

# MASS PICKETS MUST ANSWER POLICE SQUADS

Scotland Yard's Deputy Assistance Commissioner John Gerrard, normally in charge of crowd control in the Metropolitan Police area, has been put in command of a national police intelligence unit set up specifically to smash the miners' strike and working class action in support of it.

And Robert Carr has already referred to a Law Lords ruling on picketing when he said that his view of lawful picketing didn't include stopping a lorry to explain about the strike.

These are the weapons the Government is planning to use to win this battle.

Gerrard's unit will be run from a specially equipped operations room, and its job will be to collect information about the day-to-day deployment of pickets, and to coordinate the police response. This will include the supervision of special flying squads of reinforcements which are ready to move anywhere at any time. Gerrard will be in constant touch with the Home Office and with Chief Constables throughout Britain.

## Trouble spots

This expert in 'riot' control has had special training in the latest techniques used by the Army in Ulster, and the police flying squads have been taught wedge formations to break through and hold back pickets.

But they know these methods will be useless if thousands of miners and their supporters get there first.

So police are anxious to beat pickets to the coal depots and power stations. It's easier to close roads and divert van loads of miners, and form a cordon round the gates, than to break through a solid mass of determined men. Saltley taught them that!

There are reports of hurried meetings and training sessions on the 'topical' subject of pickets. In Yorkshire, top cops met last week to discuss secret plans of action and identify 'trouble spots' — and activists. Yorkshire's flying squad is 800 strong.

There are also rumours of troops being moved into special temporary barracks near some power stations.

## Fight back

But we needn't be intimidated by all this. What are 800 police to Yorkshire's 55,000 miners and their millions of allies? The working class can also make its plans. The mass strike and picket of Saltley Coke Depot came at the end of the last miners' strike. This year such solidarity can be a mark of the strike right from the start.

Begin by setting up a miners' support committee in your workplace — whether it is a factory, shipyard, building site, office, college or whatever — pledged to place workers at the disposal of the NUM strikers committees. Support committees can also raise money for the miners, arrange mass meetings at your workplace with NUM speakers, help to distribute strike leaflets and campaign for other workers to take similar action.

These works committees can then be linked up and coordinated through local committees. Your union branch can send a resolution to the trades council suggesting it set up a solidarity committee.

But there's no time to lose. We must be ready with help on the picket lines. And if necessary, we must also be ready to set up workers' Defence Squads to protect strikers from scabs and troops.

A.T.

# WORKERS' fight

3p

NO.43 - Feb 9th-15th

Feb. 28th

# KICK THE

# TORIES OUT!

# SUPPORT THE MINERS

## Build Solidarity Committees

**SO HEATH HAS finally dared!**

The anti working class Tory spivs will submit themselves to the verdict of the people they have robbed, cheated, twisted and attempted to beat down for the last three and a half years.

Heath won the last election with lies and bluff — remember how he promised to cut prices "at a stroke". Now he hopes for re election by making a scapegoat of the miners, raising a Red Scare and asking the question: 'Who rules Britain?'

Most workers know that unfortunately it is Heath and the class of parasites he represents who misrule the lives of the majority of the British people.

For weeks Tory and Labour politicians have jockeyed, each trying to make the others appear 'irresponsible', 'wreckers' or the friends of 'trade union wreckers'. Like all con men and tricksters, the Tories desperately need to focus on one issue — this time the miners and their claim — in the hope of distracting attention from their own record.

**Remember that record!** This vicious government has attacked and, if re-elected, will intensify the attack on, every one of the gains the working class has won in decades of struggle.

They have cut our living standards.

They have deprived working class children of school milk.

They have murdered countless old age pensioners by cold and starvation. Every week inflation shrinks the amount of food and other essentials they can buy.

They have raised working class rents by government decree,

keeping Britain a paradise for landlords and property speculating parasites.

They have slashed the social services and made massive tax concessions to the super rich.

They have brought in savage racist immigration laws, unleashed unwarranted proportions against people with black or brown skin. Thus they hope to divide murderously the working class against itself — all the better to exploit black and white.

They have presided over a military reign of terror in Northern Ireland and thrown hundreds without charge or trial into a concentration camp.

## Robbers' Act

They have legislated to deny workers the right to have trade unions that are free from state interference and control. Armed with the Industrial Relations Act they have raided and robbed the treasuries of trade unions which dared assert even limited independence from the state.

They have elevated the 'vocation' of the scab and the right to scab into the first principle of their new industrial order.

They have jailed three men for setting up militant trade unions. They have made plans for jailing many more in the coming struggles.

They have set up a whole network of police with the single purpose of physically beating down trade unionists who dare to picket aggressively.

That's quite a record!

Heath knows very well that an election is a desperate gamble. The Tories may not be able to create enough of a 'Red Scare' to

smokescreen their record.

They call an election now not because of the miners' strike threat. The bosses are now convinced that a long, knockdown and drag out fight with the miners will be so damaging that they can't afford it. Consequently the CBI, which was sabre rattling only a week ago, has now buckled in face of the grim determination shown by the results of the miners' ballot. They want Heath to settle with the miners.

It is generally believed that even if the Tories win the election they will still have no option but to give way to the miners.

Heath has finally stopped dithering and set the date for an election because he knows that things can only get worse, not better.

The balance of payments situation is the worst in living memory. A world wide recession, which will probably hit Britain, 'the sick man of Europe', very hard indeed, was anyway expected for 1974 — even before the so called energy crisis. Inflation is still rising uncontrollably.

## Wage freeze

A wage freeze is a certainty very soon — and Heath plans to wedge on the threshold agreements built into the wage settlements signed under Phase 3, involving 6 million workers.

For Heath, any chance of re election is a matter of now or never. The bosses need a stable government for the stormy period ahead — a government not constitutionally bound to hold an election in about a year's time. An election now is the best chance the Tories have of being returned.

It is in the interest of every worker in Britain that the Tories should be soundly defeated. Every vote against the Tories is a blow against the attempt of the bosses to strengthen their political position for the coming big battles between capital and labour.

The big danger is that the Labour Party will run rabbit scared from the baying of the Tory rednecks and union bashers. Wilson, Callaghan and a

panic of Labour politicians rushed with indecent haste to echo the Tory outcry, against Mick McGahey and to denounce 'extremism'. Labour, tied to the trade unions, cannot do other than add volume to the Tory witch hunt by such antics, and thus damage its own chances.

But whatever line Labour takes in the elections, it must be supported against the Tories. It is the party of the trade unions, financed by the trade unions, and therefore, despite the fact that in

office it serves capitalism — it is vulnerable to the pressure of the working class. Where the Tories brought in the law to shackle the unions, Labour when it tried to do the same in 1969 was stopped in its tracks by the trade unions on which it rested.

From the bosses' point of view, it is a less reliable, because less stable, instrument than the Tory Party despite the intentions of the Labour leaders.

Until we have the possibility of a genuine, socialist working class government it is in workers' interests to elect Labour. Provided that in no sense is it seen as a substitute for our own direct

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# M 62 Explosion Army reaps what it sows

**ALL THE feelings and basic human instincts of every worker in Britain will react with horror and revulsion at the deaths of two young children and their mother in the explosion in the coach carrying soldiers and their families from Manchester to Cotterick.**

The bosses' press will make doubly sure that this will be the reaction. "Evil men full of hate" says one paper of the bombers. The comment of a politician that these responsible "have no soul" was the headline in another paper.

Even the Communist Party daily the Morning Star in an editorial recently condemned the bombing of the coach: the same Morning Star whose Editor a few months ago allowed its cretinous film reviewer to refute the charge that the obliteration by the RAF of the German city of Dresden during the 2nd World War was an atrocity. This bombing, in which more people were killed (of course including children) than perished in the Atomic bombing of Hiroshima was, apparently, not an atrocity but ... merely retaliation for the German bombing of Coventry!

However horrifying the deaths of the children and their mother in the army coach, for socialists

the issue is not so simple. In every war innocents suffer. That does not and cannot determine the character of the war. In the Northern Ireland war it is impossible to allow "the politics of the last atrocity" to decide our attitude.

The IRA and its various sub groupings is at war with Britain. The war stems from the criminal occupation of Northern Ireland by the British Army. Britain has oppressed Ireland for fully 8 centuries. It has no right in Ireland. It never can have any right in Ireland. The Irish people have never ceased to oppose and struggle against the British oppression and exploitation of their country. Consequently the British rule has been a barbaric exercise involving mass coercion of the people of Ireland.

The killing of 9 British soldiers in the same army coach was a legitimate act of war. Whether it is 'right' or 'wrong' depends on who is right or wrong in the war that it was part of.

The IRA, the militia of the Northern Ireland which has been oppressed, exploited and discriminated against down the

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## Liverpool 'Defend 24' Conference: A damp squib with a slow fuse

WITH more and more reports appearing about police preparations against miners' pickets, the importance of the Shrewsbury 24 case stands out clearer than ever. These 24 building workers were arrested last February and later charged with 'intimidation', 'affray', 'unlawful assembly' and 'conspiracy', allegedly on account of their activities on flying pickets during the 1972 national building strike.

Evidence has come to light showing that the trials were carefully planned by the Tories as a 'test case', part of a general campaign to suppress militant picketing. The conference called on 2nd February by Liverpool Trades Council could and should have been the rallying point for a decisive effort to free the three already jailed and secure the dropping of all charges. Instead it was more like a bureaucratic damp squib.

With Des Warren, Ricky Tomlinson and John McKinsie Jones in jail since 20th December, having repeatedly been refused bail, the Trades Council Executive's proposals to the Conference were on a lower key than the resolution of the previous conference last September, and even lower than the activity over recent months! The main item of the Trades Council Executive's proposals was a national 'day of action' in the

Harrison (Liverpool Boilermakers) and Peter Kavanagh (T&GWU). Each one of them said that what was necessary was a propaganda campaign of the type the TUC carried out over the Industrial Relations Bill. That campaign over 2½ years had, so they claimed, been crucial in securing the release of the Pentonville 5 dockers.

### Officialdom

So Des Warren can look forward to a possibility of being freed by mass action in two and a half years' time...! Or maybe he won't be so lucky.

In fact, the Trades Council resolution was tailored exactly to fit in with what the trade union official leadership would be prepared to accept.

A few speakers, such as John Deason (Wigan Trades Council) managed to get to the rostrum to put a more realistic perspective. One day actions, Deason said, are useful only as preparation for the prolonged mass strike action which is necessary. And that action will not be brought about by relying on union officialdom.

The applause for Deason,

and other militant speakers, showed that many of the 750 delegates at the conference agreed. But proper democratic discussion and decision making was completely stifled by the platform.

A number of amendments to the TC Executive resolution were put in. The platform not only did not allow speakers to propose these amendments, they didn't even have them read out in full. Instead, right at the end of the conference, Barrie Williams from the platform mentioned three amendments, and gave the Executive's opinion of what the amendments said and whether they should be accepted. Then the conference was not allowed

The 'Morning Star' of 31st January reported a statement from the North Wales Defence Committee criticising the International Socialists for using the issue of the Shrewsbury trials simply to boost IS.

IS replied to this charge in a leaflet put out at the Liverpool Trades Council conference. "Both John Llywarch and John Carpenter (two of the defendants on suspended sentences) are members of IS and there can be nothing 'unprincipled' about them speaking at meetings of the organisation to which they belong, just as it was quite right last week for Barry Scragg, Chairman of the North Wales Defence Committee and a member of the Communist Party,

## 1924 - The 'Zinoviev letter' election: a model for today's outbreak of red-baiting

# The Great Red-Scare Election

OVER THE PAST two years, the Tory government has been preparing and sharpening a whole armoury of anti working class weapons. Against the miners' strike they can now call on special police anti picket squads. The Heathrow exercise was designed to prepare public opinion for the use of troops against strikers. If the Tories feel confident enough, they will stop social security payments to strikers' families.

Among their propaganda weapons, perhaps the most effective is that of the Red Scare. They've used it liberally in the last few weeks, and have also threatened the Labour Party and trade union leaders with a Red Scare election — a tactic first used in the "Red Letter" election of 50 years ago, and which brought down the first Labour Government.

The election of 1923 had given Labour 191 seats in

Parliament, as against 159 for the Liberals and 259 for the Tories. So Labour had no absolute majority and indeed only half the seats of the Liberals and Tories combined. But they didn't combine. The ruling class was divided and this division was reflected in the unwillingness of the Liberals and Tories to form a coalition.

It was into this gap that Labour stepped and Ramsay MacDonald formed the first

Labour government in the following month. The fact that the two capitalist parties acquiesced to a Labour Government was not a sign of Labour's strength, but rather of the confidence of the bourgeois politicians that Labour would provide a safe stopgap. As Asquith put it, "if a Labour government is ever to be tried in this country, as it will be sooner or later, it could hardly be tried under safer conditions."

Labour's electoral programme was one of nationalisations and of dealing with unemployment; it laid particular stress on nationalising the mines.

If anything worthwhile was to come out of the Labour government, then the strategy would be to press ahead with party policy and force an election on these issues as soon as the Liberals and Tories combined to vote against them. With such a

strategy Labour would certainly have increased the number of its MPs, and could possibly have been returned as the largest single party.

But MacDonald did not fall short of Asquith's estimation. Rather than forcing an election on its own terms and around its own policies, the Labour government was concerned to use its few months of power to demonstrate that it was "fit to govern" — or in other words, that it was entirely subservient to the whims of capitalism and that the Red paint with which some had daubed it was not justified.

Unemployment increased, and prices went up; the mines weren't nationalised; and so eager were the Labour leaders to prove their respectability that they even evoked the Amalgamated Transport Workers' strike.

The excuse given for every betrayal was, of course, that Labour had to depend on Liberal support in order to survive as a government.

### ANTI-COMMUNIST AS THE NEXT MAN

But the idiocy of such an argument was that under no circumstances would the Labour government survive more than a year without an election anyway. And when that election came it was not centred around the Labour election policy of nationalisations and the repeal of war time anti strike legislation, but around a Red Scare. Thus for all their efforts, the Labour leaders got painted in brighter shades of red than ever, and the betrayal of their election policies meant that they had nothing left to do but whimper that they were as anti communist as the next man.

The Red Scare was sparked off by the infamous "Zinoviev Letter", the existence of which was announced to the world by the Daily Mail, just 5 days before polling was to take place.

The letter was supposedly sent to the British Communist Party by Zinoviev, "President of the Presidium of the IKKI", and Arthur MacManus, who was a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. Headed "very Secret" the letter called for a campaign to put pressure on Labour to ratify the Anglo Soviet Treaty which the Government had negotiated; for the building of communist cells within the Army and Navy and the munitions factories, and for the formation of a group of military experts within the CPGB.

### CLUMSY FORGERY

That the letter was a forgery there can be little doubt. Firstly there was no such body as the Presidium of the Executive Committee. Secondly the initials used for the Executive Committee were IKKI (i.e. the Russian initials) and not the usually used ECCI. Likewise USSR was used instead of SSSR, again unusually. Kuusinen's name appeared as Secretary to the ECCI, whereas in fact he was an ordinary member, and the Communist International was referred to as the "Third Communist International".

But this clumsy forgery was quite sufficient to dictate the terms of the election. The letter had been 'leaked' to the Daily Mail by someone in the Foreign Office, who had got their hands on it on 10th October. (The election was set to take place later in October).

### WHITE RUSSIAN PLOTTERS

Exactly how the letter came into the hands of the Foreign Office was never revealed. According to one story it had been intercepted by the Post Office, another said that it had been supplied by a source which could not be divulged, and another that it had been captured by British agents in Moscow. The truth of the matter was probably as stated by the Communist Party at the time, that the forgery was perpetrated by White Russian emigres intent on wrecking the Anglo Soviet Treaty.

A NINE months' long struggle for the right to work ended in compromise at the end of last month when workers from the LIP watch factory at Besancon, France, signed an agreement to set up a new holding company, Societe Europeene Horlogerie et d'Equipment Mecanique.

The LIP workers took over the factory last Spring, when faced with the threat of mass redundancy. They continued making watches, distributing and selling them mainly through the trade union movement and using the money to pay their own wages and maintain production.

### Daring

This daring experiment in the expropriation of bosses and the setting up of a system of workers' control was denounced by the boss class as "robbery". But it had plenty of active support from workers throughout western Europe. Demonstrations, strikes and fund raising rallies involving thousands of workers were held to keep the factory going. Working class families, workers'

## LIP'S STRUGGLE AGAINST REDUNDANCIES ENDS AT DOLE

organisations and student societies sent in orders for LIP watches.

But such an experiment cannot survive in the capitalist system. The workers and their families must eat, therefore they need money, but the only way to make money is by participating in capitalism and by being competitive.

The danger constantly loomed that the men could end up supervising their own wage cuts and sackings. Even if the factory could prove to be 'economic' boss class could make sure that difficulties were put in its way (lack of

rather revolutionary, and could have dangerous consequences.

Sales fell drastically and there were financial problems. Thus the workers were pressured into negotiations, and had to backtrack on their insistence that there be no redundancies. The holding company is only going to re employ a third of the workers at first, taking back another 200 by September.

### Slump

The fate of the other 400 rests in the hands of Claude Neuschwander, the new boss, who says that the number of workers to be employed depends on the efficiency of production and the size of the market. A slump in sale — highly probable given the present economic situation — would knock the men back to square one: the new company could even go bust.

Ironically, the 4 day non stop negotiations were held in a place called Dole, which is exactly where most of the men look like ending up. Alan Theasby

# Sadat sells out the Palestinian cause in Geneva talks

IN A BARE tent at kilometer 101 on the Cairo to Suez road, an Egyptian and an Israeli General met on January 18th to sign a 'disengagement' agreement. This was followed on the same afternoon by the signing, separately of course, by Golda Meir and Anwar el Sadat of the "United States Proposal" document prepared by Kissinger.

With that the war of last October was at an end.

At an end too was a whole era of Middle East politics, an era dominated by head on collisions between Zionism and the Arab people. The Geneva talks now going on make way for the Arab bourgeoisie's open betrayal of the struggle it has been forced to carry out under the pressure of the Arab masses, and in particular of the Palestinians.

The brand mark of this betrayal is the recognition by Egypt of the State of Israel, allowing for direct collaboration with Zionism. So far, however, imperialism has failed to draw the Algerians, Libyans, Syrians and Iraqis into the talks — let alone the representatives of the Palestinians themselves.

Of course, no definite statement has been issued by Egypt saying it will recognise Israel. But all the signs are unmistakable. First, the disengagement agreement itself is a clear break with previous Egyptian policy that "any agreement on disengagement of forces near the Suez Canal must be followed by iron clad guarantees of a full Israeli withdrawal from the entire Sinai Peninsula."

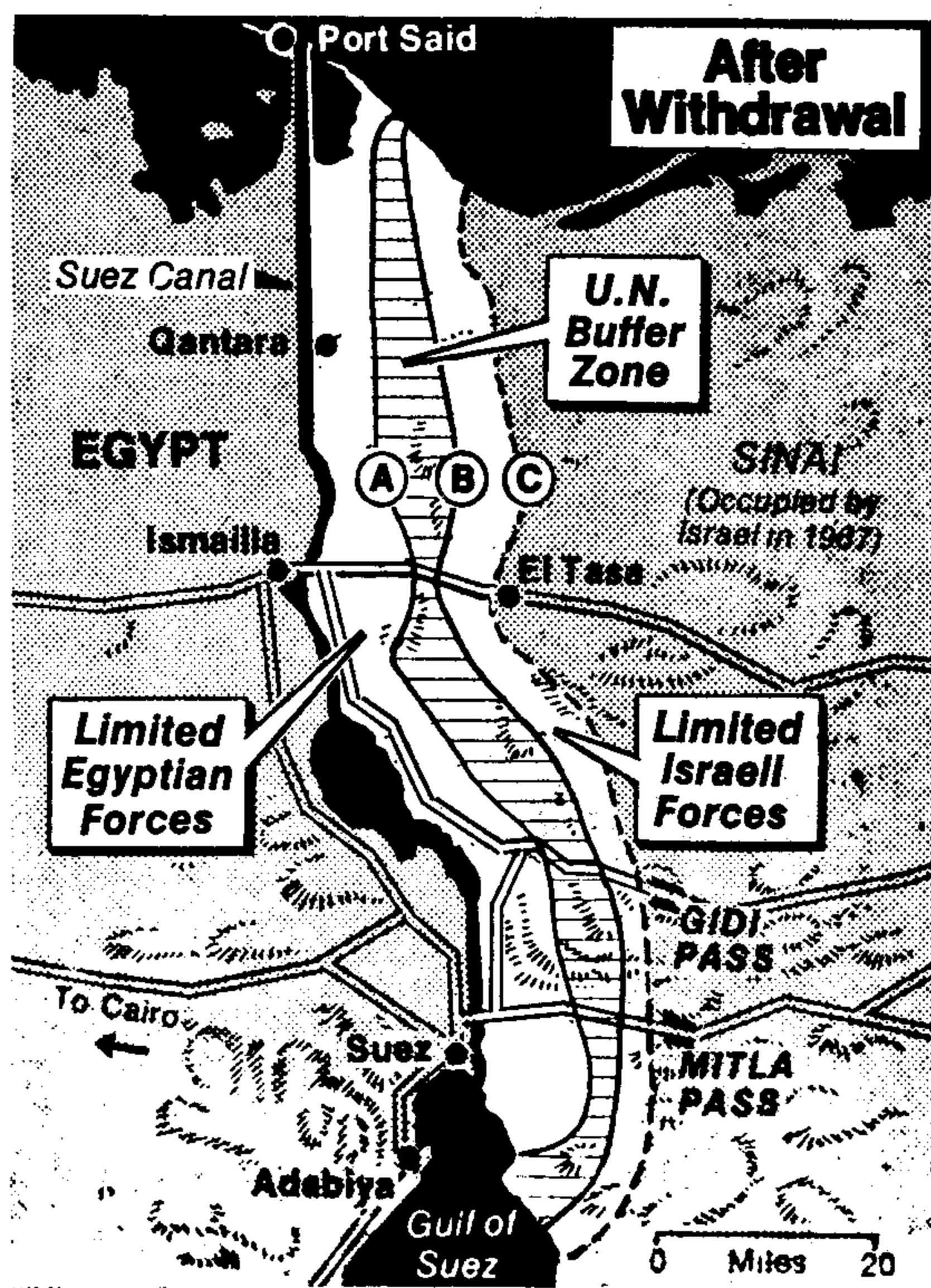
## Recognition

But on January 18th Egypt agreed to disengagement on the following terms: it would be given a narrow strip along the east bank of the Canal in return for a reduction of Egyptian troop levels in the Sinai Peninsula to less than a tenth of present strength and a withdrawal of SAM 2 missiles to the west bank of the Canal, out of range of Israeli occupied territory.

Meanwhile Israel withdraws from the small and untenable enclave on the west bank in return for a strengthening of its defences. This will come firstly from the withdrawal of Egypt's troops and missiles, secondly from the establishment of a UN occupied corridor running the length of the Sinai Peninsula between the front lines. And thirdly, because these allow for a concentration of Israel's forces at three strategic points which are the key to the whole of Sinai, the town of el Tasa, the Gidi Pass and the Mitla Pass.

But in the signing of the agreement, Egypt has made a political capitulation far more significant than the military one. Egypt has accepted the right of imperialism to determine Egyptian troop levels on Egypt's own soil! And by agreeing to the UN occupied buffer strip, Sadat is saying that he gives up his intention to wage war on the racist settler state of Israel.

These are the first fruits of the Geneva talks. But there is more to come. Already, hidden within the wording of the disengagement proposal, is a veiled endorsement of UN Resolution 242. This resolution demands Arab recognition of Israel in exchange for an Israeli withdrawal from all territory occupied by it in the 1967 war.



But while Egypt, in participating in the Geneva talks, moves toward recognition of the Israeli state, it is well known that Israel has no intention of withdrawing from large areas of the territory it annexed. Jerusalem, Gaza, Sharm el Sheikh, the West Bank of the Jordan and the Syrian Golan Heights are all declared to be "non negotiable"; and the result of the recent elections in Israel confirms that any Government trying to trade any of these off would fall.

UN 242 prattles piously about peace. Yet all it says about the Palestinians is that there should be "a just settlement of the refugee problem". The states to be recognised are existing states, and that doesn't include Palestine. At the very 'best' the Palestinians are, in its plan, to be herded into an impotent 'Bantustan' divided between the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza strip. There they will be left to rot under joint Israel Jordan 'supervision', including the liquidation of the Palestinian resistance. Israel would guarantee its own interests and those of US imperialism; Jordan, headed by the same Hussein who butchered the Palestinians in the 'Black September' of 1970, would guarantee the interests of the Arab rulers and traditional European interests.

## Finance

In this way the Arab rulers would kill several birds with the one stone of detente with Zionism. Already there is a prospect of the Suez Canal being reopened now that Egypt holds both banks again. Japan has invested \$140 million to clear the Canal, making it fit for shipping. The USA and Italy have offered finance for further parts of a clearance and reopening programme.

Thus imperialism would cut its transport costs; and the Egyptian bourgeoisie would be enriched by a dramatic inflow of foreign currency. These investment moves are likely in the long term to extend well beyond the Canal and we could yet see a gradual denationalisation and foreign

penetration of the Egyptian economy. But this is a long way off as yet.

So far, the Assad regime of Syria has denounced the talks and the disengagement; but hardly from very principled reasons. Stating their case, the Syrian Foreign Minister said there would be "no military disengagement agreement that is not linked to complete Israeli withdrawal from occupied Syrian territory." Not Palestinian territory, but only Syrian territory. Thus the Assad regime's 'support' for the Palestinians ends the moment it can make a separate Syrian settlement regarding the Golan Heights.

## Re-alignment

But for the present, the contrast between Egypt's position and that of Syria (and Libya, Algeria & Iraq) can also be seen reflected in the ranks of the Palestinian movement. Yasser Arafat, Sadat's tandem partner, has actually supported Sadat's initiatives; whilst the majority of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation as well as the Syrian backed Al Saigah section and the Iraqi backed Arab Liberation Front have denounced the agreements and the talks.

The Kremlin is exerting its utmost pressure to get Iraq and Syria to line up with Sadat. Last year Russian Foreign Minister Gromyko warned Assad that he would not support a rejection of UN 242. Now Gromyko's deputy, Kuznetsov, repeats these warnings.

So once again the policy of 'peaceful co existence' (i.e. a mutual agreement with imperialism on balance of power), reinforced by Russia's strategic (naval) need of the Suez Canal, means a cynical betrayal of revolutionary aspirations.

The entire gamut of cynical calculations made by the Geneva participants can, however, be blown sky high by renewed outbreaks like this week's clashes on the Syrian border or by the actions of the Palestinian resistance. Arafat's position is by no means unchallenged, and the courage and tenacity of the Palestinians in the past is an indication that they will not be quietly coralled by the Sadats and Husseins.

The interests of the Palestinians are utterly irreconcilable with those of imperialism and Zionism and their collaborators. This can set a definite limit on the concrete results of the Geneva talks. The participants want those talks to break out of these limits and sketch out a new realignment in the Middle East.

For this to happen, the "peace" talks will have to turn into a council of war .... war against the Palestinians and their supporters amongst the Arab masses.



Above: closely guarded tent at Kilometer 101

JACK PRICE

Executive is prepared to leave them in the lurch, allowing the sort of demoralisation that will bring further guilty pleas, then other militants cannot be. Nor can the working class afford to let the Tories get away with their Shrewsbury test cases.

## Support Committees

The widest possible support must be built for the 19th February and 18th March actions. Militants building support committees for the miners must see to it that these committees take up the cause of the Shrewsbury 24, as one that is inseparably linked with the miners' cause.

M. THOMAS

made no coordinated effort. Instead, apparently, IS preferred to let the Trades Council Executive have its way.

With all this said, though, it must be emphasised that the SCALE of the activity IS has mounted puts to shame bodies like the Defence Committee, like Charter, like the Liverpool Trades Council and like the Liaison Committee. These bodies, with far greater resources than IS, have, under Communist Party influence, persistently confined their efforts to what is acceptable to trade union officialdom.

The 'Morning Star' has no right to condemn IS's activity until the CP corrects its own lack of activity.

to vote on the amendments; only to rubber stamp the Executive resolution.

The Executive justified its position by setting up a false alternative: either their "realistic" attitude, or wild cries of "General Strike at once to bring down the Government". There were a few speakers, like Bill Hunter (Liverpool AUEW) who did just talk about an immediate General Strike as the answer to everything. But more serious alternatives were not given a hearing. An amendment put by Workers Fight was not even mentioned by Barrie Williams in his summary. Protests from the floor were steamrollered by the platform calling to go to a vote.

## I.S. and the Defence Committee

to speak at a Communist Party election rally in Merthyr". And IS point out that they have collected a large amount of money for the Defence Committee.

IS of course DOES have the right to try to recruit members from its activity around the Shrewsbury case. But what is at issue here is effectively the building of a private defence campaign separate from the Defence Committee. And when it comes to the question of decisive action to free the three, this can cripple the campaign; because decisive action can only be called if there is ONE central body

which is going to call it. IS's protests would be more convincing if IS had shown some serious interest in the Shrewsbury case earlier than September 1973 (seven months after the 24 were arrested!), and if IS members were not refusing to work in the various united front local committees than have been set up across the country.

If IS had organised itself seriously for this purpose, it had the resources to decisively sway the Liverpool Trades Council conference towards an effective, militant policy. But, despite some good speeches from individual IS members like John Deason, IS

which had just ended excluded Communists from standing as Labour Party candidates and declared Labour Party and Communist Party membership to be incompatible? Hadn't they jailed J.R.Campbell, the editor of the CP's weekly paper, for inciting mutiny amongst the armed forces?

But it was no use. Grovel as they may, the reactionaries would not let them off the hook. Labour was branded as the 'tool of foreign agents', a danger to 'national security'. The election became a one issue affair, and Labour's one independent piece of policy, the recognition of the Soviet Union and the Anglo Soviet agreement now hung round their necks like a dead weight.

For its betrayal of party policy and for its anti communism, Labour leaders reaped a bitter harvest. In the election Labour lost 40 seats and the Tories were returned with 415 MPs, their biggest majority since 1832.

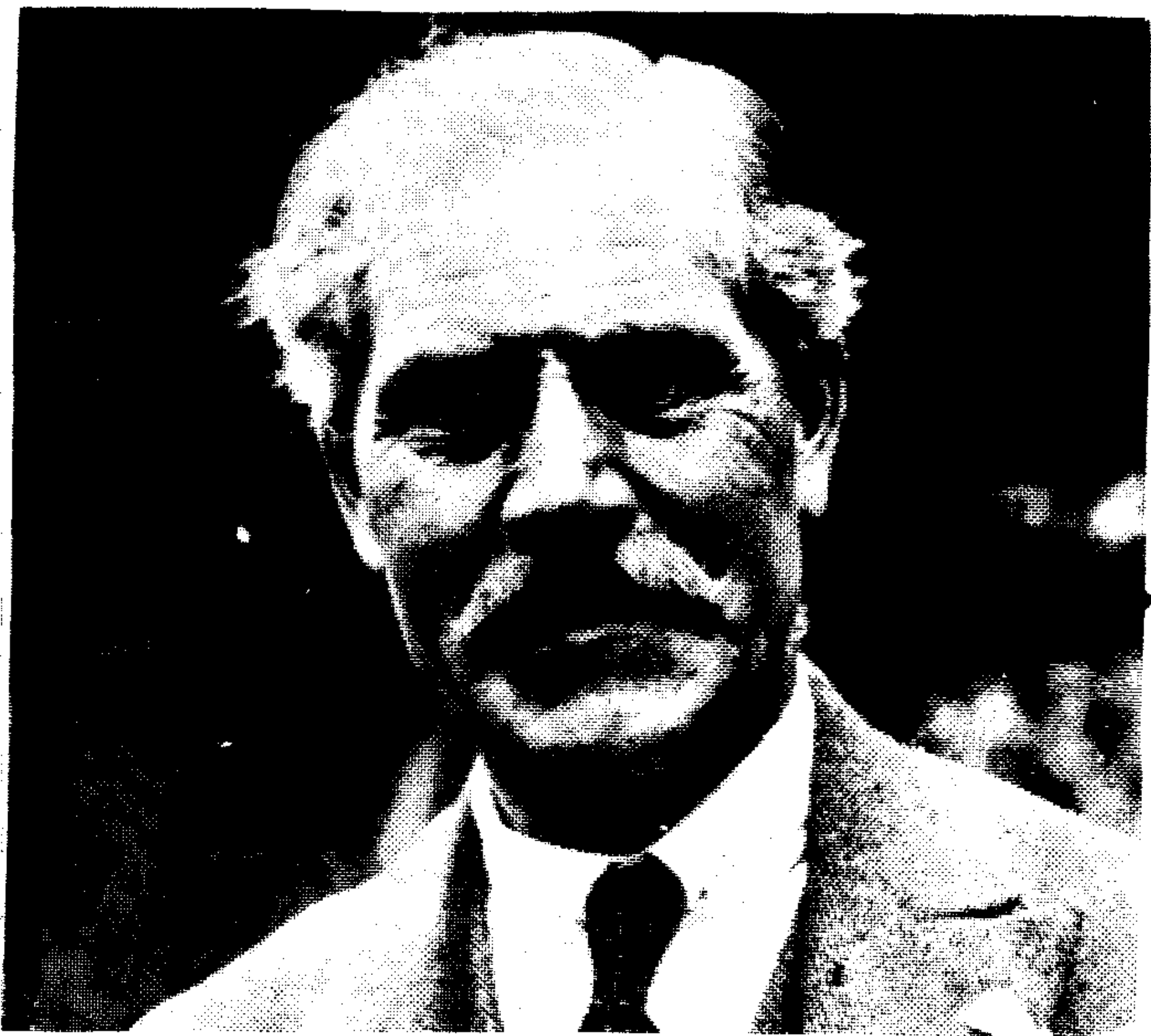
## UNION v. STATE ELECTION

But the "Red Letter" scare did not in fact shake the hard core of working class Labour support. Labour's vote increased from 4,348,379 in 1923 to 5,482,629 and in North Battersea, Saklatvala regained his seat on a Communist ticket (in 1922 he had stood as a Labour candidate) defeating a 'constitutionalist' who had Liberal and Tory support.

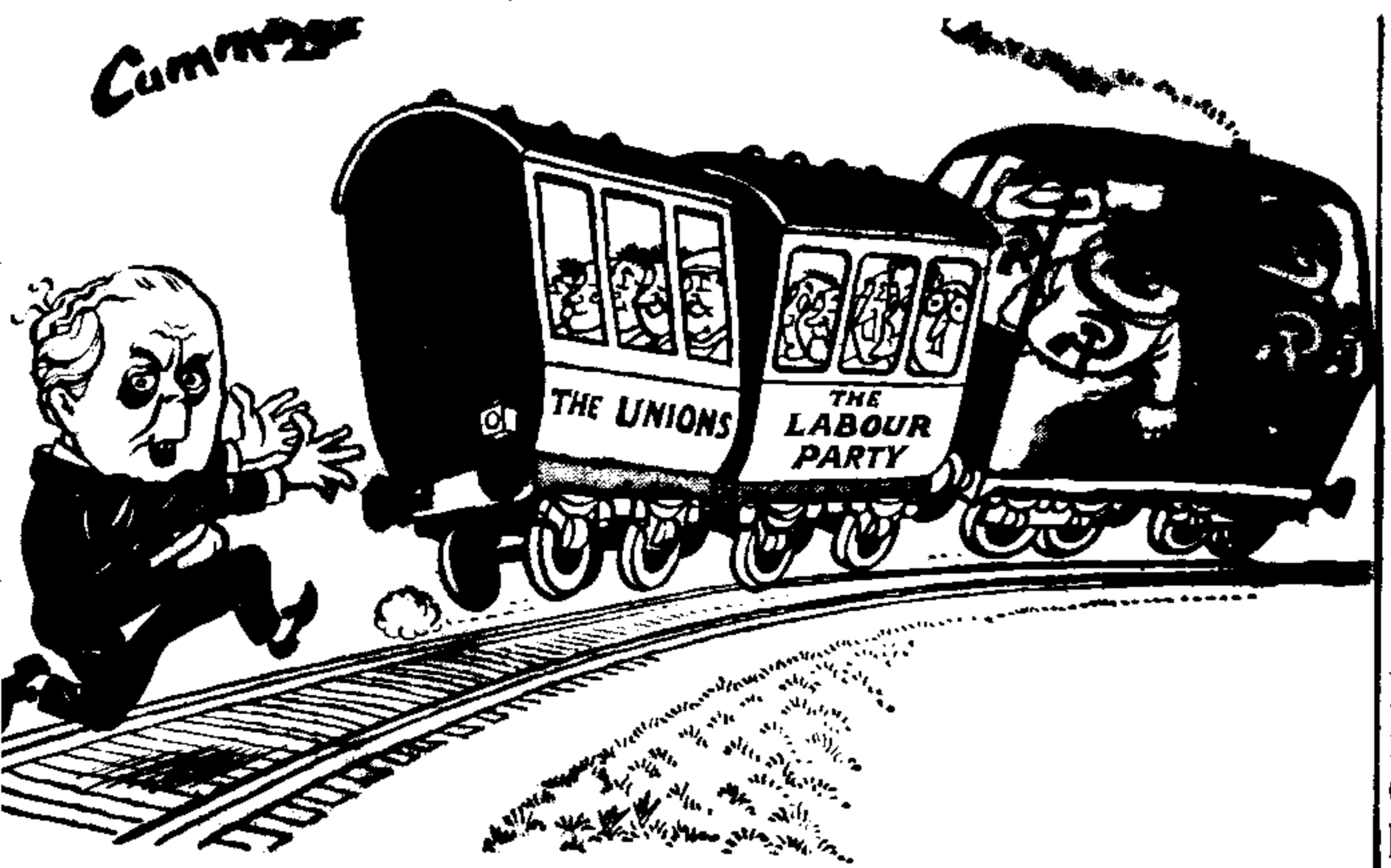
What had happened was that the 'Red Scare' had shaken the middle class voter away from the Liberals and towards the Tories — exactly the same vote which MacDonald had hoped to attract towards Labour by his weak kneed policies.

In any 'Union v. State' election which Edward Heath decides to call, we can guarantee that the same Red Scare tactics will be used, with exactly the same aim of frightening the 'floating voter' into the hands of the Tories. The lesson of 1924 is that nothing will help them more in this aim than the sort of capitulation the TUC produced over Phase 3, or the anti communist pleadings of Labourites like Reg Prentice and Jim Callaghan.

PAUL ITIZE



Above: Ramsay MacDonald — Tories thought him safe  
Below: Express's contribution to today's outpouring. "Nearly 50 years ago" was 1924 — but the 'warning' it refers to was a forgery.



In any event, the Foreign Office sent it to MacDonald, who returned it with instructions that they should find out whether or not it was genuine and publish it if it wasn't a forgery. MacDonald also approved a draft protest note to the Russian Charge d'Affairs, Lakovsky, and left the matter with the Foreign Office, who were to consult him before making any move.

Someone at the Foreign Office, however, decided to place MacDonald's hand and the letter was leaked to the Daily Mail. The same day the Foreign Office published it and also sent off the protest note, without MacDonald knowing a thing was happening.

The next day the storm broke. The press started a anti communist witch

hunt, with the government supposedly in the hands of the communists. "Union Jack or Red Flag" screamed the Daily Mail, "Vote Conservative and rid the country of the government that is controlled by the Communists who take their orders from Moscow, the home of wholesale murder and starvation."

At first the Government Ministers claimed that the letter was a forgery, as indeed it was. But that line fell through when it became apparent that MacDonald had approved the protest note. The Labour Ministers protested that they were the most vehement anti communists, as indeed they were, and they produced an impressive list to prove their claim. Had they not at the Labour Party conference

# Link students grants campaign to miners' struggle

A massive demonstration of students is expected to gather at the Ministry of Education on Friday 9th February as part of the campaign for higher grants.

The National Union of Students, together with the Ministry (NUS) has estimated that a rise of £135 to £250 a year is a necessary minimum figure, with the real value of student grants now only 75% of the 1963 value. It is feared that the Government will use the 'Phase 3' education cuts made in 1968 to evade paying up. The NUS is also demanding an end to the means test (parental contributions) and equal grants for married women. There are fears that these demands, too, will go by the board.

The success or failure of the campaign for higher grants will not only depend on the amount of involvement there is in the Grants Campaign. It will also depend on the support students receive from other sections of the population

(particularly the trade union movement) and on the confidence, or lack of it, of the government.

The struggle of students for higher grants, and their support for the miners against Phase 3, are not separate.

A successful miners' strike will give confidence to all opposition groups, including students, against the government. A successful students' strike will weaken the ideological ability of the government (even if it is a Labour government) by their refusal to meet the students' demands.

Many students have already started to form solidarity committees, and linked themselves up with local support committees; in some areas these have also connected with regional solidarity committees (e.g. the London Action Committee, which will be meeting to

coordinate London student support in the strike).

Militant students should:

1. Form a solidarity committee in your college (under the auspices of the Student Union

where possible), if it doesn't exist already. Where it does, join it and campaign for others to do so.

2. Organize benefits to raise money for the miners.
3. As part of the week of action

on the grants campaign, invite miners to speak at your college. At any rate, contact the NUM and offer support.

At stake for students is not just higher grants, but the future of higher education. The December cuts topped off 'around £200 million' from education, which have entailed cuts to the building programme and cuts in the grants of some £7,000 students — those at A level colleges, local techs etc receiving discretionary grants.

The Government, given a free hand, will rationalise higher education out of recognition and squeeze out thousands of students from working class homes. If the government is to be stopped, higher grants won't be enough. It must be defeated in the coming decisive battle with the working class — and out in front of the working class are the miners.

That is why students must give active support to the miners.

Denny Kelly

## "Sectarian slaughter was Army's doing"

By Tim Finnegan

Both the militant Protestant UVF and the Provisional IRA have accused the British Army in Northern Ireland of the savage slaughter of two electricity workers on January 31st.

13 men were playing cards in a mess hut, when two men, one armed with a submachine gun, burst in. First they relieved all the workers of their wage packets. Then they ordered any Protestants present to kneel down. Two did so, though some Protestants refused to obey. The gunman then opened fire with the machine gun over the heads of the kneeling two, spraying the remaining 11 with bullets.

Two died, one was very seriously injured. A Protestant who had remained standing was also injured.

The killers appear to have been members of the so called "Ulster Freedom Fighters" — a mysterious organisation which has claimed responsibility for some of the most savage and indiscriminate sectarian murders.

The UVF and IRA charge is that the UVF is in fact an undercover section of the British

Army. According to the theories of the influential Brigadier Kitson, until recently stationed in N.Ireland, the creation of such a gang would make good military sense. The use of what Kitson calls "pseudo gangs" has been common British Army practice when fighting against guerilla forces. Kitson wrote a book about how such disguised British operatives were very effectively used to defeat the Mau Mau freedom fighters in Kenya in the 1950s.

Why would the British Army slaughter electricity workers? The UVF and IRA both believe it was a deliberate attempt to foment sectarian violence and short circuit any possibility of a UVF and IRA agreement. Both organisations have recently made gestures towards each other — the UVF appealing for an end to the sectarian killing of Catholics and the IRA has called off attacks on off duty members of the UDR (the mainly Protestant civil defence force).

The UVF are discussing the Northern Ireland situation. This is part of the ferment and the search for new solutions generated by the setting up of the new Assembly. If such discussions even tone down the sectarian divisions, then they are very much to be welcomed.

The point however, is that such a development would present a real threat to British rule in N.Ireland and its puppet Assembly. It could spell an end to divide and rule politics.

When the UVF and the IRA unite to make such a charge as they have against the British Army, it should be taken seriously. And what a comment it is on the Army's supposed role of 'keeping the factions apart' and stopping the killing.

## CASTINGS STRIKE OFFICIAL

One February 1st, the strike at Art Castings, Nuneaton, was finally made official by the T&GWU. If no settlement is reached by the end of this week, members of the T&G still working in the factory will be called out.

With support for these Indian strikers rapidly growing throughout the area after they had stood up to continual police harassment of their pickets, the management is showing signs of weakening. On January 29th they offered to reinstate 81 of the 83 strikers, but refused to reinstate the two militants whose reinstatement was the reason for the strike.

It was the police harassment that brought the strikers to the attention of the local trade union movement. Mass pickets were mounted in their defence. After one mass picket, two stewards returned to Sterling Metals with stories of the violence of the police. Other workers, doubting the stories, went along to see for themselves — and as soon as they arrived were pounced on by the police. Now the shop stewards committee of Sterling Metals, the largest factory in Nuneaton, has pledged full support to the strike.

Support could also escalate now that the strike is official, as other factories have promised to help when the strike is official. Already, TASS members at Alvis, a BLMC subsidiary which makes military vehicles, have backed castings from Art Castings. Other users of this firm's parts are the big assembly plants, among them Massey Ferguson, Coventry, Perkins Diesels, Peterborough, Fords Dagenham.

Contact the strikers (0203 85785) with offers of financial support & picketing.

## Election

from Page 1.

struggles. And provided that we don't allow the Labour leaders to con the working class into damping down its militancy.

There must be no let up during the election campaign or after it in the battle on the industrial front. Miners' President Joe Gormley wants to postpone the miners' strike set for February 10th until after the elections. This can only play into the hands of bosses and the Tories.

We must hit them both industrially and electorally.

A Labour government led by Wilson, Callaghan and their cronies never was and never can be a substitute for the self reliance and self help of the rank and file.

**SUPPORT the miners! Build solidarity committees now!**

**ACTIVE and unconditional support for Labour against the Tories!**

**DEMAND that Labour MPs pledge themselves to fight for the following:**

Immediately release the three trade unionists jailed at Sherburny.

Repeal the Industrial Relations Act and compensate its trade union victims.

End all government interference with the trade unions.

No Incomes Policy under capitalism! Demolish Phase 3 and the 'Counter Inflation' legislation of which it is part.

Bring in a guaranteed £30 minimum wage tied closely to the cost of living.

Scrap the Housing

Finance Act.

Enforce equal pay for women now.

Abolish all racist Immigration Acts.

Unconditionally withdraw British troops from Ireland.

S. Matgamna

## Explosion

from Page 1.

centuries, have every right to fight the British Army and to attempt to drive it from Northern Ireland.

There is no logical reason why they shouldn't strike at that army in Britain itself. That is what they did in blowing up the coach.

Those responsible for the deaths of the two children and the woman in that coach are, in the last analysis, those in Westminster, in their refusal to withdraw the British Army from Ireland.

The British Army is itself responsible every day for mass repression in Northern Ireland. Despite the setting up of the Northern Ireland Assembly a month ago, the Army still terrorises Catholics in areas like the Falls Road of Belfast raiding houses that is, wrecking and ransacking them, beating up men and even teenage boys of 15.

There is still a concentration camp in Northern Ireland run by the British Army. Two years ago the British Army shot down in cold blood 13 unarmed men in Derry, and even the official court Coroner in the inquiry that followed described the killing of the 13 as 'cold blooded murder'.

This is what produces incidents like this week's coach bomb and like the bombing of the Old Bailey. Only people who are pacifists — who reject violence in all conditions — can without hypocrisy condemn the IRA, and the Northern Ireland Catholics,

for fighting back.

Those like the British press who use the accidental death of two children and the wife of a soldier for an orgy of pious indignation are disgusting hypocrites. They do not protest at the regime of terror in Northern Ireland. They did not protest at the slaughter of Bloody Sunday. They support the British Government's concentration camp policy in Northern Ireland.

Their cries of indignation are no more than shots in the propaganda war of the reactionary, brutal, anti working class Tory government.

Whether or not the recent bombing in England makes any tactical or strategic sense is another matter. This newspaper doubts it. But we support the right of the IRA to use such tactics if it thinks fit and to strike at the British Army in Britain. Despite the tragic deaths of the woman and children, the bombing of the army coach was at least aimed at the right target.

There is one way to end such incidents. Get the British Army out of Ireland — NOW! Unconditionally.

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## RACE TODAY

"In posing the revolutionary potential of the Asian and Caribbean peoples, the new RACE TODAY takes a distinctive place in British journalism..."

C.L.R. James.

The monthly magazine which records and recognises the struggle of black people nationally and internationally. Essential for the political activist.

February Issue: "The Black Explosion in Schools." March Issue: "Trade Unionism vs Revolution in South Africa. Asian workers' struggle." Per Issue 15p. Annual Sub. £1.60 184, King's Cross Road, W.C.1.

## MEETINGS

Nottingham W.F. 15th February 8pm at The Lion, Clumber Street, Nottingham. Andrew Hornung on LENIN

London W.F. 10th February, 8pm at the Golden Lion, Britannia Street, Kings Cross. Andrew Hornung on LENIN

## FUND

AT the end of January, the £400 CRISIS FUND stood at £417.69

This is a great boost to the weekly Workers Fight. Thanks to all contributors.

## HOME OFFICE HUMBUG ON FORCE-FEEDING

THE HOME Office last week replied to the pressure of enquiries regarding the forced feeding of 4 of the Winchester 'bomb trial' prisoners, by coming up with the fact that they have been 'force feeding' another prisoner, Keith Bailie, for two and a half years. And Bailie, apparently, is in the best of health.

Before everyone jumps to the conclusion that forcible feeding is positively beneficial, it must be stated that Bailie was merely artificially fed. He has not had to submit to being held down by several warders while a large tube was rammed down his throat, then held down to stop the food being spewed up. He has not had the experience of having a "doctor's" hand held over his mouth to make him swallow down his own vomit, as happened to Marian Price, nor of being made to get into a bed while covered in vomit, as was Hugh Feeney.

60 years ago, wide sections of public opinion recognised the hypocrisy of Home Office statements that forcible feeding was done to save the lives of hunger strikers. Yet now this view is being touted as 'reasonable' by such papers as The Guardian.

But the choice is not as presented, between forced feeding and death. It is between forcefeeding and allowing the Winchester prisoners to serve their sentences in Northern Ireland, near their relatives.

The Home Office has attempted to hide behind rules and regulations. Yet the rules themselves show that the hardship now inflicted on the Irish prisoners is totally gratuitous and vindictive.

At a meeting at the Conway Hall on February 2nd, legal experts exploded the Home Office excuses by examining the prison rules. The rules by particular stress on the importance of securing regular visits for prisoners. It is in accordance with these rules that prisoners are generally held at prisons near to their homes.

In stark contrast with smug statements from the Prison Authorities and certain sections of the press, to the effect that the hunger strikers "on reasonable terms with the medical staff who carry out the unpleasant task of force feeding them", is a letter from Hugh Feeney smuggled out of Gartree Prison shortly after he arrived there at the beginning of



last month: "Today the 1st January I was once again force fed and once again was sick. ... Force was used, and after I was violently sick it was explained to me by the doctor that he could be a lot tougher. He also forbade my having tobacco."

"I refused an injection but was not allowed to, and it was given against my will, to determine my appetite."

"I remain in solitary confinement and am entirely naked as the doctor forbids me to wear a blanket or towel...."

"The first feed I was given here was full of salt and the wooden clamp was banged against my teeth. As I said force was used to cause me as much discomfort as

Mary Feeney, Mr. Liam Kelly and Clare Price study the hundreds of signatures on a birthday card for Marian Price, which the prison authorities would not allow her to receive. Photo Workers' Press.

possible....

"The first day the doctor ordered me into bed even though I was covered in vomit; not very nice. In every sense of the word it reminds me of a Russian concentration camp, no mail, psychological force feeding [appetite injections] solitary, no clothes not even a towel, no smokes — all on doctor's orders called Discipline. High Feeney, Gartree Prison."

## Militant teachers demand full claim

ON 4th FEBRUARY THE Burnham Committee put the official seal on the sell out decided by the National Union of Teachers Executive on 26 January. It approved a settlement of about 8%, within Phase 3, in place of the teachers' 25% claim.

Outside the committee meeting, 70 teachers, delegated from schools across London, mounted a lobby to demand the full claim.

There were also calls to support the miners. And this is the key question. Not even the NUT Executive denies that the 25% claim is necessary to avoid a

drastic deterioration in the education system and teachers' living standards. Either an alliance with the miners, to break Phase 3, Phase 4, and the Government; or it will be the teachers and children's education which are broken — that is the alternative!

After the lobby, a brief meeting decided to set up an action committee of representatives from schools supporting the full claim. (For more details, contact Jon Duveen, phone 226 2491).

This action committee, and other militant teachers, will have to work fast, to bring about a vote to reject the settlement at the NUT Special Conference called for 16 February. Already, though, *Harding Teachers' Association* has elected delegates committed to reject the settlement.

## NEW ATTACKS ON 3 NUT 'REBELS'

THE CASE of the 'Wandsworth 3' is now almost a year old.

On February 17th last year, at a mass teachers' rally organised by the NUT after a demonstration over the London Agreement question, the union Executive refused to discuss a motion put by the Wandsworth Teachers' Association. The motion called for solidarity with other workers in a link up to fight Phase 2, and even though the overwhelming majority of the meeting wanted it put, the platform was adamant.

After much heckling, the Executive lost control and abandoned the meeting.

Soon after, three prominent union militants were picked off and used as scapegoats. They were promptly hauled up before various union committees, after which no doubt mindful of the fact that the 3 had been supported by other members with demonstrations and pickets the issue was quietly dropped.

That was three months ago. But suddenly the union bureaucracy is taking a renewed interest in the disciplining of these 3. A meeting of the Professional Conduct Committee was held on Sunday 2nd February, and this too was picketed by Rank & File (including) NUT members from around the country.

Why the new interest? Could it perhaps be to do with the fact that two of the Wandsworth 3 — Fred Scott and Dave Whately — are standing for Executive positions in the forthcoming union elections?

One thing, though, is for sure: the people who should be hauled up and disciplined by the Union — that is, by its members — are the gang who've just sold out our 25% pay claim for a mere 8%, adding our numbers to the list of 5 million other workers that Heath is claiming think Phase 3 is "fair"....

Ian Hollingsworth