



Next issue
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Because of Christmas 'Socialist Press' will not appear again until 4 January 1978. In the meantime the Editorial Board would like to wish all readers and supporters Seasonal Greetings.

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PARRY PLANS 10% SELL-OUT



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Parry

Firefighters from all over the country will gather outside Congress House in London today to confront the TUC traitors who stand between them and their 30% claim.

But it is becoming clearer by the day that among the enemies of the strike must be counted Terry Parry himself and the rest of the right wing leadership of the Fire Brigades Union.

Government police

Even as the TUC play out their role of government police force inside the trade union movement by preventing any section coming out alongside the firemen, Parry is trying his hardest to accept the government offer

TUC keeps firemen isolated

of 10% plus promises of wage rises later.

And he has made no call for other unions with claims outstanding to take action now.

When the bosses' offer was put out to the membership it met with resounding rejection. Yet the FBU executive met for nine hours last week to discuss the vote.

"Flexibility"

Afterwards, the Executive immediately proposed talks with the local authority employers to seek some improvement that would allow Parry to recall the delegates conference.

On Monday night, after talks had allegedly "broken down" with employers, Parry declared that he was simply looking for "some flexibility" either on the 10% or on the phasing of the future proposals "and then the matter will be resolved."

This ignores completely the need to destroy the 10%

limit. 14 million workers are in the pay queue behind the firemen.

Healey's pay controls must be crushed if living standards are to be defended for any section of workers. Even the latest offer to the firemen makes that clear.

The firemen have claimed 30% now. The employers have offered only 10% with a two year commitment to take firemen to the level of the top 25% of skilled workers.

Cut in wages

By leaving pay controls intact, this offer would ensure that the members are tied to a steady cut in real wages in future years beyond the scope of the deal—and that the rises over a two year period will be limited to three sets of (say) 10% plus just under £9 spread over the two years.

The FBU—if it accepted this deal—would set a precedent for both government and the TUC to move

towards fixed league tables for all public sector workers—a plan already put forward by David Basnett, general secretary of the GMWU.

Break off talks

Firemen must demand that Parry breaks off all talks until the employers agree to break the 10% limit and offer more money now.

Pressure on the TUC must be increased. Motions should be passed through union branches calling on executives to support the firemen.

Collections should also be made—particularly as social security is being withheld from the firemen.

Not enough

But solidarity of this kind is not nearly enough for those who really want to beat the coalition and the TUC.

The decision of NUPE to reject the first vote of the membership and now to accept the employers' offer of 10% for one million local authority workers is a vicious blow against firemen, public employees and the whole working class.

So long as the TUC can hold workers back through the 12-month rule or allow them into battle only one at a time the Liberals are happy to sustain the government in their concealed coalition which is designed simply and solely to bolster wage control.

Chief guardians

The TUC are conscious of the fact that if the firemen should win, the Lib-Lab government will almost certainly fall.

So, as chief allies of the Lib-Lab coalition, the TUC have been enlisted as chief guardians of the 10% limit.

For this reason the FBU strike has always been far more than simply a pay battle. It involves government.

Vital step

Only the Workers Socialist League has from the outset focussed on the need to develop beyond simple calls for "solidarity" and "support", to tackle the question of mobilising pay strikes alongside the firemen.

This remains the next vital step if the 10% policy is to be broken once and for all.



Sadat—is he bowing to Washington or to Mecca?

Playing Carter's tune

"He who pays the piper calls the tune", says the old proverb.

So it was last week when Zionist piper Begin was in Washington to discuss his latest refrain with his chief backer and main organiser of world imperialism, President Carter.

The "peace" proposals put forward by Begin and later partly leaked to the press involved no retreat whatsoever in the sovereignty of the settler regime beyond handing back a few worthless pieces of barren desert in the Sinai peninsula to Egypt.

"Concessions"

Such are the so-called concessions being granted by the Zionists.

The capitalist press of the entire world is engaged on an extraordinary public relations exercise on behalf of these plans, trying to make the weak and fearful Sadat look like a heroic peace maker and to make his many Arab opponents appear unreasonable.

At the same time the Zionist colonists are being cast in the role of reluctant but definite conciliators.

Beneath this fantasy lies the reality of a hard faced Zionist regime unprepared to make any concession to Palestinian national rights and imperialist backers who, while more ready to compromise with bourgeois and feudal Arab interests in the area for the sake of international exploitation, will not in any way weaken the Zionist enclave which provides an invaluable spearhead for them in their efforts to divide and rule in the area.

Lip service

Carter, as is well known, has begun to pay some lip service to Palestinian national rights by using such phrases as "homeland" in some of his speeches earlier this year. The purpose of this was to

force the Palestinians into a compromise, possibly even including a West Bank state with some sovereign rights.

This purpose was made clear in Carter's violent denunciation last week of the Palestine Liberation Organisation as "unconstructive", "unco-operative" and "unworthy" of a seat at the Geneva peace talks.

These statements were combined with efforts by Sadat and the world's capitalist media to woo so-called moderate Palestinian opinion on the West Bank.

Efforts will no doubt be made to pull some of the bourgeois Arab regimes, particularly Syria, into the so-called pro-peace efforts.

In this process the attitude of the Soviet Union will be crucial, and Carter's statement that how "constructive" the Soviet Union has recently been, shows that he sees a role for them there.

Recent visit

One other interesting aspect of the diplomatic comings and goings in the Middle East has been Begin's recent visit to London for 5 days before his trip to Washington and again yesterday (20 December) to see Callaghan.

Social democrats and Stalinists, basing themselves on peaceful coexistence and collaboration with imperialism, are both incapable of offering any way forward in the struggles of the oppressed Palestinians or the Israeli working class.

A programme must be developed to assert the political independence of both Israeli and Arab masses from their own capitalist class as the basis on which to fight for an end to national oppression and imperialist exploitation in the Middle East.



TIM



INTERNATIONAL

TURKISH CRISIS

DEEPENS AS NF

LOSES MAJORITY

The National Front coalition government in Turkey is in acute crisis in the aftermath of this month's municipal elections.

Eight deputies have resigned from President Demirel's Justice Party—leaving him stranded with only 221 coalition supporters in the 450-seat Parliament.

The elections themselves were marked by increasing fascist violence which ended with 13 dead and 67 wounded. The results paralleled the October General Election.

Lost heavily

The Justice Party lost heavily, particularly in the municipal areas. The main bourgeois opposition party—Ecevit's RPP—now controls 42 out of 67 of these local councils, while the Justice Party won control of only 15.

The fascist National Action Party took control of 5 councils. But the left wing parties attracted only 2% of the total vote and failed to win control of a single area.

The swing to Ecevit's party—which only won 33 councils in the last elections—indicates the growing hostility and resentment at the right wing policies of the NF government.

No way forward

But it also indicates the crisis of political leadership in the working class, since Ecevit's party is in no way a workers' party and offers no

way forward for workers or peasants.

Meanwhile the fascists are gaining in electoral strength, and growing more confident as increasing sections of the capitalist class begin to conclude that the old "democratic" forms of rule are not adequate to solve their acute economic problems.

No stability

The resignations from the Justice Party must be seen in this light. While the immediate consequence might be the fall of Demirel and Ecevit forming a government, this will not create stability in Turkey.

The IMF are demanding drastic measures against the working class before agreeing to part with a \$1 billion loan vital to preserve the Turkish economy.

Running out

Industry in Turkey is even now running out of essential raw materials through lack of foreign currency.

Whichever government continues in office, the capitalist class must attempt to enforce further devaluation of the lira, price increases, and wage controls if the IMF is to be placated.

To do so means confronting the workers' movement. And this is why the fascist forces are now gathering strength. Provocations are increasing.

Fifty four students were wounded after a bomb went off in a care in Ankara known to be frequented by leftists.

But in this sharpening situation, the Turkish Communist Party and the trade union bureaucracy still remain tied to the politics of class collaboration.

"Democratic" alternative

They still advocate support for Ecevit's bourgeois RPP as a "democratic" alternative to fascism.

And, as it did in Spain in the 1930s, such a fake position could result in a monumental defeat for Turkish workers.

But even while the Stalinists create confusion sections of workers, including miners and metal workers, are engaged in struggles. These must be extended.

Overthrow

The aim must be not the illusory one of a 'democratic' Turkish capitalism, but the

overthrow of capitalism.

In the struggle against class collaboration and for a programme of independent action, a revolutionary leadership can be built.



A mass meeting of Babcock Wilcox strikers in Viscaya

BOOKS OPENED BY BASQUE STRIKERS

A one day general strike (opposed by the main reformist and Stalinist leaders) brought about half the industry of Biscay (Viscaye) province to a halt on December 2.

The strike, which over 100,000 workers supported,

was called in solidarity with the locked-out workers of the large engineering firm Babcock Wilcox.

This firm is one of the largest in the great industrial area around Bilbao employing 5,000 workers.

Babcock is 10% owned by the British parent company, 12% by well-known Spanish capitalist families and 8% by

the Bank of Viscaya. The rest are small shareholders.

Babcock has long been notorious for its repressive attitude to its workforce.

So when the military section of the Basque nationalist organisation, ETA, decided to stage a dramatic event to interfere with last June's elections, they kidnapped and then killed the Chairman of Babcock's board of directors, Javier de Ybarra.

At just about the same time Babcock began to attempt to sack a large section of their workforce so as to impose massive speed-up on the rest.

Their plan was to sack 40% of the workforce in 12-18 months. But the reaction of the workers has been so strong that the bosses now want to sell off the few profitable parts and shut down the rest.

The factory has now been occupied. The bosses have been forced to open the books to representatives of the workers' assemblies.

Owed £700

They have been prevented from moving out machinery and from paying money to the government rather than to the workers. (Each worker is now on average owed about £700 by the company which has been refusing to pay wages).

The workers are now demanding the nationalisation of the firm by the state holding company, INI. It should remain, say the workers' representatives, "under workers' control".

Despite the great material hardship involved, the action of the Babcock workers has been extremely solid. Only three workers out of 5,000 voted against the series of actions which culminated in the one-day general strike.

Sabotage

But the struggle of the Babcock workers is threatened with sabotage by the union's bureaucrats from the Socialist Party, Communist Party and Basque Nationalist Party.

Nonetheless the working class of Viscaya is responding to the calls of the Babcock workers. The Babcock struggle is increasingly being seen as a model by the thousands of other workers threatened with redundancy.

Unemployment in the province (the most industrialised in Spain) has tripled in a year. And there are now in the province 600 firms "in crisis", trying to dispose of a



PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL

IN BRIEF

FRANCE

Workers are showing that they have no faith in the policy of one-day strikes organised by the main reformist and Stalinist union leaders. Rank and file pressure has led to the continuation of strikes against the pay policy in the more militant sections of the public sector, especially the electric power industry.

NETHERLANDS

79-year old millionaire art collector and mass murderer Pieter Menten was last week sentenced to 15 years in jail for taking part in a mass execution of Jews in 1941. The massacre was in Podhorodze (then in Poland, now in the USSR) and the Dutch court has mainly used evidence provided by the Soviet government in its case against Menten.

ETHIOPIA

Eritrean guerrilla fighters are reported to have entered parts of the key Red Sea port of Massawa and have intensified the siege of the Eritrean capital, Asmara. The West Somali Liberation Front,

lost control of Harrar which they claimed to have captured. But it is still clear that in both wars the Ethiopian dictatorship is hanging on to very little.

TUNISIA

The Prime Minister has announced a new campaign of repression in the official trade union against "proponents of the class struggle, the dictatorship of the proletariat or the permanent revolution". Such people, he said, had "infiltrated" the apparatus of the trade unions which have recently launched a strike wave against the Bourguiba regime.

CYPRUS

The kidnapping of his son by "EOKA-B terrorists" has been a political godsend to President Spyros Kyprianou. He got his son back unharmed; he got several days of public sympathy; but most important he got the withdrawal from the February Presidential elections of his only rival Glavcos Clerides, who has been politically associated with the far-right EOKA-B. It couldn't have been better if he had staged it

Kremlin must open

West Germany's most recent spy scandal seems by far the most significant.

Last week it was revealed that East German agents in the West German Defence Ministry had discovered the detailed location of all NATO's top-secret atomic missile sites in Western Europe.

Secrets lost

The NATO alliance has apparently lost every major military secret.

A NATO official is quoted as saying:

"The seriousness of the situation has yet to be fully realised but there can be little doubt that the disclosures are far more detailed and dangerous than anything Kim Philby took to Moscow."

The scandal is two-fold: first, the major espionage coup of the East Germans; second the leak from West German government sources of the information about the extent of the coup.

NATO's books

its secrets but all the world knows it has lost them!

The West German Defence Minister and some officials of his department have already been suspended from duty.

The Christian Democratic opposition is demanding the resignation of other Social Democratic government chiefs.

But the government is trying to claim credit for unmasking the spies who were appointed to their posts during the last Christian Democratic government.

Major consequences

The events could, therefore, have major consequences for the stability of the West German coalition government as well as for the NATO alliance.

Socialist Press welcomes any event such as this which weakens the reactionary anti-Communist NATO alliance.



Secrets gone—Schmidt

NO STABILITY FOR FRANCO'S HEIRS

The Moncloa Pact signed in October by the 'democratic' Francoist government parties has not brought stability to Spain.

Continuous worsening of economic conditions and the seemingly endless delays in the implementation of promised democratic reforms has brought workers into the streets in hundreds of thousands in all of Spain's major cities.

In demonstrations of up to 250,000 workers have demanded democratic rights, action to end unemployment, and wage increases to match inflation.

Massive demonstrations

There have also been massive demonstrations in support of autonomy for Spain's various component nationalities and regions.

Proposals for regional autonomy have been made not only in regions with strong traditions of national struggle such as Catalonia and Euskadi (the Basque region) but also in areas like Cartille and Leon and Extremadura.

There is hardly a province in which some project for autonomy has not been launched.

This fervour for 'autonomy' springs from a combination of genuine popular pressure and opportunism. The struggle for national rights especially in Euskadi has been a major part of the struggle of the masses against Francoism.

Through militant mass mobilisations and threats to boycott its reforms the Suarez regime has been forced to release all Basque political prisoners captured before last December's referendum.

Head off

But at the same time it has tried to head off this militant predominantly working class movement for democratic rights by attempting to make a deal with the bourgeois nationalists (the Basque Nationalist Party) for what has become called 'decaffeinated' autonomy.

This plan is already at an advanced stage in Catalonia where the exiled head of the

Generalitat (autonomous government) in exile made a deal with Suarez in September, was re-installed in office in October and last week announced his virtually powerless regional cabinet: composed of members of the Democratic Centre (Suarez' democratic francoists) the Socialist Party, the Catalanian CP and the bourgeois Democratic Pact for Catalonia making it Spain's first formally declared popular front since the so-called rebirth of democracy.

In other regions too Suarez' Union of the Democratic Centre has leapt onto or even launched the autonomy bandwagon.

In several regions even Manuel Fraga's fascist Popular Alliance has joined in.

These capitalist parties as well as the Socialist Party and the CP have tried to use the question of regional autonomy to create a diversion from the struggle about wages and jobs and for real democratic rights, instead of a fictional autonomy.

In places this diversion has worked. But increasingly workers have come to see legal demonstrations called by the signatories of the Moncloa Pact as an opportunity for getting on to the streets to demonstrate their hostility to the Suarez regime.

(Demonstrations with that as the declared objective would never be permitted by the police).

This is what happened in Malaga two weeks ago when a 'respectable' demonstration for autonomy got out of the control of those who had called it.

Angry

It was one of a number of demonstrations throughout the southern region of Andalusia (including a march of 300,000 in Seville) as part of a government sponsored 'Day of Andalusia'.

The Malaga crowd became angry when they found that the Civil Governor, the agent of the Interior Ministry which had encouraged the demon-

PHOTO: Derek Spier, IFL



As persistent reports come out of Iran indicating a wave of demonstrations in defiance of the Shah's repressive regime, a picket was staged last week outside the Italian Embassy in London, protesting against the detention of 12 students by Italian police.

stration, was refusing to fly the Andalusian flag from his administrative building.

Police attack

The Francoist armed police attacked the crowd, injuring many, and killed Manuel Garcia, a nineteen-year-old worker and member of the Workers' Commissions.

Garcia's murder provoked further fury against the police and for several days the situation in Malaga took on an insurrection-like character.

Public buildings were attacked and burned, barricades were built against the police attacks. The Civil Governor was forced to resign before order could be restored.

Since the 'democratic reforms' were initiated after Franco's death two years ago the police have murdered at

least fifty demonstrators and have injured and tortured hundreds more.

No democratic or workers' rights will be secure in Spain until these repressive forces of Francoism—the armed police, the security police, the civil guard and the army—are dissolved.

The astronomical distance between the demand for the dissolution of the repressive state apparatus and the policy of the reformist and Stalinist leaders was highlighted last week during a meeting of the parliamentary committee studying the future of the Spanish army.

Army 'apolitical'

The Chairman of this commission is Socialist Party MP Enrique Mujica.

After last week's meeting between the commission and

the Defence Minister General Gutierrez Mellado (appointed a General by Franco himself), Mujica announced with approval the General's statement that the army was 'apolitical'.

He didn't mention, of course, the three occasions this year, on which sections of the army have semi-openly advocated a military seizure of power.

While this 'Socialist' is off hob-nobbing with these budding Pinochets, his 'Communist' colleague Santiago Carrillo's chosen friends last week were the bishops.

The Spanish church issued a protest against the proposal made by the constitutional commission of the Cortes to disestablish the Catholic Church and break all constitutional links between church and state.

In response to the bishops' protests Socialist Party leader Felipe Gonzales at least said:

'We Socialists don't ask to participate in the synod of bishops. So they shouldn't meddle in the constitution'.

Carrillo, however, never one to leave aside a chance for collaboration with the forces of reaction, made a unctuous statement saying:

'I am ready to listen to the bishops if they have reasonable things to say'.

So perhaps Carrillo is about to add a state catholic church to the long list of other things he supports—including the monarchy, the integrity of the Francoist repressive forces, and American military bases.



AFL-CIO IGNORE MINERS

The leadership of America's main trade union federation, the AFL-CIO, kept the line of the movement firmly in the camp of class collaboration during its biennial congress in Los Angeles last week.

Octogenarian George Meany, leading agent of American imperialism, was re-elected to two more years as AFL-CIO President.

But Meany and his fellow leaders remained as hostile as ever to a policy to mobilise the working class around an independent policy.

However, with unemployment still well over 7% of the labour force, these bureaucrats realise they must appear to demand some remedial action.

The convention passed one resolution pleading with the

Carter Administration for a major tax cut.

The other policies which Meany and his henchmen supported were almost entirely protectionist.

American industry, Meany said, was being 'destroyed by foreign competition'.

He made a call (before the Congress) for sweeping import controls, rigid enforcement of anti-dumping laws and an end to foreign investment by US companies.

Meany makes no secret of his attachment to the main bourgeois parties and America's imperialist foreign policy.

Strange, or perhaps not so strange, then, that his reactionary protectionist answers to economic problems are identical to those of the British so-called 'lefts' of the Tribune Group and the Communist Party!

All these 'leaders' of the working class reject independent policies to resolve the problems of the working class.

They ally themselves to their national capitalist class following it everywhere in its call for trade war.

For the working class this amounts to advocating fratricide.

As the AFL-CIO bureaucrats conducted their congress not even the slightest ripple or echo of the current miners' strike broke the unruffled surface.

Yet the miners are locked in a life and death struggle to preserve their union against a concerted attack by the coal-owners and their big business allies.

Worried at their falling profits, relative to the extensive non-union section of the industry, the bosses are also driven on in their attack by

the requirements of Carter's energy programme.

Stockpiles have been built up, and unless the miners stay out for three months they stand no chance of defeating the employers.

But no thought could be further from the minds of the AFL-CIO leaders than to organise the necessary support in the transport and steel industries, and the trade union movement as a whole.

Furthest of all from their intentions was any political break from the two parties of big business—the Democrats and Republicans—that are both lined up with the employers against the miners.

The fight for a Labour Party in the USA based on the trade unions is inseparably linked to the fight to remove the reactionary AFL-CIO bureaucracy, and for a programme to defend the class interests of American workers.

CP's call for bloc with Generals

Luis Corvalan, Secretary General of the Chilean Communist Party, released from jail earlier this year in exchange for Vladimir Bukovsky, wants to defeat the Chilean generals by making an alliance with . . . the Chilean generals!

In a press conference last week at the headquarters of the French Communist Party he proposed a class collaborationist alliance stretching from the CP, across the Christian Democrats who welcomed Pinochet's coup, to the 'good' generals.

He said that: 'A process of understanding between all the anti-fascist forces is underway in Chile. The majority of the Christian Democrats were hostile to Salvador Allende towards the end of his government. They even greeted his fall with satisfaction.'

'They were hoping that, without too long a delay, the government of the country would return into

their hands. But fascism which began by persecuting the communists, finished by persecuting all democrats.'

'We wish to reach with all democrats an agreement for today and tomorrow—that is not only to overthrow fascism but also to rebuild the country and construct a renewed democracy. To do that the CP proposes a democratic government, broadly representative, on the basis of an understanding, an alliance between the Popular Unity and the Christian Democrats, and with the participation of democratic sectors of the armed forces.'

'We think a profound democratisation of the armed forces is necessary. Those whose hands are bloodstained must go. But that's not the case with all the military, or even all the officers or even all the generals'.

It should be recalled that Allende's government carried out a purge of the top military officers, replacing those of doubtful loyalty by 'democratic generals'. One of the most important of these 'democrats' was General Agosto Pinochet.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BOOM?

Euphoric reports of Britain's vast new balance of payments surplus might suggest that the economy is entering a state of boom.

But if you look at the figures to prove it—the official statistics for industrial production which are so little mentioned on the BBC—then you find just the opposite.

Instead there is a continued and deepening slump.

The industrial statistics

come in the form of an index representing the volume of output of all industries, beginning in 1970 at 100.

The recently published level of production for October 1977 is 101.4.

That one figure summarises years of growing disaster for British industrial capitalism.

What it means is that industrial production is now only 1% more than it was 7 years ago!

It is 2% less than it was

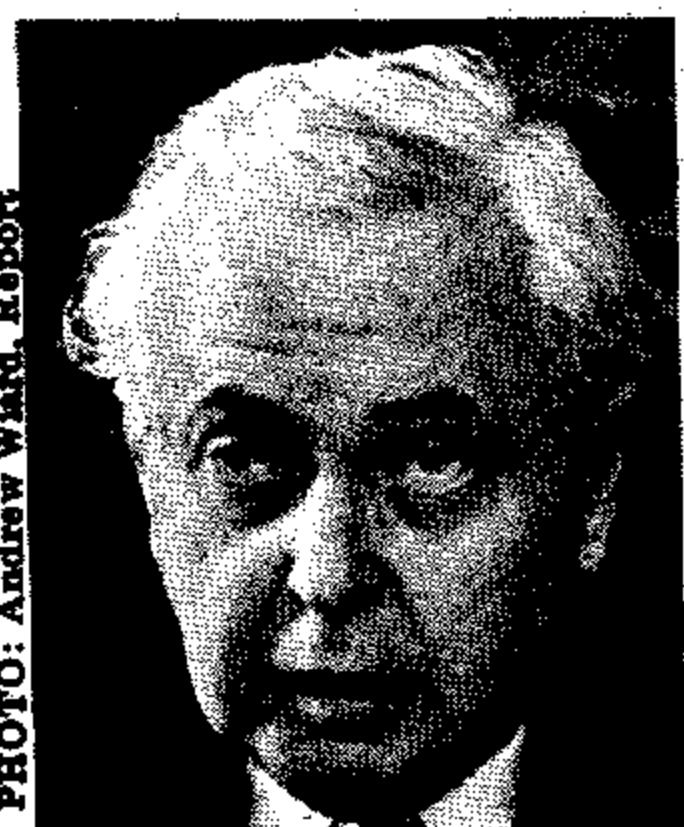


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Wilson - fought the 1974 election saying 'Back to work with Labour'.

earlier this year. It is 8% down on its peak level in

the short-lived boom in 1973.

And it is even significantly less than it was in the three-day week in early 1974!

These figures show that the long drawn-out crisis of British capitalism which emerged in the 1960s is no nearer to a solution.

The main decline in production is found in the heavy industries making producer goods (machinery, etc).

This reflects the collapse of productive investment as capitalists divert resources from productive accumulation to unproductive, speculative get-rich-quick schemes.

In this way they try to escape from the low profits

in industry but end up by worsening the position of British capital as a whole.

More and more, therefore, profits can be assured only through speed-up in the factories and pushing down wages.

And that is now the strategy of British capital and its Lib-Lab coalition government.

The consequences of this to the working class are only too obvious—lengthening dole queues in an economy we are daily told has never been healthier.

But the capitalists know well enough that their picture of health is hardly even skin-

deep.

Beneath the appearances is the rotting figure of capitalism, whose one obsessive thought is how to impose a long-term historic defeat on the working class.

This has once again become a necessary condition for the renewal of the growth of capitalist production, not only in Britain but world-wide.

The imposition of such a defeat would amount to a return to barbarism.

That will be the inevitable consequence of failure to build a world revolutionary party and overthrow the capitalist system.

AN ELECTION THAT WENT WRONG

'British Leyland workers at Cowley must face up to the cold reality: another major strike could finish the Company'.

That—under the headline 'Cowley in danger'—was the opening paragraph of an editorial in the weekly *Oxford Times* on December 16, about the election of Alan Thornett to the post of deputy senior steward at the Cowley assembly plant.

The editorial, the latest in a long line of witch-hunting articles in the local Press, says that if the TGWU is to move against Thornett they should do so quickly—before he takes office after the Christmas break.

Spectre

It offers the spectre of strikes in support of Thornett bringing a new crisis if Leyland refuse to recognise him in his elected role.

And the article reflects the official line that 'apathy' elected Thornett, describing his vote as 'by less than 700 of the union's 4,300 members.'

In fact Thornett's vote (of 796, not less than 700) rose since the last elections in a declining poll and took place



Alan Thornett - duly elected but still witch-hunted.

under the usual anti-Trotskyist barrage of propaganda.

What the article—wrong voting figures and all—left out was the massive swing away from Parsons.

He was defeated not by apathy but because his class collaboration policies were decisively rejected.

Bobby Fryer—elected as convenor in place of Parsons—polled 1,195 votes.

And Fryer and all the elected deputies polled far more votes than any Tory-inspired postal ballot would produce.

In fact when the ballot was introduced three years ago, the Press hailed it as the

end of left leadership at Cowley.

However the niceties of democracy are not allowed to get in the way of a good old fashioned witch-hunt.

It started, before the elections, in the *Oxford Mail*, the daily sister paper to the *Times*.

The last issue published before the vote abandoned all attempts at balance,—reprinting lengthy extracts from an election leaflet by Parsons—complete with his list of favoured candidates.

The leaflet—and the article—complained of 'unsigned soggy socialist swill' and 'Trotskyist extremism' backed by about twenty people.

After the elections the same paper published a further lengthy statement from Parsons attacking the lefts who were elected as 'Marxist elements who are like maggots'.

'Mole'

The witch-hunt was continued in the national Press by both the *Daily Express* and the *Telegraph*—which ran a piece under a headline 'Trotskyist 'Mole' may be pressed onto Leyland'.

The burden of this story was that Fryer was likely to insist on Leyland accepting Thornett as a deputy senior steward.

The sole basis for this sinister plot according to the *Telegraph*, was that Thornett had been duly elected!

It also quoted an unnamed source as saying:

'Everybody with any interest in what's going on at Cowley will be looking for the first signs that Thornett has put Bobby Fryer in his pocket'.

Average meal

So there we have it. Wrong election figures, blatant campaigning for the right wing and support for moves to set the decision aside.

It was about an average sized meal for the Press and one that may yet give them indigestion.

For, as the *Oxford Times* feared, moves by the TGWU bureaucracy or British Leyland to set aside the election results are likely to be met by a stronger force—the anger of the working class.



NEW ARMY SWOOP

In a series of highly co-ordinated raids reminiscent of Operation Motorman and the introduction of internment, the British Army and the RUC last week swooped on republican areas of West Belfast and arrested 15 people.

Principal target of the 'security forces' raid was the Republican Press Centre in Belfast's Falls Road.

All office equipment was seized and bundled into army trucks.

Everything—from a duplicating machine and photocopier to duplicating stencils, photographic files and lists of postal addresses for subscribers to *Republican News*—was taken.

Stripped bare

The Republican Advice Centre across the road was also stripped bare, with the police taking everything from wall-posters to rubbish bins.

And in Lurgan, just west of Belfast, the *Republican News* printing works was broken into.

The entire current edition was seized and the works owner has been arrested.

On Friday 16 December, the RUC announced that the printing presses have been confiscated.

The official reason given for the raids is the pressing need for an 'inquiry' into 'suspected links' between Sinn Fein and the Provisional IRA.

Designed to suppress

But the actions taken give the lie to this story.

raids are clearly designed to suppress *Republican News* and therefore to deprive Northern Ireland's republicans of any medium for expressing their political views.

Democratic right

While *Socialist Press* sharply disagrees with the petty bourgeois nationalism of Sinn Fein, we defend to the hilt their democratic right to argue their views openly.

All the more so when the suppressed paper—*Republican News*—has been a focus of opposition to British imperialist repression in the Six Counties.

Following on the shootings of Irish Republican Socialist Party chairman Seamus Costello and Derry IRSP organiser Colin McNutt (who was buried on 16 December), these raids signify an increase in the degree of open repression being meted out to republicans.

For eight years now—since the troops went in in August 1969—that repression has been systematically doled out to all who dared raise their voice against British thuggery.

Bludgeon

Internment, torture and assassination squads have been used to bludgeon the Catholics into submission; now one of the vehicles for exposing and combatting such repression has been taken away as well.

It is imperative that Sinn Fein's right to a newspaper be restored at once.

That right will always be in jeopardy though, as long as the British army remains in

the north, and as long as the RUC and UDR are there to back them up.

The immediate withdrawal of troops and the disbanding of the UDR and RUC are thus essential in order to put an end to the repressive measures enacted since 1969.

The British labour movement has an urgent responsibility to assist this struggle.

The strikebreaking Lib-Lab pact must be broken and the advocates of British imperialist occupation of Ireland within the Labour Party must be driven out.

Ennals loses his memory

The Hounslow Occupation faces a fresh threat this week from David Ennals, Cabinet Minister presiding over the destruction of the health service.

Ennals has warned that he will cut off the switchboard at the hospital, in an attempt to bring the occupation to a halt.

And at a meeting in Oxford last week, Ennals condemned the occupation members as 'extremists' whom he accused of wasting Area Health Authority money.

He also denied point blank that the smashing up of the Hounslow Hospital ever took place!

Ennals' visit to Oxford was primarily to bring the local

health service unions bureaucrats into line. He came to lay it on the line that there would not be an extra penny for the opening of the John Radcliffe Phase II—and that other hospitals would have to close.

Last month a delegation of right wingers had returned from a visit to Ennals in London saying that they had received a promise that the hospital would open.

This promise Ennals intends to keep. He has ordered the Area Health Authority to open the hospital come what may and close down enough services to pay for it.

Presumably no more beds will get smashed up and



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Ennals

patients pushed out into the rain than proved necessary at Hounslow.



THE WAGE CONTROL COALITION

Last week's "will he, won't he" press speculation on the possible ending of the Lib-Lab coalition deal has brought the question of the nature of the deal back into the news.

Virtually alone on the left in Britain, the WSL has insisted that the Lib-Lab deal was not simply a Parliamentary device to enable the

same Labour government to retain office, but embodied a new level of *subordination* of the Labour Party to the bourgeois Liberal Party.

From the outset we have shown that the essence of this bloc was the Liberals' determination that wage controls be maintained, and their belief that the Labour leaders in harness with the TUC were the only force capable of upholding it.

Socialist Press discarded

the fake rhetoric peddled by Liberal leader Steel suggesting that the Liberals were interested simply in achieving certain concessions in relation to elections for the European Parliament.

Absolutely correct

Last week's events have proved our position absolutely correct.

Amid the wreckage of Liberal hopes for EEC

elections based on proportional representation—and of comfortable seats in that Parliament to preserve their own careers—Steel clung tenaciously to the Lib-Lab deal.

To run the risk of bringing down the government at a crucial point in its fight to impose the 10% limit on the firemen and another 14 million workers was a chance Steel was not prepared to take.

In addition to wage controls, Steel can also point to other key aspects of the Liberals' anti-working class policies being implemented by the Callaghan government.

Proposals to assist small businesses and to legislate the Devolution Bill, borrow extensively from the Liberals' programme—as do Healey's tax cuts.

Not contemplated

And the Liberals have Callaghan's assurance (if any were needed!) that no socialist policies will be contemplated.

They are consulted on every aspect of government policy in the House of Commons—far more so than the Labour Party National Executive or the Labour Conference, both of which are ignored by the Callaghan-Healey leadership.

And this gives the Liberals their first smell of governmental power for decades. Small wonder that Steel is reluctant to put all this at risk, and chance the oblit-

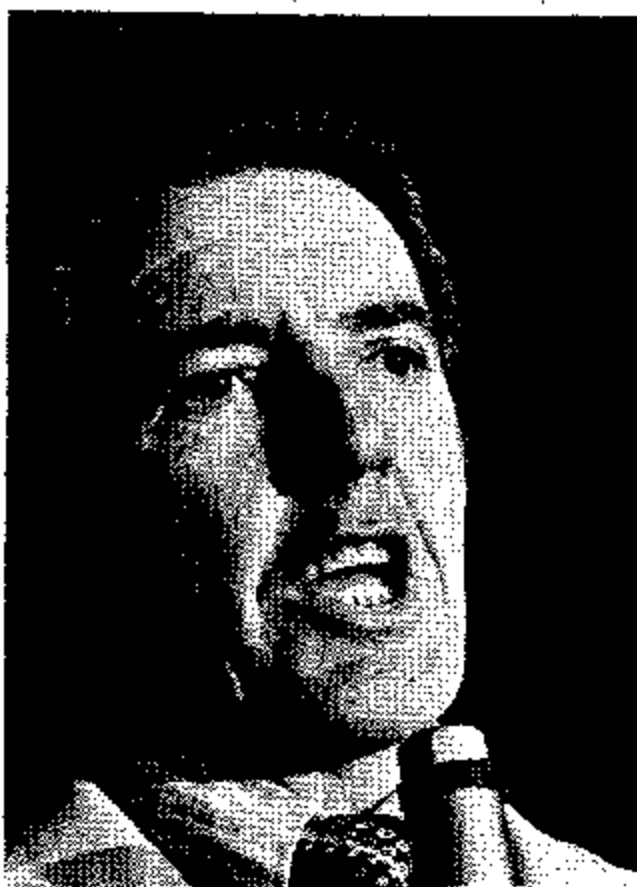


PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Skinner

eration of his party in a General Election by breaking the coalition deal.

From Callaghan's side also the coalition provides a vital prop.

The Parliamentary support at present being given by the Scottish and Welsh bourgeois nationalists is a fickle support that could at any point evaporate.

As such it is inadequate as a foothold from which to impose a further round of vicious wage controls on the working class.

It was the search for a base of support *outside* of and *against* the organised working class to impose such policies that led Callaghan last March from almost exclusive reliance on the police role of the TUC bureaucracy to sign a joint pact with the Liberals.

Important turn

This marked an important turn for the Labour leaders.

The Labour Party was built by the trade union movement at the beginning of the century after repeated harsh lessons had shown that the Liberals would not defend workers' interests.

It was a partial step on the road to an independent workers' party. But from the outset its leaders refused to develop the political independence of the working class.

It remained a working class party in name, but saddled with a *bourgeois* leadership dedicated to class collaboration, who see the road to socialism as a road leading through piecemeal 'reforms' of capitalism and bourgeois Parliamentary elections.

At every crisis point these



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Left-talker Neil Kinnock

leaders have decisively taken their stand in *support* of the capitalist class and *against* efforts to remove it.

But in the Lib-lab deal the Callaghan government—under pressure of the forward movement of workers against wage control and against the TUC collaborators—reached out to ally itself and subordinated itself openly to Britain's second-string bourgeois party—the Liberals.

Continuing crisis

This deal reflected the weakness in front of the class strength of the working class.

But the lack of any decisive challenge to this new alignment within the Labour Party or the TUC indicates the continuing crisis of political leadership within the organised workers' movement.

Of those Labour MPs who like to be regarded as 'left wing' only Dennis Skinner is on record as stating he is prepared to vote against the Lib-Lab coalition—and Skinner has made no moves to launch any fight against it.

Meanwhile the 'lefts' have trooped obediently time and again into the lobbies to vote support for Liberal policies and for the wage controls that keep the Lib-Lab deal intact.

As Eric Heffer said: "I'm in favour of sustaining the government. Therefore if I do vote for the government it will not be because I agree with the [devolution] proposals but merely to help sustain it."

But last week's flurry of activity has again spelled out the facts.

Break the deal

The coalition hinges on the 10% policy.

Any Labour MP who claims to oppose this pay limit must therefore be forced to fight to break the Lib-Lab deal and to remove its supporters from the leadership of the Labour Party.

Any MP that takes up this fight must be supported in that fight.

Those that shy away from it must be removed.

In this struggle workers can learn the real positions of their leaders 'left' and right, and see the need for a new leadership in the workers' movement.



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Healey speaks under Callaghan's watchful eye

PRESS GANG NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS

Censorship is not a moral question. The control of opinion and news is as much a reflection of the domination of one class as the dispensing of justice by JPs.

It was not surprising, therefore, that within hours of the BBC 'Tonight' programme last Thursday, in which Official IRA and Sinn Fein spokesmen spoke face to the camera, Tory spokesman Airey Neave was demanding an inquiry.

Viewers can have been in little doubt of the BBC's attitude. The programme was designed to bolster rather than erode the image of the Irish nationalists as monsters.

The presenter remarked casually that the probable reason the Provisional IRA had refused to give an interview was because they did not have an answer to the questions!

Nevertheless Neave, as he has done on every occasion that television has appeared to question the role of the Army or the British government, accused the BBC of propagandising the

line of incidents of censorship and attempted censorship on events in Northern Ireland.

Last week *Socialist Worker* reprinted some extracts from the minutes of the News and Current Affairs Committee of the BBC, which had first appeared in the *Leveller*.

The minutes are incomplete, in reported speech and in part ambiguous. They provide little more than a fleeting glimpse into the workings of the policy-making body of the BBC news team.

But in a few short paragraphs are revealed:

—The drought in Bangladesh was dropped from news programmes after it was reported that India would react badly (because it controlled the water flow of the River Ganges).

—The National Front was to be treated as "just another political party" while the IRA was not.

—Discussion was held on concealing the racial origins of murder victims if racial killings became widespread.

—Pressure was brought on reporters to show more hostility to Robert Mugabe, the

to Philip Agee, who was being deported.

In this last case it was reported that he had visited Cuba on several occasions and should be treated with "appropriate scepticism".

The use of the courts to prevent publication is now commonplace and their use to prevent TV programmes going out has increased dramatically.

The blacking out of the programme about Tate and Lyle workers in South Africa was merely the latest in a long line—which has extended even to *The Goodies*.

On Sunday the *News of the World* exposed a meeting of the "British Conservation Society" as being a meeting of the British Movement.

The BBC's reaction was to invite its leader onto 'The World This Weekend' and leave him free to present his racialism over the air.

Inside the press, radio and TV is being waged a continuous class battle for the means to control the presentation of news.

The question of whose freedom will prevail will be answered only by answering the deeper question—which



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Kinnock's cold water on firefighters

Neil Kinnock, one of the 'left' MPs who has trumpeted his 'support' for the firemen's case, faced a tricky problem last Wednesday.

While liberal MPs held what turned out to be a mock debate about whether to maintain the Coalition, Kinnock was told (or realised) that his job was to go out and do his bit to force the 10% down the throats of the firemen.

So Kinnock turned up on a strong demonstration of several hundred firemen from South-West London.

After a march from Batter-

the rally.

Though he never uttered the words, there could have been no doubt in the mind of anyone listening to him, that what he was saying was 'Get back to work'.

The way Kinnock put it was to say that the firemen 'had convinced the nation', that the strike had been fully vindicated and had 'won' because the government offer was one which would have been 'unthinkable four weeks ago'.

Firemen he said had to 'realise when they had won'.

that no one failed to see that what this particular form of 'left' double-talk meant was 'realise that you've lost'.

The reception of other speeches by FBU members showed that the firemen at the rally knew well enough that they had *not* lost; nor had they yet won, with an offer which gave them not a single penny more than the last one.

They saw that to win they had to be prepared to accept a head-on clash with the government which Kinnock cringingly helps to keep in

Ireland ROOTS OF TODAY'S CRISIS

PART 8:

Labour after the Easter Rising

The myth that after the Easter Rising the leadership of the Irish working class, essentially Thomas Johnson, William O'Brien, David Campbell, Cathal O'Shannon and Thomas Foran, turned away from the national question is a stubborn one.

It is a myth which has been spread nonetheless—for obvious reasons—by the rabidly anti-proletariat leadership of Sinn Fein.

It has also been fostered for more obscurantist reasons or simply through ignorance by some of those decking themselves out in Marxist garb.

Easy target

An easy target for them to aim at was the labour leaders' attitude to the Rising itself. At the first meeting of the

Executive of the Irish TUC following the executions on June 10, a resolution "regretting the loss" of Connolly and O'Carroll was passed, while the first post-rising meeting of the Dublin Trades Council in July failed to condemn the executions that had taken place.

Political development

When a full gathering of Congress delegates convened in Sligo in August, it was impossible to avoid taking some position on the rebellion.

The chairman Thomas Johnson in his address declared:

"This is not the place to enter into a discussion on the rights and wrongs, the wisdom or the folly of the revolt. As a trade union movement we are of varied minds on matters of historical and political development." Connolly very likely would have insisted on a position

and against such neutrality.

But it cannot be claimed that Johnson was doing any more than drawing the conclusion that flowed from Connolly's conception of the proletarian party as a gathering of "varied minds" rather than a homogeneous movement formed by programmatic unity.

The 1916 Congress agreed to form a political party that was independent of Congress—breaking from the present situation where it had been synonymous with it.

'Splitting workers'

But no practical steps were taken—partly because most of the union activists gave their time over to building up the union membership, and fear of "splitting the workers" prevented a formed position being taken on the burning issue of the day.

Instead a few militants revived Connolly's old party,



James Larkin

the SPI, as the advanced guard of the projected Congress party.

The labour leaders were approached by the leader of Sinn Fein, Arthur Griffith, with a proposal that labour join in the formation of a new party with the nationalists against both the unionists as well as the old Parliamentary Party.

Labour declined, but the leadership nullified this declaration of independence by not only failing to stand candidates in elections at that time, but actually assisting the nationalists.

By-election

O'Brien and Foran worked for the victory of Plunkett in North Roscommon and McGuinness in South Longford while O'Brien was involved in the nomination of de Valera for East Clare in the July 1917 by-election.

It could hardly be said that the labour leaders ignored the national question whatever was missing in their formal pronouncements.

Instead, while failing to build their own party, they laid the first foundations in the building up of Sinn Fein.

When these petty bourgeois nationalists began to reveal themselves openly as the irreconcilable enemies of the working class that they always were, labour leaders like Johnson and O'Brien

complained of Sinn Fein's ingratitude in so quickly forgetting that it was through the sacrifices of labour that they were raised to power.

But in all this there was no rupture with the past. War is the continuation of politics by different means and the constitutional and parliamentary cooperation that Johnson and O'Brien—on behalf of labour—lent Sinn Fein was only the continuation of the military cooperation that Connolly had given the nationalist Volunteers.

Withdraw

While O'Brien thought that Labour could bide its time, withdraw from its self-imposed subordinate position at a propitious moment and reap an electoral harvest, Connolly too had believed it possible that the Citizen Army, the first Red Guard of Europe, could both merge forces with the nationalists and act independently at some future date.

"In the event of victory," he had told them, "hold on to your rifles as those with whom we are fighting may stop before our goal is reached."

But as Labour did not lead and did not aspire to lead the struggle against Britain, those members of the Citizen Army who wanted not only to hold onto their rifles but to actually use them were pulled towards the IRA.

In the 1918 election, which tested the popular attitude to separation from Britain, Labour divided on the question of standing candidates.

First time

Two thirds of the electorate were voting for the first time. Labour's final decision not to stand embedded itself very strongly into the popular consciousness.

Not to be contesting power at such an election made Labour as a political force difficult to take seriously. Sinn Fein was enormously concerned at the consequences for itself if Labour candidates had stood.

At first Labour candidates were considered, but on every issue Congress found itself trying to take no position that would divide its supporters in Belfast from workers in the rest of the country.

Self determination

So while it supported self-determination in general, Congress avoided a public position on its application to Ireland.

It dodged calling for self-determination and freedom for Ireland by adopting a position that "Labour yielded



Connolly drilling the Irish C

to none in determination to win for Ireland freedom which sounded the same but in fact wasn't.

Again Sinn Fein, by not recognising Britain's right to rule Ireland, declared that candidates elected in the 1918 election would not go to Westminster but would attend their own national assembly instead.

They asked Labour to take the same position, which only partly felt able to do.

Once more to placate unionist sentiment Labour based its abstention from Westminster on recent British measures, imprisonment without trial, deportation and threat of conscription and not on England's right to rule.

Shamefaced

Also it abstained support for the Irish Assembly, Dail Eireann. In this way it got the worst of both worlds.

To the unionist workers the policy appeared not just nationalist but shamefaced nationalism, while to workers in the rest of the country this lack of an independent line made Sinn Fein appear as the only party willing and capable of ejecting the English administration. Eventually labour's own supporters inclined to view that a half-hearted party should stand aside for more determined spirits.

A Menshevik concept of the relationship between politics and economics allowed a certain complacency in the labour leadership.

This was illuminated when O'Brien rejected Captain J. White as a possible labour candidate.

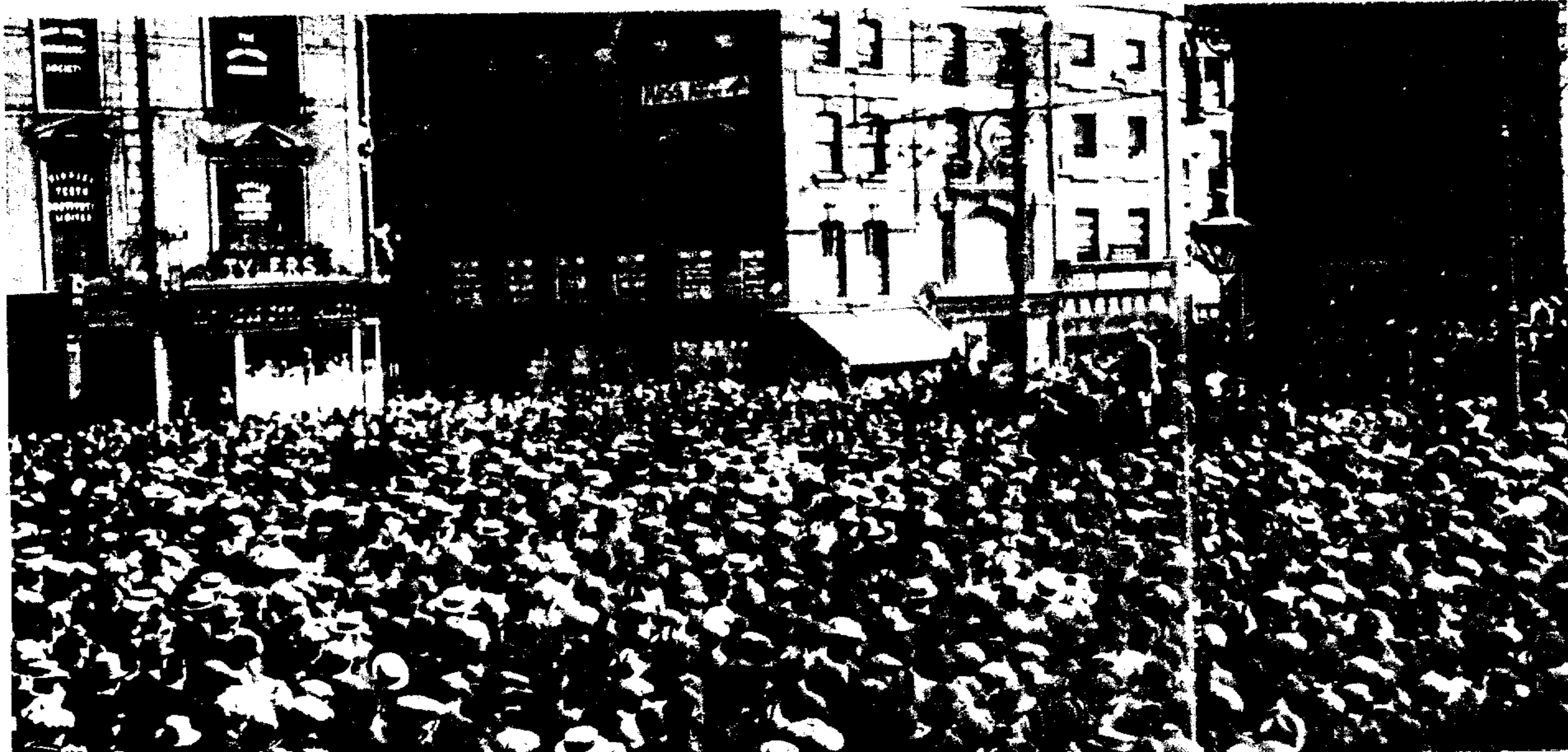
White had drilled and trained the Citizens Army and had recently been arrested by the British authorities for trying to bring West miners out in protest against the executions of the 1916 leaders.

Non-participation

His labour nomination could not be considered, however, as O'Brien told him since he was not a member of a trade union!

Eventually at the Labour Conference in November Thomas Johnson on behalf of the Executive urged non-participation:

"A call comes from all parts of Ireland for unity on this question such as was expressed on the conscription issue. Your Executive believe that the workers of Ireland join earnestly in this demand that they would willingly sacrifice for a brief period their aspirations towards political power if thereby the fortunes of the nation can be





British Army outside Liberty Hall, Dublin

The Executive's position was easily carried by ninety-six votes to twenty-three.

Sinn Fein publications expressed their appreciation, Labour they said "had done the right thing at the right time."

Sedition

Other commentators saw it differently. With that happy facility of the bourgeoisie for understanding nothing in a world that they own, the *Irish Times* warned "Sedition and Bolshevism will go hand in hand to the polls."

It was not only the *Irish Times* that saw an imaginary advance for Bolshevism.

James Larkin was very alarmed about Labour's passivity in securing representation and even more alarmed and suspicious about any alliance with Arthur Griffith.

He wrote to Thomas Foran of the Congress Executive in 1919:

"I see that Sinn Fein wants a republic in Ireland now. What is to become of Arthur's Kings Lords and Commoners? Does he not want the foreign capitalists come and start up industry in Ireland because land is cheap labour cheap and unorganised. . . Not only do we demand a free Ireland but we demand a free Ireland of free men and women."

To which Foran naively replied:

"Griffith has had to move with the times. The national movement here is more advanced than you seemed to think and every day becomes more infected with Bolshevik propaganda. . . A big section of Sinn Fein is favourable to our propaganda and we are getting recruits every day from that quarter."

Sinn Fein swept to victory in the 1918 election and called a public meeting to inaugurate the new national assembly.

This "revolutionary" Dail was a one-party body but Labour, which by abstaining had eased Sinn Fein's path to power, was now going to render further assistance by drafting a social and economic declaration of aims for the new assembly.

Sinn Fein felt that they needed such a programme now that they were assuming governmental responsibility (!) and so they turned to Labour to help them to write it.

Too radical

Johnston, O'Brien and Cathal O'Shannon collaborated on writing a draft inspired by Patrick Pearse's socio-economic views. But the Pearse of 1916 was too radical for Sinn Fein of 1919.

Michael Collins wanted the document suppressed. Even-

tually it was decided to draft it, omitting some radical declarations and toning down others.

The document known as the Democratic Programme was adopted by the Dail, though nothing was done to implement it.

From 1919-1921, as the war with the British raged, it was not regarded as opportune to press its execution. The Free State government that issued from the Civil War regarded it as no more than "poetry", and its sections on natural resources "communistic". In any case the Government of Cosgrave did not regard itself as at all bound by it.

Home rule

Labour delegations travelled to Berne in 1919 for the first post-war gathering of the Second International.

The nationalists probably felt that having endorsed a socio-economic programme drafted by Labour representatives, the delegation would be well placed to secure Ireland's right to self-determination.

The delegation compromised with Ramsay Macdonald, whose English delegation agreed to support home rule provided it was within the British Empire.



J H Thomas

Whatever it revealed about Irish labour representatives, this international recognition more than satisfied de Valera and Sinn Fein.

The Irish delegates declined to affiliate to the Second International and voted against an anti-Soviet Union resolution at Berne.

Becoming infectious

But abstention on virtually every political question was becoming infectious and it declined to affiliate to the

Third International as well, though a substantial minority favoured joining.

While working internationally on behalf of Sinn Fein the Labour leaders attempted not to give official recognition to the Dail—hoping no doubt that it would be an ephemeral institution that would give way to a more representative body when the British withdrew.

Yet British attempts to destroy Sinn Fein were forced to come up against the organised opposition of Irish labour. A number of examples can indicate the capacity of labour and the dependency of Sinn Fein upon it.

In April 1919 the British authorities proclaimed Limerick a special military area and imposed a system of permits for access to the city.

General strike

In response, the Limerick Trades Council called a general strike. The response was total, and from April 14 for 12 days the strike committee set up with workers' delegates was in complete control of the city.

The Limerick Soviet dissolved itself on April 26 when the British said they withdrew their permit order plans for the town.

Next year on April 5, 1900 political prisoners went on hunger strike in Mountjoy jail.

Lord French the Irish viceroy expressed the view that they could die if they chose to do so.

In response the Labour executive called a general strike for their release.

Effective

Apart from Belfast, the strike was completely effective and after two days the authorities changed their attitude to the prisoners and the strike was called off.

In May, Dun Laoghaire dockers refused to unload a British munitions ship. When British troops intervened, the railway drivers struck as well.

The NUR executive in London, led by chief bourgeois lackey J.H. Thomas, tried to get the strike called off and promised a union conference that would demand an end to the British occupation of Ireland.

By three to two, the vote at the conference took the strongest pro-Irish position yet seen in England.

The leadership limited itself to a few strikes and the NUR's real attitude is probably best revealed by its refusal to pay union benefit to those who refused to move munition trains.

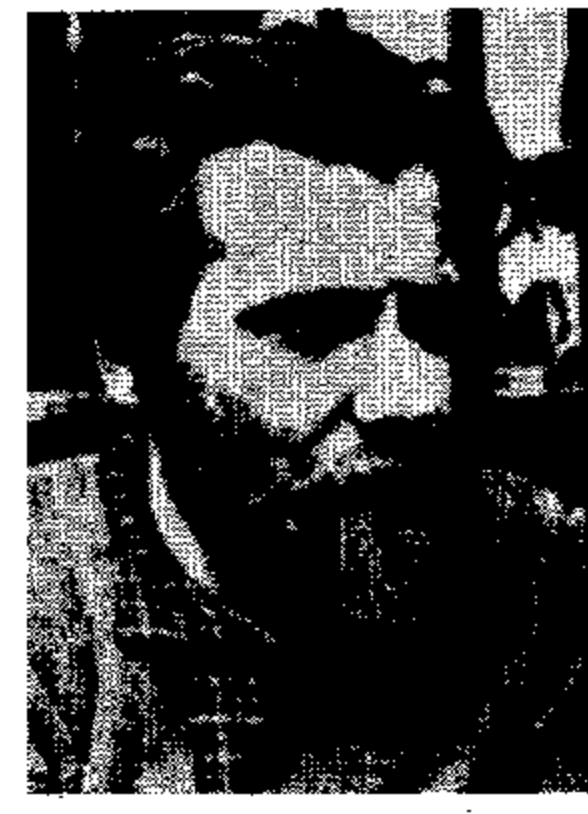
Critical part

All these actions played a critical part in the struggle against the British. The tragedy was that under the leadership of a Bolshevik party it could have been carried much further, and under the banner of the working class.

It is probably this knowledge that guided de Valera's speech at the 1921 Congress Party meeting.

"It is not necessary for me to say - you know it so well - that were it not for the solidarity of Labour behind the national cause . . . the Irish cause would not be where it is today. . . We who are in a position to gauge the Irish advance know what your support has been to us and what your refusal to put forward your own interests has meant to the cause of Ireland over the last two years."

Labour's subordination of workers' interests to the nationalists could hardly have been more eloquently expressed.



A review of 'The Trial Begins', a novel by Abram Tertz (Andrey Sinyavsky). Republished by Fontana, price 70p.

Packed into this short novel is a wealth of insight into the barren decadence of the daily life of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union.

Only the knowledge that after his prolonged imprisonment for 'slandering the Soviet Union', Sinyavsky emigrated to France in 1973 and has since abstained from politics confirms that the novel embodies the sharpest of artistic observation rather than political analysis.

Perhaps for this reason, the compressed narrative of this ninety-five page book conveys a vivid impression of the internal corruption, hollowness and instability of the bureaucracy that usurped political power in the Soviet Union following the death of Lenin, and which now rests uneasily on the nationalised property relations established in October 1917.

The bureaucracy's paranoid obsession with 'enemies', 'gangsters', 'spies' recurs again and again as the novel charts the progress of Public Prosecutor Globov, his wife and his son, during the year of Stalin's death.

Glovov, risen from peasant life to a top public post, epitomises the insecurity of every bureaucrat.

"In strict confidence he told her that spy centres had been uncovered in X-gania and Y-akia. A group of criminals in the Z Regional Party Committee had been plotting to seize power. The enemy, whose influence now went beyond all bounds, attempted to spread panic and wild rumours were flying round the city, one more fantastic than the other—for instance that cancer germs concealed in matches had been infiltrated into the country by a foreign power (you pick your teeth with a match and its all over with you), or that, under the influence of cosmic rays, women were only giving birth to girls (to the detriment of our Army)". (P.62)

Under siege

The bureaucracy is throughout portrayed as feeling itself under siege, scared not only of working class opponents from below, but also of each other.

Within this unstable framework, the only release is an occasional opportunity to turn, with admiration and relief, to the 'master' on whom their positions depend.

The parallels with the petty bourgeois delight at this year's royal jubilee are obvious, as Globov's rebellious son Seryozha attends a massive parade:

"Our darling! Our joy!" groaned the bony woman, craning her neck to the left. She looked as if she might foam at the mouth at any moment, and Seryozha felt embarrassed by his own indifference. To his shame, he could not make out, among the blobs on the grandstand, the One whose proud name intoxicated all the rest like wine" (P.59)

Seryozha, along with a young girl, come to the conclusion that a new revolution is necessary to overthrow privilege and repression.

UNCONSCIOUS ECHOES OF TROTSKY

He rebels against Stalinist propaganda, and against its most central tenet—the concept of building socialism in one country.

"You know Granny", he said happily, his voice still raw with tears, 'I've come to a conclusion: there's only one thing that can help us now—a world revolution'.

But the girl, Katya, seeks support from a cynical bureaucrat, Yury Karlinsky. He takes one look at their draft programme, and attacks it out of hand:

"But it's Trotskyism, pure Trotskyism!"

The decades of witch-hunting and mind-blocking by the bureaucracy now makes itself felt on the young girl:

"Katya was shocked. What did enemies of the people, spies and saboteurs have to do with it? Such men had to be destroyed, mercilessly, as was being done by Berya. But Seryozha's organisation, so

bourgeois family.

Chapter one begins with Globov reading the case of gynaecologist named Rabinovich who had procured illegal abortion.

Stable hierarchy

The case and the 'crime' of abortion recurs as a strand running through the novel. The empty court room one night, Globov speaking to the whole bureaucracy makes his imaginary speech:

"No Rabinoviches undermine the basis of society", he proclaims.

Sinyavsky may or may not know that his understanding of the issue is the same lines as those expressed in *Revolution Betrayed*:

"The most compelling motive for the present of the family is undoubtedly the need of the bureaucracy for a stable hierarchy of relations and for the disciplining of youth by me-



Stalin's statue demolished in Budapest after his death in 1953

far nameless, existed for the struggle for freedom and for a genuinely Soviet regime. She shuddered with disgust as a newspaper cartoon came into her mind: Trotsky, or Tito, or some such mercenary killer, pictured as a long-tailed rat and surrounded by his hangers-on, sat enthroned upon a hill of human bores". (P.64)

Demoralised by Karlinsky the cynic, Katya's will is broken.

Remains defiant

But Seryozha remains strong, defiant, even in imprisonment. The youth in the novel bears out Trotsky's picture of youth under Stalinism.

"They have, thus, but three possibilities open to them; participate in the bureaucracy and make a career; submit silently to oppression, retire into economic work, sciences or their own petty personal affairs; or finally, to go ground and learn to struggle and temper their character for the future".

Revolution Betrayed P 63
Alongside the repression of youth, Sinyavsky's novel highlights the bureaucracy's repression of women.

Again seeming almost to echo Trotsky, Sinyavsky approaches this question through the prohibition of abortion, and the conscious turn by the bureaucracy to the resurrection of the

of 40,000,000 points of support for authority and power'.

But explicit scenes in the novel interwoven with a picture of the real decadence and degeneration of the leading layer of the Stalinist bureaucracy

Colleagues

Perhaps the most vivid of the gently ironic picture of the party given by Interrogator Skromnykh for his wretched friends:

"Globov found he enjoying himself and decided to stay late. He liked the people; they were Skromnykh's colleagues, every one with a face like an open book, a past as clear as glass and a staidness of conscience. Kingmen of whom perhaps he the world was terrified.

" . . . The dread invisible army was relaxing at festive meal".

The Trial Begins is never republished by Fontana clearly hoping to cash in on the now lucrative 'dissident' market.

But unlike the later work of Solzhenitsyn and others carries a message that is from anti-communism.

It is sardonic, lively exposure of a microcosm of the Soviet state bureaucracy. Read it!

TEAMSTER BUREAUCRACY IN REVIEW

Second of a two-part series reviewing the final volume in Farrell Dobbs' history of the fight of Trotskyists in the Teamsters' union in the USA. 'Teamster Bureaucracy' is distributed in Britain by Pathfinder Press; 47, The Cut, Waterloo, London SE1. It costs £2.50. By KEITH WHITE

Out of 4,000 members Teamsters Local 544 only a few voted against the switch to the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO).

The capitalist press, however reported that the June 1941 meeting had been attended by only 750 many of them 'outside Trotskyists'. IBT President Tobin used his capitalist witch-hunting campaign. He dispatched some 300 supporters (IBT and AFL officials and downright hoodlums) to Minneapolis and began a drive to keep alive Local 544/AFL.

Organising campaign

New officers were appointed and an 'organising campaign' planned.

This campaign: "... took the form of a terrorist attack upon the membership of 544-CIO. Patrol squads began cruising the city—many in cars with out-of-state licence plates—posting truck drivers on the streets and inside workers at their places of employment.

The purpose was to make the motor transport workers sign cards pledging support to 4-AFL and at the same time to forcibly collect membership dues.

Tobin's thugs used clubs, blackjacks, chains, knives and guns.

CIO members were beaten some after having been dragged from trucks and others while working on loading docks or inside warehouses.

Similar tactics were used in assaults on 544-CIO road workers at freight transfer plants throughout the region around Minneapolis.

Police help

And of course the police gave their support:

"In several instances advances of IBT goons arrived at truck terminals and warehouses escorted by police and cars.

"The cops then looked the other way when 544-CIO members were slugged. They intervened only when groups of angry workers sought to deal firmly with the 'bimites'.

(P. 131)

In the face of such intimidation the leadership of 544-CIO proposed the membership should accept dual membership of 544-AFL.

The Local 544 Union Defence Guard was not mobilised because of the danger of provoking a full-blooded assault by the state forces.

Legal moves

Local 544-CIO leaders tried to demonstrate continued support for their class struggle policies but attempts to draw workers into industrial action were blocked by legal moves such as court orders to ban picketing.

To continue with this they would have simply needed the best Militants in town.

The legal basis for moves against class struggle action was Roosevelt's Wagner Labor Relations Act (1933) implemented at state level by the Minnesota Stassen Act (1939).

Supported by trade union



US President Roosevelt with Stalin in 1945. Stalinists connived at the jailing of Trotskyists for anti-war activities, only to fall victim to the same reactionary legislation in the Cold War period.

forced to negotiate with unions representing a majority of their employees the Wagner Act also included 'unfair labor practices' clauses and established a National Labor Relations Board for purposes of compulsory arbitration.

The provisions of the Stassen Act were as follows: 'No one was compelled to join a labor organisation. Strikes in violation of a working agreement with an employer were declared an 'unfair labor practice'.

In the warehouses that were to be permitted, a majority of those engaged in picketing had to be employees of the struck firm. At plants where no strike was in progress, protest actions could involve no more than one picket at each entrance. Sit down strikes were banned outright.

In all cases, unions had to give ten days' advance notice of a desire to negotiate with the employers. Another ten days' notice was then required if the workers decided to go on strike, which made a total of twenty days before a walkout could begin. That, of course, gave the bosses time to prepare strike breaking measures.

The governor was to appoint a state labor conciliator to mediate worker-employer disputes. If the conciliator decided that an industrial conflict was 'affected with a public interest', the governor was to have a commission of three to investigate the matter. Hearings were then to be held by the commission, and that body had thirty days in which to make a public report on the controversy. During the thirty-day 'waiting period' the union was forbidden to strike.

It was declared unlawful to interfere with 'free and uninterrupted use of public roads' or to obstruct 'ingress to and egress from' any place of business. An even more specific stricture was included to protect scab trucking. That

neither is party to a strike'. As a final ironic touch, court injunctions were authorised against unions engaged in 'unfair labor practices' and in cases where an unlawful act was 'threatened'.

With employers all over the state refusing to bargain with 544-CIO or its supporters the Trotskyist leadership decided to apply to state Labor Conciliator Blair for a ballot of employees to decide to which union they wanted to belong.

Inappropriate

Earlier when Tobin's gangs were cruising the streets of Minneapolis 544-CIO obtained a court order against their thug activities.

Tactics such as these must be carefully considered.

Clearly Dobbs is correct to argue the inappropriateness of using the Local's Defence Guard but the use of the courts against Tobin did not help the workers involved to develop a line of struggle independent of the capitalist state.

The case of demanding Blair authorise a ballot of employees is more complicated.

In general the workers' movement must not use these fake 'neutral' bodies—such as industrial tribunals.

The lesson of the Wagner and Stassen Acts is that trade unionists who support state regulation of the labor movement are placing a rope around their necks.

The independence of the trade unions is a principle—not just a good tactic. Yet in the particular circumstances they found themselves in the SWP felt justified in using the courts as a tactic.

Hemmed in with heavy legal restrictions on all sides and a trade union bureaucracy quite prepared to use physical measures in alliance with the state against the militants, they could not rule out any avenue to protect themselves and move towards a stronger position from

Dobbs stresses at every point that use of the courts was subordinate to the use of class struggle methods.

Plant ballots

Dobbs feels that because the SWP did not suspend action in deference to the courts, they had not sacrificed independence.

Under the terms of the Stassen Law Blair had to announce a date when the application for plant ballots would be heard.

This was fixed for June 30th. The hearings dragged on until August 2nd when Blair refused to petition.

Between those dates the witch-hunt was escalated decisively.

Indicted

On June 27th Roosevelt moved against the Trotskyists. The SWP headquarters in Minneapolis was raided and the Trotskyists indicted on July 15th.

The charges which led to the jailing of the 'Minneapolis 18' were based on two laws.

One was an 1861 statute aimed at the counter revolutionaries of the Southern slave states but left unused until 1941.

Under this statute the Trotskyists were charged with a 'conspiracy to overthrow the government by force and violence'.

The second part of the indictment was based on the Smith Act of 1940 'the first statute since the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 to make mere advocacy of ideas a federal crime'.

Charged

Under the Smith Act the defendants were charged with advocating overthrow of the government by force, publishing and circulating literature advocating this, forming organisations 'to teach advocate and encourage such overthrow', becoming members of such organisations: distributing publications which 'advised, coun-

A full study of all the issues involved in the trial and the policy adopted by the SWP in the face of imperialist war is beyond the scope of this review.

In addition to *Teamster Bureaucracy* material on this is to be found in James P. Cannon's *Socialism on Trial* and *The SWP in World War Two* (both published by Pathfinder).

However, a few points can be made. The Communist Party for example, not only refused to join the defence campaign, but enthusiastically supported Roosevelt's attacks on the Trotskyists.

Less than ten years later the Stalinists themselves were the victims of the Smith Act and the SWP were almost alone in the labour movement defending them.

Ironically, the conviction of the Trotskyists was used as a precedent against the Stalinists.

Pardon demanded

The Civil Rights Defense Committee, set up to organise the defence campaign, was able to gather support from a wide range of academics, civil libertarians and, most importantly, working class organisations.

For example in 1942: "around one hundred and fifty central labour bodies and local unions, speaking for over one million workers passed resolutions protesting the violation of our constitutional rights."

By 1944, when the victims were already in jail, labour organisations representing over 3 million workers were demanding a Presidential pardon.

The jury found the 18 defendants not guilty on part one but guilty on part two of the indictment.

On December 8 1941 (just one day after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour) 13

a year and a day.

Even after the trial 544-CIO was able to organise some struggles which resulted in wage increases for the workers involved. Further attacks put a stop to this, however.

The *Teamster* series raises many political questions not covered in this review.

Vital question

More space would be needed to assess them fully, as does the vital question of a Labor Party in the USA and the errors committed by the SWP on this issue.

Perhaps most outrageous of all is Dobbs' 'Afterword' in which he attempts to show a link between the class struggle record of the SWP in the 1930s and their current practice in the 1970s.

If any honest comparison is to be made between these two periods it must begin by drawing the sharp contrast between the 1930s movement with its orientation into the working class and today's SWP, which is a petty bourgeois grouping preoccupied with civil rights protest and reformist demands, in a political bloc with the Pabloite United Secretariat (from which reactionary US legislation debar them from affiliation.)

Vital period

This review is not intended to answer these questions, but to give some of the flavour of the struggles fought by our movement 40 years ago in the USA. *Teamster Bureaucracy* is highly detailed.

Buy this book and the others in the series (*Teamster Rebellion*, *Teamster Power* and *Teamster Politics*).

Read them and rediscover this vital period in the history of the Trotskyist movement.

OUR POLICIES

In this series we have been dealing with the fight in today's conditions for the demands and principles of the Trotskyist Transitional Programme, and focussing on the difference between the transitional demands and the line argued by the reformists.

The fight for nationalisation

The consistent message of the Trotskyist Transitional Programme is that the fight for the jobs, living standards and democratic rights of the working class must not be tailored to fit in with the requirements of the ruling class and its crisis-ridden system.

To defend existing jobs and create new employment in conditions of slump it is necessary to fight for work-sharing on full pay.

Rationalisation

This runs directly counter to the employers' drive for rationalisation, sackings and speed-up.

To finance such demands, and to pay wages that maintain and improve workers' living standards may well prove to be beyond the

means of a particular capitalist—or the employing class as a whole.

The demands, however, are necessary for the defence of workers' interests.

Nationalisation

And our answer to the empty pockets and depleted wallet of the individual capitalist is not to compromise on these demands, but to call for the nationalisation of industry, with no compensation to the old exploiters.

Naturally the complete programme of socialist revolution calls for the nationalisation of all major industry.

We would not rest content with the expropriation of one or two bankrupt firms.

But if the full programme of nationalisation is to be carried through, then it must begin with particular struggles through which the mass movement of the working

class can be mobilised, can learn its strength and discard its treacherous leaders.

Because we stand at all times for the political independence of the working class and its interests, we insist that nationalisation take the form of expropriating the major capitalist trusts and their shareholders, with compensation paid only in cases of proven need.

This requirement specifically rules out the fake "nationalisation" that has characterised reformist efforts to prop up post-war British capitalism through the purchase of run-down sectors of industry no longer profitable to private owners.

Strengthen

The effect of such "nationalisation" is to strengthen the capitalist class by relieving it of the burden of directly sustaining



PHOTO: Dave Evans, IFL

Leyland workers at Longbridge. The 'nationalisation' of Leyland under the Ryder plan was a cover for wholesale rationalisation and speed-up, while private shareholders reap the increased profits.

industries while leaving the reins of management firmly in the hands of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois state.

Under such conditions, massive rationalisation schemes have been carried through at the cost of thousands of jobs in transport, mining and other industries.

Another manoeuvre by the reformists in government to

give an impression of "nationalisation" while serving the interests of capitalism, is to launch massive state investment and subsidies into companies that remain privately owned—the clearest examples being British Leyland and Chrysler.

Collaboration

Leyland, trading on its "nationalised" image has been able to exploit to the full the collaboration of the trade union bureaucracy, while functioning, in the words of leading management spokesman Alex Park as a "joint stock company" in which the state acts alongside individuals as just another shareholder.

In fighting against such phony 'nationalisation' we must stress that the struggle to expropriate particular groups of employers or industries must not rest on the dubious goodwill of the Parliamentary Labour Party, which has again and again supported such schemes.

The fight must draw on the strength of workers themselves, exercised through factory occupations, with committees to open the books of the bosses and unmask the business secrets of the giant monopolies and petty exploiters.

Through such struggles workers will see the need not only for nationalisation extending far beyond the particular workplace involved, but also for a break from the parliamentary charades of the Labour politicians and the establishment of a workers' government.

Conscious obstacle

But this does not mean that we can ignore parliamentary politics.

Quite clearly in the fight today for the nationalisation of particular groups of capitalists the question of the anti-socialist Lib-Lab coalition government—standing as a conscious obstacle to further nationalisation—is a factor to be reckoned with.

The demand that those 'left' Labour MPs that claim to represent the interests of the working class break from

that coalition and throw their weight behind the independent struggles of the working class is important in the fight to expose the impotence of these 'lefts' and the necessity for a revolutionary leadership.

For us, therefore, the call for nationalisation of particular firms and branches of industry is not an abstract call restricted to general propaganda: it is an agitation-slogan designed to organise



Black sugar workers in Natal

Apartheid gag on TV film

This space was reserved to review a TV documentary film which was not shown.

A few hours before the third of Anthony Thomas' documentaries was to go on the air, the big sugar monopoly, Tate and Lyle, got a High Court injunction to stop sections of the film being shown.

The offending part shows the subhuman living conditions in a camp lived in by black sugar workers on a

plantation partly owned by Tate and Lyle.

Tate and Lyle say they have sold the plantation and that in any case they provided "better" accommodation for their workers than that shown in the film.

But what they provided was dormitories in which men were forced to live alone without their families.

The other firm mentioned in the film is British Leyland. They did not try to get an injunction but no doubt breathed a sigh of relief when

the film was banned.

They were sufficiently embarrassed to ask the director Anthony Thomas to include a statement that they would negotiate with a black trade union if 50% of their workers joined it.

In theory this is a change of line by Leyland. In practice they know it is just words since the law in South Africa will come to their assistance because negotiating with black unions is illegal. And last week's High

Court injunction shows again that the law in Britain is also a defender of apartheid as it did when the National Association for Freedom got an injunction to prevent the Union of Post Office Workers from operating a week's mail embargo against South Africa.

If last week's decision stands, then it has become illegal in this country to criticise capitalists for operating racist and repressive labour policies.



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Heffer - staunch defender of NEB strategy.

and to lead the working class.

Trotsky spells out this approach in the Transitional Programme:

"The necessity of advancing the slogan of expropriation in the course of daily agitation in partial form, and not only in our propaganda in its more comprehensive aspects, is dictated by the fact that different branches of industry are on different levels of development, occupy a different place in the life of society, and pass through different stages of the class struggle.

"Only a general revolutionary upsurge of the proletariat can place the complete expropriation of the bourgeoisie on the order of the day. The task of transitional demands is to prepare the proletariat to solve this problem."

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

NUPE SELLS OUT 1 MILLION ON PAY

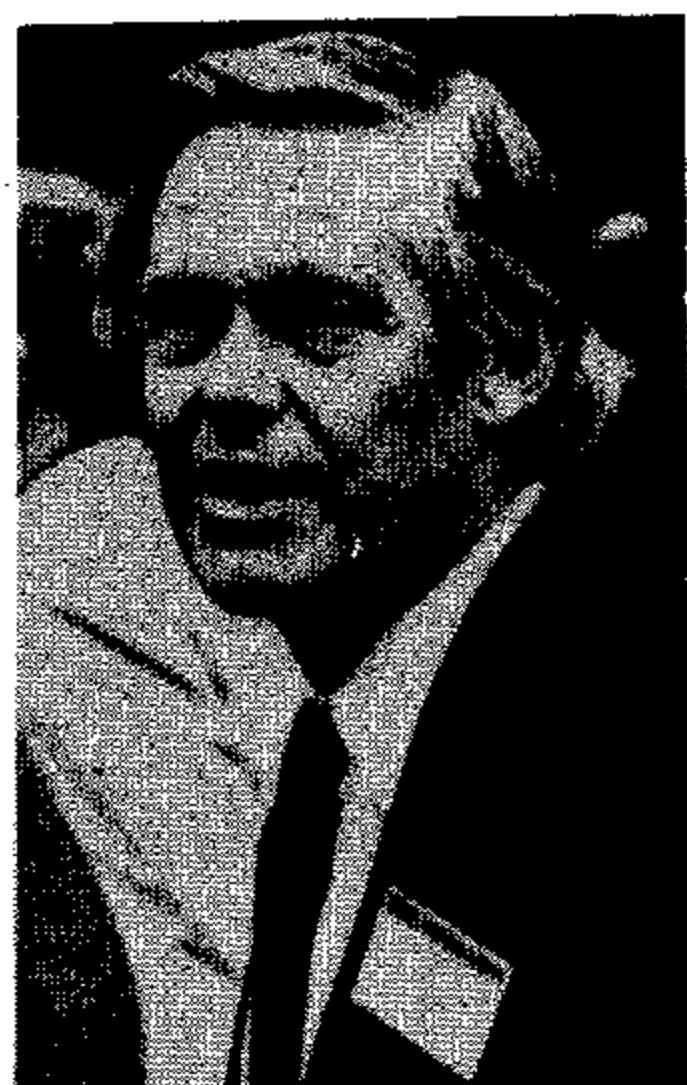
The sell out of the Local Authority manual workers is just around the corner.

The union side have not yet formally agreed to the employers' pitiful offer, but this is only due to the deliberate stalling tactics by the officials of NUPE.

Of the 3 unions involved, only NUPE have rejected the offer.

But instead of taking action to support the claim, they have only put up token resistance in order to win prestige over the other 2 unions in their quest to increase membership within local authorities.

Once again the low paid will suffer while the union



NUPE leader Fisher

bureaucracy seeks only to further their aims of recruitment.

The original claim was for:
*a £50 minimum wage
*a 35-hour week
*4 weeks' holiday after 1 year's service
*payment of average earnings whilst on sick leave
*consolidation of Phases I and II of the Social Contract

*enhanced payments for those not on bonus
*a threshold clause to protect the standard of living
*and an increase in shift allowances.

The employers' response to that claim was to offer a new minimum wage of £42.40—a total increase of £3.90, leaving £5 of the wage unconsolidated.

Average earnings were to be paid only on sick leave due to industrial accident or disease.

The offered increase in the shift allowance would raise it to the princely sum of 12.76p per hour for rotating shifts—an increase of 2.26p per hour, with 1.5p per hour for those on alternating shifts.

Meaningful discussions

On the threshold clause, the employers have said that if the living standards of local authority manual employees fall below the value of the agreement, then "meaningful discussions" will take place.

The question of the shorter working week and longer holidays will be "looked into" by the joint secretaries without commitment. And perhaps most ominous of all, two new committees will be set up to look into (a) productivity and (b) differentials.

This is the deal the unions are about to accept, despite a clear mandate from NUPE regions to reject it.

It comes nowhere near the original claim. But by skilful manipulation at recall conferences, union bureaucrats have been able to dupe delegates into believing this was the best offer that could be gained.

If that is the best offer that full time negotiators could get, then they must be replaced by lay members who will take a hard line.

The membership have received no lead as to how the claim could be won.

Betrayal

The negotiators have said that if any group of local government workers receive more than 10% then they will be back to reopen negotiations.

This is a coward's way out. It is a betrayal of trade unionism.

Are we to ride on the back of the firemen, when we should be out there on the picket line beside them?

A united stand by all those in local government is needed to smash the 10% limit.

The union leaders must be fought and defeated, along with the TUC bureaucrats if the low paid are to win a realistic standard of living



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Scene from this summer's mass picketing at Grunwick - these forces must be mobilised to force the TUC to act.

BURY ACAS - BLACK GRUNWICK

The ACAS recommendation that APEX should be recognised at Grunwick's was finally put to death by the Law Lords last Wednesday 14 December.

The burial of this diversionary body will only bring forward mourners from the ranks of the TUC bureaucracy who saw in its existence a vital tool with which to hold back and fend off demands for action to cut off supplies and services to the factory.

Ward and his backers in the ruling class were jubilant and not in the least surprised.

Only regret

Our only regret is that the corpse travelled so far: from High Court, which found in its favour, to the Court of Appeal, which ruled it void, to find peace in a hole dug for it weeks ago by the 'highest juridical body in the land'.



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Rolls Royce strikers supporting Grunwick picket of TUC

RR OFFER FAILS

Another derisory offer from the management at the Rolls Royce Mulliner Park Ward plant in North London has been deservingly rejected by the strikers.

After 14 weeks on strike, the management last Wednesday offered the 600 workers a 10% increase plus a £60 special lump sum payment. Formerly they had been offering a straight 10%.

This crude attempt to buy off the striking workers was first rejected by the strike

Labour MP Bruce Grocott joined the ranks of the 'lefts' overnight and came to the realisation that the 'higher echelons of the judiciary were anti-union and anti-Labour' while veteran 'left' MP, Audrey Wise's response was to sponsor a spurious motion in the Commons which expressed 'grave concern at the Law Lords' decision'.

Stalinist AUEW-TASS member of the TUC General Council, Ken Gill, sensing that this might affect the functioning of his favourite watchdog of the working class remarked sadly that the decision 'drives a nail into the coffin of ACAS'.

APEX General Secretary Roy Grantham, still unsatisfied with the butcher's job he has carried out on the strike so far, promised to do his best to resuscitate the dead recommendation.

Presumably while it does the legal rounds again, the strikers will be waiting for the outcome on the picket lines?

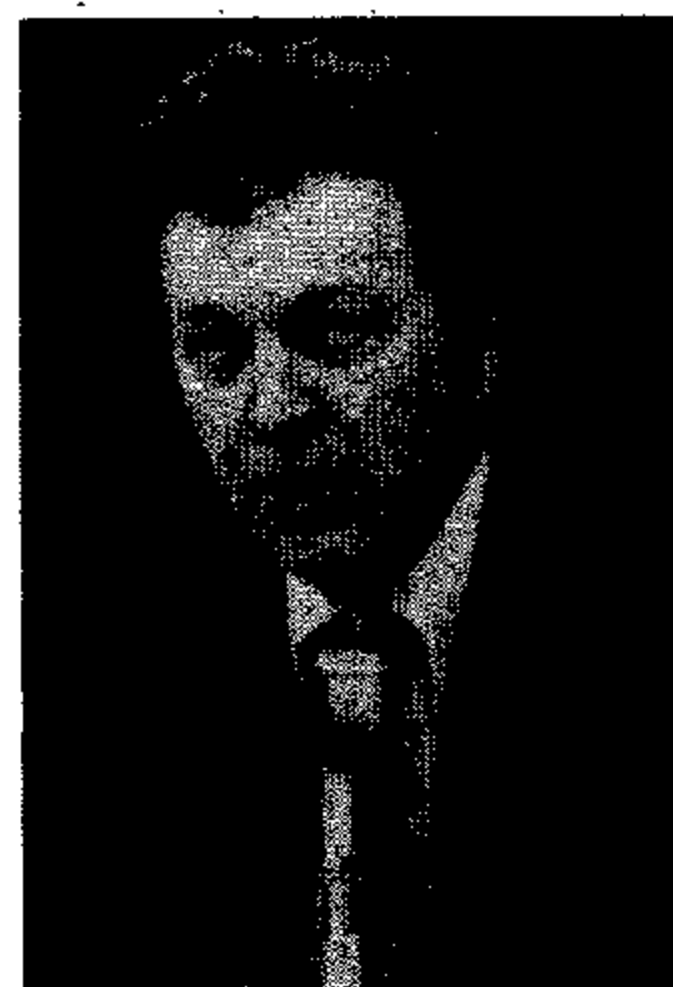


PHOTO: John Shorrocks, Report

Stalinist Ken Gill

Jack Dromey's kaleidoscopic array of about-turns reached a new high when, having just called off a S.E. Region TUC conference on Grunwick (because APEX hadn't given it full support!) he brazenly prophesied that "this dispute can only be won by trade union muscle".

Although we would be the last to disagree with this last statement, regular readers of *Socialist Press* will recognise that alone against the array of fake-Trotskyists reporting Grunwicks, the Workers' Socialist League has pointed to the fact that despite its strength, the trade union movement, with the likes of Jack Jones, Len Murray and Hugh Scanlon at its head, is effectively decapitated.

Determined

So too at a local level, only a leadership determined to mobilise whole layers of workers behind the strikers' call for blacking of all supplies and services can lead the way forward to victory.

Roy Grantham has said that any initiative of which he disapproves undertaken by the strikers will result in their suspension from the union.

Because of this intimidation, the strike committee will not be supporting the lobby of the TUC General Council on the 21st.

Yet to even fight for blacking action, in the form of a model resolution to all labour movement bodies, will also result in similar intimidation from their own union bureaucracy.

Do-or-die

In this do-or-die situation, we believe that the strikers must break sharply from the bureaucracy. An appeal for support must be launched and local postal, electricity and water workers must be brought into action behind the blacking call.

With the verbal support of huge sections of workers translated into concrete solidarity support and financial backing for the strikers and workers imposing blacking action, the question of closing down the factory and winning the strike will once more come to the fore.

Only with such a focus will the strikers achieve what seems to be slipping out from their grasp: full reinstatement and full union recognition!

BIKE STRIKE FACES NEW ACAS THREAT

The 'kiss of death' of ACAS intervention is hovering over the three-week old pay strike at the giant Raleigh bicycle factory in Nottingham.

The strike, involving 4,000 workers in the plant, has been made official by all eight unions involved.

Management assess the claim as 39%—which is of course in conflict with the 10% pay limits.

They have offered 10% plus another 4% in exchange for a self-financing productivity deal, while threatening that they may be forced out of business if the strike goes on, or if the claim is met.

Union leaders have responded by calling not for nationalisation of Raleigh, but for the National Enterprise Board to take the firm under its wing.

The alternative, according to Jack Hallam, Metal Mechanics Union Divisional Secretary, is that the market be opened up for importers.

'If T.H. Raleigh can't afford to stay in business, and we can't afford to work there, there is an obvious chance for overseas manufacturers to come in'.

While Hallam is right to reject the company's arguments on 'viability', the fight must be directed towards a clear alternative.

This means struggling to open the books of the bike monopoly to prove the case for its nationalisation.

The intervention of the NEB—which has masterminded the attacks on the British Leyland work force—will do nothing to assist Raleigh workers in their legitimate pay demands.

Instead of such diversions Raleigh workers must organise alongside local firemen to spread and strengthen their attack on the 10% pay limit.

Tactics change on health cuts

The Secretary of State for Social Services, Mr. David Ennals, has made a tactical retreat in his bid to cut health services in Greenwich District, South London.

In the face of huge opposition from staff and the local community, he has rejected the Area Health Authority's plan to close St. Nicholas Hospital, Plumstead, which has 283 beds.

Instead he is proposing that five smaller hospitals in the Area should close with a loss of about 250 beds and a theoretical 'saving' of about £980,000 annually.

The hospitals now threatened are the Eltham and Nottingham; Bexley Maternity; Bexley and Welling; Woolwich Memorial Hospital, and the British Hospital for Mothers and Babies in Greenwich.

While this change of plan is an indication of the level of opposition to the closure of St. Nicholas, it would clearly be a mistake to talk of a 'victory' when Ennals is simply attempting to shift his ground and to pick off five smaller, and consequently weaker hospitals in the same areas.

Consultation on this new plan are scheduled to end at the end of February 1978.

Government ban 0.36% pay rise

Provincial journalists have had the final insult of the government's pay limits shoved down their throats—a 10% offer has been withdrawn because it went 0.36% over the limit.

The NUJ had already voted by almost two to one to accept the offer when the employers—the Newspaper Society—whipped it away from under their noses.

Union negotiators went back to see the management on Monday (December 19) in one of the most humiliating positions a team of union negotiators can have faced.

The Newspaper Society offered £7.35 for seniors with a scaled down offer for junior journalists.

This represented a 12% rise for many of the lower paid journalists, but was calculated as being 10% of the wage bill for the industry.

It was accepted by the journalists with less than 4,000 voting out of a total of 9,300—a sign of the demoralisation that set in during the negotiations.

The vote clearly reflected that the journalists—who had put in a claim for £23 a week—have been given no lead in how to win the claim.

Although the negotiators

recommended rejection, they offered no direction to the industrial action that had to follow.

Hopeless attempts to devise a way round the 10% were correctly rejected by the membership after the failure of *Daily Mirror* journalists to outflank the government.

But the direction for action—taking up a fight inside the TUC, linking up with the firemen and other unions—was not even mentioned by the Provincial Journalists Industrial Council, which negotiated on their behalf.

Instead the prospect of an isolated action divorced from other sections of the working class was held up to the membership—who could clearly see that they were not negotiating in isolation.

The Newspaper Society offer has not only stuck to the 10%, it has also refused to allow further claims to be made locally, and has thrown out all the fringe benefits claimed by the union.

The Darlington strike, which continues despite the relaunch of the North of England Newspapers, has lost momentum in the Christmas period but journalists from other papers in the Westminster Press group are to meet again on January 6 to discuss action in support.

Kangaroo lover speaks out

While the findings of the special kangaroo court set up by the TGWU bureaucracy to witch-hunt militants at Cowley await the rubber-stamp of Regional Committee approval, one Regional bureaucrat has already nailed his colours to the mast.

Jack Adams, "senior steward" of a tiny number of TGWU members at the MG Abingdon plant has gone into print with a ridiculous witch-hunting attack against two of those charged by the frame-up court, Bob Fryer and Alan Thornett.

Democratic ballot

Their offence according to Adams? They had the nerve to be elected to senior steward and deputy senior steward positions by a democratic ballot of members in the plant!

And vicious right wing convenor Reg Parsons was ousted by a margin of 200 votes.

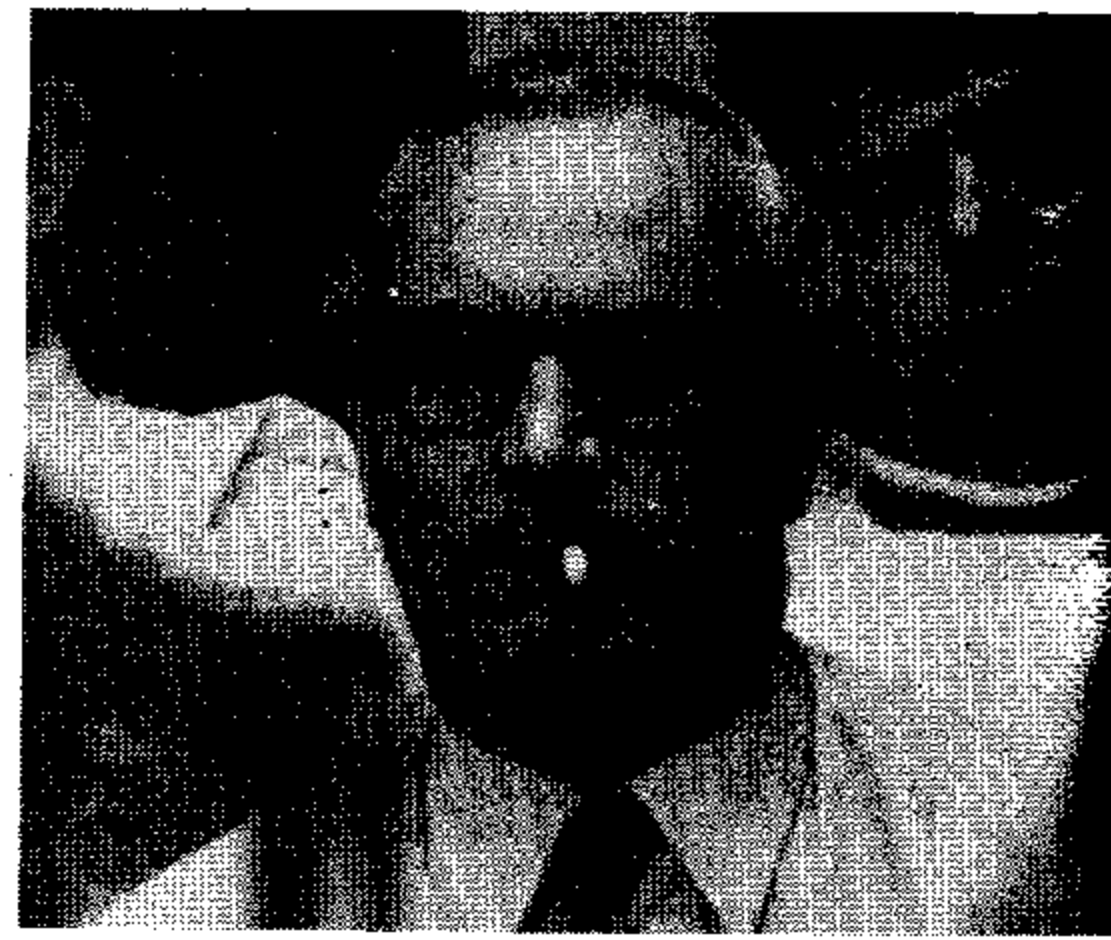
"This is nothing short of criminal, and reflects very badly on those 2,000 plus TGWU members who did not vote despite the facilities provided", thundered Adams in a letter to the local *Oxford Mail*.

No right wing cries

Adams was silent on the fact that Parsons was previously elected on a similar turn-out. There were no right wing cries of "apathy" then.

It is purely the fact that left wing candidates, who have fought the right wing's subservience to management, have been elected that brings Adams to brand the election as a "parody", and the workforce as "damned thoughtless".

The response on the shop floor to Adams' tirade was a



Chief kangaroo keeper Bill Roche JP

near unanimous cry of "Who the hell is Adams?"

Socialist Press readers had to remind workers that in two far more mysterious ballots a year ago the unknown Jack Adams was credited with thousands of votes from Cowley, and on this basis gained a seat on the TGWU Regional Committee.

Repeated requests at that time from two Cowley TGWU branches—representing 5,000 members—for an inquiry into the running of these ballots were brushed aside by officials.

Now Adams, as a member of the Regional Committee, is to be one of the bureaucrats responsible for implementing the decisions of the real parody—the Cowley kangaroo court.

Outside of rule

The court itself was set up outside of any TGWU rules by the Oxford District Committee in order to victimise

ten leading left-wingers Cowley Assembly including Bob Fryer and Thornett.

Its structure ensured the same tight-knit clique of right wing bureaucrats act as prosecution, judging jury—raising "charges", conducting "hearings", recommending sentences to the Regional Committee.

In charge of the affair were two magistrates District Secretary Buckle JP and Leyland Plant convenor, D Chairman Bill Roche JP.

Adams' outburst at the whole sordid affair in not strength but desperate straits of a bureaucracy that is isolated from popular support.

In the fight to defend their elected representatives and carry forward the struggle against the employment of Cowley workers have a chance to deal a further blow at the kangaroo keepers.

SCOTTISH workers need not fear. The US Government has no intention of bringing in a school of killer dolphins to protect the Holy Loch nuclear submarine base, according to Foreign Office Minister Frank Judd.

LEADERS IGNORE BAKERS STRIKE BALLOT

Bakery workers who voted overwhelmingly for a strike in support of their pay claim have been forced to stay at work by their union and operate a work to rule.

The 57,000 bakery workers, who are unlikely to put enough pressure on their managements to come up with an improved offer through such half hearted action, are now facing the same kind of witch-hunt in the press as if they were out on strike.

Sake of public

Sam Maddox, general secretary of the Bakers' Union, said that a strike would not be called over Christmas for the sake of the public, ignoring the call of

the members for just that.

Christmas was an ideal time for the strike since it would have hit the company at a time of bumper profits, and at a time when the small bakeries were too busy with Christmas specials to have scabbed on the strike by increasing their output.

Maddox had held back the strike threat until after Christmas without saying when it will be introduced.

The 40-hour week that the members are now working, together with a ban on Sunday work, lops about 20 hours off the normal working week.

Coming so soon after their strike over bank holidays it

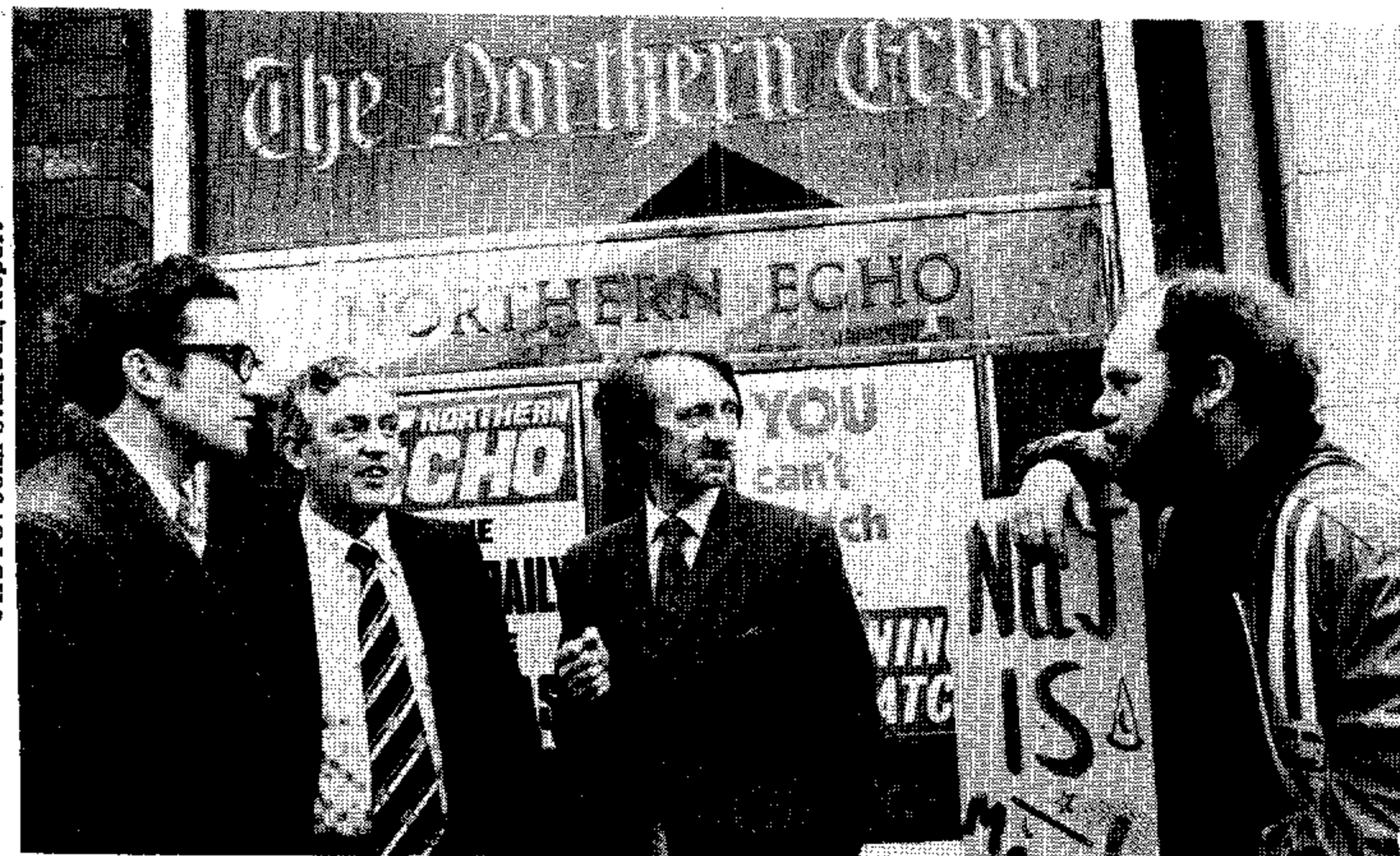
shows the readiness of bakery workers to fight to put an end to their appalling pay conditions.

Small enough

The claim itself put the union in small enough. Maddox says that members are taking action to improve a 6% offer to 10%.

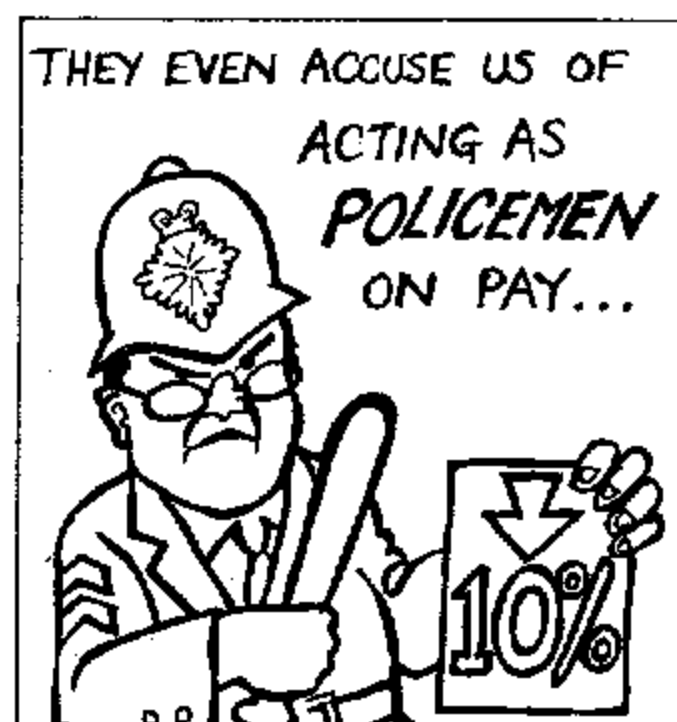
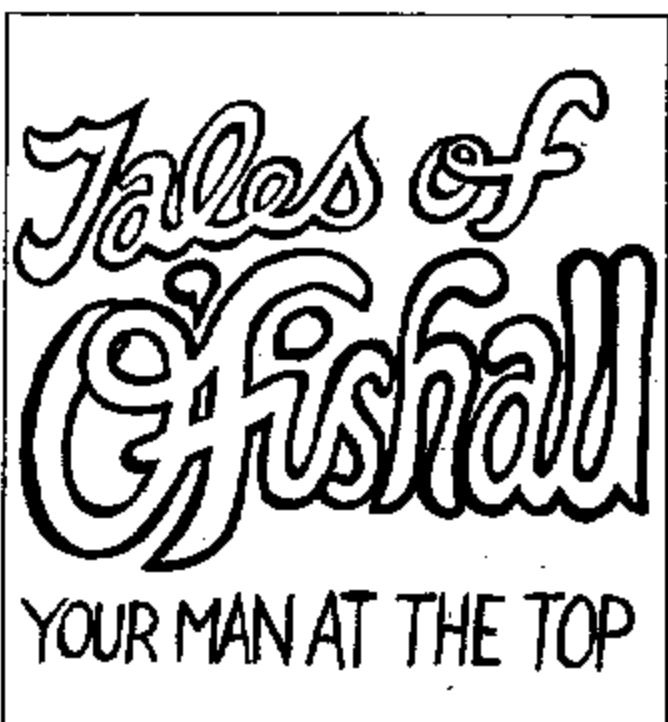
The difference is consolidation of Phases 1 and 2 which would increase members' overtime pay.

The employers—the Federation of Bakers—have refused to consolidate, claiming this would be in breach of the Government pay poli-



The Darlington picket line in the early days of the strike with the then General Secretary Ken Morgan.

PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report



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SCARGILL'S COURTS BETRAYAL



Kent NUM banner on march against unemployment—only strike action on wages can answer the incentives diversion.



George Brown's scabby Christmas

As firemen faced a Christmas on strike and with all sorts of "difficulties" having been put in the way of their receiving social security money which they are entitled, a sometime leader of the labour movement started a collection.

But Lord George-Brown's collection was not for the firemen but for the scabs of the army.

Sickening appeal

In a display of Christmas spirit, Brown's sickening appeal for charity to the strike-breakers was

launched along with Liberal MP Jo Grimmond and Tories Ian Gilmour and Winston Churchill.

In a series of letters to the bourgeois press they spoke of members of the armed forces "who will have almost nothing with which to brighten this Christmas for their families, let alone themselves".

It is worth remembering that this venomous traitor rose to political eminence due to his claims to fight for the interests of the working class.

For several years he was deputy leader of the Labour

Party. It is a long time since anyone associated this wretch with the labour movement but his conduct reminds us that the top echelons of the Labour Party and trade union movement are still infested with parasites every bit as loathsome as Brown.

Earlier this month Brown was one of the guests of honour at a dinner given by the Institute of Journalists—the anti union body which recruited Josephine Kirk Smith at Darlington, when her refusal to join the NUJ sparked off the seven month strike there for a closed shop.

The labour movement must not wait for such creatures to gorge themselves on workers' blood and leave of their own accord like Brown and Prentice.

They must be expelled from the movement on which they prey.

FUND

£170.46 is the sum received over the last seven days towards our £600 December Fund target. This brings the total this month to £426.73.

With the Christmas post greatly delayed it is important that a major effort is made in the week after Christmas to raise all the outstanding money, and make an early start on the January Fund.

With a new set of price increases adding to our running costs due in the New Year it is more important than ever that the fight is taken up to raise the full amount each month.

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Whatever the outcome of this Wednesday's court hearing on pit productivity deals—and it is virtually certain to be another rebuff for those supporting democratic decisions within the NUM—Arthur Scargill and his Stalinist allies have done miners nothing but harm by taking to the courts.

In seeking to involve the law and the bourgeois state in the internal affairs of the NUM, Scargill is not only abandoning the vital independence of the workers' movement, but also diverting from the pay struggle.

Biased in favour

Nothing can be gained from this. The courts have been exposed time and time again as biased in favour of the extreme right wing, and the armed agents of the capitalist class.

The jailing of Grunwick pickets, the prohibition of blacking action by postal workers and the injunctions flying in Newham North East Labour Party are all examples fresh in mind of the hostility of the courts to the labour movement.

"Benevolent" judge

More and more the law is being brought in to reverse and destroy democratic processes.

It is a matter of principle not to invite further such interference.

But even if Scargill and the three other area leaders should happen to find a "benevolent" judge, nothing would be resolved.

The right wing would make the running in a long drawn-out legal wrangle, while the central issue—the frustration of miners on the wages question—would remain unresolved.

It is frustration at the



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Scargill

effects of two years of wage controls and the prospect of a third that has driven miners towards the reactionary incentives scheme.

While Scargill squanders time and money on lawyers, the £135 pay claim—which was adopted at the NUM Conference and tacitly endorsed in the ballot which threw out the incentives plan—has been allowed to gather dust in Gormley's waste bin.

And for many miners Scargill, McGahey and others calling industrial action simply against incentive schemes—separate from the pay claim—would be the last straw.

It certainly appears from *Morning Star* reports that Stalinist McGahey has been holding back on action on wages.

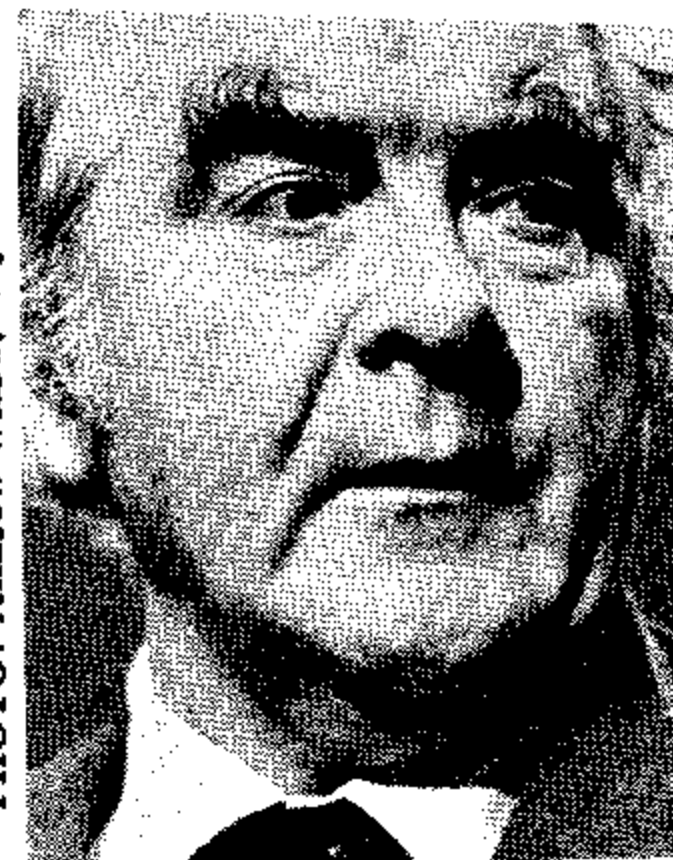


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Gormley—claim in waste bin.

A Scottish delegate conference voted 19-7 to demand a special national conference to discuss "various forms of industrial action" to implement the pay claim, and to reject and condemn the Executive's plan for area incentive schemes.

"Complete unity"

McGahey told the *Star* "there was complete unity on the question of our stand as a Scottish area, but some people wanted immediate

action, while others wanted to take this decision".

Those delegates who wanted 'immediate action' on wages held the correct position.

Left-talking

Bitterness at the endless delays and left blather on wages by McGahey and other left-talking Executive members bubbled over last week in Solsgrith colliery, Fife, where miners were driven into a reactionary strike demanding an incentive scheme.

Every day wasted in the courts, every day without a clear programme of action on the pay claim will add strength to NCB and right wing propaganda for incentives.

Already Scargill, McGahey



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

McGahey

and the 'lefts' have delayed nearly two months after the NUM claim should have been settled.

Latter-day piecemeal

Yet in opposing the NCB's speed-up plans and upholding the £135 claim they have been proved to represent the majority of miners.

While right wingers attempt to lead miners into the dangers of a latter-day piecemeal on an area basis, those that showed majorities against the plan must take strike action for the pay claim, giving a lead to all miners.

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