

# SOCIALIST PRESS



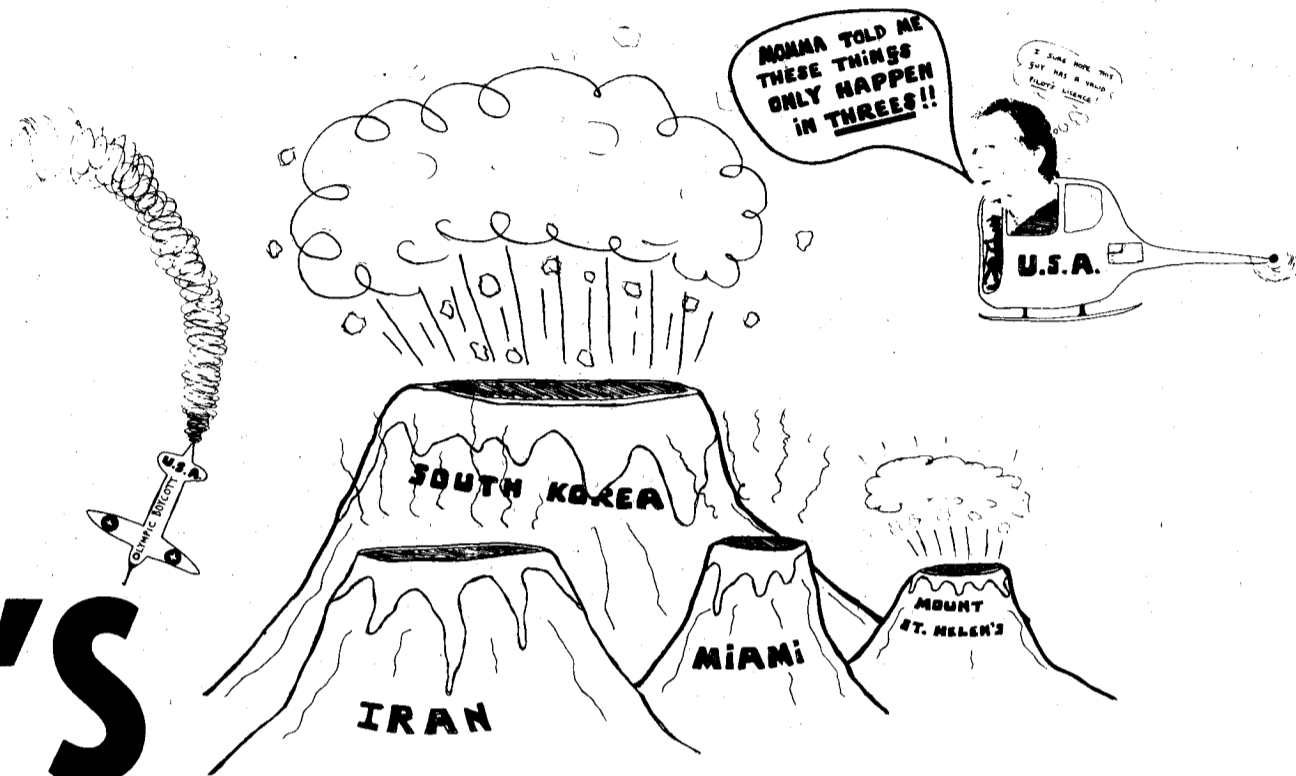
Weekly paper of the Workers Socialist League \* No. 200 \* May 28 1980 \* 20p

Published by the Trotskyist International Liaison Committee

Fighting  
the anti-  
union  
laws  
Centre pages



# SOUTH KOREA: CARTER'S VOLCANO ERUPTS



Tanks ward off demonstrators

As President Carter flew over the devastation caused by the eruption of Mount St Helens on the West Coast of the USA, an equally unexpected explosion of militancy brought 200,000 workers and students onto the streets of Kwangju, South Korea's fourth largest city.

Attempts by military authorities to repress student-led demonstrations led to escalating riots in which vast crowds surrounded army and police outposts, raided armouries, and waged an armed insurrection that took control of the city.

Miners from nearby areas, armed with dynamite and gelignite, joined the struggles.

Workers' and students' militias, armed with captured automatic rifles and riding captured army vehicles, formed roadblocks around the city and organised the distribution of free milk and groceries, as police, soldiers and paratroopers fled.

## 16 towns

In parallel struggles, armed battles took place in a total of 16 provincial towns in Korea—a state hitherto regarded as a staunch fortress of US imperialism in S.E. Asia.

The demonstrators initially put forward demands including the lifting of martial law regulations and the execution of the army hard-man, Major General

Chon Too Hwan, whose repressive moves triggered the initial protests two weeks ago.

But as the struggles subsided outside of Kwangju, and army reinforcements began massing tanks, artillery, jets and helicopter gunships on the edges of the beleaguered city, these initial demands were reduced to a call for no victimisation of the student leaders, and an army admission that its conduct had been brutal.

## Material problems

There seems little doubt that army intimidation and brute violence will eventually contain last week's Kwangju revolt.

But there is equally little likelihood of such repression resolving the profound material problems that have driven Korean workers and students into open struggle against one of the world's most vicious regimes.

Throughout 1980 there has been a wave of strikes and occupations by workers fighting to defend their living standards against galloping 30-40% inflation.

Wage increases forced from the employers have been running at 10% above the government's 15% guidelines—while the Korean "miracle" economy has plunged into crisis with an expected \$4 billion trade deficit this year, growing unemployment and falling exports.

The regime of former President Park—assassinated by

his Intelligence chief in November 1979—and his successors have responded to this crisis with a policy of Thatcher-style monetarist restrictions, seeking to drive down wage settlements through an increase in unemployment.

But since Park's demise militant struggles for trade union organisation and the removal of Park's nominees from union leaderships have escalated.

In April, for instance, miners took over the city of Sabruk, attacked a police station and demolished several houses—demanding the removal of a union president who accepted a sell-out pay deal.

## Divided

This wave of militancy, developing in the wake of Park's death, found the military regime divided and confused.

Some army chiefs favoured making limited concessions on democratic rights to the students and the bourgeois opposition of the New Democratic Party.

Others, like Chon Too Hwan, preferred to defend the status quo, and crush any sign of

revolt.

In the event the two policies were combined—with the freeing of selected bourgeois political dissidents and the promise of elections, coupled with heavy press censorship, martial law restrictions and the constant threat of military violence.

## Too slow

The pace of this "liberalisation" proved too slow for the NDP. From its stronghold in the student campuses it began to agitate for an immediate end to martial law. Riots broke out in Seoul—to be followed by a renewed crackdown on opposition leaders.

It was the arrest of one of these leaders in particular—Kim Dae Jung, only recently freed after 33 months under arrest—that sparked the Kwangju revolt.

But needless to say neither Kim Dae Jung—who has pleaded for students (and workers!) to "leave politics to the politicians"—nor his rival NDP leader Kim Young Sam—who publicly endorses the presence of 38,000 US troops in Korea and regards their task as to

"deter Communism and protect democracy"—can offer any serious lead to the Korean workers and students.

Nor indeed can the other Kim—Kim Il Sung, leader of the deformed workers' state of North Korea.

Despite years of chest-beating rhetoric about the essential unity of Korea, Kim's Stalinist bureaucracy has been terrified by the spectacle of mass revolutionary struggles in the South.

As a result Kim has fallen over himself to assure US imperialism that North Korea has no intention of intervening in the "internal affairs" of the South Korean dictatorship, of aiding those in struggle against Chon's regime, or of using their 700,000-strong army on the border to invade.

Significantly it was fears of such an invasion that slowed the movement of the army units against the Kwangju militants.

## Example

Kim has gone further—and stressed that his perspective is not a united socialist Korea, but a federation, in which South Korean capitalism is left intact! The courage and militancy

of the workers and students in South Korea are an example to the international working class.

But the political problems they confront are likewise those faced by workers in every country: without a revolutionary leadership capable of breaking politically with the reactionary bourgeois and Stalinist parties and leaders and spelling out a perspective for united working class action, such spontaneous explosions of militancy can be headed off, isolated and defeated.

There is no doubt however that these struggles have also demonstrated once again that imperialism and its puppet forces can be defeated in mass struggle.

For US President Carter, the Kwangju uprising must have brought dreadful memories of the crumbling of the Shah of Iran's awesome 400,000-strong army in the face of the mobilised Iranian masses.

As the US combat troops in Korea wonder when and how they will be called upon to act against the South Korean working class and aircraft carriers steam towards the peninsula, American workers must take up the fight for their immediate withdrawal.



# INTERNATIONAL

## USA week by week

### Cuban cold-war flop

Still unable to put a foot right either at home or abroad, President Carter has blundered into yet another embarrassing mess over the Cuban "boat people".

As cold war anti-communist propaganda, his invitation to reactionaries to leave Cuba and come to the USA might have seemed like a good idea at the time: but as a practical reality, in which tens of thousands of criminals, unskilled workers and ageing professional people have herded across the Florida Straits to add themselves to the fast-growing US unemployment figures, the move is a sure-fire loser.

Even the bourgeois press has been forced to admit that at least 20% of the new arrivals are criminals and layabouts whose chief impact on the US will be to depress average earnings of junior employees in the organised crime rackets in the area.

And even the most optimistic estimates show that the numbers involved, while indigestible for the USA, are far from disastrous for the Cuban economy.



Carter

Indeed only 100,000 out of a total population of 10 million are thought likely to leave—a mere 1% of the population.

This is scarcely a propaganda coup for Carter. Nor are his desperate and belated efforts to stem the tide of immigration, with increased coastal patrols, heavy fines and other restrictions.

Meanwhile the kind of social tensions being exacerbated by this disastrous gimmick were indicated by the Miami riots, in which the hand of fascist elements in barbaric attacks on blacks and orientals could be clearly detected.

In Miami itself unemployment in the black ghetto areas is estimated as high as 36% in some parts. This, however, is a not uncommon figure in other US cities.

With the recession now well under way in the US and mass lay-offs in the car industry, Carter must have fingers crossed that the Miami events are not repeated in the black ghettos of Detroit and elsewhere—at least before the Presidential elections.

# ISLAMIC CONFERENCE NO COMFORT TO US IMPERIALISTS



PLO leader Arafat with Khomeini

There is more than one type of manoeuvre in the complex world of international diplomacy and power politics.

And one of the most influential kinds is the military manoeuvre.

For the Kremlin bureaucracy the costly and embarrassing invasion of Afghanistan has had many drawbacks and disadvantages. But the new balance of forces in S.W. Asia created by the presence of 80,000 Soviet combat troops on the borders of Iran and Pakistan has had the side effect of dramatically enhancing Moscow's influence throughout the entire region.

A clear indication of this new situation was last week's conference of Islamic foreign ministers in Islamabad.

Of course there were some well-publicised setbacks for the Soviet bureaucracy: in particular a contingent of Afghan rebels, brought in to the conference as part of the Iranian delegation, were allowed to address both a closed session of the conference's political committee and a press conference—though they were not recognised as a formal delegation.

And the January conference demands—for the withdrawal of



Afghan rightist

Soviet troops from Afghanistan and the right of the Afghan people to choose their own government—were upheld.

But these minimal gestures were, in the words of Iranian Foreign Minister Sadeq Gotbzadeh, "the least we could do".

They were not backed up by any substantial support to the war being waged by the right wing Afghan rebels: even a measly £11 million hand-out

from Saudi Arabia, and donations from the viciously reactionary regimes of the United Arab Emirates and Malaysia were immediately described as aid for the 700,000 Afghan refugees now encamped in Pakistan and Iran—and not as money for arms.

While verbally supporting the Afghan reactionaries, the conference went on to appoint a two-nation ministerial committee with the task of seeking a political solution to the situation in Afghanistan.

### Contacts

The committee is composed of ministers from Iran and Pakistan, and—despite the fury of the Afghan rebels—is expected to make contacts with the Soviet-installed Barbrak Karmal regime in Afghanistan itself.

In this respect the decision, while formally pressing the case for an immediate and unconditional Russian withdrawal fits in neatly with Karmal's recent offer of talks with Pakistan and Iran on a non-aggression agreement.

The Pakistani regime, in particular, has increasingly formed the view that US imperialism, however willing in theory, is unable in practice to offer military defence of the bourgeois regimes in S.W. Asia against what they see as a looming Soviet threat.

The Pakistan government was particularly enraged that the US imperialists, in the wake of the Afghan invasion, offered only \$400 million in aid as a bribe for the transformation of Northern Pakistan into a front-line base for the Islamic guerrillas to operate across the border.

This was rejected—as a sum large enough to compromise General Zia's regime as a US puppet in the eyes of the masses, but not large enough to facilitate serious military defence against Soviet forces.

Since then, the US administration has obstructed credit arrangements to Pakistan involving some \$200 million.

Correctly suspicious of such cynical allies, and respecting the evident military strength of the Kremlin, Zia's regime has spear-

headed the moves towards political accommodation with the Stalimists.

The Saudi Arabian and Gulf regimes, on the other hand are unambiguously aligned with the imperialists, but find themselves embarrassed by the US commitment to support the Zionist state of Isarel.

With the hard-line Begin regime taking Parliamentary steps to "legitimise" and render permanent its occupation of the entire city of Jerusalem, the Saudi minister at Islamabad pointed to the contradiction between unlimited US support for the Zionist occupation of Palestine and its opposition to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

The influence of the PLO delegation at the conference was heightened by this factor, and also by the dramatic rise in the resistance of the Palestinian people in the occupied West Bank against their Zionist oppressors.

And the PLO (which on the fifth day of the conference declared its support for the

Soviet invasion of Afghanistan) were able together with the Libyan and Syrian delegations to lead a strong anti-American current which succeeded in establishing 17 separate condemnations of the US in conference resolutions.

As imperialism in South East Asia is once more rocked by a massive popular revolt—this time against the US puppet government in South Korea—the Islamabad conference is testimony to its slackening hold in the vital Gulf region.

Conspicuously it was far-away Morocco which led the pro-US lobby at the conference.

The voice of "realism", which once led the reactionary Islamic regimes to look exclusively to imperialism for support against the oppressed masses in their own countries, now increasingly urges them to seek a political deal with the Kremlin Stalinist bureaucracy, which has emerged as the predominant force in the area both willing and able to restrain revolutionary struggles.



Syrian President Assad with Cuban leader Castro

## Australia abortion bill fails

The Queensland state government, notorious for its repressive anti-union legislation, has failed in its attempt to ram through an anti-abortion bill even more draconian than that of John Corrie in Britain.

Proposed by state premier Mr. Bjelke-Petersen, the bill would have restricted abortion strictly to women facing death or likely to commit suicide as a

result of giving birth—and only then after securing the consent of three doctors!

Bjelke-Petersen's original draft even excluded abortion for victims of rape or incest—though he eventually climbed down on those in the face of huge protest.

But his vicious bill failed to win support from the rank and file of any of the state's three main parties.

Instead it incurred the outright opposition not only of the Australian Medical Association, but also of four of Bjelke-Petersen's own government ministers, who joined with 11 back bench supporters of his coalition to secure its defeat in Parliament by 40 votes to 35.



Picket against Queensland anti-union laws, London 1977

## IMF 'OK' FOR TURKEY LOAN

The IMF this week showed its approval for Turkey's Demirel government by extending \$1.625 billion special drawing rights over the next three years.

Imperialism's interest in Turkey is based on the need for a firm foothold of support in an area of the world where the movement of the masses has left it with no really stable ally.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development has pledged \$1.16 billion to Turkey for this year alone—but many of the OECD nations were expected to hold back release of their pledges until

Turkey had reached a deal with the IMF.

The latest extension of credit should be seen as an indication of approval of government policies, in particular the January economic package which included a 33% devaluation, consumer price rises of 100%, attacks on nationalised industry and incentives to foreign investors.

But the IMF clearly wants more than this. Support for the Justice Party government is based on the willingness shown by Demirel to launch a huge attack on workers struggling to defend their basic rights and living standards.

The workers movement

internationally must be alerted to the threat posed to the Turkish masses.

**DON'T LET TURKEY BECOME ANOTHER CHILE**  
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# Why did Peruvian left wing vote collapse?

The Peruvian general election on May 18 brought an almost complete collapse of the left wing vote, this represents a victory for the bourgeoisie and a setback for the working class.

The electoral setback is in part the outcome of the treachery of the Stalinist forces who continue their desperate search for a popular front-style alliance with sections of the Peruvian capitalist class.

And it is in part to be attributed to sectarian manoeuvres by various Trotskyist parties that led to the disintegration of the united workers' electoral front.

## Toppled

The new President, Fernando Belaunde Terry of the bourgeois Accion Popular (AP) was toppled from this office in 1968 by a 'progressive' section of the military headed by General Velasco Alvarado.

Twelve years later Belaunde polled 42% of the vote, routing the right wing APRA (27%) and the Christian Democrats (11%).

The remaining twelve candidates (including Hugo Blanco) polled 20% together.

According to unofficial but reliable sources AP has gained an outright majority in Congress and the workers parties have won less than 30 of the 240 seats—a substantial fall from the 34% they won in the 1978 elec-



Blanco addressing mass meeting in Cuzco

tions for the Constituent Assembly. Peru is unique in that the

Trotskyist parties have a periphery and influence out of all proportion to their size, and they have been able to make a major impact on national politics largely through the personal popularity and record of Hugo Blanco (whose party, the PRT is affiliated to the USFI).

Blanco's appeal was capable of raising 96,000 signatures to support the official registration of the PRT. But the Trotskyists have no organised base in the labour movement, unlike the Maoists—who control the country's largest union, the militant teachers' organisation SUTEP—or the Stalinists who, although small, control the important CGTP union confederation.

The PRT's lack of a base is a problem shared by the Morenists (PST), the Lambertists (POMR) and the small Fourth Internationalist Tendency group (POR) who comprise the other Trotskyist tendencies in Peru.

The General Strike of July 1977 forced the calling of elections by the dictatorship of General Morales Bermudez, who stipulated that 'the first step back to democracy' would be the calling of a Constituent Assembly in July 1978.

## Minimum programme

At that stage the Trotskyists were affiliated to FOCEP, an alliance with small leftist groupings and independents based on a minimum programme which stipulated that no agreements should be made with bourgeois forces.

In 1978 FOCEP gained the bulk of the substantial left vote but was incapable of providing a political leadership.

Waves of strikes continued without any direction, only to be betrayed by the refusal of the Stalinists and the inability of the Trotskyists to call a general strike for the overthrow of the dictatorship.

The Assembly was dissolved in July 1979 after completing the squalid business of agreeing a bourgeois constitution.

Since then, repression, unemployment and inflation have all increased and the state of the working class has worsened appreciably.

65% of the population suffers from malnutrition while fish sufficient to feed everybody is shipped to the imperialist countries to be processed into pet food.

In the run up to the 1980 elections, the left was beset by haggling totally marginal to the real struggles.

Genaro Ledesma, one of the leading independents inside FOCEP, signed an agreement to include within the alliance the populist military group PSR and the CP.

## Lost battle

This obliged the Trotskyists to withdraw, and they subsequently lost the legal battle to retain the name of FOCEP.

A new front, ARI (Revolutionary Left Alliance), was formed on 18 January 1980 out of the four Trotskyist parties, important mass organisations such as the miners union, the peasant federation, the teachers union, the UDP (centrists, independent leftists and the Maoist PCR and UNIR (pro-Peking Maoists).

In its early days ARI held the most massive rallies ever seen in Peru, and was clearly perceived as a powerful pole of attraction for the left, and a major threat to the bourgeoisie which began to hint at the cancellation of the elections.

However, problems arose almost immediately. The Maoist PCR and UNIR sought to change ARI's character by calling it a 'strategic alliance' and attempting to introduce their slogan for a 'popular revolutionary government' to enable alliances with the bourgeoisie.

## Democratic centralism

They also struggled to foist democratic centralism on ARI in order to impose their 'anti-imperialist, non-aligned' programme, which explicitly defends allying with the rightist APRA and the Christian Democrats.

At the same time they fought for the inclusion of the ten-member bourgeois grouplet ARS which had been explicitly proscribed in the original ARI

agreement.

The PRT succeeded in halting these moves and won a return to the original terms in a conference where these were ratified by the UDP and UNIR as well as the PRT.

However, having lost the battle for popular frontism the PCR and UNIR (probably under instructions from their masters in Peking) played the card of quarrelling over their quotas in the election lists.

The alliance finally broke apart on 26 February—the date for official inscription—because agreement could not be reached on the allocation of candidates. The Trotskyist groups affiliated to the Moreno/Lambert Parity Commission must take full responsibility for their part in this debacle.

They had already left ARI before it broke up, on grounds totally different but just as spurious as those of the Maoists.

The PST and POMR claimed that ARI was a "class collaborationist front" both in its composition and in its programme.

## Not allowed in

Where was the bourgeoisie? The only party that could conceivably fill the bill—the tiny ARS—had not been permitted to enter ARI. (Although, curiously, it had been a part of the original FOCEP without any objection from the PST and POMR). The bourgeoisie, it turned out, was in the mind of ARI, which according to the Parity Commission hadn't 'broken with it subjectively'.

The Lambertists and Morenists also objected to the fact that the ARI programme did not include the slogan for a workers government. This objection raises the important question of how Trotskyists should intervene in elections.

The minimum programme of ARI starts by saying:

"The organisations signing below spell out a united programme on the basis of our respective programmes while maintaining complete freedom of agitation on those aspects where differences exist..."

The most glaring omission in the programme is precisely this question of governmental demands which while posing a

united workers front against the bourgeoisie, the PRT correctly fought to be left for each organisation to formulate in its campaign. (It was precisely on this point that the Maoists refused to join FOCEP in 1978—and it was they who subsequently gave way on it to enable the formulation of ARI).

However, it is impossible for Trotskyists to come to complete programmatic agreement on governmental demands with Maoists and centrists precisely because of the counter-revolutionary popular front politics they stand for, and the question at stake was simply one of a united electoral front of workers parties.

## Five lists

Following the break up of ARI the left slate divided into five lists, which finally fought the election separately: 1) the PRT, POMR and PST (all under the name PRT), winning three seats, 2) USP, one seat, 3) UNIR, twelve seats, 4) FOCEP, one seat, 5) FUI (the Moscow CP, PSR and other nationalist groupings), seven seats.

It appears that the potential constituency of the left when faced with this complete disintegration voted for the 'lesser evil' of Belaunde to impede an APRA victory.

Naturally enough recriminations abounded. Blanco fervently refuted charges that the "Fourth International" had forced him to take sectarian positions against the 'national interest' by declaring that 'the national leadership of the PRT has always been autonomous in its decisions'.

In the same issue of *Combate Socialista* (no. 9) Blanco writes in a desperation for which we may admit some personal, but no political sympathy:

"Many lessons should be learnt although it is too soon to draw them all out; this is still a time of desperate recriminations and insults between little leaders as we all try to justify our incompetence by blaming each other..."

"New comrades on the left... take the helm yourselves and do what we were incapable of doing! Send us to hell if we deserve it, but not the people, who are victims of it all."

Take those organisations which can still be useful to you and mend them, throw out those which are useless and make others.

Continue the fight on the ashes of our mistakes!"

There are indeed many lessons to be learnt from this debacle; not only to understand the scandalous heritage of Stalinist popular frontism but also the heritage of Pabloism in Peru, the bankruptcy of a Trotskyism built far too much on a personality cult around Blanco, while failing to confront the vital struggle to construct a mass revolutionary party.

## Mass support

The PRT—despite the mass support Blanco can still command—can only throw up its hands and invite the 'people' to resurrect what they can from the ruins!

The task of a revolutionary leadership is not to abandon the 'people' to their own devices and the wretched cruelty and greed of the imperialists and their local bourgeois devotees—but to fight to construct a Bolshevik-style party to lead the struggle for the seizure of power and the smashing of the bourgeois state on the basis of the political independence of the working class allied with the poor peasantry.

## TROTSKYIST INTERNATIONAL LIAISON COMMITTEE

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\*TROTSKYISM AND THE FIGHT AGAINST WOMEN'S OPPRESSION.

\*TROTSKYISM AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

\*TROTSKYISM AND PETTY BOURGEOIS NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS

\*THE FIGHT FOR A TROTSKYIST YOUTH MOVEMENT

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Evening meetings on additional topics, films and social events.

The school will be attended by delegations from the organisations affiliated to the TILC and members of the WSL. A special invitation is being extended to supporters of the WSL to take part in the discussion and learn more about the WSL and the TILC.

Details are available from any WSL branch or from: WSL, BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX.

Cost: £12 including accommodation for the eight days. A cheap meal will be provided at lunch time and there will be a pooled fare arrangement. Crèche facilities.

# Appeal court reverses train robbery frame-up

The Court of Criminal Appeal in Dublin last week ordered the release of Osgar Breathnach and Bernard McNally after they had spent 17 months in jail following their conviction for the Sallins Mail Train Robbery.

As we outlined in a previous issue of *Socialist Press* the convictions followed a terror campaign launched by the forces of the so-called Free State against the Irish Republican Socialist Party.

## Farce

Breathnach, (editor of the IRSP paper 'Starry Plough') and McNally were found guilty of the robbery after a farce of a trial in the Special Criminal Court, where three judges sit without a jury.

At the time of writing it is not clear on what basis the appeal court reversed the convictions, as this is to be announced later.

But the defendants had prepared their appeal on more than 20 grounds—the most important

of which related to illegal arrest, forced confessions and refusal to arrange for a solicitor to be present when Breathnach was being questioned.

## Public eye

It seems that the campaign to free the IRSP members had so clearly established the facts of the case in the public eye, and the behaviour of the police and the treatment the case got in court was so well known, that the Appeal Court felt obliged to release them.

Certainly the appearance in the Appeal Court of numerous representatives of civil rights organisations from several countries—including Amnesty International—left the judges less room for manoeuvre.

In the days leading up to the appeal, the Provisional IRA announced that Breathnach and McNally were innocent and that they had carried out the robbery. It is impossible to assess at this stage what impact this had on the verdict.

Perhaps the forces of the Irish state will now feel it incumbent on them to explain to the taxpayers why it was

necessary to spend over £1 million on two trials lasting 65 and 43 days to convict people who are then released on appeal 17 months later.

A third defendant Edward Kelly disappeared during the trial, was sentenced in his absence and a warrant has been issued for him.

The IRSP claim that he too should now be considered to be cleared.

*Socialist Press* will report on this as developments take place.

Following the Appeal Courts decision the IRSP held a press conference in Dublin at which Breathnach announced his intention to take civil action against the state. The IRSP will be running a campaign for the abolition of the Special Criminal Court, whose constitutionality will be tested by legal action.

## Opportunity

Last week's victory should not be underestimated.

It opens up a real opportunity to highlight the repressive state apparatus of the Republic. It opens up to re-examination the conviction of numerous other class war victims.

As Breathnach also pointed out at the press conference, the verdict must also re-open the questions surrounding the assassination of IRSP founder Seamus Costello. "Was it coincidence that he was assassinated during the course of this case?" he asked.

## Congratulations

*Socialist Press* extends its warm congratulations to the released militants and calls on the British labour movement to support the campaign against the Republic's repressive state machinery.

Such a campaign, linked to the building of opposition to the continued occupation of the north by imperialist troops and the fight for their immediate withdrawal, can play a vital role in unifying the struggle north and south for an Irish workers' republic.

Furthermore, the linking of struggles in Ireland with those against the Tories in Britain demonstrates the independent interests of the British working class as distinct from the interests of the 'British nation' which are in reality the interests of the British employers.



## IRELAND

# "String 'em up"-Police Federation

Not satisfied with the effective "licence to kill" extended to the Special Patrol Group and the SAS, the Police Federation last week underlined its demand for the restoration of capital punishment for all convicted murderers.

And, flying in the face of a growing body of opinion embracing even Tory MPs on the Commons Home Affairs Committee, the Federation nailed its reactionary colours to the discredited mast of the 'Sus' laws.

Meeting symbolically in Scarborough—the conference centre blacked by most unions because of local hoteliers' refusal to recognise the GMWU—the Federation heard chairman James Jardine declare that:

"The repeal of the 'Sus' law will be seen as a major reduction in the ability of the patrolling police officer to act as a crime prevention officer on the streets."

But the Home Affairs Committee made it quite clear that its proposal for the abolition of the 'Sus' law is designed purely as a cosmetic measure to defuse the highly effective campaigns that have been waged against police harassment of young

blacks.

As the Tories and Labourites put it in their joint report:

"It is to be expected that the repeal of 'Sus' will be a contribution to the further development of cooperation (with the police)."

It can be expected that the vast armoury of alternative laws—already used by most police forces outside London—will now be brought more into use in the harassment of black and white youth currently clobbered under "Sus".

For the Police Federation however any hint of a curtailment of their rights is immediately seized upon as a grievance.

But with the sting taken out of previous years' Federation conferences by the huge pay increases handed out by the Tories, the anticipation of using the savage anti-union laws in the pipeline and the steady escalation of police powers, the Federation's attention has shifted slightly—to voicing complaints about the impact of spending cuts.

No... you've guessed it! They do not care about the closures of schools, hospitals and social services. The Police Federation is worried about the impact of cash limits on police recruitment and training!

# Bosses squeal in Tory cold shower

Last week's CBI annual dinner witnessed the unseemly spectacle of CBI President Sir John Greenborough virtually begging the Tory government to cut interest rates.

With many of the country's most vicious and grasping industrialists weeping into their soup as they face the prospect of economic ruin in the gathering recession, it must have taken an iron will on the part of Chancellor Sir Geoffrey Howe to brush aside this heartfelt plea.

## Moral speech

But he held firm, sticking to his prepared text and delivering an uplifting moral speech on the need for Tory leaders and employers "to give to each

other the benefit of our support".

Meanwhile figures show that manufacturers have been registering their real level of confidence in their stocks of fuel, raw materials, work in progress and finished goods, and by continuing to cut back on capital spending.

## Plummet

The drop in stocks in the last quarter was the biggest since records began in 1955. It indicates both plummeting morale among manufacturing capitalists and the level of Tory destruction of basic industry.

Indeed after one year of Tory policies—supposedly designed to spur on free enterprise and profitability at the expense of social services—redundancies are now running



Howe

at an average rate of nearly 1,000 per day (330,000 per year), and unemployment is certain to reach new post-war record levels in the next few months.

For the 712,000 school leavers who will shortly be in search of jobs, the outlook is bleak, with only 163,000 notified vacant jobs—a fall of over 5,000 on a month ago.

For unemployed workers and youth, the squabbles over tactics between the CBI and the Tories are of no immediate interest: only mass action to drive out this government of bankers and employers can open the possibility of a planned socialist economy that will provide full employment.

# SYL Conference: a big step forward

The Socialist Youth League is now firmly on its way to becoming a truly national organisation after holding its Second Annual Conference over the weekend 17-18 May.

SYL members and supporters from 15 towns and cities as far away as Glasgow and Motherwell attended the highly successful event.

The level of political debate was extremely high throughout the weekend and three excellent films—Look Back at Grunwick, Superman and the Bride and Bolivia—The Tin Mountain, were widely appreciated.

On the Saturday evening a highly successful social event was organised. Four local bands played to a capacity audience

which drew in many youth from a local council estate.

All in all the SYL must now be recognised as an extremely serious revolutionary youth organisation which has a national base.

SYL branches and members have been in the forefront of the fight against the Tory government and in defence of democratic rights.

In the coming year the SYL is determined to grow in size and increase its influence among young people.

The conference adopted a basic policy document concerning most aspects of youth oppression and outlining policies on how youth can fight back against the bosses' rotten system. This document will shortly be published as an SYL pamphlet.

In his opening remarks Chairperson Dale Ackroyd from Bradford SYL set the tone of the conference. "The bosses are afraid of youth", he said. "They know that young people won't swallow what they have to offer. They won't lie down; they are fighting back! This conference has to make clear an effective socialist programme for youth and workers—a programme to create jobs for youth; to end the misery of low pay and long hours; to defend and extend leisure facilities and to end the exploitation and oppression of women, blacks and gays."

## Crisis

The message of the SYL has got to go out. The bosses' system is in a crisis, the bosses

cannot take society an inch forward.

Our aim is to end this rotten system once and for all and replace it with one that produces goods because people need them and not because it will produce a profit for the rich."

There followed introductions and discussion on Fighting the Tories, racism, Ireland, women's oppression, the National Union of School Students and international solidarity.

Fraternal greetings were taken from the WSL, the Woman Worker, the local trades council, and the Revolution youth group.

A new national committee and an editorial board for Red Youth were elected and the conference ended with the singing of the Internationale.



Some of the new SYL National Committee

# Blair Peach coroner spells out

## facts of life

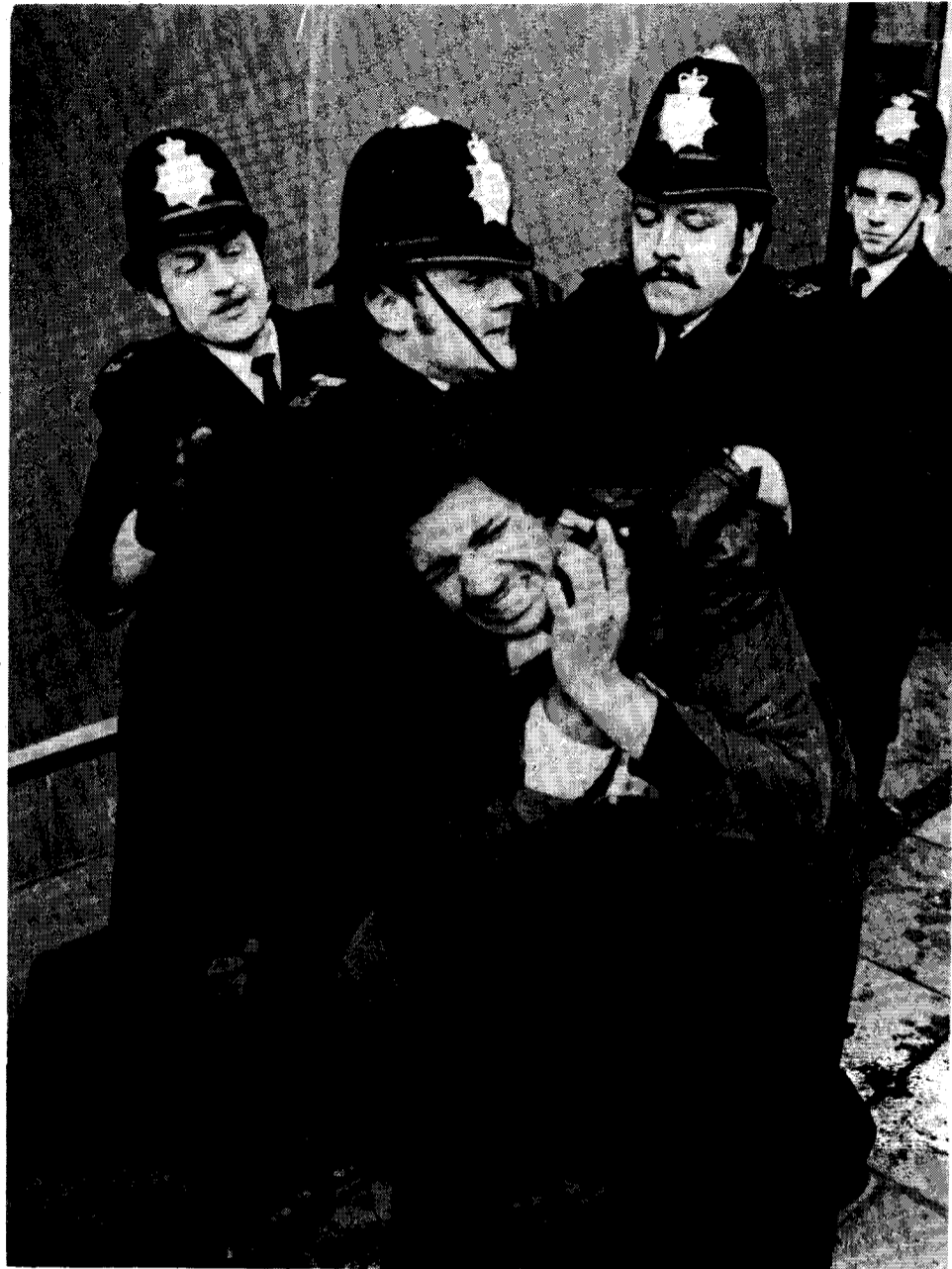


PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Police in action in Southall

The Blair Peach inquest came to an end with a savage defence of police thuggery by the West London coroner, Dr John Burton.

His long summing up may rescue a respectable verdict for the state but it will do nothing to shake the conviction of every class conscious worker who has followed the inquest that the police not only murdered Blair Peach but that they have announced their intention to kill again.

### Clubbed

Witnesses have given a graphic description of the SPG charge down Beachcroft Avenue in Southall and of Blair Peach being clubbed.

Then as Blair Peach sat on the pavement, dying from his fractured skull, he was ordered to move before being taken by local residents to a nearby house.

Other witnesses have told how they ran from the SPG but were followed and attacked.

The evidence from the 40 SPG men was, if anything, more damning.

### Contradictory

Faulty memories and contradictory statements have built their own picture of a bunch of armed thugs arrogantly confident that they will never be called to account.

The 'unauthorised' weapons in the SPG lockers including a whip and several varieties of vicious clubs were blandly explained away.

### Nazi regalia

The police did not even seem particularly anxious to present a credible story. Chillingly the court was told that in future these weapons—also used by the crime squad—should be issued *officially*.

Even the Nazi regalia discovered at the home of one of the SPG thugs, has, however, failed to dent the coroner's persistent belief in the police force that looks likely to keep him in business for years to come.

Dr. John Burton—who claimed he was not advocating killing demonstrators—said that 'sufficient force to be effective' must be used by the police.

Although Burton has told the jury that the inquest is not supposed to be a trial, he at least has already found Blair Peach guilty.

He asked the jury whether anyone left in the street when the police charged could be 'innocent'.

"You have to decide whether a policeman in that situation might reasonably believe Blair Peach was one of the rioters. If he did, even if he is mistaken, he is still protected.

"If a policeman reasonably believed he was hitting one of the rioters and it was necessary to do so he would be protected

in law."

Earlier Burton had outlined his defence of violence on a mass scale by police.

He held up for the jury, not the SPG locker weapons, but a chopper, and painted a picture of a beleaguered force surrounded by an armed and dangerous mob.

"If you believe that is the situation they are in and they believe it is necessary to use force to disperse them to prevent them forming up again, it is necessary to use sufficient force to overcome all resistance. The force you use has got to be effective."

The force used on Blair Peach was certainly effective; but we should be grateful to Coroner Burton. His explanation of the class nature of the police force and his own court was timely and lucid.

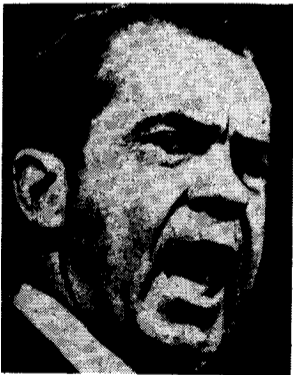
### Protected

His refusal to order Commander John Cass' internal police report to be opened to the jury was a stirring defence of the police to be better protected by the courts than, say, Granada Television.

"A doubt has been placed in the jury's mind that there is something they should know about", he complained.

Burton spent the rest of the inquest doing his best to eradicate that doubt.

## Tax firm books "thrown away"



Nixon

The most predictable secretarial slip since Nixon's secretary wiped his Watergate tapes was announced to Lord Denning in the High Court last week.

Last year the Inland Revenue raided the offices of Rossminsters, the banking group, and took away van loads of papers for investigation.

Denning—in one of his famous pro-employer rulings declared that the tax raid was 'military style' and therefore illegal and ordered the papers to be returned.

The House of Lords last December overturned that decision. Two weeks before they did so the new secretary to tax consultant Roy Tucker "threw away" diaries that would have had to be returned.

Denning, who set up the unfortunate mistake in the first place, accepted the explanation, and fined Tucker £1,000 for contempt, a sum it is thought he is well able to afford.

The £6,500-a-year secretary Lynette Binks, said afterwards: "He is a super boss and I am still working with him."

## GORMLEY'S TV BID

Joe Gormley's work in the working class on behalf of the bosses continues to be recognised by his grateful admirers.

The NUM President has just accepted a seat on the board of Midlands Television Ltd., a company set up to bid for the franchise at present held by ATV.

Gormley, who if the bid is successful, will sit on the board with Sir Sydney King (Lincolnshire district organiser of the National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers) is expected to fit in well with other directors who include the widow of Airey Neave, Lady Airey, well known for her determined aim to censor all anti-

imperialist statements from television.

Chairman of the company, which stands a good outside chance of ousting ATV from the Midlands licence to print money, is Sir Robert Booth, chairman of the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham and a director of the Birmingham Board of Barclays Bank.

Other fellow directors include Oscar Hahn, executive director of Guest Keen and Nettlefold, and the Duke of Rutland.

Part of the original money put up to launch the bid has come from IPC, the magazine group which at present has sacked all its 1,300 journalists for demanding a pay rise.



## PRESS GANG



Whether Basnett's accusation of a meeting between Thatcher and assorted Fleet Street editors to discuss coverage of May 14 is correct, is unlikely to be confirmed in the pages of the papers they edit.

Certainly there was a subdued air about the denials, and the Basnett allegation was reportedly common currency in Westminster before he made it.

But the question of a formal meeting is itself only the outward and visible sign of the relationship between the government and the press.

This has been most clearly shown (May 14 apart) in the coverage of the Carter/Thatcher campaign to organise a boycott of the Olympic games.

Before the British Olympic Committee decided to defy the boycott campaign, a crescendo of headlines and editorials proclaimed the evils of attending.

The 1980 Olympics in Moscow were compared to the 1936 Olympics in Berlin (a pity however that the press failed to leaf back through its own files to discover the complete absence of a campaign to boycott the Berlin Olympics, intended by Hitler to demonstrate Aryan supremacy in sport—an aim with which Fleet Street editors were not notably out of sympathy).

The press campaign over

Moscow was never long absent from its pages.

News that the tiniest satellite of US imperialism had decided not to attend was accorded front page treatment.

It burst out in full flower when the West German Olympic Committee, to the outrage of West German athletes, voted to join the boycott, and it received a fresh lease of life last week when Thatcher denounced Britain's athletes as competing for tarnished gold.

Whether it has been necessary to vet the headlines with Thatcher or not, Fleet Street has been sensitive to every last whim of government propaganda.

At the same time suggestions by sections of the international Olympics movement that the games should be denationalised by banning national flags and anthems have received no support at all from Fleet Street—despite the editorials which state that their fear is of the Soviet Union making political capital out of the Olympics.

That is because they want the nationalism (cultivated in sport and transferred to foreign policy) and the 'political capital' to continue as a feature of the Olympics—so long as it is not one of the workers' states that

benefits.

So while sports writers are kept busy with football against Argentina and rugby in South Africa, the foreign editors have junked their 'Keep politics out of sport' liberalism in favour of outrageous attacks on the Soviet Union.

In the *Daily Mail* this has produced the odd spectacle—which, after some hesitation, the paper has portrayed as a virtue—of the political pages raging in favour of a boycott and the sports writers campaigning against one.

The boycott has failed. Of major sporting nations only the United States, West Germany, Japan and Canada have joined the boycott (and W. Germany's vote could yet be overturned). More nations will send teams to Moscow than sent them to Montreal, including as a final humiliation for Carter, Australia.

A piece conceding that the Soviet Union had scored a big propaganda victory has appeared in the *Mail*—not quite on page one however.

But the *Daily Mirror* like troops staying in the jungle after the war is over, has continued to back Thatcher's contention that the golds will be "tarnished".

*Mirror* reporters too, however, will go to Moscow.

After all, there may yet be some jingoistic phrases to be coined from a 'British' victory.



# TORY LAW IS CLASS LAW

Amidst the massive battery of attacks on the working class opened up by the Tories riding on the back of the betrayals of the last Labour government, the use of the law against workers has risen rapidly in significance.

Of course, the use of the 'law' by the ruling class is not by any means new. As the law makers they have always been in a position to do so.

Thus, throughout much of the 19th century trade unions as we now know them were illegal, and militants like the famous Tolpuddle Martyrs constantly faced the threat of jail or deportation if they tried to organise.

In County Durham throughout the 1850s and '60s the police fought a running battle against the attempt by miners to organise in unions.

## Baton charges

Secret night meetings held out in the fields were broken up by baton charges; houses were raided and families evicted to keep up the general air of intimidation.

Even the subsequent recognition of trade unions by the government and the employers following a series of open riots and bombings in the mid-1860s in Sheffield, Durham and London did not really change this.

The decision to give certain legal immunities to the trade unions reflected not any acceptance of working class rights, but rather the decision by the ruling class to 'deal' differently with trade unionists, or more particularly with their leaders.

When this new strategy of using the union bureaucrats as intermediaries failed, however, it was a case of back to the boot, the cosh and the bayonet.

In 1906 the Taff Vale judgement wiped out at a stroke the rights previously won by strikers.

In 1911 transport workers in Liverpool were shot down for organising mass pickets by armed police.

We get a picture of this 'reforming' period from the work of E.J. Allen.

Writing in 1910 he points out:

"We have had Taff Vale decisions and Osbourne judge-

ments from their law courts; so much for the state as an administrator of justice. The army has been used against strikers at Featherstone, Mold and Belfast; so much for impartiality in these cases. During the strike at Hull and Grimsby, gunboats were there to show how the navy is to be used when capitalist interests are threatened."

## Outlawed

In fact, the ruling class has always been ready for any excuse to outlaw strikes and trade union action, even at times when they were also drawing the trade union leadership increasingly into the state.

In 1915 the Munitions of War Act effectively made strikes illegal and by 1916 had been extended to all industries.

Similarly, in 1940 the Conditions of Employment and Arbitration Order (Order 1305) was used, with the assistance of the Labour and trade union leaders, to outlaw industrial action.

Thus, in 1942, three miners leaders from Betteshanger Colliery in Kent were jailed and a further 1,000 threatened with jail for non-payment of fines imposed for taking illegal strike action.

Again, in 1944, Trotskyists on Tyneside were put on trial and eventually jailed for defending the right of shipyard workers to take strike action, regardless of the needs of the imperialist war, against their own ruling class.

## Labour government

Such 'temporary' wartime measures were kept as long as possible. Order 1305 was last used (by the then Labour government) in 1951 against militant dockers on Merseyside who found themselves charged with 'incitement' to cause strikes! Stripped of the verbiage, their crime was to be militant, effective trade unionists.

The period since the mid 1960s should therefore be seen in the context of this long history of state repression of the working class.

At the same time, however, the sharpness and rapidity of recent developments should be seen in the light of the massive economic crisis facing capitalism and the inability of employers to drive up their profits and

prop up ailing British imperialism without physically smashing the working class as an organised force.

Since the late 1960s the attention of the bourgeoisie, and its servants in parliament has been firmly focussed on the use of the state against the working class.

The introduction of British troops into Ireland to break the nationalist population went hand in hand with attacks on the trade unions.

Wilson's 'In Place of Strife' was followed by Heath's Industrial Relations Act and the creation of an 'Industrial Relations' Court to discipline workers.

## Conspiracy laws

Since then, the introduction of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the use of conspiracy laws against pickets as in the trial of the Shrewsbury Two, the use of SUS laws against youth and of police and the SPG against strikers and pickets, notably at Grunwicks, have created a framework of direct state suppression to be liberally used against militants.

As the trials of anti-fascists at Southall and Leicester in 1979 showed, in the eyes of the state and its courts, mere presence at a demonstration which challenges, however slightly, the authority of the bourgeoisie, is sufficient for a conviction.

Taken together, these things testify to the shift towards the use of the state apparatus—army, police and courts—to tackle an undefeated working class.

It is important, therefore, to get this idea of 'the law' firmly into perspective.

Just what is 'the law'? Whose 'order' does the much vaunted 'law and order' defend? How did that order come about?

The British bourgeoisie are usually reticent about their own origins. While perpetuating the myths of the 'typical British compromise' gradual change and 'fair play' they conveniently ignore the fact that the real ending of the old feudal order of the middle ages was a result not of some cosy Parliamentary compromise cooked up over tea, but of the military defeat of the Crown and aristocracy by Cromwell's bourgeois forces.

This was, of course, subsequently made both definitive and 'legal' by lopping off the King's head in 1649.

The deals and compromises came only after this decisive victory for the new, emerging bourgeois class.

In practice capitalism only compromises when it is to its own material advantage.

For bankrupt capitalism in crisis there is no room for such compromise.

## Class warfare

What we have, instead, is a move towards open class warfare—class against class—where the central aim of the ruling bourgeoisie is to smash and atomise the working class as an organised social force.

To do this, it uses the state—in the marxist sense of 'bodies of armed men'—as a weapon against the working class.

And in the background, as in countries like Turkey, stands the mailed fist of capitalism in crisis—fascism.

Only after the material defeat of the working class and the smashing of its organisations will they stop to sift the remains to see who can be 'dealt' with to restore the air of 'legitimacy' and gentlemanly co-operation!

Contrary to the opinions sometimes expressed by judges

from beneath their wigs the law is neither god-given nor eternal.

It is made by men and more particularly by men acting as part of the ruling class in society.

The law is, therefore, no more than an organised expression of the interests of the ruling class of the time. That is why the 'law' did not deter the bourgeoisie from beheading Charles I in 1649, nor from throwing out James II in the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688.

These acts were determined not by precedent or any existing notions of 'justice' or morality—in fact they flew in the face of earlier established positions.

They reflected what was necessary for the emerging bourgeoisie.

For the Tory government, therefore, the question of 'law and order' has nothing whatsoever to do with the 'rights' of working people and everything to do with the defence of private property: their privately owned banks, factories and wealth.

So, if the 'law' established in an earlier period inconveniently states that school meals must be provided of a certain nutritional value and that nursery provision is compulsory, these laws will be scrapped.

If the 'law' guarantees the rights of trade unionists to strike and picket, these laws will also go into the dustbin.

At the point where they come into conflict with the interests of finance capital and big business, they must, for the Tories, go. The law is not sacred; it is a question of power.

## Blair Peach

Thus, whilst conspiracy charges were used against flying pickets like Des Warren, and the PTA is used against Irish workers and trade union militants no such use of the 'law' is made to deal with the agents of the state who murdered Blair Peach.

Similarly, while the print unions are hauled before the courts for supposedly 'coercing' their members into strike action on May 14, no such use of the 'law' is made against torture chiefs like Mason, Jenkins, Whitelaw and Atkins who officiate over the systematic use of the most barbaric forms of physical brutality and coercion against Irish prisoners of war.

And finally, while the courts and the threat of imprisonment are used to bludgeon Granada television into revealing who passed on documents exposing the sinister role of the government during the steel strike, no action will be taken against the spies and provocateurs who are constantly infiltrated into the ranks of the labour movement and amongst those waging a struggle against imperialist domination.

That is the reality: a class law designed to produce naked class justice. For the bourgeoisie the law is in essence no more than a weapon to be shaped and honed for use against its class enemies—the organised labour movement.

In practice the ruling class operates and sees itself as safely above the law.

Occasionally, buffoons like Richard Nixon blow the gaff on this by foolishly stating it in the open.

Then, in order to perpetuate the vital myth of justice, these ruling class mouthpieces have to receive a ceremonial smack on the wrist from their accomplices—before being let loose in public once more. Richard Nixon was never jailed for his crimes against the American and Vietnamese people; Des Warren got three years for picketing!



Police escort scabs during the national rail strike of 1911 - in

# FIGHT THE ANTI-UNION LAWS



Three of the seven dockers tried on conspiracy charges in 1951



Tory union-basher Prior



which two pickets were shot dead by troops.

# ING THE NION



are carried from the court after their acquittal.

# LEADERS WHO LONG FOR DEFEAT



(above) TUC leaders emerge after betraying the 1926 General Strike; (below) TUC leaders on March 9, 1980, fighting to prevent a General Strike to defeat the Tories.

If capitalism has a long history of attempts at state suppression of trade unionism, the working class has an equally long history of struggle to defend its right to construct independent class organisations in the workplace.

No-one reading the history of the early trade unions, or of the 'new' unions in the 1880s, could doubt the willingness of the working class to fight in defence of its basic rights against the bourgeoisie.

There has, however, almost throughout, been a secondary problem confronting the working class.

### Organs of Struggle

Not only has it been obliged to defend the very existence of the trade unions as class organisations against the employers and the state; it has also consistently had to defend them as organs of class struggle against its own official leadership within the trade union bureaucracy.

Thus, saddled with a reformist leadership, the working class has, for the past hundred years, been fighting on two fronts.

Every attempt to smash the unions by the state has evoked a massive response within the working class.

But at the head of these movements there has remained a leadership class dedicated to the preservation of the power and property of the very class which launched these attacks.

At every stage, therefore, instead of spelling out clearly the class implication of these vicious anti-union attacks, the reformist bureaucrats within the TUC have sought to limit actions to protest with a view to negotiating a deal within the framework of the capitalist system.

### Prepared attack

We see this clearly in the case of the 1926 General Strike.

Faced with a deliberate, well prepared attack on the mine-workers designed to drive down their wages and smash their power as a militant, organised section of the working class, Arthur Pugh, Chairman of the TUC calmly informed the Tory Prime Minister on 12 May, 1926, nine days after the start of the strike, and with more workers coming out each day:

"We are here today, sir, to say that this general strike is to be terminated forthwith, in order that negotiations may proceed."

That the cancellation of the strike spelt automatic defeat for

the miners mattered not a jot to these traitors.

For, as JH Thomas, leader of the railwaymen had remarked nine days earlier:

"I know the government's position. I have never disguised that, in a challenge to the Constitution, God help us unless the Government won."

Clearly, a leadership which begins from the necessity for its own members to be defeated is hardly the best equipped to defend the rights of those members.

Because these leaders identify themselves and their futures with the continuity of capitalism they are totally incapable of representing the independent interests of the working class within a capitalist system wracked by crisis.

As the dying hulk of capitalism staggers from crisis to crisis, from war to war, these reformist traitors are always ready with yet another transfusion of fresh blood to keep the corpse up on its feet.

But it is the working class which is bled white in the process.

For Trotskyists, therefore, the understanding of the struggle to defeat the attempts of the state to dismantle the trade unions is two-sided and contradictory.

### Combativity

On the one hand there is the tremendous combativity which exists inside the working class. This was the unequivocal fighting strength which in 1942 forced the courts to release miners' leaders at Betteshanger colliery and to drop the fines imposed on a further 1,000 miners.

That same resolute determination led to the withdrawal of anti-union Order 1305 in 1951 as a national docks strike swelled up around the attempts to jail dockers' leaders.

That same class solidarity in 1972 compelled the Tories, through that shadowy figure 'the official solicitor' to release the 'Pentonville 5' as the demands grew among rank and file trade unionists for a general strike which would have challenged not only the 1971 Industrial Relations Act but—as the miners did two years later—the very existence of the Tory government.

That is one side of the picture.

On the other hand, in sharp contrast to this fighting capacity of the working class as a whole, we have the cringing, class collaborationist record of the union leaders.

Time and again they display an absolute willingness to sacrifice members' jobs in steel, BL,

shipbuilding and textiles before the high altar of capitalist "viability".

They are willing to trade the hard-won rights of their members for a few seats around the negotiating table.

And they remain eager to take over the job—as outlined in the 1969 'In Place of Strife' and the Concordat of 1979—of policeman of trade unions. No laws! they plead. We'll do it voluntarily! And they do.

### Witch-hunts

The witch-hunts of militants in the TGWU, as in the Cowley 9 case, the AUEW leaders' collaboration in the sacking of Derek Robinson from his post as Combine Convenor in BL, and the attacks on militant trades councils, as most recently at Tameside, all bear testimony to the value of the union bureaucracy to the bourgeoisie as pawns of the capitalist state.

It is also a measure of the total political bankruptcy of this 'official' leadership. As any militant well knows, union rules today are not a means for organising action but for shackling those who would argue for it.

The struggle to defend the trade unions as independent class organisations must, therefore, be consistently fought on two levels.

Firstly against any attempts by the state to incorporate them or govern their activities through repressive laws and the courts.

Secondly, in each and every one of these struggles, against the wavering capitulationist leadership of the unions at both national and local levels.

The demand for a General Strike, as during the steel strike, or over the anti-union laws, poses sharply this question.

### Democratise

Thus, the struggle to defend the unions against Tory anti-union laws goes hand in hand with the struggle to democratise the unions.

That means transforming the unions into fighting organs of the working class, directly accountable to their members and controlled at local level by those members.

It also means breaking the strangle hold of the existing leadership in the unions through the construction of factory committees, combine committees and councils of action which can effectively mobilise and unite the militancy of the rank and file in action against the bosses, around an independent class programme.

The trade union bureaucrats will no doubt resist such steps, just as they resist every

other step along the road to mobilising the mass movement.

But it is precisely in such confrontations with the existing reformist leadership that a new, revolutionary leadership is constructed.

The construction of independent militant organisations corresponding more closely to the tasks of the mass struggle against bourgeois society is therefore central to the fight against both the Tories' anti-union laws and the trade union leadership.

They give an organisational expression to the tasks of the labour movement.

They also prepare the basis for the development of Councils of Action (Soviets) as direct organs of workers power.

If the factory committee poses the question of a challenge to the power of the employer in one firm, the Council of Action does so for an entire town.

It is the workers' answer to the bourgeois parliament with its phony democracy, sterile debates and clientele of time-servers and businessmen. Councils of Action, drawing delegates from every section of the labour movement, constructed on a national scale, are the historical successors to that parliament.

The sharp tasks posed before the working class by this Tory government demand that preparations be made immediately for the coming struggles.

If trade union rights, jobs, living standards and services are to be defended then the emphasis must be firmly on preparation for an all out struggle to bring down the Tory government.

For this reason, the Workers Socialist League fully supports the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement's conference on July 5 in Birmingham.

This conference, under the title 'After steel and BL—new leaders needed to defeat the Tories' can provide a powerful forum for all those militants engaged in struggle both against the employers and the Tories and against their own trade union leadership.

In forging a fighting class programme for the coming period the CDLM Conference can be an important step towards the construction of a new, revolutionary leadership in the labour movement which begins not from the interests of capital but from the independent interests of the working class.

We urge all our readers to attend and win support for the conference in their trade union branches, stewards committees and trades councils.

# SLAUGHTER ON IDEOLOGY

TERRY EAGLETON reviews *Marxism, Ideology and Literature* by Cliff Slaughter, published by Macmillan at £4.50.

Better known for its devotion to Middle Eastern autocrats than to Marxist art, Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party seems an unlikely source for a study of Marxism and literature.

Yet Cliff Slaughter, veteran Healyite, has produced what is in some ways a valuable, usable study of precisely that subject.

The chief merit of Slaughter's lucid, trenchant account is that it situates the Marxist study of literature firmly within a political analysis.

Liberating 'Marxist criticism' from the academy, Slaughter integrates a Marxist theory of art with Marx's overall materialist theory of the capitalist mode of production.



Slaughter

spective is, it assumes distinct dangers in Slaughter's hands.

For such highly general, abstract discussion of art assumes that there is, indeed, something called 'Art'—some single, universal activity whose 'essence' is the creative transformation of human energies.

Such an idea has precisely been the stock-in-trade of bourgeois idealism.

### Abstract

Slaughter, like idealist art critics, tends almost unconsciously to celebrate 'Art' as such, in the abstract; it is less a question of the particular material effects of particular works of art, than the universal 'creative' qualities of Art-in-general.

In fact Slaughter seems unaware of just how historically

relative a term like 'art' is.

Was Homer really 'literature' for the ancient Greeks? Was the Parthenon a 'work of art' for them, in the sense that it is for us?

How far is Slaughter an historical materialist when he speaks of the 'essentially human experience' which art (all art?) is supposed to embody.

### Lukacs

Such language is ironically very close to that of the supposedly 'greatest' Marxist literary critic of the century, Georg Lukacs.

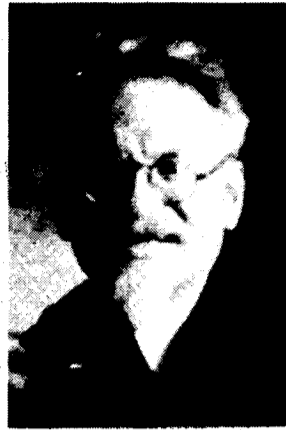
Ironically, because Slaughter's chapter on Lukacs is an excellent, highly principled expose of Lukacs's Stalinism, and its devastating effects on his literary theory.

But when Slaughter rightly rejects some of Lukacs's bourgeois-idealist formulations ('the enduring spell of all works of art that evoke life's inexhaustible dynamism'), it is difficult not to feel that he has not slid dangerously close to such Romantic abstractions himself.

Of the various Marxist critics with whom he deals, Slaughter properly singles out two as outstanding: Trotsky himself, and the German art critic Walter Benjamin.

The virtues of both men are impressively analysed; but their inevitable limitations are wholly ignored.

Slaughter, for example, supports Trotsky's view that literature is 'thinking in images'—a hangover from Russian Romanticism which the Russian Formalists rightly took apart.



Trotsky

He also fails to mention that brilliant though much of Trotsky's literary criticism is, it never effectively breaks with the actual techniques of bourgeois criticism, whatever its profound differences of perspective.

### Excessive

Benjamin's concern with the material modes of production of art is valuably emphasised; but his latent 'technologism'—an excessive trust in the technical



Benjamin

forces of artistic production themselves—is passed over in silence.

So, indeed, is the whole of Benjamin's mystical, Messianic, Jewish-apocalyptic thought, which confronts anyone trying to appropriate Benjamin as a traditional Marxist with a severe problem.

For Slaughter, in undialectical fashion, there are problems only with those thinkers with whom he disagrees; his celebrations are consistently uncritical.

It is characteristic of Slaughter's failure to break entirely with bourgeois humanism that he feels constrained to place the word 'science', when applied to literature, in inverted commas.

Literature, one assumes, is too fragile and delicate a plant for such grubby handling, a matter of 'creativity' rather than 'categories'.

He makes some telling points against Althusserian literary 'science', and rightly criticises my own earlier tendency to uncritically adopt Althusser's idea of 'ideology'.

But his equal rejection of my own concept of a 'literary mode of production' is difficult to square with his applause for Walter Benjamin; and his irritation with Althusserianism sometimes descends to a mere grousing about too many complicated categories, as though Marx himself could not equally be accused of this by any petty bourgeois.

The defects of the book, however, are substantially outweighed by its merits.

It is passionate, committed and intelligent, and should be required reading for any student of the topic.

### Exchange value

For Marx, labour under capitalism is inevitably abstract labour, producing commodities whose concrete qualities exist for the sake of their exchange value, for the goal of profit.

Under such a system, art becomes a commodity like any other; but because artistic labour is irreducibly concrete and particular, it confronts bourgeois society as something of a scandal.

Moreover, it offers a model of what a non-abstract form of labour might be like—a labour process which existed to develop creative energies rather than to alienate and repress them.

Important though this per-

## IN REVIEW The Seduction of Joe Tynan, reviewed by Tony Richardson

# SURFACE VIEW OF US POLITICS

It is hard to work out whether the "seduction" in this superficial film is a reference to Joe Tynan's political degeneration or to his physical seduction by a



J.F. Kennedy

woman lawyer who helps him with a court case.

Alan Alda plays a rising 'liberal' Democrat politician from New York who is headed for the US Presidency. The film focuses on the way he leaps from bandwagon to bandwagon in his campaign.

For him politics is simply a career. He sees it as more important than his personal relationships or his feelings for his daughter.

His every move is a manoeuvre. He only backs a struggle against a racist ruling by the Supreme Court when it is clear that he can win.

The film has problems in depicting any actual degeneration in Tynan. From the outset he is a cynical opportunist—compiling a filing system on men he doesn't know in order to ingratiate himself through touching inquiries after their wives and families.

Nor can Tynan be shown to be particularly extraordinary as a US bourgeois politician: his rivals in the film begin by

opposing him, but one by one fall to flattering him as his campaign gathers momentum.

### Uncritical

Indeed the film fails to take any critical position on this set up. Alda appears to start from the view that corruption is acceptable so long as it is combined with a winning streak of liberalism and with upholding the traditional bourgeois values of the family.

The naivete of the film and its main character is also remarkable. Would someone like Tynan be unaware of the corruption of John F. Kennedy—the 'liberal' Democrat who brought the world to the brink of nuclear war during the Cuban missiles crisis?

Yet Alda has Tynan solemnly telling his woman friend that her "compassion" reminds him of Kennedy! Such cynicism may go down well at Democratic party gatherings but it seems a bit far-fetched to extend it to the bedroom.

One other sign of naivete is



in the lament by one old Senator who warns Tynan that "after a while you forget what you came here for."

In reality of course US bourgeois politicians are anything but starry-eyed idealists. They are dedicated to no cause other than lining their own pockets and those of the capitalist class as a whole.

It is hard to imagine a political system more shaped by such material considerations.

Former CIA director George Bush, for example, in his unsuccessful challenge to Ronald Reagan for the Republican nomination, lashed out over \$1

million in one primary election in a single state: and this was before the Presidential race itself gets underway!

Yet Alda's liberalism leaves him blind to such realities and a million miles away from the struggles of the American working class. He offers only an abstract look at bourgeois political morality.

This is not simply the fruit of Alda's own shortcomings. It is linked to the lack of any workers' party in the USA—any mass party committed, in however partial a way, to struggle for the interests of the US labour movement.

Any attempt to analyse US politics without grasping this

must wind up as a superficial, moralistic exercise trapped between the two US capitalist parties.

### Acting

The most worthwhile aspect of the film is the superb acting by Barbara Harris (as Tynan's wife) and Merryl Streep.

But even Harris' performance finds it impossible to overcome the unconvincing banality of Alda's script in which the happy family unit is supposedly restored.

Splendid acting cannot remedy the weaknesses of this lightweight and superficial film.



# GREEN LIGHT TO VICTIMISE GAY WORKERS



It is "not unreasonable" to dismiss a worker who has any contact with young people simply because he or she is homosexual. That is at this moment the law in Britain.

It results from the judgement of an Employment Appeal Tribunal in Glasgow in April chaired by Lord Macdonald. The appeal was made by John Saunders, a maintenance handyman for the Scottish National Camps Association, which dismissed him in 1979 because he was known to be gay as a result of what the tribunal darkly refers to as 'a homosexual incident in Stirling'.

## Reason for sacking

The Camps Association admit that the only reason for dismissal was homosexuality, and the industrial tribunal to whom John Saunders first appealed found against him. The confirmation of that by the Appeal Tribunal is even more serious since it establishes a legal precedent for the whole country.

If it is not reversed (and it is currently under appeal to a higher court) it could open the flood gates to widespread victimisation of gay workers in a wide range of jobs, especially, of course, in education, health and social work.

It is for this reason that a pamphlet just published by the Gay Teachers Group—*Gay Rights and the Teaching Unions*—is particularly timely.

The vulnerability of teachers to prejudice and oppression of gays is obvious.

The growth of an openly gay community has not removed the bigoted attitude widespread within imperialist (not to mention Stalinist) countries that homosexuality is some form of corruption of "normal" sexuality.

And from this viewpoint, constantly reinforced by the



bourgeois media, the gay teacher thus appears in the role of "corrupter of the young".

If there are comparatively few recent cases of teachers being dismissed for being gay, this is certainly because the hundreds of cases which do occur are disguised and hushed up by mutual agreement between the employers and the teacher concerned, who agrees to resign for "personal reasons" and to avoid damaging exposure.

On the basis of statistical averages there must be tens of thousands of gay teachers in Britain.

The vast majority live in fear of discovery and, like the majority of gay people in general are afraid to come out, especially at work.

Teachers are simply a particular example of the way in

which social bigotry about homosexuality converts so many gay people into the most direct and effective agents of their own oppression.

But this would be less true if gay teachers had any good reason to suppose that education authorities would not discriminate against known homosexuals, or if they thought that the teaching unions would defend them if discrimination did occur.

## Reason to fear

On both scores gay teachers up to now have in general good reason to fear the worst.

In 1974 the National Council for Civil Liberties submitted a questionnaire on the employment of gay teachers to all education bodies. They asked 5 questions pertaining to possible discrimination.

Only one authority (Solihull) gave entirely satisfactory answers to all the questions.

Over half the authorities did not reply.

Many expressed open bigotry, stating or implying that homosexuality was a threat to children.

And virtually all of them qualified their answers in one way or another.

Several replies could not bring themselves to utter the very words. Suffolk for example replied darkly that:

"these matters have not caused us any difficulties in the past."

Kingston-upon-Thames claimed that:

"all teaching appointments that are made in this area are based on professional judgements, and considerations to which your questionnaire refers do not therefore apply."

## Victimised

It is hard to know if even "satisfactory" answers to the NCCL's questionnaire meant anything since one of the best, the one which sparked off the

coherent and explicit position on racialism (if one that is still short on political and practical realities) its position on gay rights is appalling, bears little relation to the classroom situation of today and is unhelpful for both its gay members and the pupils (both heterosexual and homosexual) in our schools." (p.18)

The other main school teachers' union, the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers has a position which, if possible, is even worse than the NUT.

In reply to the Gay Teachers Group the NAS/UWT said it believed that:

"teachers' private lives are their own affairs. They should however keep their private lives private. Any teacher who publicly proclaims his or her homosexuality would in our view be inviting serious difficulties." (p.11)

Quite true—but the first difficulties would arise not with the teacher's employer but with his own union.

## Notorious

The NAS/UWT general secretary Terry Casey said in a notorious BBC interview a year ago that:

"my union would not knowingly recruit a homosexual teacher."

The main Scottish teachers' union denied any knowledge of discrimination against gay teachers and so did the Association of University Teachers. The college teachers' union NATFHE didn't even bother to reply.

It is worth recording the reply of the organisations of the public schools, the Headmasters Conference, since even if it has nothing to do with gay rights it does illustrate the superior quality of English grammar which you would get for the high fees at such establishments:

"I am not aware of the Headmasters' Conference having proceeded to the length of

passing any Resolutions in the sense of which you request details.

Yours sincerely,  
R.F. Glover (Deputy Secretary)"

The Gay Teachers Group pamphlet is an important contribution to the struggle for gay rights because of the way in which it focusses attention on the policy of the teachers' unions which have to take up a serious practical commitment if gay rights in education are to be advanced.

## Positive attitude

But, as the pamphlet discusses also, the issue is not only one of discrimination against gay teachers but also the problem of fighting for a more positive attitude in schools towards homosexuality so as to combat the oppression of gay school students. And that must be part of a change in the attitude to sex in general.

It is impossible to disagree with the pamphlet's remarks in discussing the position of the NAS/UWT that "private life" must be kept a secret:

"Many teachers have abandoned the role of an aloof authoritarian for a more relaxed way of relating to their pupils that brings with it a greater honesty in answering their questions. If pupils in such a situation instigate discussions on sexuality—and they often do—including seeking the teacher's own opinions on and experiences of sexuality, such teachers in such situations frequently answer their pupils directly."

"Why should gay teachers in similar situations act or be expected to act upon different principles, to be dishonest where others are honest, and to dissemble where others are candid?"

Until their policies and practices are changed then, as this pamphlet proves, the teachers' unions make their contribution to dishonesty as well as to the oppression of their own members and their pupils.

# Europe-wide attacks

The Saunders judgement is one of a number of attacks on gay rights which have occurred recently not only in Britain but throughout Europe.

The French parliament recently voted against a proposed extension of gay rights (the CP and Socialist parties voting in favour).

But the sharpest attacks are in Greece. In July a gay journal Amfi is to be tried. Last week the Greek censors banned the showing of the British film 'Nighthawks' about a gay teacher in London, because:

"both the content and the scenes of the film dangerously undermine the sane traditions of the Greek people and the accepted moral disgust for homosexuality and will have a

destructive effect on Greek youth."

Third, the Greek government has retailed the notorious anti-gay bill "Concerning the Protection from Venereal Diseases and Other Related Matters", which would allow one year prison sentences to people suspected of "immoral soliciting" in public.

GAY RIGHTS IN THE TEACHING UNIONS  
Published by the Gay Teachers Group (London),  
112 Broxholm Road, West Norwood, London SE27

# The Battle for Trotskyism

Second edition of the opposition documents presented inside the WRP by the present leadership of the Workers Socialist League

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Price £2.50 plus 20p postage and package from Workers Socialist League, BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX

The pamphlet correctly concludes: "while the NUT has a



# BL stewards call conference

Ten years ago BL workers were among the highest paid manual workers in the country. Today, we are among the lowest. We have had one thing after another forced on us—from Measured Day Work, the Ryder Plan, Participation, Corporate Bargaining, the Edwardes Plan, the victimisation of Derek Robinson, to redundancies and speed up.

This year we have had yet another wage cut—that is what 5% means when inflation is at 20%.

And for this privilege we have had to swallow 92 pages of strings.

We started out with a claim for £24.35 hours and no strings. The company refused to negotiate from the beginning.

When Edwardes decided to impose the deal, the LCJNC and the convenors' conference refused to call a BL-wide strike even though they had a 60-40 majority in the ballot for action.



Edwardes

Instead they passed the buck to the officials, who spent the rest of the time running away.

Terry Duffy, who gave himself 25%, no strings, instructed his members to work.

Moss Evans avoided a decision by promising to back any action taken by members.

When the members responded he begged for peace. With more than 18,000 on strike he derailed the struggle with his pathetic agreement which changed nothing in the 92 page document. All that changed was:

1) Participation will be re-established.

2) The miserable LCJNC, which has shown that it cannot fight its way out of a paper bag, will be restarted—with even more official control.

No wonder that the Tories and the employers think Edwardes is a hero.

He may not be able to walk on water but he certainly knows how to walk on door-mats. He has treated the unions in BL with contempt.

He has never negotiated. He simply tells the unions what he is going to do. The national officials refuse to lead a national fight against Edwardes.

The convenors, with a few honourable exceptions, rely on the officials, which is a face-saving way of surrendering.

Make no mistake. Edwardes is attacking the very existence of the unions in BL.

The victimisation of Derek Robinson was a direct attack on shop-floor organisation in the company.

The 92 page document is aimed at undermining the traditional role of the shop stewards by doing away with mutuality on a range of issues.

The threats to sack strikers even after procedure is exhausted is a direct attack on the right to strike.

Yet the response of our leaders is to get involved in participation and the LCJNC, both of which are aimed at reducing shop-floor strength.

We must prepare now to ensure that there is no repeat of last year's farce. We need to unite the combine behind a common claim, and we need to prepare all of BL Cars for a

## TEXT OF A LEYLAND ACTION COMMITTEE LEAFLET

united fight this time.

The LCJNC cannot be relied upon to do this. With the same officials in control as were responsible for this year's claim, we can expect only a repeat performance.

Remember, the only opposition from the union leadership was around the strings. None of them opposed the 5%. Next year we need a rise, not another cut.

A first step towards achieving these objectives is to get the negotiations under the control of the membership. For this we need a national conference of BL Cars, based on delegates from the plants to draw up a claim, to elect a leadership to pursue it, and to wage a campaign to get the membership solidly behind it.

We must break the cycle of defeat—for this we must change the way we approach the annual negotiations, and we need to change the leadership.

This conference will discuss how to fight for the necessary changes, and what steps can be taken now towards a national delegate conference.

# Renold jobs under threat

815 workers at Renold Chains, Coventry, are due to lose their jobs if the company carries out its plan to close the factory.

Management claims that reduced orders for metal timing chains made at the plant for the motor industry is one of the main reasons the jobs must go.

It is clear that despite the brave words about "fighting to defend jobs at Renold" that were spoken by an AUEW official at the Day of Action demonstration in the city, the workers at Renolds must develop a totally different approach from that which is being advocated by the trade union bureaucracy.

Jim Griffin, Assistant Divisional Organiser of the AUEW has already accepted the central argument of the employers—viability.

He argues only that sufficient orders exist for another twelve month's production, and that if the plant were kept open during that time a discussion could be opened around alternative products.

In order to provide finance for the changeover to new products Griffin is trying to persuade the company to approve an application to the government for temporary short-time working compensation, and if that fails, for a Temporary Employment Subsidy.

Under the first scheme, companies can receive 75% of wages for several months in order to avoid making workers redundant. Under the latter, the government pay £20 a week per worker for periods up to 12 months.

The limits of reformism are

shown graphically in this strategy.

Here we have a Tory government determined to back to the hilt the employers' drive to cut jobs—and the trade union bureaucracy can only come up with the solution of asking that same government to subsidize what it sees as an unproductive plant.

At a time of growing recession the trade union bureaucracy holds out the prospect of launching new products!

## Open the books

The first step in an alternative path to defend jobs is the demand for the opening of the company books.

Workers at the Coventry factory should elect a committee whose job it will be to investigate the company claims.

Every scrap of information must be gathered to give a complete picture of the financing, production records, orders and "viability" of the Coventry factory and the Renold group as a whole.

Such an investigation should be carried out totally independent from the interference of management.

All that is required from them is the information.

But if this is not to be an exercise in getting the workers to prove to their own satisfaction that they have to sacrifice their jobs, opening the books must be part of a whole strategy to resist the bosses' offensive.

The best way to launch an investigation and a real fight to defend jobs is to do so from a position of strength—this means a policy of occupation.

## Threat to all

The threat to Renold's workers is part and parcel of the threat to all workers' jobs and indeed flows out of the crisis of the motor industry. Steps should be taken to discuss these attacks jointly with car workers.

The Leyland Action Committee conference planned for June 7 in Birmingham is an ideal opportunity for any Renold worker who wants to fight management plans to bring the problems of the supply industries right into the centre of a discussion on how to defend carworkers from Edwardes' attacks.

For any strategy to defend BL workers must involve plans for an integrated plan for the whole of the motor industry.

# JOIN THE WSL!

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

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

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

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

TUC leaders, too, have set out to establish a basis for collaboration with Thatcher and the Tory cabinet, paralleling their anti-working class alliance with Wilson and then Callaghan.

But the working class has experienced and overcome such betrayals before—to topple Heath's union-bashing government in 1974, and smash through Callaghan's reactionary Phase 4 of wage controls in a series of monumental pay battles last winter.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

JOIN US and take forward the struggle for socialism!

# L.A.C. CONFERENCE

LEYLAND ACTION COMMITTEE

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# Jackson forces home Post Office bosses charter

by  
**T. Brook**

At the annual conference of the UPW last week, by far the most important issue facing postmen and PHGs was local productivity, under the name of "improved working methods".

The debate took place on Tuesday morning when Tom Jackson moved support of the deal.

Jackson claimed it was "an experiment" (3 months) from 1 June, and was far and away the best deal in the Post Office. It would, he claimed, stand alongside any other deal in outside industry.

This deal was concluded some months ago between the UPW London LDC3 and the London Postal Region, with every encouragement given by Jackson and the UPW HQ.

In the past, LDC 3 has been in the forefront against local productivity, reinforcing that policy with annual conference agreement year after year.

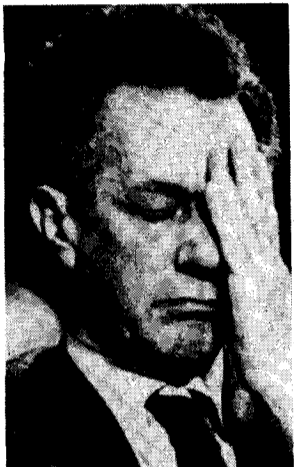
The so-called "improved working methods" contain everything which previous conferences have rejected—local productivity and work measurement studies.

Rather than eliminate what Jackson calls "overtime kings"—

it will put greater pressure on rank and file members to work overtime in order to meet management targets.

## Do "an Edwardes"

The axeman Keith Joseph's threat to breach the GPO letter monopoly and the Post Office's determination to do "an Edwardes" were the main reasons that Jackson advanced the deal for acceptance.



Joseph

It must be remembered that Jackson once stated at a previous conference that he would "sooner have a smaller well paid workforce than a large low paid workforce."

The first amendment, a composite of nine, called for the rejection of the report and was moved by East 3 District Council (Essex) and seconded by London NWDO No. 1 Branch (a member of LDC 3).

Support came from Croydon, Manchester, Burnley,



Jackson

Stroud, Orkney, Warrington, Oxford PHG, London SEDO No. 2 (also a member of LDC 3) Uttoxeter, St Austell and Liverpool.

In a debate that lasted for over two hours, twelve spoke in favour of rejection and 14 in favour of local productivity.

The main argument for rejection, quite rightly, centred around the point that productivity leads to lost jobs and loss of future job opportunity.

Others showed that it was against UPW policy and would have an effect on future pay bargaining.

Jackson in replying to the debate said that those who rejected local productivity had "paraded petty points" and were "doing a grave disservice to members, to a great public service and to the public they served."

Under the deal, he claimed, the overtime kings will suffer while those who do average overtime will benefit by increased pay (through loss of jobs) and more leisure time.

The amendment was defeated by 6,510 to 5,064 on a card vote.

The report was later accepted.

The defeat of the amendment represents a major setback for UPW members and the trade union movement as a whole.

The Post Office is delighted with the decision because it can exercise the maximum pressure on local branches to lose jobs

without compensation, or to join the scheme and still lose jobs.

It will certainly cause divisions among the branches of the UPW, which in turn may make it easier for the Post Office and Jackson to hammer further cutbacks later.

Jackson, in his opening speech to conference on Monday had cried crocodile tears over Tory policy and unemployment reaching 2 million.

But at the same time he spoke of UPW members entering a productivity agreement designed to lose jobs.

Such hypocrisy runs right through the higher echelons of the trade union and Labour movement.

If the Tories want to break the letter monopoly and cream off the profitable sections in the major cities they will do so—productivity or not—unless we are prepared to fight by all out strike action.

The Post Office is to be split, in fact it is already split into two sections.

The Postal side will have to go it alone while the highly profitable telecommunications side will be divorced from the Post Office next year, putting it in an ideal situation for stock market sharks to buy shares to cash in on the rich pickings.

In preparation for the official split the UPW rushed out a special report dealing with "Telecommunications Restruc-

turing" just one week prior to conference.

The debate on this crucial issue took place on Friday morning with delegates only receiving amendments the day before.

The main argument put forward for acceptance of this shabby deal was that it was in the best interests of Telecoms members and it contained a 3½% pay increase from April 1. The pay date is July 1.

Two amendments calling for rejection of the report were withdrawn.

Janice Stone moved the composite, which sought to defer the report "to be the subject of a special telecoms conference to be held not later than November 1980."

The main reason she cited was the rushed nature of the report—which hadn't given branches the time to consider its contents. The question of the 3½% was a carrot which was not acceptable.

The agreement contained 17 commitments and by far the most controversial was the third, which states "to reduction of complement wherever improved efficiency allows this to be achieved without incurring redundancies."

## Rebuffed

The UPW EC was rebuffed however in the final vote which went in favour of referring the issue to a special conference.

# Tories move to hive off docks

A major confrontation with dockworkers at Southampton and the other 18 ports controlled by the British Transport Docks Board [£16.6 million profit in 1979] seems inevitable if the Tories press ahead with their plans to denationalise the most profitable sections by handing them over to private shipping companies.

At present, the plan (the Bill introducing private capital is scheduled for Parliament in July) contains provision for the government to sell up to 49% of its holdings in the BTDB Board which means that the port of Southampton [£7 million profit in 1979] would certainly revert to being owned and controlled by private shipping lines.

Already the TGWU and NUR bureaucracies have been forced to (verbally) declare their intention to fight these far-reaching proposals, with regional secretary J. Ashman (TGWU) warning of "catastrophe for labour relations".

He hinted at industrial

action in defence of this nationalised industry—while Labour MP Robert Mitchell, in condemning the move as a retrograde step, revealed that "... We have spent years developing the present set of industrial relations".

It is of course precisely this same union-management collaboration that has supervised job-slashing, wage-cutting deals throughout BTDB, and transformed Southampton Docks into a haven of strike-free profiteering drawing down the vultures of private capital.

## Militancy

The greatest obstacle to these plans however will be the workforce themselves.

With 72 hours of strikes plus the TUC May 14 stoppage only recently concluded, workers have given notice that they will seek to defend their jobs against rampant Tory attacks.

The newly emerging militancy of the 2000-strong workforce [these strikes were the first for 18 months] threatens to demolish any pretence to 'special labour relations'.

This momentum must be

kept up with demands on TGWU leaders to develop strike action in every section of British Transport Docks with supporting action from the NUR against the Tory plans.

## 250 workers at Vosper Thornycroft's Shipyard in Woolston, Southampton are on unofficial strike.

They walked out on Thursday 22 May when engineering workers refused to implement 'flexibility' agreements.

This is the first walkout concerning the far-reaching Confed. deal imposed without consultation of the workforce.

Production is at a standstill at AC-Delco (General Motors) in Southampton Western Docks. Over 900 workers are laid off due to a pay dispute involving storemen. The factory is one of the biggest engine filter producers in Europe.

# Scottish teachers win support

8,000 Scottish teachers were called out on strike for three days last week by their union, the EIS. They will be out for two more days this week.

The union leadership have stated that these stoppages will continue "indefinitely" until the claim for 18.6% is secured.

This action—unprecedented for Scottish teachers—is transforming many teachers' attitudes towards trade unionism.

## Support

In Glasgow and Lanarkshire especially, teachers organised in strike committees have sought the support of both the general public and the organised labour movement.

In Lanarkshire the steelworkers have pledged their support, paid for rooms for the strike committee in Motherwell Town Hall and helped teachers secure duplicators and

telephones.

In the Springburn area of Glasgow, teachers' representatives have been invited to address the shop stewards' committees at the rail engineering workshops, and have planned a public meeting this Thursday to publicise their case.

The strike has also helped smoke out the right wing in the union leadership.

At a mass meeting in Glasgow last Tuesday, the representative for Albert Secondary denounced EIS Executive member Norman McLeod who has refused even to pay the strike levy!

The speaker called on the EIS leadership to organise a mass picket of the school at which McLeod is headmaster.

That same evening, McLeod announced his resignation from the Executive. He has since been given prime time on the media to attack the policies of his own union.

There will be further escalation of the strike this week following the ballot vote of the

8,000-strong Scottish Secondary Teachers Association to join the strike.

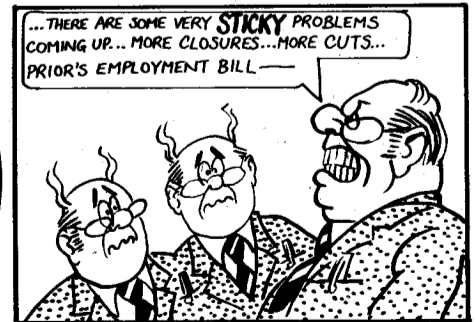
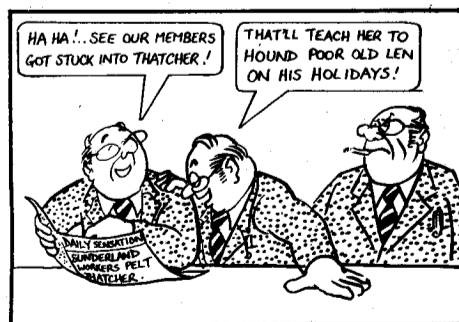
But within the SSTA there are determined anti-strike elements who will have to be challenged by more intensive picketing.

The undoubted steps forward in the fight must not blind teachers to the manoeuvres going on behind the scenes.

John Pollock, EIS General Secretary, is already pressing for a deal along the lines of that secured by the civil service.

This would mean a permanent pay review body, payment of the increase from 1 May instead of 1 April, and more money being "found" by allowing a reduction in the teaching workforce over the next year.

Such wheeling and dealing can only be blocked by a determined extension of the strike and exposure of the schemes being cooked up by the leadership.





# SOCIALIST PRESS



## Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement

AFTER THE STEEL AND BL STRIKES—NEW LEADERS NEEDED!

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# 'LEFTS' COME TO SAVE

# CALLAGHAN —not bury him!

There is no doubt that Saturday's Special Conference of the Labour Party will be a vocal display of unity by both 'left' and right wingers alike.

After all, there is only one resolution—unanimously endorsed by the Party's NEC—and no amendments are allowed.

But the facade of unity will be erected at a time when the Tory offensive is producing major cracks in the Labour bureaucracy.

Saturday's four platform speakers, Jim Callaghan, Eric Heffer, Joan Lester and Tony Benn, will have one simple objective in common: to divert the attention of militants away from the treacherous wage-cutting policies of the last Labour government, away from the necessary mass action to bring down the present Thatcher government and towards a vague package of policies for a Labour government in four years time!

Nobody pretends that the policy resolution before the Special Conference contains anything new.

### Leftovers

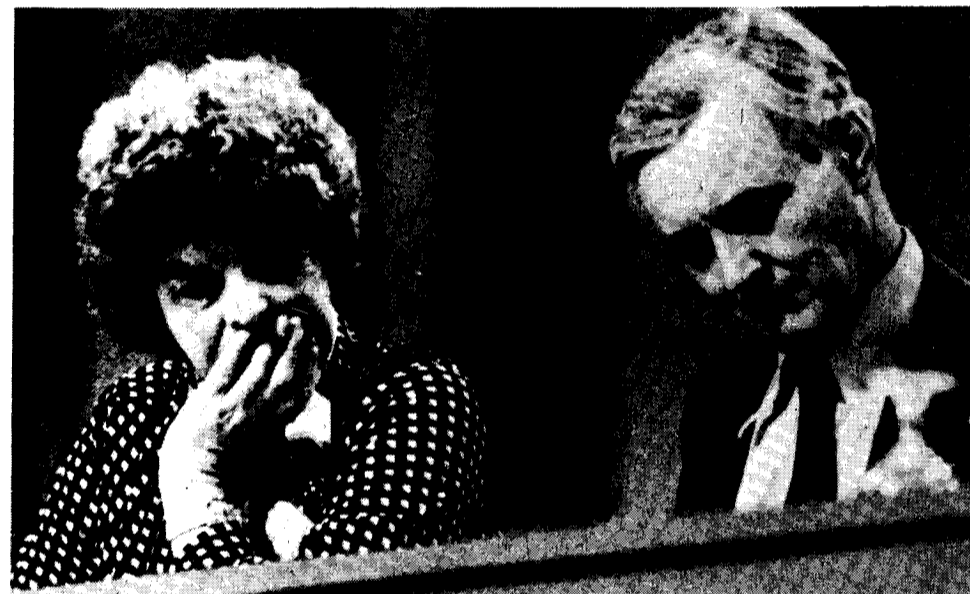
It is a warmed-over pot of reformist left-overs, specifically worded to exclude any commitment to a perspective of a planned socialist economy.

Instead the starting point is the reform and expansion of capitalism—the system that world-wide is plunging into recession, and in Britain has brought record levels of unemployment and inflation.

After five years of mass unemployment under the Wilson and Callaghan governments, the resolution hypocritically proclaims that "the restoration and maintenance of full employment" is "the highest priority for the next Labour government".

After the ignominious collapse of the price controls introduced under Wilson, it pledges once again to introduce "a comprehensive and powerful system of price controls".

While talking gamely of "international agreement" and of peace, the resolution nails its colours to the mast of nationalist trade war and class collaboration with a pledge "not to allow manufactured imports to continue to destroy



"What shall we tell them, Tony"—"Hmmm, never mind, we'll think of something"

our [] industries and jobs."

\*It calls for "extending public ownership and planning the economy", while—with the exception of North Sea Oil and sections "hived off" by the Tories—studiously avoiding any pledge to actually nationalise major industries or the banks. Instead it restricts itself to seeking a "significant public stake—and a degree of control" over various industrial sectors. This amounts to little more than further Callaghan/Wilson-style government: cash handouts to private employers.

\*And in a section headed "Policy for Peace", the resolution, tongue in cheek, condemns the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan with a ringing and hypocritical declaration of "universal respect for the rights of all peoples to self-determination"

—a "universal" respect which of course successive Labour leaderships and governments have refused to extend to the Irish people in their continuing struggle for national liberation.

By avoiding any reference to action over current issues confronting the working class—the cuts; unemployment; the anti-union laws; 22% inflation—the Labour leaders plainly hope to avoid exposing the divisions that now increasingly run through the union bureaucracy.

Last week's tentative move by Tory Chancellor Howe to invite the TUC to discuss a strategy of wage controls produced evidence of these divisions.

While some union leaders—Ray Buckton of ASLEF, Alan Sapper of the ACTT and Ken Gill of TASS—ruled out such

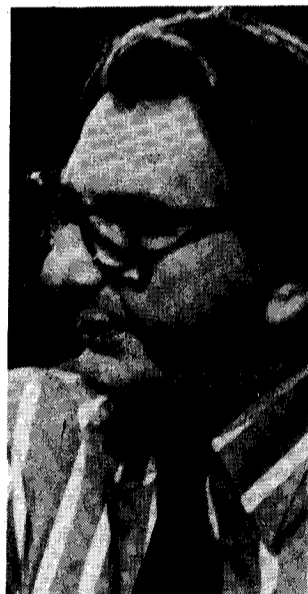
talks, others were more cagey.

Alan Fisher, Moss Evans and Joe Gormley all declared their preference for more all-embracing talks, clearly angling for some new form of social contract.

Electricians' leader Frank Chapple, however, who came under unprecedented attack from other union leaders for his condemnation of the May 14 Day of Action, declared his willingness to talk to Thatcher on any terms.

### Healey

His stand was immediately endorsed by shadow Chancellor Denis Healey, who once again proudly revealed himself an unrepentant supporter of wage controls.



Heffer

There is no doubt that under pressure of the working class such divisions are now also opening up throughout the Labour Party.

Yet sooner than build on this basis a campaign for the removal of the Callaghan-Healey gang and for a socialist programme as the platform from which to fight for action to bring down the Tories, Labour's 'lefts' are scurrying around seeking to "unite" left and right and whip up support for Callaghan's policies!

Saturday's special conference will thus confirm the complete inability of the 'lefts' to offer any real alternative leadership to Labour supporters and the necessity to build a principled leadership in the labour movement as a whole.

Linwood  
jobs  
sacrificed

Another 1,000 jobs at the Talbot plant in Linwood Renfrewshire have been sacrificed on the bloody altar of 'profitability'.

Stewards voted last week not to oppose the latest wave of sackings, which brings the total since December to 2,500, and leaves only a skeleton crew of 2,500 in a plant where once 8,500 were employed.

The question now being raised is obviously "How long before the closure?"

Certainly there is little to suggest that the latest capitulation by the stewards will appease Talbot's Peugeot-Citroen owners.

The strike record of Linwood over the last 18 months is impeccable by any employer's standards—with only one week lost.

Even management admit that there has been substantial speed-up in the last six months.

But with the car industry in crisis and every firm looking for ways of rationalising its production, even the most abject subservience to management is no guarantee of a job.

The only way that jobs can be defended is not through collaboration with the employers, but only through an independent programme of action—plant occupation, supporting strikes and blacking action—to enforce the demand of work sharing on full pay.

# WE NEED YOUR CASH!

If readers of this column have detected an increasingly desperate tone in our appeals for money in recent weeks they are right!

For any operation that is run on a tight budget, 22% inflation inevitably has a crippling effect.

So when we are at the same time fighting to expand our work both nationally through our youth work and our work among women (with the two papers *Red Youth* and *Woman Worker*) and internationally, through the fight to build the Trotskyist

International Liaison Committee, such high levels of inflation make life extremely difficult.

But as a series of important interventions show, this work is central to the building of the WSL and the fight to reconstruct the Fourth International.

Last weekend saw the most successful conference to date of the Socialist Youth League with an extremely capable youth leadership emerging that will be a great asset to the fight for Trotskyism in the coming period.

*Woman Worker* continues to be used centrally in work such as the fight against cuts in social services—and *Woman Worker* supporters played an important role in the Notts nursery conference reported in last week's *Socialist Press*.

### Funds

And this weekend members of the WSL and a number of organisations affiliated to the TILC have been intervening in the Lutte Ouvriere Fete in Paris. But all this work costs

money. Increasing amounts of money. That is why we absolutely have to raise our monthly fund in full and achieve greater progress in tackling the second half of our £3,000 Special Fund.

So far on the May fund we have only £484.70 towards our £750 target—leaving us £265.30 to raise in five days!

Progress on the Special Fund is even slower.

Since Easter when we successfully completed the first half of the £3,000 fund we have only raised a further £342.65, giving us

£1842.65. This leaves £1157.35 to raise by the WSL Summer School at the end of July.

So can we appeal to every reader and supporter to respond to our call. There's important work to be done which we cannot allow to be thwarted purely by a lack of money.

Dig deep into your pockets and see what you can come up with. The address to send your donation is:

Socialist Press Fund, BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX.

## Grain picket

As we go to press, GMWU ladders from building sites all over the country are expected to join a mass picket of the CEB Isle of Grain power station site.

They are protesting against a reactionary agreement by AUEW, TGWU, EETPU and UCATT with management to train 26 scab ladders on the site to fill the jobs of 27 striking GMWU ladders.

Such an open strikebreaking move by the four unions is the most far-reaching response yet by union leaders to a closure threat by management.