



CALLAGHAN DEFEAT

TESTS LABOUR LEFT



Setbacks—Callaghan



Which way now? Benn with conference chairman Allaun

Despite weeks of back-room manoeuvres and intensive lobbying, Labour leader Callaghan suffered damaging defeats last week in his bid to resist democratic reforms in the Party.

A 4-3 margin won a demand for the introduction of mandatory reselection of all Labour MPs, and a similar majority put control of the party's manifesto into the hands of the National Executive Committee.

Hammer blow

Though Callaghan successfully repulsed a parallel move to take the election of the party leader out of the grip of the Parliamentary Labour Party these defeats have struck a further hammer blow at his authority, and marked a high point of the mounting crisis within the party.

Once again these developments in the Labour Party can be seen as a reflection of the growing militancy within the working class in the face of attacks by the capitalist class and a hostile government.

Last October the tenacious pay strike by Ford workers against the Labour government formed the backdrop for the conference defeat of Callaghan's wage-cutting 5% pay policy.

This year's conference took place in the context of continuing bitter pay struggles by 2 million engineering workers, ITV technicians and carworkers at Talbot and Vauxhalls, as well as a mounting mass movement in every area against the Tories' spending cuts, closures and assaults on basic rights.

Appear to lead

'Left' critics of Callaghan, who have recognised that if they are not to be swept aside by such a movement they have to appear to lead it, found themselves unable to back down on the constitutional reforms which they have offered as the panacea to resolve the crisis of leadership within the party.

CUTS

The conference offered bucketfuls of rhetoric against the Tory spending cuts, but voted down a motion that would have called on Labour councils to

refuse to implement the cuts and backed unions taking action against them.

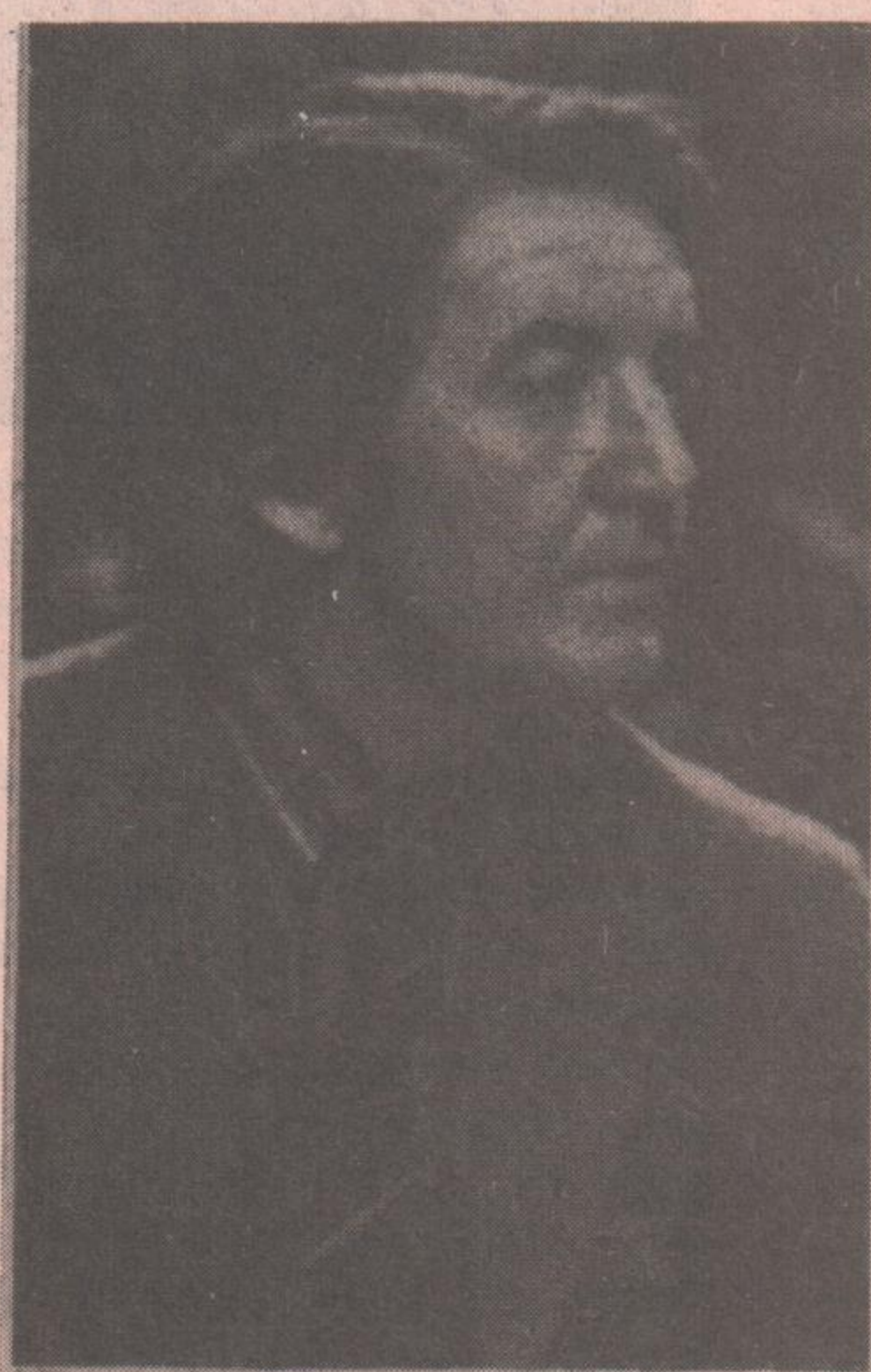
Instead there will be only a "massive and vigorous" campaign of protest while Labour councillors up and down the country do the Tories' dirty work.

Abortion

A lobby by the National Abortion Campaign on Wednesday demanded that the Labour leadership impose a 3-line whip on MPs to oppose the Corrie anti-abortion Bill at its Third Reading.

An emergency motion to this effect had been tabled by the Oxford CLP.

But the motion adopted simply called on Labour MPs to oppose the Bill, leaving reactionaries like Harold Wilson and others to follow their "consciences" into the Tory anti-abortion lobbies.



Skinner

Indeed such is the feeling within the party rank and file and many trade unions that it seems unlikely the impending

party inquiry can easily reverse these changes—though the right wing will energetically struggle to do so, particularly on the manifesto issue.

But what has been consistently left to one side is the question of what alternative policies the 'lefts' can offer to go into the manifesto.

Dodging action

Indeed while the press thundered its opposition to the 'left wing' reforms, the conference itself was avoiding any call to immediate action against the cuts, dodging any attempt to force Labour MPs to oppose Corrie's anti-abortion bill, ducking any challenge to Callaghan's stated opposition to strike action designed to defeat or bring down the Tories, and squirming out of any commitment to nationalise major industry.

Perhaps the most wretched display of the 'lefts' inability

Nationalisation

'Left' figurehead Tony Benn led the NEC appeals for conference to reject a motion committing the Party to nationalise the top 200 monopolies—arguing that they would not carry out such a policy.

Instead a vague motion was passed calling for a plan for a "socialist transformation" along with the pledge to renationalise sold off assets without compensation.

TORIES

Not one of the resolutions adopted by the conference in any way challenged Callaghan's explicit statement that the Labour Party

would oppose mass industrial action designed to defeat or bring down the Tories before the expiry of their five-year "mandate".

While there was talk of action "inside and outside parliament" against the anti-union laws, it was plain that such actions are intended as nothing more than protests.

IRELAND

A motion calling for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland was forced onto the agenda, despite an initial NEC ruling that the matter should yet again not be discussed.

But with 'left' wing opposition from Tribunites Orme and Foot it was defeated on a show of hands—including large numbers of trade union votes.

Workers should check to see which way their union and GMC delegates voted: has there ever been a discussion of Ireland in your union or Labour Party? On what basis were so many votes cast in favour of imperialist repression in Ireland?

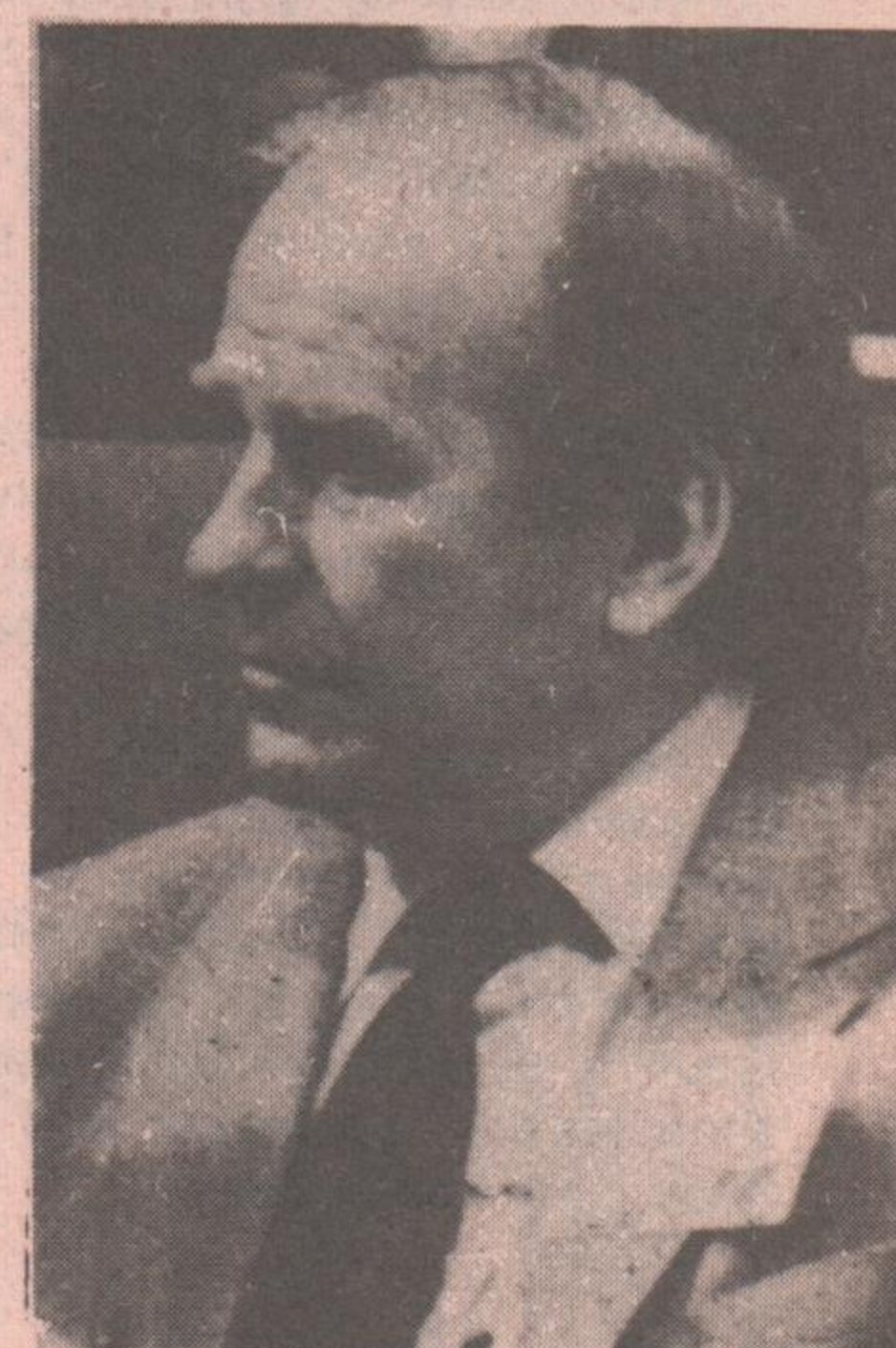
import controls to protect 'British' employers against 'foreign' competitors, and their defence of the NEB—which pumps government subsidies into private industry.

Like Callaghan, the 'lefts' see the road to socialism as one through peaceful, parliamentary reforms: they too fear the mass mobilisation of the working class in independent struggles that could rapidly expose their own hollow socialist rhetoric.

Beginning of fight

This is why Callaghan's defeats must be seen not as the end but the real beginning of the struggle for new leadership in the labour movement.

In stepping up the demands on the 'lefts' to press home the victory by fighting for the removal of the Callaghan leadership and campaigning for alternative, socialist policies, workers can quickly test out these glib-talking 'socialists'.



Orme

In this way many workers will correctly learn from the crisis in all wings of the Labour Party the need to build a principled, revolutionary leadership to take forward their struggles against the Tories.

CONFUSION ON LEFT ASSISTS PERUVIAN DICTATORSHIP

The Peruvian General Strike of July 1977 opened a convulsive period of workers mobilisation which has continued to remain in force ever since, although it has varied in intensity during different periods.

This strike was supported by the capitalist parties, one of which, APRA, controls the Confederation of Peruvian Workers (CTP), and also by the Stalinists of the Peruvian Communist Party who control the most important workers confederation, the CGTP.

This left the dictatorship with no social base whatsoever.

President Morales Bermudez' military government succeeded to some extent in restraining the development of this opposition by buying off the political parties with the promise of elections to a constituent assembly in July 1978, so that although working class mobilisation continued almost unabated, it did so without political leadership.

Overall majority

The assembly opened on 28 July with the bourgeois parties gaining the overall majority as expected, (particularly APRA and the PPC), but the left taking 34% of the votes.

The most successful electoral force on the left was FOCEP, a front which includes on its left wing, three Trotskyist parties—the PRT (the official USFI section led by Hugo Blanco), the PST (the section in support of the Bolshevik Faction of the USFI, led by Enrique Fernandez Chacon) and the POMR (the section of the OCRFI, led by Ricardo Napuri).

On the right of the FOCEP the major figure around which various other small parties and independents are grouped is Genero Ledesma, an independent who, like Blanco, has been active since the sixties.

This front was not based on a socialist programme but did stipulate in its founding statement that it would "make no alliances with bourgeois parties"—parties that were mentioned by name.

The other forces on the left are the Stalinist PCP and the UDP, a Maoist grouping led by Barrantes.

Sovereign

On July 28 last year the Trotskyist groups produced a "resolution" which declared that from that day the military government was defunct and the constituent assembly sovereign.

Not surprisingly they were supported only by a few independents from the Maoist lists.

The massive strike wave continued, the civil servants, bank workers, metal workers and miners were all out and in a militant mood, staging demonstrations that called not only for wage rises and better working conditions but for the downfall of the dictatorship.

Naturally neither the bourgeois parties nor the Stalinists were anxious to take power under these conditions and were only too pleased to leave the military to continue their savage repression and keep their own hands clean.

Left cover

The Stalinists gave a left cover to the bourgeois parties who had moved to a position of outright support for the military, by refusing to call for the downfall of the dictatorship or organising a general strike to coordinate the widespread but random strikes.

In September 1978 the miners strike was broken through hunger, isolation and military attacks, and there was a



Blanco—calling for unity, but furthering confusion

temporary retreat by the working class.

The left was divided over what position to take; there were conflicting calls for a general strike, for the setting up of soviets and a popular assembly and for immediate elections by various sections coupled with a resounding silence from the Stalinists.

In January 1979, when the Stalinists finally called a three day general stoppage, the divisions and infighting of the left and the opposition of the CTP meant that no firm leadership was given and the strike had to be lifted on the second day through lack of support.

The Constituent Assembly was dissolved in July 1979 after

approving a bourgeois constitution and making arrangements to increase the number of deputies in the APRA strongholds for the general elections and reduce representation from the radical constituencies.

A united front of the workers parties was formed behind the call for a one day general strike on July 19—with the support of both the Stalinists and the Maoists.

The success of this strike night of 1979 was a sign of the Stalinists in the Peruvian movement, unusual in Latin America where workers organisations are generally controlled by the nationalist parties.

Declining

No concrete gains were made despite the rapidly declining standard of living of the working class—the minimum wage can buy only half of the government definition of a family shopping basket, and official figures put malnutrition at 65% of the population which makes such gains imperative to the survival of the class.

The level of violence from the troops was also evident with at least three deaths and three thousand arrests on that day alone.

Unfortunately the left now seem to be more concerned over the coming general elections (fixed for July of next year) than the disorganised but still continuing mobilisation of the working class.

In August Ledesma signed an electoral pact with the PSR (one of the bourgeois parties proscribed in the founding document of the FOCEP, a populist 'left' military grouping) and the

PCP, simultaneously expelling the Bolshevik Faction's PST.

He was forced to retract this arbitrary expulsion, but the internal battles of the FOCEP still rage over the entry of the PSR and whether the left candidate for the coming elections should be Ledesma, Blanco or even Barrantes of the UDP.

Primaries

The most bizarre solution to the impasse must be that of the PSR who propose "socialist pre-elections" on the model of the North American presidential primaries, in which even members of the bourgeois parties will be invited to participate!

While these electoral party games continue, the teachers strike continued well into its fourth month.

Their union, SUTEP, (controlled by the Maoist Patria Roja) remains unofficial despite a membership of 130,000.

At least 5,000 of the strikers have been sacked, hundreds have been arrested including their leadership, and there have been scores of deaths during the daily demonstrations which take to the streets and occupy schools, embassies, offices of international organisations and often wind up late at night marching on the gates of the presidential palace.

Rivalry

The political rivalry between the Stalinists and the Maoists is reflected in the lack of effective support for the teachers by the CGTP affiliated unions.

Last month 32 'left' political and union leaders—including the Trotskyists' began a hunger

strike as a substitute for effective support for SUTEP, and this was backed up by calls from the AP and the PPC and various religious leaders for the government to "find a solution to the teachers strike".

Radical

The hunger strikes spread all over the country, numbers reaching 300 at one stage, backed up in some of the more radical provincial cities such as Ayacucho, Cusco and Arequipa by one and two day general stoppages.

Unsurprisingly this propagandist approach affected the government not one whit—in fact the spectacle of the entire left leadership quietly starving to death together in the same building behind massive police protection must have afforded them considerable satisfaction.

Wide forces

That hunger strike is now over, although others continue in different parts of the country.

Its aim was to draw together the widest range of forces behind the teachers strike, but although this helped the morale of the strikers when their strength was showing signs of flagging, it was no substitute for effective organisation of supporting strike action to force the government to recognise the union and negotiate a settlement on the teachers' terms.

As we go to press, we hear that the strike has now ended, with no concessions having been won from the dictatorship and the union still denied recognition.

Mao's heirs attempt to deal with their past

The thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China is a good opportunity to reassess the years' achievements and developments and recent trends.

The celebratory meeting held in London with such experts as Paul Stearns, Neville Maxwell and John Grieggs was a miserable affair which failed on all counts.

Talking to a sparse audience, the speakers were keen not to upset the delegation from the Chinese embassy sitting in the front row.

Only Maxwell expressed unease at the fact that those who had been the bitterest opponents of the People's Republic were now its enthusiastic supporters.

He, of course, failed to analyse why.

Exploitation

Clearly, modernist sees the chance of breaking the Chinese working class with the discipline being offered by the bureaucracy in China.

According to a Japanese survey, Chinese imports of capital goods may reach \$35 billion in the next six years to meet its modernisation programme.

The bureaucracy has made efforts to encourage investment from firms and capitalist governments, with promises of super profits which will be allowed to be removed from the country.

It offers its vast pool of cheap labour which the bureaucracy will discipline for capitalism.

One investment deal has just been announced by Rong Yiren, chairman of the newly-established Chinese International Trust and Investment Corporation, with Eaton-Shen Pacific Corporation of San Francisco, which will supply \$150 million.

Anti-soviet

The other interest imperialism has in China is its anti-USSR role.

A secret Defence Department study concluded that the US should bolster China's military potential and Defence

Secretary Harold Brown is shortly to visit Peking.

The latest round of talks between the Soviet Union and China—the first such talks since the Cultural Revolution—may show signs of upsetting American plans in this direction.

Much "China watching" is also going on at the moment to try and ferret out the present bureaucratic clique's attitude to the "bureaucratic" "Gang of Four".

Ye Jianying, a senior vice-president made the main anniversary speech on behalf of the bureaucracy.

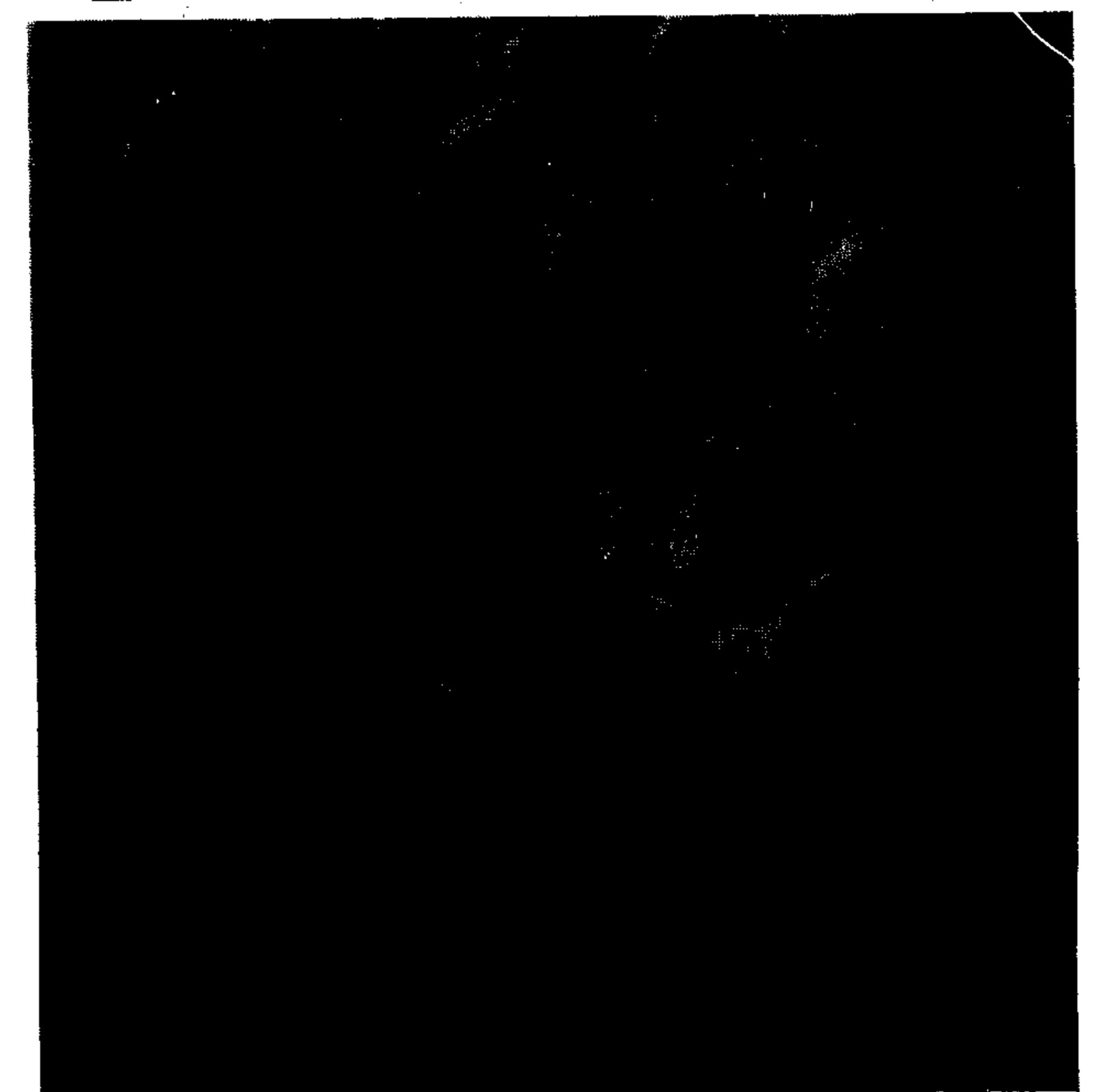
"Contribution"

He listed Mao as one of those (along with Chou En-lai, Chu Te and others) who made an "immortal contribution" to the building of the People's Republic.

The supple-spined Maoists of the British Revolutionary Communist League however—still straddling the fence—are at pains to emphasise that this speech attacks only a "dogmatic understanding" of Mao, not the man himself—and is against "ossification of the revolutionary struggle".

Ye described the Cultural Revolution as "ten long years of havoc".

This is not surprising as most of the twelve new members just brought onto the Peking Political Committee are 70-year olds who were accused of different crimes in the Cultural Revolution or earlier and disgraced.



Hua and Deng

They are now rehabilitated of course, and have mostly regained places lost dozens of years ago.

In this way the "right" faction has been strengthened as against the group around Wang Dongxing, Mao's closest collaborator.

But though they have now apparently gained the confidence to try the Gang of Four, all is still not well in Peking. There are many signs of opposition to the regime.

Stories are filtering out of rioting in Hainan Island involving about 9,000 people with 300 reported dead and wounded.

Opposition groups have also re-emerged, with the publication of a magazine Tansuo (Explorations) which attacks the lack of political justice and defends Mao's memory.

A demonstration organised by the Association for Democratic, Scientific and Socialist Studies, complained at the maltreatment of petitioners and at the lack of any official ceremony to mark the third anniversary of Mao's death.

Despite all its efforts to appear to the contrary, the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy, like its counterparts in the USSR and elsewhere, remains a fundamentally unstable regime balancing nervously between the power of the masses in their own country and the power of world imperialism.

Vitaly needed is a Trotskyist leadership capable of advancing the struggles of the masses in the direction of the political overthrow of the Peking bureaucracy.

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SPANISH 'LEFTS' COLLAPSE PAVES

WAY FOR GONZALEZ-AND COALITION

James Callaghan can draw comfort from the fate of his fellow right-wing reformist leader, Felipe Gonzalez

Last week, by an overwhelming margin (86% of the votes) Gonzalez was voted back into the General Secretaryship of Spain's Socialist Party (PSOE) from which he resigned six months ago.

It might have been a different party from the one which voted six months ago, against Gonzalez' passionate opposition, that the PSOE should continue to define itself as a "Marxist, working class party".

The "Marxists" who carried the day in May were reduced to a mere 7% of the delegates.

Unscrupulous

This was the result of an unscrupulous campaign of constitution-rigging and witch-hunting carried out over the last six months by Gonzalez and his gang.

But the victory of the right cannot be put down to fraud.

It followed from the supine political weakness of the "lefts" of the PSOE.

The opportunity opened up by Gonzalez' humiliation in May found the 'lefts' not leading any struggle for the "Marxism" they profess to believe in, but rather paralysed with fear of assuming any responsibility.

By a set of pathetic,

yellow compromises they have collaborated in "the triumph of Felipe", which they now even shamelessly claim as a victory for themselves!

This laughable claim is based partly on the view that the need for the special congress shows that the party still dominates over any individual leader—almost the reverse of the truth.

The 'lefts' also claim that, though the special congress voted a new definition of the party as a "mass, democratic and federal" party (i.e. not Marxist) their views really prevailed in the resolution which defined the PSOE's relation to Marxism.

Tool

This said that the PSOE took Marxism:

"as a theoretical tool, critical but non-dogmatic, for the analysis of social reality"

and that the party would incorporate:

"Marxists and non-Marxist elements which

have contributed to making socialism the great emancipating alternative of our time..."

While the 'lefts' rejoice about meaningless verbal formulae, Felipe Gonzalez and the right wing have taken an iron grip on the party and are preparing to lead it even further to the right—possibly even into a coalition government with the increasingly hard-pressed Francoists of the Democratic Centre Union (UCD).

An attempt to get the Congress to vote against coalition with the capitalist parties was angrily rejected by the leaders who were willing to be constrained only not to enter a coalition in a "subordinate" position. The Gonzalez leadership and their opponents certainly lived up to the keynote slogan of the Congress—the "slow revolution" to socialism.

The slowest route to any stated destination is to go in the opposite direction.



Felipe Gonzalez

New offensive against Pol Pot

Despite claims by the Heng Samrin regime in Kampuchea that the Khmer Rouge forces under Pol Pot had been all but eliminated, the huge Vietnamese army of occupation has launched a new offensive against the Khmer Rouge positions.

Diplomatically, Pol Pot's barbarous regime continues to enjoy Chinese and imperialist support.

It was once again recognised by the UN last month as the rightful government of Kampuchea.

200,000 force

But at the military level it is believed that the Khmer Rouge's ability to defend its positions against the 200,000-strong Vietnamese force is now very small.

In the last two weeks refugees have told stories of Pol Pot's troops trading their guns for rice to avert famine.

The evidence of catastrophic famine in Kampuchea continues to grow.

The official position of the Vietnamese government and their puppet in Phnom Penh is that there is no famine "except in small pockets".

But they have taken steps in the last week to encourage more relief food supplies from charities in the imperialist countries.

They are also reported to have cut the rice ration to the Vietnamese occupying troops.

And once again people who have migrated from the devastated countryside to the cities are reportedly being forcibly returned to work in agriculture, where no more than 10% of the usable arable land is being cultivated.



Pol Pot

HARDLINE GENERALS' COUP FAILS

The balance of power within the Argentine military has shifted decisively in favour of the ruling faction of Generals Videla and Viola after last week's abortive coup attempt by the 'hardliner' General Luciano Menendez.

Hard though it may be to distinguish between the different variants of repression preferred by the Argentine 'gorillas', there is no doubt that appreciable political differences exist not only between the army, navy and airforce but also between factions within these forces.

Their intelligence corps vie with each other for information, each controls different newspapers and has a distinct constituency inside the bourgeois political elite.

In short, after four years in power the Argentine military is reproducing the contradictions of bourgeois political competition within its 'unified' and 'organic institutionalist' infrastructure.

While there is certain scope for the manoeuvre and bargaining of 'civic' political forms, this is very limited and the normal form of resolution is typically military: the coup.

Menendez is known as the leading figure of the Pinochet school of thought in Argentina blaming Videla for being 'soft' on 'communists' despite the President's record of liquidating tens of thousands of militants.

Menendez wanted to wage a 'holy Christian crusade' in which all opponents of the



Videla

regime would be openly executed in a devastating pogrom.

Videla and army chief Viola, on the other hand, prefer the more sophisticated method of night time raids, the victims of which "disappear".

This is less emotionally satisfying for the homicidal ideologues but appreciably more efficient for the purposes of foreign policy.

One clear indication of this is the fact that the crimes of the Argentine regime have never made the impact on the international working class or even liberal opinion that was produced by those of Pinochet and his butchers in Chile.

There is a sound material cause to Menendez' particular version of the ideology of internal subversion.

Until his downfall and subsequent arrest he was commander of the powerful garrison in Cordoba, in central Argentina, the scene of the mass upsurge in 1969, in which car workers

and students virtually took over the city and impelled the downfall of the Ongania dictatorship.

Cordoba has been the centre of deepening class conflict for over a decade and outside of Buenos Aires it is the single most important industrial and political location in Argentina.

Cordobaza

The 1969 'Cordobazo' had a resounding effect within national politics as a whole and Menendez viewed the current policies of the Videla-Viola axis as inevitably leading to the reappearance of the mass movement.

It transpires that the opening chord to the symphony of 'reconstructed subversion' was the freeing of the bourgeois newspaper-owner Jacobo Timmerman after nearly three years of arrest.

Timmerman is a liberal to be sure, but his guilt really lay not in the few lines of criticism he voiced but in his Jewishness, thoroughly repugnant to the Argentine military which has for decades nursed anti-semitism as an integral part of its unwritten code of conduct.

The release of Timmerman was an easy option for Videla in his attempt to resist the campaign for human rights in Argentina but it does not, either in itself or allied with the removal of Menendez, constitute a significant event for the masses.

Relief from terror and crippling economic conditions for the Argentine workers will only be found in the total defeat of the dictatorship, when its internal disintegration is forced through and driven to the point of overthrow by the mass movement itself organised behind a socialist programme.

Workers murdered in Portugal

Two agricultural workers in the Alentejo in Southern Portugal fell victim on 28 September to the counter-revolution.

Both members of a Collective Production Brigade, they were shot dead, and several other workers wounded, by soldiers of the Republican National Guard (GNR).

The GNR unit was stationed in the Alentejo to protect the land seized from the workers over the last two years to be handed back to the former landowners.

The law which allows this counter-revolutionary attack on the gains made by Portuguese workers and peasants in 1974 and 1975 was passed under the aegis of the Socialist Party government of Mario Soares.

Its implementation was stepped up by the Mota Pinto government against growing peasant and worker resistance.

In the face of such resistance the caretaker government of Maria de Lurdes Pintassilgo (friend and admirer of former dictator Caetano) had announced a suspension of further restoration of land only a few weeks before this new unprovoked attack by the GNR.

The workers' deaths, the first of their kind in the Alentejo since the downfall of

the old dictatorship in April 1974, has already aroused massive anger from the working class, only two months from the parliamentary and municipal elections due to take place in December.

Numerous demonstrations of protest took place last week throughout the country.

The Communist Party, headed by Alvaro Cunhal, put itself at the head of many of these—but this was in order to control the spontaneous anger of its rank and file, not to direct the movement against the reactionary government.

Cunhal declared himself "very worried" by the murders, and rushed to discuss the matter with Pintassilgo who has promised a full enquiry into the incident.

The Socialist Party leadership, which fears the spontaneous mobilisation of the working class at least as much as the CP, has appealed for calm and against "extremist provocations".

But the workers of the Alentejo know very well who bears a large part of the responsibility for last week's armies—the Socialist Party which when a minority government in 1976 introduced a law which allowed the restitution of land to the former exploiters.

Religion fails to stem the class struggle

It is a sign of the total bankruptcy of those seeking a solution to the Northern Ireland "problem" that they place such desperate hopes in the pronouncements of the world's leading exponent of mediaeval thought.

But if centuries of Catholic bigotry could not prevent the nationalist population from taking up a struggle against oppression, then the events of last weekend will have no chance of materially affecting the continuation of the war.

Struggle goes on

A few days after the Pope's plea to reject violence, the Provisional IRA made it clear that their struggle will continue and that they regard the Church leaders as incapable of solving the material problems which gave rise to the conflict.

Though their talk of

seeking to discuss with the Pope showed the visible impact on the republicans of the political climate consciously created around the Papal visit, the IRA has clearly continued with the war.

Minute details

The pages of Irish newspapers in the period before the visit were littered with the most minute details of the preparations being made—from the food the Pope would eat at each meal, to the excited report in the *Irish Press* that the Italian papers taking great interest in the forthcoming visit had reported the collapse of one of the tents in Phoenix Park.

The preparations were however marred by the class struggle, which refused to lie down despite the Pope's visit.

Workers in Limerick complained that their employers were insisting that the day off for the visit should be without pay.

And a pay dispute by drivers who were responsible for transporting electric cable to Phoenix Park continued so near the visit that special generators had to be brought in.

Their dispute with the electricity supply board was only settled after pressure on the workers by the union bureaucrats.

Whatever the capitalist papers say about the Pope's message of anti-violence, the fact that he was unable to specify who he was talking about shows how thin are the lies about "small groups of gunmen".

If the republican movement really had no popular support, and if indeed there was not a full scale war going on in Ireland today, there would have been no difficulty in the Pope spelling out that the enemy was the IRA.

The fact that his speech attacked all violence and blamed politicians for allowing the condition to develop which brought about violence was not lost on Enoch Powell, who said that drawing the connection between violence and social conditions was "dangerous".

Indeed it is dangerous for the capitalists, whose decaying, brutal system of oppression is the root of violence.



PRESS GANG



Lynch crackdown

The Southern Irish Tories of the Lynch government have made their expected move to join hands with British imperialists against Republicans North and South.

The military agreement announced between Michael O'Kennedy, Irish Foreign Minister, and Humphry Atkins, British Northern Ireland Minister, will give official blessing to many military practices that already exist on the basis of a wink and a nod.

British Army helicopters are now being given permission to overfly Southern airspace by six miles in 'pursuit of suspects'.

Intelligence

Joint operations will be carried out between the Garda and the RUC and full exchange of intelligence information will take place.

In the north the appointment of Sir Maurice Oldfield, former head of MI6 is the signal of a massive increase in surveillance in what is already one of the most effective police states in the world.

Sinn Fein activists for



Oldfield

example at present under surveillance for 70% of their lives will now have a watch kept on them every moment of their day. Oldfield is also to have responsibility for breaking down 'misunderstandings' between the police and the army.

These measures, coming in the wake of the Pope's visit to Ireland, are the bitter pill that the Pope was designed to sweeten.

By failing to denounce the Pope's visit the IRA and Pro-

visional Sinn Fein (who have asked for 'clarification' of his position) have left the republican workers in the north rudderless at a crucial moment.

The object of the Pope's visit was to strengthen all the most reactionary forces in Ireland—the Church and the Lynch government in the south and the British Army in the North.

A revolutionary leadership would point to the connection between the fight against the repression of women and the upholding of reaction in the South and the anti-imperialist struggle in the North.

The nationalists of Sinn Fein have done no such thing.

The military agreement that the Lynch government has agreed obviates the need for the British Army to make its well known 'map reading errors' and demonstrates that for British imperialism there can be no territorial rights for any part of Ireland.

The overflying helicopters, which will be used not to chase suspects, but to spy on the border region of the South, are the visible symbol of the relationship between the vassal state in the South and British imperialism.

The Pope, the Labour Party conference and Ireland have taken out a virtual monopoly on what passes for news and opinion pages in the press for the past three weeks.

The orgy of idolatry which filled the pages of the newspapers and turned 'hardened cynics' among reporters into stumbling Pope flatterers was not just an interlude in the day to day cacophony.

There was a purpose in this organised mass hysteria (although the role of the press was actually secondary to the role of television).

It was as if the media had decided to stop waiting for the second coming and organise it themselves.

Subtle

In fact a connecting line can be drawn through all three subjects, obvious in the case of the Pope and Ireland and more subtle in the case of the Labour Party.

All the papers which most hate everything about the Labour Party discovered that they had its best interests at heart.

The *Daily Mail* blew Frank Chappell up into a hero of sanity against a week of lunacy.

But prominent amongst the fears of what might happen at Brighton was the fear that the call for some kind of troops out position on Ireland might actually be carried.

After the public capitulation of the vast majority of 'lefts' to a pro-imperialist position the relief in the press was enormous, to the point of deliberately blurring the fact that there had been a largish vote against the leadership amongst constituency delegates.

Where all three subjects came together was in the agreement reached between Britain and the Southern government over security measures.

The Pope had paid off, and the fizzled-out rebellion at Brighton had not ruffled it.

With delight and headlines about 'M' and 'Smiley' the press did its best to turn the grim ruthlessness of Sir Maurice Oldfield into charismatic jingoism.

It followed it up with sudden praise for the previously hated Lynch government. "Allies Against Terror" was the gloating headline in the *Express*.

Not enough

But just in case anyone thought that this new crackdown was enough for the appetites of Fleet Street, the *Observer* was on hand to demand more and harsher measures.

"What is needed and in order of preference", writes Conor Cruise O'Brien, "is: a large increase in the Garda Special Branch... extradition of IRA men to face trial in the North" [yes, 'trial' is what the *Observer* calls it]... "RUC men present at interrogations."

It would be simpler really to cancel the Southern state and impose direct rule there too!



Lynch

Letters

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.

Right cramps nursery fight

Dear Comrades,

It is clear that in many towns and localities where education facilities are threatened by Labour and Tory spending cuts, nursery campaigns are among the first to get underway.

In the Accrington area the Clayton-le-Moors Nursery Action Group has been formed despite the obvious inability of local Labour Party members to offer any principled lead.

Indeed right wingers on

the Action Committee have been to great trouble to restrict action to the submitting of a petition to the Lancashire County Council Education Committee last month, accompanied by only a token demonstration.

A proposal for a mass demonstration outside the threatened nursery class at the Mount Pleasant Infant School, calling for support from other local nurseries, playgroups and from local trade unionists, was

defeated by the right wing, who argued that this "might upset the headmistress"!

Nor has a suggestion of a demonstration outside the local education offices yet been acted upon.

But Labour councillors have not held back from tub-thumping speeches denouncing the closure and insisting that "the fight must be kept up".

Such rhetoric is of little use if not backed up by con-

crete calls for action that can involve the mass support of parents, teachers, and other local trade unionists in the fight against the cuts.

As the mass movement grows against the Tories, Labour leaders must be judged by what they do, not by what they say.

Yours fraternally,
EJ
Accrington



Oxford nursery campaigners lobby Tory Minister Carlisle

Renationalisation call in place of anti-Tory action



In a decision that outgoing Party chairman Frank Allaun singled out for particular attention in his summing up speech, the Labour Conference called on a future Labour government to renationalise without compensation sections of publicly-owned state assets sold off by the Tories.

The motion, moved by Clive Jenkins on behalf of ASTMS, was openly intended as a means of frightening off potential City investors.

Boardrooms

As Labour NEC member and ASTMS chairman Doug Hoyle declared:

"I want this to be the talking point over lunch in the City boardrooms for the next few days.

"It would be a very imprudent and foolish investment manager who used insurance or pension funds to buy these stocks."

There is indeed little doubt the conference policy will form



Allaun

a talking point, and will no doubt be the butt of a few urbane jokes in stockbrokers' cocktail parties—as speculators and bankers weigh up the slim chances of a Labour leadership enacting such a policy while in government.

With or without a few constitutional defeats for the Callaghan-Healey leadership, there is no way a ritualistic conference decision is going to turn these leaders and a parliamentary party steeped in class collaboration and gradual

reform into a revolutionary socialist leadership prepared to confiscate capitalist property.

Even the successful motion instructing a future government to put all conference motions into practice "at the opportune time" cannot alter this fact—since for a reformist leader there is never an "opportune time" to expropriate the capitalist class!

Reality

The resolution's only opponent indeed hastened to point out the harsh reality that the policy would bring a Labour government into:

"A massive confrontation of unparalleled ferocity with the entire British and international business sector".

There is of course no way that any of the existing Labour leaders would engage in such a confrontation.

Indeed Callaghan has not yet been criticised by even a single one of Labour's 'left' for his brazen statement of Party opposition to mass working class action designed to bring down the reactionary Tory government!

And of course neither Clive

Jenkins, nor UPW leader Tom Jackson (who also strongly backed the renationalisation demand) have offered any perspective for workers who fight now to defeat the Tory offensive through mass action to bring down Thatcher.

Yet it is only on the basis of

such action, the mobilisation of the full strength of the working class, that conditions can be created to force through renationalisation without compensation and remove those Labour leaders who obstruct such a policy.

Facing both ways on the cuts

Warmed-over policies

Still more abstract talk of socialist policies was offered up in the successful motion which reaffirmed the Party's commitment to "Clause 4 socialism".

And a NUPE resolution called on the NEC to draw up a programme for "a socialist transformation of society", including measures:

"to take into public control [?] those industries which are vital to the national economy and extend public ownership under democratic control and management over the major monopolies and financial institutions."

Expand NEB

This "socialist" programme however is apparently to include the expansion of the NEB, whose sole function is to pump state finance into ailing sections of private industry, to assist rationalisation, speed up and increased exploitation.

Also to be included are "compulsory planning agreements" with the major mono-



Opposing nationalisation—Benn

polies which this "socialist programme" would clearly leave intact for the foreseeable future. In other words, under a thin crust of "socialist" rhetoric, the NUPE motion serves up once again the warmed-over remnants of Labour's reactionary 1974-79 government policies of class collaboration and aid to private industry.

A certain 'left' garnish is offered by NUPE's vague talk of a state-owned "national health corporation" including the drug industry, but yet again the prospects of persuading Labour leaders to nationalise the highly profitable pharmaceutical giants in confrontation with the City are, at best, remote. Indeed the real content of

the resolution in relation to nationalisation was indicated by the fact that it was supported by the NEC, while the previous day in his set-piece speech Benn on behalf of the NEC had attacked a motion seeking to commit the Party to the nationalisation under workers' control of the largest 200 monopolies.

Though the motion carried with it all of the woodenness of the 'Militant' group, it was a specific call on the leadership to enact specific policies when in government. In line with Benn's urging it was firmly rejected by the conference.

The conference made a further 'left' gesture by carrying unanimously a resolution calling for a campaign to repeal the vicious 'SUS' law used for the harassment of black youth. There was a tactful silence from the platform on the Labour government's record of supervising an increase in police harassment of youth, and in use of 'SUS'.



Kinnock

A prolonged standing ovation and extensive press applause for a demagogic speech on the education cuts by Neil Kinnock could not disguise the bankruptcy of Labour's policies.

Though Kinnock—whose personal popularity in the constituencies now closely rivals Benn's—pitched into an eloquent denunciation of the Tories' "barbarian assault" on education, and "educational genocide", the Party had already voted in advance to throw in the towel to local authority spending cuts.

Councillors

A unanimous vote on a programme for education "to be set in motion immediately the next Labour government takes office" included votes from dozens of Labour councillors busily engaged even now in carrying out Tory spending cuts in their own areas!

Indeed the very first day of the conference had seen a card vote throw out demands for all Labour councils to flatly refuse to carry out the cuts, and for full support to trade union industrial action against the cuts.

Instead it passed a vague call for a "massive and vigorous" campaign against the cuts to be carried out by some party members, while others in town hall meetings actually axe schools, nurseries and social services, and others, in union offices, collaborate with them and hold back from the necessary strike action.

Covered over

In this context Kinnock's impassioned oratory served the necessary function of covering over the Party's total prostration before the Tory offensive, and offering the eternal "jam tomorrow" in place of action today.

As the Tory press pointed out, such a skilled performance indicates that "comrade" Kinnock is cut out for a high-flying career in the Labour leadership.

A fiery discussion on the planned closure of steelworks at Corby and Shotton gave room for set-piece displays of oratory by MPs. But amid all the arm-waving was a virulent streak of nationalism: every speaker endorsed the reactionary call for import controls, in a bid to foist the unemployment onto 'foreign' steelworkers overseas.

Tribune Group welcome for Foot

The defeat of the right wing in the main conference at Brighton did little or nothing to alter the mood of good fellowship which dominated the meeting organised by Tribune at the Brighton Dome on the evening of Wednesday 3 October.

Chairman of the meeting and Tribune editor Richard Clements began characteristically by reminding the meeting how 'unsectarian' they were.

Just to show this he allowed a lengthy diatribe from Barbara Castle (of 'In Place of Strife' fame) about how she is now apparently working inside the EEC framework "in order to destroy it".

There were clearly few in the hall who did not agree with the heckler who shouted "Why don't you get out?"—meaning not only out of the European Parliament but also of the meeting.

Another example of Mr. Clements' lack of 'sectarianism' was the contribution he allowed

from the most eloquent supporter of every betrayal of the last Labour government—Deputy Leader Michael Foot.

Foot, of course, did not embark on the hopeless task of defending the Callaghan gang, but confined himself to attacking the Tories and telling Wedgewood Benn, (who shared the platform with him) to "grow up".

Double think

No doubt he can have every confidence that Benn will, in good time, grow to his own stature of double think and betrayal.

Benn himself declared that the real division in the conference was not between left and right—but between the mass media and the delegates!

This allowed him to engage in a series of demagogic attacks on the press and on the BBC where he described, quite correctly, a 'hostility to the labour movement that is nothing short of a scandal'.

The only vague commitment he made to action was a state-

ment that he was less concerned about 'entrism' in the Labour Party than with 'exitism' by those who had long since ceased to support anything for which the labour movement has stood.

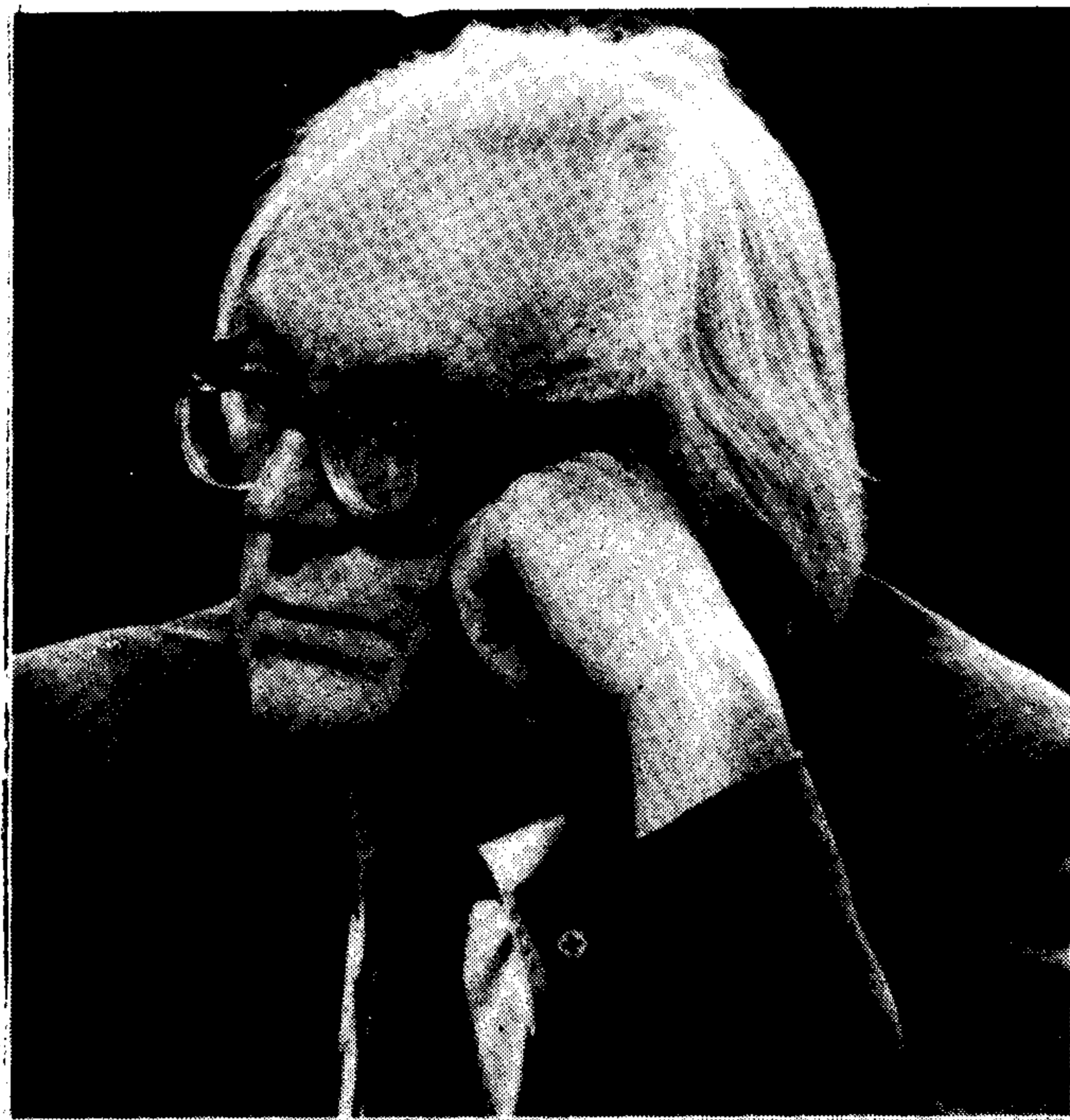
It remains to be seen whether this will mean that in the future Benn and his colleagues on the NEC will be held to granting appeals against the witch-hunting of left wingers by local right wing cliques, when their appeals come through.

Benn compared the 'constitutional wrangles' within the Labour Party somewhat improbably to great battles of the past like those of the Chartists and the Suffragettes.

Eric Heffer, at least, was much more honest.

Despite the conference victories of the week, he said, they were only at the beginning of a long, hard battle.

With leaders like those assembled on the Tribune platform, the truth of this statement was inescapably demonstrated!



Foot

USFI Xth WORLD CONGRESS

Part Three

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USFI) is undoubtedly the largest and most widely known of the currents that have emerged from the post-war crisis of the Trotskyist movement.

With thousands of members and sections or sympathising sections in dozens of countries, it is viewed by many militants as "the" Trotskyist Fourth International.

The Workers Socialist League does not share this view. We see the USFI as a movement that has departed on numerous key questions from the positions and method put forward in the Transitional Programme on which the Fourth International was founded in 1938.

We know, of course, that the two other main groupings that lay claim to the title of "Fourth International" are both now substantially smaller than the USFI.

Both of them—the Healyist "International Committee" (run by the British WRP) and the "Organising Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International" (run by the French OCI)—certainly hold political positions as bad or far worse than the USFI on many questions and are themselves (like the USFI) wracked by internal crisis.

Disorientation

But the bankruptcy of their rivals is in our view no argument for recognising in the USFI the exclusive continuity of the Trotskyist movement.

Portugal: 1974-76:

two faces of opportunist adaptation



SWP leader Barnes

Our criticisms of the SWP's positions in Portugal in 1975 do not imply that we support the very different positions taken by the International Majority Tendency and summarised in the document 'In Defence of the Portuguese Revolution' by E. Mandel, P. Frank and L. Maitan.

This document, and the other positions of the IMT in Portugal, are as far away from the Transitional Programme as those of the SWP.

While the SWP saw the existing reformist leaders as the 'defenders of the rights of the masses', the IMT sought and thought they had found acceptable 'leaders' within the officer's corps of the bourgeois army!

Carvalho

The IMT's position in relation to the 'left' talking COPCON chief Carvalho is one of the clearest instances of their failure to project a line for the independence of the working class and of their search for a spontaneously generated non-working class and even anti-working class leadership for the 'revolution'.

What emerged from the Mandel, Frank, Maitan document, and appeared in its extreme form in the LCI's (International Communist League's) participation in the Popular United Front (FUP), is a clear and conscious support for the 'left' section of the bourgeois army officers, under Carvalho.

The IMT failed at every turn to analyse events in Portugal on the basis of the class forces involved. Thus the Armed Forces Movement (or rather, the Carvalho/Goncalves wing of it) was analysed subjectively as 'left', and later alongside the CP and the left groups as opposed

to the 'right'—which in mid-1975 included the Socialist Party.

In the same way they refused to give a class definition to the state. The SWP's claim that it was a military dictatorship was rejected only on the superficial grounds that Portugal was 'the freest country in the world'.

Perspective missing

With the class perspective missing from their analytical tool-box, it followed that Trotskyism was missing from their political line.

Instead of fighting for the independence of the working class through presenting demands which could have united workers against representatives of the bourgeoisie (such as the army) and against their own collaborationist leaders, the

IMT pursued a line which actually supported the collaboration of the CP and the left groups with the AFM.

The IMT leaders supported continued rule by a section of the bourgeois army in 1975, not only against any 'Portuguese Kornilov' but also against any demand for an SP/CP government.

They raised no demand for a break of workers' organisations with the AFM.

On the contrary, they saw the AFM as being the midwife of soviet power, which the IMT appeared to regard as virtually an immediately-realizable objective.

They did not explicitly make the immediate demand 'All power to the workers' commissions or peoples' assemblies', but they came close to it by an exaggeration of the extent of dual power and through such idealistic statements as the



IMT leader Mandel

following by G. Michaloux in *Inprecor*:

"In Portugal the governmental power is vacillating while the power of the rank and file is taking shape. It already has a name: the People's Assemblies, which will elect a National Assembly of Workers and Soldiers. The National Assembly will form a Workers' and Peasants' Government..."

What need party?

If everything was so assured then what need could there possibly be for a Trotskyist revolutionary party? What need was there for the Transitional Programme?

This inexorable advance towards soviet power was helped, according to the IMT, by the Guide Document passed on 8 July by the AFM assembly.

According to Michaloux: "The 'guide document' incorporates and thereby encourages the development of the self-organisation of the workers... (It is) a clear advance in relation to the Action Plan of the Revolutionary Council."

The IMT were, therefore, more than ready to accept an unelected bourgeois, military, popular front regime which, they said, had produced 'the freest country in the world today' as a stepping-stone towards 'soviet power'.

The LCI participated in the 10,000 strong demonstration of July 16 whose main slogans included 'Unity of Workers with the progressive wing of the AFM' and 'Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly!' (a purely sectarian anti-SP demand).

Infamous front

These positions taken by the IMT leadership led directly to the signing by the LCI of the infamous Popular Unity Front,



Centrists marching behind the banner of the Uni

in which the LCI joined various left groups and the Stalinists of the CP.

The accord they endorsed supported the anti-working class 5th Provisional Government under Goncalves, the Guide Document passed by the AFM assembly, and the concept of a military-people's government.

The IMT attempted to deny parentage of this utterly unprincipled move; but the family resemblance is, unfortunately, unmistakable.

The IMT defended the principle of this pact which was based on class-collaborationist objectives. It questioned only the tactics:

"The LCI made a bloc with working class parties... there is no principled ground on which to object to that. It does not represent crossing class lines.

"The important thing is whether the objectives and platform of the bloc are correct or not.

"We believe they were not; the leadership of the LCI believed they were. This is a difference in tactics not principles." (RMP, p.26)

The policies which resulted in the signing of the FUP (which later became, with the departure of the CP, the "Revolutionary Unity Front" (FUR) are justified by the IMT as an example of the defence of the Portuguese Kerenky (Carvalho) against the Portuguese Kornilov (Spinola, etc).

Of course, the fight against Spinolism reaction was part of the fight of the working class against the capitalist class.

Trotskyists naturally had to be in the vanguard of that fight, whose class character was not altered by the fact that the 'Portuguese Kerenky's' might opportunistically decide to take the side of the masses on particular occasions.

The FUP/FUR agreement, however, like the IMT policy which led to it, is based on a different position—it is an agreement in which working class organisations come to the defence of the Kerenky's.

Class collaborationist

This is an entirely different matter from allowing the Kerenky's to fight alongside them.

That this class collaborationist position was not abandoned within the IMT despite criticism and self-criticism can be seen from the position taken in the Presidential elections in June 1976.

There leading members of the IMT publicly argued that it might or would be correct to vote for the 'left' bourgeois military candidate, Carvalho, as opposed to the CP candidate, Pato.

The differences between the two main USFI factions on the question of Portugal became at times so sharp that one SWP spokesman said that they came



Carvalho

whose post-war period has been characterised by profound political disorientation and a continuing series of incomplete and opportunist splits and fusions.

The forthcoming XIth World Congress of the USFI is however an important event. It offers Marxists the opportunity of assessing in more detail the stage of development of the political crisis which has characterised the USFI's existence since its formation in 1963.

Such an assessment is no easy task. Unlike the IC and the OCRFI, the USFI is the very opposite of a politically monolithic grouping consisting of satellite "sections" grouped round a national-based party.

Rather the USFI is a deliberately heterogeneous body, a consciously created hodge-podge of widely varying positions, analysis and practice,

straddled by a leadership which—for all its weaknesses and divisions—is definitely internationally based.

The USFI makes a virtue of the fact that within its ranks currents holding completely opposing political views on issues of programme and practice can exist side-by-side—even when such differences on topics such as strategy and tactics in Portugal 1974-6, the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea and the analysis of the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua reach a level where rival USFI factions find themselves potentially or actually on opposite sides of barricades, publicly denouncing the line adopted by their own "comrades".

The USFI therefore is no fixed entity: it is a sum total of divergent factional currents which continually shift and

switch position in response to the surface developments in the class struggle.

Untenable

At its Tenth World Congress in 1974 the main factions were the Leninist Trotskyist Faction, politically supporting the formally "orthodox", opportunist positions of the US Socialist Workers Party, and the International Majority Tendency, clinging on to the ultra-leftist and guerrillaist schemas of the USFI's European Secretariat.

But the untenable positions taken by both the LTF and the IMT during the Portuguese events of 1974-6 and the Angolan war led to a sharp realignment of forces which now shapes the coming XIth World Congress.

The bulk of the USFI's

Latin American member sections and sympathising sections broke with the line of the SWP and the LTF and, led by Nahuel Moreno's Argentinian PST, formed the 'Bolshevik Tendency'.

The growing challenge from these forces, combined with the complete collapse in the credibility of the IMT's guerrillaist perspectives of 1969 and 1974, pressured both the European and SWP leaders into a hasty dissolution of factions and the formation of a new, "united" leadership prior to the XIth Congress.

Omissions

It was this new majority leadership that drafted the five main documents tabled for the Congress. But their manifest

failure to reconcile past political disagreements is demonstrated by the pattern of conspicuous diplomatic omissions and evasions in the documents.

The Bolshevik Tendency has in the meantime declared itself a Faction dedicated to the removal of what it calls a 'Castroist current' and an "unprincipled bloc" at the head of the USFI and the restoration of "orthodox" Trotskyism.

The USFI leaders for their part have mounted vicious public attacks on the Simon Bolivar Brigade organised by parties of the Bolshevik Faction for intervention in the Nicaraguan revolution.

These attacks go so far as to endorse the action of the FSLN leaders in expelling members of the Brigade from the country!

Increasingly the language used in these attacks is that

appropriate to a split rather than an internal debate on politics.

A much lesser threat is seen in the statements produced by a new, 'Leninist Trotskyist Tendency' which has also emerged, with forces in a number of sections, pledged to "correct the errors" of the existing USFI leadership.

The USFI in short is a movement wracked by the most profound internal crisis and contradictions.

In assessing its development and its problems we can not only better grasp the political problems within it but also pinpoint central issues on which clarity is essential in the struggle to reconstruct the Fourth International as an authoritative international centre for the necessary Trotskyist world party of socialist revolution.



Popular Front in support of the Fifth Provisional Government



Militant soldiers from the RAL 1 regiment marching through Lisbon in a mass demonstration

example of that amalgam of ultra-leftism and adaptation to bureaucrats and bourgeois forces which has been the special hallmark of the IMT of the USFI.

It abandons all the lessons of the political struggle of the Bolsheviks and the left opposition.

In the first place, it confused soviets—the independent organs of workers' power, which existed only in embryo in Portugal in 1975—with workers' committees established under the guidance of a reforming group of bourgeois military officers.

Second, it abandoned the slogans of formal (bourgeois) democracy at a time when, far from having soviet rule, Portugal had a non-elected government answerable to no elected body, dominated by officers of a bourgeois army.

The slogans and demands of formal democracy at this point would have retained all their power as they did in Russia in 1917—not as an alternative to the building of soviets (as the IMT made it) but, on the contrary, closely linked to the building of soviets, whose demands at that stage should have included bourgeois democratic rights.

Lessons of October

Reflecting on the experience of 1917 Trotsky says:

"The experience of Russia shows that during the progress of the revolution, the proletariat organised in soviets can, by a correct policy, directed toward the conquest of power, draw behind it the peasantry, fling it against the front of formal democracy embodied in the Constituent Assembly, and switch it onto the rails of Soviet democracy. In any case, these results were not obtained by simply opposing the Soviets to the Constituent Assembly, but by drawing the masses towards the Soviets while maintaining the slogans of formal democracy up to the very moment of the conquest of power and even after it." (Problems of the Chinese Revolution, pp 187-188)

Third, the IMT turns soviets into a fetish in exactly the way that Trotsky on many occasions

warned against.

In the History of the Russian Revolution he writes:

"The soviet form does not contain any mystic power... Of all the forms of revolutionary representation, the soviet is the most flexible, immediate and transparent. But still it is only a form. It cannot give more than the masses are capable of putting into it at a given moment."

Fourth, it is not only soviets which were fetishized but, what was worse, fake 'soviets', which were planned to be dependent on the bourgeois military government.

It was the task of Trotskyists to expose these 'soviets' as a manoeuvre by a section of the bourgeoisie. Trotsky again had warned of such a possibility:

"As if soviets cannot be a weapon for deceiving the workers and peasants! What else were the Menshevik-Social Revolutionary soviets of 1917? Nothing but a weapon for support of the power of the bourgeoisie and the preparations of its dictatorship. What were the Social-Democratic soviets in Germany and Austria in 1918-1919? Organs for saving the bourgeoisie and deceiving the workers." (The Revolution in

India, Its Tasks and Its Dangers' Writings 1930, p151)

All in all, for the IMT the central task for revolutionary socialists was to encourage the construction of Soviets—even 'soviets' linked to a section of the bourgeoisie army! Everything had to be subordinated to this.

This contrasts sharply with the real central task of Trotskyists, which was to construct a revolutionary party to lead the working masses to socialism.

Extend gains

Of course, such a party could be constructed only on the basis of a programme to defend and extend the gains made by workers and to expose their misleaders.

And the building of authentic soviets would be a major part of such a programme, but could not be a central objective.

To the IMT, soviets, even 'soviets' established from above by a bourgeois military government with workers' parties ex-

cluded from them, became a magic formula.

There was no insistence on the independence of the soviets from the bourgeois state and no recognition that it was only under the leadership of a revolutionary party that soviets could become the instruments of socialist revolution.

In this way the IMT, too, in the programme compromised both the organisational and programmatic independence of the working class.

Socialist Press

In Socialist Press during this time we recognised the need to build and unify soviet-type committees completely independent of the bourgeois AFM.

But we recognised also that these organs were not yet strong enough to form an adequate alternative source of power to the bourgeois state.

Given also that the great majority of the working class in most parts of the country remained loyal to the main workers' parties, we continued to call for an SP/CP government, but one which was answerable to the developing independent organs of workers' power rather than to a so-called Constituent Assembly which was compromised with the bourgeoisie AFM.

This policy was an application of the Transitional Programme.

It provided a concrete demand which recognised the objective and subjective reality, recognised the combined nature of the tasks facing the Portuguese working class in 1975, and upheld the unity and independence of the working class.

A party fighting in the mass movement for these demands, along with the other demands of the Transitional Programme, would have been seen to represent a clear alternative direction to that followed by the Stalinist and reformist leaders and adapted to by the parties of the left, including those claiming to be Trotskyist.

No easy task

We do not argue that to build a revolutionary leadership, even given the enormous oppor-

tunities opened up by the fall of Caetano, was an easy task.

We do not argue that any group could have done it without in the process committing many errors—especially a young, inexperienced group of comrades.

But it is clear to us that the much more experienced leaderships of what were then the main factions of the USFI made the task more difficult and not only committed errors but pursued lines which would inevitably be the source of continual errors.

Although the policies of the main factions appeared diametrically opposed to each other—bringing them almost to being on opposite sides of the barricades—they both, in our view, grow from a common root—the poison of Pabloism.

The Pabloite method brings a continuous tendency away from the independence of the working class at the head of all the oppressed masses, towards adaptation to non-proletarian forces—whether they be petty bourgeois forces (Castro, Carvalho and the AFM) or the bureaucratic castes which dominate the workers' states and the mass workers' parties.

United

Since 1976, the ex-IMT and the SWP have to all appearances united on the question of Portugal. The two USFI groups in Portugal have fused (though the PRT (Workers revolutionary Party) has since the split in the LTF supported not the SWP but the opposition Bolshevik Faction) on the basis of an agreement on today's tasks, and an accord not to discuss past differences.

But, unpleasant as it may be, such differences must be discussed as part of the process of learning the lessons of experience which can be the only way towards forging a revolutionary leadership.

Continued next week

MARXISM AND CULTURE

Words like *culture*, *cultivated*, *civilised*, *civilisation*—not to speak of *beauty*, *elegance*, *harmony* have become so contaminated by bourgeois ideology as to be almost unusable.

This is the first problem which anyone proposing to write about 'Marxism and Culture' faces.

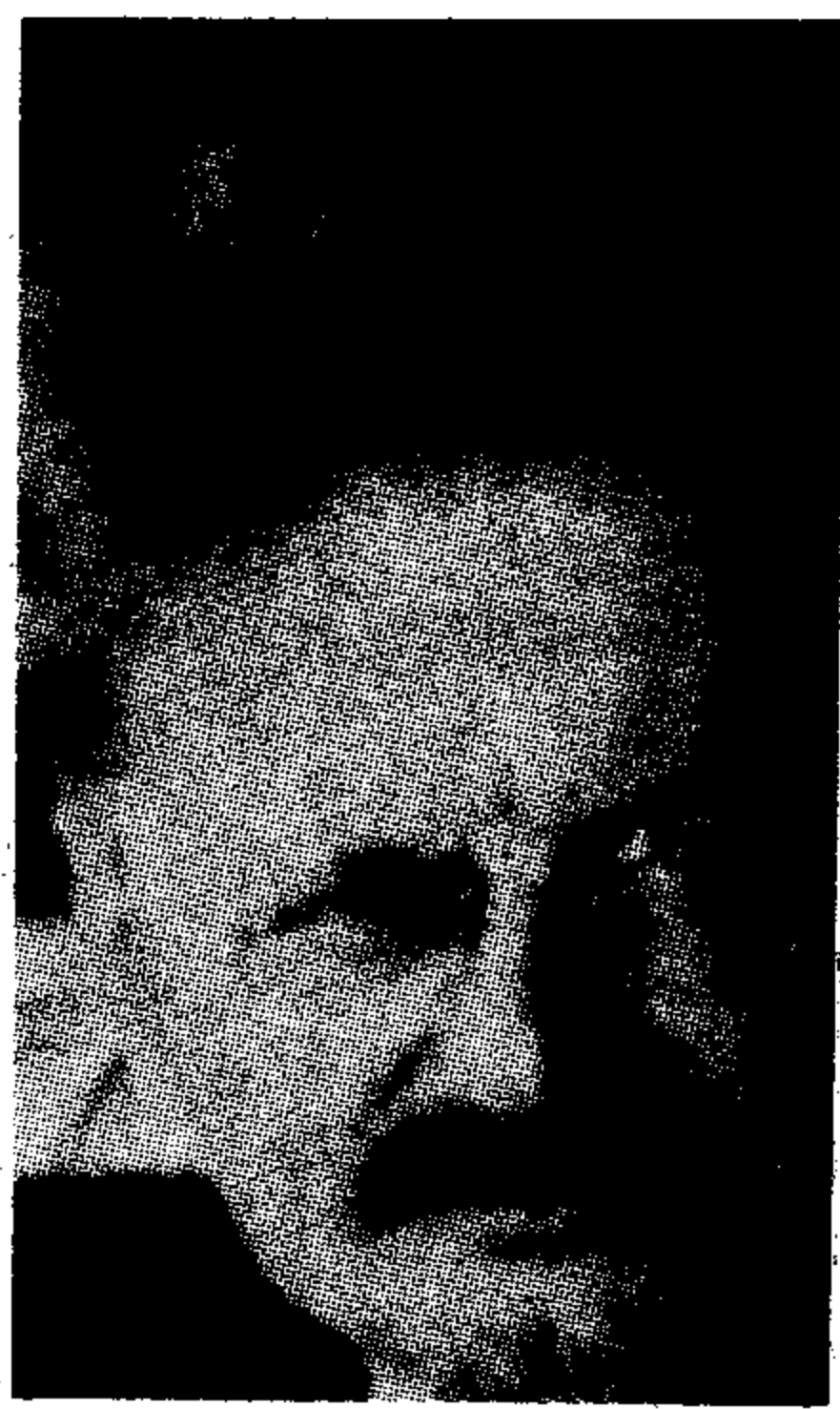
The second problem is that 'culture' is a deeply ambiguous term. It can mean, for example, the valued art-works in a society, and the processes of producing, distributing and 'consuming' these.

Or it can mean nothing less than a society's 'whole way of life', as when one speaks of 'Soviet culture'.

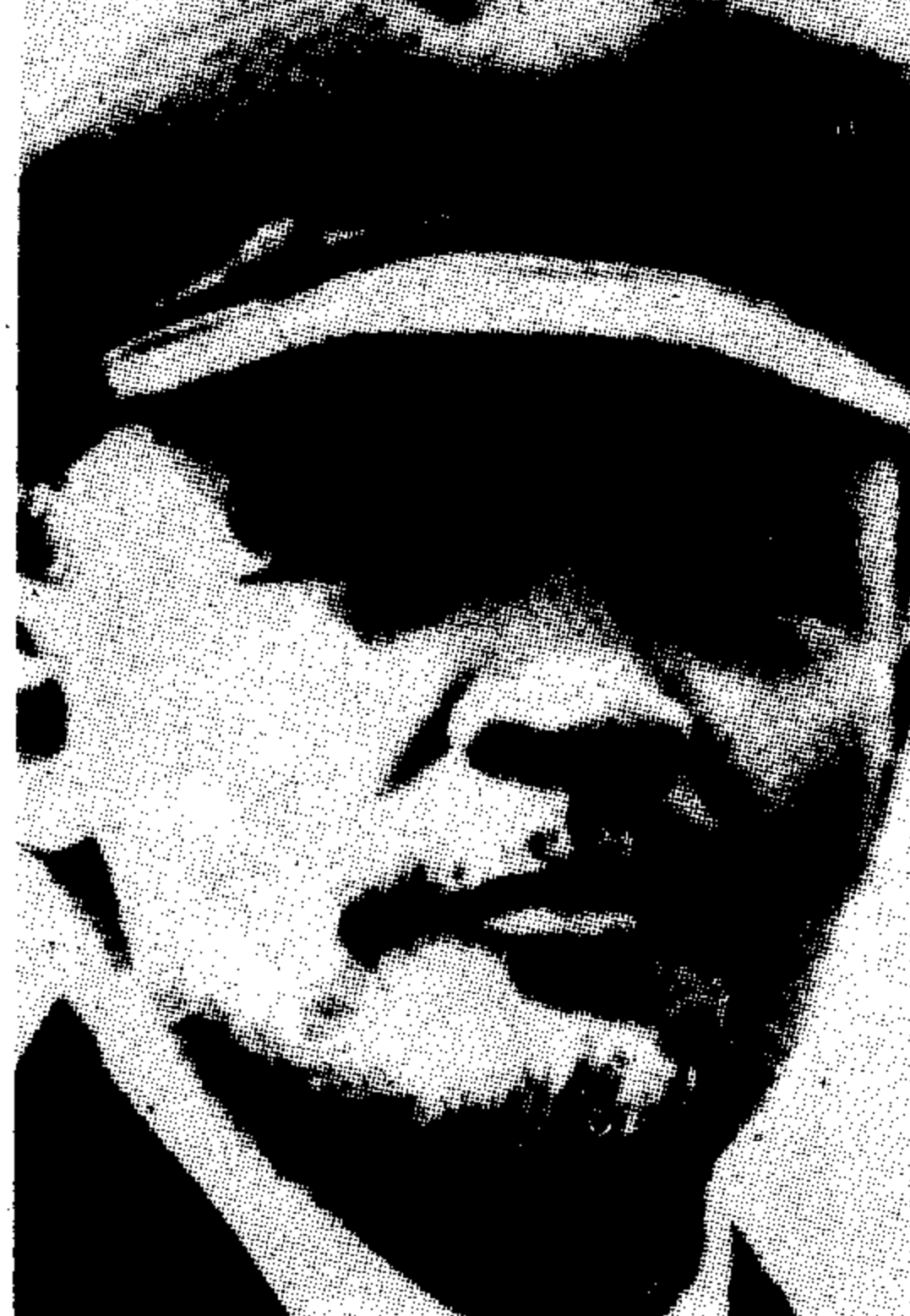
Both of these definitions are in fact ideological.



Marx



Trotsky



Lenin

Elitist

The first is narrowly elitist, itself the product of class-society: it includes Raphael in culture, but not rugby league.

The second is so broad as to be meaningless: by including *all* activities and institutions in 'culture' (political, ideological, economic and so on), it conveniently collapses together distinct social practices into one vague whole.

If culture covers everything, then it clearly means nothing—its only opposite is Nature.

This, indeed, is the position known to Marxism as 'culturalism', which grants modes of production and the Marx brothers equal status.

More usefully, culture can be seen as a set of social practices, usually symbolising certain significant meanings and values, which are marked mainly by their primarily non-functional nature.

Saxophone

Such a definition should be handled with care: EMI obviously find producing records very functional indeed.

But there is a difference between blowing a saxophone and blowing your nose, at least with the more expert practitioners of the art; and it is this difference which is at stake in defining 'culture'.

It follows from this that culture is more than a matter of the arts: reading Goethe and

Is art an optional extra, or the culmination of man's struggle for existence? Should it be designed to serve a practical purpose, or directed towards 'higher', 'spiritual' and abstract values? What interest has the working class in understanding and mastering the art and culture of the capitalist class?

TERRY EAGLETON examines the problems of arriving at a materialist understanding of culture.

keeping goldfish are both, in this sense, cultural activities.

It also follows that there is no kind of activity which is always, eternally, cultural, and another kind which is always eternally not.

An object may be a cultural artefact for one historical epoch but not for another: it is doubtful that the ancient Greeks regarded the Parthenon as 'art' in the sense that we do today.

Keeping goldfish in order to profit from their sale is not 'cultural' in the sense that keeping them for enjoyment is.

And if what counts as 'cultural' is socially and historically relative, so is what counts as 'great' culture.

Given a deep enough historical transformation, a future society may find Shakespeare quite irrelevant, in which case he will cease to be 'great art' and become no more valuable than Bruce Forsyth.

Marx asks in his Introduction to the *Grundrisse* why ancient Greek art retains an 'eternal charm'. But who is to

know that its 'charm' will indeed be eternal?

Just as any activity can become cultural, so any part of culture can become a centre of ideological struggle.

Culture is part of the class-struggle. This does not necessarily mean that the culture which 'reflects' one class's experience enters into conflict with the culture which 'reflects' the experience of another class.

Chamber music

For one thing, culture does not merely reflect class-consciousness: it helps to constitute it.

And though certain cultural practices are directly related to certain classes (chamber music and the upper middle class, for example), they still remain an area of class-contention.

The music of Beethoven is the product of the bourgeoisie, but its 'use-value' isn't necessarily confined to that class. It can be fought for—wrested from—the ruling class, and given a meaning within the revolutionary movement.

Such a Beethoven would not be 'the same' Beethoven as the bourgeoisie's: no culture is appropriated without being transformed.

Every social class, every historical epoch, re-invents the art-works it receives for its own purposes.

It might turn out that Beethoven, or Shakespeare, could not be appropriated in this way—that they had nothing to say to the revolutionary working class, in which case they could safely be consigned to the museum.

Eternal

But the point is to find out in practice—not to presume, like Georg Lukacs, that bourgeois culture will continue to be eternally valuable, nor to take the ultra-leftist line of some of the Russian Futurist artists and dogmatically propagate the slogan 'Burn Raphael!'

Both of these attitudes, in fact, reflect bourgeois views of culture: Lukacs's in its idealism,

the Futurists' in their narrow pragmatism.

Indeed it is remarkable how tenacious has been the grip of bourgeois ideology over the whole history of Marxist cultural theory. Marx and Engels themselves laid the basis for a genuinely materialist theory of culture, but their own occasional writings about art remained for the most part conventionally Hegelian.

The first major Russian Marxist art-theorist, Georgi Plekhanov, cobbled together his theory out of the two main bourgeois ideologies of his time, positivism and neo-Kantianism.

Even Lenin himself admitted to being something of a conservative in cultural matters, and had little sympathy for experimental art.

Trotsky, one of the greatest Marxist cultural theorists of all, still resorts to idealist terms like 'greatness' and 'genius', and closely supported the leading Left Opposition spokesman on art, Voronsky, who believed in such things as the 'essence of beauty'.

Classless

The period after the Bolshevik revolution was one of fierce contention over culture, posing questions of vital importance to revolutionaries today.

Should the aim be to build a proletarian culture, or to strike directly for the classless culture of socialism? Should art be seen as a 'reflection' of given reality, or as an instrument for forging a new reality, a material force of production which could organise a new consciousness?

Should experimental art be condemned as mere decadent individualism, or celebrated as the cultural equivalent to political revolution? What attitude should be assumed to the inherited culture of class-society: should it be discarded, integrated, transformed?

How far should art be 'party-minded', directly shaped by political imperatives, or how far should the individual artist be left ideologically free?

Should art be strictly



Do works of art have an 'eternal' quality?

functional, part of an improvement of material life, or should it still be seen as an end in itself?

Does art reproduce ideology or does it transcend it—should it realistically reflect the actual, or romantically celebrate the potential, the socialist future?

With the tightening grip of Stalinism in the Soviet Union, the great cultural debate withered and died.

At the first Soviet Writers' Congress of 1934, Stalin's cultural henchman Zhdanov propagated the bankrupt doctrine of 'socialist realism' and put paid to a whole era of rich cultural debate.

"The art of the Stalinist period", writes Trotsky, "will remain as the frankest expression of the profound decline of the proletarian revolution".

Georg Lukacs, the 'greatest' Marxist art-theorist of the century, becomes the Stalinist watchdog of culture in the 1930s; denouncing all experiment as bourgeois decadence, insisting on the continuity between bourgeois realism and 'socialist' writing, and thus reproducing in the cultural arena the Popular Frontism of the political sphere.

Left Front

What was lost, above all, was the moment of the so-called Left Front in Art in the 1920s—those Bolshevik artists (Futurists, Constructivists and so on) who had insisted that what was needed for revolutionary culture was more than just a change in the ideological contents of art.

What was needed, they argued, was a revolution in the means of cultural production themselves, which would take writers and artists out of their studios and studios into the factories, farms and workshops, to harness their talents to the needs of the revolution.

It was not, they claimed, just a matter of transforming the 'line' of the artist: it was a question of overturning the existing social relations between artistic producers, distributors, readers, actors, and audiences, by exploiting the material forces of production to create new art-forms.

Pioneering work

If that Soviet tradition was crushed by Stalinism, it lingered on in the Germany of the 1930s, with the pioneering work of the theatre director Erwin Piscator, the Marxist critic Walter Benjamin, and the playwright Bertolt Brecht.

It survived, too, in the tradition of the socialist theatre movement *agit-prop*, which, however deeply deformed in political content by Stalinism, strived with its 300 European

groups in the 1930s to destroy the social relations of artists and audiences established by bourgeois theatre.

Such movements followed in the great tradition of the Bolshevik theatre director Meyerhold, who celebrated the third anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution by taking over a whole town and producing a play which included a 15,000 cast, real guns and a real battleship.

Meyerhold was destroyed by Stalinism—not surprisingly, because in those days culture actually had an impact.

It is not for nothing that the Nazis were extremely interested in hiring the talents of the German Communist Party theatre director, Piscator.

If Marxist cultural theory has become a rather less politically disturbing force since that time, it remains true that culture nevertheless has its importance for revolutionaries.

For culture is one way in which individuals in class-society are formed; cultural revolution is therefore central to ideological transformation.

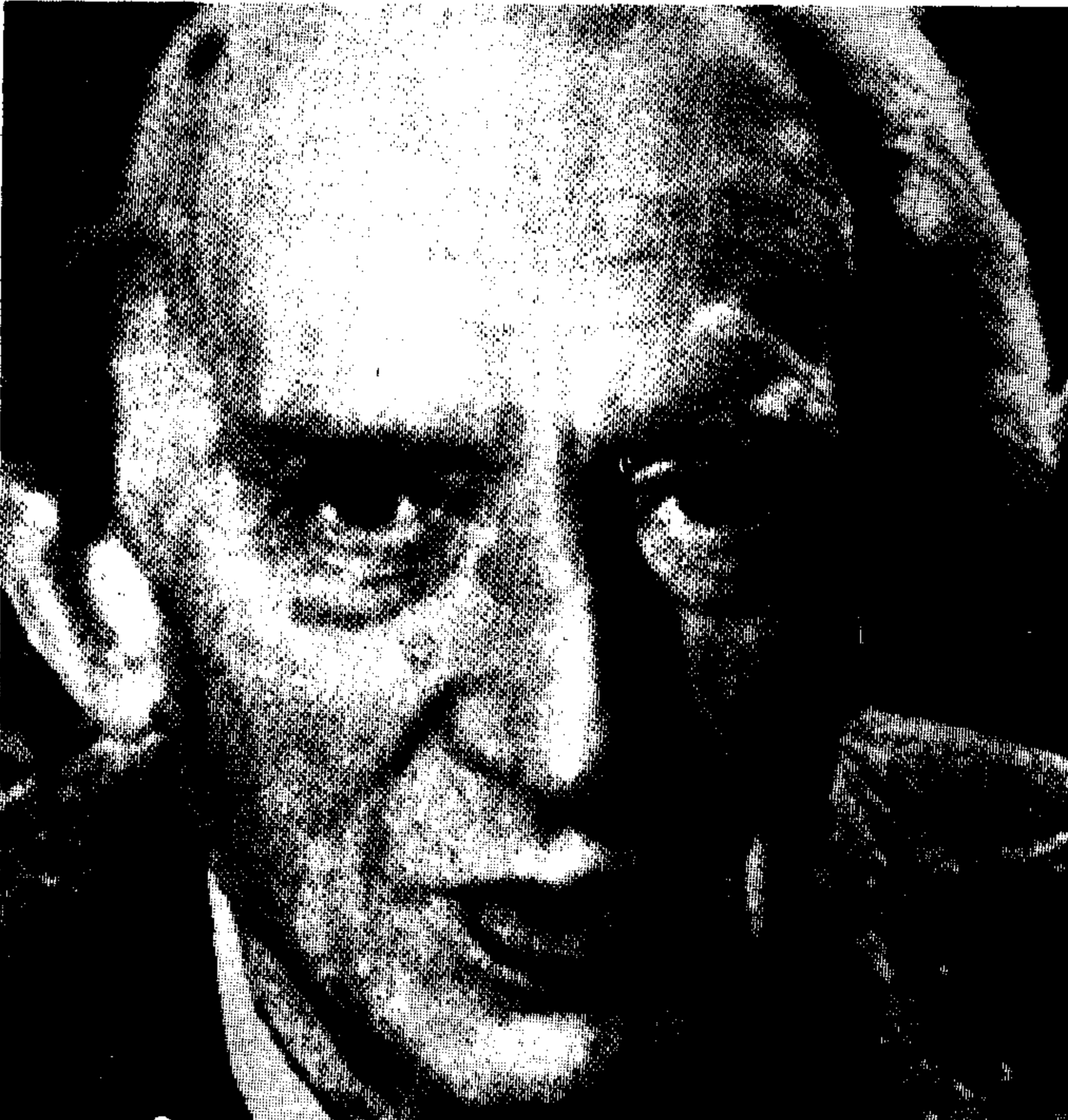
Socialism concerns not only the production of a new economy, but of a new individual; and culture is a peculiarly effective form of shaping such individuals.

It engages with the human senses themselves; it is entwined with the very roots of language and perception; it penetrates deeply into the unconscious, and carries ideological positions straight to the nervous system.

Men and women do not, of course, live by culture alone. Far from it. Yet the assertion of Marxism is that in the end they will.

Once released from the oppression of labour, men and women will be able to live and move within that 'surplus' existence we now call 'culture', rather than in the realm of material necessity.

Cultural revolution has a rightly subordinate place within the revolutionary movement as a whole. But in the end—in the very end—culture is what it is all about.



Lukacs



Stalin

Fascist thieves fall out

By Ernie Stubbins

The much publicised internal warfare of the National Front has taken a dramatic new turn, with an open statement in the NF's monthly journal *Spearhead* about a fight for control of the Great Eastern Street headquarters building 'Excalibur House'.

The faction around Deputy Chairman Andrew Fountaine, which seems to base itself on a common hatred of Martin Webster—the NF's 'National Activities Organiser' appear to have found a crucial weakness in the Front's constitution.

No control

NF Fuhrer John Tyndall has discovered, to his alarm, that the NF has no legal control over the property company set up to run the headquarters and the chain of NF premises across the country which is one of his cherished dreams.



Kavanagh

This is particularly ironic because, in a recent series of articles in *Spearhead*, Tyndall argued strongly for the NF to concentrate on building a strong basis of material assets—buildings, social clubs, publications.

"The Excalibur Club must and will become a model for the opening of similar clubs in every town and city in Britain", he wrote last July.

How bitter then, to have to admit in September that the Excalibur Club had served an injunction against him.

This confusing state of affairs is blamed upon one



Fountaine

Paul Kavanagh, who was supposed to have dealt with the arrangements for setting up the property company.

As a result, the majority faction has gone onto the offensive.

On July 29 the Directorate removed three trustees from the property company, including Fountaine and former NF President J. Harison-Broadley.

On August 5 the Directorate demanded the agreement of the minority to the principle of NF ownership of Excalibur House—isolating Fountaine, Kavanagh and two of their supporters.



Webster

By August 24 they had passed a motion of no confidence in Kavanagh.

It seems that, temporarily at least, Tyndall and Webster find themselves on the same side.

Many of the attacks against Webster are based on the hatred of gays by many fascists, and there is evidence that the British Movement is intervening on this basis in the NF faction fight.

A recent issue of the BM's paper 'British Patriot' offered assistance to the anti-Webster groups in the NF.



Fascists hoist Union Jack against Troops Out demonstration

Certainly the BM appears to have made some growth among the skinheads and lumpen elements, at the expense of the NF.

However, even in the BM there are factional problems.

Former BM leader Colin Jordan continues his endless search for ways to unseat Michael McLaughlin, and other BM organisers have recently been exposed as having joined the tiny SS Wotan grouping.

Obviously the crisis in the British extreme and fascist right caused by the General Election is

beginning to go very deep.

It will go further under the pressure of continuing economic depression.

This does not mean that the danger from fascist organisations has passed, far from it—as BM attacks against the Persons Unknown benefit dance show.

It is increasingly clear that the fascists are turning to physical attacks on left wing events and there is an obvious need for creating seriously organised workers defence forces in threatened areas to defend immigrants and the labour movement.

How safe are UK atom tests?

The UK Atomic Energy Authority recently published its annual report, describing a series of experiments which are intended to demonstrate the safety of the fast reactor—the key to British capitalism's strategy for cheap energy.

The pro-nuclear lobby will be greatly encouraged by these results when they press for the building of the commercial demonstration model of the fast breeder.

The series of experiments reported by the UKAEA is quite alarming, testing various forms of breakdown at the Dounreay research establishment.

It is claimed, for example, that UKAEA has demonstrated that it is possible for the liquid sodium coolant to come into contact with the nuclear fuel without the violent reaction which many scientists expected.

UKAEA also state that in overheating tests, the system does not run away into ever accelerating activity, but automatically slows itself down as

the temperature rises.

The final series of tests are supposed to show that the reactor can stand up to a complete failure of the coolant pump system.

But even the UKAEA admits that this test has only been tried at a fraction of the normal output level of the prototype fast reactor.

Obviously these experiments will have to be studied in much greater detail before making a policy on fast reactors, but there are important questions to be asked about the safety of the experiments themselves.

What the UKAEA failed to report is just how much damage would result from a failure of any of these tests, and how they go about calculating the odds between the commercial benefits of a successful outcome and the horrifying risks of a failure.

We are not told who has the power to authorise these tests and on what basis of information they do so.

We are not told either, about what safety precautions were taken to protect the population in the event of a disastrous "experimental" failure.

Many workers will consider that the secret practice of conducting these tests is a further consequence of rising fuel prices, pushing the Government ever faster into a nuclear development programme.

The major risks associated with these types of tests call for a policy of workers' control over the whole nuclear industry and its safety aspects in particular.

The crucial decisions must be placed in the hands of elected bodies of workers and sympathetic scientists, with full, unimpeded, access to all relevant information, both financial and scientific.

Only on this basis can the working class allow nuclear projects to proceed.

Newham Council has voted to support a petition to Parliament opposing the use of rail lines and sidings through Stratford, East London, for the transport of spent nuclear fuel.

The waste fuel is en route from power stations in various parts of Southern England to Windscale for treatment. When local residents became concerned, councillors began to investigate the question of powers to control nuclear traffic.

It emerged eventually that, despite a confusing mass of regulations and safety standards, neither British Rail nor the nuclear energy authorities were under any obligation to consult or even inform the council about the transport of nuclear waste.

Crucial decisions affecting the lives of possibly thousands of people are being made with no reference or responsibility to any democratically elected body.

'Master race' theory flunks test

The August issue of the National Front's journal *Spearhead* contained an extremely distasteful article on Charles Darwin (No. 3 in a series on 'Great British Racialists'), seeking to attribute some of the NF's racist views to Darwin in his book 'The Descent of Man'.

The clumsiness of the attempt speaks volumes for the dismal intellectual level prevailing in the NF.

The anonymous author tries to foist upon Darwin the theory of Carl Vogt, that different human races were descended from different ancestral species.

Volume

In fact, as the author himself admits, Vogt's volume of lectures was translated into English in 1864 and 'The Descent of Man' was not published until 1871.

The author claims that Darwin's book 'refers constantly' to Vogt's work.

There are in fact 11 references in a total of 1031 pages (in the 1906 London edition). There are nearly 40 authors to whom Darwin refers more frequently.

If we were replying to a serious scientific contribution we would not stoop to point out that the author's reference to Vogt springs from the fact that Vogt's name appears on page one of Darwin's book.

In this case, however, it



Members of the NF's 'master race'?

appears that the author has read page one and no more of Darwin's book.

If he had persevered as far as Chapter VII he would have found that Darwin explicitly rejects Vogt's view thus:

"Those naturalists . . . who admit the principle of evolution . . . will feel no doubt that all the races of man are descended from a single primitive stock."

The fascist writer's ignorance is not confined to Darwin but extends also to his adopted favourite, Vogt.

Vogt was in fact active in the German revolutionary movement of 1847-9, and was removed from his professorship after the victory of reaction.

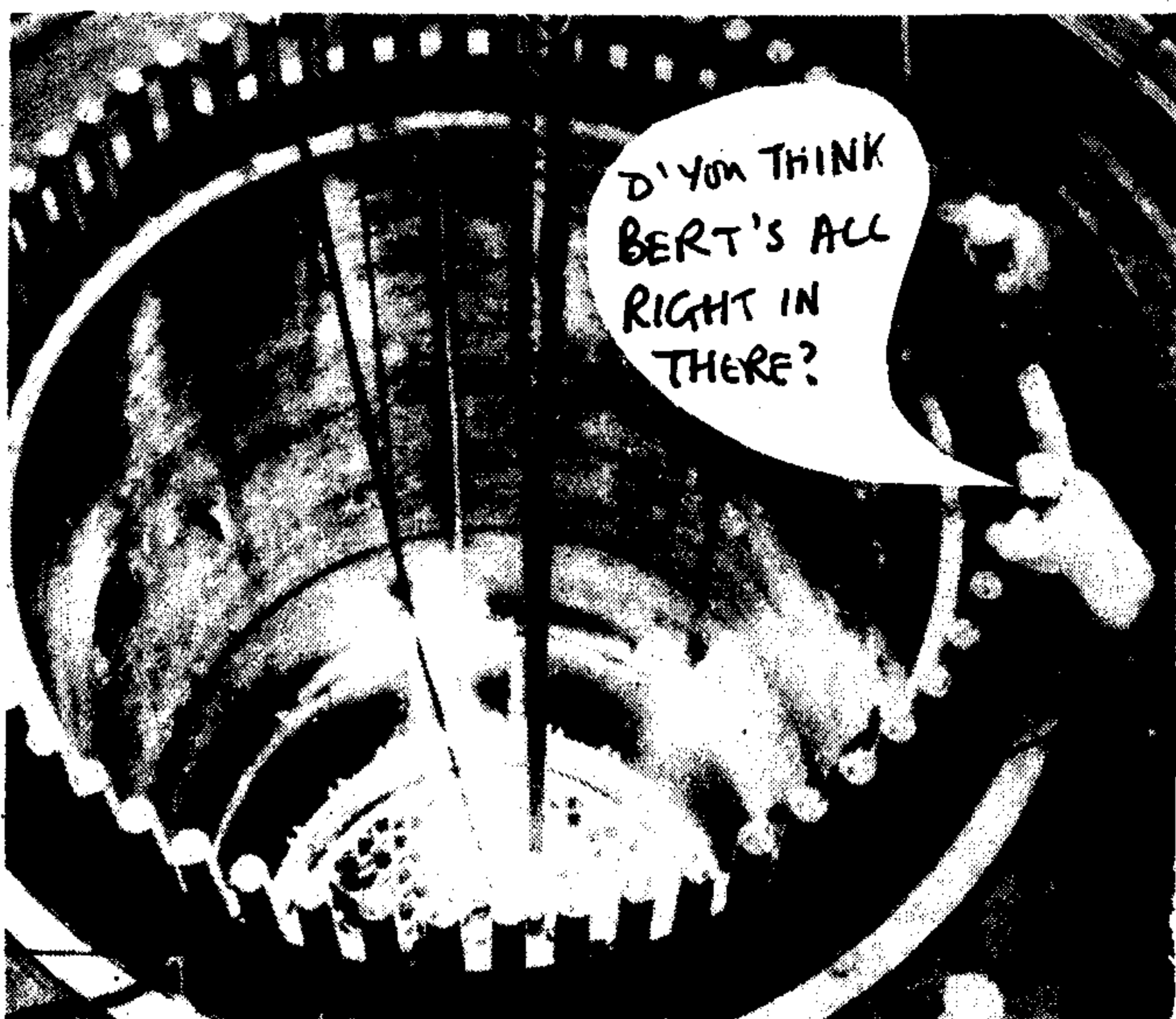
Exiled in Geneva for some years he later came to support Haeckel, another

biologist and radical reformer in the 1870s.

There is little doubt that although he was no socialist and his philosophy was the crudest form of materialism (Engels makes a scathing reference to him in *Anti-Duhring*), the fascists would have been far from approving of Vogt's views had they made any effort to learn them.

In a closing paragraph, the fascist writer makes some extravagant claims for 'Social Darwinism' and its descendant 'Sociology' which will have to be dealt with elsewhere.

By Ernie Stubbins





INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Fulham cuts: work-in continues

The occupation at Fulham Baths is continuing against local plans to close it down.

The "Save our Baths Campaign" (SOB), comprising baths workers (members of the GMWU), local trade unionists, residents and supporters, is keeping a 24-hour rota to insure that the baths stay open. Daytime swimming and washing are continuing as usual.

The excuse for the closure, wheeled out by the Tory-controlled Hammersmith Council is that the Baths are "unsafe". This is largely based on a report by Council-appointed architects.

This is simply a ploy to divert from the real reason for the attempt to close the Baths, which is part of the overall strategy of the Thatcher crew to make the working class pay for capitalism's heightening bankruptcy.

The Save our Baths Campaign must not turn the occupation struggle outwards by building supporting action amongst unions of both the public and private sectors.

Police harassment has so far resulted in the arrest of one of the leaders of the occupation as he left the Baths last Friday.

Readers are urged to take the opportunity of a free swim there as often as possible, and better still, to join the daily rota of the occupation. Especially, skilled assistance is required in maintaining the heating system.

Union branches

Support for the occupation must be won in all trade union branches, particularly in the GMWU for national endorsement (because most of the baths workers are members of this union). Trade unionists must not accept the Council's figures and

demand the opening of their finance books to an elected trade union committee.

Rush messages of support, donations and teams of pickets to Fulham Baths, North End Rd., London, SW6.

Fighting for new leadership

The broader the scope of the mass struggles now erupting in the labour movement, the more workers will be forced into conflict with the perspective and programme upheld by their bureaucratic leaders.

It is more essential than ever that a full discussion is held on the way forward in the trade unions and the Labour Party.

This is the importance of the national conference to be held on November 3 by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement.

It will provide an arena within which policies to defend jobs, social services and living standards can be argued out in the context of the struggles now under way.

Union branches and labour movement organisations are invited to send delegates to the conference, which is also open to trade unionists and unemployed.

Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement
NATIONAL CONFERENCE
*Prepare to force out the Tories!
*For mass action against Tory anti-union laws!
*Strikes and occupations against the cuts!
*Build Councils of Action!
Saturday November 3, 10.30am-5pm
DIGBETH HALL, BIRMINGHAM
Open to all trade unionists and delegations from labour movement bodies
Credentials (£1) and details from:
Godfrey Webster, 99, Barclay Rd, Warley, West Midlands

No lead in Cheshire

The Tory stronghold of Cheshire is being used as the guinea pig for an exemplary series of draconian cutbacks in public spending.

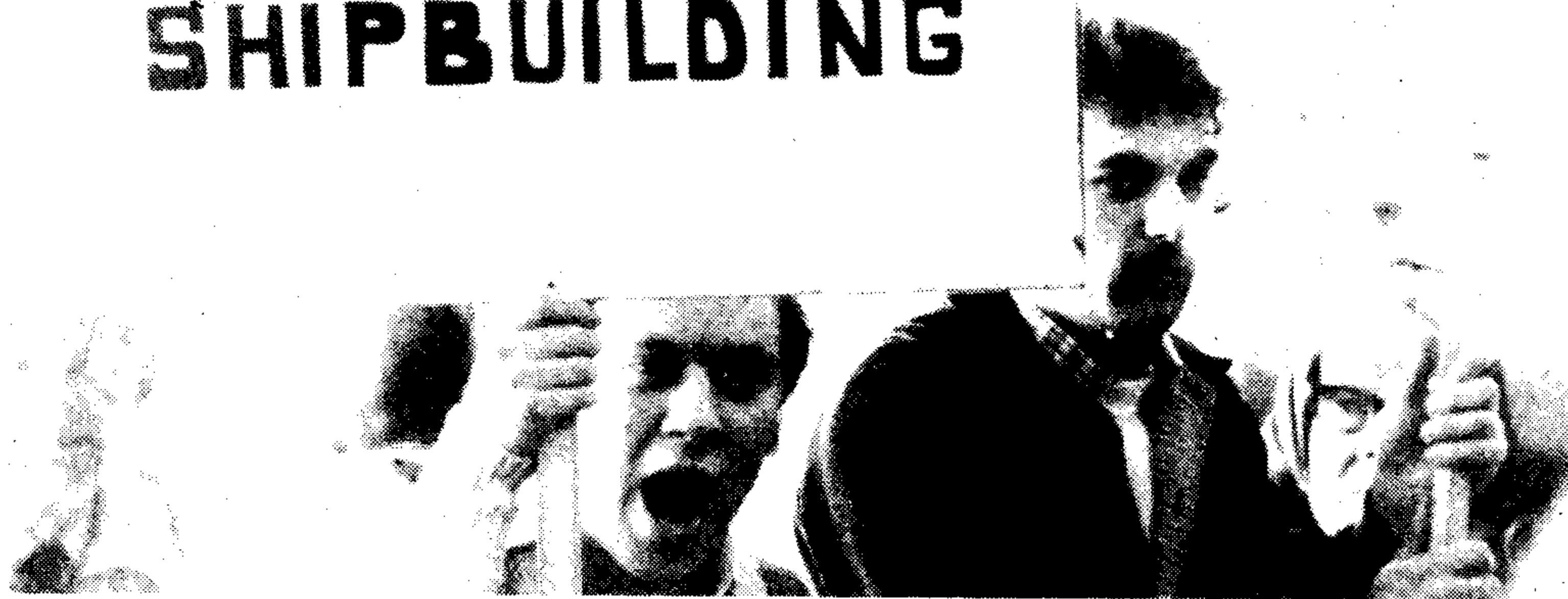
Day nurseries, children's homes, old folks' homes, fire prevention schemes, adult education and school transport are to come under the hammer, while school children face charges even for eating their own sandwiches for lunch!

In response to this attack a Cheshire Joint Trade Union Action Committee has been formed by NUPE, NALGO, GMWU, NATFHE and the FBU, and a demonstration and lobby last month were backed by over 500 people from at least 20 trade union bodies, community organisations and pensioners' associations.

A subsequent public meeting brought over 200 local workers out to hear five speakers denounce the council for their planned cuts, but offer little in the way of policies for a fight back!

The "Action Committee"—perhaps daunted by the size of the response to initial protests—has restricted its efforts so far to the production of fact sheets on the cuts, making no further calls for "action", while hinting darkly of additional cuts to come.

ROBB CALEDON COMBINE COMMITTEE
NO REDUCTIONS IN SHIPBUILDING



A SMALL BUT VOCAL lobby by Robb of steel closures, was more interested in taling about struggles in the future than offering any lead to those actually in progress last Thursday. Robb Caledon, in Dundee is now the only yard holding firm on sanctions designed to prevent British Ship-builders carrying through their planned programme of closures. These involve closing and 'mothballing' the Caledon yard, at the expense of 1,100 jobs.

It is crucial however that their firm stand in defence of jobs is supported and made the centre of the necessary fight back on jobs in shipbuilding and other industries.

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!

DON'T GO INTO THE FIGHT BLINDFOLD!

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Officials rush to carry through Ryton pay sell-out

After 14 weeks on strike workers at Talbot's Ryton plant voted last Thursday to accept a company offer which is hardly any different from that offered before the strike began.

The recommendation for acceptance of Talbot's offer was far from unanimous on the shop stewards' committee (35-19) and at the mass meeting over one-third voted against.

The mass meeting was stormy and many strikers were extremely bitter at the sell-out.

When the terms of the return to work are examined it is easy to see why.

£25 pay off

In addition to the 5½% offered before the strike began Ryton workers will get £5 a week for five weeks—a total of £25 in all for a 13-week strike which cost each striker £1,000!

The night shift has also been ended, with a consequent reduction in pay of £28 for those involved.

And this is not all. The £25 is dependent on "co-operation" with management demands for major concessions in "labour flexibility" while the plant restarts production.

The senior stewards are quoted in the Coventry Evening Telegraph as recognising the difficulties of forcing their members to accept these conditions in the next weeks.

From the beginning of the strike management has insisted that any extra money would have to come in the form of a productivity deal.

With 238 workers having left during the strike it is clear that the company will aim at maintaining existing levels of production while the workforce has been cut by 10%.

The seriousness with which the trade union bureaucracy saw the ending of the strike is shown by the appearance of TGWU Divisional Organiser Bill Lapworth and AUEW Divisional Organiser George Butler at the mass meeting.

Echoed threats

Both urged acceptance of the sell-out deal. Lapworth echoed management threats of a plant closure and Butler stressed the impossibility of persuading management to change its mind.

Lapworth even went as far as saying that regardless of the result of the mass meeting, talks on productivity, pay structures and incentives would have to take place.

Their appearance at the meeting was their first throughout the dispute.

Throughout the strike the TGWU had done absolutely nothing to black the import of strikebreaking stocks of Alpine cars from Talbot's French plant.

The officials did nothing for this strike except help knife it,

while the senior stewards did nothing to fight the officials' sabotage.

Picketing

In the early stages of the strike it was Ryton workers who carried out successful pickets of some transport facilities within Britain.

But as the strike developed it was the Stoke plant which was more energetic in its attempts to close the ports and seek support from other workers.

Ryton senior stewards, who made sneering references to "plants which don't know how to picket" are left with egg on their faces as the strike at the Stoke plant continues.

As we go to press the Stoke shop stewards will be meeting on Monday to discuss placing a picket on the Ryton plant which in any event can only work for a few weeks without the engines from Stoke.

Ryton convenors have at least declared their refusal to use engines from France.

Crisis

The major defeat at Ryton is further proof that the sharpening crisis of capitalism (which

forces management into an ever more intransigent stance against attempts by workers to defend their living standards) is daily exposing the inability of the existing leaders of the working class to win even the most minimal concessions.

Trapped inside their acceptance of the logic of capitalism—that profits are necessary before workers can increase their real income—they are forced to turn ever more sharply against the people they claim to represent.

A new leadership is needed in the working class—one which starts from the independent interests of the working class and can answer the threats of management with determined and energetic leadership and the programme of socialism.

The determination of the Ryton strikers shown in the thirteen week strike and the high vote to reject management's contemptuous offer indicates the fertile ground in the working class for those who have the answers which workers need.

The Talbot strike is far from over if the Stoke leadership maintain their insistence on an improved offer before a recommendation to end the strike.

*Build support for the Talbot strikers!
*Black all Talbot imports!

Cowley paint shop stopped

Last Tuesday 600 paint shop day and night shift workers in the Cowley Body Plant walked out on indefinite strike over the way that the new Leyland grading structure had been forced on them.

The production workers mass meeting two weeks ago rejected the stewards proposal for immediate strike action and decided to do the same as the rest of Leyland plants and put the complaints through plant procedure giving five days strike notice after this was exhausted.

Ever since that vote there has been disruption within the plant with sections walking out, particularly over the way that workers are expected to work on the same jobs as others getting more money than them.

This is what happened in the paint-shops where workers on grade two were relieving others on grade three.

Each time this happened there was a stoppage, leading to walk outs. This came to a head last Tuesday when the dayshift voted at a mass meeting of both 'A' and 'Q' paint shops to go out until the company concedes.

This was followed by a night shift mass meeting which decided to do the same.

The paint shop workers are particularly angry as the parity scheme was supposedly brought in by Leyland to give workers on the same job the same pay throughout Leyland—let alone in the same plant.

This is now a fight against the right of the company to impose their grading structure as they see fit and if lost will lead to further impositions.

Since the paint shops walked out the night shift press shop has also walked out over a similar issue.

As a result of the strike 1,000 other workers on the Maxi, Princess and MG are now laid off in the Body Plant.

Because of large body stocks the Assembly Plant is not yet affected but both the Maxi and Princess will be shut out there by the middle of the week.

At Abingdon only the MGB is still in.

This leaves only the Marina, whose bodies are not painted in the Body Plant, unaffected but some small parts that are done in 'Q' paint shop are being blacked, which should hit production.

A full TGWU stewards meeting on Monday heard a report on the dispute and was followed by a paint shop stewards meeting which decided to call a mass meeting of members for Friday.

The local TGWU official has said that the company has made it clear that no changes in the grading will take place in plant procedure and that they are not willing to continue with procedure whilst the dispute is on.

Hours..

From back page

geared to make sure that none of the other unions stood firm. But despite these leaders the breakthrough has taken place on the 40 hour week.

This means that shorter hours must now be prominent in every pay claim. With determination to strike, even bigger breakthroughs than that of the engineers can be achieved.

No wonder the employers are trying to play down the result, now saying that the 39 hour week was 'inevitable' anyway!

No wonder the Tories are quiet! In the first major industrial battle during their government the employers have been defeated.

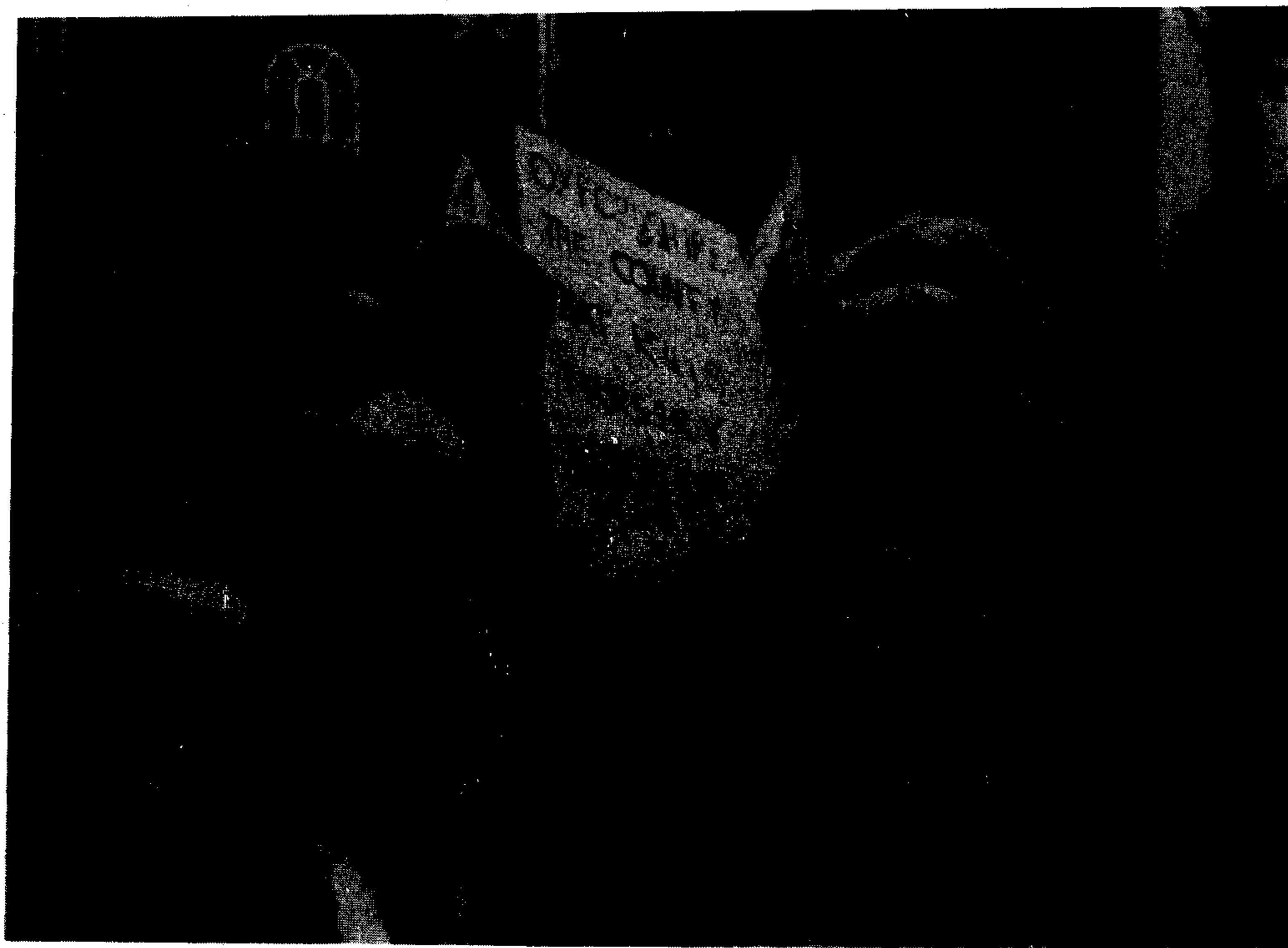
This strength of the working class should now be turned into attacking all the policies of the Tory government, to defend jobs through occupations and work-sharing on full pay and on wages.

This is the strength that must be used to force this government out of office and defeat those elements in the labour movement like Duffy and Chapple who attempt to restrict these struggles.

This is why engineers must support the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement anti-Tory Conference on 3 November. The battle is not over.

The employers—backed by Duffy and co.—will attempt to re-coup their losses through speed-up and job cutting.

Engineering workers will need to face up to the necessity for a new leadership.



Over 500 parents, children and trade unionists supported a lobby last week against Oxford County Council's plan to close all nursery classes.

Defend CPSA militants

Two weeks ago seven CPSA members in Breckfield DHSS office, Liverpool, were suspended for carrying out a ban on work-sharing, part of CPSA action against the civil service cuts.

1,000 CPSA members in DHSS, Department of Employment and Customs and Excise went on strike for one day in response to the suspensions.

There were also half day walkouts in DHSS offices in Oxford, Warrington, Bargoed, Aberystwyth and Rhondda West.

CPSA members in Breckfield and Kirkby DHSS and Kirkby unemployment benefit offices remain on strike.

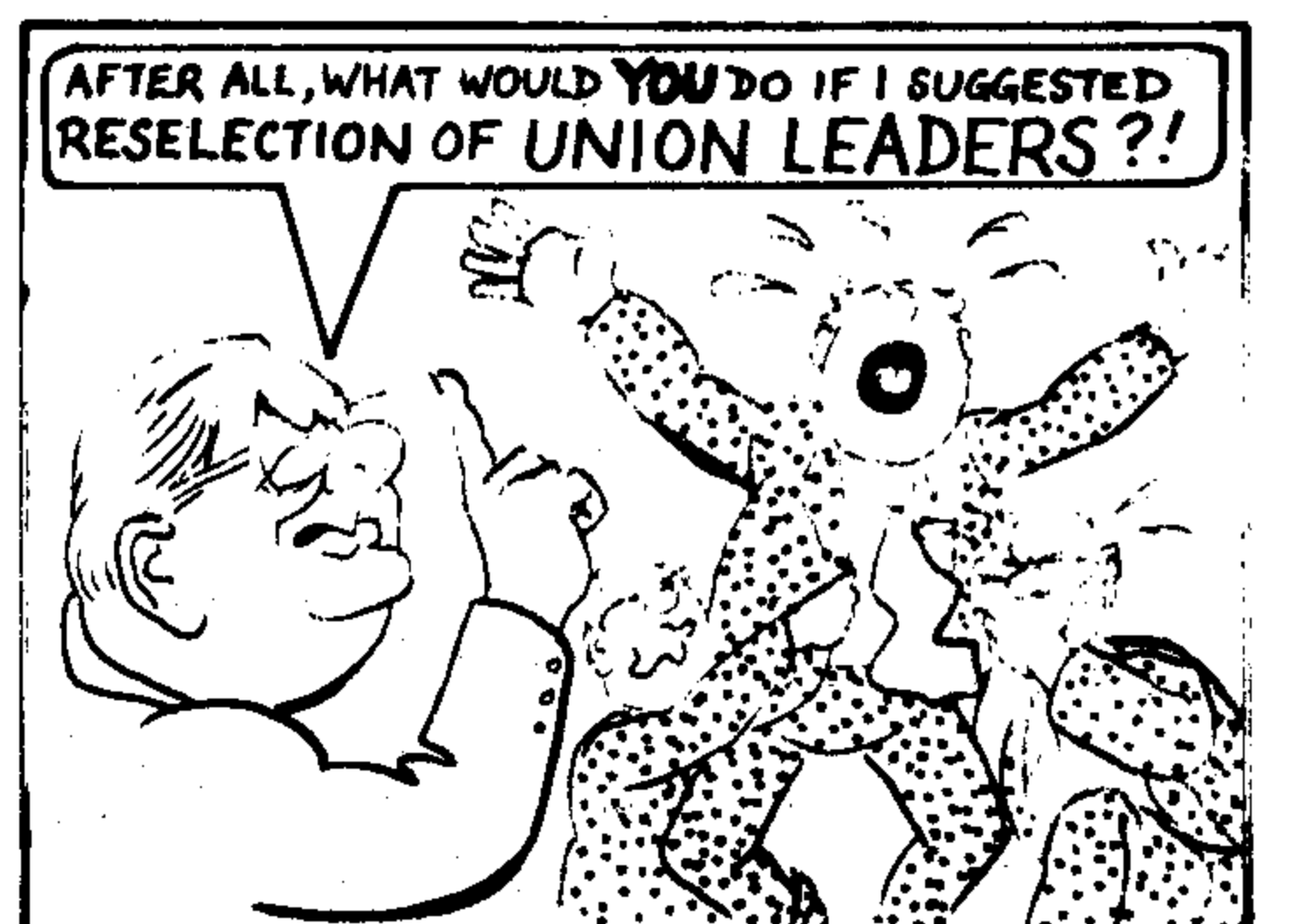
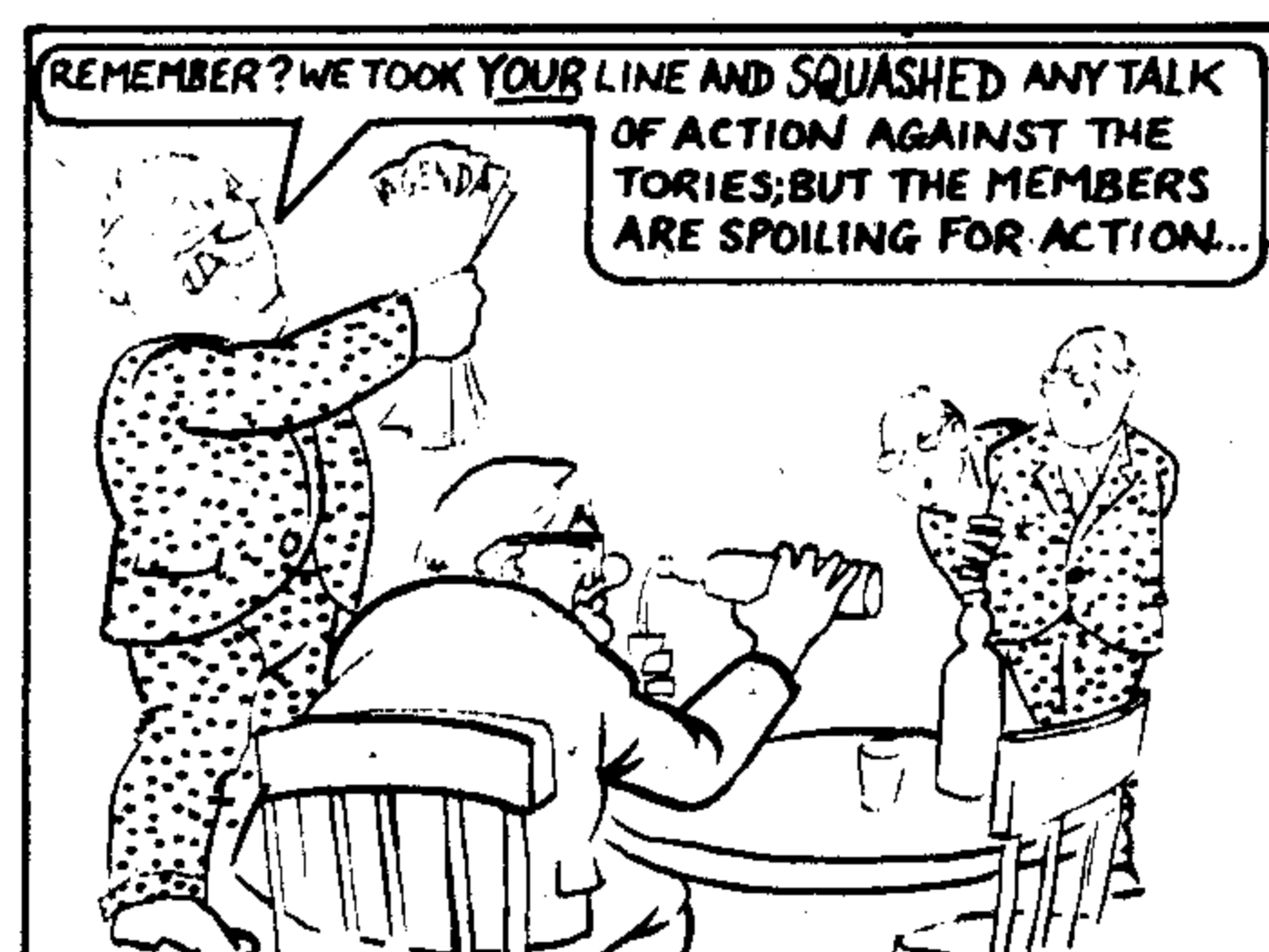
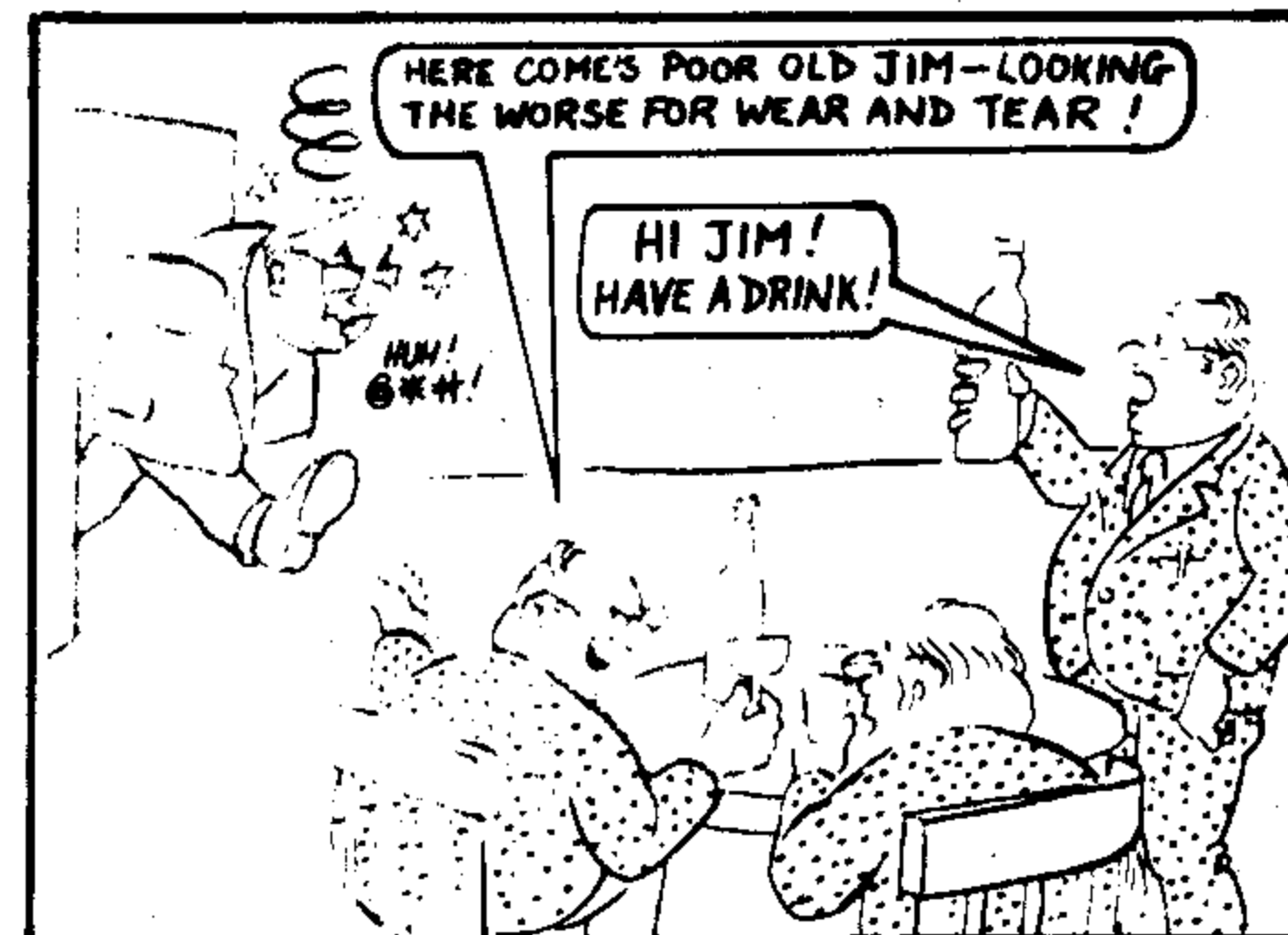
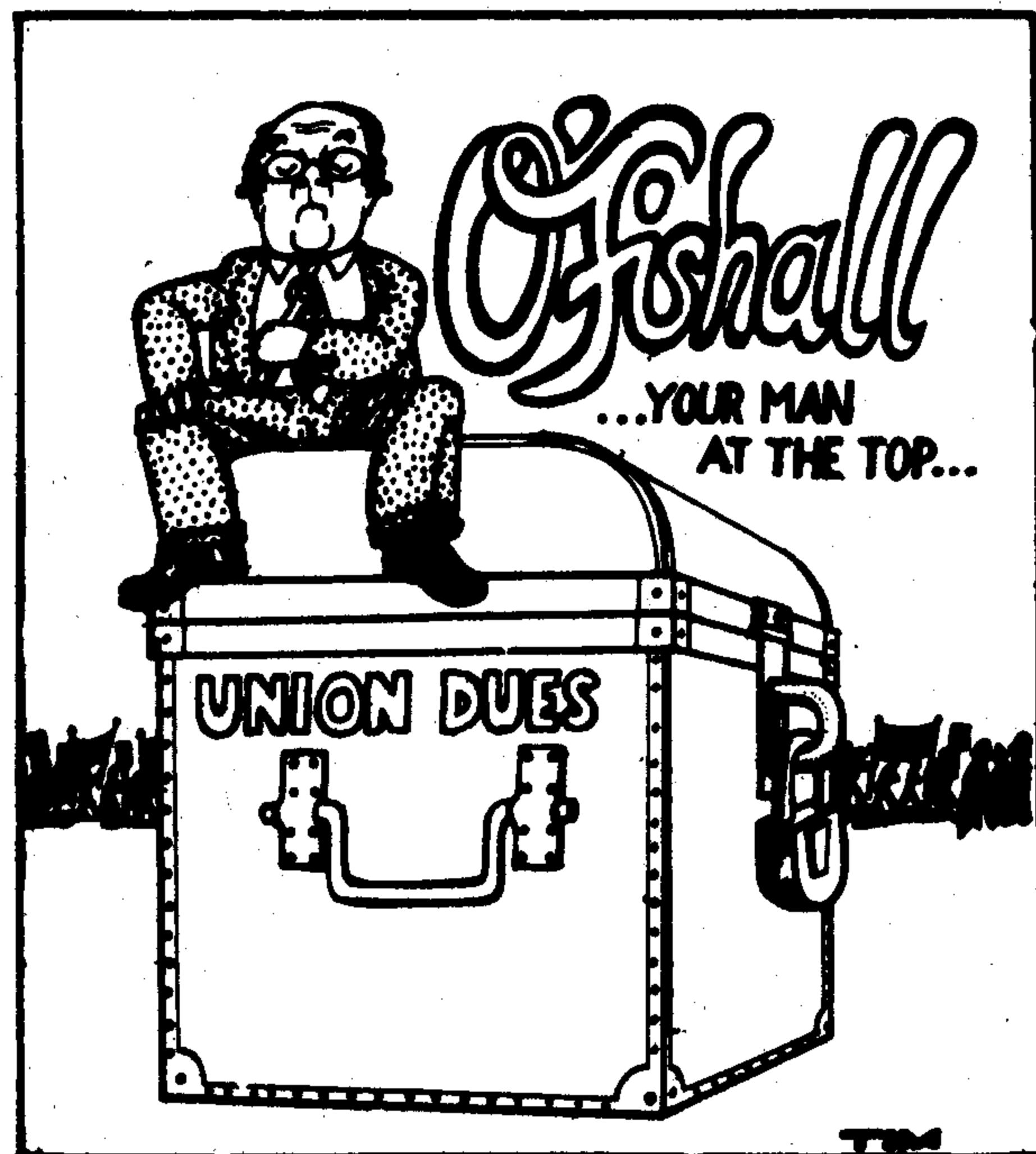
Despite this strong response from the membership the CPSA NEC have, so far, called no

action to defend their members' suspended for implementing union policy.

They have merely asked branches to send messages of support to Liverpool.

'Militant' supporters on the NEC have given no lead and in a CPSA meeting in Liverpool 'Militant' members Frank Bonner (NEC) and Geoff Byrne (Department of Employment Section Executive Committee) actually attacked Kirkby Unemployment Benefit office for taking strike action—saying that they should not interfere in the affairs of another branch!

The CPSA and SCPS members should follow the example of Merthyr Tydfil CPSA Branch Executive who have sent a resolution to the NEC calling for all out indefinite strike in defence of the suspended members.



SOCIALIST PRESS



Engineering

HISTORIC HOURS BREAKTHROUGH

After three one-day strikes followed by five two-day strikes together with an overtime ban, the engineering workers have won a breakthrough on hours of great importance.

In the middle of last week the engineering employers offered a 39 hour week in November 1981 and an extra week's holiday spread over four years—starting off with two extra days this year and one day each following year.

As well as this the employers offered a basic £73 per week for skilled workers which will raise overtime pay and night shift allowance for most engineering workers.

European scale

The engineering employers are amongst the most determined of the capitalist class and they had taken a stand on the forty hour week not just in Britain but on a European scale.

In Germany a lengthy selective strike by the Metalworkers Union failed to crack the employers.

The employers hoped at first that there would be no response to the union's call.

Then they kept publicising 'revolts' which were unsuccessful in most areas except where there were exceptional reasons as in BL, Cowley.

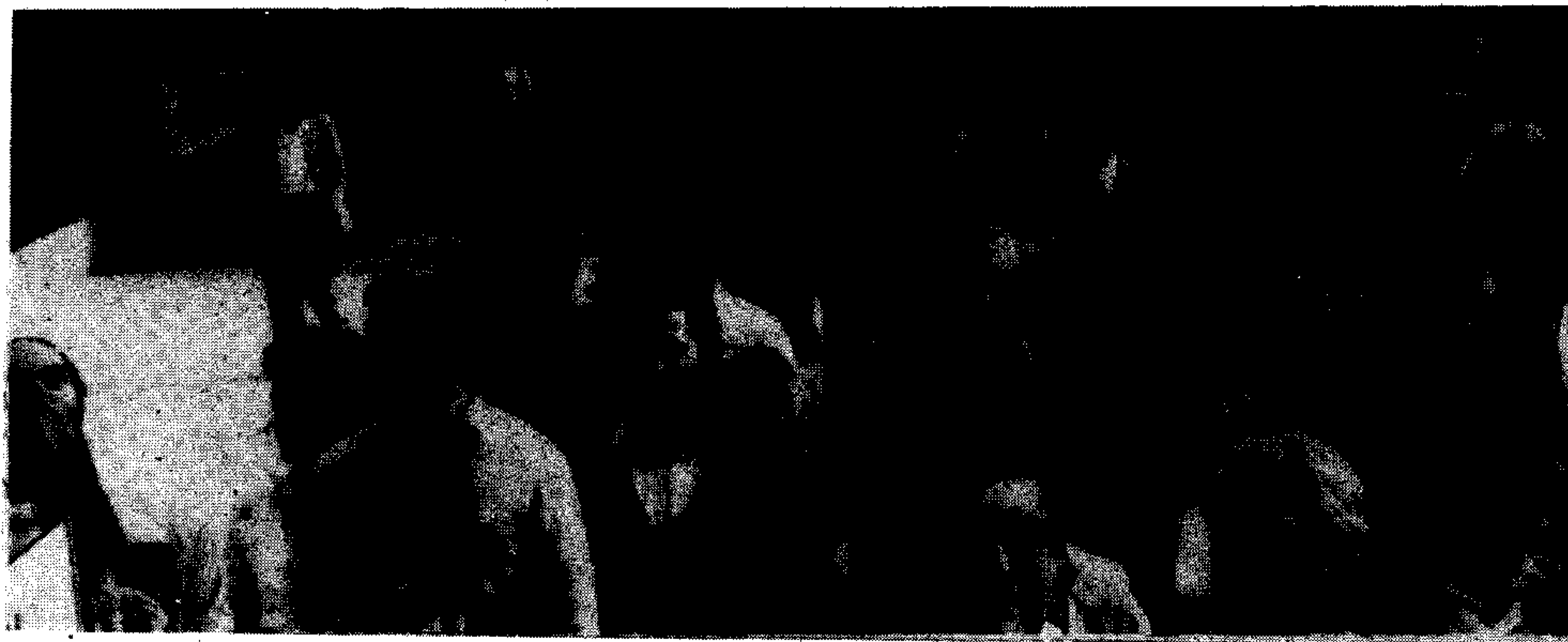
After this they tentatively turned to a policy of lock-out, first tested at the NEB-controlled Rolls Royce.

But this did not create revolts either.

Meanwhile the employers began to split. 1,000 firms conceded the full claim—including over 60 federated firms.

Very few were willing to go the whole hog and lose all their production by locking out.

But what more could have been won?



The fact that under these conditions the employers were cracked shows that if the trade union leaders had responded to demands to call all-out strike action the full claim could have been won and the workers would have not been restricted to a 39-hour week for the next four years.

In reality the likes of Duffy had to be forced into action in the first place. He failed to persuade the AUEW National Committee against action.

And the action of Chapple of the EETPU in declaring, in the middle of the strike, that he would ballot his members for a return to work was clearly

Cont'd p.11, col. 6

FUND

After the poor showing in the fund last month, the October Fund has got off to a very slow start—only £109.90 in the first eight days.

On the other hand all the indications are that support for the paper is growing all the time, with more people coming forward to join the WSL and take up the fight for the policies of Socialist Press than at any other time in our history.

This development, reflecting the growing determination of the working class to take on and defeat the Tory government and its policies of cuts, mass unemployment and recession, must form the basis for a fight to reach our new target of £750 this month.

Without wealthy backers we are dependant on our readers and supporters for the finance necessary to sustain Socialist Press and with inflation once more on the up and up, that finance is more essential than ever.

Donations should be sent to:

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

Confed leaders back BL jobs slaughter

The leaders of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions went straight from the settlement of the national wage claim to meet Keith Joseph and then Michael Edwardes to discuss the future of British Leyland.

Joseph bluntly threatened to stop all government finance to BL.

And Edwardes threatened that if they did not support his plan to close plants and cut back others, he would not even go to the government to ask for more money.

Rather than challenge such arrogance, the Confed leaders agreed to drop their opposition to Edwardes' rationalisation plan—which entails the loss of at least 25,000 jobs.

As a face-saver they added a rider, stating that if BL workers wanted to defend their jobs, they could!

This sell-out has followed almost exactly the course of the cutbacks in shipbuilding jobs where the workers took immediate protest action.

Keep your head

Make suggestions for improvements

Health & Lobby - London

Thursday, 10th October 1981



CUT THE PLAN NOT THE PLANTS

BL Cars - Suggestion Scheme

The union leaders at first supported these moves—but then quickly called off their support and persuaded the stewards to call off their sanctions which had prevented completed ships being launched.

In Leyland, too, union leaders went through the motions of opposition. They even set up an "action committee", and endorsed a demonstration past Leyland House this Tuesday.

The TGWU declared they would black all movement of

Blair Peach case POLICE LICENSE TO KILL!



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

If the labour movement does not act against the cover-up of the police murder of Blair Peach in Southall last April, no demonstrators will ever be safe again.

The decision of the Director of Public Prosecutions to do nothing and prosecute nobody after Peach was clubbed to death in a Special Patrol Group charge, gives any and every police thug effective license to kill with impunity.

Whitewash

The DPP, on behalf of the Tory government, gladly accepted a whitewash report on the killing by Commander John Cass, head of the police's own Complaints Investigation Bureau.

This decision has been attacked by a wide range of bodies including the National Council for Civil Liberties.

In a hypocritical display, the Labour Party NEC also deplored the DPP decision—

forgetting that it was Labour Home Secretary Merlyn Rees who supervised and later defended the murderous truncheon attack by the SPG.

While Peach's killers walk off scott free, Barnet magistrates continue to demonstrate the real meaning of class justice maintaining their staggering 85% conviction rate as the 342 people arrested in the Southall events come up for "trial".

Defence evidence is being brushed aside with total abandon as savage sentences are meted out to youth and workers who in many cases have already endured beatings at the hands of the police in the course of their arrest.

The fight for a labour movement inquiry into the Southall events must be stepped up.

But solidarity with the 342 defendants is also vital. Union branches and Labour Parties should each adopt a defendant and raise money to pay fines and costs.

The Defence Campaign can be contacted c/o PO Box 151, London WC2.

work from threatened factories.

But BL workers are the sacrificial victims by which the Confed seeks to appease the ruthless engineering bosses.

The latest ignominious climbdown is a nod and a wink by Confed leaders to any employers thinking of pulling out of the Engineering Employers Federation that if they stay in, they can count on the loyal services of the union bureaucracy.

Occupy

The Robb Caledon shipyard workers in Dundee have refused to accept the Confed's sell-out.

All Leyland workers must do the same.

Plants threatened with massive cut-backs or closures as at Canley, Castle Bromwich and MG Abingdon, must occupy.

Other plants must refuse to accept work from those fighting the cutbacks.

The central demand should be work-sharing on full pay with no job losses.

If the employers say they cannot pay we must demand that they open their books and those of the profitable component firms and the banks who

charge huge interest rates.

If the industry cannot defend workers' jobs then this proves the whole motor industry should be nationalised without compensation and together with the rest of the basic industries and finance houses be made part of a planned socialist economy.

WOMAN WORKER 3
Bi-monthly paper of the Workers Socialist League
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DEMONSTRATE
against the Corrie Bill
Sunday 28 October
Assemble 11.30 a.m.
Speakers Corner, Hyde Park
for march to Trafalgar Square
Called by the TUC