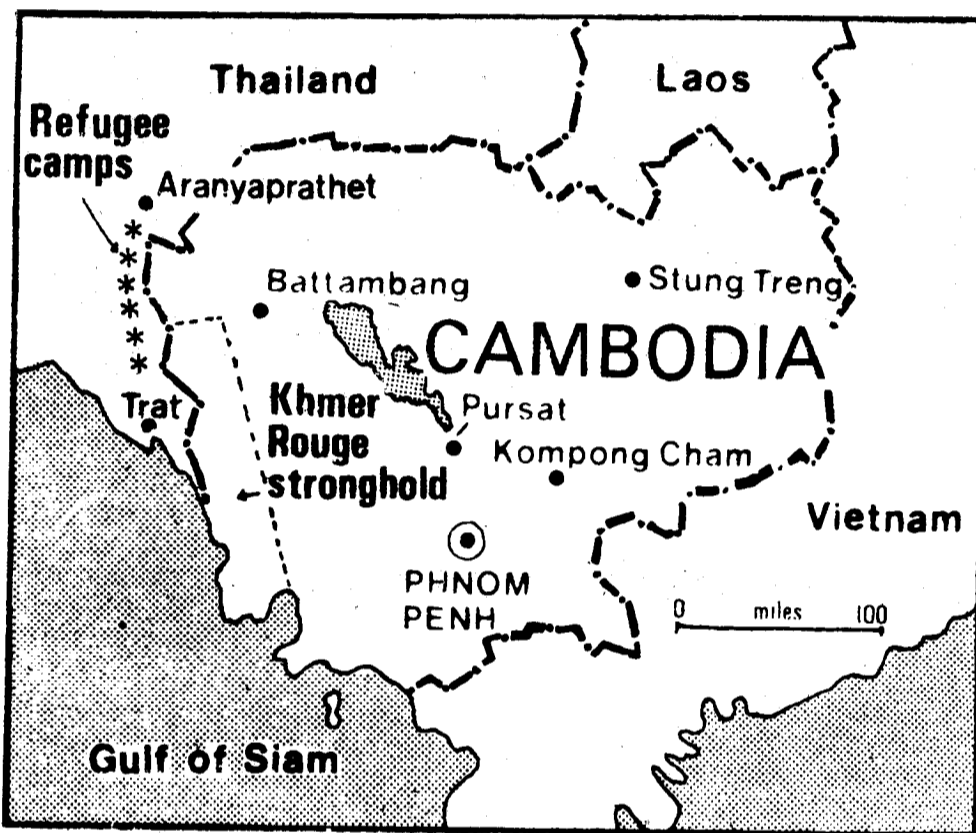
But the three deposed ones which have successively overthrown each other are now to some degree cooperating in a series of some of the most unholy political alliances ever seen.

### Collaboration

The "communist" Khmer Rouge have reportedly established quite close military collaboration with the fascist Khmer Serai.



Pol Pot



Between them they control a very significant part of the country—many reports say as much as 20 per cent.

The Khmer Rouge's political line, up to last week, was that it was the legitimate government of the country and that it should return alone to power.

In the United Nations, indeed, it remains the recognised government, though no Kampuchea government was recognised by the recent "non-aligned" conference in Havana.

### Changed line

Last week, however, either as a result of military setbacks or of pressure from now lukewarm Chinese patrons, the Khmer Rouge changed its line.

Recalling its popular frontist collaboration in Prince Sihanouk's government in the 1960s, it called for the setting up of a new "great national and democratic coalition", led by Sihanouk, to replace Heng Samrin and the Vietnamese occupying forces.

Sihanouk, the "progressive" hereditary ruler, remains the wild card of Kampuchean politics.

From the luxury and safety of what is officially described as his "palace" in North Korea, he has in the last few weeks been issuing a long series of near-hysterical statements.

Increasingly he has disowned his former Khmer Rouge allies, who during their regime kept him under house arrest and only released him at the time of the Vietnamese invasion to plead their cause in international forums.

Today Sihanouk has cooled towards his former Chinese allies, condemns the Khmer Rouge as "murderers" who want to fight "to the last Cambodian" and is evidently in close collaboration with the American imperialists as well as with his present hosts, the Kim Il Sung

Stalinist regime in North Korea. After the Khmer Rouge's appeal for a new national coalition against the Vietnamese, Sihanouk launched his own appeal for a new government based on the organisations of Kampuchean in exile in Europe.

But he has implied that the Khmer Rouge can join as individuals if they reform themselves. Heng Samrin is excluded from this invitation.

He, for good measure, has equally and for no apparent reason declared that the Prince may not participate in future elections in Kampuchea.

At the end of August Sihanouk travelled to Peking, where he announced his "complete agreement" with US policy in SE Asia, adding that the US was "my main support".

His plans now include an international conference on Kampuchea and free elections, in place of his original proposal of an armed invasion by the United Nations.

All this manoeuvring may imply that both China and the United States are both about to back a new coalition government formula with Sihanouk at its head and including the Khmer Rouge and possibly the fascists as well.

It would be a formula which, in spite of old enmities with Sihanouk would also probably get the support of the imperialist client states of the ASEAN alliance (Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines).

Last year's efforts by the Hanoi government to woo the ASEAN nations (especially Thailand and Indonesia) were nullified by the invasion of Kampuchea, and they now all take an aggressively anti-Vietnam position.

At the end of August the ASEAN nations, most of them flooded with tens of thousands of Indochinese refugees, met in something of a panic and issued a statement which said:

"The conflict in Cambodia

has worsened in the course of recent months. There exists a real danger that it will worsen further at the end of the rainy season.

"That would worsen the situation in the region, intensify the illegal exodus from Cambodia and, as a result, create a growth of problems for the neighbouring countries and an increased threat to peace and stability in the region."

But in spite of this diplomatic line-up between the imperialists and Peking it is far from true that the USSR and Vietnam stand on the opposite side.

Though these Stalinist leaders support the legitimacy and permanence of the Heng Samrin regime, they have done so with an increasingly provisional tone.

Almost certainly the Soviet Union has been involved in the latest round of diplomatic intrigue to produce an international settlement of the Cambodian dispute.

And Hanoi, after agreeing to the Geneva conference on the boat people which it originally denounced, has now also ended its opposition in principle to an international conference on Kampuchea.

It now merely says such a conference cannot take place until the Chinese military threat is over.

That particular shift in Hanoi's policy occurred during a recent visit to Vietnam of a delegation of U.S. Congressmen. (Hanoi had also done one of its famous political U-turns on whether they should be allowed in).

### Peace treaty

The Congressmen subsequently reported that the Vietnam government had told them that it was ready to sign a peace treaty with Thailand.

While this has not been publicly confirmed by Hanoi, it would be entirely consistent with the opportunistic and counter-revolutionary policies they have pursued up to now.

In relation to Thailand these policies have been at least the equal of those of China for cynical betrayal.

And Peking certainly takes some equalling.

For many years the largely pro-Peking Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) has fought a

guerrilla war against the reactionary military dictatorship of General Kriangsak.

But it has been an ambiguous struggle since China, while maintaining inadequate material aid to the CPT, has at the same time been developing its sordid alliance with Kriangsak.

Peking now declares roundly that capitalist Thailand must be defended against the alleged threat of a Vietnamese invasion!

The CPT has been told by Peking to collaborate with its oppressors in Bangkok; and its propaganda radio in China was closed down in August.

### Destroyed

This treachery has demoralised and split the CPT and by all accounts virtually destroyed its cadre.

Much of the leadership has defected to the pro-Moscow, pro-Hanoi camp.

But if anyone suggests that Hanoi has met the Chinese Stalinists' betrayals with a principled response they had better check the record.

After Vietnam Premier Pham Van Dong's trip to Thailand in September 1978, the Hanoi regime returned exiled members of the CPT from Vietnam and Laos to face retribution in Thailand, except for those who already took the Vietnamese line against Peking.

Hanoi also prevailed upon its close allies in power in Laos to cut the supply route from China used to supply the CPT guerrillas!

After the invasion of Kampuchea (where the CPT had rearward bases) the puppet Heng Samrin government declared that all CPT bases inside Kampuchea would be closed unless the CPT renounced Peking and supported the Hanoi line.

Hanoi has not condemned the Kriangsak dictatorship's bloody campaign against the guerrillas any more than Peking has.

So when Hanoi denounces the "reactionary" position of Maoism in Thailand, they are speaking not with revolutionary principle but counter-revolutionary hypocrisy.

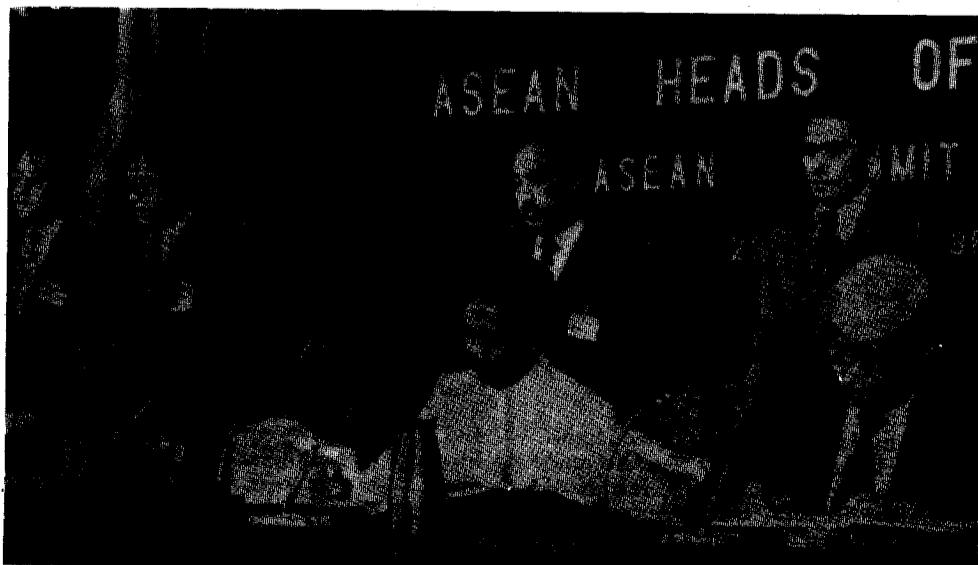
Their words are as false and their hands as blood-stained as those of the rulers in Peking.

In fact what unites all the characters mentioned so far in this account of the complex international manoeuvrings related to the future of Kampuchea is their consistently counter-revolutionary intentions and the consequence of that—their cynical disregard of the almost unbelievable material sufferings of the Kampuchean masses.

Only the scarcely sane Sihanouk even bothers to profess concern for the masses very often—but then he's sitting in his palace in Pyongyang.

The next article will look at the bloody and sombre legacy of the Pol Pot regime.

It will also examine what little evidence there is about the economic policies of the Heng Samrin regime and the occupying forces and examine their effects on the living conditions of Kampuchean workers and peasants.



ASEAN heads of state—courted by Vietnamese Stalinists and now Sihanouk

# Tories' racist drive

Since the General Election with the advent of the Thatcher Tory government there has been an increased spate of action to deport Asian people under the 1971 Immigration Act.

This gives police the power to enter the homes of any suspect person and arrest and detain them at detention centres for indefinite periods with accusations of illegal entry into Britain.

"Suspects" have no rights even for their cases to be heard by tribunal.

These laws have already brought untold misery and anxiety to the black population.

In the Oxford area a Multi-Racial Action Group has been formed in an attempt to fight these racist attacks, with representatives and delegates from ethnic minority groups and the local Labour Movement, including the Trades Council and Labour Party bodies.

This group took the initiative to convene a public protest rally which attracted around 200 people in Oxford City Centre.

The focal point was the threat to deport a 9 year old boy separating him from his family in Britain and dispatching him to his father in Pakistan who does not want him.

It is essential that this issue is taken into the unions to mobilise the working class to oppose all such deportations and to ensure that all people can live and work wherever in the world they wish.

This must be linked with a fight against the latest Tory plans to control immigration still further through using blatant sexual discrimination. A new Nationality Law is planned to prohibit the entry of men from anywhere outside the EEC to join women resident in Britain to whom they are engaged or married.

# Support Sinn Fein march October 20

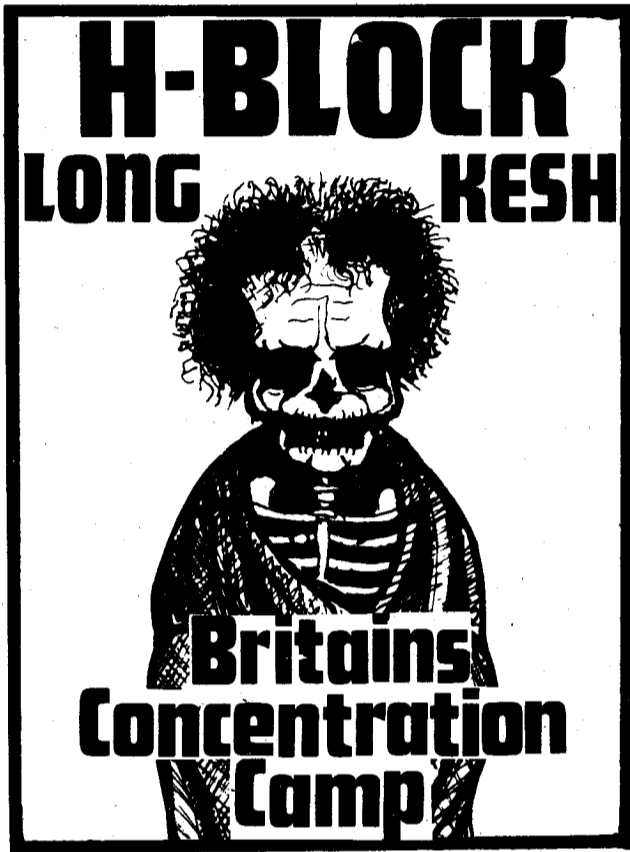
Sinn Fein has called a national demonstration in support of the heroic struggle of the republican prisoners imprisoned in the 'H' Blocks at Long Kesh and Armagh jails.

For over three years these prisoners have been kept in freezing cells, clad only in a single blanket, and subjected to extremes of brutality and ill-treatment, as a result of their determination to regain Prisoner

of War status and this refusal to be branded as common 'criminals' by the British government.

The Sinn Fein march will take place in Oxford, assembling at Chapel Street, off the Cowley Road, at 2 p.m. on Saturday 20 October.

Trade union and Labour Party branches should support this march and bring their banners.



# PRESS GANG



When the "revolt" against the Confed pay strike collapsed at the Longbridge Leyland plant last month national newspapers were left with egg on their face.

The "revolt" had been planted, watered and reared with their expert help. The press had once again become a major material force within the anti-strike movement.

Its pathetic fizzle with a bare hundred scabs forlornly eyeing the picket lines must have embarrassed even the rhinoceros-hide of the "industrial correspondents" who masquerade as reporters of events.

When less than a week later their nominated 'hero' Mike Savage said he was jacking in his job at Longbridge, they could not hide their dismay.

And so out of the locker comes Ron Hill—long time hero of the Birmingham Post and Mail—and the man who broke the Longbridge strike last year.

Colin Dunne from the Sun was sent to interview him, if that is the right word.

It reads as if Dunne must have had to take his shoes off to enter the holy shrine of this great man and con-

duct his questions and answers from a position lying flat on the floor gazing respectfully at the carpet.

Hill has been rewarded with the title "The Rebel". He stares moodily of the page with his arm folded with a caption that reads: "I'm not a poodle. I'm a bloody bulldog."

Dunne's staccato style is like the beginning of one of those novels that announces itself to be about Man's struggle for survival in a ruthless world with the odds stacked against him...

"For two years union rebel Ron Hill has been expecting the letter.

"And when it came this week he knew what it was the second he tore it open and saw the official note-paper.

"The union he joined for protection had finally got round to persecuting him."

Cut to the quick profile of our superhero:

"Ron, built like the bulldog whose spirit he so vividly evokes sticks out a chin you could break bricks on and growls.

"How can I back down? If I do, I cease to be a man, and when that day comes I'll dig a hole and climb into it. I'll be finished"...

"Ron Hill is 48, but beneath his tee shirt muscles stand out like hawfers. As a national serviceman he did a

lot of boxing and running. He still does 50 press ups every morning."

However he is still an ordinary working bloke with a heart of gold:

"He lives in a council house at Brierley Hill near Birmingham. He likes a jar with his mates.

"Two days a week he visits his mother in an old people's home."

The article goes on to praise him for a physical attack on one of the militants on the plant.

It seeks a ludicrous explanation for the Savage/Hill failure last month.

"Only a handful of men supported Mike Savage. Why?"

"There's a four letter word that affects everyone at Longbridge", says Ron. 'It's spelt F-E-A-R'."

What is notable about the article—apart from its crude propaganda—is that Hill's attacks are not aimed at a particular leadership of a particular union.

This is not red baiting. The press has moved beyond that—and in any case it is difficult even for the press to see the Communist Party leadership at Longbridge as 'reds'.

The emphasis is in this case attacking the most basic organisations of the working class—the trade unions.

Send us a letter, putting your views on the articles in Socialist Press, on the struggles in your union or district, or on any topic you feel is important. Write to: Socialist Press, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

# Letters

## Hands off the SWP!

Dear Socialist Press, I felt really dismayed to discover that the WSL has given so much prime space in your paper to hacks who have so little understanding about revolutionary politics that they see as their main enemy all the groups to the left of the CPGB who are making some significant contribution to the overthrow of capitalism.

Naturally, the state of the left in Britain is appalling—endless sectarian struggles by tiny grouplets all claiming to have discovered the correct and pure "Leninist-Trotskyist" and other "ists" line, and then turning out verbose and pompous crap and distortions about each other in order to win converts to their particular sect.

Recently, during the Garners strike, I first heard of the WSL when I spoke to some comrades on the picket line, and was really impressed with what they were saying and doing—it seemed to me that the WSL were truly differentiated from that host of hot air sects—Sparts RCT, RCG, WRP etc.—in that they really stuck to this dispute and provided much needed support to the strikers alongside the SWP and IMG.

Imagine my dismay then in reading several centre page 'SWP Specials' from your paper dated June-July 1979, which were filled with such complete distortion and in some cases direct lies about the SWP, in order to 'prove' the correctness of your Trotskyist line.

except when individual comrades from your organisation act in a true 'United Front' such as at Garners. Derek Chassay.

We reply:

Comrade Chassay's "dismay" at our extensive political analysis of the SWP's 'rank and file' politics is unfortunately not backed up by a single example of a "direct lie" or a "distortion".

We would contend that this is because the articles were carefully researched, and designed to challenge those like cde Chassay who feel it sufficient to be simply "to the left of the

CPGB", and that a Leninist party and Marxist theory are not necessary in today's class struggle.

Yet it is precisely on the basis of our grasp of Marxism and the crisis of working class leadership that the WSL's full-scale support for the Garners strike was mobilised and maintained, enabling us to materially and politically strengthen the strike.

We advise cde Chassay to read Lenin's What is to be Done? before returning to a study of our articles on the SWP.

## WRP mystery

Dear Comrades, Keeping track of the WRP's extraordinary political twists and turns can be a tiresome task at the best of times.

Over recent weeks readers have had to cope with an additional problem. It appears that the mighty Healyite press machine is going on the blink.

One of the first signs of problems came on July 18, when the Newline appeared bearing the number 992, the same as the day before.

By August it was evident that something peculiar was happening. The August 13 issue appeared without a date on the front page.

Then we had 2 issues in a row numbered 1016 and the next 2 were numbered 1018.

ly some effort to put things right, because Monday 20th's paper was number 1021.

The improvement did not last long. Papers from Wednesday 22nd to Friday 24th were all numbered 1023.

Things have not yet been put right. September 4th and 5th were both graced with 'Newline 1034'.

The whole mysterious affair is reminiscent of the Chinese propaganda radio station which for 4 years broadcast reversed tapes of news programmes.

One can only hope that the newspapers section of the British Library can make sense of it all.

A cynic might be led to regard it as just one more symptom of the WRP's problems in dealing with its own history.

## Vampires' sexual content

Dear Socialist Press, I am always interested to see what new review of a film by Tony Richardson will appear in Socialist Press.

It is not easy for a Marxist to write a review of a vampire film.

Tony in SP 162 certainly made some valid points: the origin of the vampire myth—where or whenever that was—is the horrific thought of a living death, a man who could never die. It is a macabre twist on the age-old search for immortality.

The appearance of Herzog's character in Nosferatu was able to convey this so much better than the traditional Hammer movies with Christopher Lee.

And what a relief to see a vampire with teeth that would actually be capable of doing the job!

But surely Tony's review misses the whole point of the vampire stories, including the original by Bram Stoker.

The vampire in Bram Stoker does not horrify his victims. On the contrary, they feel overcome by a sensuous languidness which prevents them from moving away from Dracula as he bends over them.

Dracula's victims are always women—the vampiresses that he has stalked away in his dungeon are given the male victims to feed upon.

And most important of all—perhaps men don't realise this—but many women actually like being bitten on the neck in the place the vampires leave their teeth marks.

Even Victorian ladies would have been aware of this.

The bite on the neck given by Dracula to his victims duplicates the passionate kiss depicted on the covers of romantic novels even now.

Bram Stoker's novel should be seen in the context of the repression of the sexuality of women in Victorian times.

Therefore it is very interesting to watch the change in vampire movies as sexual mores also change in the 20th century.

I watched the "Rites of Dracula" with Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing the other night on TV.

There were similar themes—the woman reacting with pleasure against her own inclinations as Dracula came to her and sank his lips to her neck.

Most interesting of all was the fact that, although Dracula still had no male victims, yet there was a scene where Cushing's beautiful granddaughter walked into a cellar full of equally beautiful vampiresses and was "attacked" by them.

The theme of lesbianism (coupled with a bit of bondage, as all the vampiresses were chained to their coffins) is now a standard pornographic theme—e.g. Emmanuelle.

But male homosexuality does not create the same turn-on for straight men, and so is still taboo.

In fact, if you look at many of these "horror" movies that are based on ancient folk legends, you will find many interesting psychological nuances.

What I see in this, as a Marxist, is the change in the nature of horror movies from the rather charming, allusive period pieces—such as the original were-wolf, mummy-from-the-crypt ones etc.—to the 'blood, guts and puke' explicit and (to me) quite terrifying things created by Hammer nowadays, and such things as 'The Exorcist'.

This all ties in with the article on the Politics of Sport in SP 161, where violence is good box-office, and is exploited in a way that would have made the organisers of the Roman circuses look like babes in arms.

Yours in comradeship, Cathy Sherlock.



The latest Dracula

# Hackney strikes lead cuts fight

1,000 hospital workers and other trade unionists from both the public and private sector stopped work last week and marched from St Leonards Hospital, Hackney which is threatened with closure to lobby the Area Health Authority.

On the march were FBU members from Kingsland Fire Station, NUT and NATFHE teachers, Reuters NATSOPA

chapel, British Oxygen workers, East London SCPS and CPSA members from the social security offices.

More important than the march itself was the half day strike by local government workers in support of St Leonards and the other threatened hospitals—Mile End, the German Hospital and London Jewish.

NUPE, TGWU and GMWU workers from the dust, the parks, school cleaners and

school dinners were all out in force.

Tommy Durass, SWP member and chairman of the Hackney council joint works shop stewards had obviously been a moving force behind this strike which was significant as the first across the board stoppage by workers in all the public services in support of one area of the cuts.

## Potential

Such one day strike action is of course only a first step—but one which shows the potential response from the working class to a fighting policy.

The task now is to develop the basis for full-scale occupa-

tions to prevent closures, backed up by all-out strike action.

## Slogans absent

But the SWP failed to argue for this in the Hackney demonstration, and despite the strong presence of the SWP's 'Rank and File' placards and a special issue of *Socialist Worker* on the demonstration there was no political direction behind the placards and an almost total absence of slogans generalising the call for strike action.

Nonetheless if this move can be built on there is clearly the basis for an effective fight on the cuts.

# Haringey demo

A plethora of big name 'left' MPs—Ted Knight, Norman Atkinson, Reg Race and Wedgwood Benn—addressed the 500 plus demonstration against the cuts at Turnpike Lane on Saturday.

Workers from NATFHE, NUT, NALGO, NUR, and NUPE supported the call by the Labour Party-controlled Haringey Campaign Against the Cuts.

Haringey, as an NUT speaker pointed out, has been attempting to implement the Tory cuts.

## Dithering

Its reluctance and embarrassment at doing so cannot let the council off the hook of its responsibility for implementing anti-working class measures.



Di Parkin

But, dithering and uncertain, it has crumbled on one front in the face of action against the cuts.

Playgroup workers in NALGO and parents refused to accept the closure of 3 council run playgroups and continued to run them outside the locked buildings last week.

This crypto-occupation and refusal to implement the cuts had the desired effect and the social services committee refused to endorse its chairman's action in closing the playgroups and making other cuts.

Nonetheless the officers of the council continue to freeze the filling of posts and NALGO members are refusing to cover for the vacancies.

## Shutting down

An area social services office is shutting down one day a week when there is not the proper amount of staff to cover it.

And the assistant director of social services has issued a "directive" that staff should stop giving out the home phone numbers of councillors and referring angry claimants to them if their services are cut.

But such 'no cover' action is insufficient to meet the all-out attack on the public sector.

This point was made by Di Parkin, speaking from the NALGO Women's Sub-Committee on the platform at Saturday's demo.

She pointed out that the cuts had a dual impact on women. They threatened their jobs, since for instance, in Hackney itself one in three local women workers are in public services; half of the 3,000 local health service workers are women; and women make up two-thirds of the 11,000 strong council workforce.

Many women also work part time or on temporary contracts which makes them most vulnerable to cuts.

## All out fight

Di Parkin said that the action by the playgroup workers showed the way that cuts could be resisted.

She argued against a piecemeal fight. The need was to fight against the trade union and Labour leaders' reluctance to organise an all-out struggle.

Reg Race, 'left' Labour MP and himself a former NUPE bureaucrat had argued on the platform that there was a need to "educate" the Labour front bench out of its pro-cuts policies.

Di Parkin pointed out that such "education" was not possible: it is necessary to fight to remove the right wing leadership.

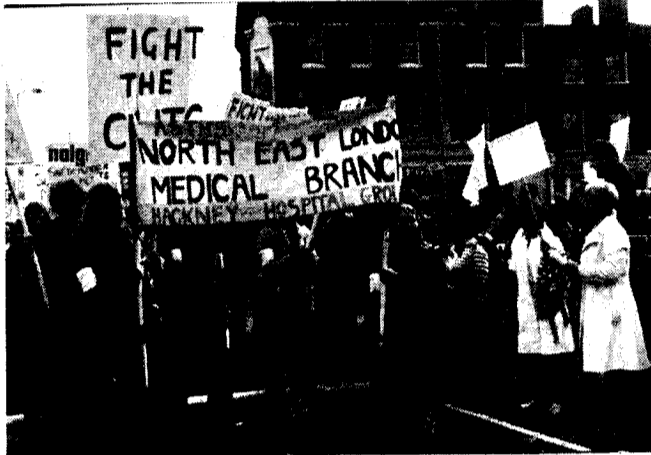
The Labour 'lefts' on the platform had a very different approach.

Norman Atkinson and Wedgwood Benn spoke of Britain's 'greatness' and the industrial capacity existing to make it greater again.

Ted Knight however did mention the need for industrial action against the cuts, as did Reg Race.

But Race concentrated heavily on the recall of MPs and accountability within the party.

What is really needed, of course, is a revolutionary programme to mobilise mass action to bring down this government and the class it represents and lead the working class to power.



Hackney workers' demonstration against Labour's cuts



Trade unionists, parents and youth lobby Oxford Trades Council

# Coventry lobby

Labour councillors who voted to implement massive cuts in social expenditure in Coventry last Tuesday had to run the gauntlet of over 300 workers lobbying the meeting outside.

The lobby, organised by the Trades Council, heard speeches from a number of trade union branches and the Coventry South East Labour Party.

As each councillor arrived they were met with a steady chant of 'No cuts'.

## Explain

Each Labour councillor was offered the use of a microphone to explain to the lobby their attitude to the cuts they were about to implement.

None was prepared to speak to the lobby.

Coventry Trades Council has organised an energetic campaign against the cuts.

It has set up a special Public Sector Liaison Committee which has produced a bulletin detailing the cuts locally.

All trade union branches have been asked to produce regular reports of the effect of the cuts on the areas they cover.

At its August meeting the Trades Council passed a motion calling for the holding of a local conference to co-ordinate the fight against the cuts and to discuss the policies necessary for that fight.

## Opposition

The readiness of the Labour Council to implement the cuts has met with opposition within the local Labour Parties.

The South East Constituency has voted total opposition to the cuts and alongside the Trades Council has called for a local conference.

At the lobby Dave Nellist from the South East CLP and a 'Militant' supporter called for the rescinding of the Council's debt and the building of a mass

movement to sweep the Tories from office.

"When we get another Labour government it must be one which is responsive to the party conference decisions and which takes measures in defence of working class interests."

His call for the removal of the Tory government brought the biggest cheer of the evening—the speech did not refer specifically to the need for strike action against the cuts.

Alongside the demand for the rescinding of the Council debt and opposition to rate increases the demand for strike action must be the central focus of the anti-cuts fight.

That is why the single most important development in the fight in Coventry is the policy adopted by the NUPE Central Branch to strike against the cuts under the following conditions: if any NUPE member is sacked; if any non-union temporary workers are taken on; or if the NUPE workers' bonus scheme is interfered with.

At the lobby NUPE chairman Joe Little threatened to "close down Coventry" if his members were sacked.

The Trades Council must fight now for branches to take up the policy of strike action against the cuts.

If NUPE workers go into action there must be immediate supporting strikes from other sections.

The Trades Council bulletin can provide an extremely vital focus for building united action against the cuts.

Workers Socialist League

PAMPHLET

How to fight the Cuts

Still available, 40p, incl. post and packing, from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

# 100 back Oxford nursery fight

Plans by Oxfordshire County Council to end nursery education, in the county by closing every single nursery class or school has sparked off a mass movement of opposition.

A meeting called by the Oxford City Nursery Campaign within five days of the cuts being announced drew 120 angry parents—well over 90 of them women.

Two days later one of the council's sub-committees which usually deliberates in glorious isolation, found more than 100 women cramming the public seating space—most of them with children in tow. The committee nervously decided to leave all decisions to the Education Committee.

## Immediate call

The fact that the women have been so quickly moved into action comes both from the dramatic scale of the proposed cuts and from the fact that the Oxford City Nursery Campaign was ready to call an immediate

meeting and put forward its strategy.

It was this campaign which led the occupation of South Oxford Nursery last year. It kept the nursery open for six weeks and was eventually evicted by force after being left isolated by the trade union leaders in the town.

## Importance

The importance of that occupation was that it showed a clear method of combatting the closures.

But as Ann Marie Sweeney from the campaign told the meeting it also showed that parents could not expect to roll back the closures without an effective turn into the trade unions for support—particularly from the public sector.

The meeting has called a delegate body to be formed with representatives from all nurseries in the county—both parents and staff—and called for trade union affiliation to the campaign.

But the fact that the campaign arises with a history of struggle already established in the town means that there is a

conscious worked out opposition to these policies.

The Rev. Tony Williamson, deputy senior steward at the Cowley Body Plant, Labour councillor and one of the right wing's leading schemers, denounced the leadership of the nursery campaign from the floor (although he had done nothing to respond to the cuts decision) and said that the main object must be to convince councillors of the importance of nursery education.

The meeting however took a correct decision in passing a resolution that it would not trade off nurseries for some other cut, and in being opposed to all cuts.

## Mass lobby

The next steps are a mass lobby of the education committee on October 4 and a mass demonstration called by Oxford and District Trades Union Council on October 13.

A fight is already being taken up in the NUT for a one day strike on October 4 to coincide with the lobby and that demand must also be taken up in all the public sector unions.

# SPENDING CUTS: THE TORIES' ROAD TO RUIN

Public spending is being slashed to the bone by the Thatcher government. Even the most basic social services, the health service and education are being effectively dismembered by cutbacks that deprive them of vital resources.

As part of the same wave of cuts, whole sections of nationalised industry—the shipyards and steel in the forefront—also face closures, speed-up and mass redundancies.

Other sections—the profitable areas of state-owned industry like British Airways, the National Freight Corporation, British Petroleum and others—are being sold off at bargain prices to Tory bankers and speculators.

This is not simply some irrational hatchet attack by a crazed government of big business representatives: it is a conscious plan to drive up the profitability of British industry at the expense of the jobs, living standards and basic rights of the working class.

Where the Tory government has direct control, it is coupling drastic cuts in public spending—which will itself drive towards unemployment and recession—with a withdrawal of support from weaker sections of industry to force forward rationalisation and speed-up.

## Manipulation

The remainder of industry is being forced on to the offensive against its workforce through the manipulation of "market forces".

This is why industry as a whole now faces a major two-way squeeze, in which soaring bank interest rates make it difficult for firms to borrow money at home, and an overvalued pound makes it increasingly hard for them to sell goods abroad.

Instead the high value of sterling has effectively reduced the cost of imported goods on the British market—forcing British firms to compete on unequal terms with more advanced overseas competitors.

As the share won by British industry in world markets falls, the weaker sections and more antiquated factories go to the wall in bankruptcy cases or ruthless rationalisation. This leaves increased markets and increased profits for the banks and the speculators.

Unemployment thus grows

hand-in-hand with a relentless pressure for speed-up on the shop floor and for the introduction of still more new labour-saving technology.

While a few capitalists and shareholders can look upon this spectacle in comfortable optimism, for the working class the future under the Tories offers little but increased exploitation and rising poverty. Indeed, increasing numbers of bourgeois economist commentators have been forced to admit that the Tory course is leading with great rapidity towards a growing "import-led recession", in which even now, only the scale of the revenues from North Sea Oil conceal the huge deficit accumulating in the balance of payments.

## High interest rates

The pound now stands in real terms nearly 25% higher in value on the international money markets than it did in 1974—and is held up by Tory insistence that high interest rates are the way to control inflation. The results are devastating.

One forecast by the ITEM Club expects Gross Domestic Product under the Tories to actually fall by 4% between the second halves of 1979-1980, and for Britain to become a net importer of manufactured goods to the tune of £3.5 billion in 1981.

Inflation meanwhile, far from being under control, continues on target for at least a 17% annual rate by the end of this year—and this figure itself is artificially low because of the way in which the strong pound cuts the cost of imported goods.

Economist after economist is now sounding a dire note of warning to the Tories. Even the arch monetarists of the London Business School have accused the government of a policy of "overkill".

## Blind ignorance

Meanwhile Wynne Godley of the Department of Applied Economics at Cambridge has aptly described the Thatcher/ Joseph strategy:

"It is as though a physician from another age had come back to find a patient in receipt of transfusion, and, in blind ignorance, proceeded to bleed him because it was the only remedy he knew.

"My belief is that the present policies will drive the economy into the worst recession since the early 1930s, with no presumption that spon-

aneous recovery will occur at any stage".

(Observer, August 26).

The Tories certainly do not presume that 'good times' are on the way again.

Treasury Secretary John Biffen, one of Thatcher's central team of axemen, only recently declared that British capitalism faces "a daunting economic prospect" in which "painful and unpopular" cuts in public spending would be made for the foreseeable future.

He argued that it is "illusory" to look for a spurt in economic growth or increased oil revenues to bail out the economy in the mid 1980s.

Tory Chancellor Sir Geoffrey Howe, has also weighed in with an appeal to union officials to face up to the "reality" of the crisis of British capitalism.

"Today's redundancies and retrenchment would be far less painful if we had faced up to our problems years ago", he declared, from his constituency in comfortable Surrey.

Of course all this "reality" is a far cry from the dream world of tax-cuts, home ownership and new "real" jobs so cynically promised by the Tories during their election campaign only a few months ago.

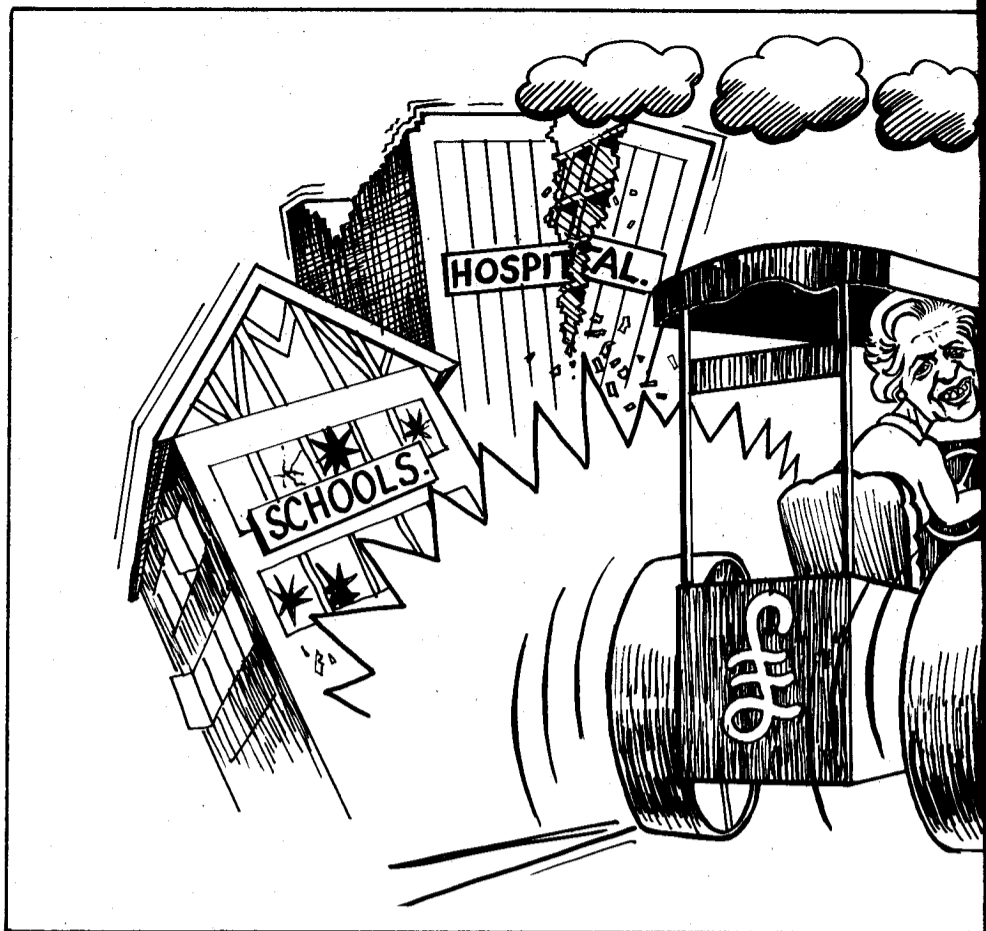
## Cinema advert

Remember that Saatchi and Saatchi cinema advert for the Tories, in which a confused couple wander from queue to queue looking for the cinema queue—and discovering long lines of people waiting for jobs, for hospital treatment and for houses?

Of course the Tories would never dare show such a film again.

But one aspect of the film was valid. The groundwork for the present cuts and the mass unemployment which the Tories are determined to create was laid by the last Labour government.

It was Callaghan and Wilson's policies of seeking simply to "manage" capitalism which led inevitably to spending cuts in health, education and social services, coupled with huge subsidies being handed out to private employers through the National Enterprise Board and other attempts to prop up ailing industry.



# Social service cuts hit poor

Social services will also suffer severely under the Tories' axe-blows.

The arrival of thousands more former public sector and nationalised industry workers onto the dole queues will swell the demand for supplementary and unemployment benefit—thus driving up one area of public spending in the process of cutting it elsewhere.

To compensate for this, existing cases of need must suffer, as benefits are cut back, taxed or abolished altogether by the Tories.

The Labour government's cosmetic scheme to help poverty-line people on supplementary benefit, family income supplement and rent rebates to pay electricity bills seems certain to be an early casualty of the cuts.



Biffen

## Bludgeon

Employment Secretary Jim Prior has called on local labour exchanges to summons long term unemployed men and women and bludgeon them into accepting available vacancies.

Within the DHSS officials have been asked to draw up options for 10%, 15% and 20% cuts in spending.

The Tories are also preparing a new Bill on the social security system, which may well provide retrospective provisions to protect the DHSS against court actions brought by claimants deprived by the cuts of their legal rights.

One proposal likely to be included in the Bill is an extension of the present 3-day waiting period before sickness benefit is paid: a period of up to six weeks is now possible—in a move to shift the burden of payment from the DHSS onto the employer.

The consequences of the DHSS cuts are a major threat to the most downtrodden sections

of society. Elwyn Owen, chairman of the British Association of Social Workers has warned Patrick Jenkins that:

"Frail, elderly people and abandoned children will die as a result of these cuts.

"Cuts in day centres, home helps and social work staff will expose scores of people to unnecessary risks. The Conservative manifesto talked of improving services to those in real need. Where, then, is the mandate for neglect?"

The BASW estimates that a 10% cut in social service spending will mean 28,000 less people receive home helps, 1,500,000 less meals will be served to home-bound patients, and 5,500 old people will be denied a place in a home.

Hostels for the mentally ill and the handicapped will close, and 10,000 abused or delinquent children will be without places for treatment.

Nobody will be safe. Minister for the Disabled Reg Prentice created howls of rage when he bluntly told the Royal National Institute for the Blind that blind people and the handicapped must carry their share of the cuts.

And if Tory plans for a means test on the Death Grant are implemented they will ensure that even the dead will continue to suffer the consequences of Thatcher's ruthless spending cuts.

# OUR POLICIES

For a real alternative to the Tories' "smash and grab" tactics which offer only untold years of misery to the working class, it is necessary to turn not to the present Labour leaders, or to the Labour "left", whose nationalist calls for import controls and state "intervention" in industry offer no prospect of a socialist planned economy, but rather to the struggle for action at every level against the cuts, rationalisation and redundancies as they are threatened.

## Occupy

Factories threatened with closure must be occupied, and the books of the employer opened to show the links between "loss-making" firms and the network of bankers, suppliers, contractors and

retailers that profit from them.

In the public sector, hospitals, schools, nurseries and other facilities in jeopardy as a result of the cuts should likewise be occupied while elected trade union committees examine and publicise the links between the public services and private profiteers.

## Supporting strikes

Supporting strike action must be fought for: in the present wave of attacks, no section of workers can afford to stand back in confidence that their own jobs are safe.

Local councils of action should be formed comprising delegates from labour movement bodies and political parties to coordinate and strengthen struggles on the cuts, on wages and against closures

in industry.

Such councils of action provide an arena in which the question of a socialist programme to defend jobs and living standards can be argued out, and those Labour "lefts" that claim to oppose Callaghan can be put on the spot and can be called upon to put their words into practice or stand exposed.

The growth of such struggles at local level must combine with broader, national-level action on wages, on trade union rights and eventually on jobs and on the cuts.

## Mass action

In this way it is possible to build the kind of mass national action that is necessary to force the Thatcher government out of office, and create the political

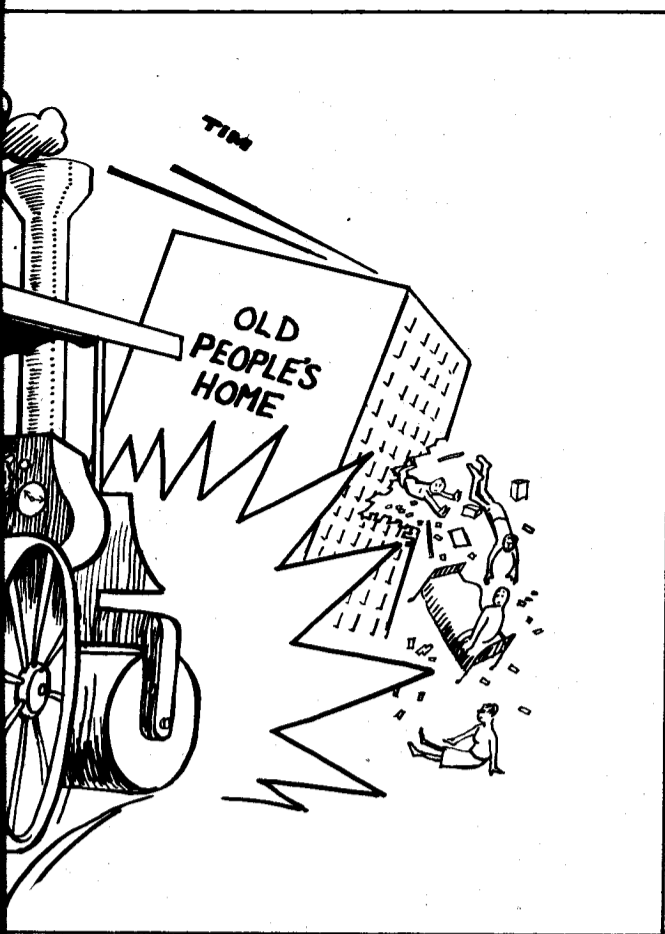
conditions for a serious struggle for the removal of Labour's right wing leadership and the exposure of the empty talk of the Tribune "left".

The struggle for a genuinely representative of the working class, committed to the socialist policies of the nationalisation of basic industry without compensation under workers' management, and the establishment of a planned, socialist economy, could then stride to the centre of the stage.

In its daily fight in the labour movement for action to defeat the Tory offensive and for the building of a revolutionary leadership prepared to lead the necessary struggles, the Workers Socialist League is carrying out the vital political preparation for this situation.



Howe



# Council housing, services grind to a halt

The Tory decision to cut public spending by local authorities by a staggering £360 millions has dire consequences for a whole range of services and thousands of jobs, and brings the threat of rate rises of 50% and over in some cities.

Nursery facilities are a foremost target for cuts in nearly every area; but these are linked to sweeping plans to axe education, transport subsidies, youth clubs, libraries and a whole spectrum of other services.

In case any Labour councils vote to defy the instruction to slash services, the Environment Secretary, millionaire Michael Heseltine, is proposing to include a penalty clause to deal with rebel authorities in a new Bill to come before Parliament in the next session.

Heseltine has made no secret of his desire to punish councillors who seek to use



Heseltine

their powers over local spending to protect existing services.

But, not content to leave matters up to the Tories, Labour spokesman Roy Hattersley has added his own warning against 'another Clay Cross', and urged councillors to use existing powers rather than present a frontal challenge to the government.

## Inflation

A combination of cash limits, spending cuts, last year's wage increases and Tory-fuelled inflation now poses many councils with implementing a 10% cut in services next year.

Even the Tory leader of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, Tag Taylor, has balked at this prospect,

declaring: "I just don't see how the government can possibly ask for total cuts of above 7½%, which in themselves would be quite horrific."

Indeed city Tories have become increasingly embroiled in a factional battle with their rural counterparts, who have been attempting to secure a larger share of government support.

Taylor recently slammed into his Party rivals, pointing out angrily that:

"There are two types of Conservatives, those in the urban areas and those in the shires. The shire people—who tend to have two cars in their garages, pay only £100 a year rates on a standard three-bedroom house, and whose main traffic problems are caused often by cows crossing the road—are in no position to seek a change."

"Our own research shows that there has only been a slight shift in Government support to the cities who have some of the major problems of unemployment and social deprivation."

But there is no real division amongst Tories on the virtual standstill imposed by Heseltine on council house building through a £400 million spending cut.

The Tory-led GLC has led the way openly declaring its intention to end house-building. The GLC itself faces a £21 million cut in its housing budget, while the 32 London boroughs must cut back by £87 million.

Tories elsewhere are meanwhile weighing in with their own cutbacks on housing, which they see as a useful means of forcing workers into the lucrative private market for rented accommodation, or to undertake ruinously expensive mortgages to buy a roof over their heads.

In the Midlands Tory councils are pruning back building programmes totalling £500 millions by nearly 20%—with a £92 million cut.

Council house rents are expected to go up by at least £2 to £2.50 per week.

While the Tories are merry about dishing out cutbacks and suffering to the working class, they scream blue murder if anyone suggests that they should get a taste of their own policies.

When Sheffield Labour councillors warned that the £3 million cut in government grants would be applied selectively to areas that returned Tory MPs or councillors, the Tory agent rushed to the press bleating that:

"This is absolutely no different to the persecution of the Jews by the Nazis."

The idea that the Tory areas clearly voted for cuts and should therefore receive them as a democratic right clearly had no appeal for them.

But of course as a policy to defend workers against the cuts it has no value either.

# Patients die in NHS wreckage

Thatcher's explicit election pledge that the NHS would be exempt from cuts in public spending was worthless from the start.

Indeed the impact of Tory cash limits and VAT increases on health budgets already cut to inadequate levels by Labour Chancellor Healey has brought further devastation.

And this has been compounded by a new call for a £100M cut in NHS spending nationally.

As Health Secretary Patrick Jenkin has spelled out the government's insistence that rigid cash limits must be observed in this financial year, a succession of AHAs have opted for ruthless "temporary" cuts to avoid overspending.

Jenkin has declared that health authorities should proceed full speed ahead with

cuts, disregarding even their national legal obligation to consult the toothless Community Health Councils at local level.

Nor need health authorities engage in prior discussion with doctors or trade unions, Jenkin has announced, while giving his support to the Northwest Thames RHA, which is resisting legal moves by the North East District Community Council to force consultation on the "temporary" closure of a 45-bed recovery unit.

## Little to gain

There would of course be little for health authorities to gain from consulting trade unions and other organisations about cuts so savage that scarcely anyone other than Tory leaders could agree to them.

Lady Robson, chairman of the South West Thames RHA has pointed out that the £100

million "squeeze" on the NHS will mean the doubling and trebling of hospital waiting lists; the closure of whole hospitals or of at least one ward in each hospital in most districts; and produced by the autumn an NHS that is only able to treat emergency cases.

Women now on two year waiting lists for a hysterectomy will now face waits of up to six years, she said.

Lady Robson admitted that her RHA was reluctant to close hospitals in the current crisis because it would be "almost impossible" ever to reopen them.

The S.W. Thames RHA alone faces an increase from 8 to 15% VAT, soaring fuel costs, a spate of price increases and the burden of meeting last winter's pay increases—all on top of a government target of saving £7 to £8 million.

But in other areas health authorities have grasped the nettle and announced plans to decimate health cover.

The Kensington Chelsea and Westminster AHA for instance, is proposing a package of cuts including

\*Closure of all medical, surgical orthopaedic and rheumatology services at St. Mary's Hospital W9—shutting down 244 beds in 9 wards

\*Closure of the chest and rehabilitation wards at St. Mary's Harrow Road.

\*Closure of remaining beds at Paddington Green Children's Hospital

\*Closure of remaining beds at Chepstow Lodge

\*Closure of St. Quintins Maternity Clinic and St. Columba's Hospital, Hampstead Heath

These and other cutbacks prompted the consultants on the AHA's N.E. District Management Team to declare that the proposals "would result in a risk to patient mortality, increase morbidity", and damage to medical education.

Meanwhile the nearby Camden and Islington AHA, faced with the prospect of slashing £4.5 million before the end of the financial year, have pressed ahead with the "temporary" closure of the wards at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital, whose work-in had become a national focus for the struggle against the cuts.

## Protest

And even the President of the Royal College of Surgeons has been moved to protest at the plan to shut down the 80-bed City of London Maternity hospital, and the axing of the casualty department and acute wards at



EGA Hospital: closure begun by Labour, finished off by Tories

the Royal Northern hospital.

Another top doctor, the Professor of Renal Medicine at Guy's Hospital, which falls within the Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham AHA has also taken issue with Tory claims that talk of deaths arising from the cuts is "hysteria".

"It is quite straightforward. If we have a reduction in allocation, we have to stop taking patients on, which means that people will die".

The Area faces drastic cuts as a five-man team appointed by Jenkin takes over the powers of the Lambeth AHA—which voted not to implement the cuts—and set about slashing spending by an immediate £5 million.

Already the 2-ward remnants of St. John's Hospital in Lewisham have been singled out as a target for the axe.

## Intensive care

Of course it is not just adults and the elderly that suffer in this latest wave of cuts. The shortage of intensive care provision for new-born babies in London was recently highlighted by the case of one baby that was turned away from nine hospitals before being placed on a ventilator unit in Oxford.

It turns out that 400 babies a year are turned away from overcrowded and inadequate intensive care units.

As one of the Lambeth AHA rebels, Mr. Derek Prentice, has pointed out

"We were already maintaining patient care at 1977-8 levels. The levels they [the new management] are going going back to are much further back than that."

# Education destroyed

The Tories fought the May General Election pledging to raise educational standards.

But the contempt they have for anyone conned by such election promises was demonstrated recently by Angela Rumbold, Tory leader of the Kingston-upon-Thames education authority, who declared that:

"The public knew and understood the kind of things this government was going to stand for."

Quailing before the Tories' attacks, Sheffield Labourite Peter Horton bleated that even a 2½% cut in education spending would throw up 20,000 teaching jobs in the next year—promising a future of unemployment and frustration for the 20,000 newly qualified teachers.

In fact the Tories are demanding a 3% cut this year, and 5% in 1980-81. Taking inflation and pay increases into account these figures mean 4½% this year and 7% next.

In many areas teaching jobs are already frozen, and in Avon hundreds of teachers will in October receive notice of dismissal on December 31, as the

authority seeks means of cutting 331 full time jobs.

School meals, milk and transport are high on the list for cuts that councils would like to make when the Tories steamroller through new legislation to that effect, saving an expected £200 million per year.

Colleges and universities too are being hit: Polytechnics will need to cut student numbers by 5,000 by 1980-81; universities face a 6% cut back in the number of students; and 450 social science postgraduates have had their grants for further studies withdrawn by the SSRC in a 25% cut.

Adult education classes and discretionary grants are also under the hammer.

Overseas students face a huge increase in their fees—which, in turn, will affect the viability of some whole courses and departments.

In every area teachers face unemployment and worsened working conditions. The youth they teach will suffer from impoverished facilities and themselves confront a bleak future of prolonged unemployment or being pruned into low-paid jobs.



Thatcher

# Foundation of the struggle against Stalinism

By Pru Chamberlayne

These two documents, written in 1923 and 1927 respectively, mark the beginning and the end of the open existence of the Left Opposition in the Soviet Union.

*The Platform of the Left Opposition*, presented to the Central Committee in September 1927, soon prompted the expulsion of 1500 Oppositionists, and their hounding into exile as well as the capitulation of 2500 Zinovievists back into the Stalin camp.

*The New Course* was produced two months after Trotsky's first open attack on the party leadership and the signing of a platform statement by 46 leading members of the party.

Stalin responded by refusing to publish the statement and by disciplinary reprisals, but news of it spread, and in November *Pravda* opened its pages to discussion.

The response was strong. The triumvirate now stepped up its repression, including dissolving the central committee of the Communist Youth League, which had overwhelmingly supported the platform.

But they also adapted to the pressure by issuing a resolution entitled the 'New Course' which declared the need for improved inner party democracy and for the carrying out of the economic policies adopted at the Twelfth Congress—those proposed by Trotsky.

## Adopted

The resolution, bearing the amendments of Trotsky, was unanimously adopted by the Politburo on December 5, 1923.

The articles in *The New Course* are Trotsky's contributions to this discussion.

The intensity of the response within the party, the openness of discussion at that point and the concessions made by the leadership explain the optimistic tone of the articles.

They are much less sharp than his original letter to the Central Committee two months before, and his preface asserts that despite the 'impenetrable mists' that have surrounded the questions of the internal regime of the party and the economy of the country:

"The dust clouds will disperse. The questions will stand out in their true form."

The effect of the resolution, even if interpreted in 'reverse gear' is bound to be intensification of "the independent activity of the entire party collectivity".

The immediate stimulus to Trotsky's attack was the sharpening economic crisis in August 1923, to which Stalin responded by further measures against industry in favour of the peasants.

This produced a massive strike wave as unemployment mounted. The question was now whether Dzerzhinsky, head of the GPU, who had been asked to report on the strike wave and the participation of party members in it, would propose that the GPU be used against party members.

## Economic policies

Here, all too vividly, was illustrated that interrelationship between the internal organisation of the party on the one hand and economic policies on the other, an interrelationship which Trotsky had come to see as crucial, and which is the central argument in both the *New Course* and in the *Platform of the Left Opposition*.

Trotsky insists that it is only by a central economic plan, controlled by a constantly renewed Rabkrin, the Workers and Peasants Inspection, and fully discussed within the ranks



Many of the Left Opposition's supporters were from the ranks of the youth like these Red Army cadets

of the party, that the state administration can be controlled by the party rather than vice versa.

Only in this way can new layers of workers be trained in politics and economics, and party democracy be fostered.

Such policies were crucial for the working class to maintain its leadership over other classes in society.

## Opposite course

Stalin's rule was leading to the opposite of all this. But a full year earlier, in November 1922, Lenin had come to be convinced of Trotsky's views.

Lenin's 'turn' followed Stalin's moves to weaken the state monopoly of foreign trade and also to control the national minorities by autocratic methods.

Lenin proposed to Trotsky that they should form a joint bloc against Stalin and seek to remove him as General Secretary at the 12th Congress. He also proposed that the Central Committee should be enlarged to 50 or 100 and that Rabkrin, then controlled by Stalin, should be thoroughly overhauled.

It should be reduced to 300 or 400 and staffed by 'rank and file workers and peasants, who, however, do not fall into the category of direct or indirect exploiters,' combined with the

party Central Control Commission, and allowed to attend any meetings of the Politburo.

Nothing said Lenin, should prevent the revamped Rabkrin from 'keeping themselves fully informed of all things and from exercising the strictest control over the proper conduct of affairs.'

In addition he proposed that the State Planning Commission (Gosplan) should be given legislative powers.

In fact Lenin suffered his last stroke a month before the 12th Congress.

His two articles on these questions, 'Better Fewer but Better' and 'How we should Reorganise the Workers and Peasants Inspections' were published only after a fight.

However, Krupskaya held back his 'Last Testament' until the next year's congress, and Trotsky refrained from an open attack on Stalin and also from insisting on the publication of the discussion on Rabkrin.

## Theses on industry

Trotsky was no doubt greatly encouraged by the Congress adopting his own Theses on Industry.

But in the event no five year plan was to be instituted until 1928, when it was imposed in the most bureaucratic and barbaric fashion by the Stalinists as a last ditch stand against the

overweening power of the prosperous peasants, the Kulaks, and the technocrats and managerial bureaucrats known as 'Nepmen'.

Trotsky has been warning of the dangers from such quarters since 1920!

Comrades who want to learn

about this background to *The New Course* would do well to read *Lenin's Fight against Stalinism* and also to read *The New Course* in the Pathfinder volume entitled *The Challenge of the Left Opposition 1923-25*, which reprints Trotsky's letter to the CC and the Platform of



Stalin (left) with Bukharin, Kamenev and Zinoviev

Leon Trotsky was born in the Ukraine 100 years ago, in 1879.

In 1905 he was the leading force in the St Petersburg Soviet. In 1917 he fought as a Bolshevik for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and became Commissar for Foreign Affairs after the October Revolution.

After Lenin's death Trotsky fought against the bureaucratisation of the Soviet state by the forces led by Stalin.

This is one of a series of articles on his main writings to mark Trotsky's centenary.

the 46 as well as the Politburo's resolution.

In fact *The New Course* stands on its own as a spirited but serious appraisal of the problem of bureaucracy.

Trotsky himself had banned trade unions during the period of 'war communism' and also banned factions in 1921. But here he warns of the terrible dangers of permanently stifling criticism and independent thought.

The party apparatus he argues must not paralyse but *organise* the initiative of the party and political opposition must be *overcome politically*, not crushed—otherwise it would simply express itself in ultra-leftism.

The most important means of combatting bureaucratisation and of bringing the older generation of the party into a correct relationship with the new was "the education of the party youth, based on personal initiative"

## Conservatism

Most deadly to revolutionary leadership was 'conservatism' of the kind which had afflicted the right wing who insisted on old formulae in April 1917 and who wanted to draw back from insurrection in October 1917.

The same conservatism strangled the necessary turn of policy in 1921 and 1923 in Germany.

He insists on Leninism as supreme revolutionary honesty towards the party and the working class—quite the opposite to the cunning, subterfuge and deception which must be used against the enemy.

The problems of bureaucracy in the party were hugely exacerbated by the syphoning off of active party militants into administrative posts, and of youth into higher education.

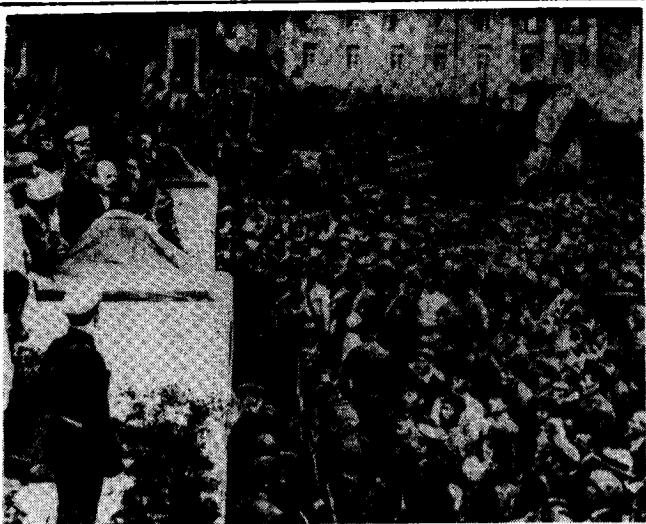
The party was also swamped by careerist petty bourgeois functionaries and the army, always a source of bureaucratisation, was predominantly peasant in composition.

The danger was that wrong economic policies would bring the peasantry under the sway of the new embryonic bourgeoisie, the kulaks and Nepmen.

Only the implementation of the policies of the 12th Congress—a central economic plan to develop industry—could develop the working class numerically and in confidence and bring the correct relationship or 'smychka' with the peasantry.



# What everyone should know about state repression



Lenin addressing a mass rally in 1919

In fact Stalin, in 1924, adopted the *opposite* method of redressing the imbalance in the weight of the peasantry.

He simply swept 200,000 workers into the party through the 'Lenin levy'.

This raw and untrained cadre was easy prey for bureaucratic rule.

Trotsky's insistence on the need for the working class to maintain a position of leadership over the workers' state was twisted by Stalin to accuse him of 'underestimating the peasantry'.

And his insistence on the need for centralised planning was used as an accusation that he believed in facile panaceas.

In *The New Course*, Trotsky answers these slanders. Little did he realise then that Stalin, backed theoretically by Bukharin, would the next year attempt an all-out refutation of the theory of permanent revolution—the theory central to the achievement of the 1917 October Revolution!

In 1925 after the publication of the *Lessons of October* in which Trotsky lays the betrayal of the German Revolution at the door of Stalinism, Zioniev and Kamenev joined Trotsky to form the United Opposition.

It was this joint opposition that produced the Platform of the Left Opposition in 1927 prior to the 10th anniversary of the Revolution.

## Seized

The Central Committee refused to publish it, the printing press of the Left Opposition was seized, and Trotsky was expelled from the Executive Committee of the Comintern.

The 7-hour demonstration in October turned in favour of the Left Opposition but at the next Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and the Control Commission inkpots and abuse were thrown at Trotsky as he spoke.

A demonstration staged by the Opposition on November 7th was broken up and the banners destroyed, and a week later Trotsky and Zioniev were expelled from the party.

But at the 15th party congress on December 2nd when 121 oppositionists signed a statement the Zinovievists deserted.

The main political attack in the Platform is on the 'opportunism' of the Stalinists, their blocking with forces of the bourgeoisie against the working class and poor peasants.

This is illustrated, not just from the dangerous strengthening of the kulaks and Nepmen and the failure to industrialise, but also in the defeat of the German Revolution, the British General Strike and the Chinese Revolution.

Stalinism was blocking with

the right in the German KPD to the extent that the lefts were being pushed into an ultra left split; in Britain they had blocked with the agents of Chamberlain; in China they had pursued Menshevik policies of allying with bourgeois forces of the bourgeois nationalist party, the Kuomintang.

The pamphlet starts with a detailed exposure of the abysmal failure of Soviet economic policy, reflecting the work Trotsky was assigned to on the Supreme Council of the National Economy after he had been removed from the Revolutionary Military Committee.

The composition of the party reflects the political orientation to the better-off peasants rather than to the working class, the middle and poor peasants.

## Appendages

And the state apparatus, and the status of the soviets as mere appendages of the state machine is contrary to the Bolshevik policy of active involvement of workers and peasants in the state machine, the ending of the bourgeois separation of the state from society and of its intimidating remoteness.

The Platform draws a parallel with German Social Democracy, where the revolutionary elements thought they had defeated Bernstein's revisionism, only to find it reasserting itself later as the dominant ideology.

The revolutionary social democrats relied too much on the revolutionary instincts of the working class and underestimated the extent to which the period of peaceful development which had given birth to so powerful a workers bureaucracy and aristocracy, would compel not only the opportunists but the centrists also to capitulate to the bourgeoisie.

"They underestimated the real danger and mobilised the revolutionary rank and file against it with insufficient energy. We are not going to repeat that mistake. We are going to correct, in good time, the course of the party leadership."

Ironically of course the larger part of the Opposition defected within weeks of making this statement.

Also revolutionaries have to assess the correctness of the decision not to split the party at that time, to fight as the champions of party unity who strove to reunite the party with the working class.

The Platform at no point uses the term 'betrayal' against the party leadership, referring instead to 'mistakes' and to the 'weakness' of the party.

Clearly the fight against Stalinism was to be a much more difficult task than Trotsky envisaged at that time. Indeed it is a central problem which Trotskyism still faces!

Victor Serge, born Victor Lvovich Kibalchich in 1890, spent his early political life in the anarchist movement and joined the Russian Communist Party shortly after the revolution in 1917.

He edited the French edition of International Correspondence, helped prepare the 1923 insurrection in Germany and wrote several important books on the Russian Revolution.

He joined the Left Opposition in 1923, was expelled from the Party in 1928 and was several times imprisoned by Stalin's regime.

Deported from Russia in 1936, he re-established contact with Trotsky and conducted a long correspondence with him (most of which is available only in French, see 'La Lutte Contre le Stalinisme', Serge and Trotsky, Maspero 1977).



Searching for arms during the 1905 revolution

Relationships with Trotsky, initially warm, broke down in a series of disagreements which showed Serge's persistent anarchist tendency.

At issue were questions such as the POUM and the Kronstadt mutiny.

Although a consistent admirer of Trotsky, Serge remained sufficiently independent to maintain his own position to the end. By the end of 1938 Trotsky was obliged to issue a public statement 'Victor Serge and the Fourth International', formally disassociating the International from Serge.

## Slander campaign

The pamphlet under review is the first English edition of a French publication of 1926, itself a compilation of articles written in 1920.

Its publication by the British Workers Revolutionary Party is obviously to be welcomed, but it should be recognised as part of the

Victor Serge's booklet *What Everyone Should Know About State Repression* has just been published by New Park Publications, price £1.

It is reviewed here by Ernie Stubbins. Next week Ernie will review a new book on Tsarism's arch-provocateur Malinovsky.

WRP's efforts to give historical and intellectual backing to its shabby 'Security and the Fourth International' slander campaigns against its political rivals in the degenerated Trotskyist movement.

The first section of the pamphlet describes the activities of the Okhrana, the security police of the Russian Empire. It is based on the files and documents of the Okhrana captured by the revolution.

Serge points out that political surveillance begins externally—following of revolutionaries, listening in to telephone calls, intercepting mail etc. Today we

revolutionary organisations, the ethnic minorities, the extreme right wing bodies, philanthropic organisations, scientific societies and even the Jesuits had successfully been infiltrated.

## 40,000

Estimates of the numbers involved run as high as 40,000 agents over a 20 year period.

At one point Okhrana agents were responsible for the entire propaganda machinery of the Bolsheviks in exile.

Here emerges an important point—the limitation of the provocateur.

For the Okhrana to make full use of its position in the propaganda network would have exposed it and put an end to it.

The police forces are constantly forced to calculate the odds between continuing, deepening their penetration on the one hand, and on the other the immediate gains to be made from destroying as much of the organisation as they already know.

## Malinovsky

There were two spectacularly successful examples of penetration into the party leaderships—Azev into the Socialist Revolutionaries and Malinovsky into the Bolsheviks.

Malinovsky even became the leader of the Bolshevik fraction in the 4th Duma in 1913, 6 years after his recruitment by the Okhrana, and enjoyed the confidence of Lenin and Zinoviev for several years.

The implantation of provocateurs was only one weapon in the arsenal of repression.

Serge describes the enormous growth of mail interception, and the development of sections devoted to breaking codes and cyphers.

The extent of scientific methods developed at the turn of the century may be surprising to some readers.

Serge discusses the Okhrana's methods of systematising their observations into network diagrams, resulting in a map of the revolutionary movement and its internal interconnections.

## Failure

Internal documents of the Okhrana showed that they often knew more about the revolutionary organisations than the leaders of those organisations themselves.

In closing the first section, Serge reflects on the failure of the enormous police apparatus to prevent the revolution.

This resulted of course not only from the courage and self sacrifice of the revolutionaries as compared with the self interestedness of the state employees, but also from the causes of the revolution itself—the consequences of the economic crisis.

Although enormous damage could be done to the revolutionary movement, the revolution itself flowed from the logic of the situation in Russia.

Even the provocateurs, despite their ability to damage the revolution, were obliged to serve the revolution.

Even while he was in the pay of the Okhrana, Malinovsky was obliged to act as Lenin's mouthpiece in the Duma.

The real danger of provocation is the distrust it sows in the ranks of the revolutionary movement.

Having discussed the problems of state repression Serge goes on to discuss the problems of working in conditions of illegality.

In this section, and the following section of practical advice, Serge brings together his experience of many years underground work in the anarchist movement in France and Spain (which culminated in the Barcelona uprising of 1917) with the Leninist systematic organisational work which led to the creation of the Russian Bolshevik party.

He begins by showing the need for educational and propaganda work about the nature of the bourgeois state.

The workers must be shown, over and over, that the police, judges, courts etc. represent the interests of the employers, that there is no 'justice' standing over the class struggle.

Beyond this starting point, it is necessary for the party to be prepared against state bans.

Not only is it the official state forces that must be guarded against, but also the private police and investigative bodies.

The conclusion from this section is the necessity of a commitment by party members to illegal work at crucial periods of historical development.

Serge's practical advice is still worth reading, although it is now inadequate in the face of the technical developments in the state machinery since 1917.

He has useful points to make about being followed, taking notes at meetings, about using telephones etc. etc., which should be taken seriously—they kept him alive during many years of illegal political activity.



Trotsky speaking at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern

# INDUSTRIAL NEWS

## Talbot strikers face closure threat

Talbot's UK chairman and managing director George Turnbull last week announced the company's intention to close the Ryton plant in Coventry if the ten-week pay strike is not settled quickly.

Throughout the strike management has stuck doggedly to its original offer of 5½% in response to a pay claim of over four times that amount.

It is clear that Talbot's parent company Peugeot/Citroen is determined to increase significantly the amount of profit it can squeeze out of workers or chop jobs on a grand scale.

### Incentive scheme

Throughout the negotiations management has insisted that extra money will only be available through an incentive scheme.

The benefits in regular hard cash from such a scheme have been so dubious that the union negotiators have so far refused to settle on management's terms.

Many meetings at both Ryton and Stoke have regularly voted overwhelmingly to continue the strikes despite a sustained campaign by management and the local press to push the carrot of incentive payments.

### Rumours

In the background there have been constant rumours that Ryton at least would

be closed if a settlement was not reached. As we go to press a mass meeting of the Ryton plant is being held to report on the abortive negotiations over the last week and to discuss the closure threat. It is not clear what the convenors will be proposing at this meeting. They should refuse to be coerced by the latest management threat and turn instead towards a deepening of the dispute.

As reported in last week's *Socialist Press* the Stoke strike committee has waged an active campaign of gaining support from other trade unionists.

This has included successful moves to stop supplies of spare parts coming in from Dublin. The Ryton strikers should take a lead from Stoke and throw themselves

into a similar campaign—both plants should take steps to seal the docks to all Talbot and Peugeot/Citroen cars coming in from the continent.

At the same time links must be forged with other groups of workers coming into struggle.

### All out strike

At Rolls Royce's Park-side plant a mass meeting of workers there voted to respond to the company's intention to lay-off its whole national workforce by calling for an all-out strike on the confed's engineering pay claim. A unified front of all these forces must be forged in a determined effort to fight the employers.

If Talbot decide to close Ryton then there must be a fight throughout the motor industry for the nationalisation without compensation of the whole of Talbot UK.

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# MINERS PRESS FORWARD PAY DEMAND

Two unions that were led into acceptance of relatively low pay increases in last winter's pay round last week submitted substantial wage demands to the employers.

NUM leaders voted unanimously to put forward a claim for increases of up to 65%—including a minimum surface rate of £80 per week and a top coal face rate of £140.

### Differentials

Other demands include a widening of differentials, a protection of earnings arrangement for miners forced out of coal-face jobs by ill-health, and an examination of a four-day week.

Significantly, the executive also agreed to press for the settlement of the claim by November—which would restore the bargaining position of the union by creating the possibility of strike action hitting coal supplies in the vital winter period.

### Right wing

Such a change will not take place without a fight against both the National Coal Board and the Tory government, which is no doubt uncomfortably aware of the ability of the NUM to force its demands through.

No doubt both NCB and Tory leaders are relying heavily on the ability of the NUM's right wing once more to sabotage united action on wages and to force home a wretched compromise on basic pay rates.

### Lobby

But a powerful and militant lobby of the NUM executive meeting—sporting cartoon placards urging Daly and Gormley not to "rat" on the members this year—provided an indication that a sell-out now under

the Tories will not be as easy as the betrayal in March, when Gormley and co. forced through a 9% deal.

Meanwhile the National Union of Seamen, who also settled for a miserably inadequate increase on the last pay round, has submitted what the *Financial Times* describes as "an extremely large" pay claim for settlement by January 1.

With inflation now well over 15% and rising it is certain that pay demands less than this figure must bring a drop in the living standards of union mem-

bers.

But since inflation continues out of the control of workers or of the capitalist class, it is essential that wages are protected against it.

This means fighting in every union for claims to include the demand for cost-of-living clauses, providing automatic increases to keep pace with inflation, as assessed by elected trade union prices committees.

The weakness of both the NUM and the NUS claims is that no such protection is included.



## 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.

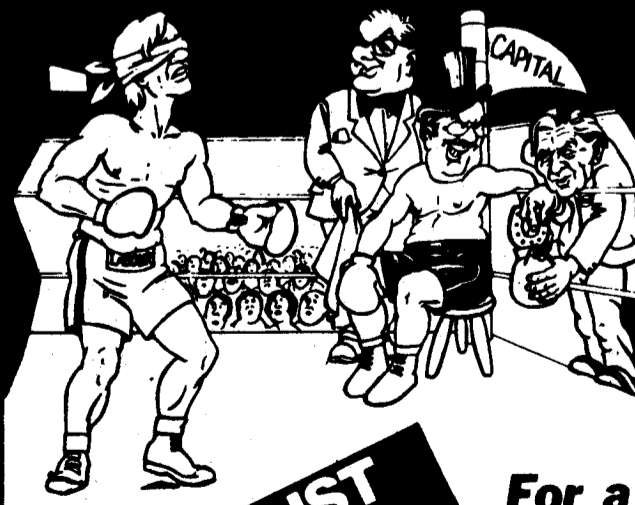
This means fighting for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International.

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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# HULL ROADS BLOCKED IN CUTS PROTEST

Hundreds of parents are blocking the roads in the city of Hull in daily protests against the Tory government's social service expenditure cuts.

Their decision to slash £2.5 million off the education budget has meant an all-out attack on the educational standards of the region.

565 full time posts are to be axed—affecting up to 1,000 full time and part time workers.

Over 200 non-teaching manual posts are to be cut; 185 full-time teaching posts will go; and all adult education classes will be shut down for a year, alongside cutbacks in the youth service and further educa-

tion and the abandonment of the nursery building programme.

Ironically in the face of this attack it is a cut of almost a half in school crossing patrols that has prompted the most bitter protests.

## Blockaded

At 9 crossing patrol locations throughout the city parents are blockading the road four times a day at the times when the patrols would be in operation.

All traffic is stopped as most drivers—particularly the bus drivers—respect the picket.

The parents ram home their message that the Tories are prepared to endanger the lives of their children going to school in

order to carry through their attack on the working class.

On Wednesday of this week, the parents from all the crossing sites are to converge and march onto the city council building.

They will be following in the footsteps of 500 school cleaners and another 500 school meals women who supported GMWU demonstrations at the council buildings last week.

But if the struggle against the cuts in Humber-side is to be won, fragmented protest action will not win it.

It will require the most determined resistance in defence of every job and service threatened by the cuts with the full backing of the trade union movement in united action against the Tory attacks.



Pickets outside Marlborough Street Magistrates Court—one of 18 inner London magistrates courts hit by strike action in pursuit of a pay claim for members of the CPSA and SCPS.

## CAR STRIKERS STAND FIRM

Vauxhall workers from the Ellesmere Port plant remain solid in their strike action on wages, and last week sent hundreds of pickets to the firm's Luton plant in a bid to bring out workers in their support.

The strike is in opposition to a company offer estimated at 17% in the press and 13% by convenors and loaded down with more strings than a grand piano.

### Scab labour

One penalty clause insisted on management's "right" to deploy scab labour to break unofficial sectional strikes, while others included rigid bell-to-bell working, increased productivity and greater flexibility.

In cash terms alone the offer is far short of the Vauxhall claim for a 25% increase linked to a cost-of-living clause and a "shorter" working week.

And although management are reportedly ready to "reword" the clause on the use of scab labour, Ellesmere Port workers have correctly rejected the entire

bundle as unacceptable.

Meanwhile national union officials have been called in on the dispute as it begins to affect car production at Vauxhall's Luton and Dunstable plants.

AS WE GO to press a mass meeting of Talbot workers at the Ryton assembly plant have voted overwhelmingly to defy the Peugeot-Citroen threat to close down the factory and are continuing their 11-week strike against a 5½% pay offer.

The leadership in Stoke has declared its support for this principled stand.

Ryton's AUEW convenor declared in a BBC interview that he now thought the plant would close, but that such threats meant that workers had to "stand up and be counted".

This is true: but at the same time any attempt by management to close the Ryton factory must be met by a policy of immediate occupation backed up by an appeal for support throughout the motor industry and full scale union blacking of all Peugeot-Citroen vehicles at the docks.

**EETPU  
militant  
still  
sacked**

Arthur Pearse, an EETPU Shop Steward at the Vosper Thornycroft naval yard, Southampton, remains victimised and sacked six weeks after playing a leading role in the rejection by the workforce of a new wage deal introducing productivity ties.

Following the victimisation the EETPU Area official E. Scanlon addressed a mass meeting held in the works' canteen and while confirming the victimisation, opposed any support for strike action saying that:

"We (sic) should think of our wives and children before walking out of our jobs."

Scanlon also stated that: "Now the case has gone to an industrial tribunal we should await its outcome before taking further action".

This, in effect, means that no picket is being maintained on the gate, and no leaflet has been put into the shipyard.

In thus betraying an elected shop steward, the appointed bureaucracy have weakened the workforce's ability to defend itself against further imposed wage cuts.

EETPU Branch 293 of which Pearse is chairman, has passed a resolution demanding his immediate reinstatement—a stand endorsed by Southampton Trades Council.

Such support must be transformed into tangible action if management are not to get away scot-free with victimisation of a leading militant.



Picket by industrial civil servants outside the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall in dispute over the staging of their pay claim. Selective strike action is taking place at certain key defence installations.

## BL frontal attack on workers

Throughout British Leyland great confusion has been caused amongst the workforce by the sheer number of different attacks all facing workers at the same time.

There is of course the latest Edwardes plan which not only includes plant closures and cutbacks but continues on the overall speed-up strategy.

In response to this offensive 3,000 Rover workers are now on indefinite strike against the company's attack on their "mutuality" agreement.

Then there are the two-day strikes on the Confed

pay claim which the Cowley workers are blacklegging on (although most Cowley workers are now laid off anyway) while the other plants keep a principled position.

At the same time the November pay review is being formulated. The bureaucratically-organised National Joint Negotiating Committee has decided that it will decide what should be in the claim.

### £120 a week

Generously, they have asked plants to submit "ideas".

The craftsmen's committee is arguing for £120 a week, while the Cowley

Assembly plant is calling for £120 per week plus a cost of living clause to cover inflation.

The Combine Committee has meanwhile called a full meeting on Wednesday to decide its position.

The Cowley Assembly Plant stewards have also correctly called for the claim to be decided on and organised by a delegate conference of one per hundred members in order to take it out of the hands of the NJNC.

Alongside all these struggles the company is busy forcing through its new grading structure.

Most plants have taken the misleading advice of the

Leyland Senior Stewards, and are putting the challenges through procedure.

The danger of this is that the initial feeling created when workers are first told what grade they are in can be lost in weeks or months of procedural wrangles.

The scale of this initial hostility can be seen from the wave of stoppages throughout Longbridge when the grading sheets were first issued.

Similarly in the Cowley Assembly Plant many stoppages have taken place and last week the night shift forklift truck drivers went out for a night.

The most important decision came when the

Cowley Body Plant production workers stewards voted overwhelmingly not to go through procedure but to go to an immediate mass meeting as soon as the new grading sheets are issued, and to recommend to that meeting a vote for indefinite strike action.

### Feeling

The company knows the strength of feeling on this issue in the Body Plant.

Although they were amongst the first to earn the 'parity' payments they are amongst the last to be issued with the controversial grading sheets.

# SOCIALIST PRESS

## Rolls Royce shut down as 'revolt' crumbles

The ignominious collapse of yet another propaganda blitz by the Tory press aimed at breaking the two-day pay strikes called by the Confed was marked this Monday when a pathetic 1,200 workers from the 5,000-strong workforce turned up for work at Rolls Royce's Derby works.

Heavy picket lines at the firm's Anstey works in Coventry acted as an added deterrent there, too, and in neither case did the company's threats of indefinite lay-offs succeed in drawing in enough scabs to start production.

### Locked out

All 30,000 Rolls Royce workers are now therefore declared locked out until the end of the Confed pay struggle.

At Hoover, another predicted 'revolt' produced only two would-be scabs!

Elsewhere, too, the two-day strikes, involving nearly 2 million workers have held solid, despite the limitations placed upon the action by Confed officials who have defied mounting calls for all-out strike action to win the full claim.

The sole blackspot was once again BL's Cowley car plants, where a conscious decision two weeks ago by Body Plant leaders to sabotage the strikes paved the way for a coordinated campaign by the press and the right wing to whip up a mass anti-strike movement in the nearby Assembly Plant.

### Solidarity

But the shortage of components from other firms shut down by the strike have caused even these plants to lay off workers on the two days.

The overwhelming solidarity of engineering workers which is now decimating production throughout the industry will massively strengthen the hand of Confed leaders as they meet this week with engineering employers and ACAS officials.

But there is no doubt that the manoeuvres and efforts to split the strength of the

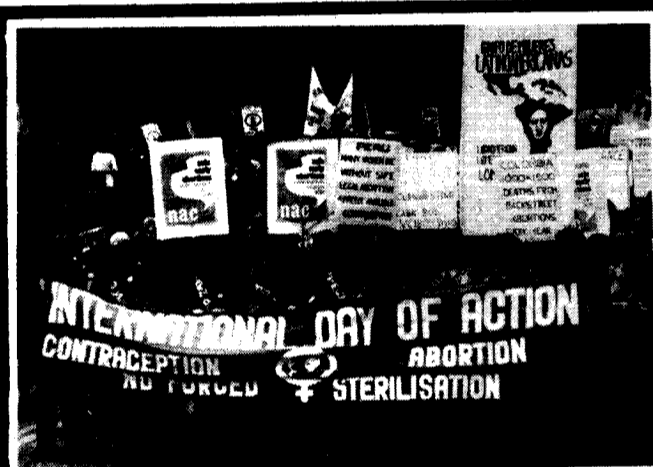
workforce will intensify so long as employers sense that union leaders are holding back all-out action.

It is significant that the most tenacious strikebreaking attempts have been made in Rolls Royce and BL, both of which, through the National Enterprise Board, are controlled by the Tory government.

There should be no illusions. The Engineering Employers Federation is the most ruthless of the bosses'

organisations and working hand-in-glove with Thatcher in confronting the Confed.

Confed leaders must be called upon once again to respond in kind. This means escalating the strike to an all-out indefinite stoppage and to naming the date for a mass national demonstration of engineering workers in which the stubborn militancy that is sustaining these strikes can find a united focus of expression.



## Fight Corrie Bill-Oct 28!

As the campaign builds up for the October 28 National TUC demonstration against John Corrie's anti-abortion Bill, it is particularly important that union branches and Labour Parties are mobilised to defend abortion rights.

SPUC, the viciously anti-abortion "Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child", has estimated that Corrie's Bill would effectively cut legal abortions by 60%; other estimates put the figure as high as 85%.

Far from merely proposing a new, shorter time limit for legal abortion, Corrie's plans would destroy existing charitable abortion clinics that presently account for up to 60% of abortions.

And a rephrasing of the grounds for abortion after this arbitrary time limit would restrict it to cases of proven abnormality of the foetus. Even women who have suffered from German measles will not qualify, since there is a 30% rather than a 100% chance of abnormality.

The result could only be a return to the agony, the exploitation and degradation of illegal back-street abortion, coupled with wholesale suffering by working class women and unwanted children brought into the world as a result of Corrie's mediaeval bigotry.

### Three line whip

In mobilising maximum delegations on the October 28 demonstration union branches must also demand that local Labour MPs pledge themselves to vote against the Bill on its third reading and call upon the Party's NEC to demand a three line whip to this effect is imposed by the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Further information on the campaign for the October 28 demonstration is available from Campaign Against the Corrie Bill, c/o 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8BB.

## Act to stop 'H' Block tortures

Three years after Kieran Nugent became the first Irish republican prisoner courageously to refuse to wear British prison uniform in the Long Kesh concentration camp, 250 prisoners are still continuing the struggle for the restoration of Prisoner of War status stripped from them by the last Labour government.

The struggle, now, as then, takes place under the most horrifying and barbaric conditions of torture, intimidation and repression.

### Left naked

Republican prisoners who refuse to wear prison clothing and thus be branded as 'criminals' for their legitimate political struggle for national liberation are left naked save for a single blanket in damp, dark, unheated cells, with no exercise, no recreation, and no association.

They are allowed only a mattress, a water container, a chamber pot, a blanket and a towel. They are entitled to visits from relatives only once a month.

Food is inadequate, generally cold, and often adulterated. Medical treatment is withheld from even the severely ill.

### Repeated violence

As if all this were not enough, the prisoners are subjected to repeated violence, abuse and physical torture at the hands of prison screws.

On the Wednesday of Mountbatten's funeral alone 42 prisoners were beaten up in an orgy of violence by baton-wielding screws.

Nor is the ill-treatment restricted to male prisoners. In Armagh jail thirty five republican women are 'on protest', confined to their cells for 21 hours a day and subjected to continual harassment by screws.

### Conscious move

This kind of savagery against defenceless prisoners is not simply the expression of the perverted malice by the prison officers: rather it is a continuing and conscious move by British imperialism to force the most militant republican fighters to accept that they are no more than criminals.

Of course the attempt to 'criminalise' anti-imperialist fighters in Ireland is consistent with the present attempts of the Tory government to criminalise trade union activity such as picketing and strikes in the public sector.

### Clear stand

For the crisis-ridden British capitalist class any organised opposition to its control should be made 'illegal' and subjected to the full violence of the state.

Irish republican militants have shown by their courageous struggle over the last three years that they utterly reject such attempts to crush their fighting capacity.

The British labour movement, which also faces the frontal attacks of the same capitalist class that is

currently repressing the Irish people, must take a clear stand alongside the Long Kesh blanket men in their struggle for the restoration of PoW status.

This means, of course, fighting in every union branch and Labour Party for resolutions to the appropriate regional and national bodies calling for an end to the torture and the immediate restoration of PoW status, preparatory to an amnesty.

But it also means coupling this with demanding immediate withdrawal of the British army of oppression which remains the root cause of the continuing war in the six counties.

The Irish war of liberation must be made a central topic of discussion, debate and active solidarity within the British labour movement, whose reformist leaders share the responsibility with the Tories for the perpetuation and intensification of the violent repression of the Irish people.

This year has seen attempts to raise such discussion in the labour movement. Newcastle Trades Council sent a fact-finding delegation to the six counties, which has published a report.

And in May of this year a successful labour movement conference on Ireland called in the Oxford area attracted 150 trade unionists and youth to a whole day of discussion on the war.

From that conference a committee to organise a labour movement delegation to Ireland has met regularly under the sponsorship of a number of local union branches and trades councils.

Its first labour movement bulletin on Ireland has sold out: a second is in preparation, and a public meeting is planned for October 12.

Meanwhile the Oxford NUJ branch has called on the union's executive to organise a special conference on Ireland.

### Withdrawal

Such examples offer ways in which trade unionists in other areas and other unions should be actively campaigning on Ireland and creating conditions to develop the struggle for the immediate withdrawal of British troops.

Trade unionists and Labour Party members can obtain more details on the struggle of the 'H' Block blanket men and the campaign in their support by writing to the H Block information centre, 170a Falls Road, Belfast

## FUND

Reports from the areas indicate that the response to the increase in our fund target this month from £600 to £750 has been very strong. Nearly the whole of the £150 increase has been covered by pledges.

However the need now is to turn these pledges into cash. Half the way through September we find ourselves with £301.70 in hand, far less than half our new target.

But this money is urgently needed. Just last week for example, the cost of distributing Socialist Press rose by 20%—the second increase this year.

All donations should be sent to:

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

Oxford Tote Winners  
2 September—7, 15—304; 9 September—6, 13—140; 16 September—28, 2—161, 94



Sinn Fein supporters highlight 'H' Block fight