

# SOCIALIST PRESS



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# ECONOMIC RECOVERY FRAUD CRASHES

So much for the economic recovery that Callaghan, Healey and every defender of this government's anti-working class policies had been boasting about since the budget.

Despite their stories of the economy having finally turned the corner, of light at the end of the tunnel and a new period of stability and expansion, workers are now being presented yet again with the bill for yet another series of "rescue" measures designed to bale out British capitalism.

The package of measures announced last week by Chancellor Healey contains three lines of attack on workers and the middle class, aimed at cutting real wages and halting any expansion of capitalist production:

\*A 2½% increase in the national insurance surcharge on employers will now be imposed in October, thus giving an added boost to existing mass unemployment, and encouraging employers to increase prices.

\*Bank interest rates are raised to 10%—thus forcing building societies to increase mortgage rates by £2.50 per week on the average £10,000 loan.

This increase, plus the likely price increases flowing from Healey's measures, is already enough to wipe out the entire value of the pay settlements proposed for Phase 4!

\*A clampdown on bank deposits is designed to put a squeeze on lending—thus hitting those seeking or holding loans and overdrafts and striking another blow at

house-buyers.

These moves by Healey give the lie to those union bureaucrats and government ministers who have insisted that wage controls, social service cuts unemployment and speedup on the shop floor would "solve" the economic crisis.

## Bogged down

In fact while workers have had a drop in living standards unparalleled since the 1850s forced upon them by Labour leaders, British capitalism remains bogged down in the midst of a growing international crisis.

At the centre of this crisis is the US economy, which has expanded production at the expense of running this year an astronomical \$37 billion per year deficit on balance of payments.

In an effort to prevent this deficit leading to a run on the dollar and to prevent the latest sharp increase in US prices leading to a new round of inflation, US banks have now raised interest rates to the highest level for three years.

These interest rates will have a depressing effect on every other capitalist economy.

But US employers, concerned at their failure to compete with foreign industry, are also calling on leading industrial nations to limit state financial backing to ailing industries.

## Imperialism

Such limits would threaten the very existence of sectors of industry in Britain as well as in France and Italy, while furthering the interests of US imperialism in penetrating the European market and enabling US multinationals

## New cut in workers' pay

to defeat such state-backed competitors as British Leyland and Rolls Royce.

Meanwhile the steel industry remains a focal point of the capitalist crisis.

US steel firms are demanding the Carter government impose still stricter protectionist measures against steel imports.

## Cutback

Now the EEC commission is calling for a 20% cut in steel output—from 36 million tonnes per quarter to 29 million tonnes.

This will have the effect of intensifying the drive towards speed-up and closure throughout the steel industry internationally.

But the cut back in this basic commodity—a raw material for so many industries—is perhaps more important as an indicator of the stagnant or declining level of production internationally.

The capitalist system has no regard to the unmet material needs of workers and the exploited peasant masses throughout the world: it is a system in which production takes place only for private profit.

Now that those profits are threatened by the internal contradictions of capitalism itself, the ruling class in each country is resorting to protectionist measures, cutbacks in production, 'austerity' measures, wage-cutting and



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Dole queue in Kirby, Merseyside

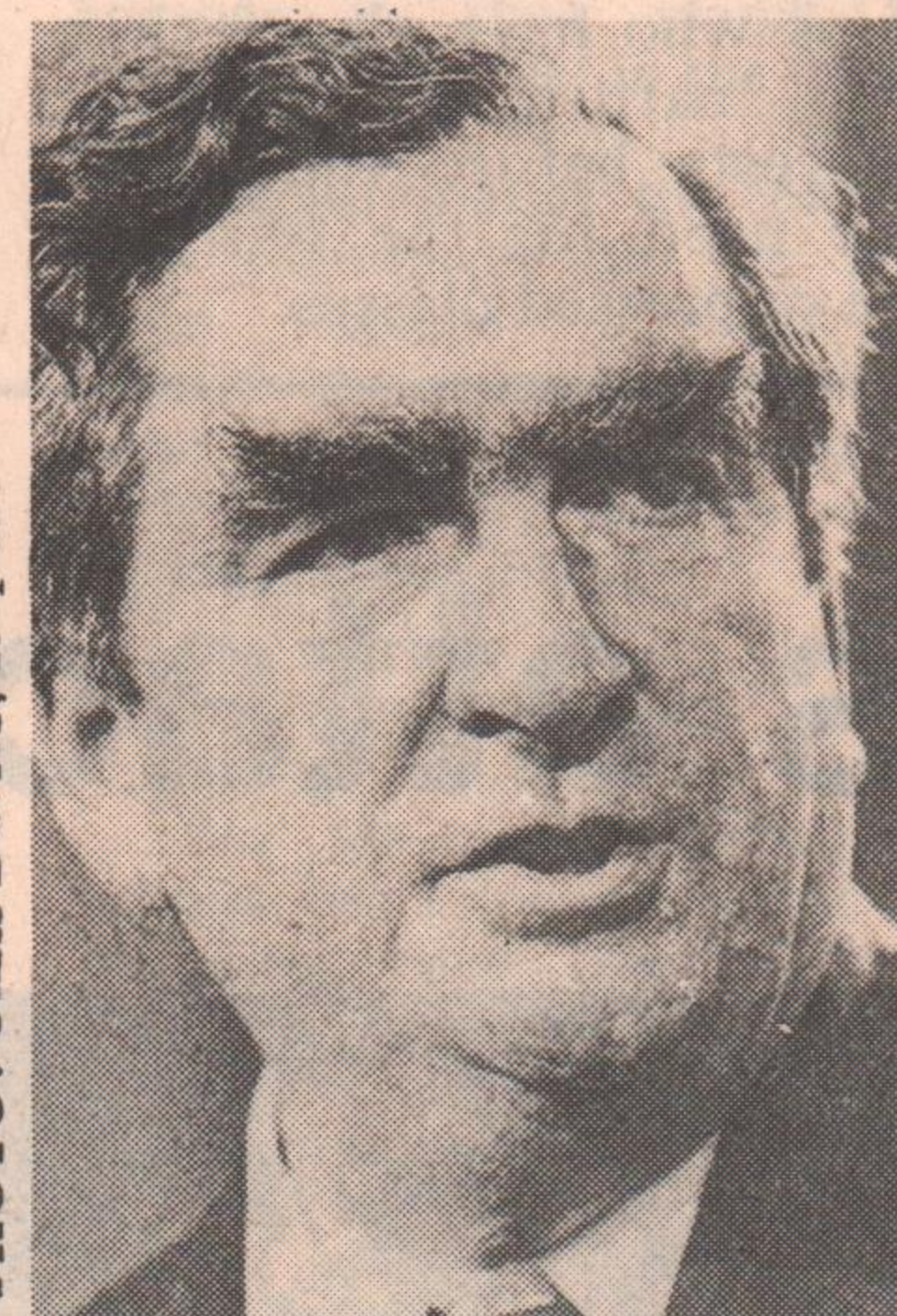


PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Healey

speed-up in order to increase the rate of exploitation of the working class.

These are exactly the policies now being implemented by the Lib-Lab coalition government.

Labour leaders see their task as restoring the "health" of British capitalism in the hopes of eventually winning a few concessions for the working class.

The last four years have confirmed how reactionary and false are these hopes.

In defending British capitalism at a point of crucial weakness the Labour leaders and their cronies in the TUC have launched the most vicious attacks on the working class.

—There is no solution along this path. The defence of jobs, conditions and living standards can only come in the struggle to

mobilise the working class for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a planned, socialist economy in which production takes place for need and not profit.

The Callaghan-Healey leadership of the Labour Party and the TUC bureaucracy stand as the foremost obstacle to such a struggle.

## Tory danger

Their betrayals over the last four years have created the danger of the return of a Tory government.

The Healey measures must be fought politically throughout the labour movement. The Tory Party has this week tabled a Parliamentary motion to cut the pay of Chancellor Healey.

Workers must demand that those Labour 'lefts' who claim to oppose the reactionary line of the government should not simply be voting *against* the Lib-Lab government on this issue, but putting down motions within the Parliamentary Labour Party, Labour GMCs and union branches demanding the *removal* of Healey and Callaghan from office.

## Opening

Those 'lefts' that refuse to act against these traitors in this pre-election period do no more than offer an opening for the Tories.

The fight must be to build a principled, revolutionary leadership within the working class, on a programme that starts from today's conditions and today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class and inescapably leads on to the conquest of power and a planned, socialist economy.

## Forces mass for Eritrean slaughter

The military dictatorship of Ethiopia is still massing huge forces in Asmara and on the borders of the liberated zones as it prepares to crush the struggles of the Eritrean revolution.

But while Mengistu and the leaders of the Derg build up their resources for a full offensive, their Stalinist backers are still seeking ways to resolve this acute dilemma.

The Soviet and Cuban bureaucracies appear to be powerless to stop the Derg from waging a war of genocide against the Eritreans.

Yet although Castro and *Pravda* now characterise the liberation struggles in Eritrea as 'secessionist', they themselves formerly gave verbal support to the Eritreans' right to self-determination and independence.

## Recognition

It is recognition of this right that the Eritrean Popular Liberation Front and Eritrean Liberation Front are demanding as a precondition of talks with the Ethiopian dictatorship, along with a recognition of their organisations as the sole representatives of the Eritrean people.

Mengistu has rejected these 'arrogant' terms angrily, and the Stalinists have so far been unable to overcome this confrontation.

Now it is clear that they are holding back their military support from the Derg's preparations as their efforts to reach a compromise become more desperate.

The ELF reports that Cuban troops have ceased any active participation in fighting against the Eritreans.

At the same time they claim that the South Yemeni forces have been withdrawn not only from the war areas, but from the whole of Ethiopia.

## Sinister

But these developments do not indicate in any simple way that the Stalinist bureaucracies and their allies will not move against the Eritreans. Other more sinister developments have emerged over the last week.

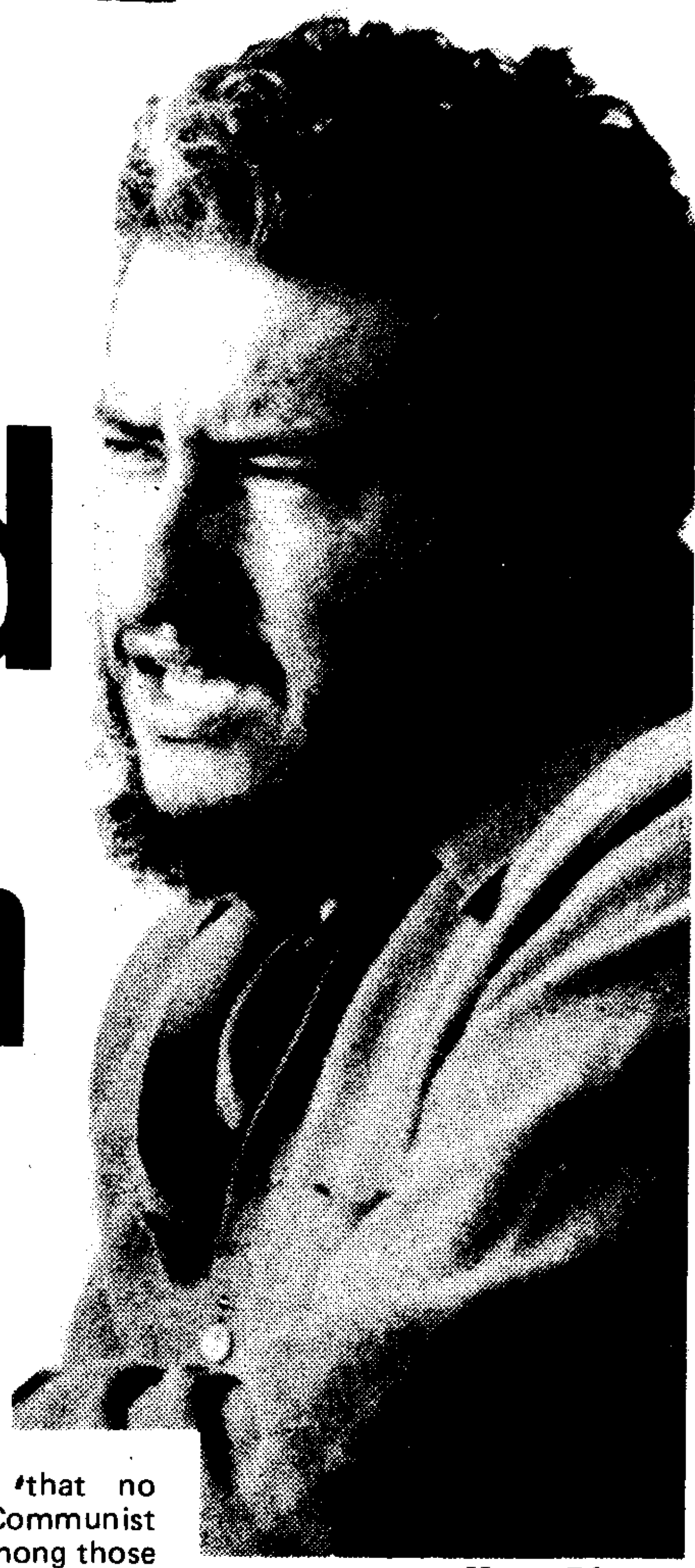
Partly in response to pressure from the Soviet bureaucracy, and partly in line with its present rightward turn, the petty bourgeois nationalist regime in Iraq has expelled members of the EPLF and the Syrian regime is expected to follow suit.

In opposition to these manoeuvres of the Stalinist bureaucracies, the demand must be taken up through the labour movement internationally that the Cuban and Soviet forces actively support the right of the Eritreans to self-determination, in opposition to the repression of the Ethiopian military dictatorship.



# INTERNATIONAL

# Defend deported Peruvian leaders



Hugo Blanco

It is still not certain whether Peru's elections to a "constituent assembly" that were postponed two weeks to June 18, in response to the general strike at the end of May, will go ahead.

Even if they do, they will be nothing but a squalid fraud.

Because in the aftermath of the general strike, the military government of Morales Bermudez has unleashed a vicious anti-left witch-hunt.

On May 25 eleven leading opponents of the regime were deported to Argentina and hundreds of others were arrested or forced into hiding.

The eleven, who are now in mortal danger, in the care of General Videla's bloody dictatorship, nearly all belonged to one of the three political forces fighting the regime from the left.

It is significant that no member of the Communist Party appears to be among those deported.

The CP supported the Velasco regime but has since cooled towards its successor.

But it was the Stalinist leaders of the General Confederation of Workers (CGTP) who sabotaged attempts to turn the regional and limited general strikes of late May into an indefinite nation-wide general strike.

### Arrests

Many strikes are continuing including a teachers' strike in which 30,000 of Peru's 100,000 teachers, led by the left-wing union SUTEP are on indefinite strike for higher wages, in spite of the arrest and summary trial of 77 of them on charges of inciting pupils to riot.

The Peruvian regime is acting against the left and the workers' movement out of desperation.

It saved itself last week from financial bankruptcy only by a last minute loan from American banks for a few more months.

The IMF continues to deny a longer term loan saying that the staggering 50% or more price increases of a month ago are still not enough austerity.

Imperialism seems to have decided that a decisive confrontation with the militant working class and peasantry in Peru is necessary.



Bermudez

One of these, the Revolutionary Socialist Party (PSR), is in no way part of the working class movement.

It is based on the "left" military officers and their civilian allies associated with the deposed President Velasco Alvarado, though through anti-imperialist and populist rhetoric it still has some mass following.

State peasant organisations set up by Velasco and dominated by the PSR have been dissolved.

The second group is the UDP composed of various Maoist and populist currents including Vananguardia Revolucionaria.

The third is FOPEC, an electoral alliance of proletarian, student and peasant forces, including the POMR (Peruvian section of the "Organising Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International"), and the Workers' Socialist Party (PST—Peruvian sympathising organisation of the 'United' Secretariat of the Fourth International).

### Fight for release

The eleven deportees include Ricardo Napuri, general secretary of the POMR and Hugo Blanco, leading member of the PST.

The world labour movement must fight for the release of all the deported leaders from Argentina and for their right to return freely to Peru.

This requires a fight against the very existence of the repressive military dictatorships in Argentina and Peru.



Two weeks ago the "Trotskyists" of the French LCR (sister organisation of the British IMG) organised two extraordinary days of debate in Paris, on May 1968 and "Eurocommunism". The event attracted 10,000 people and turned out to be a discussion not between leading LCR members and other political currents claiming to be Trotskyist, but between the LCR and an assortment of Stalinist and bourgeois politicians! Dissident right wing CP intellectual Jean Ellenstein was there, with right wing ex-member of the CP Roger Garaudy. The Spanish CP sent no less than its head of international affairs, Malo de Molina, to the debate. The most astonishing platform, however, was composed by representatives of the LCR and its paper 'Rouge' (left) alongside General Becam (third from left) and Admiral Sanguinetti (right), representatives of the "left wing" bourgeois forces in the popular frontist Union of the Left.

# Columbian workers show contempt for bosses' parties

The most striking statistic of the Colombian presidential election (held last week under military protection) was that 68% of the electorate did not vote.

This was a massive gesture of contempt both for the cynical, corrupt and repressive policies of the bourgeois parties (liberal and Conservative) who have for decades undemocratically shared power, and also for the working class leaderships who have placed their own narrow bureaucratic interests before the objective need for the unity of the oppressed classes.

The "winner" of this farce and the new President was a liberal called Turbay Ayala.

He defeated his Conservative rival by a tiny margin (2.2 million votes to 2.1 million).

### Tiny proportion

The workers and peasants abstained in their millions, though a tiny proportion of them did vote for one of the three candidates claiming to represent their interests.

Two of these represented Stalinist-dominated popular fronts—one headed by the pro-Moscow CP whose candidate was Julio Cesar Pernia and the other

by the MOIR, the largest Maoist organisation (whose candidate was Jaime Piedrahita).

These candidates received about 55,000 and 15,000 votes respectively.

The third candidate was Socorro Ramirez, a leader of the left-wing teachers' union, member of a group called Proletarian Democracy (a split from the Socialist Workers Party—the largest of two Colombian sympathising sections of the USFI).

Ramirez stood for an alliance of far left groups on a programme of anti-government and anti-capitalist demands.

This was the only candidacy which did not represent



Socorro Ramirez explicit class collaborationism.

Ramirez, however, received only about 6,000 votes.

Much more successful was the campaign launched before the elections by the Socialist Workers Party to ask the three left candidates to stand down and support a single candidate from the workers' organisations, based on a "socialist programme".

### Derisory

300,000 signatories were collected in support of this campaign which is some indication that the derisory number of votes for the left candidates reflects not so much the political apathy of the working class as its contempt for an electoral system which seems to produce an eternal round of bourgeois semi-dictators.

The new incumbent, Turbay, says he is a representative of a "new class". What he means is that he represents not so much the landowners as the financial oligarchy which has got rich quick on the coffee-price boom and so it is widely reported, on trading in narcotics.

This wealthy, corrupt opportunist is a suitable successor to his predecessors all of whom represent a class which is historically bankrupt and which hangs onto power only as a result of its client relationship with imperialism.

# All sides attack Palestinians

In a week when Israeli-Egyptian 'peace' efforts have been virtually abandoned, listeners to Jimmy Young on BBC Radio 2 were regaled with President Sadat telling them that the Americans would now have to put pressure on the Israelis if there was to be any settlement.

Sadat has also been speaking this week about the possibility of further war between the Arab states and Israel.

He has been preparing for this, following his referendum 'victory', by suppressing opposition parties and equating liberals and left wingers with the hang-overs of the old regime of King Farouk.

### Purges

With more news of anti-Communist purges coming through from Iraq, it becomes increasingly clear that none of the Arab bour-



Zionist troops invading Lebanon

geois states is capable of defeating the Zionist state.

Nor are the Stalinists themselves even protesting at these purges—there is no sign that the murder of Communists will present any threat to the Soviet-Iraq friendship treaty.

In south Lebanon, Syrian forces are now being used to reinforce the UN buffer against Palestinian commando raids into occupied Palestine.

However, such attacks will continue, as active

service units of guerrillas in Jerusalem have shown on a number of occasions recently.

The Zionists are well aware of the importance of the continued war against them by the Palestinian liberation movement, despite the restrictions placed on the Palestinians by bourgeois Arab regimes and some of their own leaders.

Their raid on the Dahar El Burj camp, just south of Sidon on June 9 showed

this clearly.

For the Israelis it is not just a matter of ensuring that the UN and Syrian forces will act on their behalf, or of 'promising aid' to fascists in beleaguered 'Christian' villages in south Lebanon.

They know that the biggest threat to them comes from the Palestinian guerrilla movement.

This is why they went in on 9 June to destroy a few naval landing craft, kill some guerrillas and bomb to rubble the houses of local inhabitants.

Palestinian guerrillas fought back against the raiders, though heavily outnumbered and up to eight Israeli attackers were killed.

Such Zionist attacks as these will not in any way hold back the Palestinian revolution, or its support amongst the masses in Lebanon and other parts of the Arab world.

With socialist policies which challenge the Arab bourgeoisie and organise the working class, no force will be able to defeat it.

# AFRICAN MASSES UP AGAINST LEADERSHIP CRISIS

Angola, Zimbabwe, Soweto, Western Sahara, Eritrea and Ethiopia—these are the landmarks of a massive forward movement of workers and peasants which throughout Africa is coming into confrontation with imperialism.

In different parts of the continent, with varying political situations, the same political conclusions can be drawn.

Workers and peasants are showing their willingness to fight against repressive imperialist-backed regimes.

And they are confronting not a powerless, but an increasingly desperate, imperialism, weakened by its massive economic crisis, and facing the continuous pressure from the working class in the advanced capitalist countries.

## Too desperate

But the position of imperialism in Africa is today too desperate for it to rely on its reactionary and left-talking collaborators along with the periodic use of brute force.

It needs its own "left" face. It has got it. And its name is David Owen, Britain's "socialist" foreign minister.

Owen, along with his black American counterpart Andrew Young, now plays a crucial role in heading off the challenges to capitalism which are bursting out all over the African continent.

During the last few weeks of growing imperialist military intervention, Owen has been the soul of "moderation".

Backed by Callaghan, he has urged caution on direct intervention and pledged his support for the unity and independence of Africa and for the Zimbabwean and Namibian freedom struggles.

His lapdog, Evan Luard, has in the House of Commons, accused Tories of being neo-colonialists.



FROLINAT guerrillas fight French troops in Chad

All this reformist verbiage is a smokescreen for a massive, secret diplomatic drive to ensure that any future governments of Namibia and Zimbabwe stay safely inside the imperialist system.

This is what all the United Nations and Anglo-American plans are designed to do.

Owen has been quoted more than once as expressing a desire to split the Patriotic Front and isolate ZANU by bringing Nkomo into the "internal settlement".

Though he expresses public commitment to the freedom of Namibia, he does not publicise

his meetings with Vorster at which he was, we understand, informed in secret of South Africa's intention to impose a state of emergency before it was implemented.

And Owen does not repeat north of the Zambesi what he told a reporter in South Africa—that in very difficult circumstances he could "understand" the actions necessary to maintain "stability".

But Owen and Young represent imperialism, and for that reason they are forced more and more openly into an alliance with the regime which still represents the only immediate



Nyerere

possibility of defending imperialism in Southern Africa—the racist tyranny of Vorster.

Vorster has implicitly acknowledged this. His bitter criticisms of Britain and the USA have recently given way to words of congratulation on their "new realism" in relation to the Marxist threat!

The imperialist strategy in Africa is completed by a form of alliance, though a highly unstable one, with Stalinism.

In Zimbabwe, for instance, the Cuban and Soviet Stalinists are party to, and supporters of the counter-revolutionary imperialist plans.

## Policemen

Elsewhere, although real tensions exist between Stalinism and imperialism because of the latter's permanent hopes of reversing the gains of the 1917 Russian revolution, the Stalinists nonetheless play the role of policemen against the revolution.

In Angola they have bolstered the bureaucratic regime of Agostino Neto against popular as well as pro-imperialist attack.

In Ethiopia they support the counter-revolutionary slaughter and national oppression carried out by Mengistu's dictatorship.

Stalinists and reformists do political zig-zags from one dictator or demagogue to another in their search for "progressive" allies in the imperialist camp.

Revolutionaries by contrast base themselves on the only force capable of carrying through the revolution in Africa—the working class in alliance with a peasantry won to working class leadership.

## Undefeated

For all their manoeuvres, neither the imperialists nor the Stalinists have been able to reverse the tide of revolutionary struggle.

Despite some setbacks, the African workers and peasants remain undefeated.

Because imperialism is a decaying system, its agents and its allies cannot produce any lasting stability.

Unable to grant even the most basic material and political demands of the masses, they are forced more and more to use the weapon of brute force.

But this decadent system will not collapse of its own accord.

Without the building of parties to mobilise workers and peasants in the struggle for the socialist alternative, imperialism will maintain itself through barbarism.

It will do this not alone but in alliance with its collaborators like Shipanga, Motlana, Buthelezi, Leon, Muzorewa and Sithole.

But everywhere the main obstacle to a decisive victory against imperialism is also the same—the political bankruptcy of traditional nationalist, reformist and Stalinist leaderships and programmes.

The leaderships conceal the true nature of the imperialist struggle in Africa.

This strategy is founded, as the Zaire events have shown,



SWAPO freedom fighters

partly on a willingness to support or carry out every form of repression.

While, a month ago, the main imperialist powers pretended in public to be considering whether to launch a military intervention in support of the Mobutu dictatorship, they had, through a secret agreement between the USA, France, Britain and Belgium, already commenced an invasion.

While in Paris last week junior minions of these powers staged "disagreements" about how to intervene, Zairean workers and peasants were already being terrorised by troops from Morocco and other African client states, airlifted into Zaire by the USA in a move agreed secretly in advance by the imperialist collective.

While imperialism has no scruples about using agents like Mobutu and King Hassan of Morocco, it uses also the "progressive" regimes whose "left" anti-imperialist rhetoric is more and more clearly revealed as a facade behind which they maintain exploitative social relations in their own countries and support imperialist designs elsewhere.

## Manoeuvre

The most glaring exponent of this kind of fraud is President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, darling of the reformists.

Nyerere is leading the campaign of rhetoric against the interventionist army of open reaction.

But at the same time he is engaged, less publicly, in the imperialist manoeuvre designed to keep Namibia as a capitalist state and head off any struggle which threatens to sever its links with imperialism.

Last week, in a move which can only be designed to strengthen those reformists in SWAPO most receptive to some kind of collaborationist deal with Vorster, Nyerere released a number of SWAPO dissidents previously imprisoned by him.

But Nyerere did not release SWAPO militants willing and ready to take up a struggle against the bureaucratic control exercised by the SWAPO leadership, scores of whom are still reportedly jailed in Tanzania.

He released one time militant Andreas Shipanga, who is now committed to an accommodation with Vorster and imperialism.

At the same moment racist Rhodesian Premier, Ian Smith, suddenly decided to legalise ZANU and ZAPU.

This is clearly an attempt to break the Patriotic Front and foster the tensions which the ZANU and ZAPU leaders themselves fuel through their competitive manoeuvres to bureaucratically control the Zimbabwean liberation movement.

## Betrayals

As the struggle grows, more and more militants inside and outside these organisations will confront betrayals of leadership which follow from strategies which reject the independent mobilisation of the mass of the oppressed under working class leadership.

In the Zimbabwean Patriotic

Front they will confront leaders like Nkomo.

On the one hand he expresses allegiance to his Soviet and Cuban sponsors; while on the other he calls for a negotiated settlement, for racist leader Smith to play a role in an independent Zimbabwe, and maintains a large part of the ZAPU army as no more than a bargaining counter.

Also in the Patriotic Front they will confront leaders like Mugabe who has publicly praised the treacherous Peking Stalinist bureaucracy and who, to promote his sectional interest over the unity of the oppressed in struggle, has expressed his willingness for a formal alliance with the arch-collaborator Muzorewa.

In SWAPO they will confront a leadership which accepts the present in Namibia of South African troops even while these are carrying out the murder of SWAPO fighters and civilians, and which looks to imperialism and the United Nations to guarantee a negotiated settlement even when it is the same imperialism which arms the racist troops.

In the South African ANC they will confront a leadership which for 16 years has maintained an alliance with the "progressive" sectors of capital internationally which has left the South African working class defenceless in its day to day struggle against repression

## Urgent task

This crisis of leadership is being posed ever more sharply.

The urgent task is now to build a new leadership—a revolutionary party fighting for the political independence of the working class based on a programme of transitional and democratic demands which express the objective interests of the oppressed masses.

Such a programme can form a base for a solid alliance of the peasantry with the working class and leading to the only solution in the interests of the masses—the socialist revolution.

We demand:

\*An end to secret diplomacy and deals.

\*Imperialist troops out of Africa.

\*Immediate labour movement backing of all arms supplies to the racist and imperialist armies.

\*No negotiations with imperialism and the UN.

\*Build the armed struggle through workers and peasants militias as part of a policy of mobilising the masses.

\*Build the independent organisations of the workers and peasants in factories, farms, communities and schools.

\*Integrate ZANU and ZAPU armies under a single elected leadership.

\*Demand maximum material support for the liberation struggle from the labour movement in imperialist countries and from the workers' states, (USSR, East Germany, Cuba, China).

\*The dissolution of the existing state apparatuses in South Africa.

\*The setting up of constituent assemblies.

\*Build the revolutionary party.



Imperialist puppet Mobutu

# RED YOUTH - NEW PAPER FOR S.Y.L.

The Socialist Youth League takes another big step forward this week with the publication of the first issue of its monthly paper *Red Youth*.

Announcing the launching of the Socialist Youth

League, the lead article outlines the political basis on which the SYL was founded—in sympathy with the programme and aims of the Workers Socialist League.

It explains the political importance of such a development in the present

period.

The founding resolution of the SYL is also printed together with details of the first campaigns to be run by the SYL—on youth unemployment and the fight against racism and fascism.

A major article draws the lessons youth can learn



Youth demonstrating against racism

from the closure of the Speke factory where the failure of the stewards' committee to fight for a policy of occupation left the workforce with no perspective for fighting the closure and resulted in a vote to accept redundancy pay.

The article also details

the treacherous role played in the struggle by Communist Party member Derek Robinson.

Phil Moore, national secretary of the SYL, writes on the Anti Nazi League.

He argues that the ANL is incapable of giving a lead to youth in the fight against

racism and fascism because as a body riddled with bourgeois and liberal elements it cannot point to the real culprits who have created the conditions of wage cuts, poor housing, unemployment and public spending cuts which allow the fascists to gain a hearing.

## First meeting

The article points out that this is because the ANL is actually wooing some of those responsible—Labour MPs, trade union leaders, even Liberals whose undeclared coalition with the Labour leaders has ensured the continuation of these attacks over the last 15 months.

The first issue of *Red Youth* also reports the first public meeting of the Socialist Youth League in London and the SYL national committee plan to include regular reports in future issues of the activities of the SYL up and down the country.

*Red Youth* will appear monthly and costs 5p an issue.

Any *Socialist Press* reader who would like to take out an annual subscription to *Red Youth* can do so by sending a cheque/PO for £1.44 (regular subscribers to *Socialist Press* need only send 60p) to *Red Youth*, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

# In search of the lowest common denominator

A miserable 120 individuals were nearly lost in the ample space of Conway Hall on May 28 at a national conference to mark the first anniversary of the International Marxist Group's 'open-house' paper *Socialist Challenge*.

A sixth of those present managed to find places on the paper's 21-person National Policy Committee, which will supposedly take over the direction of the paper's uncertain editorial line.

But since all but a handful of those on the Committee will again be drawn from the ranks of the IMG little will change.

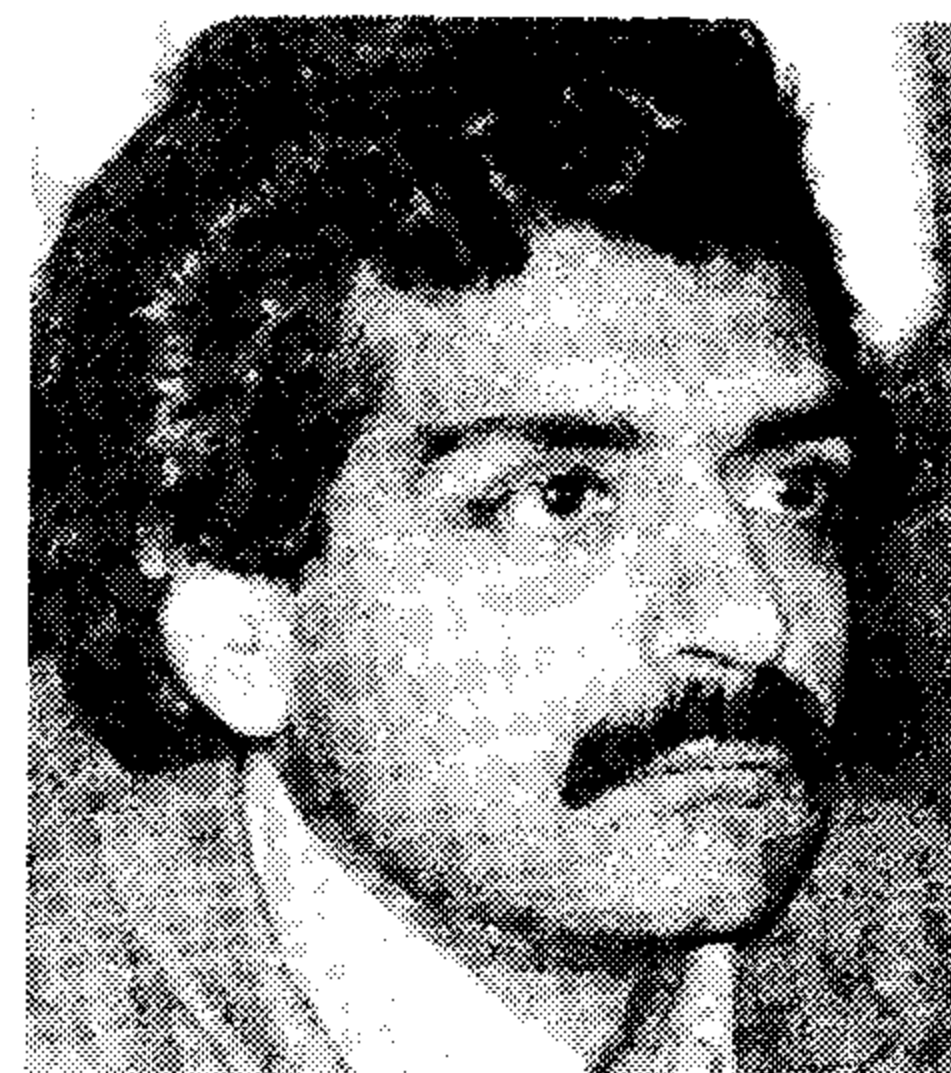
This is especially true when we see that among the non-IMG members is a preponderance of those drop-outs from the International Socialists who have

now taken to calling themselves the "International Socialist Alliance", and who self-evidently have nothing political to say for themselves.

The IMG's willing abandonment in *Socialist Challenge* of central aspects of Trotsky's Transitional Programme—most notably

the call for defence of the Soviet Union against imperialism—was unanimously endorsed by the conference, but was apparently not sufficient to bring the anti-Trotskyists of the *Big Flame* group onto the new Policy Committee.

Despite talk of the conference being a "refresh-



Tariq Ali—only 119 turned up to join him

ing experience" and an "important step forward", there is little doubt that the feeble turn-out and the failure to attract other forces onto the Policy Committee marks a setback for the IMG's attempt to ape the Socialist Workers Party's notion of 'socialism by numbers', and to 'regroup' the British "left" on the basis of the lowest possible common denominator.

## Islington Socialist Youth League DISCO

Friday 23 June 1978 at Caxton House, St. Johns Way, Archway.

8pm - 11pm Sound System

## Jah's Fire

(Reggae and Soul) Tickets 35p (members) or 50p (non-members).

# ANL SEEKS VICARS AND PATRIOTS

Politics at its lowest common denominator comes to Winsford in Cheshire on June 20 when Carnivalists of the Anti Nazi League will attempt to set up a branch there.

Over 100 letters have been sent out to organisations and individuals in the area by the local Communist Party secretary Jim Kneedham.

## Peacefully

The mailing list includes Tories, priests, parsons and patriots.

In a press statement Mr. Kneedham says that the National Front can be beaten peacefully.

This is the Stalinist answer to National Front threats to organise a branch in the Winsford area.

And it lines up with the current policies of the Socialist Workers Party—the main 'revolutionary' force in the ANL.

## Alliance

It also follows a recent attempt by local Labour Party leader Councillor Ernest McGee to organise an alliance of Liberal, Tory and Labour Councillors to



ANL leaders Peter Hain, Ernie Roberts and Paul Holborrow "combat" the NF.

The Winsford branch of the Workers Socialist League has been in the forefront of opposition to such attempts to confuse and divert the anti-fascist struggle, arguing instead for

workers' organisations to defend immigrant communities and for a programme of socialist policies to offer a solution to the material conditions exploited by the National Front.

# No right to politics

The 50 or so youth being led by the SWP on a Right to Work March from Liverpool to London are being denied any right to politics.

The spectacle of these angry and militant youth being taught that these attributes alone are all that is needed is a sad one.

They are being taught that all politics are dangerous and opponents' politics are to be especially avoided.

The march ends this week with a typical SWP stunt—a picket of Eton College.

## Challenged

Tony Ryan, ex-Speke shop steward and "thinking of joining the SWP" is supporting the march and speaking at meetings along the way.

Challenged in Oxford about the notorious *Socialist Worker* lead article ("A Match to Fire the Mersey") in which Ryan had praised Stalinist convenor Derek Robinson, Ryan said that the problem with the Speke mass meeting was not that no-one called for occupation but

that a leaflet put into the plant attacked Robinson's role and demoralised the workers!

He attributed the leaflet to the SWP and then to the WRP. It was in fact a WSL leaflet and provided the only correct analysis of Robinson presented to Speke workers, and the only call for occupation.

Ryan's rationalisation of what happened is bizarre: "What they (the shop stewards) did and what

went wrong was we followed the correct procedure", he said ignoring the fact that no preparation or call for occupation was ever made.

Right to Work Secretary John Deason—who along with other SWP members encouraged the youth to jeer critical contributions—stormed for 20 minutes against open the books demands, criticism of Stalinism or political clarity.

The youth on the march have turned towards politics and are now being held away from them by the SWP.

The battle for revolutionary leadership—unlike Waterloo—will never be won on the playing fields of Eton.



Derek Robinson—praised by SWP spokesman Ryan

# SUPPORT MARCH TO EXPOSE IRISH TORTURE



The campaign to expose the barbaric treatment of republican prisoners in British imperialist jails in Northern Ireland has been stepped up in the wake of the brutal murder of Brian Maguire at the notorious Castlereagh interrogation centre on May 10.

Maguire, a 27-year old trade union activist, was arrested at 6 am on Tuesday May 9, and taken to Castlereagh, where he was interrogated by the RUC until 11.30 pm.

According to police he was then awakened at 7 am, went to the toilet at 7.10 am and then returned to his cell.

When his breakfast was brought at 7.30 am, prison officers claim they found him hanging from a piece of torn sheet attached to a ventilator. He was dead.

### Scepticism

Police later claimed that Maguire had made a statement the previous day admitting involvement in the recent killing of a policeman.

Such claims must be treated with extreme scepticism. In the last month alone the sentences of three prisoners were quashed on appeal since the sole basis for conviction had been confessions extracted by police brutality.

80% of current convictions are obtained in this way.

And even if Maguire had made such a confession the unsolved question is how he could have committed suicide while inside Castlereagh—where everything that could be used for a suicide attempt is taken from the prisoner, and the ventilator grill, even if he could have reached it, could not have supported his weight.

This case—which highlights the brutality of the British imperialist occupation in Ireland—has been taken up by the Trade Union Campaign Against Repression, demanding a trade



Imperialist army at work in Northern Ireland

union based enquiry into:

- 1) The death under torture of Brian Maguire;
- 2) The vicious and brutal activities of the RUC Special Branch at Castlereagh and at other torture centres throughout the North;
- 3) The conditions of political prisoners in H-Block and in Armagh jail;
- 4) Into the general repression of anti-unionist people in the ghettos of the North.

### 2,000 protest

The day after Maguire's murder TUCAR led a 2,000-strong protest strike and march on Transport House, Belfast, and the protest has now been extended to the labour movement in the south.

On May 26, the AGM of the Dublin Council of Trade Unions passed the following resolution moved by TUCAR member Paddy Healy:

"This council calls on the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, through its Northern Committee, to hold a public enquiry into the death by hanging of Brian Maguire, AUEW/TASS branch secretary, in Castlereagh interrogation centre. This council also calls on the British TUC to prevail on Mr. Mason to authorise all the relevant duty officers to give evidence at this enquiry without restriction or claim to privilege, and to produce all the relevant documentation for the enquiry".

A similar resolution was passed by the Dublin Regional Council of the Labour Party, and a resolution calling for an independent, public enquiry, but otherwise similar, was passed unanimously at the Annual Conference of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union which took place from 30 May to 2 June.

A petition on the same subject has been signed by

several representatives of the labour movement, and was the basis of a delegation to Leinster House (the Irish Parliament) on Tuesday 24 May.

The Workers Socialist League supports this campaign for a trade union enquiry.

But we go further than

simply demanding Labour minister Roy Mason "authorise" duty officers at the Castlereagh torture chamber to give evidence.

the Geneva Convention. \*Support for the war of liberation leading to British withdrawal and an amnesty. The march leaves Hyde Park at 2.30pm.

### Withdraw troops!

We call on trade union branches and Labour Parties, in taking up the case of Brian Maguire, to condemn also the complicity of Labour leaders in the repression of the Irish people, demand the withdrawal of all British troops from Ireland, and call for the expulsion of Mason and his fellow overseers of the torture squads from the labour movement.

Full support must also be given to the national demonstration called by the Prisoners in Ireland Committee on Sunday July 9 around the demands for:

\*Political status for Republican prisoners as guaranteed by

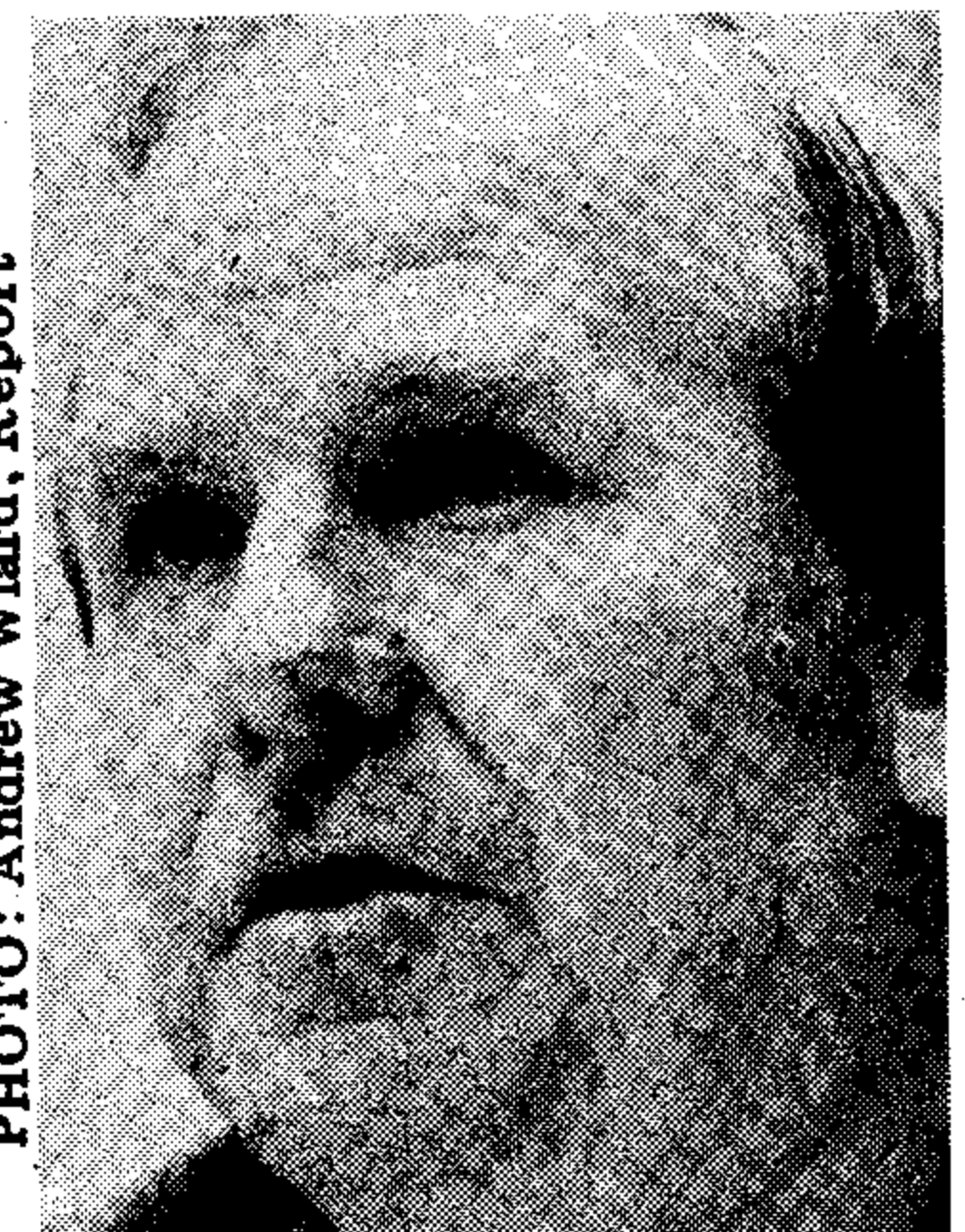


PHOTO: Andrew Wiaard, Report

Orme—'left' who helped to repress Irish workers.



## World Cup—all about male

### READER'S LETTER

### dominance?

# PRESS GANG

## They shoot foremen don't they?

In the week when an unemployed man was sentenced to six months' prison for missing Prince Charles with a lemonade bottle, it took something particularly reactionary to steal the limelight in the Tory press.

That something was provided by the strike of foremen at Ford's Dagenham works—a strike which called on management to tighten up on disciplinary action against production workers, after allegations that foremen had been thumped.

The *Daily Mail*, anxious to back every reactionary trend inside the trade union movement, went to town on the strike—and is to be reported to the Press Council for its pains.

The front page of the *Mail* on Wednesday June 7, headed Foremen walk out in fear, came up with the amazing statement that

"their strike, at what is agreed to be one of the toughest plants in the world, has racial overtones."

This bald statement—the second paragraph in the front-page lead story—was backed up by the following anonymous evidence:

"A 42-year-old paint sprayer, who would not give his name, said that 90% of the trouble involved coloured workers.

"He said: 'It happens practically every day now, but since the Race Relations Act everybody takes a lot more notice than they used to.

"Fifteen years ago if two white blokes had a punch up one of them got sacked and that was that, but they can't do that now."

His evidence was supported by another anonymous worker, who said that there were "always a few trouble-makers" among the black workers. "Only a couple of weeks ago one bloke gave the foreman a karate kick in the head."

The *Daily Mail's* exclusive interviews with what has every appearance of being the entire National Front membership at Dagenham may have given them a stick to beat the working class and black workers at once, but it has not gone down well in the factory.

By Friday all Fleet Street papers were reporting strong denials from workers at the plant that black workers had exclusive rights on foreman battering. Conventors at the plant threatened the *Daily Mail* with the Press Council—a toothless old dog which will do nothing to stop such racist reporting being repeated.

The answer to these attacks on black workers lies not in the Press Council but in the hands of the working class itself. The class role played by reporters who write such reports is worth three times any treatment which is handed out to the Fords foremen.

Dear comrade editor,

Your Press Gang story in issue 103 of *Socialist Press* correctly draws attention to the appalling contradiction between the tyranny of the Argentinian political regime and the all-entertainment and sport-is-not-about-politics position of the media.

However there are further political issues involved in the whole coverage of the World Cup and attitudes towards it.

At no time is the male dominance of sport and the sport media so manifest as during the World Cup.

It is impossible to switch on the television without being regaled with either 22 men running after a ball or a group of men discussing how the 22 ran after a ball or more men in a state of distress because 11 men

didn't run after a ball well enough!

The hysterical identification with a particular town or nation state is a form of nationalism rarely challenged even on the left.

The absurdities of "my team good or bad" divide the working class in like manner to "my country right or wrong".

This hysteria is matched by an exultation of machismo values of competitiveness, strength and virility.

Somehow what has happened to Scotland is seen as indicating some collapse of maleness amongst the whole nation.

Interest in football is always seen as a wholly male affair. Though some women do play and attend football matches, no women ever appear in the media to speak about football.

Women are overtly excluded to the role of providers

of sandwiches and TV meals for housefuls of men with beer in hand and their feet up before the box.

For football has a sacrosanct quality that questions of equal rights and commitments to domestic duties cannot challenge.

It is time that this opiate of the masses and means towards women's oppression is seen for what it is.

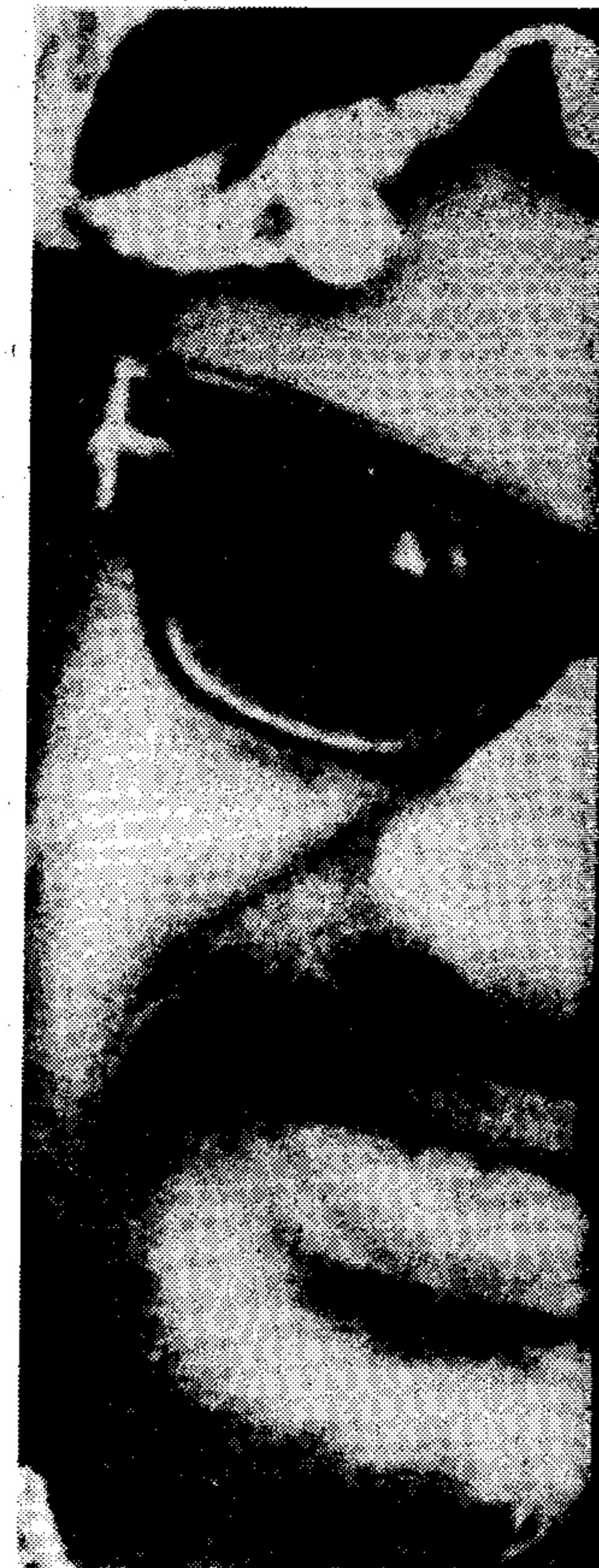
At the same time we should be campaigning for the nationalisation of football clubs under workers' control; and thereby the kicking out of all the profit interests which feed and encourage these negative aspects of the sport.

Yours fraternally,

D.P. Oxford

\* Capitalist men certainly seem to have done best of all out of the World Cup! Ed.

# WRP LEADERS JUNK THE OLD TROTSKYISM



PLO leader Arafat—his portrait  
PLO leaders are now carried  
Young Socialists and WRP

The leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party has always prided itself on its defence of orthodox Trotskyism against the attacks on it by the various political currents that have attempted to revise or abandon the Transitional Programme.

But since 1974 this facade of orthodoxy has increasingly crumbled to reveal beneath it an opportunist practice easily as degenerate as the worst tendencies that have attacked the post-war Fourth International.

Today the WRP stands as the most servile apologists for the anti-communist dictatorial regimes of Gaddafi in Libya and the Ba'athists in Iraq, and the uncritical camp-followers of the petty-bourgeois leadership of the PLO.

## No call

In dropping any call for the construction of Trotskyist parties to lead the working class in these countries, in refraining from even the most timid criticism of these leaders, the WRP has abandoned the central task of the Transitional Programme—the fight to resolve the historic crisis of proletarian leadership.

And, as has so often proved the case with WRP positions, this has been accompanied by a conscious falsification of the historical positions of the Communist movement.

## Quote distorted

A WRP Political Committee Statement, "Salute Al Fatah", published in *Newsline* on March 18 takes and distorts a highly selective quote from Lenin's speech to the Second Congress of the Communist International:

"In Lenin's own words: 'The point about this is that as communists we will only support the bourgeois freedom movements in the colonial countries if these movements are really revolutionary', and further: 'We believed that the only correct thing would be to take this difference into consideration and to replace the words "bourgeois democratic" almost everywhere with the expression "national revolutionary"."

The spurious reference given by the WRP to this



Libyan leader Gaddafi—anti-communist

bowdlerised "quote" (actually to be found in *Second Congress of the Communist International* Vol. I p.III) is no doubt intended to deter readers from discovering that Lenin's position bore no resemblance to the liquidationism of the WRP.

## Full sentence

In fact the full sentence reads as follows: "The point about this is that as communists we will only support the bourgeois freedom movements in the colonial countries if these movements are really revolutionary and if their representatives are not opposed to us training and organising the peasantry in a revolutionary way. (emphasis added).

"If that is no good, then the communists there also have a duty to fight against the reformist bourgeoisie, to which the heroes of the Second International also belong..."

## Unconditional duty

Lenin goes on to spell out the "unconditional duty" of communists to assert the independence of the exploited from the bourgeois democrats through the fight to organise peasants' councils.

But the WRP lays no claim to "train the Palestinian fighters in a revolutionary way". It makes no criticism—tactical or strategic—of the PLO's petty bourgeois leaders, headed by Yasser Arafat.

And the WRP has made no call for the setting up of peasants' councils or any form of independent body within which Trotskyists could struggle for a proletarian class line.

Instead in *Newsline* of April 26 we read: "The International Committee of the Fourth International (run by the WRP) declares again its unbreakable solidarity with the PLO, sole representative of the Palestinian people."

What has this position got to do with the revolutionary Marxism of Lenin and Trotsky? Is the WRP suggesting that the PLO has 'naturally' or 'spontaneously' evolved into a revolutionary Marxist party?

## Support

Not exactly. On occasions it is possible to find in *Newsline* sentences in which "Trotskyists" declare support for the PLO.

But it is not possible to find a sentence where the WRP calls for the building of a Trotskyist leadership for the Palestinian struggle, or in any way questions the leadership given by Arafat and his petty bourgeois and Stalinist cronies.

Lenin's position was entirely the opposite of this belly-crawling. The *Theses on the National and Colonial Question*, drafted by Lenin and quoted in the same volume (which is published by the WRP's own publishing house) spell out the following policy:

"The Communist International has the duty to support the revolutionary movement in the colonies only for the purposes of gathering the components of the future proletarian parties—communist in fact and not just in name—in all the backward countries and training them to be conscious of all their special tasks, that is to say, of fighting against the bourgeois-democratic tendencies within their own nation. The Communist International should accompany the revolutionary movement in the colonies and the backward countries for part of the way, should even make an alliance with it; it may not, however, fuse with it, but must unconditionally maintain the independent character of the proletarian movement, be it only in embryo." (pp.181-2).

Any study of the positions of the WRP will reveal that they do not act on this basis at all.

In their increasingly hysterical attacks on all those who question their opportunism and liquidationism, however inadequately, they have gone so far as to state in *Newsline* of 6th June that:

"Our movement's alliances are based upon its revolutionary principles and its socialist internationalism."

## Desertion of principle

On the contrary, Messrs Banda, Healy and Mitchell, your policies are based, beneath all the bluster and vitriol, on a desertion of the principles of revolutionary Marxism and a complete capitulation to bourgeois and petty bourgeois nationalism.

A study of *Newsline* over the last three months, and its coverage of the Zionist invasion of the Lebanon indicates how far the WRP has deserted these principles, turned its back on the most basic ABC of Leninism, and limped along lamely behind every vacillation of the PLO leadership.

The entirely legitimate struggle of the Palestinians against the colonialist and racially exclusive Zionist state of Israel and for a "democratic and secular state" of Palestine is one which highlights the reactionary role of the Arab bourgeoisie, and their dependence on imperialism.

Desperately afraid that the destruction of the

Zionist state by the struggles of the oppressed masses would herald the impending destruction of their own apparatus of class rule in each country, the Arab heads of state have consistently obstructed the Palestinian struggle.

## Restricted

In Egypt even before the present 'peace' efforts, the Palestinians were always restricted by the bourgeois nationalists from doing anything beyond issuing propaganda.

In Jordan reactionary Bedouin troops were mobilised to murder hundreds of Palestinian liberation fighters in 1971 and to drive the remainder across the border to Israel.

In Lebanon the tottering capitalist regime with its crumbling military forces could not itself contain the Palestinian and leftist forces, who became engaged in open warfare with the fascist Falangists and other right wing forces during 1976.

## Slaughter

It was left to the Syrian bourgeois government to send troops to intervene in the North of Lebanon (thus enabling the fascists to slaughter 3,000 Palestinians in the camp of Tel al-Zaatar), and station a 30,000-strong Saudi Arabian financed "peace-keeping force" in Lebanon.

But in South Lebanon the PLO held on to its military bases for operations into Israel. In March of this year the Zionists used the pretext of an Al-Fatah Commando raid as a cover for a wholesale military invasion aimed at wiping

out these bases.

The move failed, but at the same time it exposed the extent to which the Palestinians have now been denied active support by any section of the Arab bourgeoisie, and the political weakness of the PLO leadership.

Rather than expose this betrayal of the Palestinians and address appeals for aid to the oppressed masses in the Arab nations, the PLO leader Arafat sent a cable to all Arab heads of state, demanding that they "shoulder your historic responsibilities".

The Gaddafi dictatorship in Libya went one stage further in bankruptcy—and officially called for an emergency Security Council session at the United Nations!

## No criticism

The WRP uttered no criticism of either of these actions, though both were to be instrumental in bringing about a fresh setback on the Palestinian struggle.

While the front page of *Newsline* on March 16 uncritically reported Gaddafi's turn to the United Nations, an "International Committee Statement" on page 2 took an opposite line and trotted out the formally orthodox Trotskyist position.

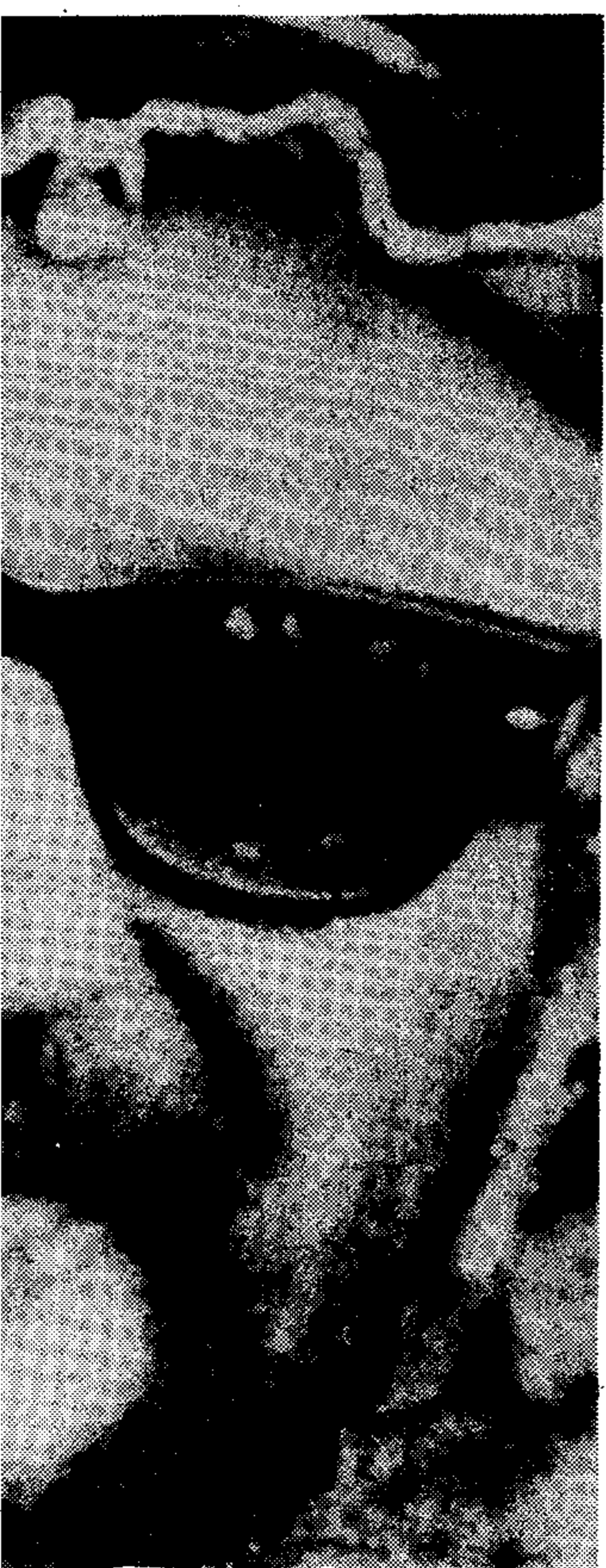
"Place no faith in the United Nations—tool of US imperialism".

And while Arafat's telegram appealing to the Arab bourgeois leaders was twice uncritically reported in *Newsline*, the IC statement incongruously called on the "world working class" to:

"Combine the struggle against Zionism with the struggle against your own



Zionist defence minister Weizman and PM Begin



wait along with those of other on every demonstration by members.

bourgeoisie and the Stalinist agents of imperialism!"

*Newsline* on March 20 recorded even greater confusion, as WRP General Secretary Mike Banda "criticised the Syrian regime for its failure to support the PLO".

Since *Newsline* had been virtually full, for months on end, of reports and pictures of the Syrian military intervention into Lebanon against the Lebanese leftists and the PLO, one might have thought such an appeal foolhardy to say the least.

### Diplomacy

But Banda's diplomacy on this issue was linked to the WRP's subservience to the PLO—which is a signatory to the five-power so-called "Steadfastness Front" formed last December in the wake of Egyptian president Sadat's bid to sign a "peace" with Israel.

Members of the Front are Libya, Algeria, South Yemen, and PLO and... Syria!

But in the event of the actual invasion by Zionist tanks, planes and troops, this Front proved not to be worth as much as the paper the signatures were written on.

### Impotence

Increasingly embarrassed by the impotence of the "Front", the WRP gradually dropped all reference to it, for fear of exposing the hollow rhetoric on which it had been constructed.

But at a WRP meeting in London on March 19, *Newsline* editor Alex Mitchell declared that the WRP's alliance with the PLO "brings the forces of the world socialist revolution together on a common programme of struggle."

Does this mean that both the WRP and PLO regard themselves as standing on the Trotskyist programme? Has the PLO affiliated to the WRP's International Committee?

### Nationalist programme

Or does it mean the WRP admits to having espoused the bourgeois nationalist programme of the PLO?

Meanwhile the imperialist powers were preparing a more subtle attack to supplement and complete the work of the Zionist invaders—the dispatch of a 3,000-strong UN "peace-keeping" force.

The WRP leaders, acting perhaps on impulse or on some recollection of past principles of the communist movement, headlined on March 20 "UN Does Zionist Dirty Work".

Next day *Newsline* carried a 'Comment' article which carried the text of the Security Council resolution, and declared:

"Anyone in the British (!) labour movement who takes seriously the fraudulent claims of the Security Council motion will soon learn differently. This decision, far from bringing 'peace and security' to the Lebanon or the Middle East is—and will prove to be—a cruel blow to the Palestinian struggle for self-determination and a strengthening of

UN commander Major General Emmanuel Erskine, in which

"Arafat pledged to help the UN force to ensure the complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Zionist troops from South Lebanon."

At that time however, Arafat was still insisting that the PLO "would not stop their commando raids behind the Zionist line", and on April 4 *Newsline* reported a PLO newspaper slamming "those self-deceivers who gamble on the UN forces", and calling on the Palestinians to fight on.

But by April 10 *Newsline* had begun to scent a definite move by the PLO leaders to accommodate to the UN,

main commando group in the PLO".

But within days the reasons for the disgruntlement of some so-called "opportunists" was revealed at the very end of a *Newsline* lead article based on a Fatah political statement.

"Finally, the Fatah leaders decided to facilitate the mission of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) 'on the basis of the stand of these forces and their role as clarified between Dr. Waldheim and Arafat'".

Arafat had finally and predictably abandoned his earlier stance of rejecting a cease-fire.

But the *Newsline* loyalty went into reverse and began

plans for provision of \$100 million worth of arms and military equipment to reconstruct the Lebanese army.

The objective was obvious—to act jointly with fascist forces to reassert direct bourgeois military control over the south of Lebanon which until the Zionist invasion had been virtually controlled by the PLO.

### Armed presence

But it was not until May 25 that *Newsline* reported President Sarkis' repudiation of the 1969 Cairo Agreement which extended to the PLO the right to an armed presence in south Lebanon.

Sarkis emphasised his demand that south Lebanon be handed over "to the legitimate Lebanese authorities"—in other words the bourgeois government.

Arafat at no point questioned that the discredited puppet government of Lebanon—propped up by huge Saudi Arabian and US military aid—was the "legitimate authority".

Instead, Arafat and the PLO leaders signed a five-point agreement with Lebanese Premier Selim Al-Hoss in which, according to *Newsline*, the PLO:

"\*Assured the Prime Minister of its eagerness to facilitate the mission of UN forces in the fulfilment of total Israeli withdrawal from the south and re-establishment of Lebanese sovereignty there.

\*Condemned all negative practices and violations in the south, and expressed full readiness to exert all efforts to stop such violations as soon as possible in order that Palestinian-Lebanese ties may be preserved.

\*Emphasised its intention to end armed manifestations in the south to help the legitimate authorities in the execution of their duties and extending their sovereignty."

Abandoning even the pretence that a continuation of armed struggle was possible under such conditions, Arafat announced that:

"All we want from the Arab states, including Lebanon, is to allow us to maintain a political and information presence and to set up education centres..."

### 180-degree turn

*Newsline* carries no WRP comment on this capitulation by Arafat—which is a 180-degree turn from the policies the WRP was advocating two months before.

It took even the pliable hacks on the *Newsline* editorial board and the WRP Central Committee a day to work out a way of explaining their abrupt volte-face.

But the PLO leadership had provided themselves with a cover, which the WRP gratefully used: the setting up of a regular Palestinian army and of a Palestinian "government in exile".

"During the civil war in Lebanon and the Zionist invasion of March this year, the armed struggle was the dominant aspect of the Palestinian struggle. Today, the political struggle has the dominant role", declared *Newsline*.

After three months in which there had been not so much as a mention of socialism or even politics in the context of the Palestinian struggle, *Newsline* journalists suddenly announced that:

"Discussion of such a [socialist] programme within the PLO is now [!] possible".

And, rushing to defend Arafat—whose actions have now struck a substantial blow against the Palestinian struggle—the *Newsline* uses the most backward arguments to prevent any attack on the PLO leadership:

"Attempts to block political development [!] and to undermine the leadership of the PLO—which has proved itself in the battle against imperialism and Zionism—can only split the forces of the Palestinian national revolution in the face of the concerted imperialist plot now being hatched in the Middle East..."

"To attempt to undermine this leadership... is to play into the hands of the enemies of the Palestinian national revolution".

The WRP thus sets its face not only against the building of a conscious Trotskyist leadership within the Palestinian movement, but also against the rejectionist forces already within the PLO that responded to the five-point deal with the Lebanese bourgeois government by challenging Arafat's leadership.

One of the rejectionist forces not in the PLO is George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine which withdrew from the PLO in 1974, denouncing Arafat and the PLO leaders as "sattelites of reactionary capitulationist regimes".

### Confusion

On this analysis, though on little else, we are forced to agree with Habash.

The trail of confusion and capitulation left by Arafat in the south of Lebanon demonstrates unmistakably his inability to offer any lead to the Palestinian and Arab masses that stands independent of the Arab bourgeoisie.

If the balance of military forces in Lebanon is really such that the PLO has had no choice but to bow to UN and Syrian pressure and make a tactical retreat from direct military action, a principled line would involve not meekly signing away the right of the Palestinians to continue the armed struggle, but using every avenue to the Arab masses and international workers' movement in order to denounce and expose the treachery of the Arab bourgeois heads of state.

### Political break

Arafat and his petty bourgeois co-thinkers are incapable of such a political break.

Under these conditions the WRP's declaration that they regard the PLO as the "sole representative of the Palestinian people" is no more than a roundabout way of declaring that the WRP has abandoned any call for a Trotskyist party to lead the Palestinian struggle, handing the Palestinian masses over to Arafat.

It is their failure to make this call for the building of a Trotskyist party—either in the Palestinian struggle or in the case of the self-styled "progressive" dictatorships in Libya and Iraq—which points to the actual degeneration that has taken place in the WRP leadership.

Our final article in this series will examine this process of degeneration.

—By—

John Lister

Continued next week



Palestinian guerrillas.

Zionist imperialism in the Middle East" (March 21).

That same article was the last in *Newsline* to demand unequivocally "the withdrawal of all UN personnel from Lebanon".

In fact it was not the British labour movement that needed warning about the role of the UN, so much as the WRP's allies in the leadership of the PLO, and the self-styled "Steadfastness Front", which spent 14 hours the next day deciding whether or not to support the UN Security Council resolution!

Their dilemma was soon at an end. *Newsline* of March 29 carried the headline "PLO pledges to aid UN", and an uncritical article declaring that "the Palestinians see the UN troops' only role as removing the Zionists."

The same article added: "Arafat said the joint (Palestinian/Lebanese left) forces were ready to extend all facilities to the UN forces to succeed in their mission."

*Newsline* journalists, conveniently forgetting their March 21 warning lest anyone be fooled by the Security Council resolution, failed to utter a word of criticism.

Next day they reported a meeting between Arafat and

and carried an interview with Lebanese leftist leader Samir Sobh expressing complete confusion on the role of the UN in Lebanon, and declaring that he was "waiting to know" what the UN's intentions were.

Next day *Newsline* revealed that "Steadfastness Front" signatory, President Assad of Syria, was pressuring the Palestinian resistance to withdraw from South Lebanon—again with no WRP comment or criticism of either side.

As Arafat and his allies began to put more definite touches to their backstage deal with the UN forces, *Newsline* was clearly troubled by the prospect of militant Palestinians challenging his leadership.

### Relief

April 27 therefore saw the WRP breathe a sigh of relief as an article "Fatah Unity Unshakeable" declared that there was no basis to "a number of recent reports about differences within Fatah."

And on April 29 a further article "Al-Fatah Unity is confirmed" quoted Arafat at length, and roundly denounced:

"the opportunist forces and the counter-revolutionaries who placed their hopes in an alleged disunity of the

to denounce "provocations" "from rejectionist groups in the south" who have persisted in wishing to fight the Zionists. And the WRP uttered no criticism of Arafat's new capitulation to the UN.

Instead on May 19, *Newsline* suggested there was some ambiguity in the same Security Council resolution which they themselves had sternly (and not incorrectly) denounced as a hollow fraud on March 21!

"It is quite obvious that the UN forces are trying to carry out their mission as a deterrent force in Lebanon against the Palestinian Revolution. This is despite the terms of the UN resolution which established UNIFIL..."

And, to their embarrassment, WRP journalists also reported that:

"Arab fighters, said to be radical Palestinians and leftist Lebanese", had continued to fight on against UN forces, despite Arafat's collaboration.

While Arafat trod softly, however, imperialism was lining up a further attack on the PLO—through the medium of the Lebanese government.

At the beginning of April a team of US military experts had begun talks with Lebanese President Elias Sarkis, drawing up



Stalinist tanks greeted by hostile crowds in Czechoslovakia in 1968

# Probing the essence of Stalinism

On 15 June Folrose Books publishes *'Communists' Against Revolution*, containing the essay by Tim Wohlforth "The Theory of Structural Assimilation" (until now virtually unobtainable) and an introductory essay by Adam Westoby. Here in the first of a two-part review of this important book we print extracts from the introduction to the book by John Lister.

**The role of Stalinism in the post-war world is one of the most perplexing, intriguing, contradictory and practical problems confronting the Trotskyist movement.**

And it is a problem that has in the main been only inadequately considered and superficially answered.

For all these reasons it has stood squarely at the centre of the post-war political crises that have brought the disorientation and disintegration of the Fourth International which was founded forty years ago as the continuity of the revolutionary Marxism and proletarian internationalism.

## Dead

The very reason for the foundation of the Fourth International was the analysis by Trotsky and the Left Opposition in 1933 that the

Comintern—by then totally dominated by the Stalinist bureaucracy—was *dead* for the purposes of 'revolution' and a thoroughly *counter-revolutionary* force within the international workers' movement.

## Unstable

At the same time, the Stalinist bureaucracy itself was recognised as a fundamentally *unstable*, bonapartist form of rule, balancing between the nationalised property relations established in the October 1917 revolution and the international pressures of imperialism.

Trotsky established a clear position of unconditional defence of the Soviet Union as a workers' state against imperialism, coupled to the fight to prepare the leadership for a *political revolution* for the overthrow of the bureaucracy and restoration of soviet power.

This analysis has continually had to be defended both against tendencies that have attempted to see the Stalinist bureaucracy as a *permanent* and *progressive* force in the workers' movement (pre-war centrists, and currents in the post-war Fourth International up to the present day) and against those who see it as a permanent new ruling *class* in the Soviet Union (pre-war Shachtmanites, and 'state capitalist' groups today).

The pressure to revise these positions increased dramatically when the post-war period found the Stalinist bureaucracy not only still in power but even extending its power into Eastern Europe.

## "Evidence"

Each of the tendencies that has succumbed to this pressure has latched on to aspects of the post-war actions of the Stalinist bureaucracy as "evidence" for its one-sided and deceptive analysis.

This is because neither tendency is able to grasp the essentially *contradictory* nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy as a reactionary counter-revolutionary ex-crescence which nevertheless *feeds off the nationalised property relations established in October 1917*.

In its own, bureaucratic, fashion, the Kremlin bureaucracy seeks to defend these property relations (which are the source of its power and material privileges) against imperialism, while attempting to prevent the slightest movement towards political independence on the part of the

working class international—which would disrupt the delicate balance of class forces on which the bureaucracy rests.

Thus its every action is shot through with the most profound contradictions, defying all but the most rigorous analysis.

## Independence

In defending the Trotskyist perspective, the most important starting point is therefore the question of the *political independence* of the working class from the Stalinist bureaucracy in the struggle for state power.

It is this question, combined with an analysis of the *world counter-revolutionary strategy of Stalinism*, which provides the key to refuting any idea that the Stalinist bureaucracy can evolve towards 'left centrism', and to sharply exposing the reactionary nature of "Euro-communist" criticism of the regimes of Eastern Europe.

This fight for political independence also confirms the need for the building of Trotskyist parties to carry through political revolution in Cuba, Vietnam, China and Yugoslavia as well as the USSR and Eastern Europe.

## Correct

It is necessary for the world Trotskyist movement to re-examine those issues bearing on the post-war role of Stalinism in order to clarify and correct the wrong positions that have been adopted and that have disoriented and split the International itself.

Tim Wohlforth's essay *The Theory of Structural Assimilation*, written in 1961-3, is a major contribution to such a re-examination.

Yet it is a booklet which has been neglected by every major tendency terming itself Trotskyist.

The reason is clear. By re-opening discussion on the post-war events in Eastern Europe and China, Wohlforth attempted to find the key to the role and involvement of Stalinism in the Cuban revolution.

His objective was to reassert, on the basis of a thorough analysis of events, the consistently *counter-revolutionary* role of Stalinism even at the point where capitalist property relations were being overturned in Eastern Europe under the aegis of the Red Army and in China by Communist forces under Mao.

## Retreated

But in doing so Wohlforth was forced into conflict with the existing positions of all the leading figures in the post-war Fourth International.

And sooner than answer the points Wohlforth raised, every one of those leaders avoided discussing them, clinging to their established positions.

Wohlforth succeeded admirably in proving his case in relation to the East European events.

But he was quite unable to go further and relate his theory to developments in Cuba—the actual starting point of his investigations.

And even having developed a theoretical under-

standing of post-war Stalinism far in advance of the leading members of the Trotskyist movement, Wohlforth retreated from a fight for his positions.

Instead he allowed his work to be brushed aside, ignored and virtually forgotten by all but a very few individuals.

## Examine

Adam Westoby's essay *On Wohlforth's 'Theory of Structural Assimilation'*, (completed in the winter of 1976) sets out to explain these curious aspects of Wohlforth's work.

It also goes on to expand its analysis of events in Eastern Europe and China, examine some weaknesses within the *Theory* as it stands, and explore the prospects for applying the same theoretical approach to the Cuban revolution.

Central to both Westoby's approach and that of Wohlforth is the conception of Stalinism as a system that operates on a world scale, and that must be viewed as a *whole*—contradictory as that whole picture may appear at first sight.

Any attempt to view the actions of Stalinism in this or that country is isolation from a historical and international analysis, they argue, must result in a descent to mere impressionism, opening the door to catastrophic political errors.

Continued next week



Hungary 1956—the possibility of political revolution



# Blank wall on house crisis

When a major national trade union and a community-based research group combine to produce a pamphlet on housing we should take notice.

When this same pamphlet calls for a major campaign in the labour movement for a housing policy to meet the needs of the working class we should be interested.

When the foreword to this pamphlet is written by Alan Fisher, one of the salesmen of the social contract, we should look out for diversions, evasions and contradictions. We will not be disappointed.

'Great debates' have become quite fashionable recently. Their function is to allow the coalition government to hide all the class implications of its policies under a mass of verbiage churned out by professional bodies, academics, bureaucrats and the capitalist press.

The latest victim of the 'great debate' epidemic is housing. This pamphlet is produced by NUPE and SCAT (Services to Community Action and Tenants) as their contribution to the great debate on housing.

It represents a serious attempt to analyse the housing policies of the coalition government and their impact on the working class.

## Promise

However, at the last moment the authors pull back from the conclusions that must be drawn to arm the workers for the fight.

The introduction contains a promise of great things, pointing out the attacks on housing which have been carried out since the election of a Labour government in 1974.

It states clearly as its starting point, that the private market is incapable of meeting the housing problems of the working class.

The authors assess the myth of a surplus of housing, which the Tories in the GLC and elsewhere are already using to cut programmes, from the workers' viewpoint.

They show how a large proportion of dwellings are kept empty by owners and landlords hoping for more favourable market conditions, how many more are second homes, how nearly a million homes are unfit and many more are in need of expensive repairs.

Set against this are the large number of households forced to share accommodation with others, the lengthening waiting lists and the scandalous level of homelessness.

The 'surplus' soon evaporates, leaving a tragic shortage for millions of households.

After clearing away the idea that there is no housing problem the pamphlet looks at the record of the Labour Party on the question.

They quote the 1973 Programme for Britain: "It is necessary that the next Labour government treat housing as a high priority", and point out that despite this statement the 1974 manifesto did not contain the basis for a socialist housing policy.

# IN REVIEW

# IN REVIEW



Here they skip over a key question.

## Relationship

What relationship is there between democratically-formulated party policy (reflecting the experience of party members) and parliamentary propaganda (reflecting the requirements of the leadership in its relationships with the international ruling classes)?

The 1974 Labour government did, however, introduce a rent freeze and promoted council housebuilding.

But within a year the cuts had begun, and still continue despite the appearance of a call for expanded public investment in the Labour Party programme of 1976.

Again there is no mention of the political processes which allow parliament to impose cuts directly opposed to the wishes of the membership of the Labour Party.

Not only is there no criticism of the role of the left wing of the Labour Party in parliament, but there is no mention of the existence of the coalition deal with the Liberals (a condition of which was a veto on the planned extension of local authority direct works departments).

Next they examine the growth in the housing budget on which the Labour Party often bases its claims.

Nearly all of this increase can be accounted for by the increase in interest charges imposed on local authorities over recent years, very little of it actually adding to the number or condition of houses.

## Only option

Under the present subsidy arrangements, the government finds it very difficult to avoid paying these costs, but at the same time its international credit arrangements prevent any increase in the overall budget.

The only remaining option is to shift money from capital programmes (housebuilding, improvements etc) to financing debt charges.

The central section of the pamphlet is likely to be the most useful. It sets out in some detail the impact of the cuts on the working class.

The authors have used the resources of NUPE and the network of tenants' associations to gather information from all over the country.

On the question of rents, the

authors show how the 1974 package of measures to buy off the wave of working class militancy which kicked out the Heath government.

Since then, however, the freeze has been taken off private and housing association rents, and council rents have been forced up by cynical manipulations of the subsidy system.

Increases in rents have gone hand in hand with a series of attacks on the services given to council tenants.

Repairs and maintenance work have been cut back and modernisation programmes have been reduced.

Harrassment of tenants in arrears with rent has increased.

Often these reductions lead to conflicts between tenants and council workers, when the latter get the blame for the politicians' decisions.

The authors recognise this, but fail to put forward the demand for elected committees of tenants and council workers to open the books on councils' housing programmes.

This is the only way that the working class can combine the



Tory leader Thatcher



Fisher

However, even the level of building and rehabilitation allowed under the IMF cuts have not been achieved.

This is due in part to the May 1977 election of Tories to many of Britain's town halls, and in part to a new system of financial controls which penalises councils which overspend their budgets, which has inevitably led to *underspending* in many areas.

## Main threads

The effect of these cuts on employment has been immense. Record levels of unemployment exist in the building industry and a wave of redundancies is sweeping the town halls.

In the final section the authors attempt to draw out the main threads of current housing policy.

The central theme of this section is the turn away from public provision, towards the private sector.

In order to achieve this the government has developed the so-called intermediate tenures—the housing associations, co-ops, equity sharing—as steps along the way from renting to owning. Every step along this road means an increase in housing cost.

The authors make a few hesitant steps towards a socialist criticism of these policies.

## Conclusions

They point to the declining productivity of the building industry, and to the failure of the private market to provide adequate housing at reasonable prices.

But the conclusions that they draw reflect the contradictions of the situation that leads to the need for this kind of pamphlet.

After a ritual call on the TUC to "debate the housing situation", they go on to call for Trades Councils and tenants groups to examine local authority housing plans and to take "appropriate action".

What they mean by appropriate action is not made clear.

There are of course massive problems to be overcome in building unity between tenants and workers which can only be achieved by building committees to open the books of the authorities, which would draw up plans based on their own assessment of housing needs.

## Hold back

This leads on immediately to the questions of democracy in the Labour Party, and nationalisation of the building monopolies, if these plans are to be implemented by Labour councils.

The authors have to hold back from such explicit conclusions in case the readers ask embarrassing questions about democracy in NUPE.

Workers and activists in housing and community groups should study this pamphlet and draw the lessons of its strengths and weaknesses.

A strong proletarian struggle on housing will only be achieved by overcoming the kind of contradictions it contains.



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Peter Shore

technical knowledge of the housing workers with the day to day experience of the tenants.

The 1974 Labour government gave a boost to council housebuilding but by July 1976 the brakes were slammed on.

All new tenders were frozen for a month while Shore searched for a rationale by which to cut the programmes.

He came up with the vicious system of "priority areas", which pretends to have isolated the areas in greatest need.

In a number of speeches around this time, Labour politicians spouted about shifting resources towards rehabilitation of older housing.

## Smokescreen

Although there are many positive features of such a policy, in practice it has been a smokescreen behind which the cuts have gone on unabated.

The rehabilitation programmes themselves—improvement grants, municipalisation, council mortgages—have all been cut recently.



Nearly 1 million homes are unfit for habitation and many more are in need of repairs

# INDUSTRIAL NEWS

## Garners profit hit as blacking bites

Notable new support has been building up on the picket lines in the nineteenth week of the strike at Garners Steak Houses from trade union branches, trades councils and anti-racist committees.

ations have committed themselves to covering one evening a week and this has increased the hysteria of the managers and other scabs. Despite signs posted on restaurants such as: "We are working, not communists, you are welcome", which appeared recently at the Haymarket branch, potential customers are in almost every case refusing to enter. Those inside have reported the rows created when the managers try to

send them outside to procure custom. And Cyril Margolis himself (the owner of the chain) harangued the managers last Wednesday on their lack of loyalty to him in his hour of need. **Policeman** One night recently the only customers in one branch were a plain clothes policeman and Geoffrey Margolis, the owners' son! Clearly the strike is hitting Margolis extremely hard and rumours abound



TGWU bureaucrats Ron Todd (right) and Brian Nicholson: trying to dodge Garners conference.

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report



Demonstrators on the Garners day of solidarity.

such as the Oxford Street branch will be closed part of this week and that he is about to go bankrupt. The morale of the strikers is, on the other hand, very high and they feel themselves close to victory. The question remains why the strike has had to go on now for 20 weeks? The TGWU is well-placed to win such a strike in five minutes.

to help with this work. The absence of TGWU Executive member Brian Nicholson who was said at one time to be about to devote attention to the strike at the Garner's conference is noteworthy.

The main focus of the strike now must be the fight for the recall conference to be held on Thursday 22 June at Transport House, Smith Square, London at 7.30 p.m.

Sponsored by the SE Region TUC, the Greater London Association of Trades Councils and the TGWU Region 1 Committee, the conference will discuss supporting action for the recognition struggle.

### No money

Likewise the availability of George Abrahams to carry out the wishes of the strikers leaves much to be desired. The Region 1 Committee refuses to pay the strikers the £36 a week living wage they have asked for. They did give the strike committee £600 two months ago but put out an appeal to the branches in the region to recoup this amount.

### Call

Each labour movement organisation is invited to send three delegates.

We call on TGWU branches to pass the following resolution:

"This branch supports the strike of the Garners workers for union recognition and resolves to:

- 1) Send three delegates to the recall conference.
- 2) Send delegations to the picket line one night every week.
- 3) Call on the Region 1 Committee to pay the strikers £36, to be raised by a levy or any other suitable means.
- 4) Send a donation to the strike fund."

### Postmen

Steps still have to be taken to get the Panificio Bread Company blacked and the vegetable supplies stopped. The postmen have promised not to cross picket lines and TGWU drivers similarly. However the following up of this blacking work has not been fought for by the TGWU leadership but dealt with by a sub-committee set up by the strike committee

### Open books

There is, it seems, a case for the opening of the books of the Regional Committee!

## The Workers Socialist League

The Workers Socialist League is a Trotskyist organisation fighting to construct a principled revolutionary leadership in the working class in Britain and internationally and for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International on the basis of the Transitional Programme. The WSL fights at every step against the existing leaders of the trade unions and the Labour Party—now firmly harnessed to the bourgeois politicians of the Liberal Party in an unspoken coalition arrangement.

Against their policies of class collaboration we put forward instead a programme which points to the independent class interests of the working class, its need to organise independently to overthrow capitalism, destroy its repressive state machinery and establish a socialist planned economy.

Only in this way can workers resolve today's problems of tumbling living standards, mass unemployment, slashed social services, racial, national and sexual oppression.

For more details on the WSL and its work, fill in the form below.

Name.....

Address.....

Trade Union/Occupation.....

Send to WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

## Published June 15

"Communists' Against Revolution deals with the most important aspects of the development of Stalinism on a world scale since 1945.

It brings together in one volume the until now unobtainable 1964 essay by Tim Wohlforth *The Theory of Structural Assimilation* with a critical commentary by Adam Westoby.

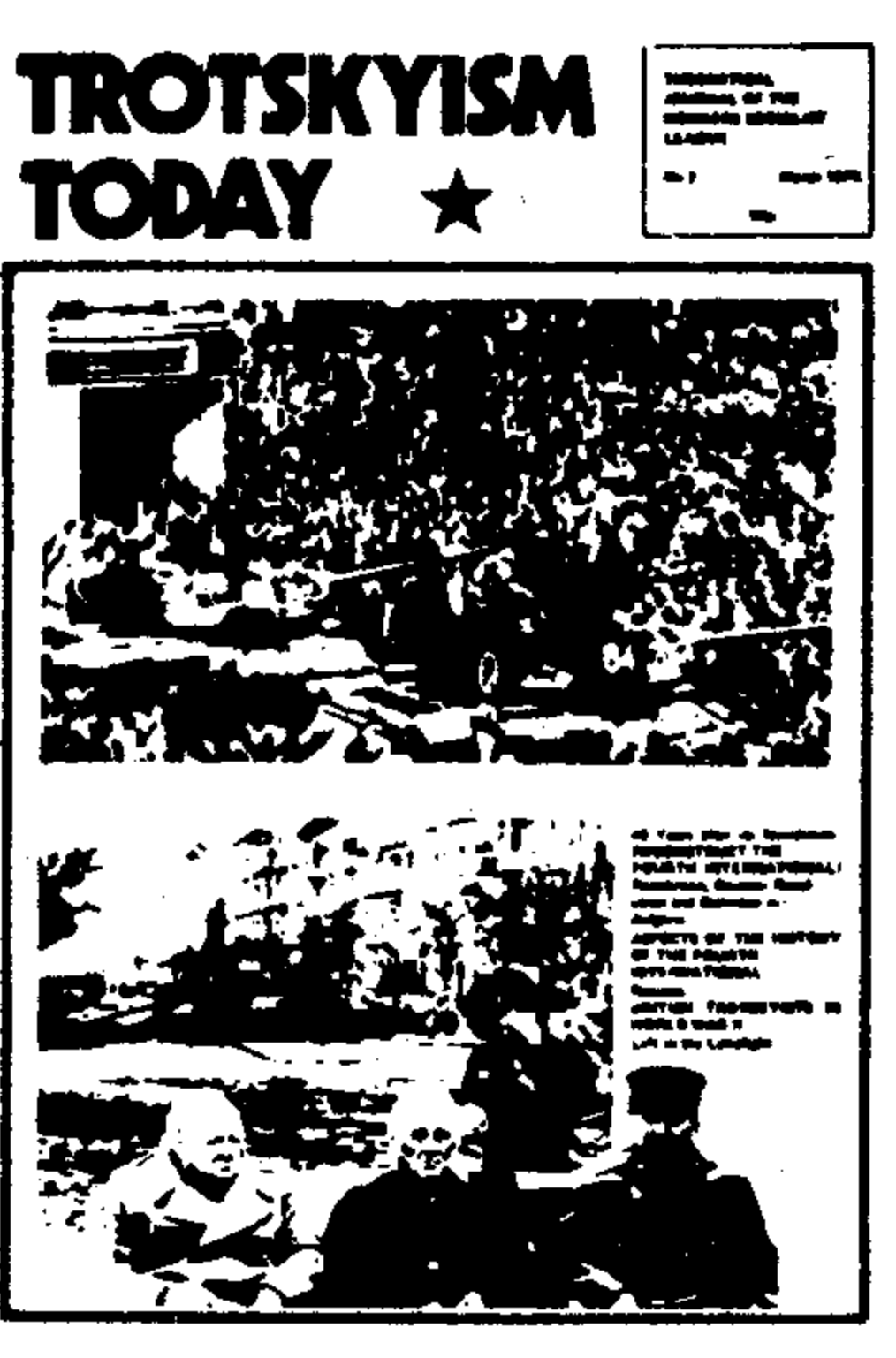
This 166 page book is vital reading for those who wish to defend the method and principles of Trotskyism against the varied revisionist currents that have challenged the very essence of the Transitional Programme.

Order from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5



### STILL AVAILABLE

"TROTSKYISM TODAY" Quarterly theoretical journal of the Workers Socialist League. Issue No. 2 includes article on the history of the Fourth International. Available from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR



## London

WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE  
A Public Meeting to launch the book 'Communists' Against Revolution  
Speakers include Adam Westoby and Socialist Press editor John Lister.  
Thursday 15 June  
Earl Russell  
Pancras Road, Kings X  
7.30pm

## WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

Summer School  
"The Reconstruction of the Fourth International"  
July 23 to July 30, 1978  
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# INDUSTRIAL NEWS

## Gormley's new tactic

In a bid to prevent Yorkshire mine rescue brigade men winning substantially improved bonus payments, NUM leaders Joe Gormley and Lawrence Daly stepped in last week to sign a national settlement with the NCB.

According to Yorks NUM President Arthur Scargill the deal they struck was considerably below the figure that Yorkshire NCB management were prepared to concede, and below the

claim lodged by the rescue men themselves.

Though Yorkshire rescue workers at first threatened strike action to fight this sell-out and force through their claim, they have now decided to accept the national settlement, which includes shorter duty and standby hours and an extra £14 per week.

The NUM right wing, having used the tactic of pressing area productivity deals in order to force in divisive incentives payments and defuse the pressure for a national wage claim, has

now resorted to imposing a national level sell-out in order to head off the Yorkshire claim.

This is the background to Daly's renewed assurances of support for the wage-cutting policies of the Lib-Lab coalition government.

The defence of miners' conditions and living standards demands a tenacious struggle for a principled leadership in conflict with the betrayals of the right wing and capitulations of the 'left' within the NUM.

## Journalists win major victory

Westminster Press journalists on three weekly papers have won a major victory against the most aggressive employer in provincial newspapers.

Journalists on the *Acton Gazette*, the *Hendon Times* and the *Watford Times* struck for five weeks to secure back pay on the national pay agreement and won just as mass pickets

were to be reintroduced.

Pickets had shut down King and Hutchings printers in Uxbridge for the best part of a week with NGA members refusing to cross and giving a lead to other printers.

Hundreds of thousands of copies of newspapers and periodicals were lost including the *International Herald Tribune*, the *Jewish Chronicle* and *Al Arab*—a daily paper circulated in Europe.

The NUJ General Secretary, Ken Ashton, called off the mass pickets so that the employers could negotiate without being under any pressure.

After three days the NGA deputy general secretary—Dobbins—ordered his members to go into work, which for two days they did.

Then faced with the mass pickets the NGA not only refused to cross but called management outside the building and harangued them.

### Presses halted

NATSOPA and SOGAT members took their cue from the NGA and the presses ground to a halt.

The NUJ pickets who had come from all over London and from the *Kentish Times* and the *Oxford Mail*, kept the presses closed.

London based Westminster Press papers were called out in support.

From then on management were faced with a simple choice of settling the dispute at a cost of about £2,000 or seeing many times that amount lost every day.

The victory will strengthen all provincial paper chapels but should not blind members to the disastrous policy adopted by the negotiators of piece meal settlements which allowed chapels to become isolated in the first place.

### No offer

Gratefully Westminster Press responded by talking for a week without offering the journalists any guarantee on back pay.

The mass picket was recalled for Tuesday June 6 with every prospect of another shutdown.

Half an hour before it was due to begin Westminster Press called new talks and backed down.

The victory means that just 6½ months after it was due to come into effect, the National Agreement between the NUJ and the provincial employers can be signed.

### Can be beaten

But more importantly the strike has shown that a powerful and determined employer—ready to strike a blow against trade union organisation on its papers—can be defeated.

Westminster Press had become the last big employer to refuse to backdate the pay agreement as long ago as April.

One by one papers in its empire forced local managements to back down.

When strike action was called the management capitulated at Oxford and Slough and resolved to wreak vengeance on the smaller chapels at Acton, Hendon and Watford.

What swung the initiative away from the management was the determined fight that the small numbers of NUJ members put up and the massive support they received from the printers.

It was NGA FoC Ian Cummings at Uxbridge who successfully fought for a decision not to cross the picket.

## Basnett boosts Phase 4

The General and Municipal Workers Union conference at Scarborough revealed clearly the methods by which the trade union leaders hope to force a Phase 4 of wage control on the working class.

David Basnett is this year's TUC Chairman and this seems to have given him the dubious privilege of leading the latest attack on workers' living standards.

A vague and contradictory motion on wages moved by Basnett on behalf of the Executive Committee called for an end to government imposed wage restraint, but for the TUC to decide on "bargaining priorities" and to negotiate a joint public sector agreement with the government.

This was to include a "realistic minimum wage" in each industry and "sensible wage structures".

The meaning of this phrasing can be seen by looking at Basnett's complete failure to fight for the £50 minimum wage demand of last year's conference.

This year he was careful to have no figure at all included.

### 35-hour week

The motion also demanded Executive action over the 35-hour week.

The hypocrisy of this call was clearly revealed when 20 pipe ladders from Dagenham turned up to lobby the conference.

They had responded to Basnett's appeal last year for grass roots action in favour of the 35 hour week, only to be jumped on by the bureaucracy as soon as they took individual action.

Their dispute has now been referred to ACAS, with assurances from their local officials that they have "an unanswerable case for 35-hours".

When Basnett refused to speak to them they surrounded



PHOTO: Laurence Spaham, IFL

his car and had to be forcibly removed by his driver/body-guard.

The need to physically defend Basnett against his members is the clearest reflection of his role in defending capitalism against the demands of his membership.

An alternative composite motion was moved by John Cope from London.

This was more specific in committing the Executive against wage control and correctly demanded support for workers struggling for better wages and conditions.

But it was weak in terms of an alternative to EC policy.

It contained no proposals for the protection of workers against the erosion of wage increases by inflation.

It's suggestions for cutting hours centred on the same 35 hour week policy as the Exec-

utive and did not raise the question of the control of hours

### 5 vote margin

After procedural manoeuvres to suppress it had failed, the motion was narrowly lost by the margin of 199 to 204.

Such a vote in a union such as the GMWU clearly represents a high level of hostility to wage control in the working class and a growing recognition of their leaders' treachery.

But the complete absence of any coherent opposition underlines the need for an alternative revolutionary leadership.

This would be able to present to the GMWU membership policies that would start from the defence of their interests and lead forward to the struggle for a socialist society.

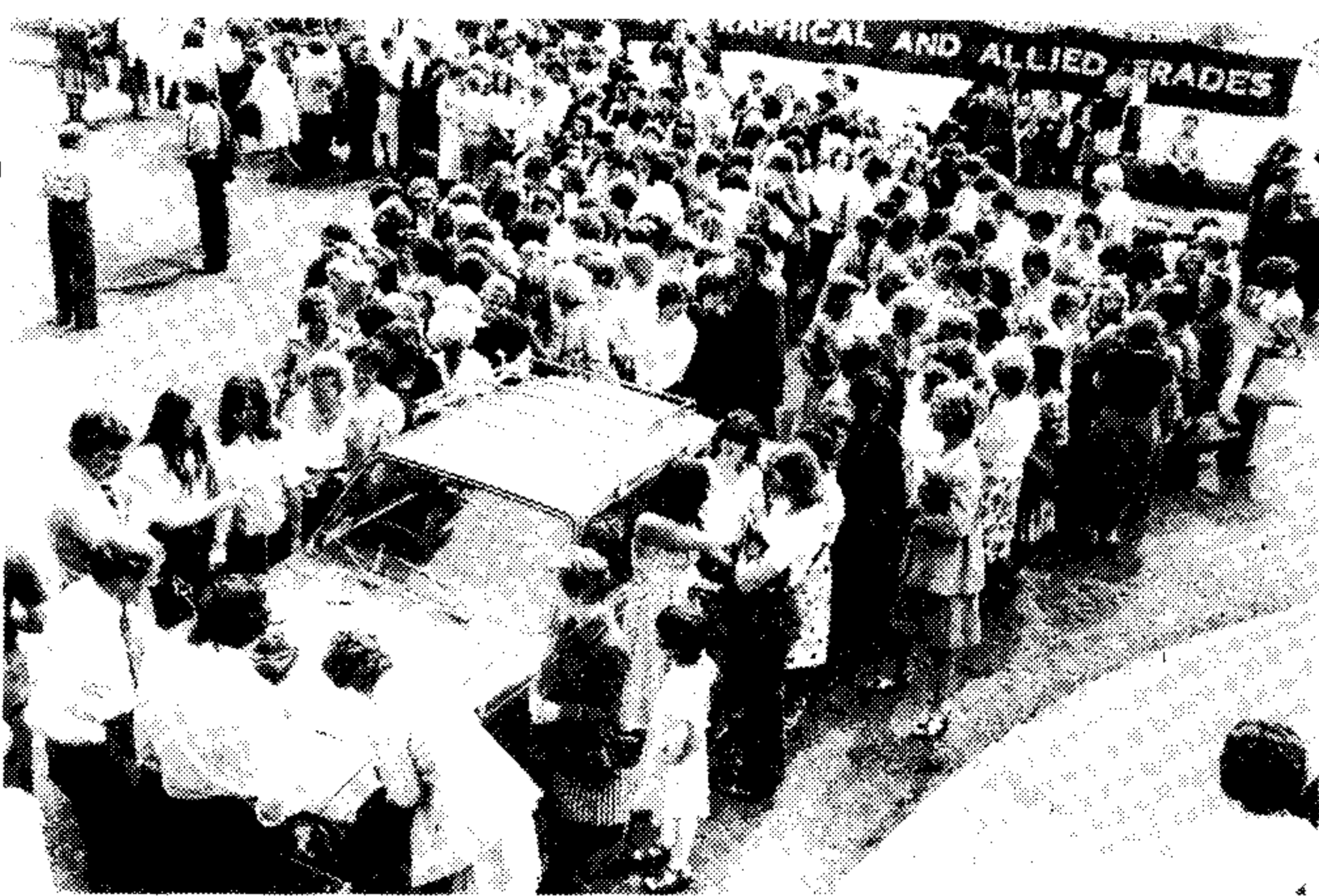


PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL

SOGAT workers receiving strike pay at the Bank of England strike. All are SOGAT members.

## Toolroom diversion

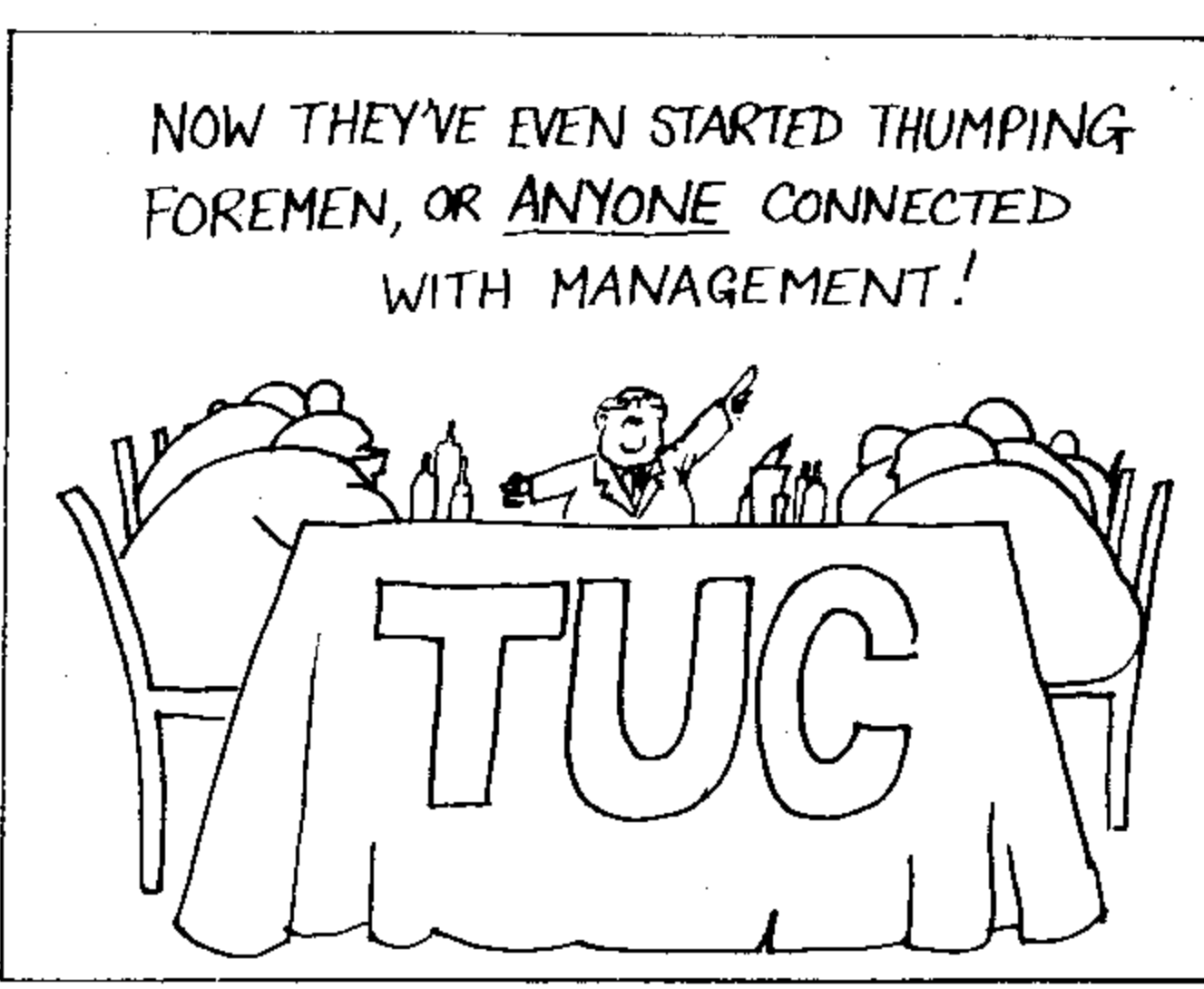
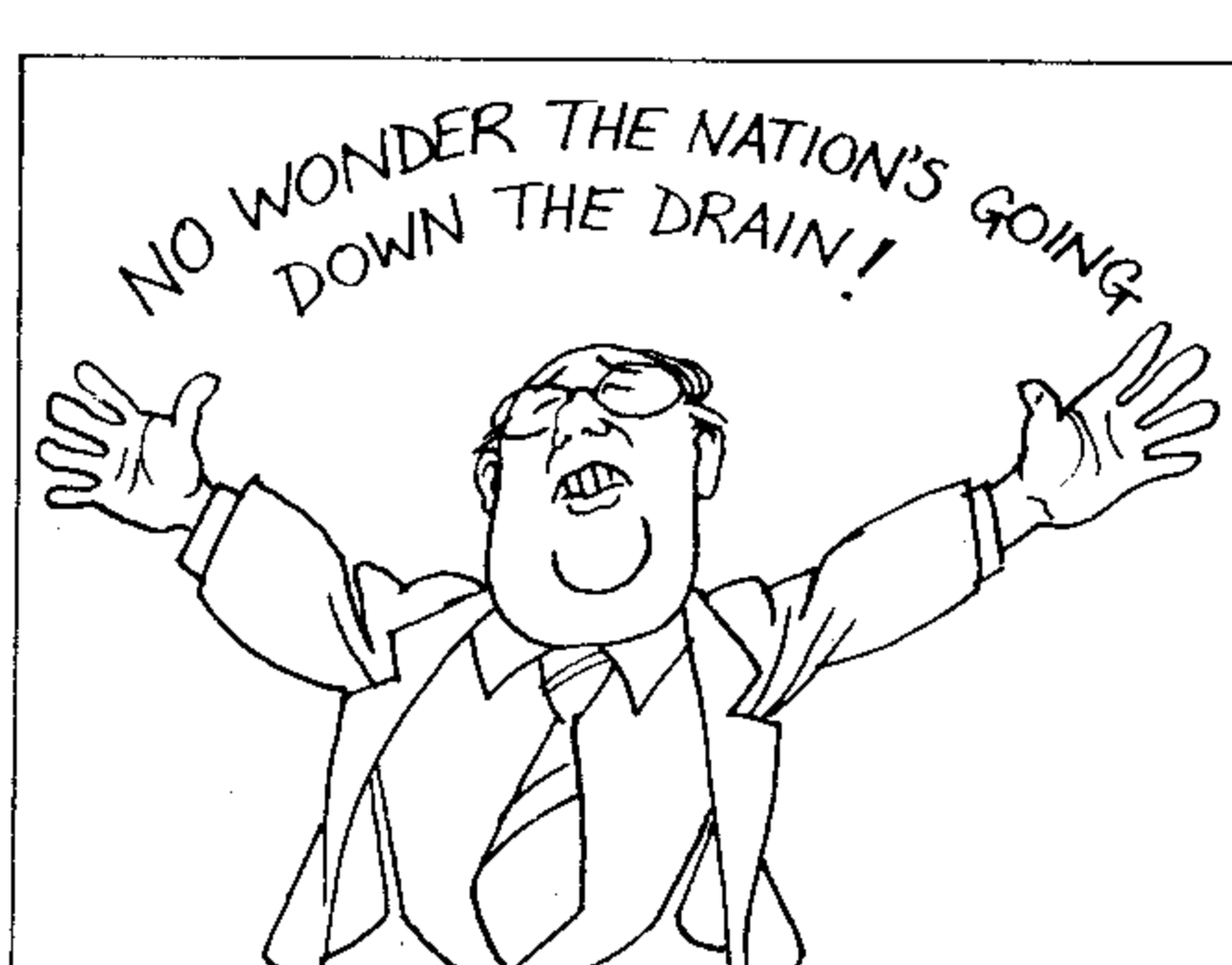
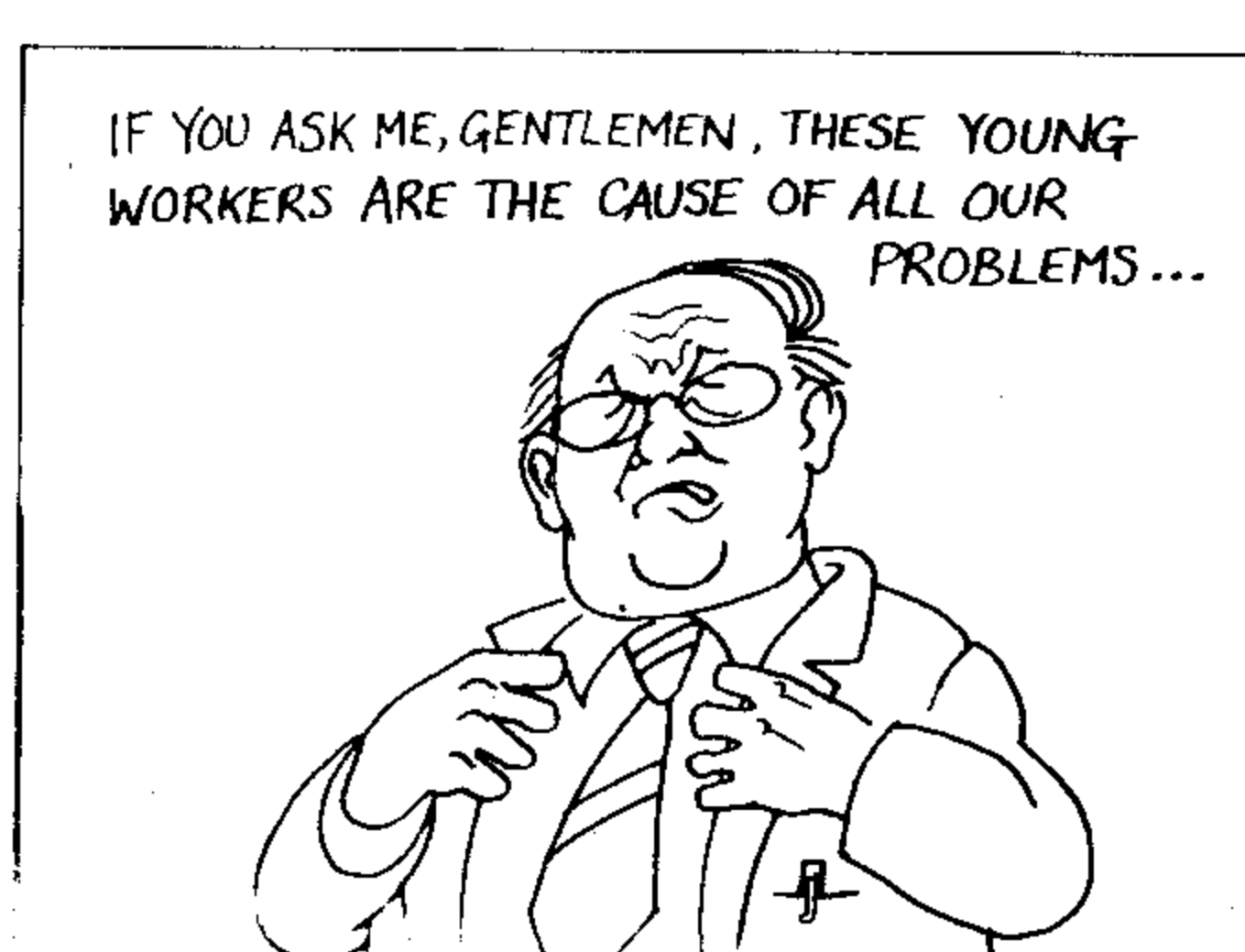
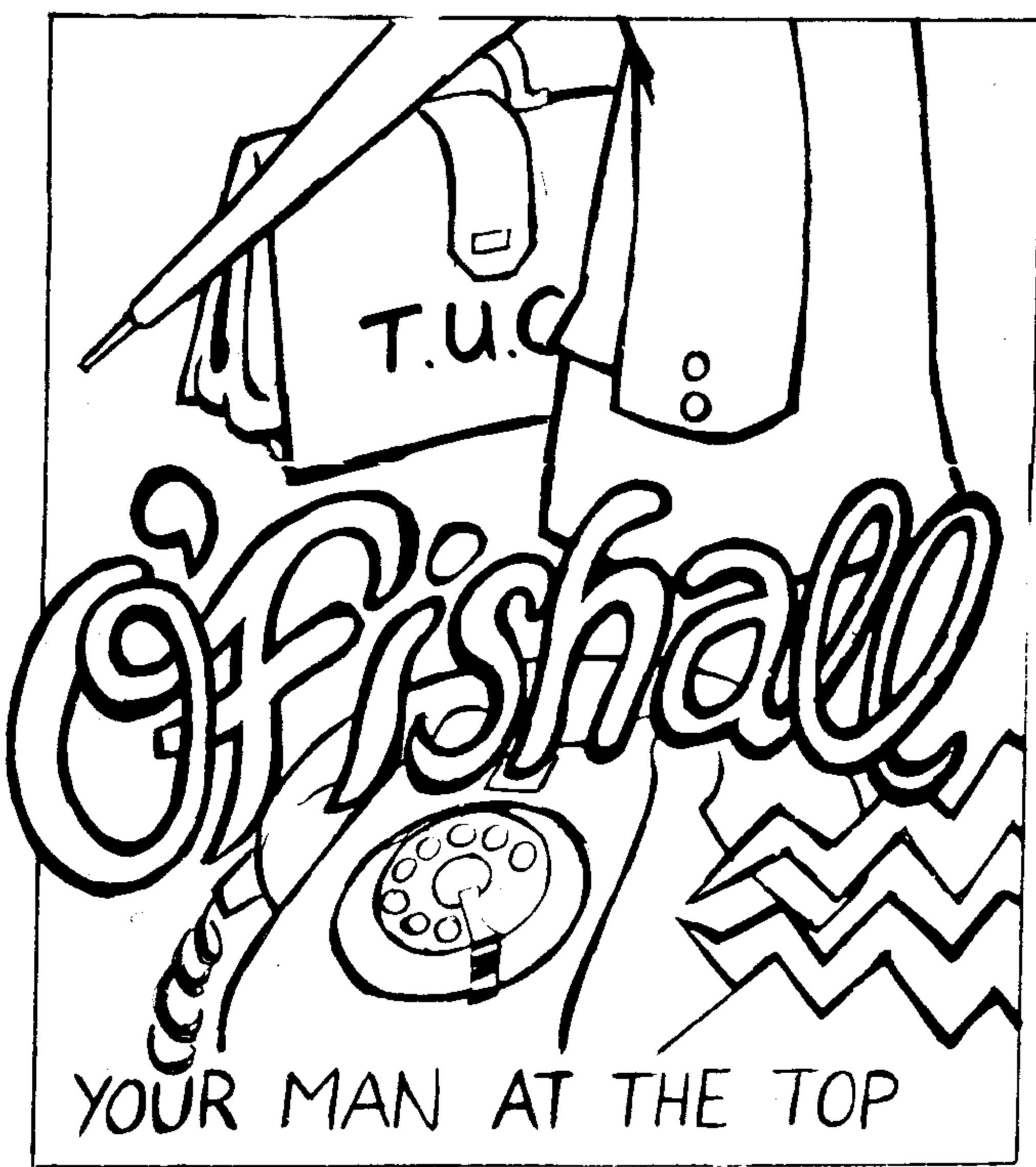
2,000 British Leyland toolroom workers on Monday demonstrated their readiness to fight for increased wages when they took unofficial strike action in defiance of union officials.

There was talk before the strike of action for a possible £90 or even £93 pay claim—but on the day, toolroom leader Roy Fraser resorted to almost incomprehensible demands.

And sooner than fight the company for the big wage increases his members want, Fraser has now raised the most reactionary of diversions—the prospect of withholding subscriptions from the union.

Fraser backed away during last year's strike from a frontal challenge to Leyland management and government pay policy.

His latest scheme shows that he still has no stomach or policy to conduct a serious fight.



# SOCIALIST PRESS



## THOUSANDS MARCH AGAINST GISCARD WAR MOVES



Giscard



PHOTO: Mark Rubner, IFL

EGA campaign supporters

## Dangers remain despite EGA partial victory

France's military interventions in Africa provoked (if belatedly) a large counter demonstration in Paris last week.

Despite the habitual ambiguities of the French Stalinists on French imperialism the CP leadership was forced by the massive hostility among workers to Giscard's policy to call this demonstration based around slogans rejecting all military intervention.

The demonstration, attended by tens of thousands of workers and students, was also organised by organisations of the "far left"—the LCR, the PSU, Lutte Ouvrière and the OCT.

The demonstration was an important step against French imperialism.

### Alternative

The Stalinist leadership, however, is clearly intent on making it not a part of a general political mobilisation against the reactionary policies of the Giscard-Barre government but an alternative to such a mobilisation.

And the CP have gone out of their way to formulate their criticisms of Giscard's African policy in such a way that it does not threaten their aim of building a firmer alliance with the Gaullists.

So Marchais in his speech stressed not so much opposition to French colonialism but opposition to French support for American imperialism.

So he condemned the African wars because they were on behalf of American multinational trusts and because they heralded France's return to NATO—objections which he knows will appeal to Gaullist nationalism.

The French labour bureaucracy has faced another difficult situation in the last two weeks when workers expected it to act in their interests and against the reactionary policies of the Giscard government.

### Occupation

This was the militant occupation of two plants of the state-owned Renault company, at Cleon near Rouen and at Flins near Paris.

The comprehensive demands of the workers include higher wages; a reduction in the length of the working week; an extra week of annual holiday and improvements in working conditions.

The Renault management replied by breaking off negotiations with the unions and calling in the armed police.

The surrounding of the Flins factory by thousands of heavily armed riot police was enough to convince the few hundred mostly immigrant workers in

occupation to leave before mass murder took place.

At Cleon for several days, workers defied a court order to leave but last Saturday they were eventually removed at gunpoint by a force of thousands of riot police.

The Flins workers meanwhile had reoccupied part of the plant.

The attitude of the two main trade union federations has been different.

The CFDT has practiced open sabotage and demanded an immediate end to the strikes and occupations.

The Stalinist-dominated CGT has given some verbal support and even called for solidarity action.

But they are restricting this to taken two or four hour stoppages which they hope will be enough to protect them against charges of betrayal while at the same time defusing the wave of anger among French workers against the brutal interventions of the state.

But the lesson of the Renault occupations and that of the anti-imperialist demonstration are the same—the French Stalinists are being forced more and more to call limited mobilisations of workers in order to head off the mounting anger against all aspects of the Giscard regime.

## Worker defence vital

DESPITE DENIALS by the police that there was anything to connect the incident to the National Front, Sunday night's 15 minute street battle between Asians and 150 rampaging white racist youth in the Brick Lane area of East London had all the hallmarks of an organised racist attack.

The attack was launched from three directions by the youth whose hatred of the Asian community had doubtless been fuelled over the past week by front page headlines in the national and London evening press over the proposal to create a Bengali "ghetto" in that part of East London.

'Left' MP Arthur Latham has called for a Special Branch report on the incident, presumably hoping that these spies on working class organisations and "extremist" groups will be able to establish a link between these youth and fascist groups.

Socialist Press has consistently condemned such appeals to the capitalist state for aid in dealing with the fascists as not only hopeless but extremely

At a meeting on Thursday with representatives of staff at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital, David Ennals announced that no attempt was to be made to close the hospital on July 21.

Faced with determined opposition to the closure throughout the labour movement and almost definitely with the prospect of sustained strike action in London's hospitals during the approach to the General Election, Ennals was forced to declare a postponement of the closure date.

This news was greeted with understandable delight by the EGA staff and hailed

as a 'victory' for the occupation.

But on closer examination it can be seen that the 'victory' is very partial and that Ennals' statement is deliberately worded to concede nothing to the EGA except a postponement of closure.

There is no long term commitment to maintain the hospital on its Euston Road site.



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Ennals

Also the statement proposed setting up a working party which will:

"... draw up detailed proposals for alternative accommodation".

EGA stewards must be very wary of entering into a working party set up to discuss ways of closing their own hospital.

They must refuse to cooperate with Ennals in any way until a definite commitment is made to repair the lift at the EGA.

At the moment they have only conditionally agreed to enter the working party but they must be prepared to turn this into a complete boycott when Ennals' intentions are made more clear.

At a conference of London Health Service stewards held at the EGA on Saturday it was quickly revealed that one part of Ennals' statement at least was a downright lie.

dangerous for the workers' movement.

Latham has voted for every single anti-working class measure of the Labour and Lib-Lab governments—measures which have perpetuated and worsened the appalling conditions in which both black and white workers are forced to live in numerous urban areas.

### State to act

Now that the fascists are exploiting the cowardly failure of the 'lefts' to fight for a clear alternative to the betrayals of the right wing, Latham wants the bosses' state apparatus to act—on behalf of the workers!

The only way to halt the racist attacks is for the labour movement to organise workers defence squads to defend immigrant families, picket lines and public meetings.

At the same time this struggle must coincide with a fight in every labour movement body to clear out the right wing Callaghan-Healey leadership and break this anti-working class coalition government.

One of the main reasons for EGA stewards accepting Ennals' proposals was that he promised that the nine COHSE members in the Emergency Bed Service, who have been suspended for continuing to refer patients to the EGA against the RHA's instructions would be reinstated—or at least that the problem of their suspension would be quickly resolved.

A speaker from the EBS however revealed the cynical intention behind the promise.

He informed the conference that the members had not been reinstated, that they would still have to attend the disciplinary hearing, and that they would only be reinstated if they signed a pledge to act entirely under the instructions of the RHA.

### Refused to sign

The suspended workers have refused to sign this pledge, as it would obviously remove their independence as a trade union branch.

They have called for a mass picket of the hearing at Fielden House, 28, London Bridge St., London SE1 at 1.30pm on Wednesday 14 June.

These workers must be supported and their defiant stand at the very centre of the fight against hospital closures must be preserved.

Without their full and immediate reinstatement even the partial victory will be turned into a defeat.

### Reinstatement

COHSE branches must pass resolutions demanding that their leadership who have formally given official support to the EBS members take immediate steps to ensure their reinstatement.

Such a resolution has already been passed by St. Pancras Hospital COHSE branch, which also at a

meeting last Wednesday passed a motion pledging indefinite strike action from the moment the running of the EGA is interfered with.

This resolution—already passed by South Camden District JSSC—must be welcomed as the strongest initiative taken so far by any individual hospital in defence of the EGA.

There was an almost unanimous call at Saturday's conference—attended by about 40 stewards—for the setting up of an all-London Health Service Joint Shop Stewards Committee.

The general mood of the conference was that the partial victory over the EGA could only be turned into a complete victory if the union leadership was to take the offensive and consolidate the strength which has forced Ennals' change of mind.

Health service workers must:

\*Fight for the immediate reinstatement of the EBS staff.

\*Adopt a policy of indefinite strike action should the EGA closure proceed.

\*Demand an injection of funds into the NHS to restore all cuts—linked to rising costs as assessed by trade union committees.

\*Fight for the nationalisation of the drug monopolies and private medicine without compensation.

## FUND

With a further £137.46 to add to our total since last week and a Summer Fete taking place in Oxford this weekend the £2,000 special fund is poised to take a big leap forward.

Our total to date is £1199.66, leaving us £800.34 to raise over the next six weeks.

Providing all the money that has been pledged comes in we should have no problem in raising that sum and indeed in going well over the top.

Donations should be sent to:

WSL Special Fund  
31, Dartmouth Park Hill  
London NW5 1HR