

SOCIALIST PRESS



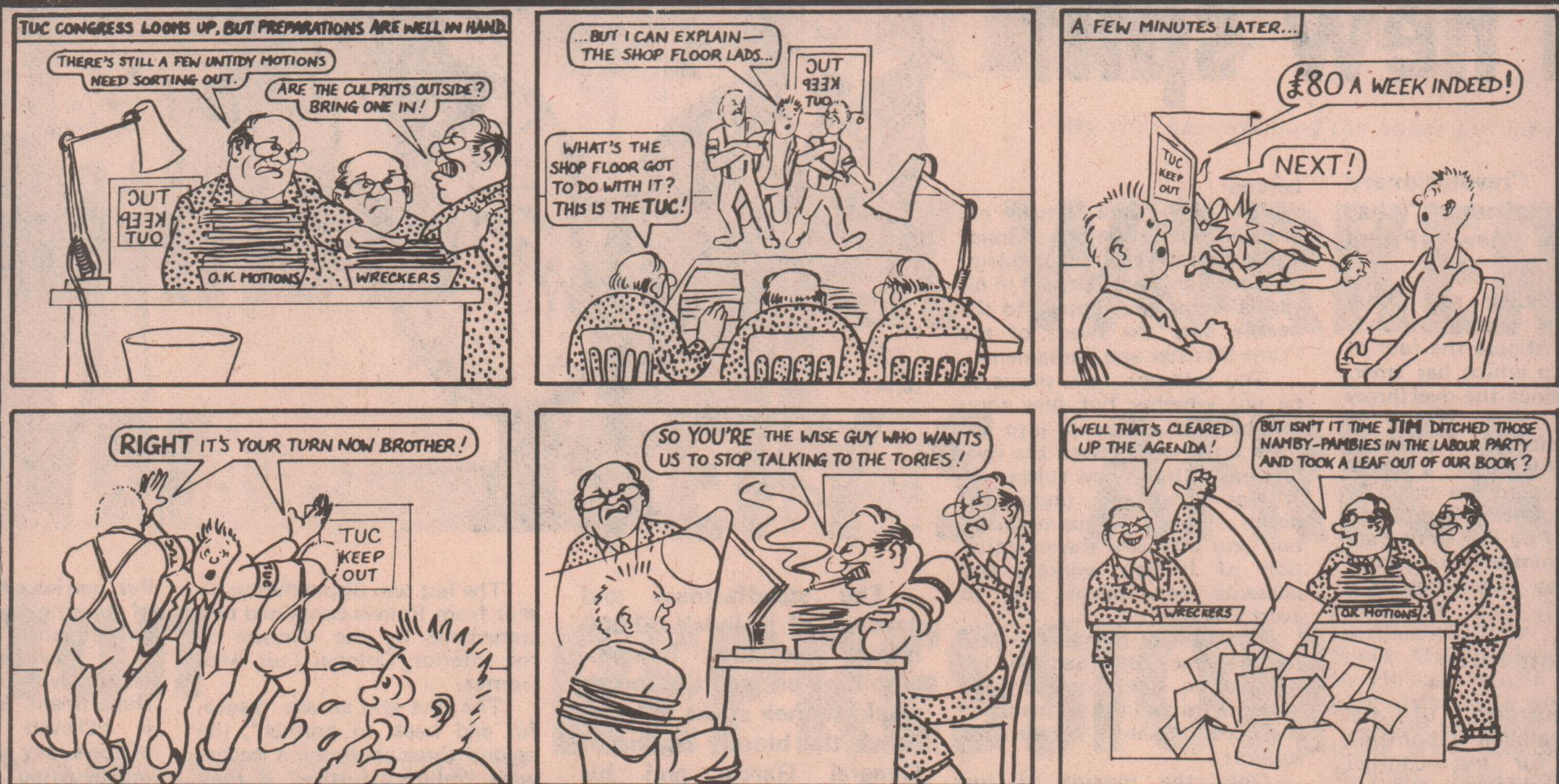
New threat to BL workers Centre pages

Prior's Bill p.8
Bolivia p.2
NF ban Back page

Weekly paper of the Workers Socialist League * No. 210 * 13 August 1980 * 20p

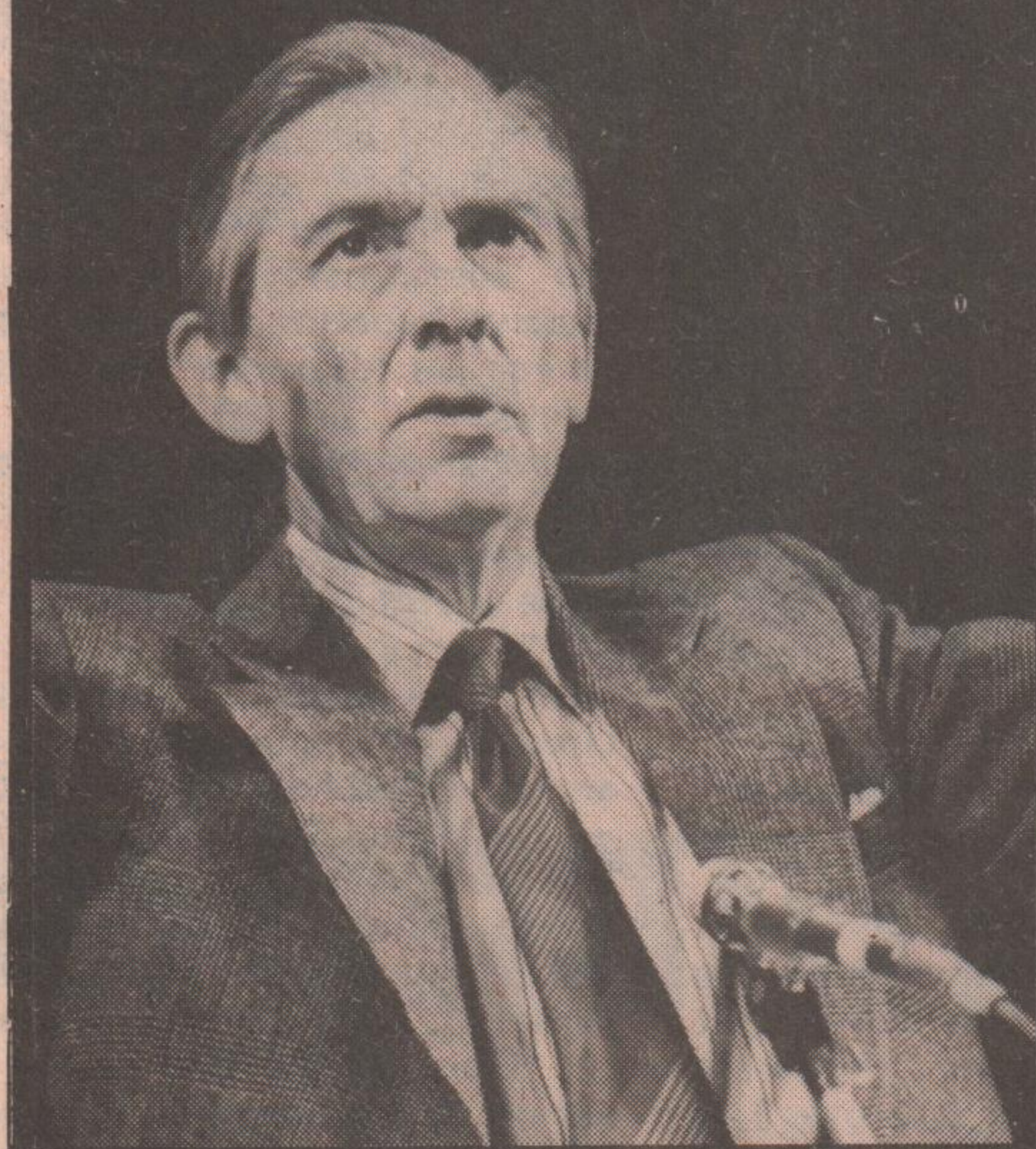
Affiliated to the Trotskyist International Liaison Committee

TUC DISARMS WORKERS:



Socialist Press (5 September 1979) predicted last year's TUC

PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL



A few days after this year's TUC Congress winds up, the Thatcher government's anti-union "Employment Act" comes into force.

It is a savage blow against hard-won trade union rights. It attacks the right to strike; the closed shop; picketing rights; working conditions and trade union democracy.

On top of the formal provisions of the Act, the Tories are to impose "Codes of Practice" which still further restrict union rights.

On picketing, Prior's new Code aims to:

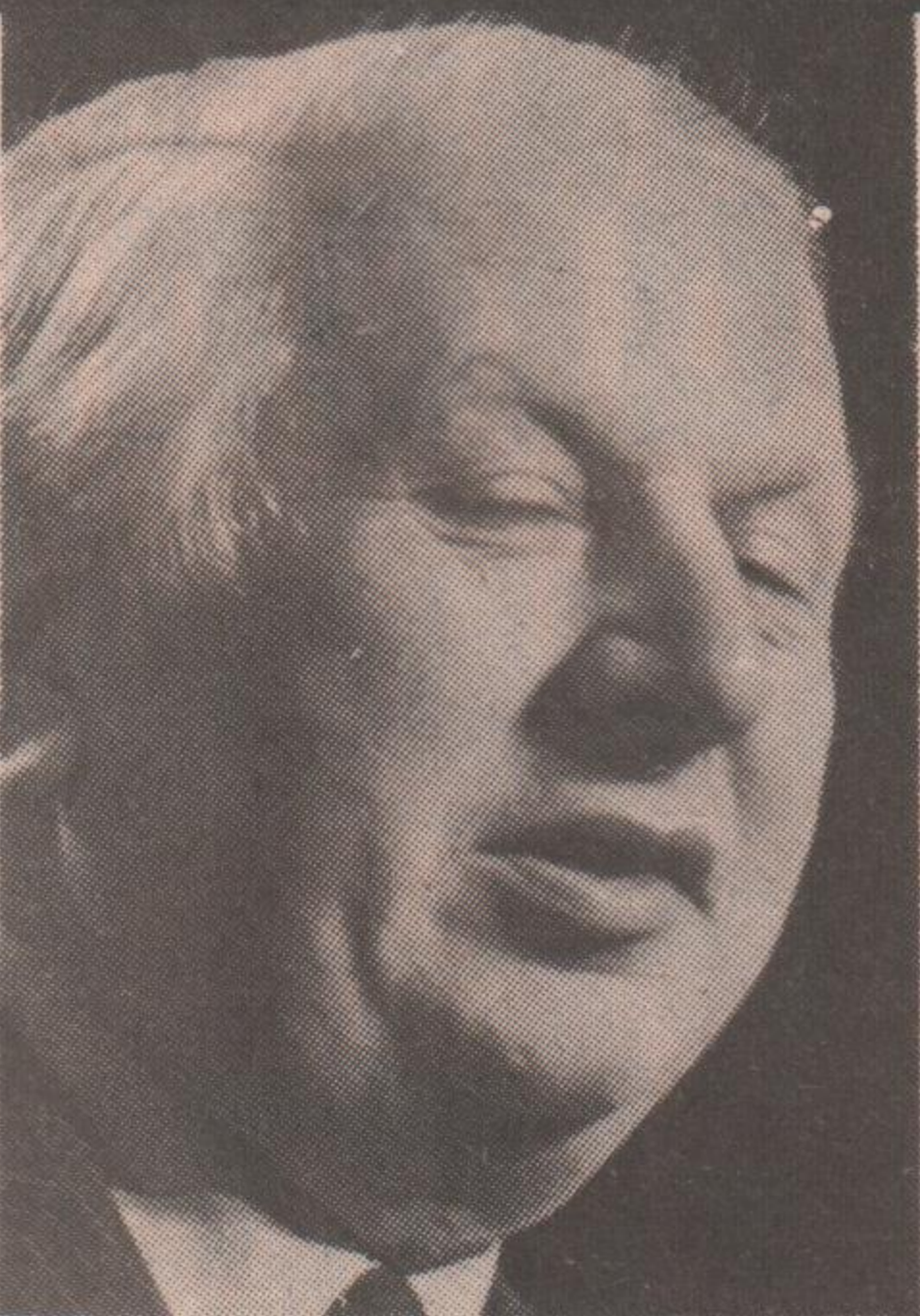
- *Restrict pickets to six in number.
- *Restrict their activity to "seeking to explain their case" to would-be blacklegs.
- *Ensure that each picket line is presided over by a union official with the task of policing his own members.
- *Prevent unions taking disciplinary action against scabs who cross picket lines.

Ballot vote

On the closed shop, the Tories plan not only to make the establishment of new closed shops nigh on impossible—by requiring a secret ballot vote showing 80% in favour of a closed shop before such an agreement is conceded—but also to destroy existing closed shops by calling for a fresh ballot on the issue every few years.

Before long, thousands of workers—whether they are engaging in struggles during this winter's pay round; contemplating strike action or occupations against cuts and closures; or struggling for the unionisation of unorganised sections in order to resist the attacks of the employers—will come face to face with this Tory legislation.

It is a major weapon in the hands of the employers—a scabs' charter designed to sap the mass



Prior

strength of the working class at a time when jobs and living standards are under unprecedented attack.

But what have the union leaders done to oppose these anti-union laws?

A handful of leaflets and stickers have been issued. A Sunday demonstration was called on March 9. A few speeches have been made.

And on May 14 the TUC reluctantly held its 'Day of

Action'—before which union leaders fought alongside the Tory press to restrict the scope of strike action and dissipate the growing anti-Tory militancy within the working class.

The Tories were not fooled for one moment by the empty rhetoric of Len Murray and the TUC leaders.

Afraid of members

They recognised at once that these bureaucrats are much more afraid of the potential strength and independence of their members than they are of any Tory attacks on union rights.

Sooner than lift a finger to defeat Thatcher, the bureaucracy are prepared to see the most fundamental union rights stripped away.

This is why the TUC Congress agenda contains no call for all-out trade union action to defy and defeat the Employment Act and its reactionary provisions.

Instead there are mealy-mouthed statements of "oppos-

ition" to the Act, and calls for a Labour government to repeal it. Only NATSOPA and the NUM even hint at action against the new laws. For other unions it is to be accepted as "the law of the land" until the next Labour government!

But it is not only on trade union rights that the TUC leaders have thrown in the towel.

As the Thatcher government lays waste the social services, health and education, the public sector unions offer not one tangible proposal for action to halt the cuts.

And the entire agenda sports only one resolution against the Tory government. The Bakers' Union calls vaguely for the TUC to:

"give a lead to all affiliated unions and their members by mounting a campaign jointly with the Labour Party against the cuts in social spending and the anti-union legislation. This campaign should clearly aim to bring down the Tory government and bring to office a Labour government pledged to the socialist policies contained in Clause 4—part 4—of the

TORY LAWS ARM EMPLOYERS



Police in action against pickets at Adwest

Labour Party Constitution."

Yet despite the correct call to "bring down the Tory government", this motion gives no clue as to how this is to be done.

Far from calling for the necessary general strike action to defeat Thatcher, the TUC has set its face against even an extension of the protest action it called on May 14.

In a letter to Colin Barnett, secretary of the NW Regional TUC, Murray last week declared

that: "The General Council recently consulted affiliated unions and I must tell you there is little or no support for a repeat of the Day of Action in the near future".

Nor is the TUC content with blocking any national level action: Murray also went out of his way to veto a regional demonstration planned by the NW TUC.

Laughably arguing that he

Continued page 11



Kremlin backing for Bolivian junta?

Iran rulers in new split

Iran's "revolutionary Islamic" parliament has selected a new Prime Minister.

And in doing so it has deepened the gaping wounds which now disfigure the face of the leadership which has emerged in Iran since the overthrow of the Shah.

The selected premier, Mohammed Ali Rajaie, a fundamentalist close to the majority Islamic Republican Party, has been rejected by President Bani Sadr who is himself increasingly denounced by the clergy as a "Westerniser".

Khomeini

The "guardian of the nation", Ayatollah Khomeini, has called for less conflict between the different sections of the regime's leadership.

But there is little doubt that, though he has not attacked Bani Sadr as openly as some of the other religious leaders, his strong sympathies lie with the new Premier and the most fundamentalist wing of the IRP. The hysterical barbarism of this Islamic crusade continues to grow.

Everyday the Islamic courts carry out several executions, sometimes by stoning to death.

The victims of these attacks are of many different kinds.

Everyday some of them are people charged with "moral offences"—prostitution, homosexuality and drug trafficking.

Executions

Others are more directly political. 400 executions are expected of those alleged to be associated with last month's attempted coup against the regime.

It is hard to tell how many other political enemies the mullahs are disposing of in this convenient category; but they have begun to single out some left-wing leaders.

On July 24 Taghi Chahran, leader of a Marxist-Leninist group called Peykar was judicially murdered.

The barbaric inquisition has not yet begun to murder the leaders of the much larger left wing groups, the Islamic Mojahedin and the Fedayin, though public threats against them are becoming more common from leading clergy.

This regime of indiscriminate terror is an essential aspect of Iran's new religious leadership.

Embarrassment

But at the same time they are an embarrassment to President Bani-Sadr and other members of the existing government like Foreign Minister Gotzabeh, who are attempting to construct a regime which looks a bit less barbaric and theocratic.

Gotzabeh, like his predecessor Yazdi and former Prime Minister Bazargan, are already being publicly denounced by the more extreme mullahs.

Bani-Sadr, himself, who has said that some of the executions are unnecessary, cannot be far

behind.

The new Prime Minister has already said that he cannot work with the elected President.

And Bani-Sadr has said in his turn that he may appeal to the people over the heads of the Prime Minister and Parliament.

The question now seems to be not whether but how soon this conflict will erupt into full scale open war between the rival factions of Iran's new rulers.

Not even the undoubted desire of both groups to maintain and intensify the exploitation of Iranian workers and peasants now seems able to avert this fight.

Increasingly marginalised by the theocracy, Bani-Sadr and his friends are likely to turn to imperialism and the remnants of the dead Shah's regime for support.

Only the pursuit of the independent interests of the oppressed and exploited and the fight to break them from reactionary religious leadership can permit the hopes aroused by the fall of the Shah to be fulfilled in the establishment of a workers' and peasants' government in Iran.



Bani-Sadr



The new Junta

The steadfastness and heroism of Bolivia's 50,000 miners and their families, who have entered the fourth week of their strike to bring down the bloody regime of General Garcia and his cohorts, have thrown the military into crisis and made considerable headway in destroying the dictatorship.

Last week a British journalist who was later arrested and expelled, was able to visit the mine of San Jose, isolated from the main complex of Catavi-Siglo XX, where the workforce had retreated down the shafts to continue the stoppage while the bourgeois press had reported a return to work.

"Death to the fascists, long live the strike!" was the response of the miners who, with the aid of the local peasantry have stockpiled food for a siege of months if necessary.

The third week of the dictatorship saw a significant increase in repression, with the cutting of telex communications with the outside world on August 7 in an attempt to forestall press coverage of the carnage.

The last two dispatches to be sent from Bolivia contained two statements by the Minister of the Interior, Colonel Luis Arce Gomez.

The first said all was "peaceful and back to normal"; the second threatened union leaders with "military justice" if they did not order a return to work.

In the last week nearly all foreign journalists have been expelled, two jailed and an almost total censorship imposed—only the rightist El Diario is allowed to publish.

This is principally because of a number of reports which detailed a new schism within the ranks of the military, faced with the enormous social cost of implementing a Chile-style dictatorship—or 'pinochetazo'.

The military commander of the key city of Cochabamba, Col. Vargas Salinas, Minister of Labour under Banzer, has withdrawn his support from the Junta.

A few days later he was followed by General Hugo Echeverria, commander of the motorized division in Santa Cruz, Bolivia's second city and Banzer's stronghold.

Echeverria has pulled his tanks off the streets and refuses to resign, while the powerful La

Paz garrison has forbidden any of its officers to take part in the government.

It may be that Banzer, in harness with the American State Department (which stated that it believed 'more moderate officers may soon take over'), is manoeuvring to oust his pro-Argentine colleagues with a remodelled dictatorship in a desperate effort to provide an alternative to both the crippled 'democratic' opposition and the present butchers who have proved incompetent imitators of his 1971-78 dictatorship.

Any such attempt to renovate the Banzer dictatorship is doomed to fail in the face of massive popular opposition, but it may still be chanced.

Meanwhile, the junta continues to imprison and kill relentlessly. Conservative estimates put the number of those held in the La Paz football stadium and the concentration camp at Viacha at over 2,000.

The prime architect of this 'state of internal war' is Interior Minister Arce.

He was responsible for many of the murders committed by the army on the 'Night of San Juan' massacre of miners in 1967, is a drug trafficker, head of military intelligence for

Natusch and now inquisitor general for the wretched of Garcia.

In the last four days Arce has brought in more help from Argentine military intelligence to "improve military vigilance", purge the army itself, flush out the opposition and refine torture methods.

It has been widely rumoured openly reported and does not seem unlikely that Juan Lechin, president of the COB (TUC), was kicked to death by soldiers after he was forced to make a TV call for resumption of normal work four days after the coup.

Arce would clearly rejoice in Lechin's death but prefers the greater political efficacy of Argentine methods to those of Chile.

Videla himself announced extensive aid for the bankrupt Bolivian economy but the cutting of US aid alone will lose Bolivia \$250 million in two years and with the Andean Pact and the major European states blacking the junta as well as the loss of income from tin sales, the dictatorship will require massive injections of cash if it is to survive for more than a few weeks.

When questioned about this, the new president of the Banco Nacional, Fernando Bedoya, a close friend of Garcia's stated:

"Everyone is going to be with us—Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and Chile—and they will help us".

He added that arms and aid had been offered by Israel and South Africa and that economic assistance had also been proffered by the Soviet Union.

"Gen. Garcia told us not to accept it, but also not to refuse it because if the Carter administration doesn't change its position, we will talk to everybody". (New York Times, 7 August 1980).

If this statement is true, the treachery of Stalinism has reached new depths in actively bolstering counter-revolutionary murder at the very moment that the proletariat is fighting for its very survival, when the life and death struggle against imperialism is at its peak.

CP members

It was several years before Moscow began to sell T-54 tanks to Pinochet or enter into arms agreements with Videla; but in Bolivia there is now the prospect that the counter-revolutionary scum of the Kremlin will aid and encourage the butchering, present and future, even of their own supporters in the Bolivian CP, many of whom, honest workers, have already died in the struggle.

That such vile treason against not only Marxism but also elementary international worker solidarity is well within the capacity of the Kremlin was underlined last week by a visit to Buenos Aires of a senior Stalinist bureaucrat, Yuri Fokin.

Fokin made no mention of Bolivia at all, expressed some concern over Videla's refusal to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, and then went on to state that the Soviet Union was only interested in human rights when there were "massive violations", detailing the cases of Ulster, Palestine and Chile but making no mention of the 20,000 deaths in Argentina since 1976.

What is also remarkable, at least in the short term, about the Kremlin's apparent move is that Hernan Siles' UDP alliance, of which the Muscovite CP is a part, has declared itself a Bolivian 'government in clandestinity' and is calling for recognition by foreign states.

This bourgeois democratic revival still stands to capture the allegiance of many workers, despite the fact that it did so much to disarm them in the face of the coup.

This development makes the struggle for Trotskyist positions and the call for a workers' and peasants' government in the midst of the battle against the dictatorship all the more critical.

Begin grabs Jerusalem

The desperate crisis facing the Begin government in Israel has further intensified in recent weeks.

A government which cannot even name a number of major Ministers and would be hard put to get a majority of one in the Knesset (parliament), has nevertheless supported the grabbing of 'settlements' in the West Bank and the take-over of Jerusalem as 'the eternal capital of Israel'.

The Jerusalem measure was moved by an ultra-right wing member of the Knesset who does not believe Arabs have any right at all to live there, or on the West Bank.

It was carried with the support of the Begin regime—desperate for any measure to whip up 'popular' support, and of the leaders of the 'Labour' opposition, unwilling as usual to resist in any way the most aggressive manifestations of Zionist colonialism.

In this situation in Israeli politics, the main pressure on the regime continues to come

from the extreme right.

The reluctance of the Labour opposition to force the pace against Begin, whom they could probably press into an election with little difficulty, is indicative of the fact that they have no way of dealing with the ultra-Zionists who are running the settlements, and carrying out terrorist attacks on Palestinian leaders.

It is this same pressure which seems to lie behind the article in the *Washington Star* of 7 August claiming that the head of the Israeli secret police—the 'Shin Beth'—was resigning because of Begin's reluctance to proceed against those who bombed and maimed the Palestinian mayors in June.

The author of the *Washington Star* article, David Halevy, in fact holds a leading position in the Israeli army, as do a number of other correspondents in Israel, such as Michael Elkins of the BBC.

It seems inconceivable therefore that Halevy's report did not have its origins in the highest reaches of Israel's rulers.

Halevy even managed to locate the West Bank settlements the failed assassins came from, a judgement not denied by anyone else.

Begin's denial that he blocked the arrest of the terrorists and the secret police chief's denial that he was resigning over this may have been enough to convince ordinary Zionist supporters.

Skillful

There can be no doubt that the skillful Israeli secret police could find the bombers that struck on the West Bank if indeed their membership does not include those involved.

However the task of finding such people is not high on their list of priorities.

Probably of greater importance to them is to pursue the kind of faction fight indicated by the Halevy article, with the possible aim of establishing an even more right wing government under the control of the military.



Begin



INTERNATIONAL

Giscard "makes poverty extinct"

With the elections for the French Presidency looming, current tenant of the Elysee Palace, Giscard D'Estaing has been busily covering all his options.

In a bid to dispel doubts about his interest in the welfare of those members of the French population who don't own a title or play the stock exchange, Giscard has launched a notional campaign to "make poverty extinct".

In a heart rending statement on 28 July he announced, with the traditional lump in his throat, that from January 1 1981 he intended to introduce measures designed to wipe out

the misery of the poor.

To this end he has announced plans to appoint a special Minister of Poverty.

Unfortunately, for those who might be beguiled from afar by such talk, his choice for the post is none other than the present Minister of Employment whose record was to see unemployment rise by 250%!

Having thus played such an extensive role in the creation of poverty, the honorable Minister is obviously an ideal choice.

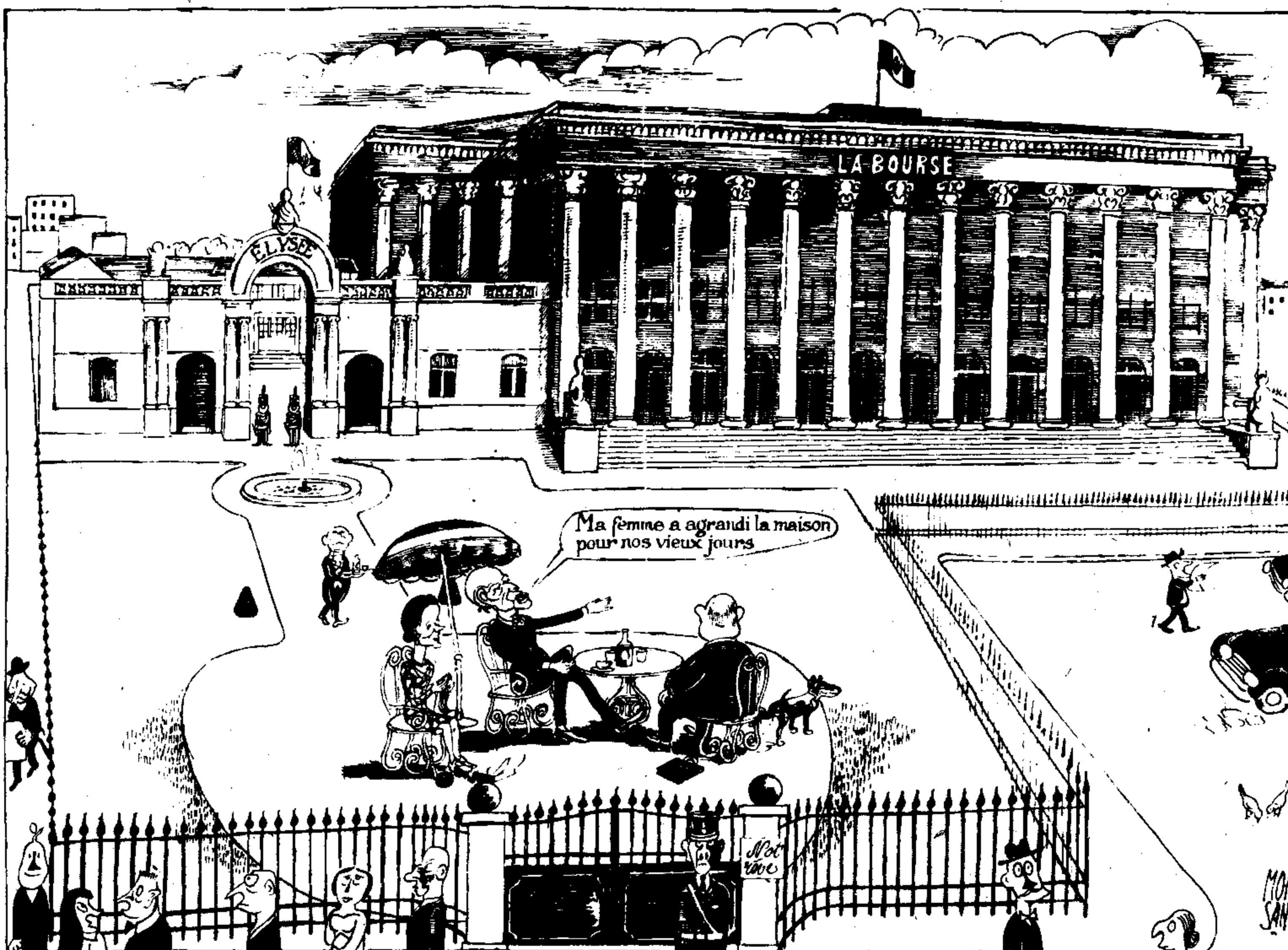
As the French satirical weekly *Le Canard enchaîné* commented in its report 'The poor have really scored this time'.

Meanwhile, back at the Elysee, Giscard and family have

been busy making alternative plans. It has been revealed that, despite protestations to the contrary, Madame d'Estaing-Anne-Aymone has been engaged in a large series of dealings on the French stock exchange, the Bourse.

Using intermediaries through Lazard's Bank she has been involved in over 300 deals in the past year, centring on shares in the Rhone-Poulenc group currently in a major tie up with oil giants Elf and BP.

Of course, no one is suggesting that her inside knowledge of policy has guided such dealings. But, clearly, in the fight against poverty, for Giscard and family charity begins at home.



"My wife has extended the house for our old age"

French Stalinists rethink over Afghanistan

The break of the French Communist Party from its Euro-Communist parties is beginning to have internal repercussions.

Despite the fact that journalists of the CP's paper *L'Humanite* have been constantly present in Kabul it was decided by the secretariat to send a special representative on a 'fact finding' mission to see the Afghan Party leadership.

The results of this can hardly be cheering. In a confidential report to Central Committee members, Claude Gotignon throws a number of spanners into the bureaucratic works of the party machine.

Firstly he concludes that the agrarian reforms implemented by the Stalinist-sponsored Taraki and Amin regimes were essentially authoritarian and military, taking the form of the

enforced distribution of land—without any deeds or titles—by sections of the Afghan army.

This had, he explains, the effect not only of antagonising the Mullahs and feudal landlords, but also of alienating sections of the peasantry who found themselves moved in at gunpoint.

In Kabul itself unemployment is rife with most shops and craftsmen being forced to close down.

Herein lies the source of the unrest in the capital, with no social group identifying their interests with the Kabul party's regime.

According to Gatignon, Karmal, the Afghan party leader, was forced to admit that the legacy of past party policies was so heavy that only a concerted and united stand between the warring factions could offer any hope of a solution to the

internal crisis gripping the country.

Karmal tactfully avoided explaining how such unity could be achieved.

But his Minister of Foreign Affairs did have one piece of unwelcome advice for the French CP.

While welcoming the French Stalinists' support, comrade Dost was careful to stress that from their point of view, and the point of view of Stalinism as a whole, it was essential that the French CP maintained good, friendly relations with the other Western European CPs—all of whom failed to support the Soviet invasion.

The message was clear. "Unity" on a platform of class collaboration is the name of the game.

Back to the Eurocommunist drawing boards, comrades!

BLACK WORKERS DEFY S. AFRICAN REPRESSION

For the third time in recent months workers at the strategically crucial SASOL plants—site of South Africa's massive oil-from-coal energy project—have come out on strike.

These strikers are part of an unfolding mass movement of workers and youth moving forward and asserting their independent strength in struggle throughout the country.

Last month 18,000 black construction workers at the SASOL 3 plant were laid off after taking strike action to demonstrate their hatred for the oppressive material conditions under which they are forced to live and work.

Following the bombing of the SASOL 1 plant in June by guerrillas of the reformist African National Congress, the state sent in the army to bolster the already substantial repressive apparatus in operation at the plants to bludgeon the workers into disciplined submission.

The SASOL plants, one alone of which required capital investments of over £1,000 million, are top secret and security concerns.

Besides the normal apparatus of electronic security fencing continuously patrolled by armed guards with dogs and strict surveillance over everyone



Botha

entering or leaving the complex, the plants have their own special police force.

The workers live on site, crammed together in barrack-like compounds. They are subject to a dusk-to-dawn curfew, repeated on-the-spot strip searches by security guards and perpetual harassment from the armed guards and troops which patrol the compounds at night.

Though the repressive might of the apartheid state is enormous, the revolutionary strength of the working class is mightier by far.

When a worker, Patrick Mtetwa, was shot dead by a security patrol on the night of July 13, workers at SASOL 3 went on a two-day rampage, burning buildings and buses and killing two whites before all 18,000 construction workers came out on strike.

Last week, following a night of violent struggle in which four security guards were attacked by angry workers while police reinforcements used teargas in an attempt to disperse them, 750 construction workers at the SASOL 2 plant demanded higher wages.

The workers, who are not unionised, added their independent strength to their negotiations with management by taking strike action. Within a day they had won a pay rise, which the bosses will not reveal.

While the majority of the workers resumed work, 80 who found the increase unacceptable were sacked.

These strikes are symptomatic of the crisis-ridden apartheid-capitalist system in South Africa and testimony to the growing strength and confidence of the black working class.

Again and again, in the factories, mines, schools and communities, black workers and youth, have demonstrated in practice their determination, combativity and willingness to struggle to the end against the system that oppresses and exploits them.

Obstacle

In the coming period, as more and more workers move into spontaneous struggles in defence of their living standards, the biggest obstacle they face is the crisis of revolutionary leadership.

The petit-bourgeois reformism of the Stalinist-dominated ANC is a noose around the neck of the revolutionary working class.

In an interview in this week's *Newsweek*, Oliver Tambo, the leader-in-exile of the ANC, underlined the path their betrayal would take should they come to power on the backs and blood of the working class. Commenting on the counter-revolutionary process set in motion by Mugabe in Zimbabwe Tambo said:

"Before they (Zanu-PF) took power, the leaders had certain theories of what they would do when in power. But when they did take power, they had to face up to certain realities. This is the way it would be in South Africa".

Intervene

It is only Trotskyists who, basing themselves irreconcilably on the independent interests of the working class and drawing their strength from the courage and initiative of the spontaneous struggles of the class, can provide the political leadership capable of breaking the stranglehold of petit-bourgeois nationalism on the independent strivings of the workers.

And it is only by intervening in the day to day struggles of the workers on the basis of a revolutionary programme which turns their spontaneous struggles against the bosses into the struggle of the whole class against the capitalist system that Trotskyists will demonstrate the necessity for the building of an independent revolutionary party in South Africa (as a section of the reconstructed Fourth International) to lead the struggle for communism.

Fight for solidarity with Bolivian masses

The resistance of the workers and peasants of Bolivia against the Junta is referred to in a separate report in this issue of *Socialist Press*.

Revolutionaries in Britain must now build a campaign to fight for solidarity action in defence of democratic rights in Bolivia.

The development of this campaign will be covered in *Socialist Press*.

As a first step the following resolutions are proposed for raising in trade union branches, particularly the NUM, TGWU and other unions with present and potential links with Bolivian workers.

NUM leaders recently visited Bolivia and had a return delegation from the Bolivian miners' union, the FSTMB.

NUM leaders must translate words into material support.

Transport workers and dockers in the TGWU must take up the call for blacking of all trade with Bolivia in defence of the working class against imperialism.

The export of arms to the Junta and the import of Bolivian tin in particular must be stopped.

RESOLUTIONS FOR UNION BRANCHES.

1) This (trade union branch) deplores the recent military coup in Bolivia and expresses its solidarity with the struggle of the miners, peasants and other workers of Bolivia against the new Junta.

It calls on the union to give maximum material support to this struggle in:

i) blacking of all trade with the Junta and calling on the TUC to organise a full-scale

blacking campaign.

ii) participating in building a national campaign of solidarity;

iii) using all necessary means to ensure that recognition and aid are withheld from the Junta by the British government.

RESOLUTION FOR LABOUR PARTIES

This (Labour Party) deplores the recent military coup in Bolivia and calls on the NEC to support all trade union action in Britain in solidarity with the miners, peasants and other workers of Bolivia in their struggle to overthrow the new Junta. It calls on the NEC to ensure that all necessary means are used to prevent British government recognition of or aid to the Bolivian Junta, and further calls on the NEC to give active support to a national campaign of solidarity in Britain with the Bolivian working class.



South African miners

Housing, hospitals cut to finance more repression

As if they had not suffered enough from sixty years of Tory government, workers in the six counties of Northern Ireland have been singled out for a special round of cuts by the Thatcher government.

In a package of proposals designed to give generous hand-outs to employers, the Tories have slashed over £44 million from public service spending, while awarding an additional £50 million to their big business friends.

The budget of the Department of the Environment is cut by £24 million—over half of it to take the form of cuts in the desperately inadequate housing programme.

£10 million is to be axed from health and social security, in a region where even official statistics show mass poverty and an average of 12.1% unemployment.



£10 million is to be cut from education spending. And the fuel assistance grant paid with supplementary benefit to enable working class families to pay electricity bills is to be scrapped

in November. The cash saved by these savage cutbacks is to be paid out in one way or another to capitalist holdings, in the six counties.

£30 million is to be handed to the electricity board to subsidise its supplies to industry which at present are more expensive than in the UK.

Sports cars

£14 million is to be given to the American De Lorean sports car project—which, at £67 million, is one of the most ludicrously expensive job creation ventures ever dreamed up in Britain, and is in financial crisis before a car is even produced!

£7 million is to go to the Harland and Wolff shipyard.

All in all, £80 million out of the £98 million Tory package takes the form of cash aid to employers.

And to help contain the inevitable further anger these measures will spark in the oppressed nationalist population, the Tories have generously allocated an additional £10 million to the "security services".

But the £10 million boost for the army of occupation and the thugs of the RUC and UDR was not enough to win the sup-



port even of Loyalist leader Ian Paisley, who denounced the plan as doing "little or nothing" to create new jobs.

In reality the impact of the cuts will be to create still more unemployment in the six counties—unemployment which will once again fall largely on the backs of the Catholic working class, though increasingly affecting the Loyalist workers as the recession gathers pace.

Within the confines of the sectarian six county Orange Statelet, dependent upon the military might and economic fortunes of a waning British imperialism, there is no hope of securing the right to a job or decent living standards for the Irish working class, Loyalist or nationalist.

Stranglehold

Only in the context of a break from the stranglehold of imperialist finance capital, and the fight for a planned socialist economy in a united Irish workers' republic could the necessary programme of public works be undertaken that would create new jobs for the mass unemployed, both North and South.

It is in this context that though at present the national struggle is almost exclusively

under the leadership of the republican movement, the working class in the six counties must be mobilised to take the lead in the struggle to drive out the British imperialist troops and assert the right of the Irish people to determine their own political future.

The struggle for this requires the tangible support of the British workers' movement in taking up the demand for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

Lobby the TUC!

A lobby of the TUC Congress at Brighton will be held on Wednesday September 3 by supporters of Tameside Trades Council.

Tameside was disaffiliated by the TUC earlier this year for the "crime" of convening a labour movement conference on Ireland.

Since then over 46 Trades Councils have passed resolutions condemning this decision. Over a third of the delegates at the annual conference of Trades Councils supported Tameside against the TUC.

A body of support is developing that can provide the basis for a fight to overturn the bureaucratic decision made by TUC leaders committed to defence of the role of British imperialism in Ireland, and to Labour's "bi-partisan" policy of collaboration with the Tories on the Irish war.

This is also reflected in the Labour Party with the growing support for the Labour Committee on Ireland and the increased number of resolutions on Ireland tabled at this year's conference.

The lobby will assemble at 12 a.m. at Brighton rail station, and march to the TUC Congress.

There is to be a public meeting 'Tameside and the Fight Ahead' to be held on the same evening at 7.30 p.m. at the Resources Centre, North Road, Brighton.

Socialist Press readers are urged to support this lobby as part of the fight against imperialist oppression in Ireland.

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This new Socialist Press Pamphlet contains articles by Terry Eagleton on marxist theoreticians from the time of the Comintern to the present day—Lukacs, Korsch, Gramsci, Benjamin, Marcuse, Sartre and Althusser.
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Councils bust Heseltine's limits

Arrogant, rich, reactionary and anti-socialist though he may be, Michael Heseltine, the Environment Secretary, is not the darling of the Tory Party at the moment.

He is the Cabinet minister responsible for the virtual destruction of the public sector house-building programme, over the last 15 months, and for a general housing crisis in which an all-party committee now forecasts a shortfall of 500,000 houses by 1985.

Flog off

He is also the man responsible for the Tories' Housing Bill—designed to flog off existing council housing and thus force growing numbers of workers onto the private market to pay ruinous prices for houses or be screwed by rack-renting Tory landlords.

But last week Heseltine only scraped his Bill through the Commons with the collaboration of Shadow Minister Roy Hattersley, and at the expense of an—albeit small—concession on the sale of old people's accommodation.

Fiasco

The Tories would weather this embarrassment better if Heseltine was not also presiding over another fiasco—the dramatic flouting of his instructions by over 200 out of 456 local councils.

Told by Heseltine to cut

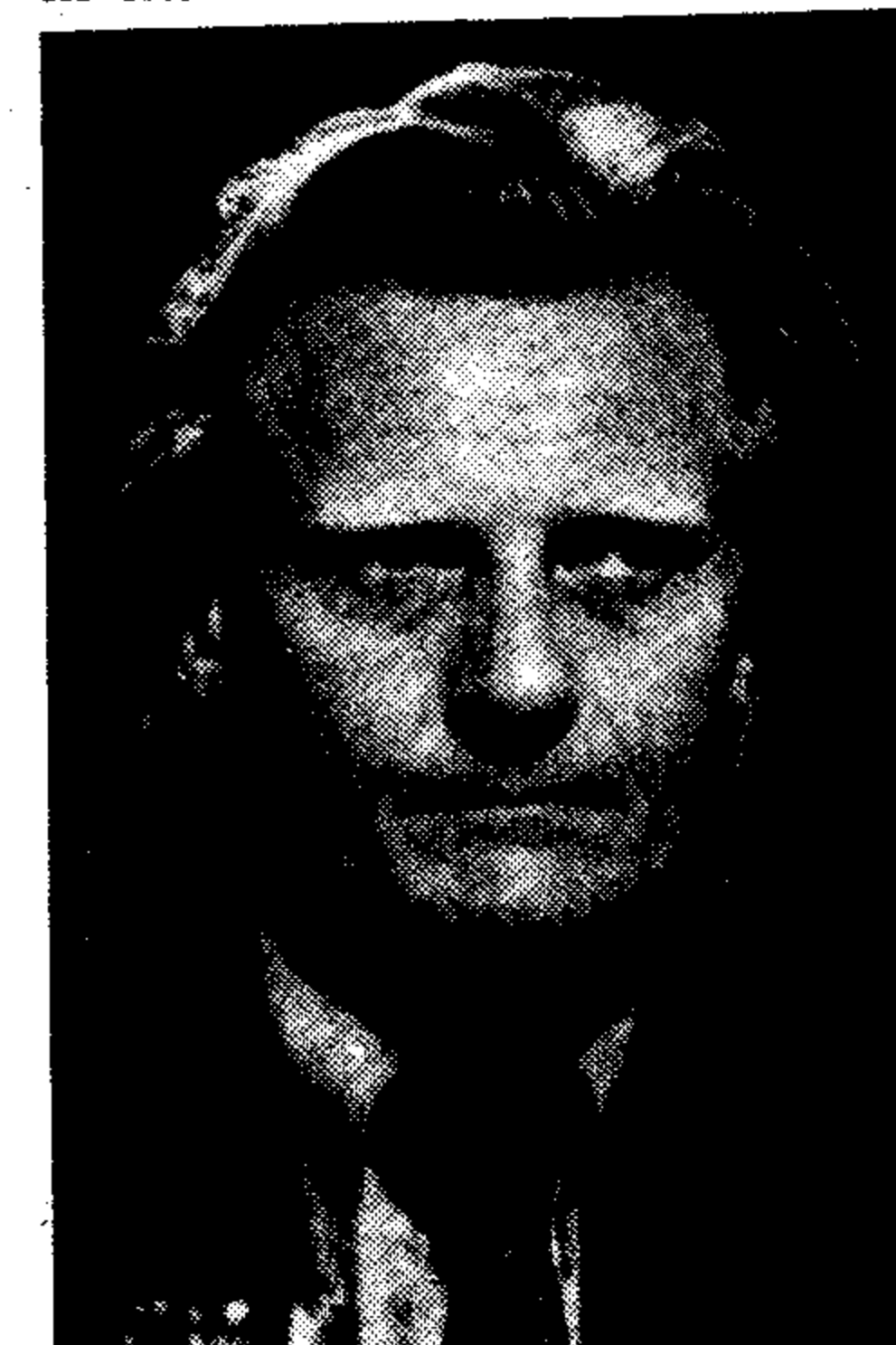
their spending by a further 2% or £700 million on their actual 1978-79 spending, only around 180 councils appear to have done so.

And 75% of those outside the limits are Tory-controlled councils—whose earlier savage cuts had left them with little leeway for further cuts.

Certainly most of the 21 biggest overspenders are Labour controlled London boroughs.

But a question remains: if 145 Tory councils are standing firm against Heseltine's latest cuts, why are not all Labour councils taking a similar stand?

The workers' movement—trade unions and Labour activists—must unite in action to force Labour councillors to defy the Tory cuts, maintain existing services, reject rate or rent increases, and fight for the defeat of the Thatcher government.



Heseltine

PRESS GANG



Preparing for the 'boom'

News that the government intends to spend £45 million on civil defence was greeted with some ridicule in the pages of the newspapers.

The amount was divided. The government after all has advised the public to whitewash the insides of windows to ward off the effects of nuclear war. For £45 million it would not even be possible to buy enough whitewash.

Britain was compared favourably to America (and to the Soviet Union, which has been building nuclear shelters into the basements of new homes since the war. In the case of the Soviet Union this information was supposed to be further evidence of evil intent).

It was not pointed out of course that the £45m will be spent neither on whitewash nor on fall-out centres for the public.

Instead it will be used to build the skeleton (if that is the right word) of a parallel administration which will wield the baton of bourgeois rule after the holocaust.

Nuclear holocausts are 'acts of war' in the language of insurance companies.

Hurricanes on the other

hand are 'acts of God'—(a good description for that savage vortex of wind and rain that blunders blindly in all directions killing indiscriminately).

The population of Central America does not therefore whitewash its windows but flees instead, seeking some building capable of withstanding gusts of 130 mph.

More than 100 people have died in the wake of Hurricane Allen in the United States, Mexico, Jamaica and Cuba.

Tens of thousands have had their homes destroyed.



This did not prevent the Telegraph from having a little fun with the hurricane, ridiculing the naming of hurricanes with male names and asking how anyone could take seriously something called Hurricane Brian.

The London evening papers have been no less parochial.

They saw the real disaster being that of those poor British holidaymakers who had had their holidays ruined.

The horror stories they recounted were of early flights home and half-completed sun tans.

Such insular carlousness is a long known trait of the British press epitomised in the Times headline over a one paragraph story: "Small earthquake in Chile: Few dead".

There is however no level of human misery from which capitalism is too squeamish to make money.

As the constructors and money lenders wait for the hurricane to pass so they can offer their lucrative services towards rebuilding, so do the two-bit companies in Britain which are springing up—even faster than double glazing consultancies—to offer you (for the price of two Caribbean holidays) your very own nuclear fall-out shelter.

Jimmy Reid welcomes Tory 'Enterprise Zone'

Last week was an outstanding one for two of the most opportunist figures in the Scottish labour movement.

Remember James Reid, "hero" of the UCS work-in of 1972, darling then of the Communist Party and the Labour Party left, ex-rector of Glasgow University and fervent expounder of the Sermon on the Mount? Readers may well ask where is he now? We can reliably report that he is alive, well and busily welcoming the establishment of an "enterprise zone" in Clydebank.

In an article in the *Glasgow Herald* last week, Reid praised the government's decision to convert the site of the now redundant Singer factory into a miniature Hong Kong of super-exploitation.

Having betrayed the struggle of the Clydeside shipyard

workers in 1972 with the farcical "work-in" policy (also advocated by his fellow CP members James Airlie and Sammy Barr), Reid then jumped into the fold of the Labour Party.

After standing unsuccessfully for Parliament at the last General Election (failing to unseat Gordon Wilson in Dundee) he then gave up his job as a shipyard worker to occupy his time writing a column for the arch-Tory *Glasgow Herald* in which he now expounds his reactionary views.

The point being reached where he can now advocate Tory industrial policies which have been rejected by even the most timid reformists, the question must be, where does James Reid go next?

No doubt in the same direction as Keir Bloomer, leading figure in the EIS, Scotland's

biggest teachers' union. Bloomer went on record last week as being in favour of the closure of two of Scotland's teacher training colleges, Callender Park in Falkirk and Hamilton in Lanarkshire.

Herein he finds himself in total agreement with George Younger, the Tory Secretary of State for Scotland, who announced the closures in a written statement last week.

Interestingly, Craigie College, which was also under threat, has been reprieved; this may have something to do with it being within Younger's own constituency.

It might be imagined that Bloomer who is, after all, the union's chief negotiator on salaries and conditions, including those of many college lecturers, would be interested in opposing the closure of these colleges.

Perish the thought! Mr

Bloomer wears many hats. In one capacity he may be a union negotiator, but in another he is a leading figure on the General Teaching Council which adjudicates on the suitability of Scottish teachers, and in that capacity, he has frequently advocated college closures.

Fewer colleges

Falling school rolls, he reasons, can only mean less teachers and therefore fewer colleges. In this he is certainly consistent for he also fiercely opposes any attempt to make reduction of class sizes a priority in union negotiations.

It was a bad week for the Scottish working class with mounting unemployment, rising prices and further cuts in their social services.

But it was a good week for the opportunists.



Reid

Making nuclear war "thinkable"

As he enters what promises to be the death-throes of his miserable Presidency, Jimmy Carter has made further moves to appease the extreme reactionary forces who have thrown their weight behind Ronald Reagan's Cold War candidacy.

Not only has Carter taken the first steps towards reintroducing conscription for American youth; massively increased the US arms budget;

and openly threatened to use military force to preserve imperialist control in the Middle East and other strategic areas; he has now signed Directive 59, which fundamentally changes US military perspectives.

As a result of this, the fire power of the gigantic US nuclear arsenal will be targeted to a much greater extent on Soviet military targets—missile emplacements, command bunkers, troop concentrations and transport centres.

In other worlds the prospect

is opened up of a future attempt at a limited American nuclear strike against the USSR, stopping short of the traditional concept of Mutually Assured Destruction which has been the basis of strategy on both sides since a virtual balance was achieved in the 1960s.

With trigger-happy Cold War generals in the Pentagon longing for an opportunity to put their billions of dollars worth of nuclear hardware to destructive use, this shift of policy by Carter opens up a far greater danger of nuclear war.



Carter

It is precisely such generals and imperialist chiefs who stand eagerly behind the shoulder of geriatric reactionary Ronald Reagan, the most likely next US President.

An insight into the way such right wingers want to use the nuclear weapons at their disposal is offered by the revelation of secret papers of Harry S. Truman, US President during the height of the Korean War.

Stung by the military defeats inflicted on the imperialist UN ground forces—in particular the repulse by Chinese troops of



Reagan

General MacArthur's attempted crossing of the Yalu river in 1950—Truman looked to the growing US nuclear arsenal to compensate.

In a note in his private journal in January 1952 he wrote:

"It seems to me that the proper approach now would be an ultimatum with a 10-day expiration limit. Informing Moscow that we intend to blockade the China coast from the Korean border to Indo-China, and that we intend to destroy every military base in Manchuria, including submarine bases, by means now in our control—and if there is further interference we shall eliminate any ports or cities necessary to accomplish our peaceful purposes.

"This means all-out war. It means that Moscow, St. Petersburg, Mukden, Vladivostok, Peking, Shanghai, Port Arthur, Dairen, Odessa, Stalingrad and every manufacturing plant in the Soviet Union will be eliminated.

"This is the final chance for the Soviet Government to decide whether it desires to survive or not."

Truman of course had been the man who ordered the dropping of nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945—not so much to crush an already defeated Japanese imperialism, as to threaten the Soviet bureaucracy with the new destructive force now in the hands of American capital.

Attack

The frenzied US military build up with Truman's Cold War period was clearly seen by the imperialists as a means of waging a renewed drive for the "liberation" of the Eastern European buffer states from Kremlin control and an attack on the nationalised property relations of the USSR itself.

There is no doubt whatever that in the Cold War of 1980, both US and British imperialists are again seeking to secure a military superiority over the

Soviet Union and the deformed workers' states of Europe, Asia and Cuba.

Meanwhile the immense cost of such programmes—\$60 billion for the American MX missile system; £10 billion for the British "Trident" submarine missiles—is being inflicted on the working class in the form of cuts in social services, health and education as military budgets soar upwards.

In countering such aggressive moves, the Soviet bureaucracy is not engaging in an arbitrary "arms race" (as the pacifists would have us believe). It is taking vital steps to defend workers' states against the material threat posed by imperialism.

This is why the Labour Party's call for "multilateral mutual disarmament" is both a vain hope and a reactionary diversion from the task of defeating the imperialist offensive, which requires the struggle for the unilateral disarmament of the imperialist powers, and the unconditional defence of the Soviet Union from attack.

Opposed struggles

Yet such defence cannot rest simply on modern weaponry and vast armies. The imperialist threat to the USSR has been increased many times over by the reactionary politics of the Kremlin bureaucrats, who, in seeking to strike a world-wide deal with imperialism, have consistently opposed struggles by workers in the post war period to overthrow imperialist governments.

Neither the politics of Stalinist "peaceful coexistence" peddled by the Communist Parties, nor the utopian schemas of the reformists and pacifists can offer a way forward for the working class in the struggle against imperialist war.

A revolutionary leadership is needed, committed to the independent struggle of the working class to overthrow its imperialist rulers and the Stalinist bureaucracies in the deformed workers' states.



Devastation in Hiroshima, 1945

TGWU funds pay for new



BL workers march in defence of Derek Robinson



Grenville Hawley

EVANS & DUFFY GANG AGAINST BL WORKERS

A reformist trade union leader, as every class-conscious worker knows, is one who accepts that capitalism is necessary (in many cases thinks it is desirable) and sees his or her job as attempting to obtain a few concessions within the system—providing the system itself is not threatened and his or her own privileged position within it is maintained.

This political position lies behind the numerous betrayals which the leadership foist on the working class, particularly in a period of severe economic crisis.

Nowhere are such betrayals more clear than in British Leyland where reformist leaders face the issue most difficult for them—the crisis of profitability of the Company.

Acquiesce

It is of course not new for trade union leaders to acquiesce to closures or redundancies. It is not new for them to do behind-the-scenes deals and to sell out struggles.

What was new in BL when the Edwardes plan was announced last September was that the leadership of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions (the CSEU) actually supported the closure of the 13 plants and 25,000 redundancies.

They actively argued that it was necessary, and railroaded the plan through the shop stewards movement.

They were themselves responsible for ensuring that the plan was accepted by organising

the infamous secret ballot jointly with the management. They recommended the 90,000 workforce to vote 25,000 threatened people out of a job.

Not surprisingly, this collusion, and the confusion it created, resulted in a 7-1 vote in favour of the plan.

Robinson

This vote was quickly turned to full advantage by management who sacked Derek Robinson with the help of the right wing of the AUEW and the Communist Party—in this way seeking further to intimidate and discipline the BL workforce.

The "left wing" of the trade union movement, represented by the TGWU at the time, took an outwardly more militant line.

They loudly opposed the Edwardes plan. But at the same time they refused to do anything about it, preferring to hide behind the decisions of the Confed—in which they were a minority rather than using the weight of their majority membership position in BL.

They, of course, had no alternative policies to offer any way other than their standard appeals to the government for more investment and for the reactionary, nationalist policy of import controls.

Profitability

But Moss Evans still had a problem. Management were saying they were bankrupt.

After all, if the profitability simply was not there, and the market share was still falling, how could you force BL to continue to employ 25,000 workers that it didn't need?

Faced with a classical

capitalist problem, and devoid of any socialist solution, Evans turned for advice to the capitalists themselves.

He decided to commission a Paris-based group of capitalists—Euro Finance Ltd—to produce a study of BL and to advise the TGWU on what its policy should be!

Accordingly on the basis of the very substantial fee paid to them by the TGWU, Euro Finance Ltd produced a lengthy report. It said that the major problems which BL has is the refusal of the TGWU to give wholehearted support to the Edwardes plan!

The report of course did not put its conclusions in terms as clear as that. They were couched in a mask of objectivity but behind this was their clear class position.

Partnership

The report 'assessed' the various options open to BL, and concluded that the best option for BL would be a partnership with another manufacturer with whom they would pool development costs—probably Honda.

The report criticises the Edwardes plan but then goes on to say that there is no point in even discussing various options to the Edwardes plan unless BL is going to survive—and it will only do that if the Edwardes plan is supported or management persuaded by force of argument to change it!

In any event the main point is to support the management. The report puts it in this way:

"At BL Cars in particular, the period 1980-83 will be critical. Depending on their force, short term shocks to BL Cars during 1980-83 could

trigger collapse of the business, although more probable would be further sharp reductions in the fixed cost base, i.e. plant closures, investment cuts and manpower reductions".

Later on it explains: "Support for measures to limit BL's exposure to short-term shocks is tantamount to support for the BL 1980 plan". (The Edwardes plan.)

Advice

The report concludes by giving its advice to the TGWU:

"From the confusion of the current situation, it seems to us that the TGWU should focus on the questions of limiting BL's exposure to short term shocks and the crucially important LC10 programme. (...)

This is not meant to imply that everything be surrendered to short-term exigencies and the LC10 programme. But it may mean having to face both ways at once!!

This is because the hard questions about BL Cars future under the 1980 plan will not go away, however much short term support the Company can muster, and however smoothly the LC10 programme is kept rolling.

But there will not be any hard questions about BL Cars manufacturing future if LC10 fails to meet plan targets".

Well, it is certainly not necessary for Euro Finance to explain to the leadership of the TGWU how to face both ways at once.

They are past masters at the exercise.

But what this conclusion to the report means is that Moss Evans has expended a large sum of union funds simply to be

told what BL management have never ceased to say—if you don't knuckle under, BL will close down and throw you all out of a job.

It didn't need thousands of pounds to get that answer. Edwardes would have told them for nothing as he has done thousands of times in the past.

The report, however, had a very big effect on the TGWU leadership.

At the June meeting of the General Executive Council it was decided to continue opposition to the Edwardes plan:

"until such times as senior stewards have had an opportunity to assess the contents of the report".

In other words they will end their opposition as soon as they can get it organised.

When the senior stewards met shortly afterwards they were handed a document which claimed that the Euro Finance report "substantially supports" the views of the TGWU on the Edwardes plan.

This is rather bizarre, since the report advocated that the Edwardes plan be supported in the absence of an alternative acceptable to the Company!

Working group

The document proposed that a "small working group" be set up to draw up a plan for BL.

"Euro Finance have sketched in the background", it explained, "a small working group could put the flesh on these bones and return within a month with a reasoned argument which would engage the confidence of all those involved".

What is needed, argues the document, is:

"a consensus on the way

forward" and a "declaration of intent" by the TGWU, by BL and by the government.

In other words, the years of 'participation' under the Labour government and Ryder, which did so much damage to the trade union movement within BL, are to be replaced by a joint "declaration of intent" with Thatcher's Tory government, designed to keep the factories running at all costs.

"Three years peace"

Any doubt about the seriousness of this turn or the support it will get from the increasingly bureaucratized convenors, was dispelled by the statement made to the press by Grenville Hawley, TGWU Automotive Group National Secretary, when he emerged from the convenors' meeting.

It was necessary to have "three years peace" at BL declared. He thought this would be accepted because "there has not been a militant voice raised at the meeting".

The TGWU report that has been produced accepts the Euro Finance report in almost its entirety.

The exception is on import controls. Euro Finance makes the case for import controls but also point out the contradictions—particularly BL's intention to become the spearhead of Honda penetration into the European market through the Bounty.

But apart from this—which the TGWU report simply ignores—there is complete agreement.

In fact the TGWU report is scissors and paste job—clippings from Euro Finance and sections produced by the TGWU research department.

bosses' report on Leyland



UP

By Bill Peters

Mirror Every month's quality month in the Mirror

No 46 September 15th 1978

A message from Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon

KEEP WORKING!

Car chief urges: Think of the other 120,000 people in the Group

UNION CHIEFS Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon today make a dramatic appeal to every employee in British Leyland to remain at work and refuse the proposed dispute procedure "whatever difficulties exist or may arise."

The two men, who are the most prominent figures in the Leyland union, are speaking at a press conference in London. They are flanked by other union leaders.

Great experiment The Leyland Mirror is a new experiment in journalism. It is a monthly quality month in the Mirror.

Selling at a loss The Leyland Mirror is a new experiment in journalism. It is a monthly quality month in the Mirror.

TURN TO BACK PAGE

It amounts to 40 pages of crass comment about the car industry designed to cover up a very deadly sting in the tail.

Like Euro Finance it calls for a partnership with another company and for more investment into BL.

But whereas Euro Finance call for three years of peace and say that any sharp shock would finish the company, the TGWU actually makes it much more specific.

In the key section they call for government funding of £1,532 million by 1985. In return for this they make the following proposals:

- 1. "It would be the height of folly to embark on the committal of resources on this scale unless other measures were taken to ensure at least some guarantee of success.
- 2. We see there being five major inter-related areas that have to be envisaged:
 1. drastic but selective controls over imports
 2. declared movement towards a full scale partnership
 3. substantial revitalisation of engineering resources
 4. continuity of physical output
 5. adequate investment
- 3. All five points have to be taken together as they embrace the short term objective of establishing the viability of the Cars division and the medium term objective of forming part of a two million unit/annum combine.
- 4. Beyond that time scale, 1995-2000, the issues are rather speculative. All the points are now examined in some detail".

The key to it all, of course, is "continuity of physical output". This is as near as you can get to a no-strike clause.

The notorious issue of Leyland Mirror

It is the logic of the Ryder report—that the interests (or survival) of the Company comes first—put down in writing in a document compiled by the major union in the car industry.

This is *exactly* the argument used time and time again by Terry Duffy.

It was the reason Duffy and the Confed accepted the Edwardes plan in the first place (and collaborated in the sacking of Robinson).

In the words of Alex Ferry (Duffy's man in the leadership of the Confed):

"Michael Edwardes gave us a look over the precipice and we didn't like what we saw".

Exactly the same argument was used by Duffy when he urged acceptance of the 5% offer and 92 pages of strings.

And it was *exactly* the argument used by Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon to force in the Ryder plan and the collaborationist "participation" committees which did so much damage to the shop floor movement in BL.

At that time we had Jones and Scanlon on the front page of the *Leyland Mirror* saying—**KEEP WORKING!**

In BL the Jones/Scanlon right wing axis of 1976-78 has now been replaced by the Evans/Duffy axis of 1980.

The logic of reformism is inexorable. Moss Evans seemed verbally far away from Terry Duffy.

He took different positions on Labour Party reform. He seemed far away from Duffy in the Ford strike and the lorry drivers' strike—both issues where the question of capitalist profitability did not appear to be so clearly posed.

Involved

But once Evans became personally involved in BL things were quickly different.

His spectacular collapse last April during the strike in the Midlands plants over the imposition of the 5% wage offer and 92 pages of strings was the key turning point.

No doubt Edwardes gave Evans a quick look over the same precipice that had given Alex Ferry vertigo six months earlier.

When the chips were down, the left and the right came together in defence of capitalism.

Evans' problem of course will be getting his document accepted by the management—despite the inducement of a no-strike clause.

For the government, the additional finance called for will be unacceptable. But this does not make the document any less dangerous.

Not influenced

A committee comprised of national officials who could not be influenced in any way by the shopfloor was set up, with powers to override the JNC.

It quickly used these powers to sign a highly controversial procedural agreement over the heads of the BL workforce which effectively crushed any opposition to the new five grade structure forced in by management.

Whilst TGWU officials and leading convenors have been drawing up the document and giving away the right to strike, *nothing* has been done to reconstitute the JNC in order to clear the way for wage negotiations to begin.

They have completely ignored the campaign waged in some plants for a democratic representative JNC to be set up based on a representative conference of BL workers.

In the Cowley Assembly Plant workers signed a mass petition on these lines and copies were sent to every level of the TGWU inside and outside of BL—but no response has been forthcoming.

Edwardes meanwhile has been far from complacent. He has called for the JNC to be permanently replaced by a committee comprised solely of national officials, and has sent proposals on these lines to the general secretaries of the unions concerned.

He has also made the major tactical move of withdrawing BL from the Engineering Employers Federation from 1 August 1980.

The implications of this are far-reaching for BL workers.

From 1 August all agreements negotiated with the Federation covering minimum rates, premium payments, holidays and hours of work will cease to exist.

Yet not a word has reached the shop floor from the unions. They have been too busy trying to solve the company's profitability problems at the expense of their members.

It is obvious that another major attack on BL workers is in the offing.

Edwardes will use the crisis in the industry and his withdrawal from the Federation to launch another vicious package against BL workers in reply to the review.

The Combine Committee has not met since Derek Robinson was sacked. Its first meeting since that time is scheduled for Wednesday of this week.

It is crucial that the committee takes the decision to reject all capitalist "solutions" to the problems of BL workers.

It must tackle the question of democratic representation of BL workers on a reconstituted JNC. The Cowley Assembly Plant has placed this on the agenda and it is crucial it is supported.

There is no reformist answer to this attack. The problems of BL are the problems of capitalism which is in acute economic crisis on a world scale.

Workers are not the cause of this crisis. They have no influence over it and no responsibility towards it.

Their only answer can be to defend their independent interests *against* the interests of capitalism.

That means not selling the right to strike but *exercising* it.

It means using the strength of the trade union movement to stop the closures and redundancies now.

***Work sharing on full pay!**

***Open the books of BL and its suppliers and distributors to an elected committee of rank and file trade unionists!**

***For a nationalised, integrated, automotive and components industry.**

***For a democratic, fully representative, negotiating committee elected at a delegate conference.**

***For a wage claim to re-establish the standard of living of BL workers and a sliding scale of wages to protect the new rates against inflation.**

Demonstration against the Edwardes plan

Whether or not the document becomes formally accepted, the "declaration of intent" spells out the attitude of the TGWU leadership.

It says clearly that the problems of the management are more important than even the most basic trade union principles.

The point will not be lost on Edwardes or the government.

Secondly the document is immediately damaging to the struggle for the wage review. It provokes discussion about the viability of the Company at just the point when all attention should be turned towards the negotiations due to begin for the November wage review.

But the document is not the only problem the workers face—although it is the most far-reaching.

When the bargaining structure in BL is taken into account it can be seen that BL workers are in a very difficult position indeed.

The fact is that since corporate bargaining was introduced 18 months ago BL workers have had no means of expressing their collective view except through a highly bureaucratized Joint Negotiating Committee—which had no powers to call strike action even if its decisions could have been influenced by the shop floor.

Last April even this body was virtually disbanded after it supported the strike in the Midlands plant.

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**Since this article was completed more information has become available on the 'reconstitution' of the JNC. It appears that the Confed has met and considered two proposals—one from the TGWU calling for proportional representation, and one from Michael Edwardes, calling for more national officers and fewer convenors.*

The JNC met last Friday but nothing was resolved. No further moves towards 'reconstitution' will now take place until August 27. Meanwhile there is no JNC and therefore no means of negotiating wages.

Prior's anti-union law: ATTACK ON WORKING CONDITIONS

Part three of a series by Jack Burnett

While the main thrust of Prior's anti-union Employment Bill is to weaken the labour movement in future battles with capital, he has also taken a little time off to deliver a few blows against the present conditions of the working class.

James Prior's right hand man in the House of Lords, the Earl of Gowrie explained the rationale for these attacks when he criticised Parliament for having in the past passed legislation that had:

"accustomed the electorate to a greater degree of mental and physical comfort than our national situation allows".

A state of affairs that the present government are energetically reversing!

Reverse

Here the attack is to reverse the most paltry and inadequate of gains made in recent years.

Only four years ago there was no statutory protection of pregnant women's jobs. Before 1976, maternity rights depended on individual agreements, and how seriously the well-organised sections of the labour movement thought of women's rights is well expressed in the national agreement in engineering that covers 400,000 women workers and had absolutely nothing to say on maternity leave or pay.

The Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act of 1978 conceded that a woman with two years continuous employment in the same job has a right to return within 29 weeks of the birth of her baby to:

"the job in which she was employed under the original contract of employment and on terms and conditions not less favourable than those which would have been applicable to her if she had not been so absent".

Like all parliamentary legislation even when passed under popular pressure the form is granted while the content of such social reform is limited.

Exclude

The restrictions like the two year qualifying period will effectively exclude many women from "enjoying" this legislation, for many women of child bearing age will have entered employment quite recently and therefore won't qualify and many others will have gone from one employer to another and consequently debarred themselves from the Act's provisions.

But while the neutral civil servants of social democratic governments frame legislation in such a way as to exclude many of those it is intended to benefit, the Tories come along to clobber the remainder that managed to jump through the restrictive hoops.

Prior's law will now demand of women who meet all the above requirements that they will still forfeit their rights unless they rigidly comply with a whole new set of bureaucratic obstructions.

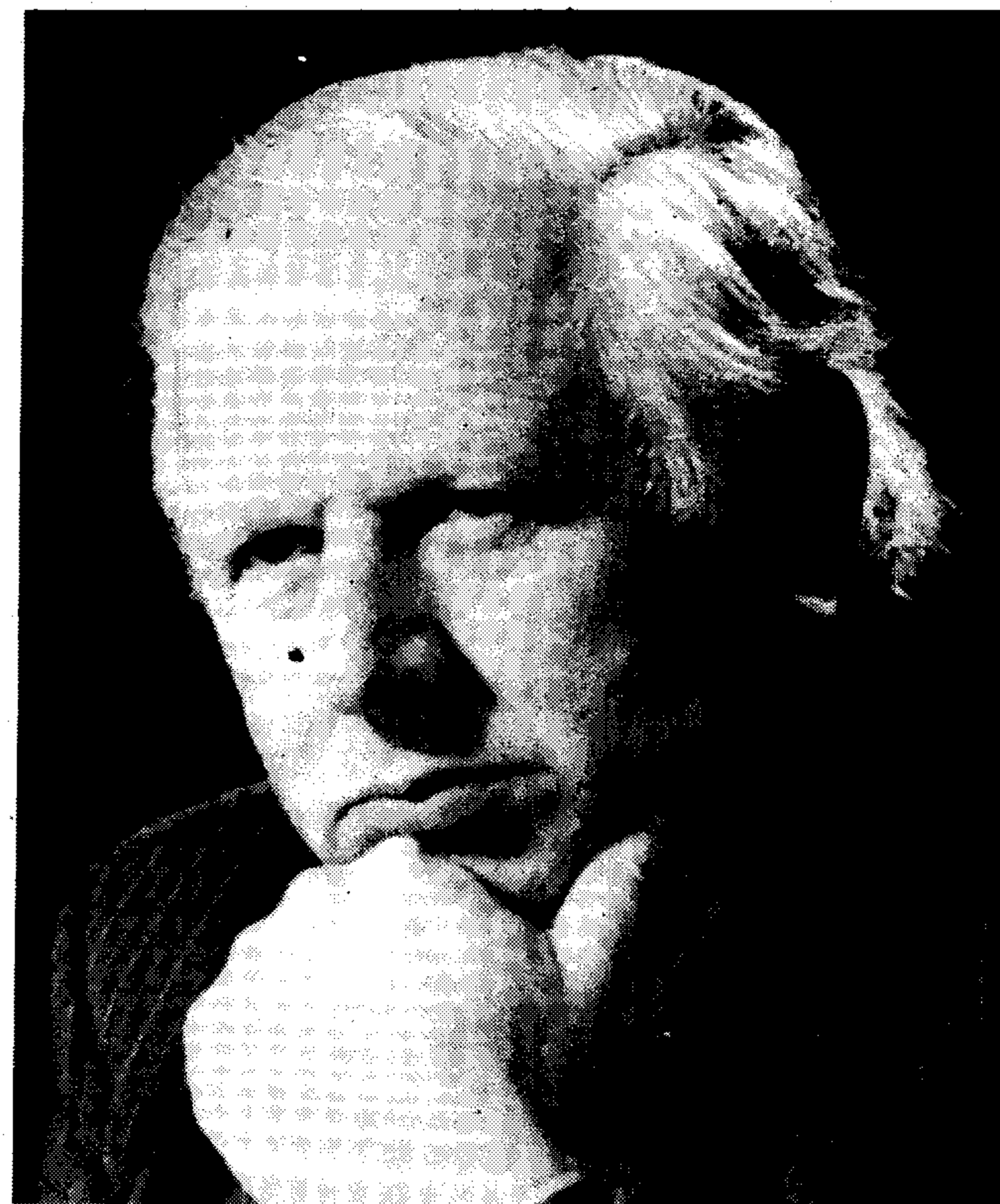
On top of the normal notifications she would give her employers, are now added:



1) a letter to her employers written three weeks before she leaves indicating her intention

to return to work. 2) if her employers write for confirmation of her return she

must comply within 14 days of receipt and finally 3) she must write a third



Prior

letter three weeks before her date of return. Failure to fulfil any one of these stipulations could lead to the woman losing her legal right to return to work.

The employer has no obligation to inform her of any of these conditions.

And having met them all, she still has no right to her own job. Instead her employer is free to give her "suitable" alternative employment which Prior's law states must not be "substantially" less favourable than what she was doing before.

The word substantial and the word suitable can cover a great deal of ground and there's little doubt that Prior intends employers to exploit it to the full.

For those working for small capitalists Prior's attack is complete.

Not wanting the small businessman to be as frustrated over his tedious new regulations as he intends to make the employee, Prior has simplified his obligations enormously. He doesn't have any!

Divert

To quote Prior's Minister of State for Employment (sic!) the inimitable Earl of Gowrie, a pre-occupation with legislation "diverts management's attention from the central task of running a business".

And to assist them with this central task Prior's law states that employers of six workers or less do not have to re-instate a woman who wants to return to her job after having had a baby if it "is not reasonably practicable to do so".

The 'apartheid'-like approach that Prior has introduced whereby a woman worker has either limited maternity rights or none at all, depending entirely on the accidental fact of the size of the workforce, is also extended by Prior into clause 7 of his law which deals with unfair dismissal.

One of the first things this government did—without waiting for a new Employment Bill—was extend the qualifying period of protection from unfair dismissal from 26 to 52 weeks. The new Employment Act doubles yet again in less than a year the period of no protection against unfair dismissal.

For an employer with less than 20 workers, two years employment has to be worked before any legal protection against dismissal is given the worker.

And for those workers who do wish to bring a claim for unfair dismissal and are legally entitled to, the dice have been further loaded by Prior against them.

Firstly the 'onus' that formally at least was on an employer to prove he had believed reasonably in dismissing a worker is reversed.

Now an employee is assumed guilty and has to prove instead that the employer acted unreasonably.

Clause 8 of the Act which deals with the "compensation" paid in proven cases of unfair dismissal abolishes the minimum award of two weeks' pay—which is overwhelmingly the normal pittance paid out in such cases.

This clause would also allow a tribunal to further reduce its award in a case of proven unfair dismissal if the management could bring forward evidence of the employee's "misconduct"—even if totally unrelated to the actual case for dismissal made by the employer!

And again refusal of an unfairly dismissed person to accept what an employer is pleased to call 'reasonable reinstatement' could lead to further reductions in the Tribunal's award.

A subsequent article will deal in greater detail with the role of industrial tribunals.

Here it is necessary just to observe that the Thatcher government's assault on post-war state incorporation of the unions is not without its positive side for the working class.

Tribunals in short undermine shop floor organisation and provide a legal screen behind which union bureaucrats can hide their treachery.

Pitiful

The pitiful hand-outs they grant a few workers is a small price indeed for the bosses to pay for the corrosive effect they have of working class consciousness.

The blind hatred that a shop keeper's daughter feels towards the working class obscures for Thatcher what a powerful instrument of the capitalist class she is busily dismantling and discrediting.

In this contradictory sense it can be said that Prior's assault on Tribunals will be regarded as the most progressive piece of legislation that this government ever enacted!

The Case of the Unknown Novelist

BOB SUTCLIFFE reviews *The Man Who Was B. Traven* by Will Wyatt, published by Jonathan Cape, £8.50.

B. Traven was a great anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist writer.

Not only do his novels, written in the 1920s and 1930s vividly and passionately portray the lives of the exploited and their struggles; but also in writing them Traven set out consciously to translate political ideas and theories into the form of fiction.

It is that which gives Traven's fiction a very special originality.

At times, when he doesn't completely succeed in his aim, his work is a bit too didactic.

But where he does fully succeed—as in his famous novel *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*—he is responsible for a unique form of writing.

The Treasure of the Sierra Madre is an exciting adventure story, a profound description of human deprivation and exploitation and their effects, a very convincing study of human characters and their interaction, and a fictional demonstration of the Marxist theory of value—all in one.

Short stories

Some of his short stories, which along with the novels are now being republished by Alison and Busby after being many years out of print—have something of the same brilliant combination of levels.

His early novel *The Death Ship* is another brilliant evocation of the exploitation of seamen and their struggle against it.

Others like *March to Caobaland* and *Rebellion of the Hanged* relate the ferment among Mexican forest workers in the years leading up to the Mexican revolution of 1910.

Other works, like *The Caretta*, *Bridge in the Jungle* and many of the short stories show the deep sympathy and understanding of Traven for the life of the oppressed poor peasants of Mexico.

For those who appreciate such sympathetic yet committed and militant writing—and for socialists in particular—Traven's works should hold a special interest.

His books have been burned by Hitler, censored both by US publishers in the McCarthy era and by the Stalinist bureaucrats of Eastern Europe.

Identity

The reason for his wider fame, however, has always been very different from the content of the books—it has been the special mystery of Traven's real identity.

This is because, despite his literary success, he went to almost incredible lengths to conceal his real identity from the general public, from his readers, from the numerous journalists and writers who sought out the mystery author—and even from his publishers.

The mystery of his identity has for decades been an intriguing topic of investigation or speculation.

Many books and articles, learned and not so learned, have

been written about the question.

"Theories" have been offered to show that Traven was the illegitimate son of the last German Kaiser, a pseudonym for Jack London, a group of several writers and many other possibilities.

The mystery surrounding Traven's identity has regrettably come to eclipse any serious interest in his remarkable works.

Two years ago producer Will Wyatt of the BBC, along with TV presenter Robert Robinson made a relatively competent film which claimed to solve once and for all the mystery of Traven's identity.

They argued that Traven the mysterious author was one and the same as Ret Marut, a German anarchist actor, editor of a revolutionary journal the *Bricklayer*, who fled persecution after the counter-revolution and who turned up briefly in Britain in 1923 where he was held in Brixton prison before deportation.

The theory that Marut then resurfaced as the novelist Traven in Mexico has long been held and Wyatt supports it without worrying about the problems associated with it.

The main one of these is how only a matter of months after disappearing from the European political scene Marut/Traven was able to write books which suggest a long and profound knowledge of Mexican peasant life.

But it is not, alas, literary questions which bother Wyatt and Robinson. They are concerned only with the historical whodunit aspects of the story.

Their unquestioning acceptance of Marut as the author of Traven's novels is part of their acceptance of the other common feature of the Traven story—that he was a man known variously as Torsvan and as Hal Croves who lived in Mexico between the early 1920s and his death in 1969.

No proof

Wyatt produced a fair amount of circumstantial evidence, though no proof that Torsvan/Croves was the same person as Marut.

Torsvan himself used "Traven" as a first name. And Croves turned up during the making of the great 1947 film of *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* as script advisor.

But none of Wyatt's circumstantial evidence for a single person who was Marut, Torsvan and Croves amounts to a proof that he was the author of the Traven novels.

It is not insignificant that such a sensitive artist as John Huston (director of the film of *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*) was never convinced that Croves, whom he came to know well, was the writer Traven.

Wyatt produces something of a coup of detection by tracing the identity of his character back one further stage before Marut.

Basing himself on the British Home Office files on Marut, Wyatt does convincingly prove that he was originally Otto



A scene from *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*

Wienecke (later Feige when his parents married) and was born on February 23 1882 in Schwiebus, then in Germany.

From Wyatt's research it seems that Feige certainly became Marut. It is possible that Marut became Torsvan and certain that Torsvan became Croves.

But whether this person or persons was Traven remains much of the mystery it had before Wyatt claimed to solve it.

In a way the best literary evidence for Wyatt's theory is Traven's obsession in his own writing with the question of personal identity and its elusive nature, and the oppressive nature of a fixed identity.

In the *Rebellion of the Hanged* a character remarks: "The first thing we must do is attack the registry and burn the papers, all the papers with seals and signatures—deeds, birth and death certificates, tax records, everything . . . Then nobody will know who he is, and what his father had . . . What do we want with birth certificates?"

Oppressive

Traven saw the identity expressed in official documents lineage and so on as part of the perpetuation of an oppressive system and state which as an anarchist socialist he passionately loathed.

It is not improbable that such a man, like some of the characters in his books, slipped from one official public identity to another.

But, ironically by the same token, Traven would have been the most dismissive critic of Wyatt's book.

Dismissed

Wyatt himself dismissed a letter from Traven to his publishers as nothing but a homily:

"I would like to state very clearly: the biography of a creative person is absolutely unimportant. If that person is not recognisable in his works, then either he is worth nothing or his works are worth nothing. The creative person should therefore have no other biography than his works".

Wyatt mistakenly attributes all this to a quest for privacy, whereas Traven's attitude to his own identity was surely a part of his creative and political concerns as a writer.

Wyatt has discovered nothing about that because he has skimmed Traven's writings, looking only for the odd quotation which will illuminate his biographical reconstruction.

He is altogether blind to Traven's ideas and literary achievements.

For instance, he grotesquely describes *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* as a "morality

tale about greed and riches in an ironic fable about the corruption brought by wealth".

Such remarks are one of the infuriating aspects of this book.

Among the others are the pretentious tendency to go into laughable detail about the making of the TV film.

There is no denying that even given its limitations, the subject of Wyatt's book is interesting to anyone interested in Traven.

But the book all too frequently lets what is tedious and boring get in the way.

In the end the book's obsession is with writing the biography of a man and not that of a creative writer.

Mundane

But is the mystery solved? The answer is, in the mundane sense Wyatt conceives of it, "perhaps but by no means completely convincingly".

When the creative side of Traven is brought in the mystery changes its form.

It is not a mystery with a solution but a mystery which is itself part of the creation of Traven's imagination.

Traven himself wrote to his publisher that:

"The creative person should therefore have no other biography than his own works".

The mystery of his identity is not one to be "solved" but to be assessed as one of its author's

works along with his imaginative writing.

That task still remains to be done.

Now that Will Wyatt has squeezed as much from the mundane mystery as is there, perhaps the republication of Traven's works will stimulate many more people to think about the real mystery.

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Shipyard losses stall Tory asset-strippers

The impact of the economic crisis on the shipbuilding industry has been so grave that it has forced even the most pig-headed of Tories—Thatcher, Joseph and Heseltine—to abandon their plans to sell off the profitable naval shipyards.

British Shipbuilders made a massive £109 million loss in the year 1979/80—double that of the previous year.

The loss was £10 million over the cash limit set by Joseph—and would have been worse if the nationalised firm had not been able to include a £40 million total profit from the three naval yards—Vosper, Yarrow and Vickers.

Government cash

BS auditors pointed out that without adequate cash support from the government, the operation is not a viable concern.

The outright closure of merchant shipbuilding is a step so wide-reaching for suppliers and contractors that even the Thatcher government has held back from it.

Hence the retreat from the resale of the naval yards.

But the old owners of Vosper, Yarrow and Vickers have been still further enraged by the retreat by the Tories from their commitment to alter the compensation payment system established when the yards were nationalised in 1977.

But shipyard workers have little to celebrate.

Resign

The management of BS headed by new chairman Robert Atkinson had threatened to resign if the naval yards were hived off.

Now they are threatening the workforce with "plans for economies and productivity improvement leading to reductions in unit cost".

In other words more speed up, redundancies and exploitation—no doubt with the eager assistance of men like BS board member-cum-union-chief John Chalmers of the Boilermakers Union.



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report Chalmers

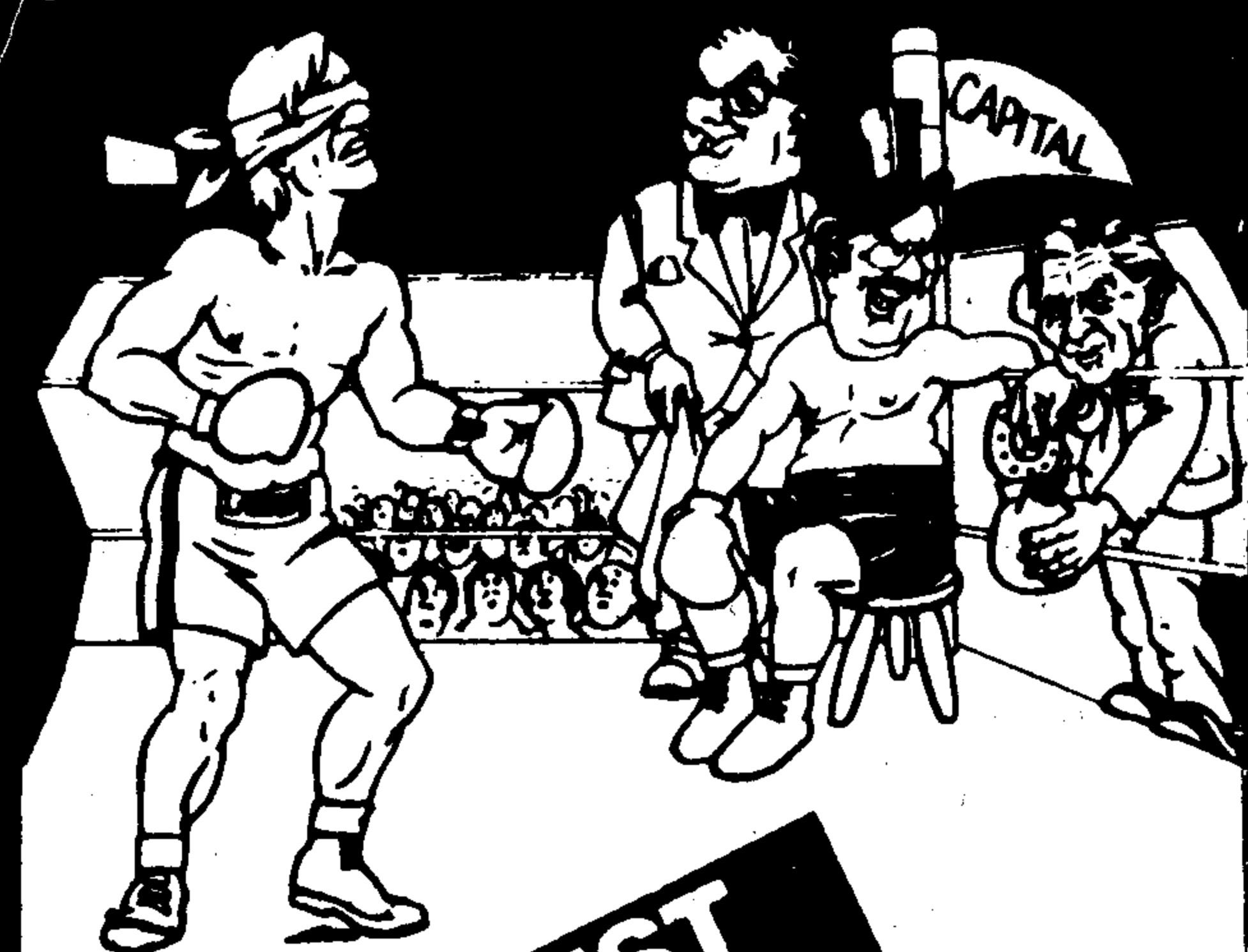


Thatcher



Joseph

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Howe moves on wage controls

The intricacies of the Parliamentary timetable forestalled the efforts of the Thatcher government to slash back the teachers' pay award of from 14-16%.

But the Tories remain determined to act on the wages

front and force settlements down to 10% or below.

Policy paper

Last week saw the Chancellor Sir Geoffrey Howe present a policy paper on wages to the TUC at a meeting of the National Economic Development Council.

The document stressed that the government intends to use cash limits to hold down rises in the public sector, and accused "excessive" pay rises of retarding progress in the economy.

TUC leaders refused to discuss the document—but have spelled out no policy to combat the Tory strategy and show no intention of fighting any of the Tory attacks.



Howe

More jobs axed

AMONG last week's crop of redundancy plans were:

600 jobs to go at Cummins diesel engines from October.

520 jobs to go in the closure of Pickering Blackburn, a carpet machinery firm.

600 production workers face immediate redundancy at the Foden truck firm which has gone into receivership, though still producing trucks.

Meanwhile a new survey by a group of leading industrial and financial organisations predicts unemployment at 2½ million until at least 1986—unless the Thatcher government quickly changes its policies.

3 day week at Rovers

Falling sales in the executive car market are producing mass lay-offs and short time working in Europe.

6,000 German Ford workers involved in Granada and Capri production are to be made

redundant in a major cutback in production.

6,000 Opel workers were laid off in June. In Audi, BMW and Volkswagen, workers are on short-time working.

And now 2,500 workers at Rover Solihull, producing the Rover and TR7 cars are to go on a three day week and a two day week—and face the prospect of short time until Christmas.

The worldwide crisis in the motor industry points to the folly of import controls as a "solution".

The common problem in every case is that production takes place only for the profit of the capitalist class: the only guarantee of jobs and living standards in the car industry or any other sector is action to overthrow that system and establish a planned, socialist economy.

WOMAN WORKER

WOMEN BEAR THE BRUNT OF UNEMPLOYMENT!

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JOIN THE WSL!

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

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

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

In a period where the contradictions of the anarchic capitalist system force the wholesale closure and destruction of the productive forces of society, only a socialist planned

economy on a world scale offers a way forward.

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

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

Internationally, we are affiliated to the newly-formed Trotskyist International Liaison Committee, which fights for the reconstruction of the Fourth International and the building of revolutionary parties in every country to lead the struggle against imperialism and against the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracies in the deformed and

degenerated workers' states.

We invite all readers of Socialist Press to seek more details of the WSL and its work, and to join us in the struggle for socialism.

Please send me more details of the Workers Socialist League.

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Send to WSL: BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX.

London cuts fighter victimised

In a major attack on the workforce at St. Mary's Hospital, London W9, management have this week suspended TGWU shop steward Rita Maxim for refusing to move onto another job.

Sister Maxim is a leading militant in the fight against the proposed closure of the W9 hospital, and against management attempts to run down manning levels as part of their programme of cuts.

Among the management techniques is the attempt to use mobility of labour to cover depleted staffing levels and thus implement spending cuts.

The struggle by the St. Mary's workers has become a

central feature of the fight to stop the cuts throughout the health service in the London area.

A mass meeting of TGWU members at the hospital is to be held on Tuesday 12 August to decide what action to take in her defence.

It is essential that this management victimisation is met by full scale resistance both by the TGWU and by other health unions in the hospital and throughout the London area.

At a time when cuts are being railroaded through on all sides, those militants who have shown themselves willing to lead a fight to defend jobs and services must be fully defended through strike action.

TUC disarms workers from front page



regional councils to launch initiatives which, in effect, are a call for a stoppage of work. I must ask you not to proceed...

Instead the TUC is talking of a six month "national campaign" focussing on unemployment.

No leadership

Denied national or local leadership from the TUC; with public sector union leaders meekly assisting the implementation of Tory cuts and closures; and with union leaders in the private sector sacrificing their members' jobs and wages in vain attempts to restore profitability to the employers, workers face a major crisis of leadership in the fight against the Tory offensive.

Disarmed by the treachery of parliamentary illusions of the Labour leaders, workers must turn to the building of a new,

revolutionary leadership if jobs and living standards are to be defended.

*Defend all jobs! For occupations, strikes and blacking action to force a policy of work sharing on full pay! No to the nationalistic policy of import controls!

*No to the anti-union laws! No talks with the Tories—for a general strike to force them out of office.

*Unite strikes and occupations as a step towards forming councils of action.

*Remove the Labour and trade union leaders who won't fight. For a workers' government!

*Open the books of the employers who threaten redundancies or refuse wage increases, and of their suppliers and bankers! Prove the case for their nationalisation, without compensation under workers' management.

*Fight for a woman's right to work! Defend and extend state nursery and childcare provision! For free abortion on demand! Defeat Prior's attacks on maternity rights!

*Defend living standards! Fight for cost of living clauses to give a 1% rise in take-home pay for every 1% rise in the cost of living as calculated by elected committees of trade unionists and housewives.

*Stop all cuts! Occupy threatened facilities, fight for supporting strike action. Set up workers' inquiries into health, welfare and social services to expose private profiteering and the savage impact of the cuts!

*Demand a restoration of public spending with automatic increases to keep pace with inflation. Demand Labour Councils repudiate debts and interest charges and refuse to implement cuts or raise rates and rents.

Fisher wanted to ensure a "co-ordinated campaign", he told Barnett that a regional march could not be held without General Council approval: "We certainly do not expect

ADWEST: mobilise to win this vital strike!

120 strikers and supporters picketed the Adwest Engineering factory in Reading last Monday.

It was the third mass picket called by the strike committee in support of the 58 strikers who were sacked after striking in support of one victimised worker during a pay dispute.

The picket was a partial success in that it focussed more attention on the strike and because it partially reestablished the democratic right to picket.

At previous mass pickets the right to picket had been totally denied by the police.

The TGWU convenor Danny Broderick was arrested when he attempted, single handed, to picket the gate.

At the previous mass picket in June 26 pickets were arrested when they attempted to defy the police and exercise the right to picket.

On Monday things were very different. Negotiations with the police two days before had

resulted in a compromise—that ten strikers would be allowed to picket and lobby the scabs going into the plant.

This resulted in some vigorous picketing—but failed to stop any of the scabs going in.

No official support

In a press conference afterwards Danny Broderick placed the main blame for their failure to shift the position of Adwest management squarely at the door of the TGWU, who after nearly 14 weeks of the strike still refuse to make it official.

He showed copies of the letter from the TGWU Reading District Secretary supporting the strike a few days after it started and calling on all TGWU members not to cross the picket line.

He explained how the inght shift was called out on strike by the District Secretary of the union and now are denied official support.

He told how the TGWU leadership had then used the bad book keeping of the branch secretary to avoid giving official support.

The strike committee, he said, had met Larry Smith, an Executive officer of the union, last week.

Smith had given them a "sympathetic hearing" and raised the matter at Thursday's F&GP and the General Executive Council. They decided to instruct the Region 2 F&GP to meet the strike committee and sort out the problem of the books.

The strikers naturally thought this was a step in the right direction, and contacted the Region 2 office to find out when the meeting was to take place.

They phoned John Ashman, the Regional Secretary and were told that it would not take place for at least a month—after they had been 14 weeks on strike!

A similar story was told by Martin Kaufman a sacked



Monday's mass picket

member of the AUEW.

He explained how the District Committee had earlier held an inquiry into the dispute and had come out in its support. Since then nothing had been done to put that support into practice.

For these reasons the strikers had decided to make all the facts about the actions of the union officials public and stop what Danny Broderick described as a "diplomatic game" with them.

The strike committee are appealing for support through the TGWU and the AUEW to demand that the leadership act and make the strike official immediately.

The next mass picket, they said, is likely to take place outside Transport House in London.

This is obviously correct. But it must be a real mass picket, which is not the case at the present time.

If the revolutionary left were to mobilise behind this strike, its effectiveness could be transformed and support for it won in the broad trade union movement.

Individuals

But that is not the case at the present time. This week the Socialist Workers Party produced only one or two individuals, while the International Marxist Group claimed to have mobilised only 12 people from various parts of the country and the actual number seemed to be even less than that.

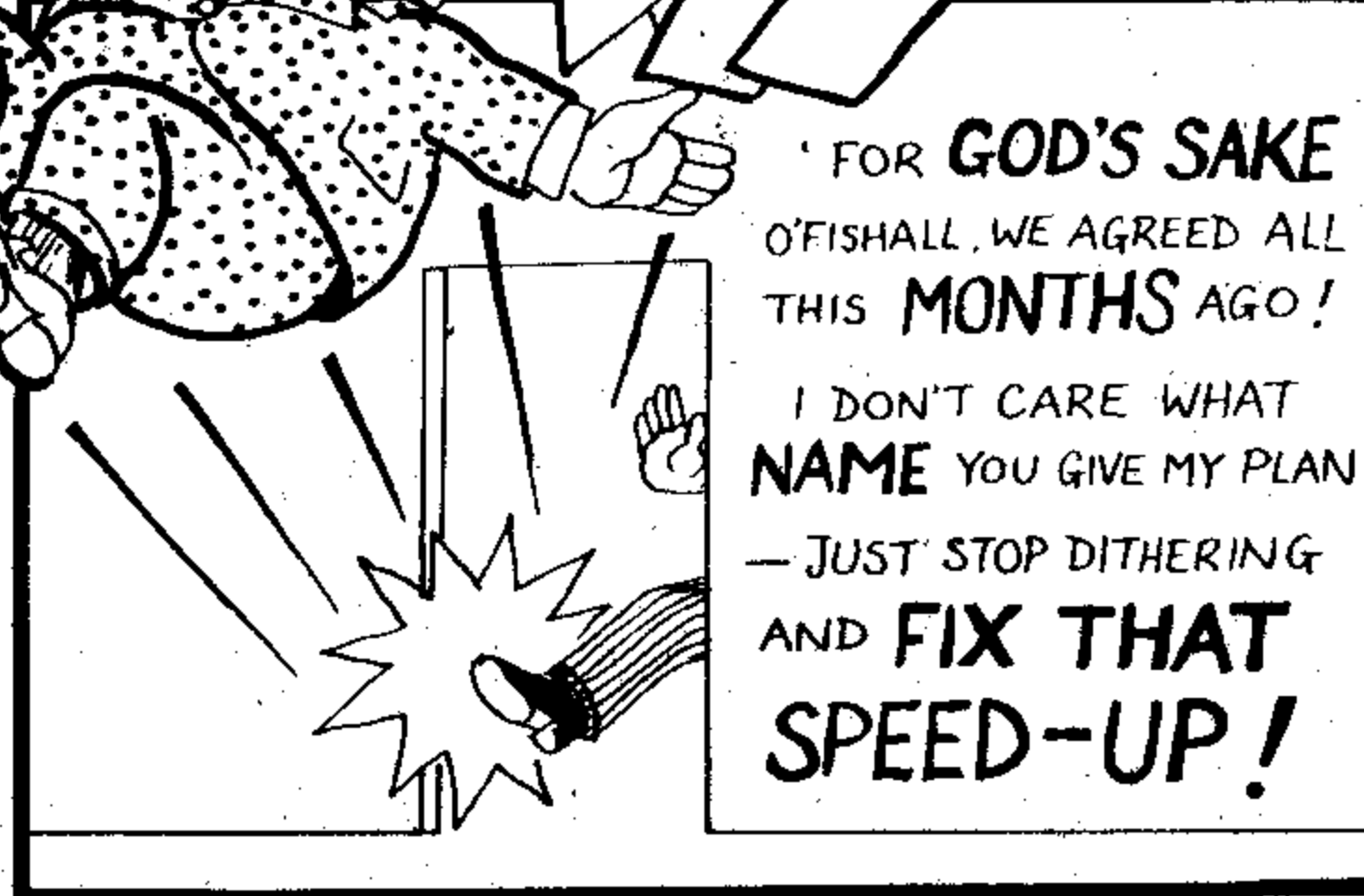
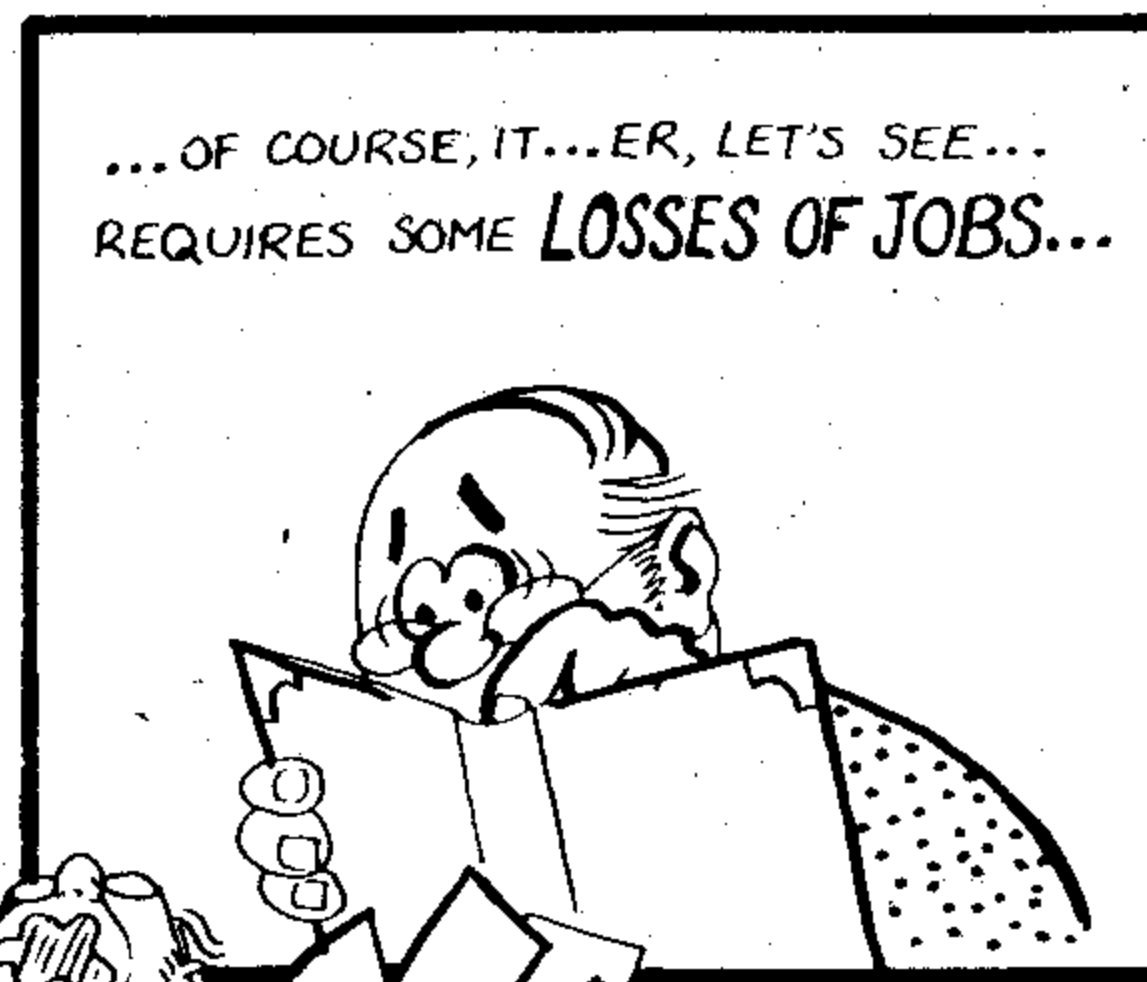
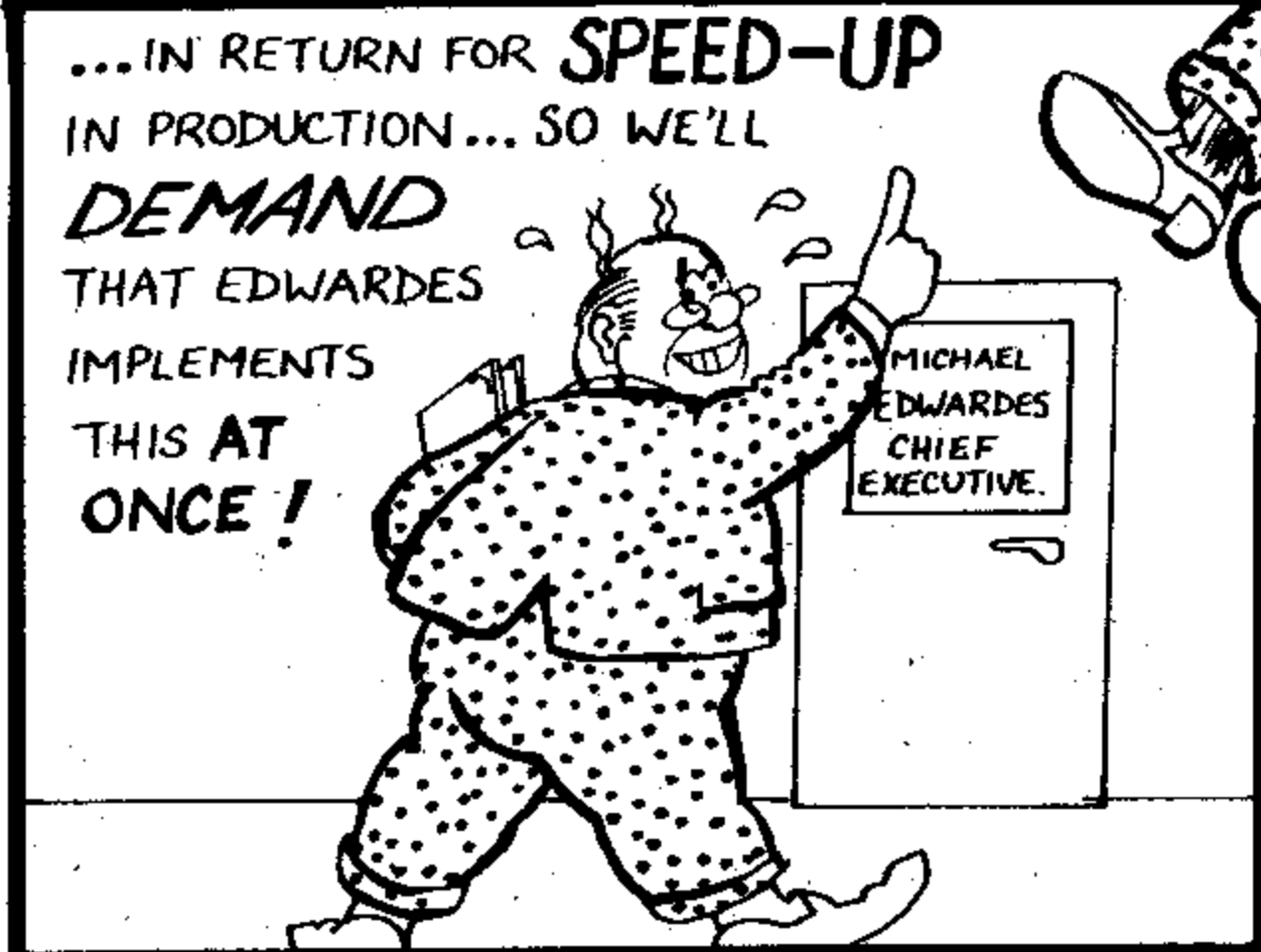
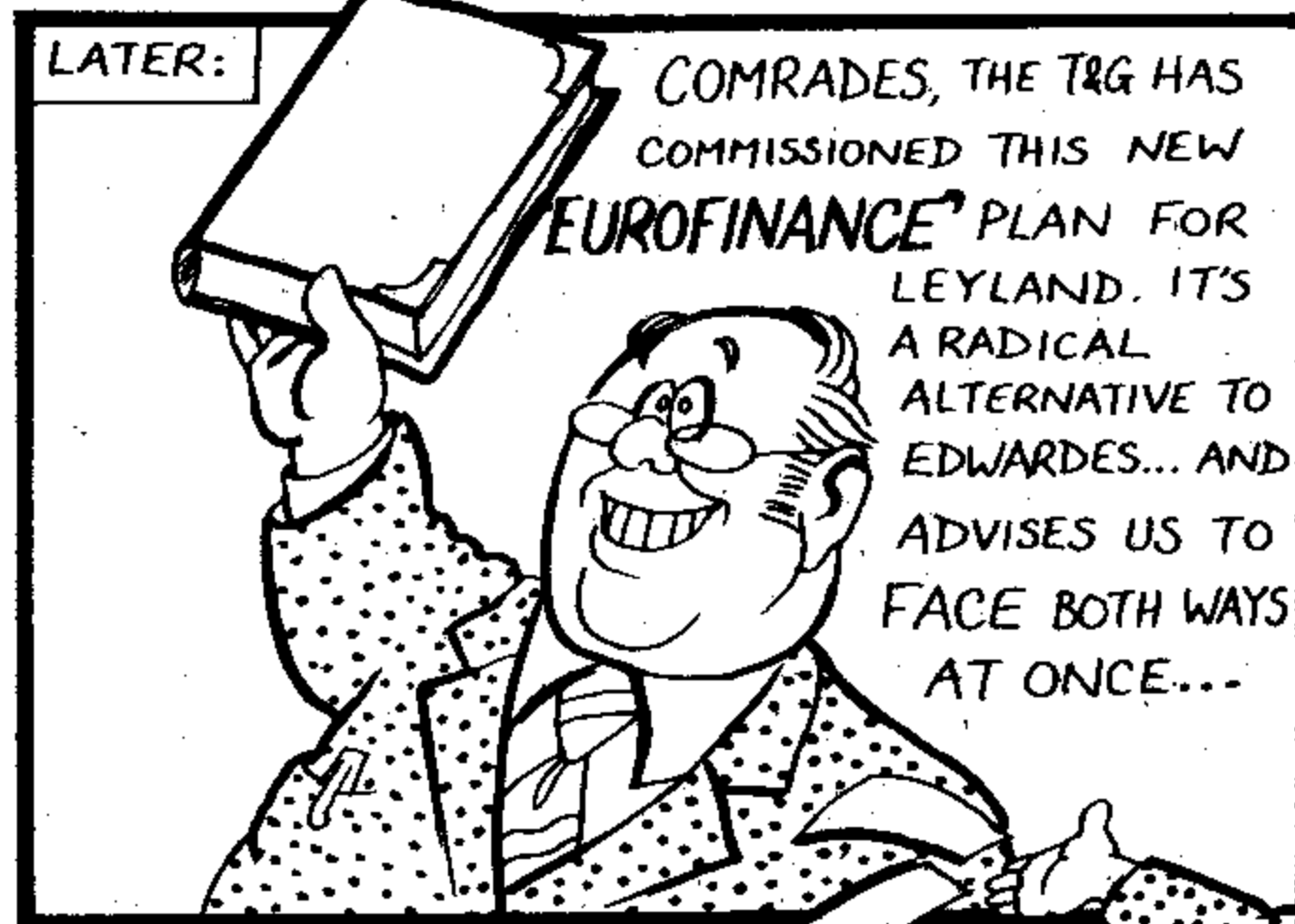
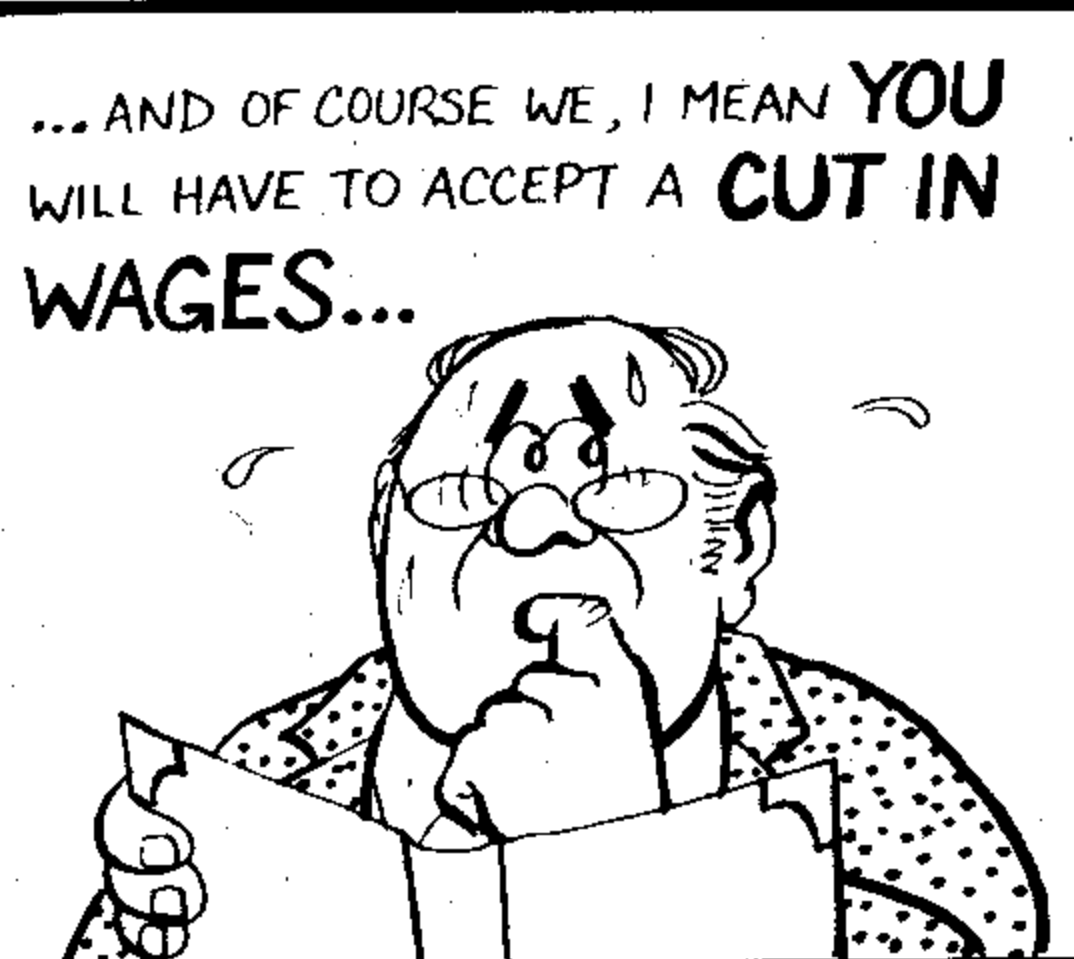
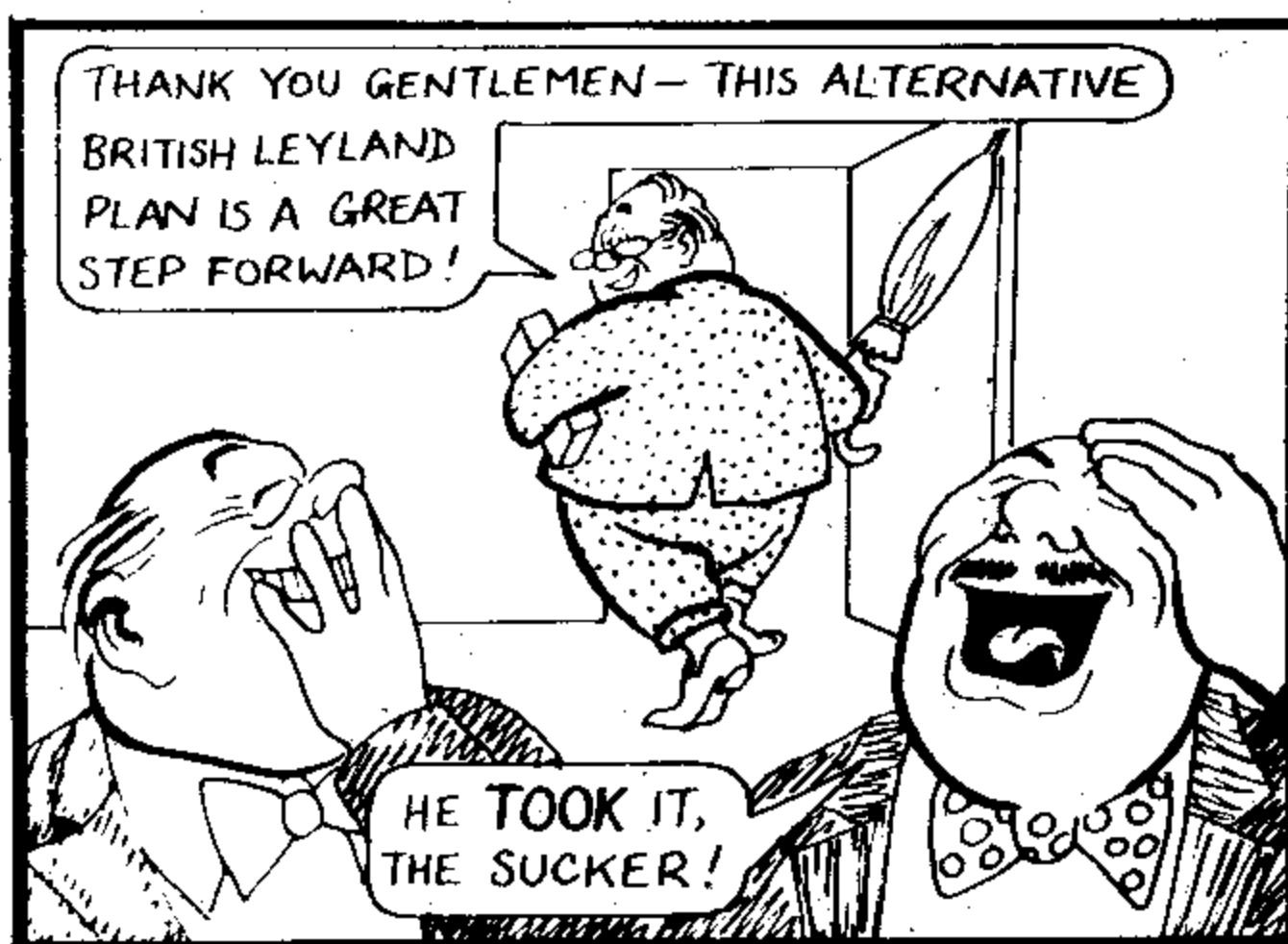
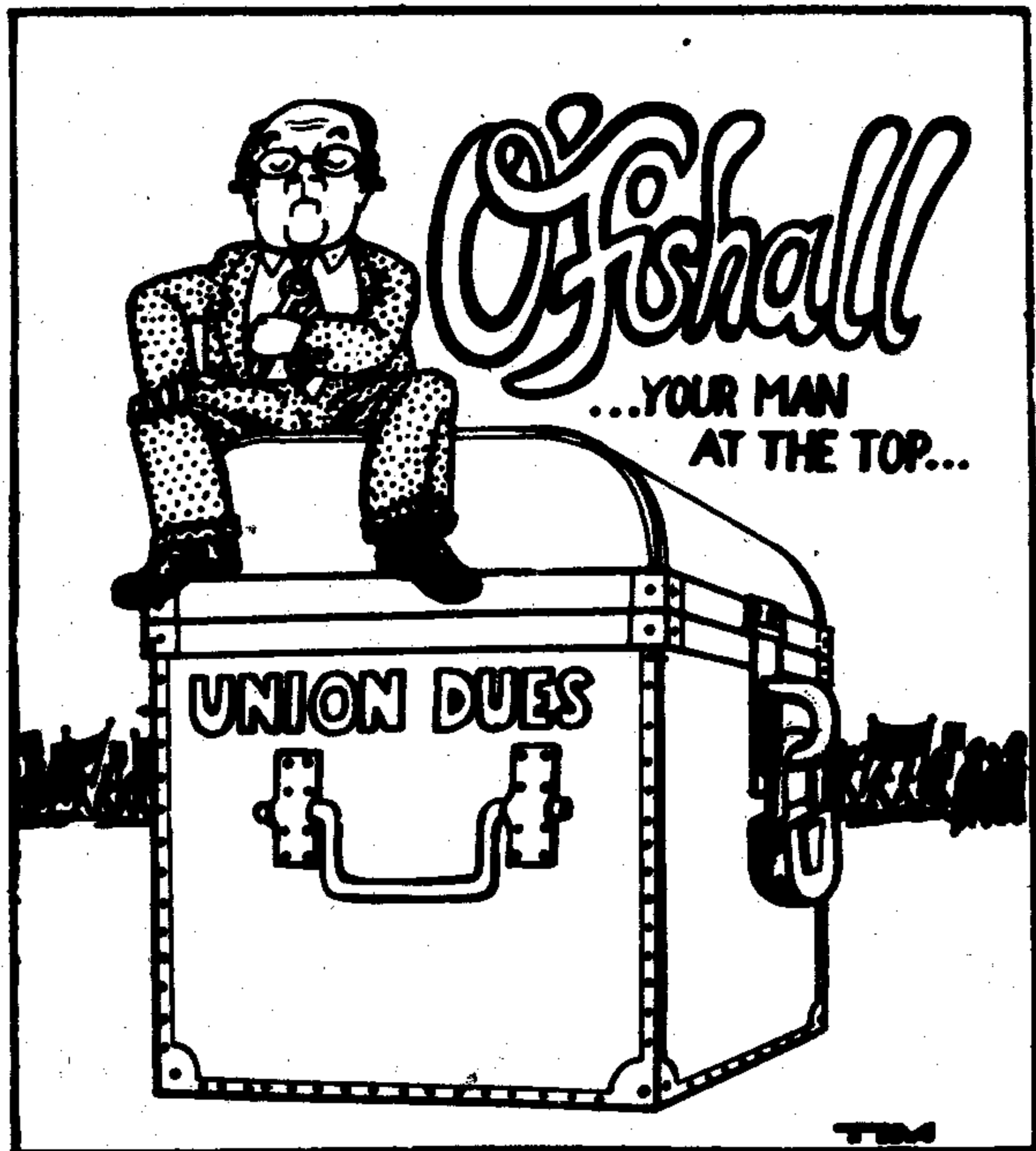
It is true that the Workers

Power have mobilised for it and so have the Socialist Labour Group, with the biggest groups of pickets coming from the WSL.

But this is not enough. Unless the bigger groups get involved, the strike cannot be sustained and the necessary support mobilised within the unions.

Socialist Press calls for the biggest possible mobilisation as soon as the date is set by the strike committee for the next mass picket.

*Donations to the Adwest strike fund should be sent to: Danny Broderick, 46 Berkley Road, Reading.



SOCIALIST PRESS



BEHIND BOLOGNA BOMBING

BAN ON NF: NO VICTORY

Far from being an effective response to the fascist menace, the 3 month ban on demonstrations in Sandwell imposed by W. Midlands Chief Constable Sir Philip Knight represents a blow against the workers' movement.

Under the pretext of banning the National Front march scheduled for West Bromwich next Sunday, Knight has in fact acted to defuse the mobilisation of anti-fascists against the NF, and at the same time to ban important demonstrations planned by the local labour movement.

The NF march—to be held

under the jingoistic slogan of "British jobs for British workers" was obviously a blatant provocation—with a route chosen to pass through areas of high unemployment and high concentrations of immigrant workers.

Public Order Act

But it was not this which prompted Knight to call on Sandwell's Labour Council to invoke the Public Order Act of 1936 and impose a three-month ban on demonstrations.

Rather Knight recognised that the scale of the opposition to the NF march made it doubtful if he could protect the fascists from angry workers and youth.

As a result of the ban, the NF will be free to march unannounced elsewhere in the West Midlands, and the chances of an effective counter-mobilisation have been drastically reduced.

Yet many Labour Party members, together with IWA leader Arder Jehaul and the Anti Nazi League spokesman, SWP member Paul Holborow, declared the ban to be an important "victory", and stated as much to a meeting of 90 people in Smethwick last week.

The Communist Party has also described the ban as a "victory" for the anti-fascists.

What they find harder to celebrate is the fact that the ban now prevents a march planned by workers from Birmid Qualcast protesting against the closure of the DAC No. 2 foundry.

And another casualty of



PHOTO: John Smith, IFL

Police protect fascists in Bolton, 1978

Knight's ban is a demonstration through Tipton on unemployment planned by West Bromwich Labour Party.

Obviously the local labour movement should defy the ban and insist upon the right to demonstrate.

It must be understood that the NF thugs and their fascist agitation will be defeated not by state bans and the actions of supposedly "democratic" police chiefs, but by the full-scale mobilisation of the labour movement to drive them from the streets.

Release Iranian students!

Iranian students in Britain ended their hunger strike as some of them were being transferred to prison hospitals.

In the United States, the students were released from jail as an embarrassed government struggled to avoid charges of holding their own hostages.

In both countries the Iranians responded to the arrests by launching a hunger strike in jail.

Newspapers, from the most reactionary to the most liberal, called for mass deportations from both countries and accused the Iranians of an international conspiracy.

The demonstrations sparked off unbridled racialism, including in America, a stone-throwing mob.

The demonstrators had come out in support of Khomeini. From their comments in court it is clear that they regard themselves as anti-imperialists.

The demonstrations must, to them, have carried echoes of the demonstrations in western capitals against the Shah.

The original demonstrations were reactionary to the extent that they identified the demonstrators with Khomeini.

But the attack on the demonstrators by the police and the racist outbursts against them are products of diseased nationalism.

The Iranian students have a right to demonstrate. They should be released.

Oppose their deportation!

9 years of internment



The nationalist population in the sectarian six county statelet of Northern Ireland mounted a massive show of resistance to the British army occupation last weekend.

Thousands marched to protest at the ninth anniversary of the introduction of internment without trial by Edward Heath's Tory government in 1971.

Republican forces mounted ambushes and raids on police and army patrols.

And the British army struck back with customary savagery; a 21-year old social worker was killed by a plastic bullet fired at point blank range. A 15 year old girl was in intensive care after being hit by a plastic bullet.

And soldiers in an armoured car gunned down a 20-year old youth.

Such violence has become the trade mark of the British repression that preserves the Orange State against the unbroken resistance of the nationalist minority.

Army terror

While the Tory press condemns the "terrorism" of the republican movement, it applauds the institutionalised terror of the army, the RUC, the UDR, and their back up of torture, remand without trial,

The fascist outrage that killed 76 people in Bologna rail station on August 2 has once again brought to light the collaboration of sections of the Italian state with the extreme right wing and the relationship of the fascist terror campaign to the needs of the Italian ruling class.

The bombings started in 1969 as a response to the wave of strikes and occupations launched by Italian workers.

Their aim was to lay the right climate of terror for a possible military coup, and to frighten the Italian Communist Party (PCI) into open collaboration with the Christian Democrats to forestall such a coup.

The first bomb which killed 16 people in Milan in 1969 was at first blamed on anarchists.

Smuggled out

Only when the evidence unearthed by the press became impossible to deny was the guilt of the fascists admitted; and by that time the Italian secret service had smuggled those responsible out of the country.

The involvement of NATO has since become an open secret.

The campaign was a success to the extent that the PCI entered into what was in effect an alliance with the Christian Democrats against the Italian working class.

They supported not only a whole series of austerity measures but also a widespread attack on democratic rights.

Indiscriminate phone tapping, house searches and arrests became a normal part of Italian life.

The renewed series of bombing recently seem to suggest that sections of the Italian ruling class are not satisfied with those concessions, and want powers to smash the mass organisations of the working class.

The Bologna bombing shows the contempt with which these sections and their fascist agents view the Cossiga government.

The government has just pressed the courts to send three members of the NAR, a small fascist group, for trial, accused of blowing up the Italian express in 1976.

By the latest bombings the NAR and its backers are declar-

ing their readiness to dispense with parliamentary democracy itself.

As in 1969 the role of the Italian state forces glimmers through the news reports.

The member of the NAR arrested in Nice last week and suspected of taking part in the bombing, had knowingly been allowed to live unmolested in France, although he had already been sentenced to four years jail in Italy for the 'reconstruction of a fascist party'.

Rumour

A careful rumour had even been spread that he had been killed in a plane crash!

The bombing must also be intended to illustrate the impotence of the PCI. The choice of working class victims going on holiday from Bologna, a PCI stronghold, could not be more provocative.

Yet the response of the PCI was predictable. They issued more calls for strengthening of the state apparatus—the very apparatus which is itself implicated in the fascist bombings.

But the growing disillusionment with the PCI's policies is shown by the fact that the families of the vast majority of the victims refused to take part in the official funeral arranged by the PCI.

Several thousand supporters of the revolutionary left also demonstrated during the funeral against the PCI's class collaboration.

But the strength of the neo-fascists and their backers lies precisely in the absence of any coherent programme or party of the revolutionary left.

They know that the PCI, with its policy of historic compromise is incapable of challenging the bourgeois state, with its tendency during this period of crisis to develop towards outright police repression.

Protest strike

But the Italian ruling class still has to actually smash the mass organisations of the working class to overcome its present crisis—organisations which responded once again with a solid protest strike against the Bologna bombing.

And that is a more difficult matter than just exposing the impotence of its present leaders.

FUND

The post this week brought a much appreciated last minute anonymous donation of £30 from a reader in High Wycombe to the Special Fund and a mere £77.85 towards the August Fund target of £850.

With the holiday season now well under way it is vital that readers and supporters of Socialist Press do not forget our monthly fund.

We still have to pay our bills in July and August and cannot do so if the money we so vitally need is being spent on sticks of rock and Cornish ices!

So rush your donation to our monthly fund to:
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