

# SOCIALIST PRESS



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November 28 demonstration against the cuts—Report p.5

## LEYLAND BETRAYAL



Duffy

The treachery of the right wing leadership of the AUEW in knifing the strikes in defence of Derek Robinson has handed Sir Michael Edwardes and the Tory government a much-needed victory on a plate.

At a time when workers by the tens of thousand are showing their readiness to fight the Tories' spending cuts and closures BL management has been allowed to sack the chairman of the Combine Committee for simply putting his name to a pamphlet which talks of occupations to prevent factory closures.

### Arrogance

Already employers strengthened by this, are displaying even greater arrogance in announcing wholesale closures—with further huge cuts in British Steel and the no-notice sackings at Meccano's Merseyside plant.

At a time when every major employer is taking steps to impose speed-up on the shop floor and looking for means to weaken and *destroy* trade union strength in the main industries, Edwardes has been allowed to throw down an arrogant challenge to the unions—and win.

And as union officials, convenors and stewards in BL and in other industries come under pressure—on the one hand from members demanding action to defend jobs, wages and conditions, and on the other from employers bleating about falling profits and empty order books—the ruthless victimisation of Robinson carried out with the full support of union officials stands as a brutal deterrent designed to scare them away from any show of resistance.

The treacherous role of the AUEW leadership in this dispute is no accident.

It flows from their earlier support for Edwardes' plan to axe 25,000 jobs in BL and close 13 plants.

### Resistance

Like every other section of the trade union bureaucracy they accept without question that the need to make capitalist industry "viable" comes above the interests of their own members.

Robinson, however, though on a partial and completely inadequate basis, stood, along with the vast majority of Combine convenors, *against* that plan and called for resistance to it.

It was clear that for Edwardes' stage-managed "ballot" to have any value the shop floor strength of the unions had to be confronted.

From the outset, therefore, it was in the interests of the AUEW leadership to assist Edwardes in the victimisation of Robinson, and their every action took place in this light:

\*Official support was withheld from the immediate strikes in Robinson's defence.

\*AUEW officials deliberately withheld categoric support for the struggle for a whole week in the teeth of a full-scale press and media "back to work" campaign—while TGWU officials made all the running;

\*No AUEW engineering

# PREPARES MASS SACKINGS Robinson sacrificed to deter convenors



Edwardes

officials at all appeared on the platform of the Birmingham rally in Robinson's support

Actions speak louder than words. With this record behind them, does anyone believe that on Tuesday Edwardes really needed to threaten closure of the whole of BL in order to force the AUEW leaders into a squalid betrayal?

Indeed the *form* of the betrayal—setting up a union "inquiry" into Robinson's activities—is custom-built to provide the material for a further witch-hunt when it is published in several weeks time.

### Full pay

Similar "inquiries" run by the TGWU in BL's Cowley Assembly plant have led to the further victimisation of militants—not by management but by the union bureaucracy itself! In the meantime, to knife

any prospect of continued strike action in his support, the still-sacked Robinson has been artfully put on full pay.

He now says he is "bitterly disappointed" by the AUEW Executive's action.

But if anyone peddled the illusion that these right wingers would act to defend trade unionism rather than collaborate with Edwardes, it was Robinson himself.

### Certainty

From the moment of his surprise sacking onwards, Robinson never issued a clear call for all-out strike action throughout BL.

He did not even criticise the AUEW officials when they failed to support those strikes that were called.

Nor did he or his fellow Communist Party members on the Combine Committee fight for the national conference of BL convenors, held the next day, to issue a clear call for a strike in all BL plants.

It was CP member Jack Adams who argued for the vague resolution calling on convenors simply to "get what action they can"—and to do *nothing* sooner than risk losing a vote!

Nor did Robinson campaign for the necessary mass lobby of the AUEW national executive to demand all-out official action.

On the contrary, on the Sunday before the sell-out, Robinson blithely informed supporters in a meeting in Wednesday that official backing was a certainty.

And on the Monday rally, Stalinist chairman Len Brindle

blocked a motion calling for a mass lobby of the AUEW EC the next day while Robinson only appealed to those from BL plants still working to go in and "collect money".

In reality the only certainty was that the reactionary politics of the Communist Party over recent years have inevitably created conditions for attacks on BL workers.

Robinson was eventually knifed in the back by those he thought were his closest allies.

On the one hand stood the



Robinson at the Birmingham rally—not waving but drowning

## Does Edwardes know?

Does BL chairman Michael Edwardes already know the outcome of the AUEW "inquiry" into Robinson?

This intriguing possibility is revealed in a letter from Edwardes to the *Times* last week in which he refers to the unofficial pay strike in Longbridge reluctantly led by Robinson in January, and publicly

trade union bureaucracy, with whom he has worked for years to force corporate-level bargaining and "workers' participation" into BL.

Right behind him were his "Comrades" from the Communist Party on the Combine Committee and in plants throughout BL, who also believed official support was a formality and who therefore

attacked by General Secretary Boyd in the AUEW Journal.

Edwardes writes: "Because this caused a disciplinary warning, his actions at that time will be fully exposed in the forthcoming inquiry by his union." (emphasis added).

How does Edwardes know what the AUEW "inquiry" will expose?

Has he perhaps already cooked up with them a deal, whereby the AUEW leaders use

the "inquiry" to find Robinson "guilty" and to strip him of his trade union positions, enabling BL generously to reinstate him—as a shop floor worker?

There is a recent precedent for such a squalid AUEW sell-out in the case of BL Service convenor and Combine Executive member John Power from Cowley, who was victimised, only to be eventually "reinstated", stripped of union positions.

have now helped strike a blow at the fabric of trade unionism in British Leyland.

But though Robinson is still sacked, and Edwardes is riding high, all is not calm on the BL shop floor.

The sacking of Robinson was at least in part a move to bludgeon workers into accep-

Cont'd back page

# Stalinist methods bring on crisis

1979 will see the slowest growth of industry in the USSR since the end of the Second World War.

That was one of the many gloomy economic facts revealed at last week's meeting of the Supreme Soviet.

In fact this year's growth rate (3.6% in place of a planned 5.7%) was so embarrassing that they did not even announce it directly but concealed it within a figure covering a number of years, a much used technique of Stalinist statistics.

## Industrial failure

There was also an even more dramatic shortfall in agriculture. Grain production last year was 179 million tonnes, compared with the target of 227 million.

The industrial failure will cause more shortages of already scarce consumer goods and will hold back the overall growth of the Soviet economy by restricting the production of heavy industrial goods.

But the grain harvest failure will have to be made good, as so often in the past, by a massive increase in imports—paid for either by cutting back needed imports of industrial goods or by going deeper into debt to the capitalists.

## Heart attack

In his speech to the supreme Soviet the economic planning chief, Nicolai Baibakov, said that the overall targets of the present Five Year-Plan could not be anything like achieved.

His direct boss, Premier/Economics Minister Kosygin preferred to suffer a heart attack rather than turn up



Brezhnev: keen to take credit — but leaves subordinates to carry the can for failure

to announce all these dire facts.

These failures of production are announced only a few weeks after huge price increases for a wide range of consumer goods. These reflected both the internal failures of the Soviet economy and the inflationary pressures being increasingly transmitted from the capitalist world.

The Soviet bureaucracy is being forced in this way to admit that, despite its grandiose claims to run a "socialist planned economy" and despite 50 years of experience of Five Year Plans, that the Soviet economy cannot be controlled by them.

In fact in recent years capitalist governments, even given the present anarchy of world markets and finances, have been more accurate in their predictions of capitalist economies than the Soviet bureaucracy have been in even predicting, let alone planning, the Soviet economy.

It is just one further piece of proof of the way in which the Stalinist bureaucracy act as an obstacle to rational economic planning and as a permanent threat to the property forms established after the 1917 revolution.

What solution does the bureaucracy have? The only one it knows—lecturing the workers to work harder and mutual mud-slinging within the bureaucracy itself.

Brezhnev's speech to the Supreme Soviet was a typical sample of this.

## "Punished"

He sharply criticised "shortage, carelessness, irresponsibility and bungling", the "unforgivable" absence of basic items like soap, toothpaste and needles and thread from the shops, a fertiliser plant which was built before it was realised there were no available supplies of fuel and materials, too many unfinished projects starved

of resources, vast losses in agriculture due to bad techniques and so on.

What was a bit new was Brezhnev's naming of guilty ministers and demands that the culprits be "punished".

## Inevitable

So, as usual, the vast problems caused by Stalinist rule will be dealt with by more pressure on the workers and purges in the higher echelons of the bureaucracy.

But all these problems, perennial in the Soviet economy, are inevitable in a Stalinist-ruled police state dominated by a parasitic and unresponsive bureaucracy.

The potential of the Soviet economy will only be realised when the creative force of the working class is liberated by the revolutionary overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

# Khomeini's crumbling power

The mounting confrontation between US imperialism and Iran was set up by the Ayatollah Khomeini as a ploy to shore up the crumbling power of his reactionary regime.

Unable to impose his dictatorship on the masses through the medium of the weakened armed forces, or with the authority and terror of the Pasdaran ('Revolutionary Guards'), Khomeini has been forced to resort to mass mobilisation as a focus of anti-imperialist demands.

Clearly such a method is fraught with dangers—not the least of which of course is the threat of military intervention from the US.

Within Iran, the divisions between the ministers of Khomeini's government reflect the total loss of direction shared by the religious leaders—a confusion highlighted by the sacking of Bani-Sadr, formerly one of Khomeini's closest advisers and until last week responsible for foreign affairs.

The anti-US and pro-Khomeini mobilisations have coincided, by a happy chance, with the referendum on the new constitution.

But again, the fragile nature of Khomeini's power was revealed by the response of the oppressed nations within the borders of Iran.

Violent conflicts broke out among the Baluchis and Turkmens, while the polling reached only 10% in some areas.

The militant anti-imperialist posturing of the regime has been employed as a device to revive feelings of Iranian 'national unity', and this has been extended even to Kurdistan.

The regime's loss of authority was shown nowhere more clearly than in Kurdistan.

A fortnight ago, Abdelrahman Ghassemlov, general secretary of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran, made his triumphant entry into Mahabad, capital of Kurdistan.

The Kurdish nationalists now control all the towns in the province, except Sardacht.

The Pasdaran have been forced to give way to the Peshmerga (militia of the KDPI) and a truce has been in force for 3 weeks.

In these conditions the

government's delegation has been forced to talk seriously of 'self-government' (but not, apparently 'autonomy') for the Kurds.

But the regime's retreat has been covered by the betrayals of the KDPI, who have responded to the threats of US imperialism by giving their support to Khomeini's appeals for national unity against the 'satanic super-power'.

The negotiations continue without the Fedayeen or the Maoist Komala, who were willing to participate but were rejected as 'objective' agents of US imperialism by Khomeini's delegation.

At the same time, the Fedayeen in Tehran have shifted their stance.

These 'Marxist-Leninists' have now joined the left Islamic Mujaheddin and the Stalinist Tudeh Party in giving 'critical support' to 'the guide of the revolution' in the name of the anti-imperialist struggle.

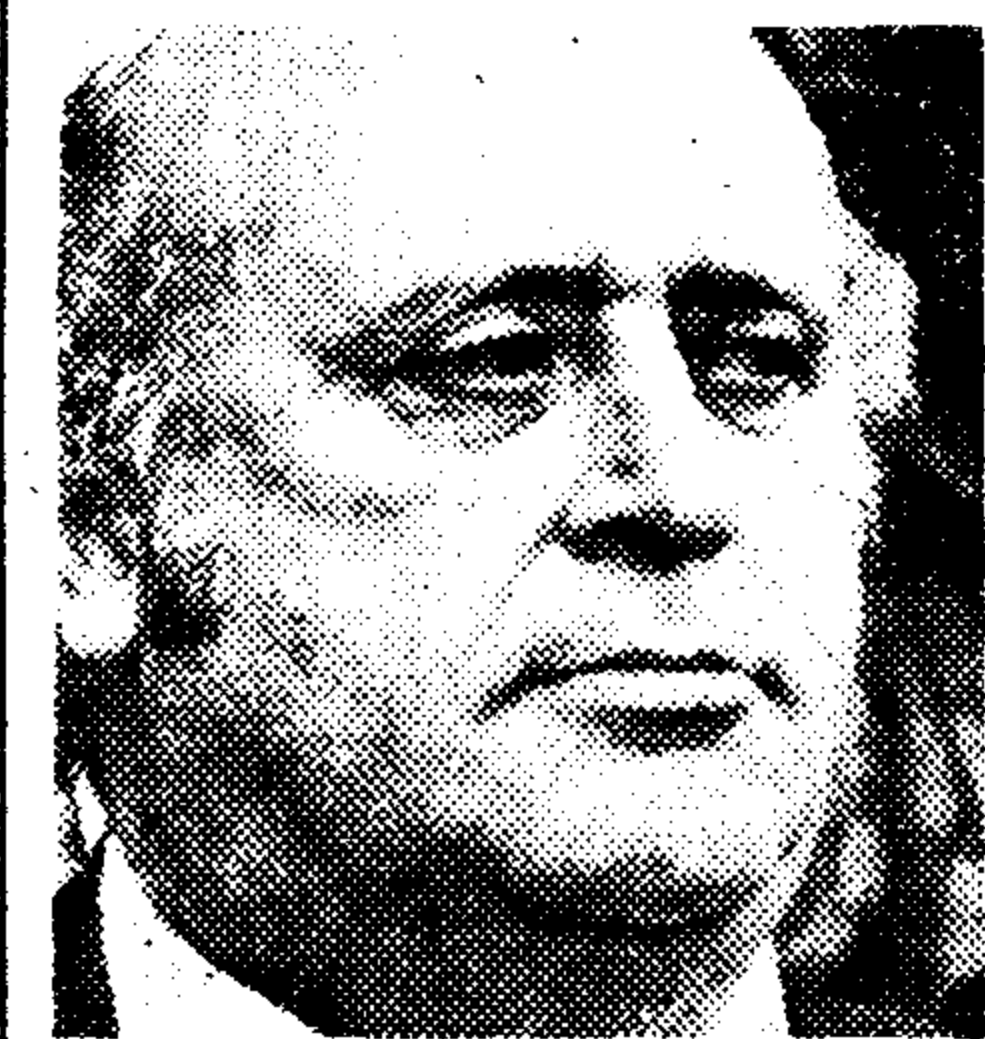
But the struggle against imperialism is not a struggle to be led by reactionary religious leaders such as Khomeini.

On the contrary, the struggles against imperialism necessarily involve the struggle to overthrow Khomeini and replace his 'Islamic republic' with a workers and peasants government, committed to the revolutionary strategy of proletarian internationalism and fighting to expropriate capital and build socialism in Iran.



Scapegoat: the butcher Shah

# Turkey: fight for workers' united front!



Demirel

The return of right wing Justice Party leader Suleyman Demirel as Prime Minister in Turkey is the signal for still further repression of the Turkish workers' movement.

Martial law restrictions imposed by 'liberal' capitalist Prime Minister Ecevit are to be supplemented by a system of special courts, and new restrictions on the trade unions.

While such measures are

purportedly aimed at repressing 'terrorists' there is no doubt that, like previous such moves, their full brunt will be felt by working class and socialist militants.

Encouraged by the electoral successes of Demirel and the extreme right, fascist terror gangs have intensified their murderous attacks on the Turkish workers' movement.

As the economic crisis of Turkish capitalism worsens, it becomes increasingly urgent that a solidarity campaign is taken up in the international labour movement to warn Turkish workers of the necessity for independent class action to prevent the possibility of the capitalist class resorting to a fascist-backed military coup in a desperate bid to resolve their problems.

For this reason the Workers Socialist League has invited other movements on the left in Britain to participate in a solidarity campaign which intends to raise these issues before the British working class.

We urge *Socialist Press* readers to move the following model resolution through their union branches, trades councils, students' unions and Labour Parties, to be sent to Turkish workers' and students' organisations in Britain and in Turkey itself along with the British Communist Party.

"This trade union branch (or other labour movement body) recognises the increasing threat to democratic rights in Turkey.

In particular we note the continued imposition of military rule in many states and escalating repression of the Kurdish people, attacks on workers' organisations and assassinations of militants and trade unionists by the mass fascist party.

These developments are a direct result of Turkey's acute and deepening economic crisis. As with Chile in the days prior to the military coup in 1973, Parliamentary democracy has come under increasing strain and the danger is growing of

fascist and military reaction.

In demanding an end to all such repression we declare support for a campaign of international solidarity with Turkish workers, peasants and youth.

And we call on the Turkish Communist Party, the Turkish Labour Party, other working class political parties and the trade union confederations to break their political links with the capitalist party of former Prime Minister Ecevit, and to form instead a united front of workers' organisations, including workers' defence militias, to defeat both the fascist terror campaigns and the repression of the right wing Demirel government."

## TURKISH SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

Organising meeting  
Sunday December 16 at 2pm  
Artists Room, Conway Hall  
Red Lion Square, London  
Open to all organisations in support of the campaign.

# IRAN From Back Page

greater is probably that the countries concerned have been cautious in order to avoid producing a sudden collapse in the dollar's value or more blocking moves by the US government.

Iran's responses to the US blocking move were equally dramatic and threatening to financial stability.

In the first place it has demanded that from now on no payments from the oil companies to the Iran government should be made in US dollars; all must be in some other currency.

This itself will substantially cut demand for the dollar and the resulting fall in value could well persuade other countries to do the same.

The extent of Iran's other move has still not become clear but it could turn out to be the most important of all this dramatic series of events.

## Sensational

Finance Minister Abd Hassan Bani-Sadr reportedly announced that Iran was going to default on all its debts—alleged to be \$15 billion—to the advanced capitalist countries.

This would be a sensational development since the financial leaders of imperialism have spent the last 25 years falling over backwards desperately trying to prevent a successful default.

Any agreed delay or rescheduling of payments is preferable

and frequently has to be arranged.

A default, they fear, would set an example to the whole underdeveloped world now in debt to the imperialists (banks, governments and the IMF) to the tune of at least \$250 billion.

The tremors of the default announcement were so severe that the Iranian Central Bank President countered Bani-Sadr's announcement and said that most debts would be repaid.

All the same a group of US banks declared \$500 million overdue last week.

The result of that was another astonishing development. Chase Manhattan Bank seized through the courts in West Germany the 25% Iranian share of Krupp's steel and engineering in West Germany.

This immediately raised the fury of the West German government which is made to seem incapable of guaranteeing the safety of foreign-owned assets in its own borders.

The conflict, therefore, is sharpening the existing tensions between the main imperialist countries.

No series of events has more severely rocked the imperialist financial system since World War II.

It is almost certain that they are but the opening tremors before what could be a massive financial earthquake which would immeasurably sharpen the economic crisis.

# Zimbabwe: bitter fruits of petty bourgeois leadership



Carrington

The struggle of the Zimbabwean masses, whose strength and combativity has withstood the continual murderous onslaught of the capitalist state now stands threatened by the connivance with imperialism of the petty-bourgeois reformists and Stalinists of the Patriotic Front.

The development of the struggle inside Zimbabwe has threatened to disrupt capitalist stability throughout Southern and Central Africa.

## New agents

As the inability of the Muzorewa regime to contain mass struggle became increasingly clear, so imperialism has been forced to turn to new agents in its desperate efforts to protect its interests.

The Lancaster House talks have been merely the public face of an ongoing process of secret diplomacy and collusion between the Patriotic Front leadership and its imperialist masters.

Mugabe and Nkomo now appear set to emerge with a deal for the reform of the capitalist state to which their reformist petty bourgeois politics has always impelled them.

Caught up in the struggle between capital and labour, the petty bourgeoisie must always turn to the one or the other as an ally in its quest to secure reforms in its own interests.

Balancing between its imperialist masters and its



Patriotic Front leaders Nkomo and Mugabe

mass base, the Patriotic Front leadership has zig-zagged opportunistically from the socialist rhetoric aimed at its supporters, to the moderate diplomacy aimed at the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Beneath the rhetoric, underlying the posturing, the politics of the Patriotic Front leadership has consistently been the politics of petty bourgeois reformism.

## Diplomats

Increasingly removed from contact with their own rank and file and supporters the Patriotic Front leadership are more closely linked to imperialist diplomats than to the working class.

To control opposition within the guerrilla ranks, it depends on the state forces of the Frontline puppets of imperialism, and on the techniques of political deception developed by Stalinism.

Recognising that the continuing development of the struggle threatens to break through its own petty bourgeois perspectives, the Patriotic Front leadership has been easy and willing prey to a "solution" which offers the prospect of power in a capitalist government.

Even if, at this late stage, either or both of Nkomo and Mugabe perform a new manoeuvre and walk out of the talks, their open collaboration with imperialism has sown deep political confusion amongst militants and layers of the oppressed in struggle.

The Muzorewa regime and its South African backers have been quick to exploit this disorientation of the masses in struggle, launching massive attacks on guerrilla camps and on militants inside the country.

The effects of the betrayals so far have allowed the Muzorewa regime, under full imperialist support, a new lease of life.

## Full endorsement

The indications at the moment are, however, that the Patriotic Front leadership will surface from the slime of secret diplomacy and deals, to announce its full endorsement of the Tory plan for capitalist stability.

Whichever section of the nationalist leadership comes to govern, will do so on the basis of the existing capitalist state structure.

The Zimbabwean masses now face the threat that the Patriotic Front leadership, coming to power on the strength of mass struggle will direct its energies precisely to prevent that

mass struggle from developing its own independent organs for the seizure of power and the exercise of control in the interests of workers and their poor peasant allies.

Only the building of the independent organisations of the working class and their mobilisation for the smashing of the capitalist state can lay the basis for a workers government and the planned socialist economy.

Only such a regime could start from defending the interests of the workers, not the profits of capital.

## Mobilisation

But it is precisely the building of independent organisations and working class mobilisation, which the Patriotic Front leadership and their reformist blend of guerrillism and diplomacy have refused to undertake.

Drawing on the historical experience of the working class in struggle, Trotskyists have consistently pointed to the reformist politics underlying the "revolutionary" rhetoric of the Patriotic Front leadership.

While calling for and mobilising all support for those in struggle against imperialism, Trotskyists have persistently pointed to the need for the working class to build independent organisations and a party and programme based on its independent class interests and reliance on its own strength.

## Bitter price

The bitter price of entrusting the leadership of mass struggle to petty bourgeois nationalists has been paid for in the suffering and blood of workers and peasants time and again.

The Patriotic Front leadership is set to use its own "authority", imperialist-officered troops, its

training to build workers' militias inside the country!

\*For the nationalisation without compensation of all land, factories, mines and banks!

\*For workers' management of industry and large-scale agriculture. For land to the poor peasants who demand it!

\*For a constituent assembly of democratically elected delegates of the workers and peasants, linked to the dissolution of the capitalist state apparatus!

\*Build the revolutionary party as part of a reformed Fourth International.

As the treacherous reality of the reformist politics of the Patriotic Front leadership comes fully and dangerously into the open, the task of building an alternative revolutionary leadership becomes even more urgent.

Workers and militants within ZANU and ZAPU and outside, must draw on lessons to be learnt from the international working class in struggle as well as from their own experience, in order to effectively act against the dangers posed by the imperialist plan.

The task now is not to replace reformists by organisational manoeuvre, but to destroy their politics by revolutionary politics and struggle.

It is the strategy of permanent revolution, the unshakeable principle of working class independence, the revolutionary programme of democratic and transitional demands which alone can provide that revolutionary alternative.

This means the building of a Trotskyist party—for unlike Stalinists and reformists, Trotskyists have as their task and goal the development, not the holding back, of those forces and politics on which the dictatorship of the proletariat will be built.

bourgeois frontline backers, and the Rhodesian army to attempt to disarm and demobilise those in struggle.

There can be no doubt that any restriction on the operations of the Rhodesian army will be circumvented—the existence of clandestine and semi-official armed terror squads is already a well-established fact.

It is crucial that workers and militants resist all efforts to disarm them and bring them under imperialist "supervision".

The task, in the face of state attack, is workers self-defence—through the development of elected committees of the workers and peasants.

It is only by placing themselves under the "supervision" of such committees that workers with military training will be able to put it at the disposal of the struggle.

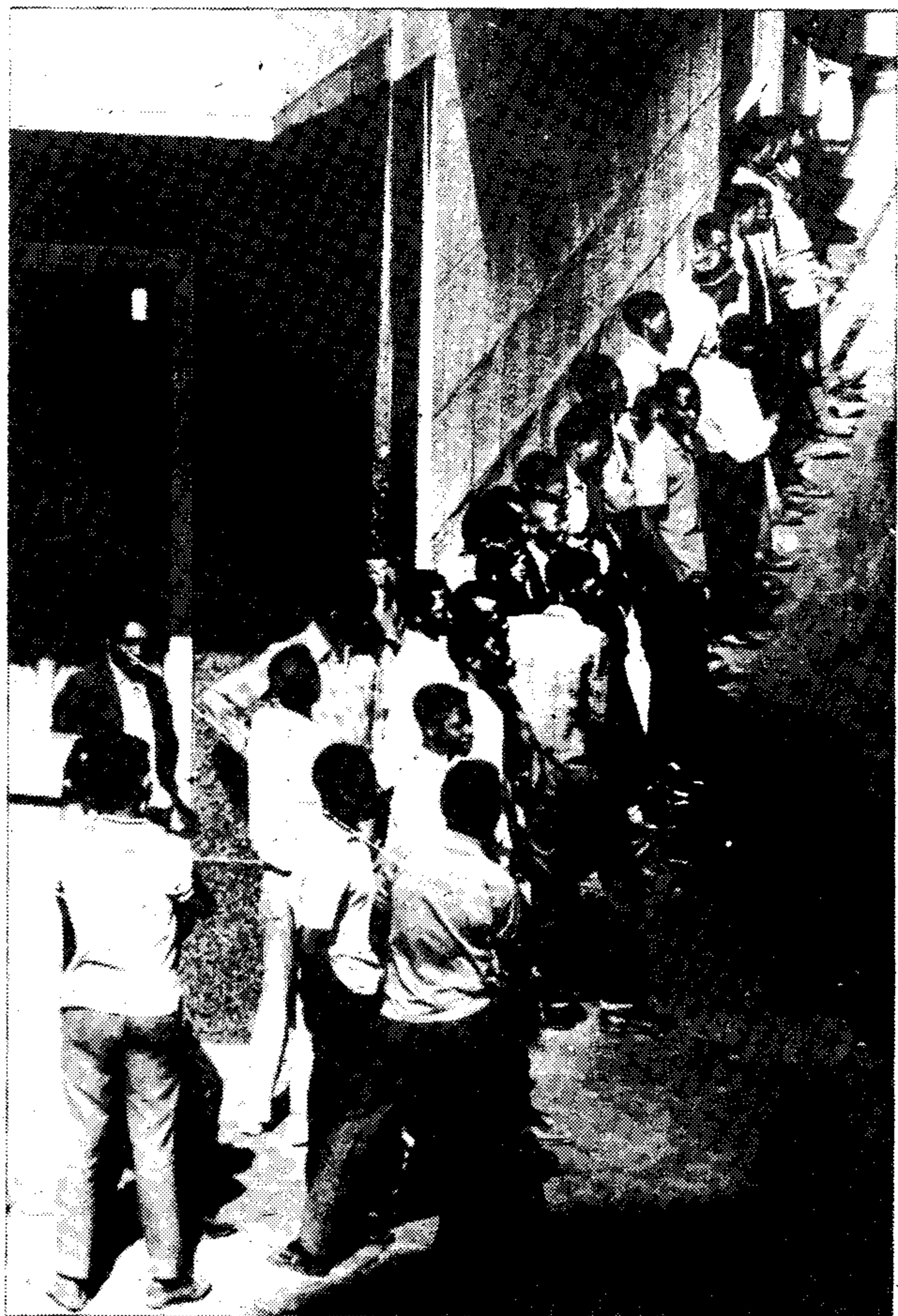
\*No handing over of arms!

\*No surrender to imperialist control!

\*Cadres with military



Muzorewa



Unemployed blacks in Zimbabwe

# LABOUR'S RIGHT WING HEDGE THEIR BETS



A further humiliating setback was delivered to Labour leader Callaghan last week as the National Executive voted 13-7 to reject all proposals for changes in the make-up of the Inquiry into the Party.

Callaghan has insisted throughout that the right-wing dominated Parliamentary Labour Party should be represented in its own right on the Inquiry—thus ensuring that the left wingers nominated by the NEC and the possible 'left' union leaders would be outnumbered by reliable pro-Callaghan arm-raisers.

### Uncharacteristic

But this has been consistently rejected by the NEC, which last Wednesday threw out a proposal from GMWU leader David Basnett, that the issue be discussed with the shadowy bureaucratic body known as "Trade Unions for a Labour Victory".

The NEC then rejected proposals to add first two, and then even one PLP representative to the Inquiry.

Even a scheme to add party chairman Lena Jeger to the Inquiry was thrown out.

The only compromise was



Callaghan speaking at last Wednesday's rally

in allowing Labour's chief whip Michael Cocks, to sit in, without a vote, on Inquiry meetings.

There is little doubt that the uncharacteristic display of rigidity by the left-wing led NEC is a reflection of the mounting militancy of the Party's rank and file, and growing fears that, through a

combination of manoeuvres and witch-hunts, the right wing are preparing the ground to overturn even the limited democratic reforms forced through this year's Party conference.

But while fighting all the way, the right wing are certainly not placing all of their eggs in one basket.

On the contrary, Callaghan's former Transport Minister William Rodgers has been among the first to respond with a statement echoing the recent rallying call from Eurocareerist Roy Jenkins, who appealed to extreme right wingers to break from the Labour Party.

Rodgers promised the left wing "hard liners" a fight "to the finish", and declared his view that if the party did split, the left would not necessarily be well placed to take over.

He gave the Labour Party a year, "not much longer" to save itself—by which he meant to undo the limited progressive steps taken in October.

But if he and the right wing mafia fail in their last-ditch efforts to defend and extend their crypto-Tory policies in the Labour Party, Rodgers is already declaring himself willing to bale out:

"I do not believe that many of us would want to be a passenger on such a gravy train to disaster".

What is it that so scandalises Rodgers and his fellow would-be Prentices and Tavernes, who all currently languish in the uncongenial surroundings of the labour movement?

It is the very idea that workers should seek to "clip the wings of MPs"—in other words instruct them to carry out policies adopted by the Labour Party.

It is the unthinkable notion that a workers' Party should be able to demand that its leader toe the Party line and remove him if he refuses to do so.

It is the horrific thought of rank and file members of the Labour movement rather than the extreme right wing leadership controlling the drafting of the Party's election manifesto.

What outrages Rodgers and his ilk, in short, is even the hint of workers' democracy—which in the Labour Party has never really developed even to the level of a fully worked out

idea. Yet for all the bluff and bluster of these right wingers, the reality is that the 'left' wing is very far from in control of the Labour Party.

And while showing a certain intransigence on the composition of Callaghan's Inquiry, the NEC 'lefts' have shown no enthusiasm for the necessary fight to take control—by campaigning for the ousting of the Callaghan/Healey leadership.

The Labour Party has over the decades proved itself an admirable tool with which class traitors and bourgeois politicians like Rodgers can serve the interests of capitalism.

But the interests of the working class can be served in the long term only by the construction of a principled, revolutionary leadership that is prepared to fight today's Labour bureaucracy—'left' and right alike.

## Tory Raison cracks the racist whip

While deciding "quite exceptionally" not to deport a seven-year old Bangla Deshi girl, Ayesha Khatun, to destitution, the Tory government on Friday cracked the racist whip and barred the entry of three Indian children deported in August.

Jayesh, Sanjesh and Dip-tesh Patel were deported, and their mother Manju Patel went with them in August, after Home Office minister Timothy Raison argued that they needed a proper application for entry clearance.

But now that proper application has been refused despite the fact that Manju Patel has been given custody of the children by an English court, and their father has offered a sworn statement declaring that he has no desire to keep the children or to come to England.

There is no doubt at all that these three boys—at a convenient distance of several thousand miles—have been victimised by Raison as part of the Tories' racistist crackdown on immigrants.

As the Tories drive home their attacks on the whole working class, they are exploiting every possible aspect of backwardness, chauvinism and prejudice to drive wedges between different sections of workers.

Anti-communist witch-hunts, nationalism (over the Common Market issue), brazen sex discrimination (in employment protection and immigration laws) and anti-Irish sentiment are being consciously stoked up by Tory spokesmen and their obedient press lackeys.

Now racialism, as openly expressed in the Tory Party

### whip

mat by Tory cuts. Only a week ago 10,000 workers marched through London in opposition not only to the new immigration restrictions but to the already existing Immigration Acts.

It is clear from Raison's actions in the wake of that demonstration that protests will not be enough to stop this planned Tory offensive.

Mass action is vital—to bring down the Tory government, and create conditions for a government responsive to the needs of the working class.



NF youth

## Fascists in crisis

A major crisis within the leadership and the ranks of the National Front is exposed this week in documents leaked to Labour Weekly.

An opposition, headed by expelled vice-chariman Andrew Fountaine, calling itself the "Constitutional Movement", has circulated the entire membership of the NF with a letter, a document listing internal wrangles within the party, a two-page manifesto signed by 28 NF members, and a questionnaire.

### Collapse

The campaign is designed to force the resignation of NF chairman John Tyndall and organiser Martin Webster.

Fountaine alleges that the NF has suffered "a collapse in morals, in finance, in administration and in political credibility in the last few years."

Its membership, he reveals, is 5,500—considerably less than many other estimates. And he draws attention to the NF's failure to win significant electoral support, with a vote that has dropped to a "meaningless percentage".

No doubt to the horror of many NF rank and file thugs and fascists, for whom gays rate a close second to immigrants as

targets for persecution and violent attack, Fountaine's 18-page document dwells extensively on the homosexuality of leading NF members.

### 'Supermole'

But it goes on to make allegations of "corruption", ballot-rigging, "mismanagement" and even "incipient socialism" against the Tyndall/Webster leadership.

There is even speculation that a highly placed former CP member in the Front's top echelon is a 'supermole' responsible for the continual leak of confidential documents to the anti-fascist journal Searchlight.

The NF's electoral fortunes plummeted, claims Fountaine, as soon as campaigns such as the Anti Nazi League began to publicise the openly fascist positions held by Tyndall and Webster, who played around "with a clique of cranky costumed clowns" in the 1960s.

Because this is true, Fountaine points out:

"They're stuck with it and we're stuck with them—unless the party is prepared to face reality and do something about it."

In another effort to prevent Fountaine and co. from doing anything about it, the NF Directorate has already disbanded oppositional branches

in such key areas as Hackney and Islington.

But as Labour Weekly correctly points out, neither Fountaine's doubtless exaggerated account of the NF's problems, nor the clear evidence that the movement faces a damaging power struggle should lull workers into a false confidence that the fascist menace is at an end.

Nor should reliance be placed on the propaganda politics of the Anti-Nazi League to complete the crushing of the Front.

### Violent attacks

Indeed the failure of their excursion into electoral politics now heightened by the Tories' racist immigration policies, stealing potential NF supporters has driven elements of the NF and the British Movement into renewed violent attack on immigrant workers, gays and the workers' movement—in particular against those fighting for solidarity with the Irish war of liberation.

Workers' defence squads must be organised wherever such dangers arise, prepared to take the necessary action to drive every fascist off the streets and back into the sewers where they all belong.



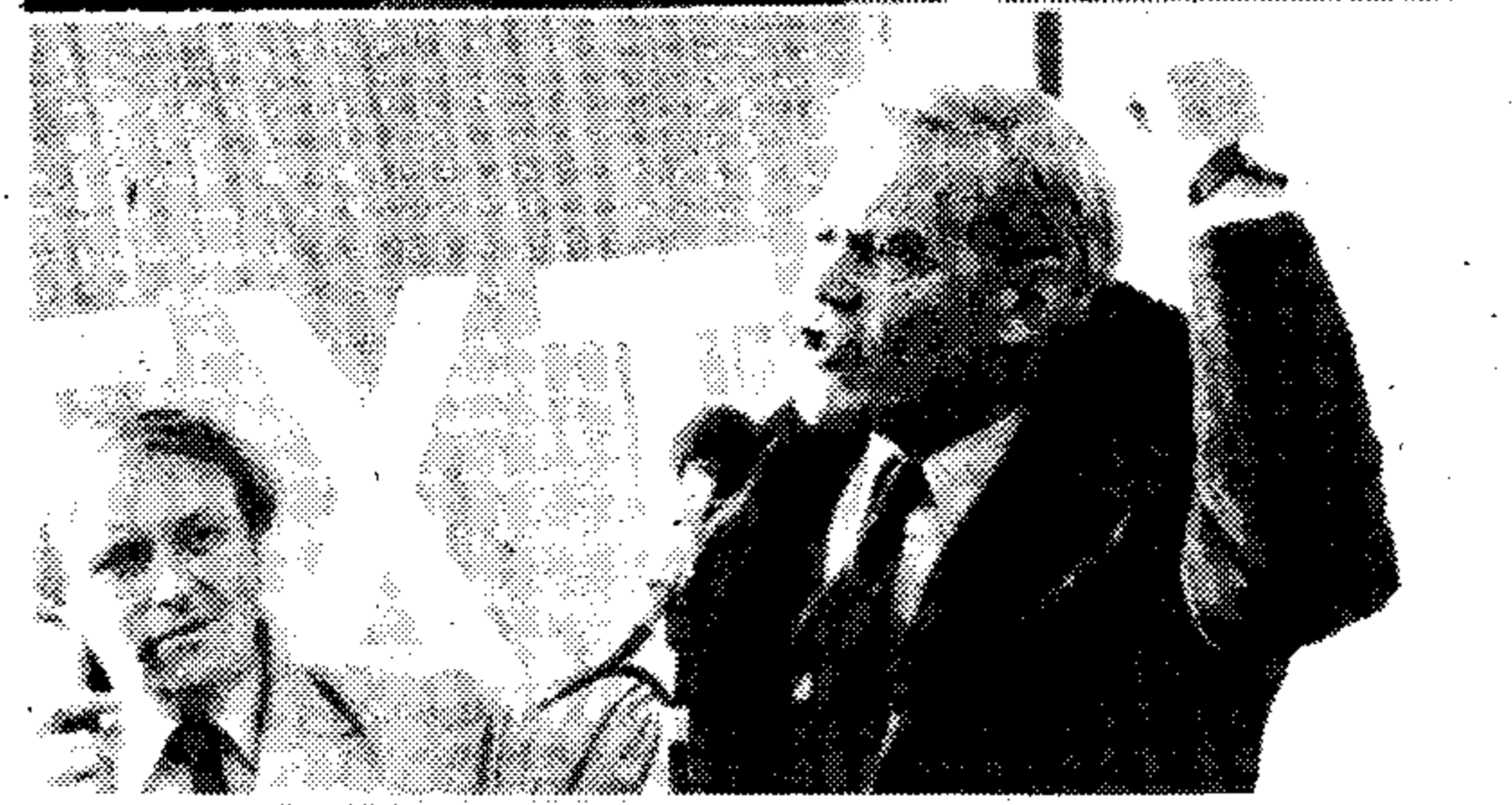
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(left) The head of the 40,000-strong march and (right) typical slogans on display



A striking display of arm waving by NUPE's Alan Fisher baffles Neil Kinnock; but wasn't it also to divert attention from the small size of the NUPE contingent?

# CALLAGHAN SURVIVES MASS PROTEST

It comes to something when the leader of the Labour Party is warmly congratulated for surviving a ten minute speech to a Party rally.

But such was the climate amongst the 40,000 demonstrators who marched through London against the Tory cuts last Wednesday that even well-rehearsed 'left' speeches from Eric Heffer, Stan Orme and Frank Allaun failed to placate the crowd that filled Central Hall.

Heffer and Allaun did what they could to appease militants by larding their speeches with vague calls to "bring this government down", and bring back "a Labour government that will implement the policies of our Party conference".

But since they refused to offer any means whereby either Thatcher could be toppled or the right wing Labour leadership defeated, such bluster carried little conviction, and they were subjected to merciless heckling.

Increasingly rattled, both Allaun and Heffer cited the 100,000-strong 1971 demonstration against the Tory Industrial Relations Bill as proof that mass demonstrations by the working class could "move mountains".

They carefully avoided the fact that despite the demonstration the Bill became law—only to be eventually repealed after the downfall of the Heath government by a Labour leader-

ship threatened with a national engineering strike.

Such lessons are plainly lost on Labour's 'lefts', who continue to urge workers to place their faith in protest marches and lobbying MPs—"particularly Tory MPs"—rather than the all-out industrial action which alone can defeat the cuts and bring down the Tories.

But they have not been forgotten by many militant workers, who throughout the length of the march had readily responded to shouts of "Tories Out"

## Time-worn

Nor are workers any longer so ready as in the past to accept vague calls for 'unity' with Labour's right wing when the task at hand is fighting to remove a Tory government.

Stan Orme, the Tribune Group's former junior torture chief in Ireland, failed lamentably to silence hecklers with the time-worn responses that "you are just helping the Tories" and "go and shout at Thatcher, not at us".

And he brought uproar when he attempted to argue that Callaghan should be given a hearing.

'Left' chairman Alex Kitson also pleaded for attention while "the leader of the Opposition gives his address". A heckler shouted back "Which address? His London address or his Sussex farm?"

Callaghan's entry had been

greeted by a wave of booing which drowned a handful of cheers.

And he was finally able to grabble through his speech—at breakneck speed—only in the stunned aftermath of a punch-up in which a group of anarchist hecklers had been forcibly ejected from the hall, and with Labour Party stewards looming over would-be interruptors.

Callaghan obstinately ignored one heckler demanding that he declare where he stood on the victimisation by BL management of Derek Robinson for whom earlier speakers had declared full support.

And while vaguely declaring that "we shall fight the cuts as hard as we can", Callaghan offered not even a verbal nod

in the direction of action to bring down the Tories.

But while certain 'lefts'—in particular Dennis Skinner and Tony Benn—are adept at trotting out speeches to match the mood of such mass protests, they have shown no more inclination than their fellow Tribunites to mount a campaign in the labour movement for the ousting of the Callaghan/Healey leadership.

A few platitudes about pledging the next Labour government to "implement Party conference decisions" mean nothing unless the present right wing leading clique is removed and a genuine socialist internationalist programme is fought for by those claiming to speak for the working class.



A visit from the ruling class

# School students lead Leicester lobbyists

Hopes of a quiet November 28 in Leicester were rudely dispersed when over 1,000 trade unionists and youth turned up to lobby the County Council over proposed new cuts in spending.

Hundreds of striking students and school students joined teachers, nursery nurses, hospital and welfare workers in a show of determination which made a mockery of the local union bureaucracy's plans for a "dignified delegate lobby".

Instead, they subjected the speakers assembled by the joint

public sector action committee to continued barracking, and shouted down right wing Labour MP Greville Janner when he tried to justify Labour cuts.

The continued call was "when are you going to do something?"

In fact, the only sign of a fight coming from the platform was the young NUSS speaker who, having pressured NUT officials into allowing him onto the platform, urged direct action and asked what use an MP was who said he supported you but wouldn't do anything.

Hardly surprisingly the speech got the biggest round of applause.

The impressive turn-out of school youth had not taken place without a fight.

In two schools youth defied threats of expulsion to take part in the NUSS-organised strike, and in one as teachers manned the gates in a bid to stem the walk-out, dozens of school students climbed over the wall to join the demonstration!

In Beaumont Leys school two leading NUSS members were ordered, under threat of expulsion, to call on school students not to take part in the action.

They stood firm. But on Thursday and Friday the headmaster hit back, and held 80 youth in the main hall, suspended from all lessons.

The willingness of Leicester youth and of trade unionists to fight must now be taken back into the union branches and directed against the local bureaucrats who have so far successfully confined opposition to the cuts to no more than protests and publicity.

An important step in this would be the building of the conference at Leicester Poly on December 16 on how to fight the cuts as the focus for developing a programme for action.



Benn: playing to the gallery, not fighting Callaghan

# Nicaragua and the crisis in the 'United' Secretariat

By Don Flint

The dramatic events in Nicaragua which brought the downfall of the reactionary Somoza dictatorship and put the petty bourgeois Sandinista National Liberation Front in control of the country has not only had an impact in weakening imperialism's grip on Central America.

It has also produced a major upheaval in the world Trotskyist movement. The biggest self-proclaimed Trotskyist current internationally, the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, split into three component parts on the eve of its long-awaited XIth World Congress.

It is therefore well worth examining in some detail the positions of the two main USFI tendencies on Nicaragua, which range from opportunism to outright political capitulation to the FSLN leadership.

## Capitulation

Why do we use the term 'capitulation'? Because, as every USFI ideologue recognises, the FSLN, a petty bourgeois nationalist formation, is *not* a proletarian party and is thus incapable of carrying through the necessary struggle for the independent interests of the working class.

Under the massive material pressure of imperialism, such a formation—whatever its initial 'left' rhetoric—eventually finds itself reabsorbed into the world framework of capitalist exploitation.

The sole exception to this in the post-war period has been the Cuban revolution, in which Castro's petty bourgeois nationalist regime emerged at a time when Kremlin military strategy required an outpost close to the USA.

As the US economic blockade of Cuba developed, the Soviet bureaucracy offered economic, political and military aid to the Castroites, which over a period of years succeeded in assimilating the Castroite movement into the orbit of Stalinism.

## Deformed

Yet this alliance with Stalinism, coupled with the absence of a proletarian revolutionary party in Cuba, ensured that even the overturn of capitalist property relations, destruction of the old Cuban capitalist state machine and introduction of an economy based on nationalisation, produced only a *deformed workers' state*, in which the exercise of power remained throughout in the hands of the Castroite bureaucracy.



Castro: gathered into the embrace of Stalinism in aftermath of 1959 revolution

The lessons of Cuba have, however, not been learned by any of the tendencies of the USFI.

It was actually formed as an international body in 1963 on the basis of common adulation for the Castroites and a common belief that "agreement" on the Cuban revolution wiped out previous disagreements and divisions.

Only now, with the 1979 split, has the extent of these problems been brought forcibly to the surface.

Let us examine the opposing views.

On November 12, the *Intercontinental Press*, reflecting the majority line of the USFI, and in particular the politics of the American Socialist Workers Party\*, carried an extended piece by Peter (now Pedro) Camejo and Fred Murphy of the SWP entitled "How to answer ultra-left sectarianism in Nicaragua".

The article was designed as a defence of their party's conduct in face of the concrete evidence that has come to light in recent weeks of the repression of left-wing groups by the SWP's chosen political allies—the FSLN.

The article is necessarily long and painstaking since, as the

authors are obliged to admit, the Maoist Movimiento de Accion Popular (MAP) and Frente Obrero (FO) and the 'Trotskyist' Liga Marxista Revolucionaria (LMR) Nicaraguan section of the USFI, have appreciable support, have been raising criticisms of the Sandinista regime from the left, and have been openly repressed.

Murphy and Camejo put forward two main arguments.

First, they say, since the FSLN heads a 'revolutionary government' its opponents have to be ultra-left and sectarian.

The FSLN position—that these groups are 'counter-revolutionary'—is concealed by the SWP, since the LMR claims to be a sympathising section of the USFI and a good deal of embarrassment could be caused.

Secondly, Murphy and Camejo argue that the FSLN is now mending its ways: it is experiencing 'an evolution in its thinking'.

Recent reports from Nicaragua indicate that the militants have indeed been released from jail, in line with the pronouncement of Minister of the Interior Tomas Borge that 'jail is not the best place for dialogue' and his request that the 'impatient left' demonstrate to the people 'the guidelines of

social participation'.

This evolution clearly reflects the pressure of the masses on the FSLN leadership. But in no way does it represent a halt in their reconstruction of the bourgeois state.

If the MAP-FO and LMR were now to fight for a Trotskyist programme they would, no doubt, be imprisoned very rapidly once again, since this would entail struggling for the construction of soviets (as opposed to cross-class organs of popular administration under the hegemony of the FSLN), combating the FSLN's reformist turn to imperialism, fighting for the expropriation of all capital, and demanding the expulsion of bourgeois forces from the government.

For the SWP, and indeed for the majority of the USFI, such demands now simply represent "sectarianism".

However, on the day that Somoza fled to Miami, *Intercontinental Press* actually itself called for the rejection of all military, political and economic pacts with the imperialist powers and repudiation of the foreign debt. It went on to call for:

"expropriation without compensation and under workers control of all the property of Somoza, of his family, of all high officials of the regime, of imperialism, and of the

Government leaders (from top) Robelo, Chamorro, Ramirez and Ortega

'national' capitalists . . . The only government that can carry out such a programme . . . excludes all representatives of the ruling classes and imperialism." (IP 16/7/79).

A mere seven weeks later, according to IP:

"The power that exists today in Nicaragua is a revolutionary power." (IP 3/9/79).

What then, we may legitimately ask, has happened in the meantime?

The property of the Somoza clan has been nationalised to be sure, but capital as a whole is staunchly defended and by a regime that figures amongst its members such leading owners of capital as Alfonso Robelo (millionaire owner of plantations and a large cooking-oil business) and Violetta Barrios de Chamorro (whose family has extensive financial interests and controls the only bourgeois daily paper *La Prensa*).

## Rescheduled

Aid has been directly sought from imperialism; debts are not to be repudiated but merely rescheduled; workers control exists only in those places where the workers are strong enough to enforce it against the dictates of the government; military aid from the US has been requested to build up a professional bourgeois army to counteract the threat of the militias; left-wing opponents are subjected to attack and arrest; and the revolution in the countryside has been suppressed for a capitalist 'agrarian reform'.

Yet far from criticism of such retreats, these policies have won the FSLN yards of free and uncritical column inches in *IP* (alongside Fidel Castro).

It is in this context that USFI support for the FSLN's attack on the Simon Bolivar Brigade and the subsequent USFI split with the Bolshevik Faction must be understood.

For, if the FSLN is 'revolutionary', it follows that:

"All activities which create divisions between the mobilised masses and the FSLN are contrary to the interests of the revolution." (IP 24/9/79).

In the eyes of Camejo,

Murphy, Barnes and the SWP leadership, the Brigade—sent to Nicaragua by the Bolshevik Faction of the USFI in the final weeks of the Civil War—had created such a division and should, therefore, be disowned immediately.

However, there are plenty of indications that they went further than this—that they indicated to the FSLN in advance that they would not look unkindly upon an expulsion, and even that they effectively encouraged the physical removal of their 'comrades' from the centre of a political revolution.

In this the USFI's actions are on a par with the abhorrent attacks on the Iranian HKS by Healy's International Committee at a time when these militants are suffering the full force of the mullahs' drive to dictatorship.

The USFI did not immediately protest at the expulsion of the Simon Bolivar Brigade, preferring to characterise the very idea of the Brigade as 'grotesque' and pronounce that its formation had not been authorised by the USFI since it had:

"nothing whatever to do with Trotskyism (or) revolutionary socialism". (*Militant* 31/8/79).

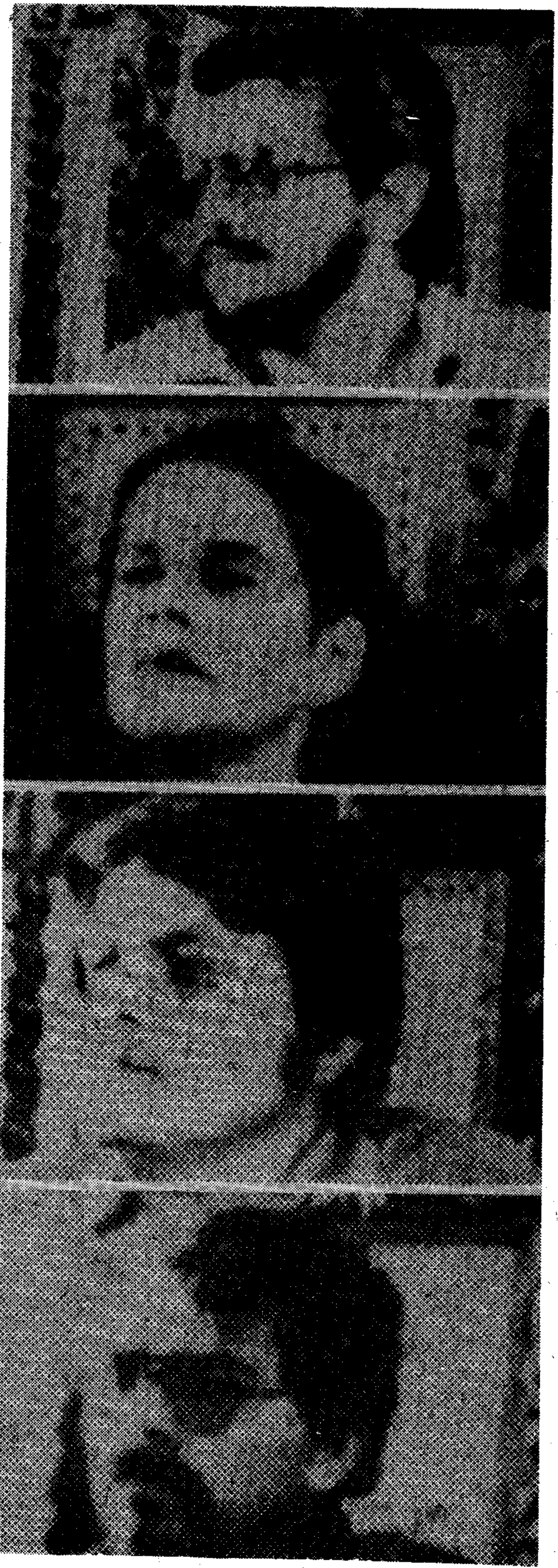
The British IMG proclaimed the Brigade to be 'fraudulent and irresponsible'. (*Socialist Challenge* 15/11/79).

## Limp protest

However, when the FSLN followed the expulsion with an ill-tempered tirade against 'Trotskyists' it became necessary to issue a limp protest in order to save face and cheer up the USFI current which follows Mandel, who had begun to edge nervously away from the more gross formulations of the SWP whilst continuing to support the substantive political line.

Thus, the expulsion began to be described as a 'mistake' made by the FSLN! (See, for example, *Socialist Challenge* 15/11/79).

There seems little need to draw out the implications of this idiotic formulation as a testimony to abject adaptationism





Sandinista guerrillas: guns and the overthrow of Somoza do not add up to socialism

all-out confrontation with the FSLN command that was already showing considerable hostility.

This was the demonstration of August 15 in Managua, supported by some 3,000 workers, calling for "Power to the Proletariat!"

### Expelled

The other major slogan was "The Revolution is in the hands of the Bourgeoisie!"

Within days the Brigade had been broken up and its leading members expelled as "counter-revolutionaries" and "foreign provocateurs".

However tactically ill-conceived the demonstration might have been and whatever the method that led to its planning, the expulsion constituted a major setback for revolutionaries.

Following the failure of its project, the PST explained events in terms of the bourgeois membership of the Junta and the fact that the FSLN was not a workers or socialist party but a revolutionary nationalist movement (*El Socialista* 24/8/79).

This is undeniably correct, but it is abundantly clear that this proper characterisation of the FSLN and the policies that flow from it have been reached only through a series of rapid and total about-turns every bit the equal of those indulged in by the USFI majority.

Moreno has emerged from the Nicaraguan fiasco defending 'Bolshevik' positions and there is a very real danger that this will encourage illusions that he heads a bloc built on consistent revolutionary politics, which is patently not the case.

### Sprightly two-step

Instead of a consistent and scientific formulation of the Trotskyist programme rigorously applied in practice Moreno has taken a sprightly two-step that has now enabled him to steal a march on those who ended up on the 'winning side' by applying exactly the same method.

This is why the tri-partite conference with the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency and Lambert's Communist Organisation for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International (OCRFI) has been established on the basis of the Nicaraguan question.

But the Fourth International cannot be reconstructed in such terms.

Moreno has blown the USFI wide open on Nicaragua and for him therefore Nicaragua has been the world from August 1979 onwards.

But what occurred before this date? Moreno's positions on Nicaragua cannot be isolated from the past anymore than can those of the USFI majority and, indeed, Moreno's past record yields a plethora of positions similar to those currently held by his opponents.

In his adherence to the method of Pabloism, Moreno has adopted the guise of a Castroite (his support for the Fidelista Organisation of Latin American Solidarity in the 1960s), a Maoist (he eulogised the Red Guards), and a Peronist (his paper *Palabra Obrera* at one point described itself as an 'organ of revolutionary workers' Peronism' and issued 'under the discipline of General Peron').

These are 'mistakes' which Moreno is now happy to admit. But the Trotskyist programme, let alone the International, is not defended and developed by constant admissions of errors as one gaily jumps off and on the carousel of history.

### Struggle

Blithe self-criticism is no escape, it is simply another method of avoiding the lessons of history.

Nicaragua has added to these lessons and split asunder the USFI, which for sixteen years held together on the basis of outright opportunism.

This split creates new and more favourable conditions for the reconstruction of the Fourth International.

But the way forward consists not in choosing between positions held over Nicaragua but in the opportunity, now opened up to intervene with a sharp programmatic struggle against the bankrupt history and liquidationist method of Pabloism and opportunism.

challenge to the state machinery of the capitalists.

But according to the USFI the FSLN is the revolutionary force while at the same time it is upholding the capitalist 'government' of national reconstruction!

So the dual power must exist *within* the government—and we must suppose that the logical course to follow is that everyone sits back and lets the mysterious "internal process" work itself out nice and smoothly.

Indeed rather than calling for the building of a Trotskyist party to resolve the dual power situation in the interests of the working class, the USFI actively opposes such a fight!

Indeed a USFI resolution on Nicaragua expressly calls on USFI members to liquidate any organisation that they may still have there:

"The OST of Costa Rica and the Bolshevik Faction in particular are instructed to cease all activity in Nicaragua, including the construction of organisations, and to limit themselves to activities undertaken in collaboration with the U.Sec. and on the basis of the line of the International.

As the resolution on the Nicaraguan revolution adopted by the U.Sec. of 1 October 1979 outlined, all Nicaraguans who are members or sympathisers of the Fourth International should act 'as loyal militants in the framework of the organisation which led the overthrow of Somoza and leads this revolution... to defend the fundamental ideas of revolutionary Marxism.'

### Criminal manner

In terms of politics alone this is a damning record. But the USFI majority went, and continues to go, beyond the practice of bankrupt politics.

It has acted in an openly criminal manner and made a mockery of communist morality in its treasonable actions towards the Brigade.

Nevertheless, with respect to programmatic consistency and political practice the record of the USFI is scarcely bettered by that of the organisers of the Brigade—Nahuel Moreno's Bolshevik Faction, acting through the Colombian PST (Socialist Workers Party).

The Colombian paper, *El Socialista*, provides a ready chronology of the myopic and opportunistic twists and turns of Moreno and his followers.

The first scent of 'brigades in solidarity with the mass struggle' comes on June 7, hidden away at the bottom of an editorial calling on the bourgeois government in Colombia to break relations with Somoza.

In the same issue the slogan of "Down with Somoza! For a Sandinista Government!" is raised along with the call for the FSLN to break from the bourgeoisie.

In July, Moreno produced the call for "a workers and peasants government based on the

FSLN" which "must not mean any political support for the FSLN!" (Declaration of the Platform of the Bolshevik Faction, International Internal Discussion Bulletin, Vol. XVI, No. 3, July 1979, p.60).

If this line had been maintained and given a concrete programmatic content, the Morenist cadre could have begun a major intervention within the masses and the FSLN.

But in practice they were thrown into confusion, since only a few days before *El Socialista* had carried the banner headline "All Power to the FSLN!" (*El Socialista* 29/6/79).

### Rank nonsense

This call is very different from supporting a Sandinista government because by definition it rules out the formation of independent soviets, places all authority in the hands of the guerrillas, and implicitly defines the Sandinistas as revolutionary.

By making such a call Moreno actually placed himself to the right of the USFI Majority, which at this stage never ventured to such an extreme, although the logic of their positions pointed to such an end.

Before the call for the Sandinistas to take full power, the brigades were intended to fight "shoulder to shoulder" with the FSLN, which in itself is an absolutely correct formulation.

But the call was issued in the name of:

"The bolivarian and eternal continental sentiment of opposition to tyranny..."

This rank nonsense, culled from the hidebound ideology of the bourgeois independence struggle against Spain, was elevated above the call for prolet-

arian power, paving the way for the consequent capitulation to the guerrilla forces.

Such a development was also evident in the inclusion within the Brigade of people of the widest possible political persuasion.

The PST trumpeted this fact a good deal, emphasising that the Brigade was not Trotskyist but contained the likes of spiritualists and Liberals, and was a truly pluralist body.

*El Socialista* even quoted, without comment, the opinion of a Colombian ex-minister of education that:

"It is fundamental that this brigade has a composition as heterogeneous as that of the (Nicaraguan) Provisional Junta. If this is not the case it could be counter-productive, one might fall into the grave danger of maximalism." (*El Socialista* 22/6/79).

Later the Bolshevik Faction back-peddled furiously, and painted the Brigade as a 'Trotskyist' force!

The awful confusion reigning within the Bolshevik Faction at this time was further worsened by the fact that at the same time as the Brigade was to fight 'shoulder to shoulder' with the FSLN, it was also to be under the discipline of the FSLN.

### Open letter

The open letter from the PST to potential volunteers stated that the Brigade would fight "under the military leadership of the FSLN" and reprinted letters from the FSLN General Staff to this effect.

Moreover, the call for volunteers made it clear that:

"the only programmatic point of the Simon Bolivar Brigade is to support the struggle of the Sandinista people..." (*El Socialista* 22/6/79,

emphasis added).

The placing of the Brigade under the discipline of the FSLN raises the major question of the correctness of the strategy of sending a Brigade.

The organisation of the Bolshevik Faction's political intervention in the form of a military unit meant that it was bound to be directed as an entity and as such isolated from the masses and the FSLN cadre.

### Scandalous

Furthermore, from the very start it placed the Bolshevik Faction in a political dilemma—either opportunism, in putting itself under the direction of the FSLN, or sectarianism, by rejecting the political (and thus military) authority of the Sandinistas.

Although sections of the Brigade did engage in fighting, the unit as a whole did not enter combat and spent the last days of the war in Costa Rica.

This, however, cannot be the basis of an attack on its politics.

It is scandalous that in attacking the Brigade the SWP, bathing in the muck of nationalism in its snide references to 'non-Nicaraguan elements', stops only just short of implying collective cowardice.

In the few weeks that it worked in Nicaragua, the Brigade concentrated on building unions and militias in Bluefields and Managua, also calling for wholesale takeovers of land and attacking the Junta and some FSLN leaders as bourgeois.

Following this new turn, which undoubtedly had its basis in the experience of working amongst a militant, leaderless, and increasingly discontented mass movement, the Brigade made a move that bore little relation to its base in the working class and inevitably led to an

# Further reading

## The Poisoned Well

The WSL's critique of the political basis of the dissolving of the IMT and LTF and the formation of a new Majority leadership, submitted to the ill-fated 11th World Congress of the USFI.

Price 35p including postage

## International Discussion Bulletin

For the Reconstruction of the Fourth International. The first issue of the Bulletin, whose aim is to take forward the discussion on the principled basis for the formation a new international tendency carries the document "The Transitional Programme in Today's Class Struggle" adopted recently by the WSL.

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and capitulation.

This adaptation is perfectly voiced in the loose and rambling if not deliberately misleading language employed in *IP* and *Socialist Challenge*.

In its four pages on the split in the USFI, *Socialist Challenge* gives over two to the question of Nicaragua, where we are told that the FSLN "fights continuously to organise the masses" (15/11/79 p.8).

It certainly does, but how and to what end?

### Ambiguity

We are never told, but left to suppose that it is for the overthrow of capitalism in Nicaragua.

It seems, however, that such a stark statement might not tally with every known detail—so the formulation is best left in its comfortable ambiguity!

Elsewhere the gains of the revolution are outlined in detail: "A Sandinista Army has been established. It has drawn into its ranks many of the militias which arose in the civil war."

Perfectly true. But is it really a great step forward?

Is it now the case that the USFI considers a professional army superior to popular militias for the purposes of social revolution? Such an innovation in Marxist theory is not spelled out by the USFI—merely left implicit in their statements.

A little further on it is pointed out that three months' back wages are to be paid to workers to cover the losses they suffered during the civil war.

But the Pabloite enthusiasts omit to point out that this gain was very largely the result of the agitation of the persecuted MAP-FO—and trenchantly resisted by the regime, who argued that it would set back the process of 'reconstruction'.

The USFI, in fact, offers readers a constant stream of such elisions, misrepresentations and general obfuscations.

But at times the tension becomes too great, and major political questions have to be confronted.

Thus, we read: "A situation of dual power exists in Nicaragua."

But: "Concentration on removing the bourgeois ministers would be to completely mis-estimate the far-reaching break that has taken place in terms of military power, the location of the real centre of power, the character of the government measures up to now, and the experiences necessary for the consciousness and organisation of the masses to develop." (*Socialist Challenge* 11/79 p.8)

### Challenge

Well then, does dual power exist in Nicaragua? Which of the contending forces is correct? Marxists have traditionally seen dual power as a situation in which the independent organisations of the working class mount a



Trainees' refuse to eat breakfast following a suicide



Officer Taylor beating up Carlin on arrival

# 'LAW AND ORDER'— WHITELAW STYLE

Socialist Youth League member Neil James reviews the film *Scum* which is at present on general release.

The movie *Scum* is now on general release. It is about the life of inmates and officers of the Borstal system.

The film was originally commissioned by the BBC's Play for Today department.

This decision was later reversed from above by the BBC Director General (and therefore the state's media-censorship machine) when the play was eventually completed.

The resultant product was decided to be "too much" for our TV screens, and was chopped.

The makers were forced to take a choice of either scrapping the movie, or reproducing it for the cinema, where it would be an X certificate, and lose the young school-leaver and 'juvenile delinquent' audience it was aimed at.

The plot is indeed interesting for its relevance to conditions faced by the younger generations of today, and to the activities of the repressive forces of the state.

Three working class inmates enter the Borstal for various offences.

## Insults

Two are first offenders (car thefts, etc) while one is a hardened, tough youth who is put in there for beating up a prison officer.

As soon as they leave the car they face a barrage of insults, and physical harassment.

They are thrown from wall to wall, punched and subjected to verbal threats of further intimidation.

The officers pick out Carlin, the hardest youth, and put most hassle on him.

He is told he will be "broken".

Then they are forced to run to their quarters. The black youth Angel is told the inmates don't like 'jungle bunnies' and is put in his own cell.

This happens to the other small and frail youth who, being white is at least spared the racism.

Carlin is placed into a dormitory where he is to be

'sorted out'.

Next morning, the routine day-to-day life inside the Borstal begins.

The general para-military marching, screaming and drilling continues to break down any initial resistance.

The attempt to make youth stop thinking and automatically obey commands is necessary to run these types of institutions.

The Borstal is run on the collaboration of the inmates' leaders with the 'Big Brother' Governor, who heads the hierarchy of screws.

## 'Daddies'

Next are the house-masters, followed by the wing heads, who are the ex-cop type.

The inmates are kept in line by their 'daddies'.

These are the hardest and most brutal inmates in the wings.

They, with their props, help control cigarettes, sex, food, money—in fact the whole lives of the inmates.

The "daddy" is used as an agent of the Borstal screw hierarchy to control the hatred of the individual inmates.

Carlin poses this threat to the "daddy", who, helped by his two props, beats up Carlin in the night.

The problem is that Carlin is not scared away from taking over—as are the other new inmates.

Angel is attacked and beaten up.

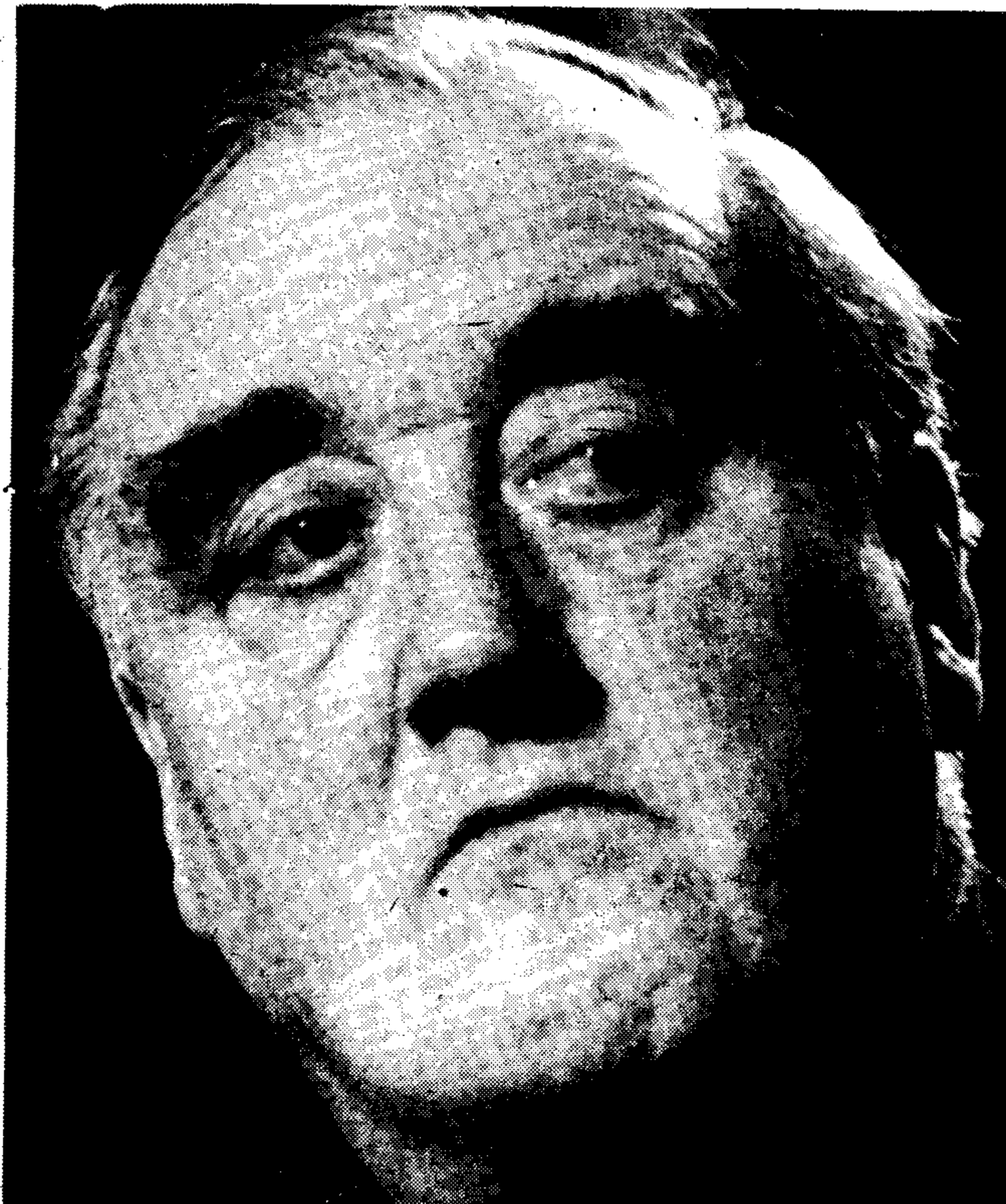
At once and by arrangement the wing officer enters the cell. After several racist insults Angel is put on report for having a 'dirty cell'!

He is screamed at and intimidated not as a person but as a number.

## Put on report

The other new inmate is asked to 'borrow' a radio by the 'daddy'. He cannot refuse—but is promptly put on report by the screw for having stolen a radio!

However Carlin decides to retaliate to these provocative attacks. He chooses his time before looking for revenge.



Whitelaw

Then he finds the 'daddy's' thug friend.

Placing two billiard balls into a sock he cracks them over the thug's head.

Meanwhile the youth in the social room continue to play pool or sit around demoralised and depressed.

They appear not to notice anything as Carlin smoothly walks away, leaving the thug collapsed on the floor.

This is the most amazing scene of pure violence and the shot shudders even the toughest audience.

Carlin repeats this vicious treatment on the daddy. It is worth describing these events to illustrate the cold-blooded nature of the violence that takes place.

## Blank silence

He approaches him from behind, and breaks his head into

development of the divide and rule strategy in progress.

The boys are separated in basket ball into blacks and whites.

Then they are allowed to release their frustration and anger against one another.

This acts as a safety valve for the inmates and weakens the youth by reinforcing backward racial prejudices.

## Individualists

The system also contains those individualists who want no trouble off the "daddies".

Archer is an example of this. His atheism and vegetarianism cause endless problems for the screws.

However, though he has courage and intelligence he refuses to take up any struggle to destroy the elitist daddy system.

He appears to be the mouth-piece of the film makers, representing a statement that individual resistance can live on while the prison system itself breeds, rather than stops hardened crime.

This message is basically the aim of the movie.

However the pressures and strain of life under the daily military regime—both physically and psychologically—drive some beyond the brink.

One youth commits suicide by slashing his wrists.

Another youth commits suicide after being raped. The climax is reached when the inmates rebel at dinner time. Music is used to help build up the tension.

## Short-lived

All hell breaks loose, though the screws escape the good kicking they deserve. Triumphant the youth dance around the hall.

But victory is short-lived, and the screws reform en masse.

The ring leaders are given the most horrific beatings and "order" is restored.

The movie thus sharply exposes the prison system and clearly raises some embarrassing questions.

In particular it shows the meaning of pledges by Tory

Home Secretary Whitelaw to introduce a new "short sharp shock" for youth.

For all the brutality this will unleash against youth, the film shows how such treatment cannot eradicate, merely strengthen criminal tendencies.

The capitalist system, now forced to destroy existing forces of production and create mass unemployment is incapable of developing or utilising the potential skills of working class youth, or fulfilling their needs.

When youth respond in frustration they are then met by the most savage repression.

Nor is it any accident that the most reactionary elements of sadistic cruelty (such as NF and UDR) are strongly represented in the ranks of prison screws.

The prison service also has its own internal SPG-style elite force of thugs which has been used increasingly over the last year.

Most recently they were used against a peaceful sit-in at Wormwood Scrubs.

Screws from all over the city attacked and beat up the 50 occupiers (particularly the Irish republicans).

## Connection

Similar brutal attacks have occurred at Hull, Brixton, Lewes, Gartree and other prisons.

As socialists we see the connection between increased attacks by the Thatcherite Tories against jobs, social services and wages and the build up and strengthening of these forces of state repression.

To us, the task must be to channel the anger, hatred, and anti-establishment resistance into a mass communist youth movement which can remove the Labour traitors and mobilise the working class to smash the repressive capitalist state machinery. This is the vital first step to creating a classless socialist society.

But whatever you do, see this film. It shows the way rigid censorship has helped to create the false image of prisons as soft, lukewarm and ludicrous as the "Porridge" TV series.



# Letter from Britain's concentration camp

## H-BLOCK LONG KESH



This is an extract from a letter smuggled out of the H Blocks of Long Kesh, Britain's most modern torture centre, in which over 370 Irish republican prisoners of war suffer intolerable conditions similar to the sewer pipe dwellings of Calcutta spoken of by Cardinal O'Fiach, because they refuse to compromise their principles and bow to Britain's criminalisation policy.

"My cell is my whole world 24 hours of the day, seven days a week, in this 8 x 10 concrete tomb, containing nothing only a stinking, overflowing poe, a piece of stinking foam for a mattress and three dirty rags for blankets.

I see no-one except the screws, who open and close my door.

I am denied exercise and

the right to associate with my comrades, my thoughts are my only companions.

I can't even see the birds or the sky as my window has been blocked with a steel grill of frosted perspex, cutting off whatever little view of the outside world that I had and stemming the flow of air to a trickle.

My cell reeks of urine and human excreta, which covers the four walls and a pile of inedible food in the corner, a rotting haven for maggots and flies which torture me day in, day out.

My hair and beard is long and matted and my body filthy and covered with sores.

I am constantly hungry and sickness is always at hand. I am refused medical attention because I refuse to wear the prison garb to see the doctor.

It's two years now since I've read a book, looked at a paper, watched TV or

smoked a cigarette. Even tobacco is denied to me.

At least twice a week I undergo a special mirror search designed to humiliate and dehumanise.

At least twice a week I'm forced to straddle over a mirror, naked, then I am punched, kicked and pulled by the beard until I am made to squat over the mirror, then my buttocks are parted, at times my insides have been probed.

I am denied the very basic human rights, at times I think even death would be preferable to these conditions."

"The blanket men in H Block suffer these conditions in the name of British Justice and Peace.

Can these men be allowed to suffer? How long can the H Blocks—a monument to British rule and brutality—be allowed to stand?

Help the blanket men

before yet another Republican POW dies, which will inevitably come.

Please copy this letter as many times as possible, send it to friends and relatives, let the world know of the plight of the blanket men in the H Blocks of Long Kesh and help smash the H Blocks!"

Signed

Matthew Lundy



# 'Sandinistas tortured me' claim by released socialist

While we have political differences with the author of this letter we reprint it here as an act of solidarity with the anti-Somoza prisoners held in Nicaragua.

Letter from Carlos Petroni written on his release by the Sandinista Police in Nicaragua.

"After 33 days in prison in Nicaragua, the Sandinista authorities suddenly set me free on 9 November 1979.

My freedom was not a result either of Tomas Borge or of the Government of National Reconstruction's generosity.

It was the international campaign for my freedom which did it. Heading this were the Bolshevik Faction, the LMR of Nicaragua, the OST of Costa Rica, the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency and the OCRFI.

I was arrested on October 8, 1979 by one of the Sandinista Popular Army patrols lead by Nestor Moncada.

It had violent characteristics and the determined purpose of eliminating me physically. This is a part of the campaign against the workers' and revolutionary left which the Government of National Reconstruction is waging.

At first my life was saved by the confusion and disagreement between FSLN officers but the main reason is the intense campaign waged in my favour.

During nine days I was ill-treated, my eyes were covered and my hands were tied. I was constantly threatened with death during the questioning.

All this occurred in Lima de Mistampa in what used to be the Somocist security headquarters. Now it is used by the Sandinista G2—it is the Chipote jail.

For 12 days I was shut up in a cell three metres by two metres with ten prisoners.

We were condemned to



Somoza's National Guard: Sandinistas persist with repression against left

hunger, humiliating conditions and tortures which are not acceptable in a regime claiming to be revolutionary.

All this time I was interrogated—especially at night—about my activities in Nicaragua, those of my contacts and friends.

Since I refused to give such information I was treated worse. I always identified myself as a Trotskyist militant of the Fourth International—for which I was threatened and insulted.

They even got to the point of faking my execution during one of the interrogations.

It is important to stress that amongst the most energetic questioners were members of the Chilean MIR and Argentine ERP.

When they didn't get their objective they proposed that I declare myself a CIA agent and they even got to the point of

proposing a public declaration that would incriminate prominent members of the Fourth International like N. Moreno and Nicaraguan comrades from the LMR as CIA agents.

In exchange for this they promised immediate freedom. I totally refused and explained in two written declarations which the Sandinista security forces have that I defend Trotskyism and the mentioned leaders and I refuse to be converted into an instrument for attacking revolutionary Marxism.

So they sentenced me to 20 years in prison.

Suddenly on 23 October I was taken to a more spacious cell, I was allowed food and cigarettes which Nicaraguan friends had sent.

I also received medicine for my sores from the torturing I had been subjected to. All of this was a result of the solidarity campaign waged abroad.

On November 8 I was taken to the Augusto Cesar Sandino airport under military custody and expelled to Guatemala without documents and with the firm purpose that I be arrested in Guatemala.

In the Sandinista jails there are not only Somocists. There are also trade union leaders, Sandinista fighters critical of the government, leftist militants, etc.

Amongst them I must mention Carlos Rico and Pablo Herrera: trade union leader from Jinotega, arrested and tortured during the Somoza regime.

He is in prison today because he doesn't totally agree with the Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction.

Carlos Median: Sandinista Southern Front fighter. He is very ill. Detained for a minor fault. He has been under arrest for 45 days and no medical attention is given him.

He has lost 20 kilos and like all the inmates of Chipote he sleeps on the floor and is fed in unhygienic places.

Zerda: anti-Somocist fighter from Molimbo. He was imprisoned 40 days ago for criticising the government.

Luis Mariano Montalban: a lawyer arrested on October 4 and tortured for seven days with (picana electrica) before being transferred to Chipote.

A Venezuelan militant belonging to a socialist group called Pietro has been in prison for having had a discussion on politics with a group of Argentinians from the ERP.

A numerous group of militants from Frente Obrero and MAP—around 50—have been detained for the sole reason of not having accepted the FSLN agreements with the bourgeoisie.

A member of the International Red Cross called ATA, president of the Reconstruction Junta of Managua who stood out during the insurrection for having led a Sandinista battery over clandestine radio stations is in prison due to simple intrigues between Sandinistas.

Presently he was working as the person responsible to INRA for the rice cultivations in all of Nicaragua.

A northern front fighter, a Commander, with the war pseudonym of Macondo is accused of treason for developing peasant mobilisations in the region of Jinotega.

He has been in jail since the first days of October. Another man who shared the cell with me was a fighter called Ibarra. His pseudonym is Palomo. He

became popular in the oriental market of Managua due to the selection of popular militias which controlled the rural sector of the insurrection.

Ibarra was tortured many times, expelled and raped by his own comrades. All this was worsened by the fact that one of his shoulders had been broken when struck with a weapon during the last days of Somozaism.

There are also Trotskyist comrades from the LMR in jail who actively participated in the anti-Somoza struggle.

Leaders of the Coordinadora Intersindical of Granada which has an influence over 5,000 workers belonging to 11 trade union factory branches and 23 peasant trade unions. Among them are Fernando Lopez, Rodrigo Ibarra, Luis E. Quintero, Mario Miranoi, Humberto Gomez. Gomez was the editor of the "Red and Black" magazine from Los Angeles. This magazine defended the Nicaraguan revolution and was oriented by the Sandinistas.

During my interrogations I was also told that the lives of Fernando Barcena, general secretary of the LMR and Binifacio Miranda, member of the LCR political committee were threatened.

A few days after I had been set free, a member of the permanent commission for human rights of Nicaragua oriented by Jose Esteban was put in jail. Esteban's presence in the jail was for the purpose of investigating the inmates' situations.

A long list of arrested leftist politicians who not only opposed Somoza in combat are in the Sandinista prison of Chipote. In other cells, away from where I was there were some 80 Sandinista comrades, southern front and internal front fighters. They were there for having criticised the government."

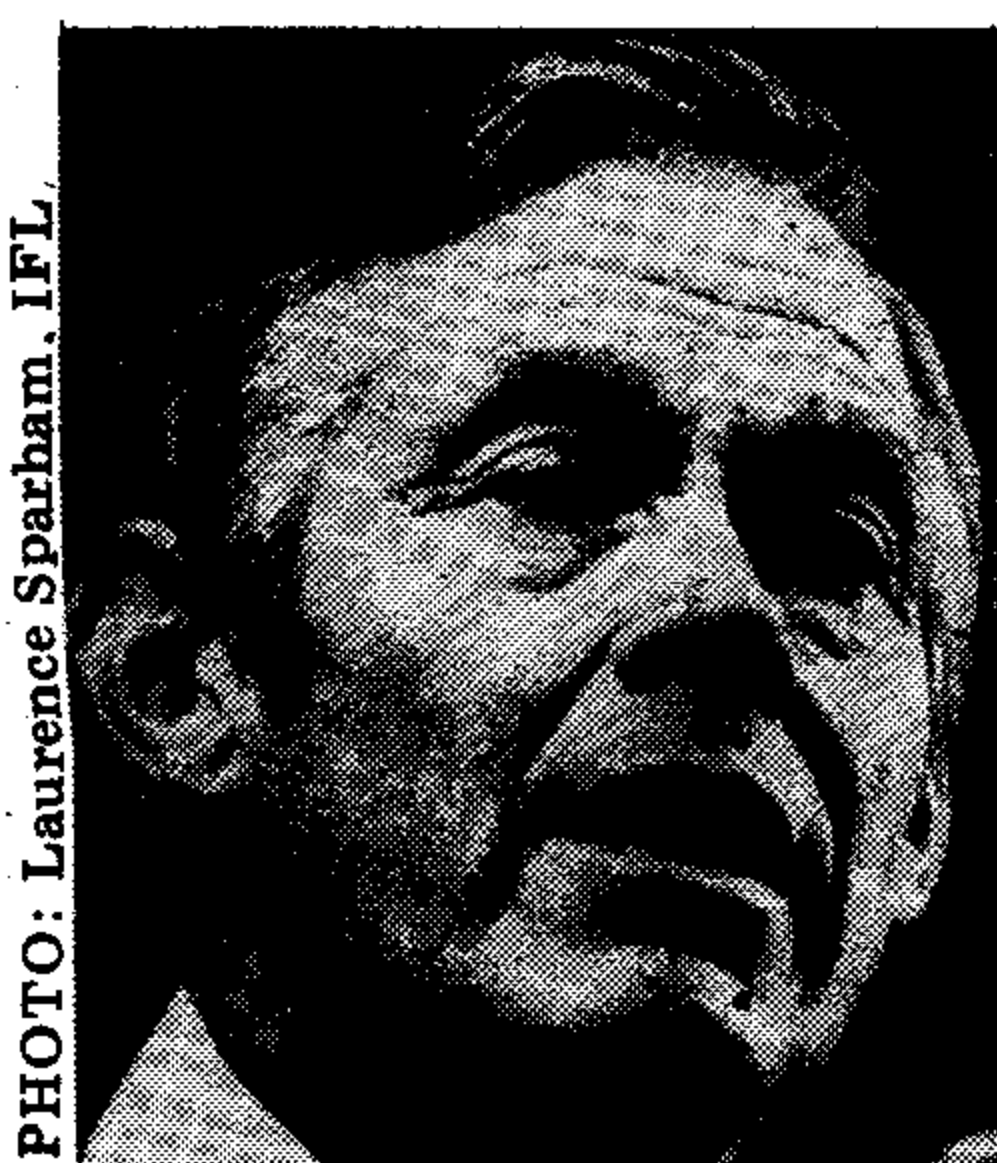


PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

Fisher

# Throw out councils' 13% offer!

Public sector union officials are all set for an ignominious betrayal of pay demands for one million local authority manual workers.

After tub-thumping speeches from NUPE's Alan Fisher declaring that the inflation rate of 17½% is now the "going rate" for pay deals, negotiators came happily out of talks in which employers offered only 13%—linked to more redundancies and rate increases.

Chief negotiator Charles Donnet (GMWU) said that he was "optimistic" of reaching a negotiated settlement.

The employers had initially offered only 9%, which they claimed was the

maximum they could afford within the Tory cash limits.

But after a break they returned to table a vague 13% offer, to be financed "either from increases in the rates or from cuts in manpower".

There is to be no shortening of the working week.

Union leaders must be called upon to reject any settlement based on acceptance of job loss or rate increases.

The cash limits imposed on councils do not act in the interests of the working class. They are part of the Tory drive to increase the profits of private industry.

### Strike action

To offer public sector workers a rise far below the increase in the cost of living and tie this to mass sackings is a bid to foist this profits crisis onto some of the lowest paid people in the country.

It is only the repeated retreats on the cuts by public sector union leaders and their refusal to confront the Tory government, which has given local authorities the nerve to make such an offer.

If accepted, it would leave union officials duty-bound to assist in imposing the cuts in manning levels sought by management.

The deal and those union leaders who defend it must be thrown out. There must be all out national strike action for a living wage in the public sector, for the rejection of cash limits and for mass action to bring down the Tory government.

# Broad Left sell out in CPSA

The political misleadership of the Communist Party, Tribune and Militant supporters on the CPSA Broad Left NEC was exposed by their recent sell

out of suspended civil servants at the Department of National Savings, Glasgow.

Over a period of two weeks 552 CPSA members had been

suspended for blacking work carried out in defiance of the CPSA national bans on overtime and temporary promotion.

Terry Adams, CPSA full time officer and a Militant supporter together with Stalinist Peter Coltman, negotiated a back-to-work deal with management.

They then put it to the NEC who voted 12 to 10 in favour of the sell-out.

### No consultation

The deal allowed a return to work on Monday 26 November and a five day "cooling off period" in which management agreed to offer no overtime, as long as local discussions were taking place with the union to identify areas where overtime and temporary promotion could be worked.

But there was no consultation with the Glasgow branch until Thursday 27 November, when the deal was simply presented to a mass meeting as a fait accompli and members forced to accept it.

CPSA's retreat over the suspensions now gives management the right to offer overtime and temporary promotion, and sets a dangerous precedent in exempting the 3,500-strong Glasgow Department of National Savings Branch from taking part in the cuts campaign.

### Similar sell-out

It is also likely that the NEC will now try to negotiate a similar sell-out of the 39 suspended members at Kennington and Nuneaton DHSS offices.

The NEC's argument for backing down over the suspensions was that they now had information that there would be no major cuts in DNS.

They also said that there was

not enough money in the strike fund to pay suspended members.

It is clear that suspensions could have been fought by all out strike action and financial support from the rest of the union.

It is vital to fight for a new revolutionary leadership in the CPSA and to this end a campaign must be waged to withdraw Broad Left support from Peter Coltman and the other NEC members who voted in favour of the sell-out.

# Ford, BOC set going rate

The acceptance by Ford workers of a 21.5% pay offer, and by BOC workers of a 20-month deal giving a 30.5% increase, indicate the kind of level which management in profitable sectors of private industry are being forced to concede in order to avoid militant strike action.

In Fords, the deal, though not sufficient to improve living standards, and offering no real concessions on the shorter working week, will be just about sufficient to keep real wages level with inflation since the nine week strike last November.

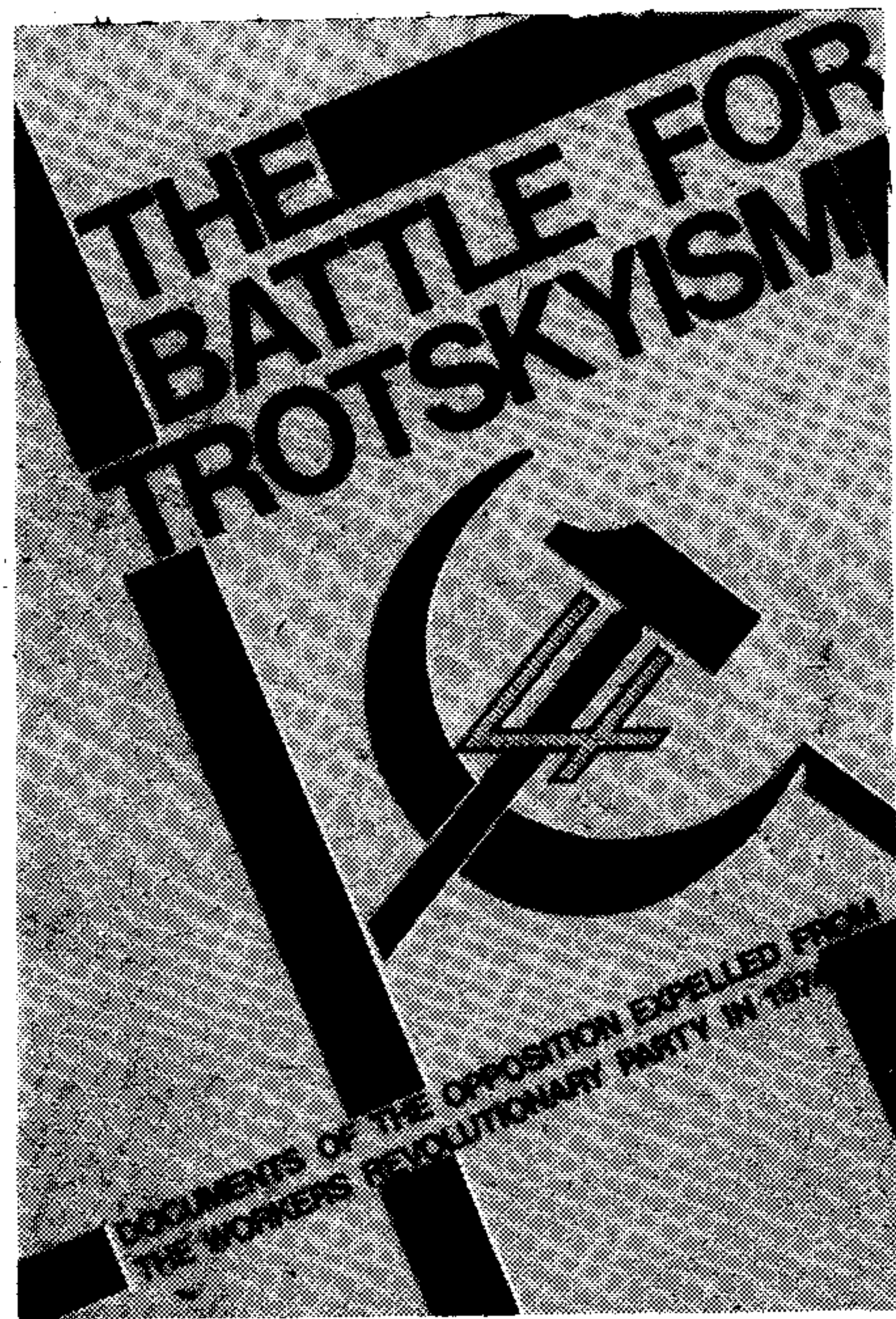
But negotiators abandoned the fight for a cost-of-living clause that would have provided protection against inflation in the coming year.

Nevertheless the fact that Ford workers are one of the few sections of workers to have broken approximately even with inflation over two years shows the impact of the 1978 strike.

Workers in the public sector and in so-called "loss making" industries must take note: only all-out action for catching up claims, linked to cost of living clauses provides the key to defence of living standards.

The longer such action is put off, the more jobs, wages and working conditions will come under the Tory hammer.

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With workers by the thousand taking to the streets to oppose Tory policies there is plainly no lack of militancy in the organised working class.

Yet the existing trade union bureaucrats and Labour leaders—whether right or 'left'—have no perspective to offer those workers prepared to fight in defence of jobs, living standards, social services and democratic rights.

These can only be defended through policies which start from the independent interests of the working class, which, as an international class, has nothing to gain and everything to lose from attempts to restore the profitability of their "own" employing class.

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dictions of the anarchic capitalist system force the wholesale closure and destruction of the productive forces of society, only a socialist planned economy on a world scale offers a way forward.

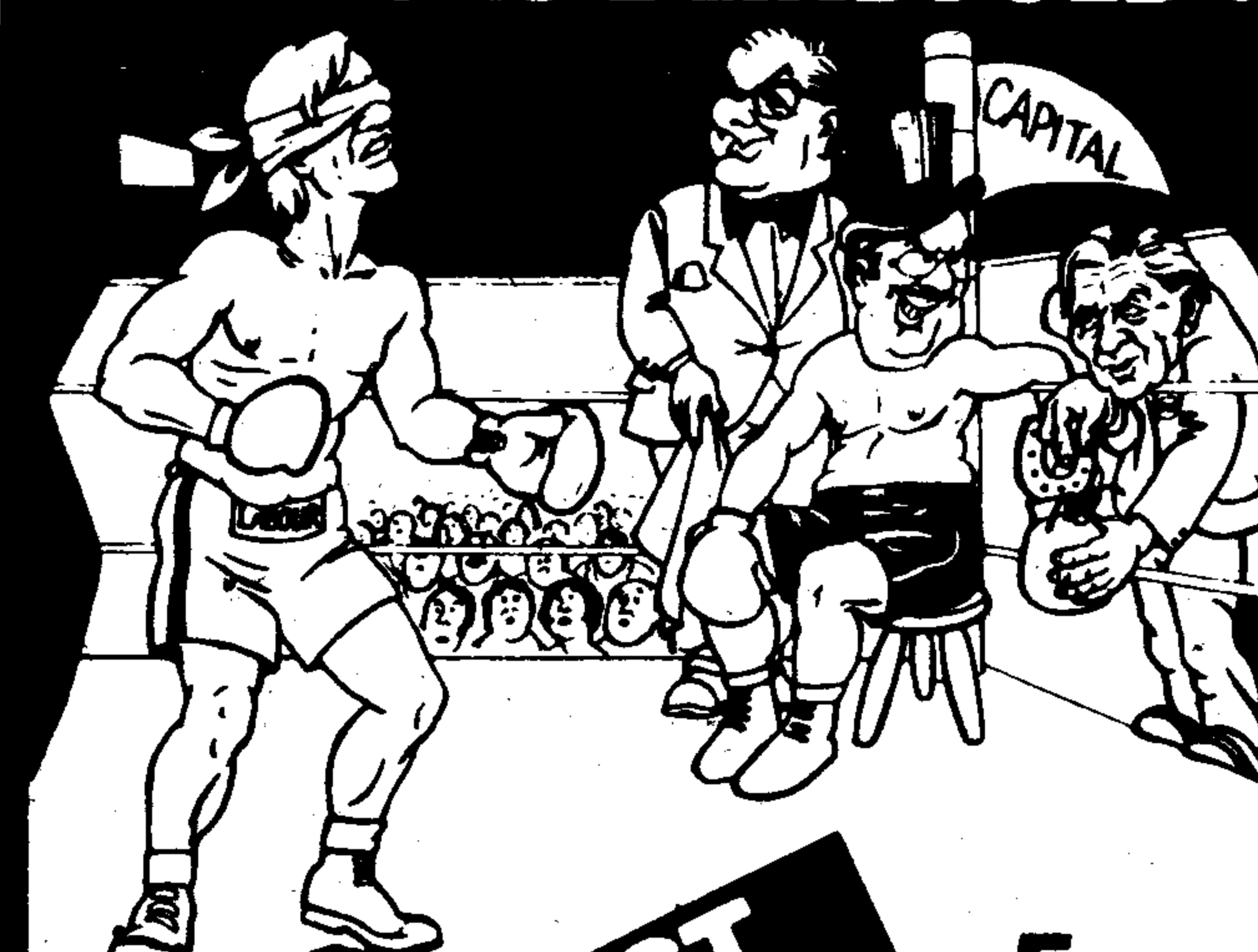
To achieve such a perspective a leadership is needed which, in today's struggles fights to advance workers beyond trade union militancy, protest politics and illusions that capitalism can be abolished through parliament.

The Workers Socialist League is a Trotskyist movement fighting day in and day out to build such a principled leadership in the working class in Britain and internationally.

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# Occupy to stop closures!

The decision of workers at the threatened Meccano factory on Merseyside to occupy the plant to prevent its closure offers a lead to every section of workers facing redundancy.

The occupation began immediately after management handed out instant dismissal notices to the 940 staff.

It began on the same day as the giant British Steel Corporation announced another thumping £150 million loss, and that it intends to inflict the whole burden of this crisis upon its 140,000 workforce, through closures, mass sackings and speed-up.

Though the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation has talked of a national overtime ban and token strikes to fight the closure of the Corby steelworks nothing has yet been done, and Corby workers still have not taken the vital decision to occupy the threatened plant as the focal point for such industrial action.

Now steelworkers through-

out the country are facing the consequences of their dithering leadership.

Yet while action has been taken at Meccano there remain many weaknesses.

In particular it is not enough simply to embark on a "work-in", producing toys without pay.

It is vital that workers use the occupation as the starting point for the fight for supporting action, and for opening the books of the giant Airfix corporation that owns the plant, exposing the necessity for its nationalisation without compensation and formulating on that basis a workers plan for further production.

This is vital because, in capitalist terms, and in the capitalist world, the Meccano plant, like British steel and whole sectors of industry, just is not viable.

A socialist planned economy is the only basis on which such productive forces can be utilised and developed and jobs protected.



Corby steelworkers

# LEYLAND from front page

tance of Edwardes' humiliating 5% pay offer, tied, as it is, to "strings" set out in an 85-page booklet.

These strings would effectively destroy every substantial trade union agreement established in BL.

And they are bitterly resented by the workers.

It should also be noted that the most solid strikes in Robinson's support were at right-

wing led Canley and Castle Bromwich—the two biggest plants threatened with closure under the Edwardes plan.

The reason is that these workers plainly saw a hope, in defending Robinson, of defeating Edwardes and thus defending their own jobs.

It is crucial that this willingness to struggle is given a clear lead.

In other words the fight for the reinstatement of Derek Robinson can be brought back into the field of mass action through the fight to force BL convenors to defy Edwardes' blackmail and take strike action on jobs and against the pay offer.

## Leadership

At the same time every trade union body in BL and the engineering industry must take up the campaign to force the removal of Duffy and the treacherous AUEW Executive, which has proved itself incapable of defending even the most elementary trade union rights.

A new, revolutionary leadership must be built amongst engineering workers which will start not from the profits crisis of the employers and the requirements of capitalism but from the needs and interests of the working class.

Such needs can be fulfilled only through the defeat of the Tory government and the fight for a workers' government that will carry through the nationalisation of the basic industries and the banks, without compensation under workers' management, as the basis for a planned socialist economy.

# NUT—conference in place of action

In stark contrast to their absence on the 40,000-strong demonstration and lobby of Parliament against the cuts last week, the NUT Executive is spending £25,000 on a special delegate conference to discuss the union's response to the Tories' education cuts.

"The NUT is a non-political organisation" the Executive argued "and therefore we cannot be seen to support a call by the Labour Party to demonstrate against the cuts".

Instead of doing anything, therefore, the Executive has put forward a lengthy resolution for consideration by the Conference

delegates in Blackpool on December 8.

The resolution rejects any notion that the Tories received a mandate at the General Election for spending cuts in education.

It calls upon teachers to publicise the effects of cuts wherever they are announced and support all campaigns against them.

The Executive wish, they say, to fight against all proposed compulsory redundancies in the teaching force—but the resolution puts forward no strategy to carry this out.

Throughout the country already we have seen how the determination of teachers to fight is being confused and diverted by moves similar to the

decision to ignore the November 28 demonstration.

Protest strike resolutions to lobby local council meetings have been watered down into 'delegate' strikes (one from each school)—as in Hampshire and Leicester—or even simply lunch-time action or deals with the Council to allow time off—as in Nottingham.

Talk about increasing strike funds is not sufficient.

The NUT must immediately declare its intention to use its full strength in national strike action to stop the Tory government in its tracks and block it from implementing its clear intention to dismantle the state education system.

# Talbot jobs retreat

The decision of a mass meeting of Chrysler/Talbot workers at Linwood to reject a stewards' recommendation for a strike against the sacking of 1,500 workers is a setback which will soon be heartily regretted by all those concerned.

There is no doubt that the Talbot workforce was under massive material and political pressure to concede to management.

The financial impact of the recent 14-week lay-off at Linwood has been very heavy on many workers—and the prospects of a long and bitter strike over Christmas is always hard to face.

Add to this the industrial devastation in Scotland in which tens of thousands of jobs have already been axed under the Tories, and in the midst of which Talbot management threatened that the entire Lin-

wood plant would be closed if there was a strike.

And, worse still, Talbot stewards were calling for strike action only in order to bring about a system of work sharing—in which every worker would face a loss of earnings.

The necessary call was for a specific policy of work sharing on full pay, backed up by the occupation of the plant to prevent its closure.

But the need, for such a policy has not evaporated with these sackings: Talbot management, their appetites whetted by this retreat from the workforce, has demanded that workers immediately demonstrate their "ready willingness" to increase productivity.

It can only be a few months before such speed-up brings a fresh round of sackings or a confrontation with workers in defence of working conditions.

In today's capitalist crisis every surrender to management simply paves the way for further attacks.

Over 100 workers attended a public meeting organised by the Trades Council of the small Yorkshire town of Todmorden last Monday.

Opening the meeting, Jim Conolly, the Trades Council chairman, spoke of the need for workers to learn the lessons of history—referring to the betrayals of the General Strike—and posed the need for organised resistance to the cuts. Jim Stirton, NUPE official for Calderdale, repeated the call for resistance to cuts and all attacks on living standards.

However only the finest of gymnastic performances allowed him firstly to avoid even a shred of criticism of the inaction of NUPE's national leadership and secondly not to mention a single concrete policy to defend workers interests.

Later reports to the meeting from Halifax and Rochdale of planned hospital ward closures

still failed to encourage Stirton even to raise the paper declaration by COHSE and NUPE of support for the policy of workers to prevent closure.

The need for a programme to defend the independent interests of workers was stressed on the platform by Barry Turner, a NATFHE regional council delegate and member of the Skipton Trades Council, from the local branch of the Workers Socialist League.

In outlining the betrayals of the union leaders and the Labour 'lefts', he argued for an action programme of demands to include occupation and supporting strike action to prevent closure, encouraging workers to follow the example of the St. Benedict's occupation in Tooting.

Redundancies, said Turner, must be opposed by work sharing on full pay under the control of elected trade union committees.

A fight, he stressed, is needed in the trade union move-

ment to open the books of the public services to reveal the profiteering by private suppliers, bankers and contractors as part of a struggle to nationalise these firms, without compensation, under workers' management.

In explaining the links between attacks on workers in the private and public sectors Barry Turner stressed the need for councils of action to coordinate and lead struggles and organise the overthrow of the Tory government.

He further moved that the meeting send telegrams to the head offices of the AUEW and TGWU deploring their failure to declare strike action in defence of Derek Robinson, the victimised BL convenor, official.

The motion—passed unanimously by the meeting—called for immediate official recognition and demanded that the union leaderships organise national strike action.

Bradford Trades Council member and 'Militant' supporter Keith Nairey echoed the need to

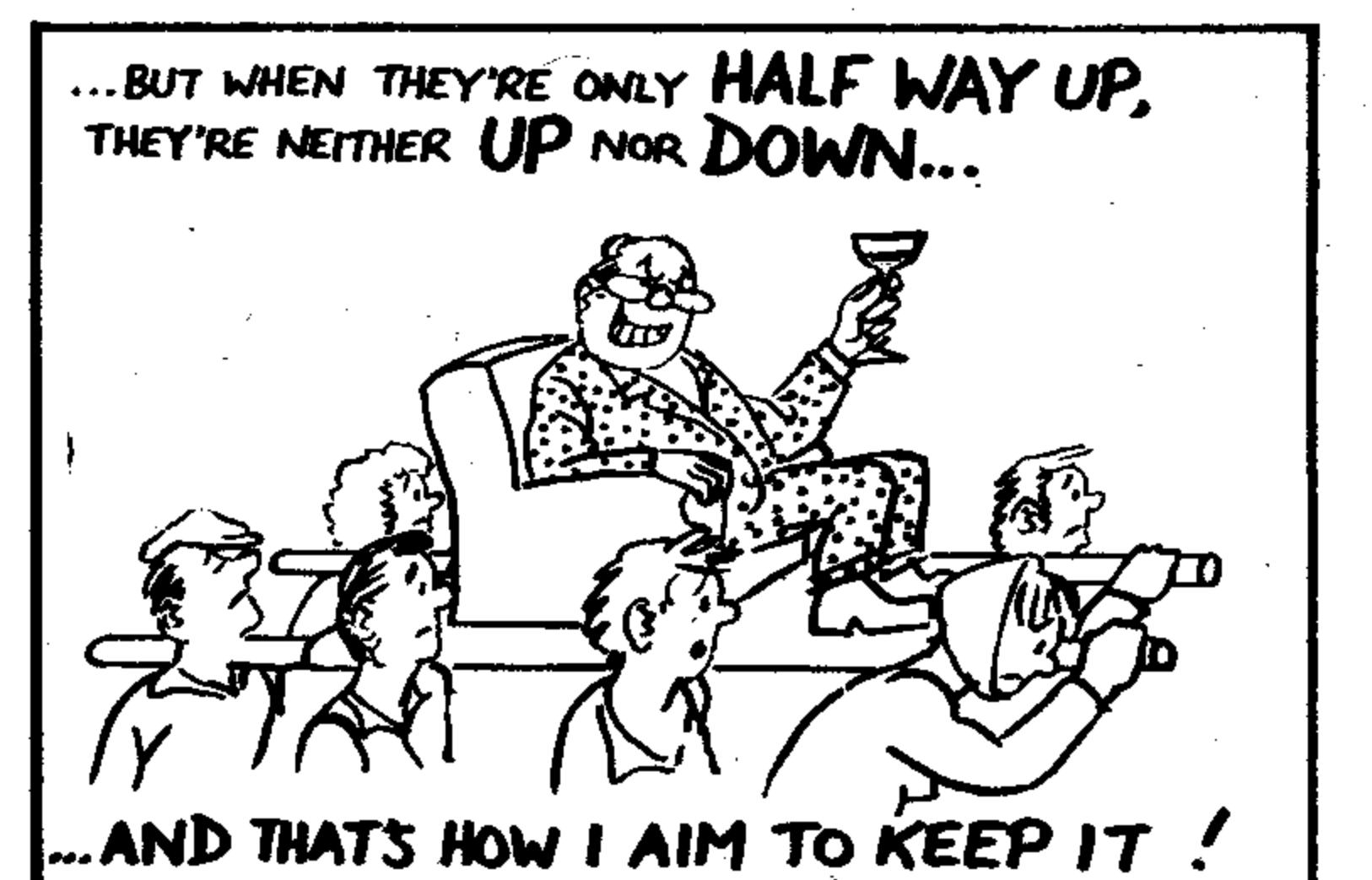
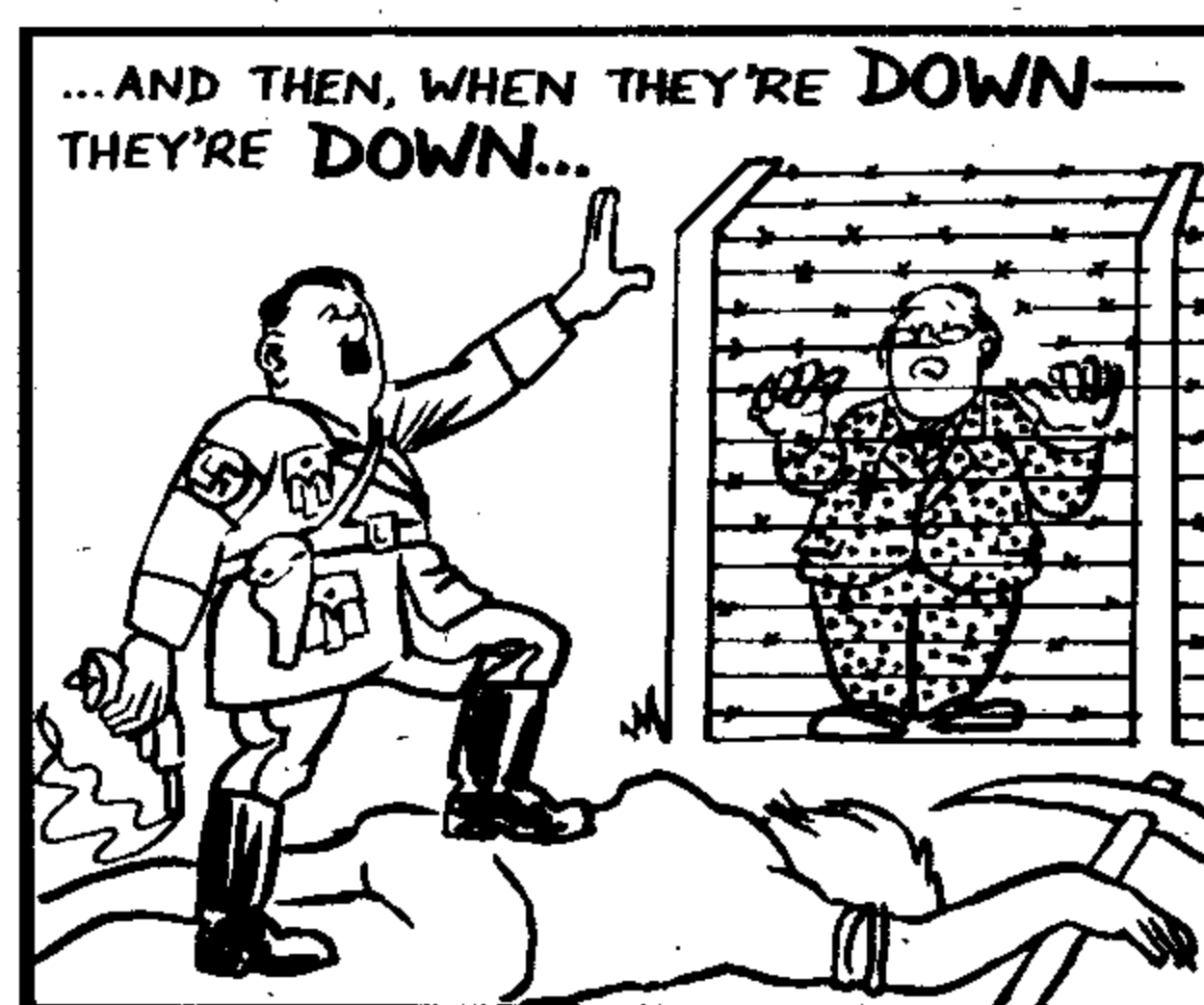
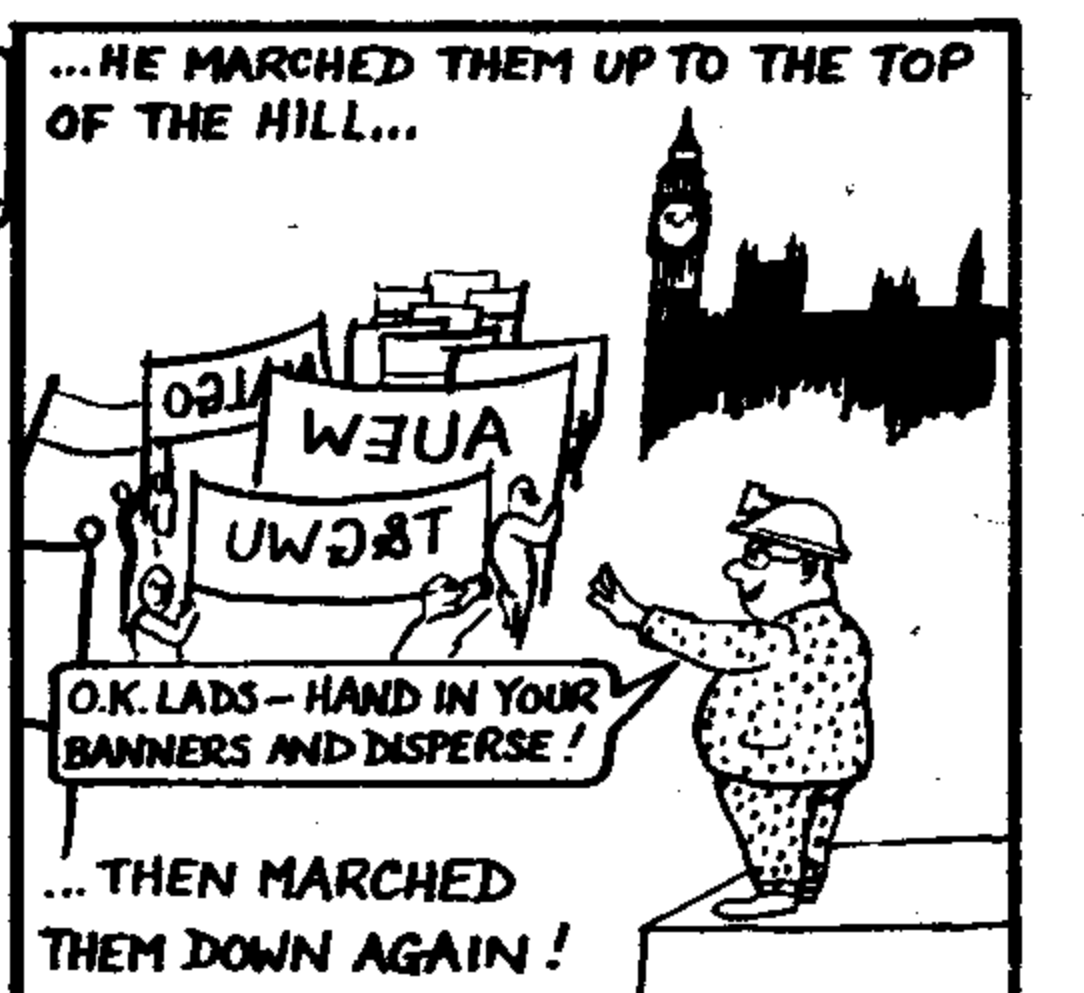
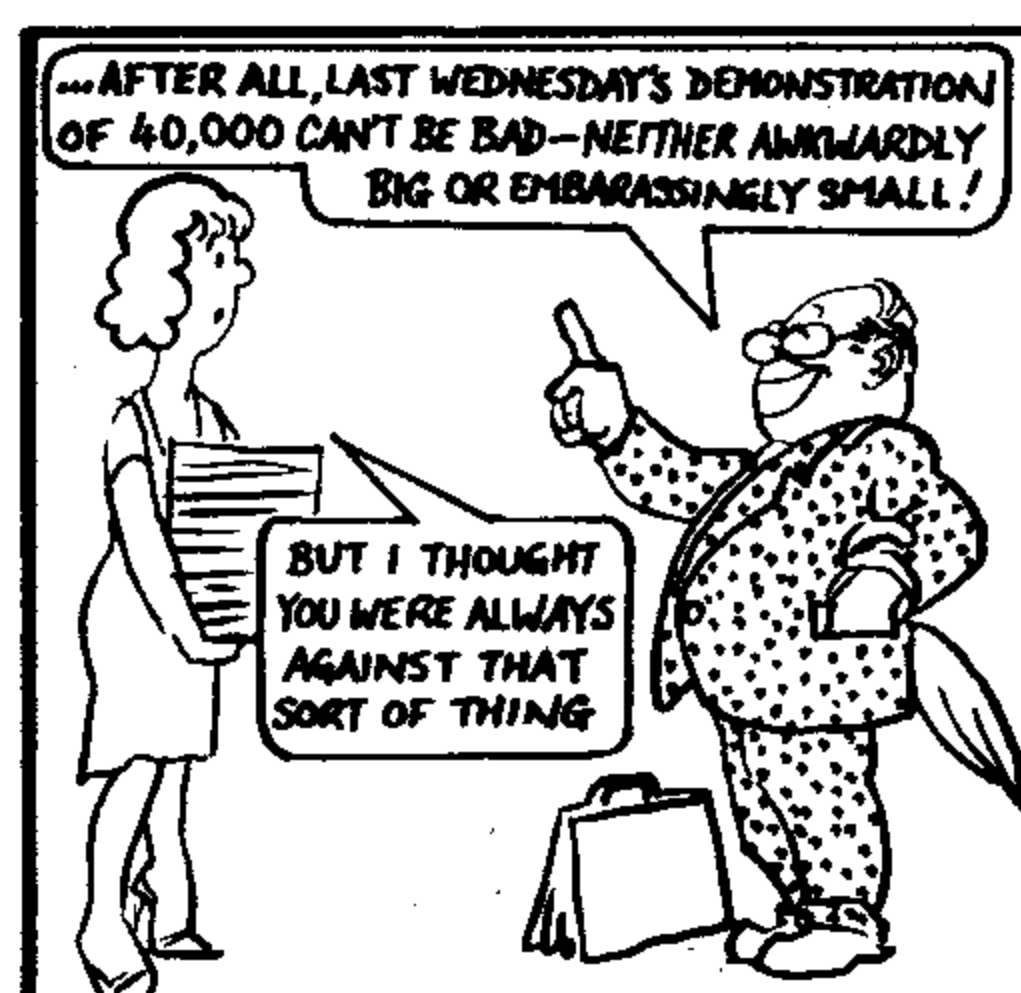
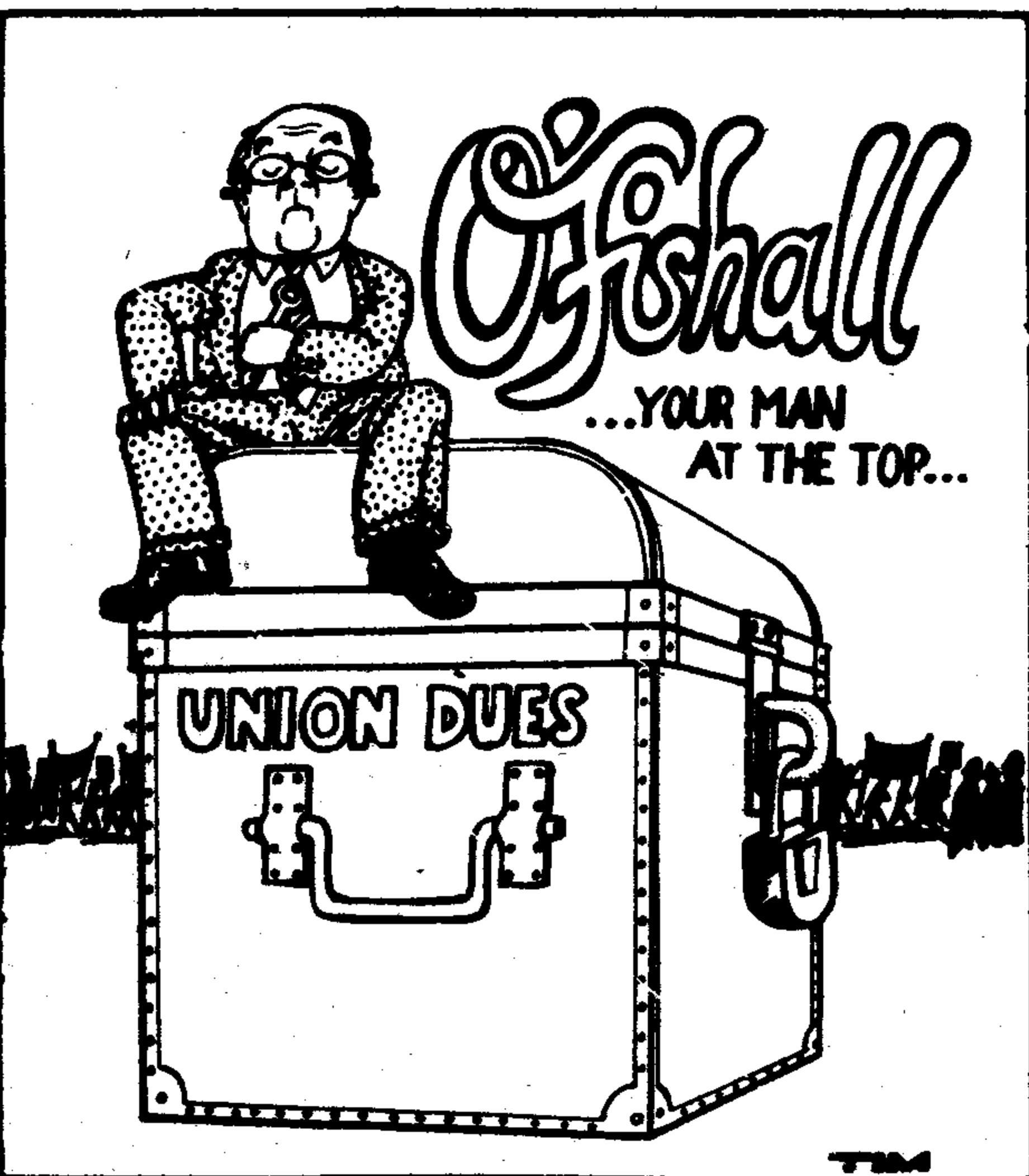
resist the Tory onslaught and called for the building of campaign Committees to fight the cuts.

However his further suggestion that it would be a revitalised Labour Party imbued with the spirit of Clay Cross, which would lead workers to socialism was met with some scepticism by workers in the audience.

Perhaps this was in part due to Nairey's refusal to call for the removal of the Callaghan-Healey leadership.

The Socialist Workers Party's intervention at the meeting came via a leaflet which began by claiming that 'Anger is not enough' and then went on to outline only partial demands for occupation to fight closure.

Their contribution to a leaflet issued by the Calderdale Action Committee against the Cuts is summed up by an utterly confusing demand which reads "Jobs threatened with redundancy must be opposed by industrial action if necessary"!!!



# SOCIALIST PRESS



The rally at the end of the Sinn Fein demo

## IRAN COULD SINK DOLLAR

## Witch hunt against 'H' Block marchers

Whatever the outcome of the occupation of the US embassy in Tehran, the world's financial markets will never be quite the same again.

The international banking system has received a shock from which it is still numbed.

It is not yet clear whether, as it comes round and realises what has happened, the reaction will be panic or something less dramatic.

### Major decline

In any case it seems certain to lead to a major decline in the role of the US dollar, an increase in the world role of other currencies, some major upheavals in the Eurocurrency markets (money deposits of currencies outside their country of origin), and a profound change in the conditions of international lending in the capitalist world.

That is a minimum. What no banker or finance minister is saying, but all are privately feeling, is that it could bring about something much worse—a financial panic and bankruptcies on the scale at least of the 1930s.

How did this precarious situation arrive?

In the first place the Iranian government, as part of the campaign to have the Shah extradicted, threatened to withdraw what it claimed was \$12 billion official deposits held in United States banks.

That would have been the biggest short term movement of funds ever seen and would have led to a staggering collapse in the value of the already sinking dollar.

### Unprecedented

For that very reason the Iranians were unlikely to do it since they would have decimated their own wealth in the process and the pressure against it from other oil-producing, dollar-holding states would have been enormous.

But Carter decided not to risk calling what was probably a bluff and took the almost unprecedented move of freezing



Massive anti-imperialist demonstration in Tehran

all Iran's deposits in American banks both inside the USA and abroad. (Iran is now making a legal challenge in London to the freezing of assets in foreign branches of American banks).

This move was if anything more threatening to the financial system than Khomeini's original threat. This move, almost unprecedented in peacetime, meant that officially

held accounts in United States banks could no longer be regarded as freely disposable by their owners but could be used only at the discretion of the US government.

### Under pressure

This is a staggering change especially when the dollar is the largest reserve currency.

It will almost certainly prompt other countries, especially those which expect even the slightest future political conflict with the USA, to want to withdraw their funds and put them into some other currency.

There are already signs that the dollar is under pressure for this reason.

The only reason it is not Cont'd p.2, col. 5

A new and sinister form of witch-hunt has been launched in Oxford.

Singled out for attack are four socialists who participated in the October 20 Provisional Sinn Fein demonstration through the town, together with the march organiser.

Backed by a number of local union branches, the 600-strong march was called to support the 'H' Block blanket protest, in which Irish republican prisoners are demanding the restoration of political status.

Fascists who had threatened to break up the march were kept at bay by tight stewarding.

Now an expensively-produced A3-size poster, bearing photographs, names, addresses, telephone numbers and workplaces of all five victims has been issued in a clear attempt to whip up reactionary violence and political hostility against them.

### Paid £10

Copies of the poster have been posted to their neighbours, the local press, major companies in Oxford, and, according to the poster, made available to "General public, Oxford; 2nd Battalion Parachute Regt., Aldershot, and the Limbless Servicemen's Association".

In addition, teams of distributors have been paid £10 a time to hand out thousands of copies of the poster on the gates of British Leyland's Cowley car plant.

The poster asks the question "Do you know these people?"

It goes on:

"On the 20th of October people marched through the streets of Oxford in support of the IRA. Most of us looked on in disgust and amazement and wondered who were these IRA sympathisers. Well we thought we would tell you".

Of course many of those who marched were socialists, who did so as a result of support for the 'H' Block struggle and opposition to British imperialism rather than from agreement with the politics and methods of the IRA.

The Workers Socialist League, while fighting for a Trotskyist programme and policy in Ireland, nevertheless defends the right of republican and socialist forces in Ireland to struggle, arms in hand against the military repression of British imperialism.

The poster, though anonymously produced by extreme right wing forces, obviously relied on the aid of an as yet unknown "finger man" with knowledge of the Oxford labour movement.

Nor is it the first such anti-IRA witch-hunt to arise from the march.

Within days of the demonstration, elaborately printed leaflets aimed at whipping up hostility among trade unionists to branch leaderships that had supported the march were handed out—also by paid agents—outside local workplaces.

Oxford's Trades Council President, John Power also sought the ear of the anti-union *Oxford Journal* to give a lying statement denouncing those same branches and trade unionists and threatening action against them at Trades Council.

Now wealthy reactionaries are attempting to incite violence against people whose sole "crime" was to participate in an anti-imperialist demonstration.

There is no doubt that as the Tory government attacks the working class, witch-hunts of all kinds will increase—as the Blunt affair, the Robinson sacking and the strikebreaking at Charing Cross Hospital have shown.

As the war of liberation in Ireland challenges military rule, those workers who correctly oppose that war and fight for the withdrawal of British troops must prepare not only for a hard fight in the labour movement: they must now be on their guard against violent provocations orchestrated by right wing or fascist forces.

## No to EEC jingoism!

Margaret Thatcher, we are told, has been tirelessly fighting "for Britain" against a rapacious crowd of assorted foreigners in Dublin.

She has spared nothing in her efforts to reduce "our" excessive contributions to the EEC budget, which, as the press tirelessly reminds us, is funnelled directly into the well-lined pockets of anachronistic European peasant farmers.

On the surface this may seem stirring stuff, particularly for the millions of British voters who registered their bitter

hostility to the EEC and all it stands for by mass abstentions in this year's European elections.

But, wait a moment! Isn't this the same Tory leadership that has campaigned avidly for EEC membership since the time of Heath?

Aren't these the same Tories who have just abolished exchange controls to enable bankers and industrialists to shift their capital into more profitable European markets?

Isn't Thatcher's government embarked on costly new commitments to the reactionary NATO alliance against the working class of both East and Western Europe?

And the same Margaret Thatcher who talks so passionately of "our" 'national interest' heads a government whose tax cuts for the rich, unemployment, cuts and inflation for the poor have revealed more starkly than ever the fact that there is not one 'nation' but two—the 'nation' of the capitalists, in conflict with the oppressed working class.

While the capitalists own the property and wealth, the British working class, in common with its brothers and sisters throughout capitalist Europe, owns nothing but its ability to work.

It is an international class, which has no country, and no common interests with the employers.

This is why, for European workers, the task is to reject all forms of jingoistic claptrap, destroy the capitalist EEC and make way for a Socialist United States of Europe.

## FUND

The November Fund closed at £655.13, nearly £100 below our target of £750. This was certainly a blow at a time when we face constantly rising costs in every aspect of the production and distribution of *Socialist Press*. It is something that we cannot afford to let happen indefinitely.

With the Christmas period now upon us it is more important than ever that any early start is made to collecting the December Fund. If possible we would like to see the fund completed before Christmas. So let's see if we can make this the month that we go over the top on the Fund target for the first time!

All donations should be sent to:

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

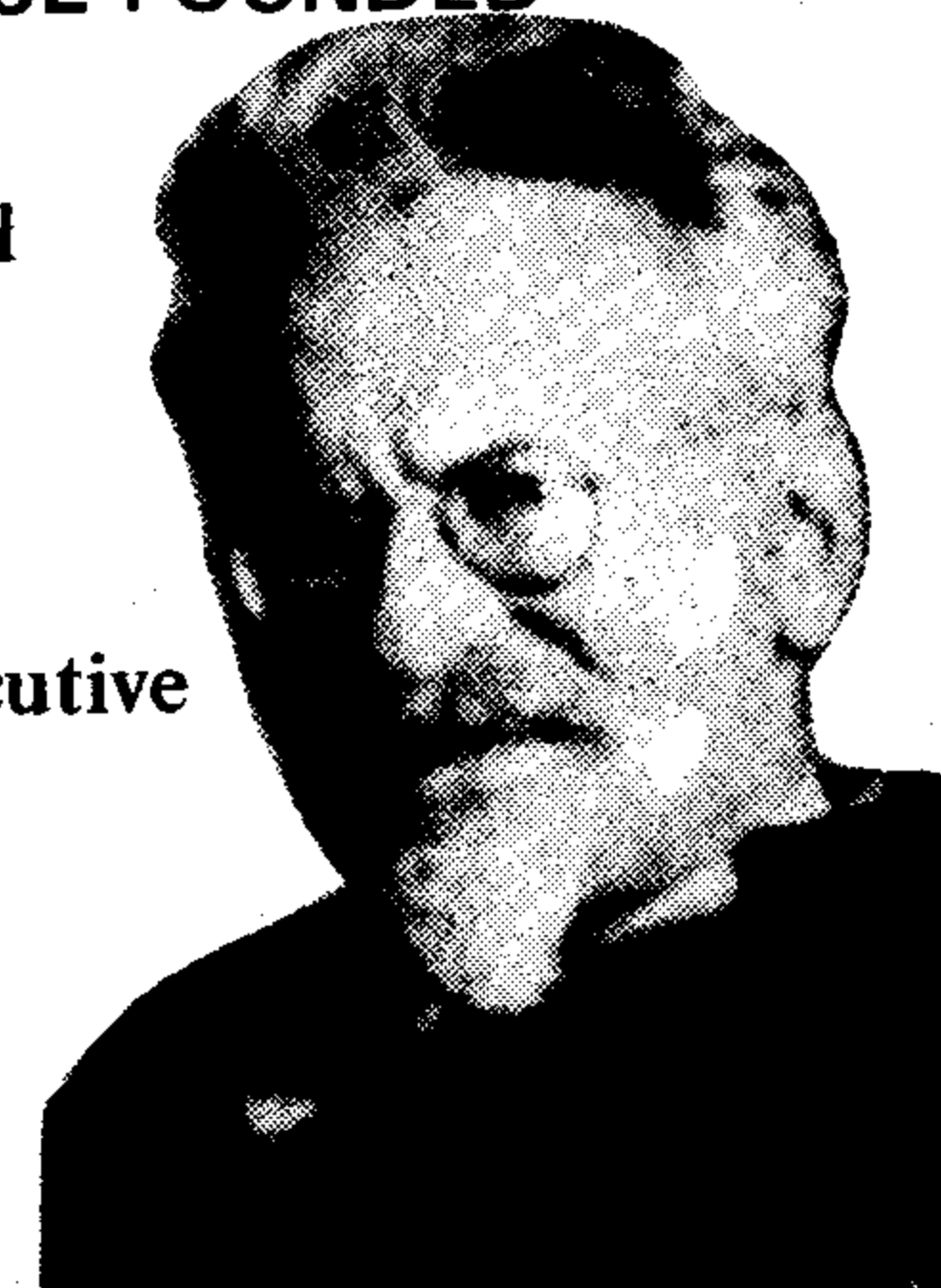
## Workers Socialist League Anniversary Rally

SATURDAY  
DECEMBER 8  
2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

100 YEARS SINCE BIRTH OF TROTSKY  
FIVE YEARS SINCE WSL FOUNDED

New Ambassadors Hotel  
Upper Woburn Place  
London WC1

Speakers from WSL Executive Committee, plus film.  
Tickets £1.00 or £1.50 at door.



### SOCIALIST PRESS

We regret to announce that the price of *Socialist Press* will be 20p per issue from next week. The price rise has been made necessary by a 20% increase in our printing bill. *Socialist Press* has remained at 15p for two years and in that time we have absorbed two increases in printing costs but we are unable to do so any longer.