

SOCIALIST PRESS

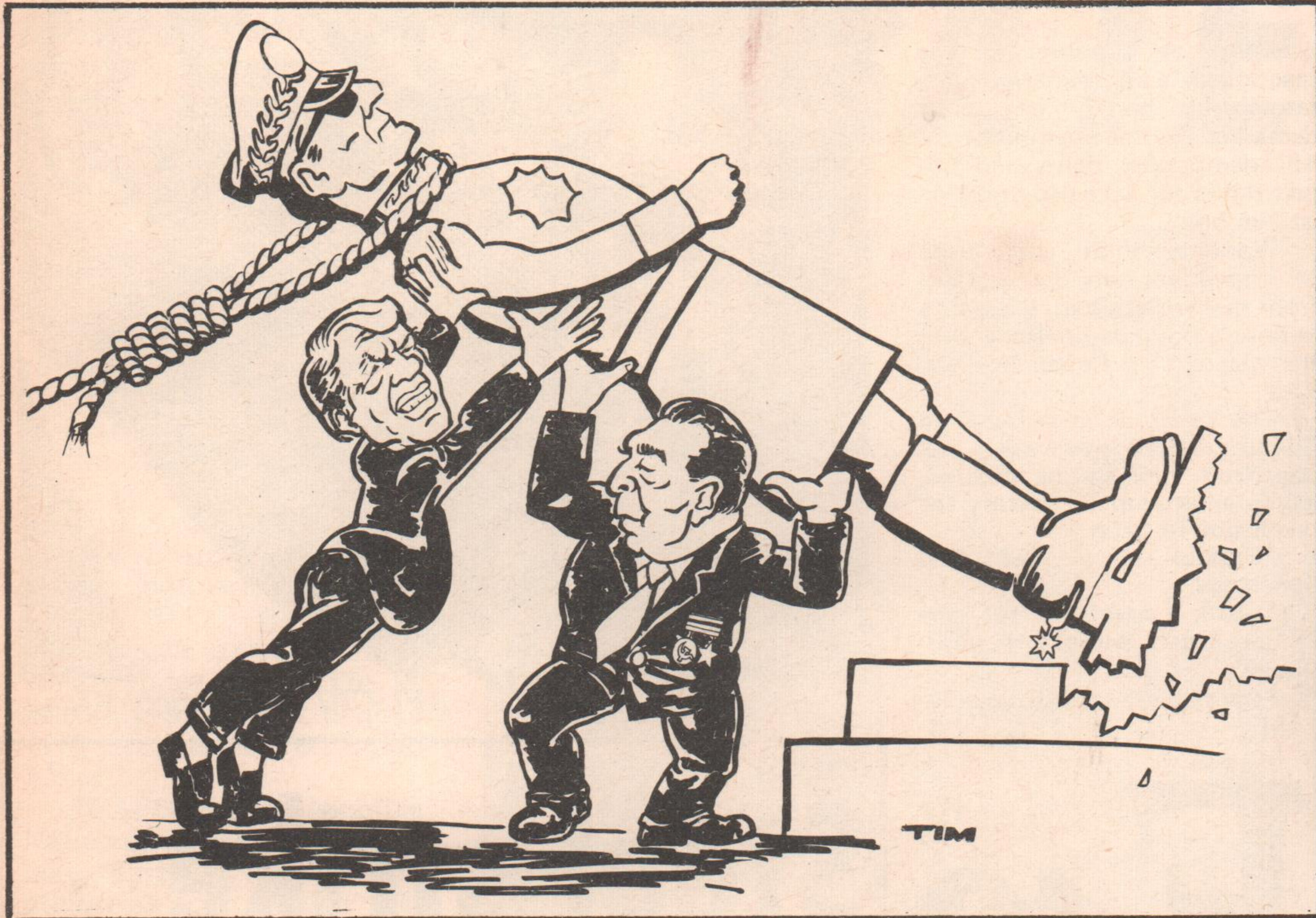


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KEEP U.S. HANDS OFF

IRAN!

Imperialism's panic evacuation of its most vulnerable servants from Iran is not an admission of defeat but part of a preparation for direct armed intervention.

As Iranian workers set fire to more American and British property, and as planes took off containing frightened relatives of the Shah, and imperialist technicians, the US aircraft carrier Constellation, with other ships of the US Seventh Fleet, was steaming towards the Gulf.

Meanwhile, every hour of the last two weeks the Iranian masses have acted to bring the end of the Shah's regime noticeably closer.

By their slogans and from their actions in strikes and demonstrations, the masses have shown themselves to be implacable in their determination to destroy the Shah's tyranny.

Unbreakable link

They have also shown their understanding of the unbreakable link between the tyranny and the interests of imperialism.

So their wrath in the streets and in propaganda has been turned not only against the self-styled "King of Kings" and his army and police but also increasingly against the signs of British and American imperialism in the country.

But it is not to protect a few buildings that the Constellation is steaming towards the Gulf.

A desperate President Carter may be ready to take the gamble of attempting US military occupation of parts of the crucial oilfields at least around Abadan on the Gulf.

Three weeks ago the Iranian oil workers once again came out on strike.

As a result no oil at all has been exported for two weeks by the world market's second largest producer.



And in the last week production has fallen even below Iran's own needs—though the regime now claims that there is an "agreement" with workers that they will produce enough for domestic requirements.

10% of US oil imports; a major share of supplies to Western Europe and Japan; nearly 50% of Israel's supplies and 90% of South African oil usually comes from Iran.

Hard blows

While there are other possible sources of supply, and South Africa has several years' oil in store, it is nonetheless true that the Iranian strikes are inflicting hard, immediate blows

against the crisis-ridden imperialist economies.

This is one factor that could push Carter into a new military adventure in the Gulf.

The Iranian economy itself is virtually at a standstill.

In addition to the oilfields the main airline and airport have been closed down by a strike.

So have most of the banks, many of the country's factories and lately the TV services.

But what now strikes further terror into the imperialists is the virtually complete collapse of imperialist authority in a country which even a year ago was one of the strongest strategic links in the chain of imperialist domination in the region.

This collapse of authority is shown partly by the growth of strikes and demonstrations in defiance of the most brutal repression.

Last week when hundreds of courageous workers were shot down in the streets of Iranian cities (especially in Mashhad where hundreds were massacred on December 31) or crushed beneath the Shah's tanks (sold to him by British Labour ministers), the defiant masses shouted "Cannons, tanks and machine guns cannot hurt us any more".

But the last three weeks have also seen the beginning of the breakdown of the chain of command in the showpiece 500,000-strong Iranian army itself.

Deserted

Several officers of the Imperial Guard—the so-called "Guard of the Immortals"—were killed in a mutiny at Lavan barracks in Tehran.

And in a demonstration in Tabriz, soldiers began by shooting on the crowd and ended by fraternising with it and joining the demonstration.

In several places groups of soldiers have deserted to the side of the masses, sometimes with their arms.

Several of Iran's Phantom jets are reported to have been sabotaged in recent weeks.

On the day after the Mashhad massacre last weekend, troops in the city were reported to have refused to leave their barracks.

The loss of authority in the streets is a symptom of the regime's loss of political authority in general.

In December the Shah tried to get Sadighi (a minister in Mossadegh's 1953 government) to form a new cabinet.

He gave up when he found only 5 people in the whole of Iran who would join him.

On December 31 the military cabinet headed by General Azhari admitted defeat and resigned.

The Shah has appointed Bakhtiar, the deputy leader of the bourgeois opposition party, the National Front, as Premier.

But Bakhtiar was immediately expelled from the Front and looks as if he too will be unable even to form a cabinet.

Ocean of blood

He is reportedly baulking at the Shah's insistence that his son-in-law becomes Defence Minister.

The Shah now looks increasingly set on a shoot-out with the masses so that his inevitable downfall will only take place at the cost of the shedding of an ocean of blood.

A major threat to the workers and peasants who have come so close to ousting their tyrant, is the fact that his collapsing authority is not being systematically challenged and replaced by organs of workers' power and defence.

There are growing reports of the masses imposing their authority.

Health workers have, for instance, taken over and renamed some of the principal hospitals.

Workers have occupied some factories and set up strike and occupation committees.

And a few days ago people's courts were reported to have tried and killed a number of agents of SAVAK (the security police of at least 5,000 agents and 50,000 informers set up by the Shah with the help of the American CIA).

But there is as yet no widespread establishment of soviet-type councils of workers', peasants' and anti-Shah soldiers or of armed militias to defend against military violence.

It is essential for these

bodies to be built in the course of the struggle.

Otherwise the leadership of the mass movement will inevitably stay in the hands of those who are now willing to exercise it.

This means anti-communist religious leaders (whose leading spokesman Ayatollah Khomeini last weekend urged oil workers to resume production to meet internal needs) and the bourgeois politicians of the National Front, whose nationalism and hostility to socialism can only end up in attacks on the masses and on the gains that are being won.

The absence of the organs of workers' democracy is, of course, in part a symptom of the absence of a revolutionary leadership in the Iranian working class which can consistently fight for a revolutionary programme.

Programme

The main workers' party, the Stalinist Tudeh Party remains committed to a search for some form of Popular Front coalition government—a policy entirely in line with the hostility of the Soviet leaders to this mass struggle taking place on the very borders of the USSR.

Every socialist must assist to the greatest possible extent in the building of a leadership to fight such betrayals.

This means fighting for the Trotskyist Transitional Programme among Iranian workers and students.

And it means fighting in the workers' movement in imperialist countries for the necessary policies of active and concrete solidarity with the Iranian masses in their struggle against imperialism.

*Imperialist hands off Iran!
*Black arms supplies to the Shah!

Black all arms to the Shah!



INTERNATIONAL

U.S. UNIONS' FAKE CHILE

'BOYCOTT'

The publicity surrounding the boycott of Chilean goods by the United States Trade Union federation the AFL-CIO is designed to cover up its real political objectives.

First, we should make it clear that the Workers Socialist League has consistently called upon the trade union leaders in imperialist countries to organise the blacking of trade and other economic links with the murderous dictatorship in Chile and with other similarly repressive regimes.

The recently instituted Chile boycott however has little more than a superficial resemblance to such a policy of blacking.

It is largely an imperialist manoeuvre.

It started life last May when the AFL-CIO sent a "solidarity team" to Chile in response to a request by the "Group of Ten", a self appointed group of mainly Christian Democratic "trade unionists".

The bureaucrats who led the team campaigned after their return for the US unions to impose a boycott on Chilean goods as a way of putting pressure on Pinochet's junta to restore the rights to organise "free trade unions".

CIA agents

The boycott was taken up by the AFL-CIO and proposed to ORIT (Interamerican Regional Organisation of Workers) which is officially the Latin American section of the Europe-based anti-Communist trade union federation, the ICFTU.

The ICFTU comprises the British TUC and most of the European social democratic unions.

Though in theory the AFL-CIO is not affiliated to the ICFTU it dominates ORIT through its own Latin American agency the AFLD (American Agency for Free Labour Development).

Neither the AFLD nor the ORIT which it dominates, are workers' organisations—not even bureaucratically deformed ones.

They are direct agencies of imperialism.

The AFLD has, since its formation in 1962, undertaken a vast programme of pro-imperialist subversion throughout Latin America.

Many AFLD functionaries are, as Philip Agee revealed in his book on the CIA, CIA agents.

Extensive interests

The AFLD is jointly financed by the AFL-CIO along with the US government and by a whole range of major US corporations including Coca Cola, Anaconda (nationalised by the Allende government), ITT, United Fruit Company and many others.

The President of the Trustees of AFLD is Peter Grace, head of the W.R. Grace Company which has extensive interests in Latin America (especially in Peru and Chile).

The Chile boycott has reportedly been approved by Carter and his main advisers.

Why then have these bosses in workers' clothing instituted a boycott of Chilean goods?

One reason is that Pinochet is not only repressing the authentic unions of the working class (which the AFL-CIO conspired to destroy before 1973) but he also refuses to recognise even the kind of yellow "unions" which the AFL-CIO and ORIT have consistently sponsored.

Without the freedom to



Carter

form such fake unions, these imperialist agents cannot carry out their counter-revolutionary task.

That task also requires that AFL-CIO, AIFLD and ORIT should urgently do something to offset the damage done to their false pretensions as a labour bureaucracy by the increasing body of published information

exposing their criminal counter-revolutionary role in Latin America.

The objectives of the present boycott are, therefore, the reactionary ones of trying to persuade the Pinochet dictatorship to allow pro-imperialist "unions" to operate.

Reactionary

The reactionary nature of the ORIT/AFL-CIO boycott is also shown by the fact that it is supposed to apply equally, not only to the reactionary Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua (added at the insistence of some Latin American unions) but also to Cuba, included at the insistence of the pro-imperialist AFL-CIO leaders.

The present boycott, therefore, must be replaced by a

blackening of supplies to the reactionary Latin American dictatorships based on clear demands for the restoration of full democratic rights and not just rights for fake pro-imperialist "unions".

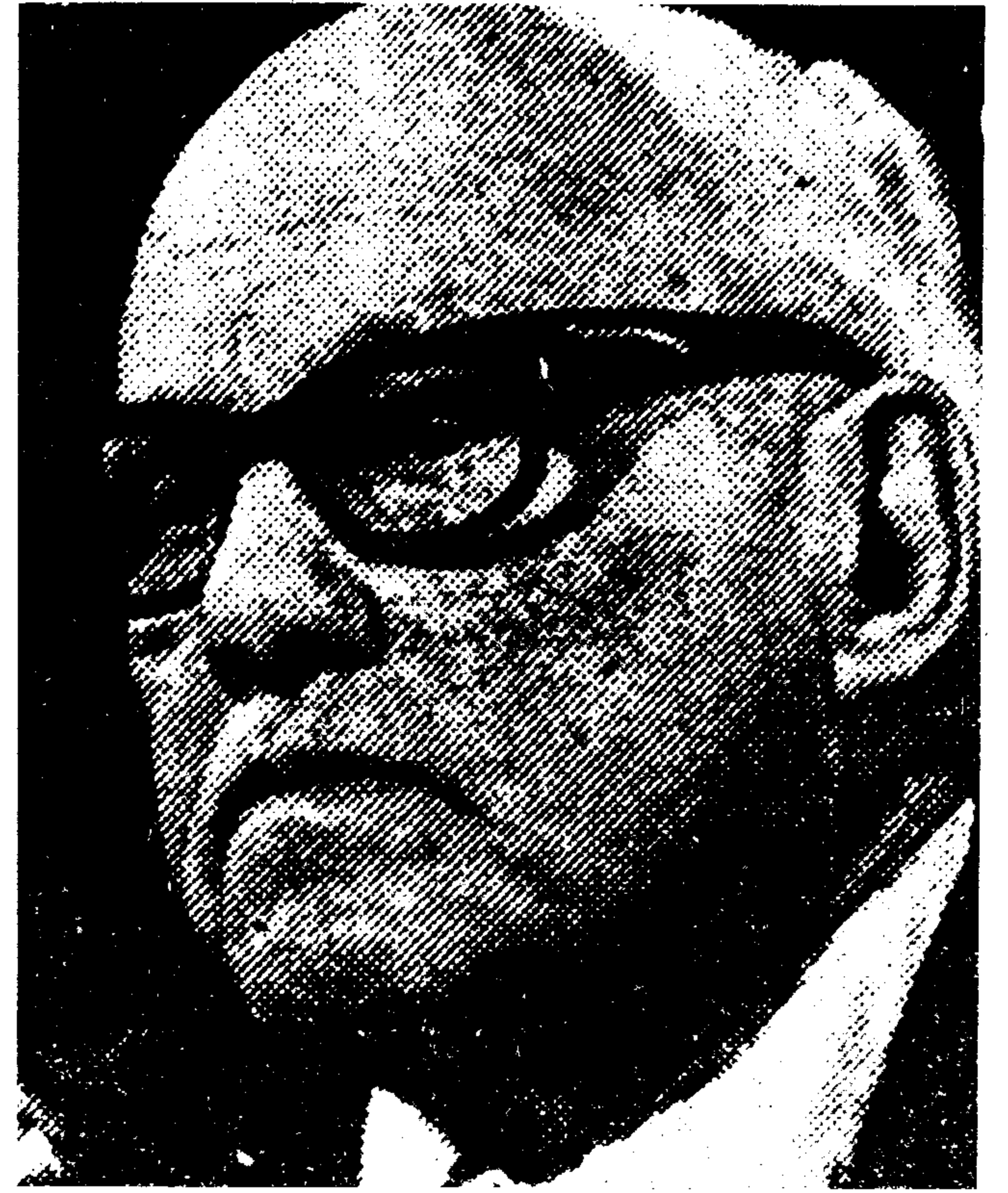
Workers should also refuse to implement any instructions from their reactionary leaders to impose a boycott on trade with the degenerated Cuban workers' state.

The policy of an embargo on Cuban trade is one which was used from 1960 by the imperialists in an attempt to destroy the revolution in Cuba.

*Expose AFL-CIO treachery!

*Black supplies to the Pinochet and Somoza dictatorships!

*Defend the Cuban revolution!



AFL-CIO chief George Meany



The Chilean Junta in 1973

Steel strike bites German bosses

Their cheeks glowing with expectation, the capitalists of West Germany are looking ahead to a 1979 coloured with rosy tints of healthy profits.

But the New Year has opened for them under a very large and very black cloud obstinately refusing to lift from the centre of the horizon.

Not collapsed

Despite their confident predictions, the strike in the steel industry has not collapsed over the holiday period.

In the face of management intransigence and lock-outs, the determination and solidarity of the pickets has in fact increased and forced Eugen Loderer and the leaders of IG Metall to extend the limited action to new plants and new areas.

As the strike begins to bite into other sections of manufacturing industry, with short-time working expected soon in the car industry, the question of blacking by other groups of workers has come to the fore.

Solidarity

Action must be taken immediately not only by dockers in West Germany but above all by steel workers and dockers in Britain and other countries to prevent increased imports from undermining the effect of the strike.

A campaign within the TGWU and the Confed must be launched now to fight for this concrete solidarity with the struggles of the IG Metall strike.

Jailbird Gandhi rides on

A short stretch of watching colour television in prison has done little to check Indira Gandhi in her ride back to power.

On the contrary, she can now fight another election to regain a seat in Parliament with all the prestige of martyrdom.

The opponents who jailed her have absolutely nothing to congratulate themselves on.

For a brief moment, the

Janata appeared to be united in action against the common enemy.

But this facade soon crumbled into the everyday disarray of the ruling coalition.

It was not futile hopes of crushing her growing strength which determined Prime Minister Desai to move against the former dictator. The main force which drove him to take this foolish step was the equally desperate hope that it could distract the Janata from its violent internal

wrangling.

But reviving the issue of Gandhi's involvement with the corrupt practice of her son Sanjay did not succeed in burying the bitter controversy over the alleged corruption of Desai's own son and the son of the Janata's former Home Minister Charan Singh.

Singh himself is now holding back from forming a new party based on the richer sections of the peasantry—not because he lacks the strength to do so

at any moment, but for tactical questions of opportunism.

Singh clearly sees now the prospect of splitting larger sections of the Janata off to join him, or even regaining greater control within the floundering coalition.

While the Janata strangles itself with its own quarrels, Gandhi is now engaged in the last moves towards reuniting the two sections of the Congress Party.

French socialist arrested in Poland

The arrest in Gedansk, Poland on 6 December of Philippe Ries from the paper *Informations Ouvrieres* has aroused an enormous protest campaign in France and internationally.

M. Ries, whose paper is associated with the French 'Trotskyist' OCI, is an accredited journalist who met members of an opposition group known as the Social Self Defence Committee, like many other Western correspondents.

His wife was also briefly held and his lawyer, according to the latest reports, has not yet been allowed to see him.

'Defamation'

After his arrest the authorities originally said he was 'suspected of espionage'. Since then they have said that he will be charged with 'defamation of the Polish state'. The local prosecutor has also let it be known that he may get 'provisional liberty' for 20,000 dollars bail.

These gradual retreats of the

authorities come in the face of a large campaign which has won 80,000 signatures in France, a demonstration at the Polish embassy in Paris on 14 December, and the support of amongst many others, the General Secretary of the French teachers' union, CP philosopher Louis Althusser and CP Assembly member Boulay.

It has now gone as far as protests from the French foreign ministry.

On 13 December the Self-Defence Committee held a press conference about other arrests.

Kas Switon leader of an independent trade union, faces eight years, Gajjillo, a sailor, faces a long sentence for distributing 'forbidden documents' and Koslowsky, who set up a

peasants' committee, has been sent to a psychiatric hospital.

In Gedansk itself on 13 December there was a demonstration, said to be as large as 4,000, to celebrate the eighth anniversary of the great strike movement and to remember the dead of those days.

Internationale

Speakers included a member of the strike committee of 1970, Zoloch, and two others.

The Polish national anthem, the Internationale and various revolutionary songs were sung. Some arrests were made, though not of the platform speakers.



SWAPO BETRAYALS HELP S. AFRICA'S NAMIBIA STRATEGY

The Namibian elections held last month under the control of South Africa resulted in the expected victory for the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance.

According to the official figures the DTA secured a reputed 81% of the vote. With 93% of the registered electorate taking part in the ballot this would mean that the DTA are claiming support from 75% of those eligible to vote.

The poll was contested by the DTA, Aktur, and three small extreme right-wing splinter groups. The 50 assembly seats were divided 41/9 between the DTA and Aktur.

SWAPO and the Namibia National Front refused to take part in the election preferring one which was controlled by the United Nations.

'Militant' stance

Despite this 'militant' stance it is the antics of SWAPO itself which have played a not inconsiderable part in preparing the present situation.

South Africa was initially forced to negotiate because of the strong forward movement of the Namibian masses and the threat of a protracted guerrilla war.

Now South Africa faces a far more favourable situation brought about by the connivance of the SWAPO leadership and imperialism.

After having appeared to be co-operating with a UN-imperialist plan for a neo-colonial solution in which SWAPO participated, the South African government announced that it would be holding South African controlled elections in December.

Vague prospect

At the same time, eager to provide the imperialists with an excuse for continued negotiations, the South Africans held out the vague prospect of UN controlled elections after the South African ones.

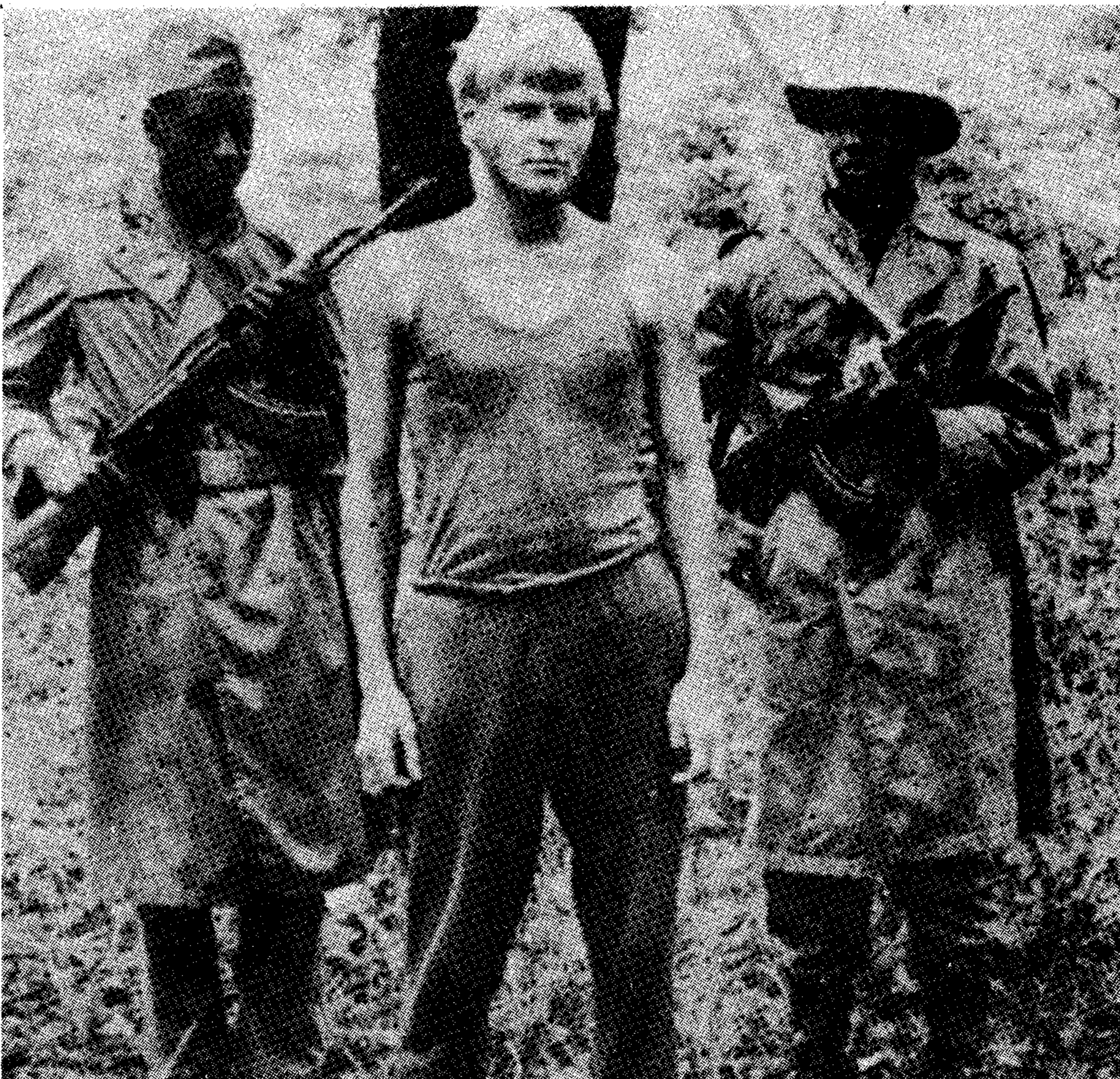
As *Socialist Press* no 123 pointed out when these events were occurring:

"With Aktur and the DTA pressing for early elections controlled by anyone other than itself South Africa has now decided to fall back on its own plan . . .

"The South Africans have made maximum use of SWAPO's betrayals and equivocations on the question of elections.

"A massive registration of voters has been force-organised. Aware that SWAPO would refuse to participate in South African controlled elections they have connived a situation in which its two pet political fronts, Aktur and the DTA, are assured of an electoral victory.

"All that South Africa requires is that the prospect of UN elections is delayed until there is strong right-wing 'internal' control over



SWAPO guerrillas with captured South African prisoner of war

Namibia.

"And while the imperialists negotiated the South African army and police contrived their campaign of terror with unlimited powers to detain indefinitely anyone whose actions were held "to promote violence or intimidation."

"Internal opposition leaders have been faced with stepped-up repression. This, coupled with political confusion sown by the SWAPO leadership, made internal SWAPO mobilisations almost impossible."

Socialist Press also pointed to the crucial role of 'Marxist' Neto in ensuring SWAPO connivance with the imperialist plan.

"Co-operation from Angola is, of course, essential to the Western plan.

"Imperialism has wooed President Neto from his 'left' rhetoric by playing on

the economic and political crises facing his regime.

"The bait of economic investment was most likely coupled with an offer to limit or even stop supplies of imperialist arms to the rebel forces of UNITA which still wages a guerrilla campaign against Neto.

"Opportunistically sacrificing the interests of the Angolan and Namibian masses to the short-term benefits of co-operation with imperialism. Neto gave his support to the UN plan."

From the time of SWAPO's initial involvement in the imperialist plans to secure a 'compromise', 'negotiated settlement', South Africa has been provided with an increasingly favourable situation in which to protect its own

political and economic interests in Namibia.

The connivance of imperialists, 'radical' front-line states and the SWAPO leadership has allowed South Africa to strengthen its own agents, step up security controls inside Namibia, increase attacks on SWAPO guerrillas and repression of SWAPO internally, all with the de facto protection of the imperialists.

Fullest use

Even as the SWAPO leadership and Neto co-operated in terms of the imperialist plan to curb the activities of SWAPO fighters South Africa was making the fullest use of the opportunity to strengthen reactionary forces inside Namibia, committed to the defence of South African and imperialist interests:

*South African troop strengths have been increased.

*Conditions of near martial law have been extended.

*Terror raids have been stepped up against SWAPO and refugee camps.

*Waves of arrests of militants inside Namibia have taken place.

*Black tribal guards loyal to the DTA leaders have been re-organised and rearmed.

*Black army units inside Namibia have been developed.

*A Namibian paratroop unit has been established.

*Whites have been organised into civil defence units. In addition to all this



SWAPO leader Nujoma

there are clear indications of the formation of right-wing terror squads.

At the same time South Africa set about using the conditions it had established to strengthen right wing forces politically.

Massive finance poured in from South Africa and imperialism to boost the DTA.

While repression against SWAPO and the NNF were stepped up throughout the country, the DTA was given every assistance to build an effective national presence.

State and private capitalist media combined to give it massive publicity and propaganda support.

Using all these factors and SWAPO's declared commitment to an election, South Africa then publicly broke from the UN plan, in order to pursue directly what had been its goal all along—the entrenchment of a pro-imperialist, pro-South Africa 'independent' government.

Acceptance

Even then although they made public noises of opposition, the imperialists conceded a de facto acceptance of the South African-controlled elections.

The SWAPO leadership meanwhile, continued to place its full confidence in the imperialist powers, arguing that the South African elections should be opposed because they represented a departure from the imperialist plan!

It was in this situation of an equivocating, vacillating leadership tied to imperialism; front line states promoting the imperialist plan because of their own dependence on imperialism; massive repression; enormous ruling class support for the DTA; and total ruling class control over the state, the economy and the media, that the South Africans force organised the registration and the elections.

Succeeded

The fact that South Africa has succeeded in what it set out to do—entrench a friendly, 'independent' government which has de facto recognition from imperialism—immeasurably strengthens its negotiating positions as regards a further UN-supported elec-

tion.

The fact that it was able to do so at a time when SWAPO—far from providing a revolutionary alternative to the imperialist plan—was actually tying itself more and more closely to the imperialists, shows nothing more clearly than the danger posed to the mass struggle by the SWAPO leadership.

Recognition

The oppressed masses in Namibia now face an increasingly difficult situation.

The DTA electoral victory means that in any future negotiations, whatever the rhetoric and posturing imperialism will have to concede a de facto recognition to a DTA government.

Already the DTA has made it quite clear that it will use the size of its election victory as a weapon in the struggle to challenge even further the already marginal international recognition of SWAPO as the only representative of the Namibian people.

Inside Namibia it is to be expected that the DTA will attempt a programme of limited reforms while at the same time strengthening the forces of reaction militarily.

This and its existing monopoly of the media and control of key government institutions will be used to boost the DTA image even further.

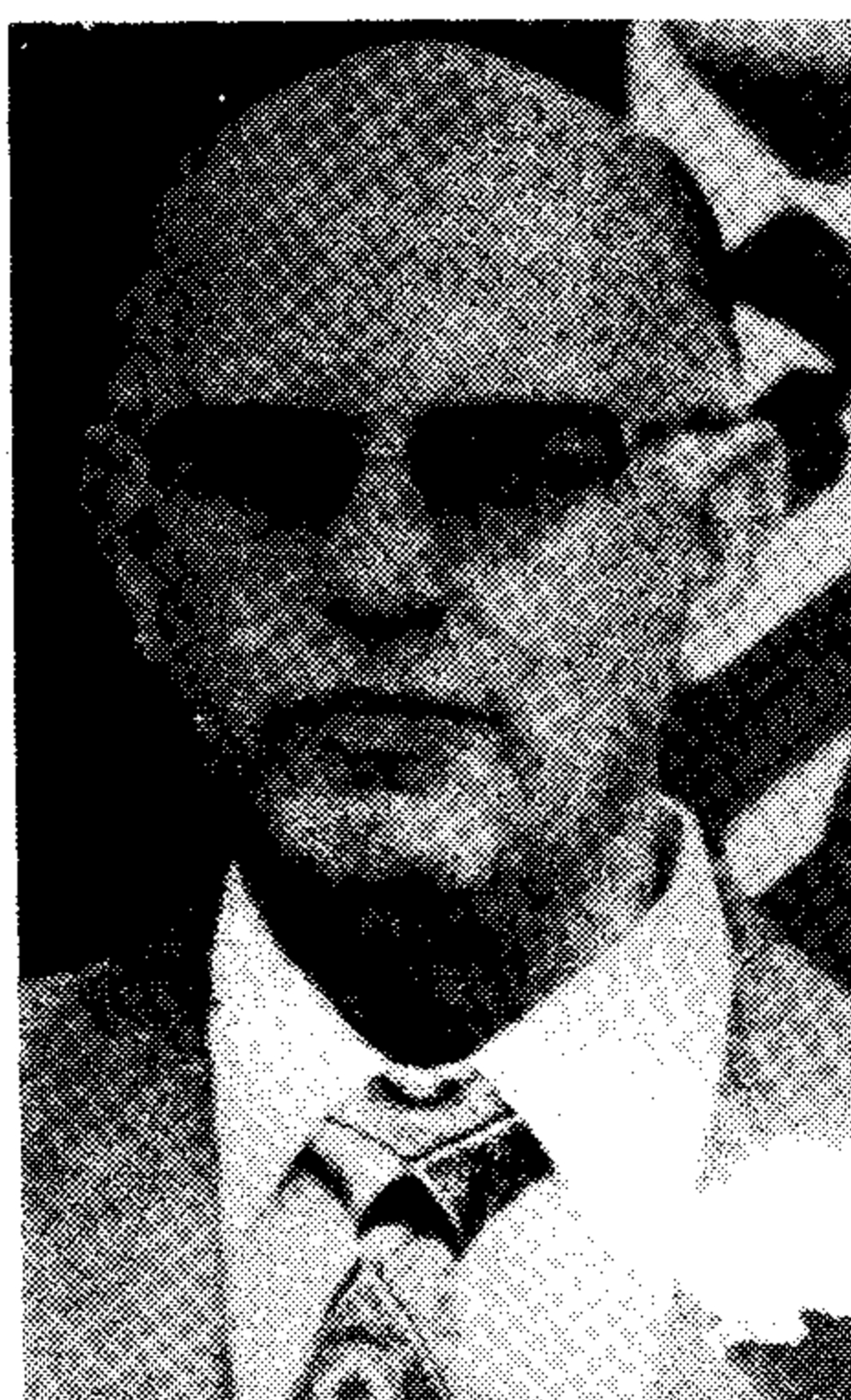
We can also expect attempts to woo 'moderate' SWAPO leaders via the patronage now in the hands of the DTA.

This will be a necessary move given the inherent instability of the DTA, artificially boosted as it is by South Africa.

However, now that it has 'won' the election further efforts to keep it together will be forthcoming from its white leaders.

SWAPO's support will undoubtedly be undermined by all this and political confusion will grow amongst some layers of the oppressed masses.

The origin of this confusion lies squarely with SWAPO. It is above all SWAPO's ties with imperialism which have facilitated the growth of the DTA.



South African premier Botha



IRA BOMBINGS A DISASTROUS TACTIC

The Workers Socialist League has always maintained its unconditional support for the struggles of Irish socialists and republicans against British imperialism.

We defend the right of these anti-imperialist fighters to use tactics, including armed struggle, in the war against national oppression, and stand at all times fully in their support against the witch-hunting of the capitalist media and the repression of the capitalist state.

But this by no means implies that we support any and every tactic they do in fact adopt.

And precisely because we support the struggle for Irish liberation, we declare our complete opposition to the recent wave of terror bombings carried out in Britain by the IRA, and the continuation of bombings against civilian targets in the occupied six counties of Ireland.

Such tactics do nothing to harm British imperialism or to mobilise the working class in either Ireland or Britain against the barbarism of the British army or its bloodthirsty servants in the RUC, the UDR, the concentration camps and torture cells.

Backlash

By injuring the civilian population in militarily useless actions, they merely assist the capitalist media to whip up a reactionary backlash, helping them to regain waning support for the army repression of the republican and socialist movement in the occupied six counties.

The Republican argument in favour of the bombings demonstrates more clearly than anything else the failure of their leadership to grasp the importance of mobilising the British working class in the struggle against British imperialism:

"Whether the enemy likes it or not, international attention is being focussed on the British occupation of Ireland and hopefully this extension of the struggle will provoke debate on Ireland by the working class of the colonial power."

(*Republican News*, Dec. 23)
Certainly the bombings—none of which has even attempted to hit any of the culprits responsible for repression in Ireland—will "provoke debate" inside the British workers' movement.

But it will be a "debate" in which as on previous occasions the defenders of the Irish liberation struggle will be driven increasingly onto the defensive as hostility grows towards terror bombings of civilian targets.

Confusion

The IRA statement fails completely to grasp the fact that the British working class is also at the receiving end of the violent repression meted out by the same capitalist state machinery that is at work in the six counties.

Addressing the "English people" it says:

"For 10 years our people have suffered under your Army".

This deliberately ignores the fact that "our" army has become a standard strikebreaking tool used by Labour traitors against the British working class.

The IRA statement exhibits its confusion most clearly when it asks:

"Who are we to hold responsible for British murder in Ireland?"

The answer is simple: the culprits are the British capitalist class, its state machine, and its servile lackeys in the Labour and trade union movement.

These are the common enemy of the British and the Irish workers' movement. A united fight is essential if they are to be defeated.

But the IRA has no concept of such international unity. Instead it openly proclaims its readiness to make British workers pay with their lives for the barbarism of their own ruling class:

"any acts of brutality against defenceless prisoners of war would inevitably force us into considering inflicting heavy civilian casualties."

Irony

Such a futile, destructive strategy stands as a major threat to the Irish liberation struggle. It must be resolutely opposed.

The irony is that this turn takes place at a time when sections of the British labour movement have begun to show more sympathy to the Irish struggle and particularly the 'H' Block issue.

Demonstrations called during 1978 by the Prisoners Aid Committee were the biggest on Ireland for several years. The use of the army against the labour movement in Britain itself is also raising workers' awareness of its real role in support of capital.

The real character of the sectarian set-up in the six counties is being further revealed for all to see by the arrest of five RUC men charged with murdering Catholics.

And there are now growing pressures within the international workers' movement—particularly in the powerful US labour movement—for solidarity action in support of the Irish POWs.

Under these conditions the task for British socialists is to step up the fight within the trade unions and the Labour Party for action to force the immediate withdrawal of all British troops from Ireland.

But the bombing campaign,

by diverting from the real source of terrorism and violence—the criminal role of the Labour leaders in furthering the repression of the Irish people—offers the Callaghan-Mason clique and their Tory press admirers a ready weapon against such a fight.

Motive force

There is no doubt that the motive force behind the historic war of Irish liberation is the military occupation of the Northern six counties of Ireland by the organised terror force of British imperialism.

In the spurious name of preserving "peace" and "stability" the British army, with its enthusiastic retinue of RUC, UDR and prison screws, daily carries out systematised harassment, beatings, shoot-



PHOTO: Derek Speirs, IFL

Mason

ings, torture, jailings and wholesale intimidation of the Irish people.

By blocking the struggle for national liberation in the six counties, British imperialism hopes to prevent the unification of the Irish working class in its common struggle against unemployment, poverty and extremes of capitalist exploitation both North and South and thus



CARWORKERS CONFERENCE

THE CRISIS IN THE MOTOR INDUSTRY

Called by the Campaign for Democracy
in the Labour Movement

January 20, 1979 in Birmingham

Full details from CDLM, c/o 37, Birchfield Close
Blackbird Leys, Oxford



IRA fighter takes aim at British soldier

prevent the creation of an Irish workers republic.

But the IRA's latest tactics have demonstrated that it is not only the Labour leaders who wish to exclude the working class from the Irish struggle.

Spectator

Both in Britain and in Ireland the IRA's own approach relegates the working class to the role of passive spectator—or even possible victim—of the clandestine activities of an elite, and heads off once again down the same old blind alley of

individual terrorism.

The bombings have shown that the republican movement has not been subdued by army repression, arrests, tortures or SAS murders.

But unless a turn is made in Ireland to political agitation designed to mobilise the working class around demands to fight the mass unemployment, low wages and slum housing which flow from British imperialist rule in the six counties, there is still no evidence that—for all the courage and devotion of its fighters—the IRA has any

serious strategy for the defeat of British imperialism.

Obligation

A Trotskyist party equipped with such a programme for action must be built in Ireland.

This, however, in no way lessens the obligation of the British working class to take up, through every available avenue in the labour movement, the fight to force the removal of the Callaghan-Mason leadership, the restoration of PoW status to political prisoners and the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

Carter medics fail to save Boumedienne

So all the world's doctors and all the world's medical technology could not bring Houari Boumedienne to life again.

The attendants round his sickbed were like a living epitaph for the Algerian revolution.

First, the Soviet physicians were brought in to cure the illness of the Algerian President; then the trips to Russia where it became clear that they could do no more than ease the pains of his mortal sickness.

With Boumedienne's return to Algiers, it was the French advisers who flocked to cushion his dying hours and sought ways to prolong his valuable life.

'Mercy' team

When even these methods brought no improvement, no less a friend than President Carter sent out a high-powered team of medical experts on a 'mercy' flight to the Maghreb.

All in vain. The 'Revolutionary Council' which heads the Algerian bureaucracy was forced to lock itself up to decide on a successor to their widely-lamented leader.

This whole enterprise was an ironic parallel to the history of the Algerian revolution itself.

After the victory of the FLN and the winning of independence from French imperialism in 1962, the petty-bourgeois nationalists who came to power



Boumedienne

proclaimed their devotion to socialism and turned for support to the Stalinist bureaucracy of the Soviet Union.

Necessary response

But the spate of nationalisations and collectivisations which took place in this early period was largely a necessary response to the problems caused by the long and bitter war and by the exodus of French capital and colonial managers.

Any Algerian leaders who had a real desire to fight for socialism and to extend the struggle against imperialism, completely lacked any programme to carry those wishes into practice.

The real direction of the bureaucracy was revealed in 1965 when Boumedienne, previously head of the armed forces, came to power in a coup.

Only weeks later major agreements were signed with the French government for the exploitation of Algeria's vast mineral wealth.

But the open return of Algeria to the welcoming capitalist fold did not stop there.

Geared to capitalism

Under Boumedienne's direction, the political positions and economic structure of Algeria were geared more and more to the requirements of capitalism, often in violent contrast to the colourful rhetoric brandished by the very same leader.

Today, it is the United States which stands as the major trading partner of 'socialist' Algeria.

In thirteen years, Boumedienne proved his worth to Stalinism and imperialism alike.

The task for socialists is to expose that role once and for all to the masses of Algeria who still preserve some desperate hopes of their bureaucratic rulers.

Callaghan puts the boot in MANIFESTO: 'LEFTS' MUST PUT UP OR SHUT UP



In yet another display of how supple is his spine, Tony Benn has obediently abandoned any attempt to incorporate a series of left-wing sounding policies into the Labour Party manifesto.

At the December 20 meeting of the Party's National Executive he immediately capitulated to Callaghan's ultimatum that Ministers either toe the line of his right wing cabinet, or be removed from their posts.

Callaghan's outburst came in response to a timid move by Eric Heffer to exempt Ministers from the discipline of cabinet collective responsibility in NEC meetings—particularly in discussions on the manifesto.

Revelling in a new chance to humiliate the pathetic array of 'left' talkers who hold a majority on the National Executive, Callaghan once more threw down an open challenge to his supposed opponents to fight for his removal or belt up.

While most of them politely complied by belting up, Tribune Party chairman Joan Lester chimed in with a grovelling statement stressing how tolerant Callaghan is towards ministers.

Determination

Of course this tolerance does not extend to anything resembling socialist policies.

Callaghan's latest insistence on cabinet responsibility is connected to his determination to squash the proposals for nationalisation, programmes of public works, a wealth tax and improvements in the Health Service contained in a draft manifesto vainly submitted by the Home Policy Committee headed by Benn.

Inadequate

In taking a stand against even this inadequate package of reformist policies, Callaghan is counting on support not only from the whole Cabinet and NEC right wingers, but also from TUC leaders.

Both steel union chief

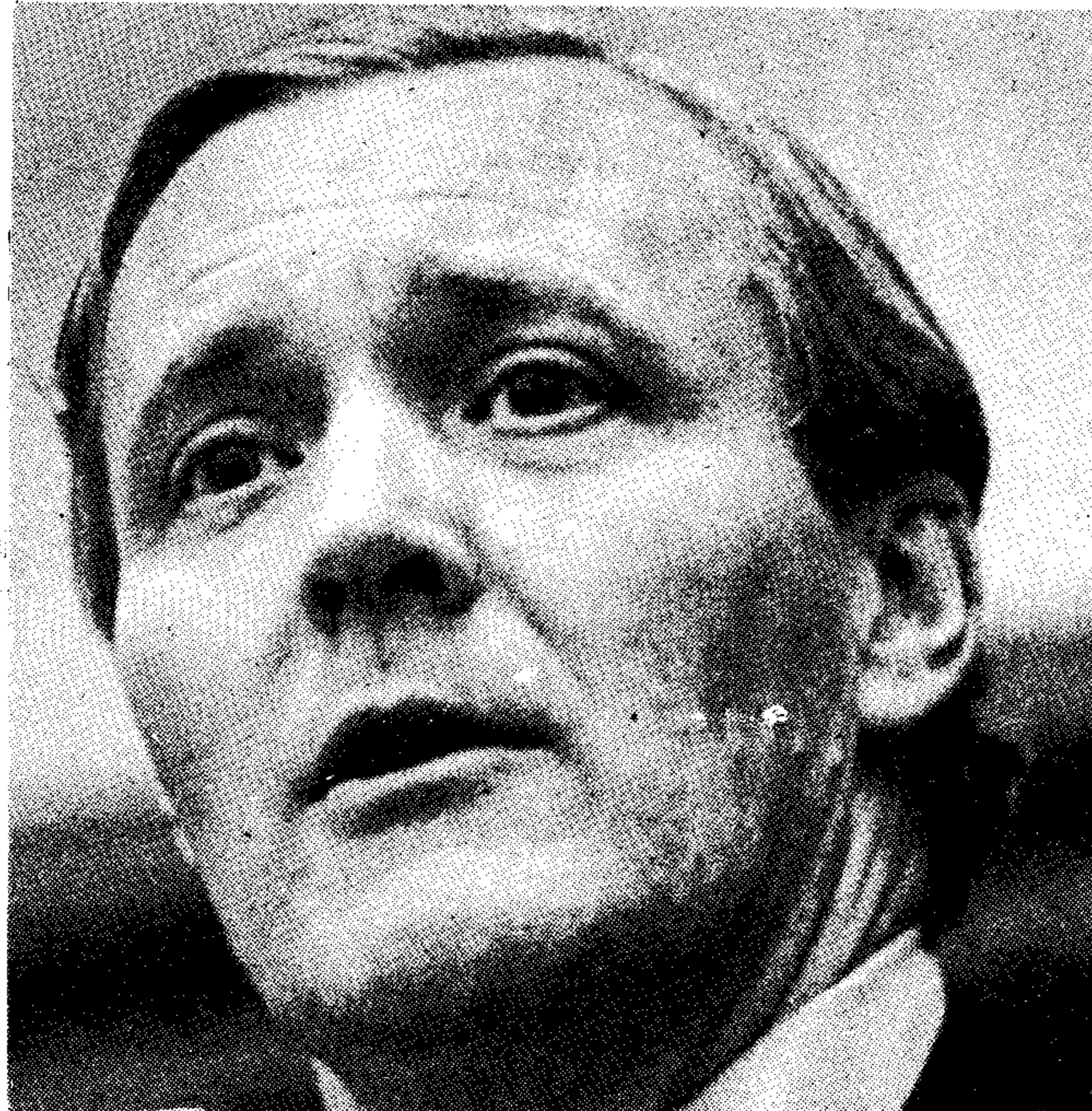


PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Benn

Bill Sirs and NUR leader Syd Weighell have apparently written to Callaghan opposing the Home Policy Committee proposals.

As Callaghan lines up his forces to impose what could possibly be the most reactionary and anti-socialist Labour manifesto of all time, the harsh truth must be faced by socialists within the Labour Party: while the Callaghan-Healey leadership retains unchallenged control, there is no prospect of Labour's manifesto

containing even empty promises of socialism.

Benn's latest collapse on this question should come as no surprise.

Key member

While eagerly searching around for any opportunity to establish himself as a 'left', he remains a key member of the Labour government which has

inflicted the biggest ever cut in working class living standards, slashed the social services and collaborated shamelessly with the CBI in forcing through speed-up and mass sackings.

Programme

Constituency parties must insist that those NEC members who claim to oppose Callaghan's policies take a stand now and fight for the removal of the Callaghan-Healey leadership, and for a fully socialist, internationalist manifesto rejecting all forms of class collaboration, imperialist oppression and import

controls, and spelling out instead a programme of mobilising the working class to force through the nationalisation of basic industry and the banks without compensation under workers' management.

Those 'lefts' that take even the most timid first steps along such a path must be given critical support and pressed to go further.

Those that refuse to take up such a fight effectively join up with Callaghan as enemies of the working class and saboteurs of Labour's election campaign.



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Heffer



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Lester

EEC ELECTIONS -BY ORDER

Desperate to whip up some interest in this year's elections to the EEC European Assembly, the Labour Party NEC has made it a crime for local Parties not to participate.

The Walsall North Party, which had taken the correct decision not to participate in the selection of would-be European careerists, has been instructed to invite affiliated bodies and party organisations to submit nominations.

This followed anguished protests from the Birchills/Leamore ward, the Midland area NUM and others that the Walsall abstention was depriving them of the right to engage in the selection process.

The NEC instruction—which



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Callaghan

will apply to any constituency that takes a principled stand and decides to boycott these farcical elections to a completely spurious and reactionary Assembly—marks a further step along the road to a commitment to a full-scale Labour campaign in the elections.

No decision

So far there has been no decision as to where the cash is to come from to finance such a campaign, which will be hugely expensive if they are to achieve any credibility whatsoever.

The overwhelming apathy or outright hostility of the electorate at present means that the elections are unlikely to reach the level of participation of council elections.

Since the NEC is now clearly shifting towards an all-out campaign, it will be interesting to see the reaction of 'left' MP Ian Mikardo.

Last November, in a letter to General Secretary Ron Hayward Mikardo threatened to withhold financial contributions to party funds if the NEC proceeded with rumoured plans to spend £100,000 on the EEC elections.

Participation

Will Mikardo adhere to and fight for this boycott position? Or will he join the bulk of the Tribune Group and the queue of



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Mikardo

pro-Market careerists in the swing to full participation in the elections?

No one who recalls Mikardo's nationalist 'import controls' policy and countless previous ignominious capitulations to the Callaghan-Healey leadership will expect to find in him a new ally in the necessary fight for a boycott of the Assembly elections, the break up of the EEC, and a Socialist United States of Europe.

A PROFITABLE ROAD TO SOCIALISM?

Now that the government's 5% pay limit has been blasted asunder in the private sector the trade union leaders have been forced to find a new guise for their efforts to hold back wage claims.

During Phases 1 and 2 they openly argued for wage controls in what they called the "national interest".

During Phase 3, support for the 10% limit was the real content of their defence of the 12-month rule—designed to isolate any section on strike.

Now under Phase 4 Moss Evans and other TUC leaders argue that "profitability" of the firm must be the guide for workers' claims.

Common factor

The common factor in each case is the refusal of union leaders to fight for the independent interests of the working class. In this respect their position is no different to the Labour leaders—the only distinction is that the union leaders are more acutely aware of the pressure of their membership.

True to form the Stalinists of the British Communist Party have assisted the union leaders to cling on to such policies.

We have shown how leading Stalinist Derek Robinson—convenor at Leyland's Longbridge

plant—has acted to defend the profitability of Leyland.

But now an article by editor Tony Chater in the December 15 issue of the Communist Party daily *Morning Star* actually argues how progressive it is to take the employers' profitability into account in claims.

He proclaims that such a line helps "open the way for socialism"!

Trade unions, he says, should be doing more than just dealing with wages and hours. He goes on to say:

"In fact, in formulating wage demands during free collective bargaining, the unions already take into account a whole range of factors. They do not pluck their wage demands out of thin air.

"They consider, for example, the cost of living, profitability, productivity, and comparability with workers in similar jobs."

It is true, of course, that many union leaders do act in this way. But rather than propose a change, and a turn to considering only the independent interests of the workforce, Chater goes on:

"What I am talking about is a radical extension of this process in the context of active, critical mass support for a government opening the way to socialism."

So for Chater, also, the cost of living is no more than a "factor"—alongside "profitability".

This shows just how far along the reformist path the CP has travelled. The article shows how the Stalinists see "socialism" being brought about not in revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of an entrenched and stubborn capitalist class, but through "mass support" for a Parliamentary Labour government legislating progressively more radical reforms.

"Obviously there must be a close relationship between a Labour government and the trade union movement in the process of moving from here to socialism".

The Labour Party is of course dedicated to the achievement of reforms within the capitalist system. This is why Callaghan attacks the working class in order to boost capitalist profits.

The only way forward to socialism is through the exposure of this class collaboration and the building of a mass, revolutionary party.

Chater's article indicates once again to those who doubt it that the Communist Party stands as a counter-revolutionary obstacle to such a struggle.



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Robinson

THE BIRTH OF AMERICAN MARXISM

1978 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the emergence of the Trotskyist movement in the United States. The Socialist Workers Party which today claims to represent that tradition offers no more than a hollow mockery of the fighting spirit of that early movement. This article is the fifth in a series of seven being published by *Socialist Press* which examine the early history of the SWP, the party so central in the 1930s to the launching of the Fourth International.

By John Lister

The development of the Marxist movement in the United States has at each point been bound up with international developments.

This was equally true when in 1933 the crushing of the German working class by Hitler caused the Trotskyist movement to reassess and change its tactics in relation to the Stalinised Communist Parties in each country.

The German CP's ultra-left policy of branding the mass Social Democratic party as "social fascist" and refusing to form a united front with it for joint action against the Nazis, led to a fatal split in the ranks of the German working class in the face of a ruthless enemy.

The "social fascism" line had been dictated to every national Communist Party by the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Kremlin.

It reflected the complete inability of the ruling clique in the Soviet Union—pre-occupied as it was with preserving its own power and privileges—to analyse the class struggle or offer revolutionary leadership to the international working class.

Catastrophe

But the final symptom of bureaucratic degeneration in the ranks of the Communist International was the complete failure of any section of the Comintern to respond to the German catastrophe.

Not one section of the supposed Communist International in any way questioned the disastrous policies and leadership that had allowed the most powerful CP outside the Soviet Union and the best organised proletariat in Europe to fall victim to fascism without so much as a finger lifted in resistance by the CP leaders.

Trotsky pronounced first the German CP and then the entire "Communist" International as "dead for the purposes of revolution".

In place of the five year struggle by the Left Opposition to reform the Comintern, Trotsky declared it was now necessary to build new Communist Parties, and a new International to take forward the principles and the revolutionary heritage which had brought about

the October 1917 Revolution in Russia.

The International Left Opposition changed its name to the International Communist League and changed its orientation from propaganda work aimed exclusively at the Communist Parties to the building of independent revolutionary parties in every country.

In the United States this turn coincided with an abrupt turn in the class struggle itself—the end of a period of relative quiescence and demoralisation within

such a "liberal" administration immediately won over the AFL trade union bureaucracy which declared its support to Roosevelt's National Industrial Recovery Act (NRA).

"Right to organise"

Section 7(a) of the NRA supposedly granted workers the "right" to organise in unions. But this was little more than a sprat to catch a mackerel.

In exchange for the feeble "protection" offered

Conference of Progressive Labor Action (CPLA), headed by A.J. Muste.

The CPLA later became the American Workers Party. And it was able to offer a principled and resolute lead to an even more decisive battle a year later, when in April 1934 the historic Toledo Auto-Lite strike began.

The Toledo strikers brushed aside the wrangling and stalling of Roosevelt's arbitration bodies, and walked out on April 13, 1934.



Pickets confront police in Minneapolis Teamsters strike

the working class and the start of a period that was to bring monumental unionisation struggles and the building of the great industrial unions.

The year before 1933 brought the supposed "New Deal" offered by Roosevelt's capitalist administration in which inflationary public spending programmes were launched to create low-paid work for less than a quarter of the 12 million unemployed.

"Arbitration"

The programmes were designed specifically to head off riots, demonstrations and unrest among the unemployed.

For the remaining 9-10 million jobless workers there was nothing other than state and local relief agencies, which in many cases were unable even to provide dole.

But the appearance of

by Section 7(a) union officials pledged themselves to stand by the extensive system of "arbitration" and state interference in union organisation.

But the rank and file membership were not so easily bought off. In six months in 1933, 1695 strikes took place, involving over one million workers.

In the forefront of these struggles were workers in the car industry, as employers, driven on by the capitalist crisis, attempted to impose savage wage cuts.

In Detroit and in California a rash of strikes broke out. The Detroit strikers at first turned for leadership towards the Communist Party, whose ultra-left attempts to form a "red" trade union grouping in the largely unorganised car industry had little to offer.

Disillusioned by the defeat suffered under such leaders, the best layers from this pioneering strike wave turned towards the new

Conference of Progressive Labor Action (CPLA), headed by A.J. Muste.

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The Toledo strikers brushed aside the wrangling and stalling of Roosevelt's arbitration bodies, and walked out on April 13, 1934.

"It was not until the arrival of 900 National Guardsmen 15 hours later that the scabs were finally released, looking a "sorry sight" . . .

"Then followed one of the most amazing battles in US labor history. With bare fists and rocks the workers fought a six day pitched battle with the National Guard.

"They fought from rooftops, from behind billboards and came through alleys to flank the guardsmen.

"On May 24, the guardsmen fired point blank into the Auto-Lite strikers' ranks, killing 2 and wounding 25. But 6,000 workers returned at dusk to renew the battle.

"On Friday May 31, the battered troops were ordered to speedily withdraw . . . As the dust began to settle 98 out of 99 AFL locals in Toledo voted for a general strike the next day . . .

"By June 4, the company capitulated, and signed a six-month contract including a 5% wage increase, naming Local 18384 as the exclusive bargaining agent." (p.10).

This major victory was to signal a series of new inroads by unions into the auto industry.

Mass work

But while the American Workers Party was playing a key role in these struggles, the Trotskyists of the Communist League of America were also active.

The turn to mass work in the building of an independent party meant the utilisation of any and every opening for revolutionary intervention into workers' mass struggles.

Thus in early 1934 moves in New York towards hotel unionisation provided an arena of work which was developed by a member established in the industry with the unlikely aid of an intellectual whose principal asset was that he could speak fluent French and thus conduct political discussion with the French chefs!

General secretary

This intellectual, B.J. Field, became general secretary of the union. All of a sudden he, and the CLA itself, found themselves at

the head of a mass movement of catering workers fighting for trade union organisation.

All-out strike

An all-out strike began in New York in January 1934 and James P. Cannon was assigned full-time by the CLA to work on the struggle, backed up by a further group of CLA members.

The CLA's weekly paper, *The Militant*, was brought out three times a week to capitalise to the maximum on the events of the strike—previously only the crucial German events of 1933 had merited such treatment.

Cannon, Field and others addressed rallies and demonstrations, one, in Madison Square drawing an audience of some 10,000.

But though devoting the entire resources of the CLA to furthering the strike, the US Trotskyists knew that the paramount question was the building of a Bolshevik-type party with firm discipline and absolute dedication to principle.



Dobbs

Field was carried away by the apparent power of his official position in the union.

He began to defy the CLA and reject its policies and discipline, despite continuous efforts to bring him back into line.

We apologise for a misprint in Part 4 of this series. On page 9 the paragraph reading:

"It seems to us that Cannon did not wish for a rapprochement (but it is not possible to say) and that Weisbord was simply prevented from entering the ranks of the Left Opposition."

should have read: "It seems to us that Cannon did not wish for a rapprochement but it is not possible to say that Weisbord was simply prevented from entering the ranks of the Left Opposition."

Nursery care: vital for women and under fives

By Mary-Ann Todd



PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

Axing the nurseries—Shirley Williams

In 1949 there were 900 day nurseries providing places for 43,000 children under five years old.

In 1975 there were only 540 nurseries, offering 26,000 places, despite the fact that the same period has seen a dramatic increase in the numbers of women who work.

Such figures give a hint at the chronic decline and acute crisis in the provision of state care for the under-fives.

They are included in a 127-page TUC working party report *The Under-Fives*, published in 1978.

The report is of considerable importance in highlighting the plight of both the under-fives, and of the millions of women who in the traditions of the bourgeois family are supposedly responsible for their upbringing.

This two-part review of the report will examine some of the facts and figures presented in it, and go on to look at some of its 64 recommendations in the light of the practical record of the TUC and Labour leaders in the fight for women's rights and for the extension of the social services.

The 20 years 1956-76 brought a massive increase in the number and proportion of women in the total British workforce, and in the trade union movement.

Women now form 41% of the workforce, and 28% of the trade union movement—with 3 million women now in TUC-affiliated unions.

Yet the glaring problem that remains is that for all the legislation on equal pay and equal opportunities, women workers remain denied equal rights as long as adequate child care resources are denied them.

There is a massive unmet demand for nursery places. The Report quotes a 1974 survey showing that 72% of parents wanted some form of day-care provision by the time their children reached the age of two, and 91% wanted facilities for four-year old children.

Recommendations

It goes on to examine what facilities are available—looking at day nurseries, child-minders, nursery schools, workplace nurseries, mothers and toddlers clubs, playgroups and nursery centres.

Its terms of reference were to conduct such an investigation and recommend means of extending provision for the under-fives.

But in drawing up its recommendations, the working party concentrated

on what *should be*, rather than what was likely to be achieved under the existing Labour leadership:

"We are well aware that a service such as we shall be recommending, and indeed any worthwhile improvement in existent provision will require the allocation of greatly increased resources for this state service."

Prudently, the working party therefore steers well clear of any practical proposals as to how their schemes should be fought for by the working class.

Sharp insight

Despite this, the body of the Report offers a sharp insight into the plight of particularly working mothers under the present lack of nursery facilities. 66% of women have children aged between 0-15 years.

Without child care provision the mother is forced to remain in the role of wife/mother, denied financial independence, social status, and contact with the organisations of the working class.

In many cases the wife's wage is far from a luxurious "extra", but essential to the family budget in a time of falling living standards.

Stop-gap

This drives many women to seek individual, stop-gap solutions to the problem of child care which conceal the real problem and often impede the social and educational development of

the child.

Many women find themselves forced to take on work in the home—child-minding being the largest single category.

Such work is non-unionised, uninsured, leaving the individual deprived of sickness and holiday pay, and faced with the costs of using her own home as a business premises. The (largely female) home-working labour force is known to exceed 250,000.

Where nursery provisions are available they often entail long, tiring journeys to take the child to and retrieve him/her from the nursery or school.

Other forms of child-care often leave the woman worker vulnerable to forced absenteeism if the child is sick.

Nursery provision is often available only through degrading means—tests, forcing each mother to prove how desperate are her circumstances.

Restricted

Women without their own means of transport are even then often restricted in their hours and place of work to conform to the availability of child care.

This leaves women concentrated in low-paid industries and occupations—often paying out much of their earnings in travel and child-minding expenses. And women are for similar reasons often unable to study or train for better jobs.

Figures show 54% of

employed married women with children 0-4 were in semi-skilled or manual jobs, compared to only 21% of childless unmarried women aged 16-24.

Surveys show that many more women would go out to work if child care facilities were available, and that as a result of present patterns of child care women are increasingly forced to slot in to 3 types of shifts—doubleday shift; night shift; and Sunday work.

5-fold increase

There has been a five-fold increase in the number of women working these shifts in the last 15 years.

The final straw is that, since those working in child care are nearly all women, this area of work is itself chronically low-paid, ill-organised, and carried out in extremely poor conditions.

Yet the years between birth and five years are the most formative in a child's life. A good foundation in nursery education is vital in developing their powers of reasoning, communication and their understanding of quality and form.

Current levels of child care make a firm distinction between the physical welfare and the education of the child.

Nurseries cater largely for the former, and nursery schools largely for the latter.

As for the private sector, there is no state control whatever over the standard of facilities or staff

provided.

As a result the situation at present is both anarchic and desperate.

Department of Health guidance directs local authorities to give priority to those with a special need—which may include single parent families, the mentally or physically handicapped; those from impoverished home environment, or with parents sick or handicapped.

Yet even on this basis there are currently 12,600 "priority" children on local authority waiting lists!

The last ten years has seen a positive decline in the service, despite the 1967 recommendations of the Plowden Report, which advocated a policy of universal provision of nursery service as a major educational and social priority.

In 1972 a Tory government White Paper *Education, a Framework for Expansion* proposed to provide part-time nursery provision for 75% of four year-olds and 35% of 3 year olds by the early 1980s, and £20 million was allocated to local authorities for nursery buildings in the year 1974-75.

But this plan—the first expansion in 25 years—was immediately superseded by the Tory cuts in 1973.

Since then the Labour government has continued to cut back on nursery building, from £39 million in 1975-76 to a mere £5 million per year from 1979-81—a cut of 87%!

So huge are the cuts that many local authorities are

now not even taking up building grants to finance new nurseries, since they then face the expenses of staffing and maintaining the nursery schools and classes.

Not being opened

In some areas including Birmingham and Gloucestershire, newly built nursery facilities are not even being opened because councils will not pay the wages of the staff.

But the failure to expand the service is combined with cuts in existing nursery provision.

Since it is not mandatory nursery education is the first to suffer cuts at local level.

Nursery places in a class are reduced, two classes are squeezed into one, or whole classes and schools axed—the most well-known example being the closure of the South Oxford Nursery at a loss of 30 full-time nursery places.

This closure—with the tacit collaboration of full time NUPE and other union bureaucrats—was taking place while this TUC Report was being drawn up.

And it took place in the midst of hypocritical Labour government circulars urging the protection or expansion of nursery facilities which their own spending cuts and cash limits are forcing to close.

The real fight to defend and extend nursery provision, as the second part of this article will show, is inseparable from the fight for a principled leadership in the trade union and labour movement.



Stalinist NUPE bureaucrat Anderson addressing a rally during the South Oxford Nursery occupation

DO YOU REALLY WANT TAILORED GENES?

By Trevor Sellars

So what exactly is genetic engineering? About five years ago biologists developed techniques to make in the test tube novel combinations of genes from different sources.

(A gene is a segment of a molecule called DNA which determines the structure of a particular element of the cell or which governs some cellular process).

These new combinations of genes could be reintroduced into a living bacterial cell and perpetuated indefinitely as the cell divided.

The process of genetic recombination occurs naturally in sexual reproduction when genes from each parent are linked to form a different permutation in the offspring.

However, taking recombination away from the cell and putting it in the test tube allows for the first time the breaking down of the barriers which prevent the joining of genes between different species.

'Clone'

In practice this means that any gene from any source, whether plant or animal, including man—may be isolated and incorporated into a bacterium which may then reproduce to give enormous numbers of identical cells each containing the foreign gene—or so-called 'clone'.

The foreign gene may give the bacterium new and perhaps useful properties, for instance, the power to synthesise a drug or a vaccine.

What are the benefits?

The scientific advantages of genetic manipulation have already given a new and powerful thrust to advancing the study of the living cell at its most basic level.

Genes form the vehicle by which all the information required for the building and functioning of the organism is passed on from cell to cell and from generation to generation.

Genes also control the working of the cell in its second by second and hour by hour existence.

The microscope enabled scientists to explain the structure and working of whole tissues and bodies by allowing the study of their isolated parts—the cells.

Benefit

Now the ability to insert a gene in a bacterium and grow it as a clone allows biologists to examine in fine detail the structure and functioning of a single gene separate from its millions of neighbours.

Medicine will benefit by being given new techniques to first detect, later understand and ultimately correct inherited diseases caused by malformed genes—such as cystic fibrosis, sickle cell anaemia and haemophilia.

In addition genetic engineering holds up the promise of a cheaper and purer source of drugs which have been up to now difficult, expensive and time-consuming to produce.

These include hormones such as insulin which is used to treat diabetics, and vaccines used to inoculate against diseases.

More interestingly the new techniques will allow the manufacture of a whole new range of therapeutic biological products which have to date proved impossible to make including perhaps an antibiotic active against virus infections.

But the diversity of new commodities need not stop at pharmaceutical preparations.

Strains of bacteria will be tailor-made to manufacture entirely novel and potent insecticides, plant hormones, selec-

tive weedkillers, fungicides to prevent crop diseases and fertilisers.

Biological synthesis of chemical commodities will rely on cheap raw materials (perhaps largely waste such as sewage) and be qualitatively more efficient than present methods in terms of energy.

Risky

Ultimately evolving bacteria to manufacture commodities could be directed towards removing reliance on oil by both economising on energy utilisation and forming an alternative source of organic raw material for our petrochemical based society.

It is possible that the 1970s is witnessing the birth of a new biological industry which potentially could compare with and succeed the development of engineering and chemical manufacturing.

What are the risks and who takes them?

Introducing foreign genes into a bacterium and thus changing its characteristics obviously also opens the possibility of creating new disease-causing strains.

It has been argued that such germs may be particularly virulent as humans or animal or plant species which become infected may not have been exposed to them previously.



Genetic engineering can change modern medicine

Even if such a pandemic plague amongst healthy people protected by modern medicine is unlikely, certain categories may be at risk from new pathogens.

These include the old, the very young, patients on antibiotic or drug treatments which reduce their resistance to infection and populations already debilitated by disease or malnutrition especially in underdeveloped countries.

For this reason it may be that genetic manipulation raises man's ability to damage himself and his world to a new level.

It is possible that a nuclear catastrophe is limited in its effects compared to the potential destruction wrought by a genetically engineered disease to which no one has any resistance.

It must also be said that for each of these theoretical hazards arising from genetic manipulation, counter arguments have been given against them.

Certainly no damage from recombinant work has yet been shown—though little such work

has yet got underway.

The recombination process between foreign and bacterial genes may even occur naturally.

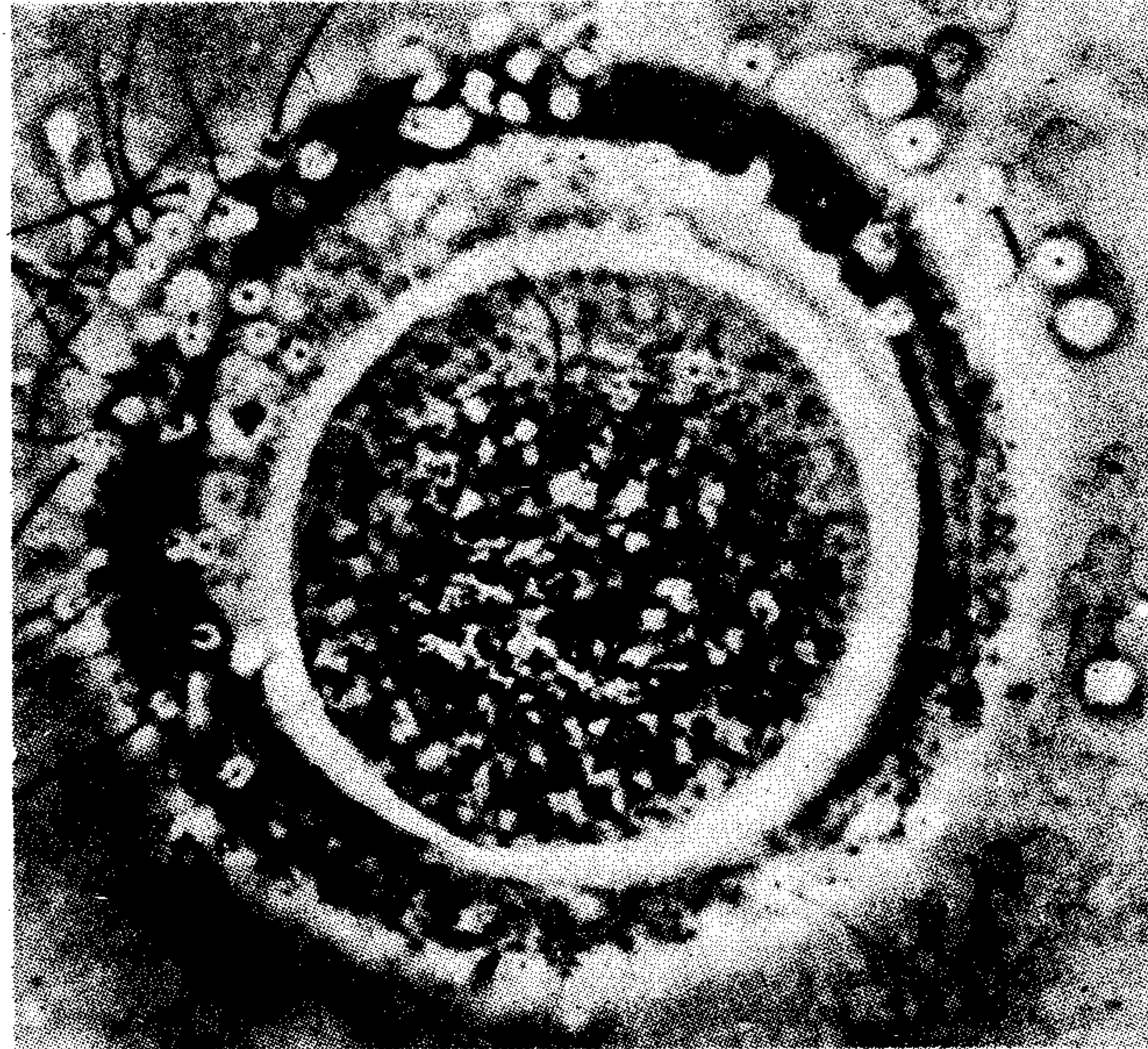
The chances of creating a disease-causing organism are small. And, say the advocates of genetic experimentation, the physical and biological barriers insisted upon by the authorities preventing the escape of recombinant bacteria from the laboratory are sufficient—though the recent Birmingham smallpox disaster should prompt some doubts on that score.

All these statements may be valid and yet it is probably now, at the point of transition from the laboratory bench to the factory floor, that the greatest vigilance must be kept.

This is because it is the experience of history since the industrial revolution that it is not scientific advance itself, but its application in the service of capital that creates new dangers for the individual, for society, and most particularly for the working class.

Weapons

Thus in the most obvious and extreme examples, the engineering and chemical industries of the nineteenth century characterised the First World War as a clash of machines, synthetic explosives and poison gas and raised the slaughter to an unprecedented level.



Fertilisation of an ovum

pattern of capitalist history to be broken at this point?

This is not a matter that can be left for the future.

Already a Californian concern called Genetech has been set up and plans to manufacture human insulin.

Fat profits

Now the pharmaceutical and chemical giants (who brought you Seveso, thalidomide and the La Roche profits scandal) are lumbering into starting positions for the race to be first into large scale production using recombinant bacteria.

Powerful lobbying will be used to ensure that the government safety regulations in the United States and Britain do not provide a barrier to fat profits.

Western governments are, already, under the pressure of loss of profits and employment prospects, being encouraged to ease restrictions.

Failure to do this will ensure that the multinationals export the whole genetic engineering operation, risk and all, from the West to more amenable (and more susceptible) third world countries.

However, most people's contact with the products of genetic engineering will not (hopefully) be due to the manufacturing process or to the military use of recombinants but with the end products them-

selves.

Past experience shows that the choice of products to be made will not be governed by the real health needs of the masses of the world but by the lucrative treatment-oriented markets particularly of the West.

Thus the first recombinant mass produced agent will certainly be human insulin and the first vaccine could well be cholera vaccine.

The media will applaud—but watch out.

ICI, Hoffman La Roche and Du Pont will have no interest in devoting resources to research into the dietary causes and the prevention of diabetes or in helping to alleviate the poor social conditions in which cholera flourishes.

Palliatives

Recombinant techniques in the hands of capitalist industry will be used solely to make palliatives rather than preventives and perpetuate the whole "illness industry" philosophy of Western medicine.

Control over the use of genetic engineering techniques in the private sector is minimal.

In the United States, the National Institutes of Health regulate only the recombinant research which they themselves fund.

Edward Kennedy's bill to

control all genetic manipulation work failed to pass through Congress, so that industry has been given a free hand and only complies with the NIH guidelines on a voluntary basis.

In Britain, the directives of the government-appointed Genetic Manipulation Advisory Group (GMAG) have the force of law.

All recombinant experiments must be notified to GMAG which also exercises control through a system of local safety committees.

The government, employers, trade unions and 'the public' have representatives on GMAG.

But the group operates under the umbrella of the Official Secrets Act and under a code insisted upon by the employers to protect commercial secrecy.

Furthermore although industrial research is regulated commercial production using recombinant techniques is outside the area of GMAG control.

Nationalisation

Trade unionists, especially in the chemical and pharmaceutical sector must bring the plans of these industries out into the open and put forward an alternative strategy for recombinant manufacture based on production of commodities for need rather than profit and on the basis of the safest procedures with constant monitoring of the health of employees.

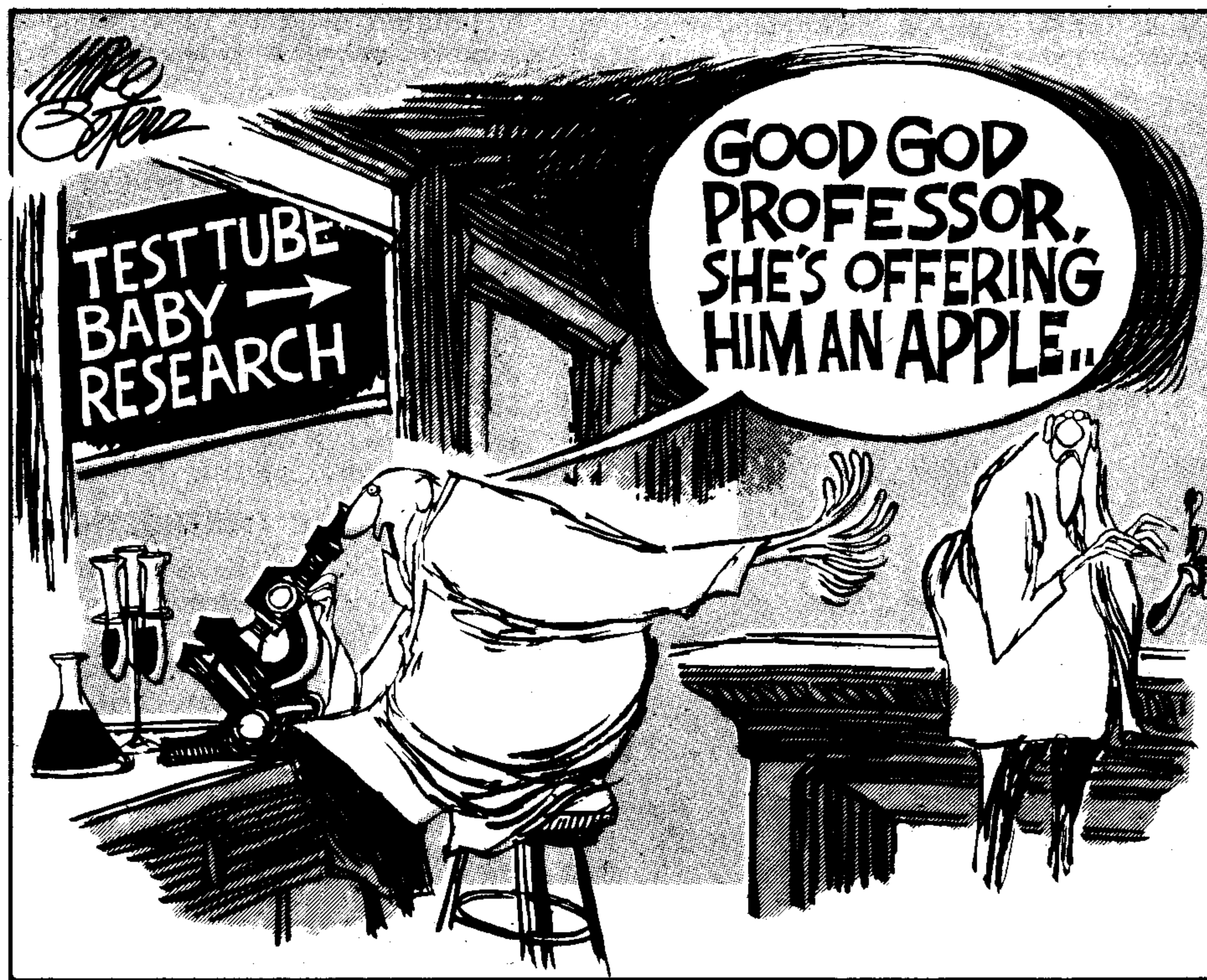
Workers must also be prepared to cooperate internationally and ensure that hazards are not exported to underdeveloped countries.

These policies are unachievable so long as the industry remains in private hands.

They lead on to the need for the nationalisation without compensation, under workers management of the drug and chemical industries as part of the formation of a planned national health service with a new approach to health care.

What is certain is that these new and powerful genetic engineering techniques cannot be developed by modern capitalism in anything other than a distorted and destructive manner.

Only a socialist society can make the modified bacterium work to the benefit of mankind.



—Mike Peters © 1978 Dayton Daily News



1979: TIME YOU RESOLVED TO JOIN US!

Before you throw away last year's diary, just stop and look back at the record of the Workers Socialist League over the past twelve months.

Every day of every week our members have been in the vanguard of the struggles against capitalism and its agents in Britain.

The political leadership and practical support given by the WSL have been crucial to workers fighting in a massive range of struggles.

*We have played a leading role in the campaign to defend the 'Cowley 9' from victimisation by the TGWU bureaucracy.

*Our intervention in British Leyland has helped bring the break-up of worker participation, and gave a national lead in the fight against corporate bargaining, the 5% limit, and massive speed-up and sackings.

*Our movement has been at the forefront of support for unionisation struggles at Grunwick, Garners and elsewhere.

*WSL policies have strengthened the fight against the cuts—in the South Oxford

Nursery occupation, in the London hospitals and in other areas.

*As growing numbers of youth have moved into politics, the WSL has supported the building of the Socialist Youth League and its monthly paper *Red Youth*.

*1978 has seen fresh theoretical work on Ireland—with the publication of a major series and regular coverage in our press along with *Irish Perspectives*.

*Other issues on which we have fought for international solidarity include struggles in Iran, Eritrea, the Middle East and Africa as well as repression in Latin America.

*We have published 'Communists' Against Revolution, a major theoretical book, and extensive coverage of so-called 'Eurocommunism', in a full year of our weekly paper.

No other movement can boast such a proud and principled record.

All these achievements have not come about by magic or by accident.

Strength

To make this impact, our comrades have been guided constantly by the strength of

our programme and by the confidence that only the policies we put forward can answer the objective needs of the working class.

It is those strengths and the discipline of a revolutionary organisation that will carry our work forward to new levels and into new areas in 1979.

The WSL is not a large organisation, yet we have been able to achieve all this already with our severely limited resources.

More support

But to extend that work even further, nationally and internationally, we need more support and more members.

So we're asking our regular readers to make a real New Year's resolution this year, and think hard why they have not joined us before?

What reason can you have for holding back?

If you're seriously prepared to fight against imperialism to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, then there's only one place where you belong—inside the WSL, working with us to reconstruct the Fourth International.



NUJ pickets sit down to block Oxford Mail and Times vans

DANGER OF NUJ SELL-OUT

As we go to press, NUJ members on strike are due to gather in London faced with the real threat that their leadership is beginning to crumble.

A meeting of FoCs has been called by the union leadership after a week of wavering statements about the future of the strike.

While chapels up and down the country expressed their willingness to fight on over wages, the Provincial Journalists Industrial Council has been offering the employers a reduction of all pickets to token level, if they would agree to talk.

This climb-down—which would be seen by members and management alike as a prelude to calling off the strike—was taken without any consultation with the membership.

Bosses rejected

It was only not put into effect because the Newspaper Society (the employers' organisation) rejected it.

The NUJ leadership opposed the strike in the first place, then wildly declared that it would be "short and sharp".

They have been looking ever since for a concession from management to allow them to end it.

In the month that the journalists have been out, not a single chapel has gone back to work—except where individual improved offers have been made.

But the latest circular from Kenneth Ashton, NUJ General Secretary, to the employers, did not even mention the £20 claim

Smaller settlements

Instead it pointed to much smaller settlements made at the BBC and in Scotland and Ireland.

Some chapels were preparing for the meeting by proposing

strong opposition to this weak line.

The employers have been badly shaken by the strike. Sales and advertising have been hit and in some cases complete issues have been lost.

At the same time arrests have been made on many picket lines and the determination of NUJ members to win their rise has increased.

At the very point where strong and vigorous leadership was required, the NUJ leadership was once again found wanting.

A call for a campaign to reverse the political ruling against blacking by the Court of Appeal, has been launched by the Oxford Mail and Times

chapel.

The chapel has called on the NUJ, the TUC and the Labour Party to fight to reverse the decision—which could outlaw all blacking.

The strike must be strengthened.

Renewed appeals for supporting action from the NGA and SOGAT should be launched and the limited support already received built on.

The full claim itself is no long term answer for the NUJ membership.

But they must ensure that the leadership is not allowed to sabotage the first all out strike of provincial journalists in the history of the union.

BBC busts 5%

In a miraculous eleventh-hour escape which called to mind the Tory government's climbdown over the jailed Pentonville dockers in 1972, the threatened Christmas blackout of BBC television was averted by a rapid manoeuvre.

A pay-norm busting 17½% award was concocted by the little-known, government-run Central Arbitra-

tion Committee, and the green light was given for the screening of the *Sound of Music*.

The award supposedly comprised a 4% pay rise to cover "anomalies" coupled to an extra 12½% to improve BBC staff's comparability with their opposite numbers in ITV.

But the fact is that the 5% limit has now been breached in the public sector as the result of determined industrial action.



MORE DETAILS

Please send me more information about the Workers Socialist League.

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How to fight the Cuts



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Renewed violence from Garners scabs

FIGHT THESE SACKINGS OF NUPE MILITANTS

The premeditated violence dished out to pickets by Margolis's scabs over the Christmas holidays signals a new and important development in the Garners struggle for union recognition.

On Christmas Day, pickets at the Haymarket Branch of Garners, had to run a gauntlet of abuse and intimidation from fourteen scab managers and hired thugs.

When the police arrived, this scab force dispersed—some going to the Oxford Street branch where striker Choudri was beaten so severely that he had to be taken to hospital.

It has been clear throughout the strike that Margolis and his henchmen have been encouraging individual scabs to provoke and intimidate strikers.

The attacks over Christmas, were, however, a carefully planned attempt by the company to physically smash the picket line.

This violence is the latest tactic in an offensive waged by Margolis since the beginning of December, when on the basis of a fraudulent ballot of scabs which went against the union, he declared that as far as he was concerned the strike was now over.

Witch-hunting

As the desperation of the organised thuggery of his scabs shows, he cannot merely wish away the strike like that.

As well as this descent into the gangster violence of London's West End he has also engineered a carefully timed series of witch-hunting articles in the Daily Telegraph and the Daily Express.

These have directed their fire against the decision by the government eight months ago not to issue new work permits for those applying for work at Garners.

They are an attempt to build a campaign against the solidarity blacking action by the CPSA and SCPS at government Job Centres, who for nine months have been refusing to handle job advertisements for Garners.

This connects with the campaign directed against the legal status of secondary blacking. The involvement of the notorious John Gorst arouses more than a suspicion that NAFF and the right wing of the Tory Party are now heavily involved in this struggle.

They have chosen this moment to launch such an attack not only to meet Margolis's desperate requirements for new scab staff; but to sharpen the pressure on the TGWU leadership to ditch this strike during the holiday period

when the independent strength of the strikers is at its most vulnerable.

It is now obvious that on this last point Margolis has failed in his offensive.

The strikers and supporters in the WSL have courageously manned the picket lines throughout the holiday period withstanding the violent assaults by the scabs.

The sight of Cyril Margolis standing outside the Haymarket branch on Christmas Day doing the Nazi salute to strikers was testimony to his frustration at failing to smash the picket line.

The strikers are more determined than ever to win this strike. They know that the press campaign around an issue which (unlike the postal blacking at Grunwicks) is not the main axis of the strike has simply helped to transform the struggle into a national issue.

The violence on the picket lines has made the strike committee's campaign against Regional Secretary Staden's agreement with the police limits on picketing more powerful and embarrassing for the bureaucracy than ever.

Staden is now in a position where he has to acknowledge scab brutality and state that the strike committee is running the strike with the full backing of the union.

This makes it increasingly difficult for him to resist strike committee demands for the end of all agreements with the police and the building of mass pickets on Garners.

Equally compromised, the Communist Party were forced, in a face-saving move, to send General Secretary MacLennan and National Organiser Dave Cook on to the picket line on Christmas Day.

For these reasons, no matter how much Staden would like to end the strike the pressure from the strike committee and the national focus this strike has now become for the working class is greater than Margolis's vain campaign in the press.

From January 2 the strike committee intends to intensify the fight for Regional backing for the Day of Action on 27 January, and for the calling of a national TGWU delegate conference to organise support for their policies.

In the meantime plans to picket Bow Street court on 10 January at 10 a.m. in defence of Brent Trades Council President Tom Durkin must be the basis for demanding that Durkin himself fight for support for Garners on the London District Committee of the Communist Party—of which he is a member.



Police arrest pickets during the day of mass picketing in December

PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL

The sacking of the branch leadership at the West London Hospital three weeks ago has now been turned into an unparalleled attack on hospital trade unionists in the Hammersmith and Hounslow district of London.

Last week, Bill Tizzard, who has been a NUPE shop steward at the Hammersmith Hospital for almost four years was sacked on the spot on a completely trumped up charge.

During a recent dispute over manning levels at the hospital, he is alleged to have assaulted a member of management.

Suspended

Despite the fact that seven witnesses have declared the charge to be completely untrue, he and two others were suspended.

This was followed last week with Tizzard's instant dismissal, served without notice or advance payment, going against all established procedure.

Also, at the West London Hospital itself, Tom Nichol, a member of NUPE who was working a temporary contract at the hospital for only three weeks had his contract terminated following the strike for the reinstatement of the dismissed branch leadership, Alan Pinfold and Stan Hunt.

The fact that Nichol played an active part in organising the picketing during the dispute is the obvious reason behind the sacking.

As a result of these moves by the Area Health Authority, almost the entire union leadership in the hospitals have been dismissed in the space of a few days, in union branches which have taken years of work to build up.

There must be immediate action for the reinstatement of these trade unionists. Management have timed the

sackings to coincide with forthcoming action on pay in the health service unions, and if they are successful they could be spread to a massive programme of victimisations throughout London hospitals, causing a major setback to trade union organisation.

A defence committee has been set up for the reinstatement of Bill Tizzard at the Hammersmith Hospital.

Strike action

This must be extended to both hospitals to include all five trade unionists who have been sacked in the past three weeks.

Immediate strike action must be planned at both hospitals, and NUPE should be forced to circulate all branches in the Division and call a conference of all London Health Service stewards to publicise the disputes and plan supporting action.

A lot of the blame for the continued sackings can be directed at the NUPE full time officials who have been handling the dispute.

Treacherous tactics

It is they who allowed the strike at the West London Hospital to be called off, when there was a desperate need for action and support to be spread throughout the London division, and it is they who have reportedly insisted on going to ACAS, Industrial Tribunals and the courts in order to avoid a direct confrontation with management.

These treacherous tactics have strengthened the hand of the Area Health Authority.

If the reinstatement of these workers is to be achieved then the remaining leadership in the hospitals must fight along these lines, organising within the branches and forcing NUPE to give full and official support to all their actions.

British Leyland ballot betrayal

The 2-1 ballot vote to accept a package of policies put forward by British Leyland management is the result of a long period of bureaucratic manoeuvre.

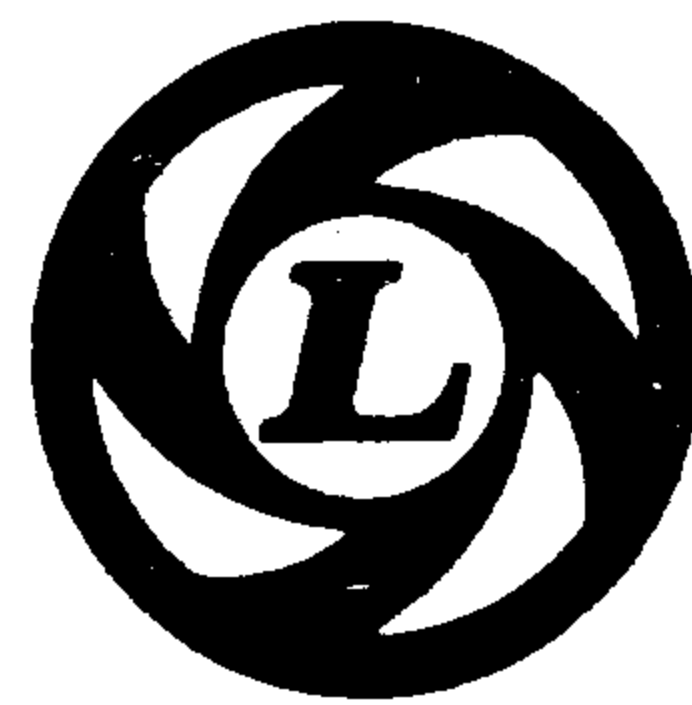
The 'yes' vote was recommended by the vast majority of convenors. In fact, with the exception of the Oxford area, Jaguars in Coventry and the Drews Lane plant, every factory

leadership was campaigning for acceptance.

Longbridge convenor and leading Communist Party member Derek Robinson was one of the first to welcome the result and urge that the rationalisation should now proceed.

The convenors efforts were backed up by a press campaign designed to suggest that the package offered a 16% increase.

Yet even then abstentions on the ballot rose to 20,000 as against only 5,000 on the first



such ballot. What does the result mean? All that the company has really

gained is acceptance of the 5% pay limit. Enforcing the rest of the package is a very different matter.

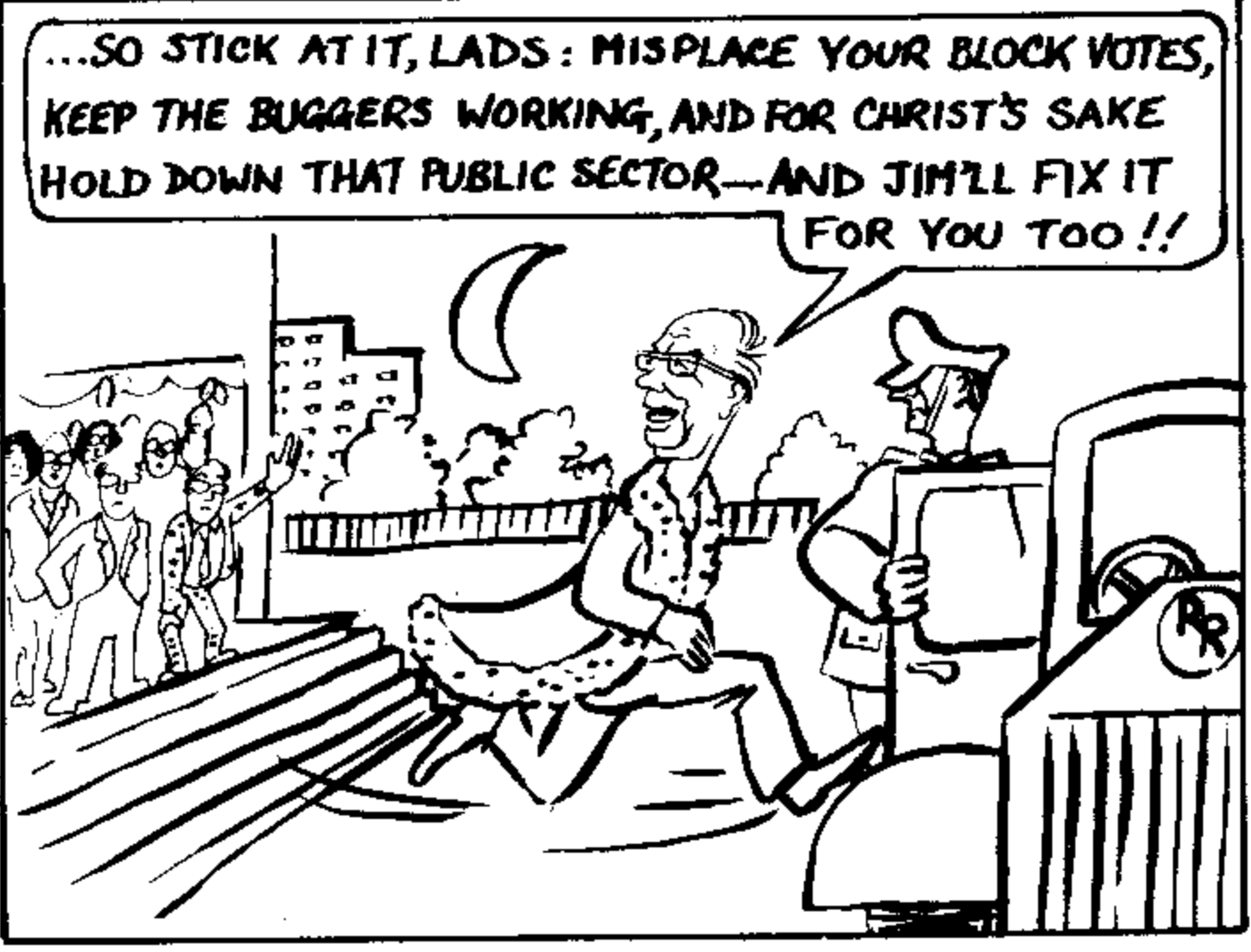
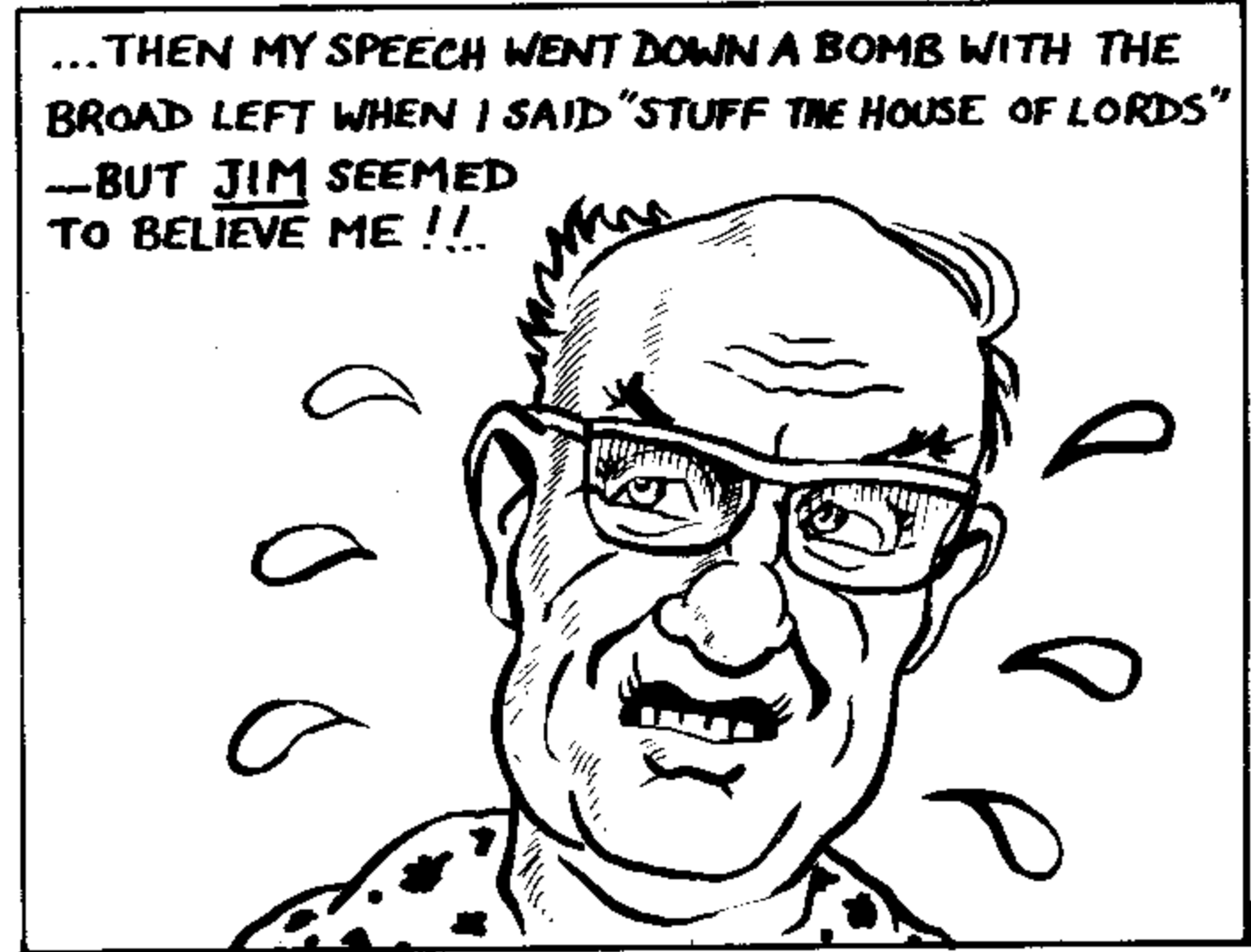
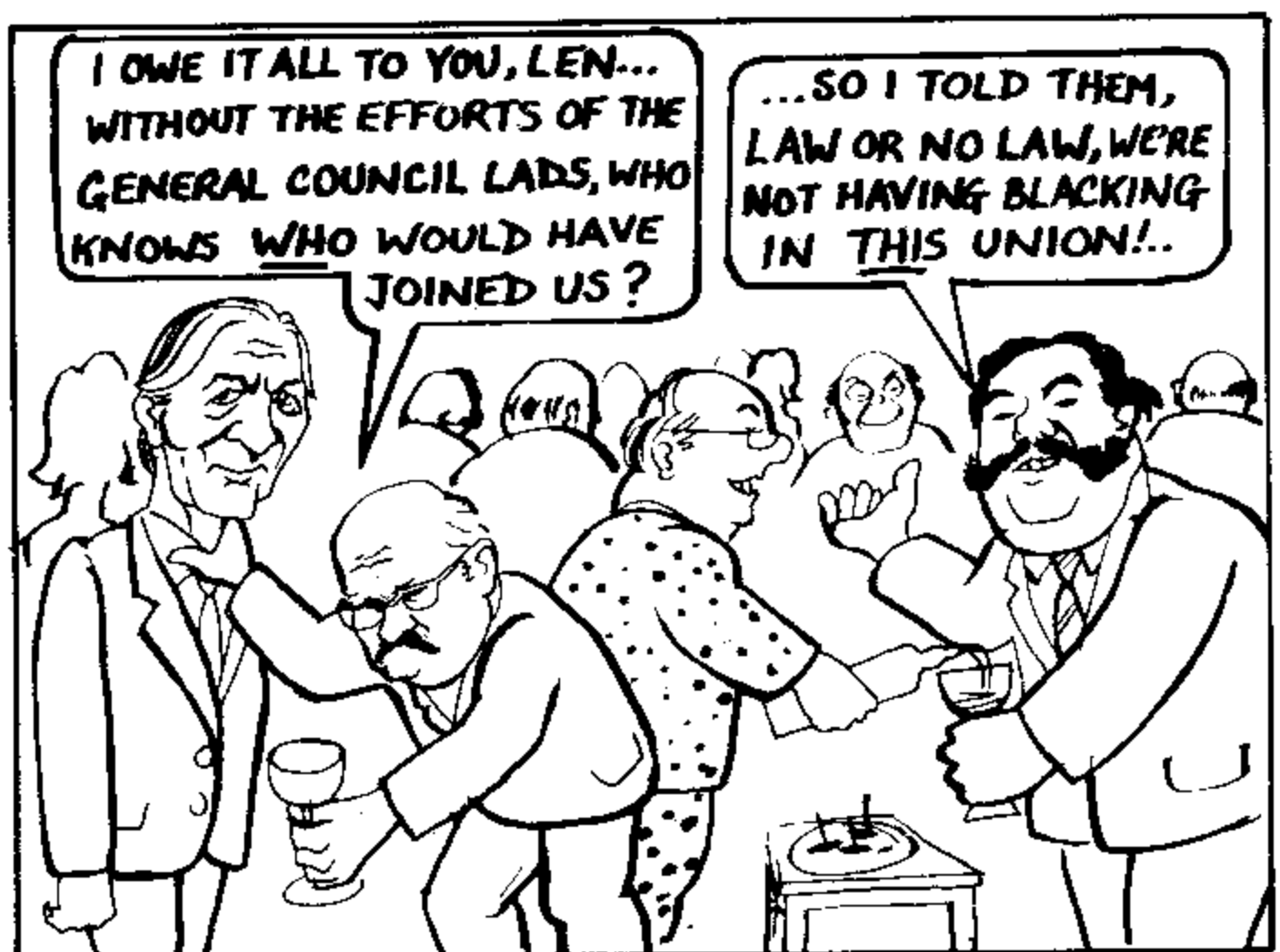
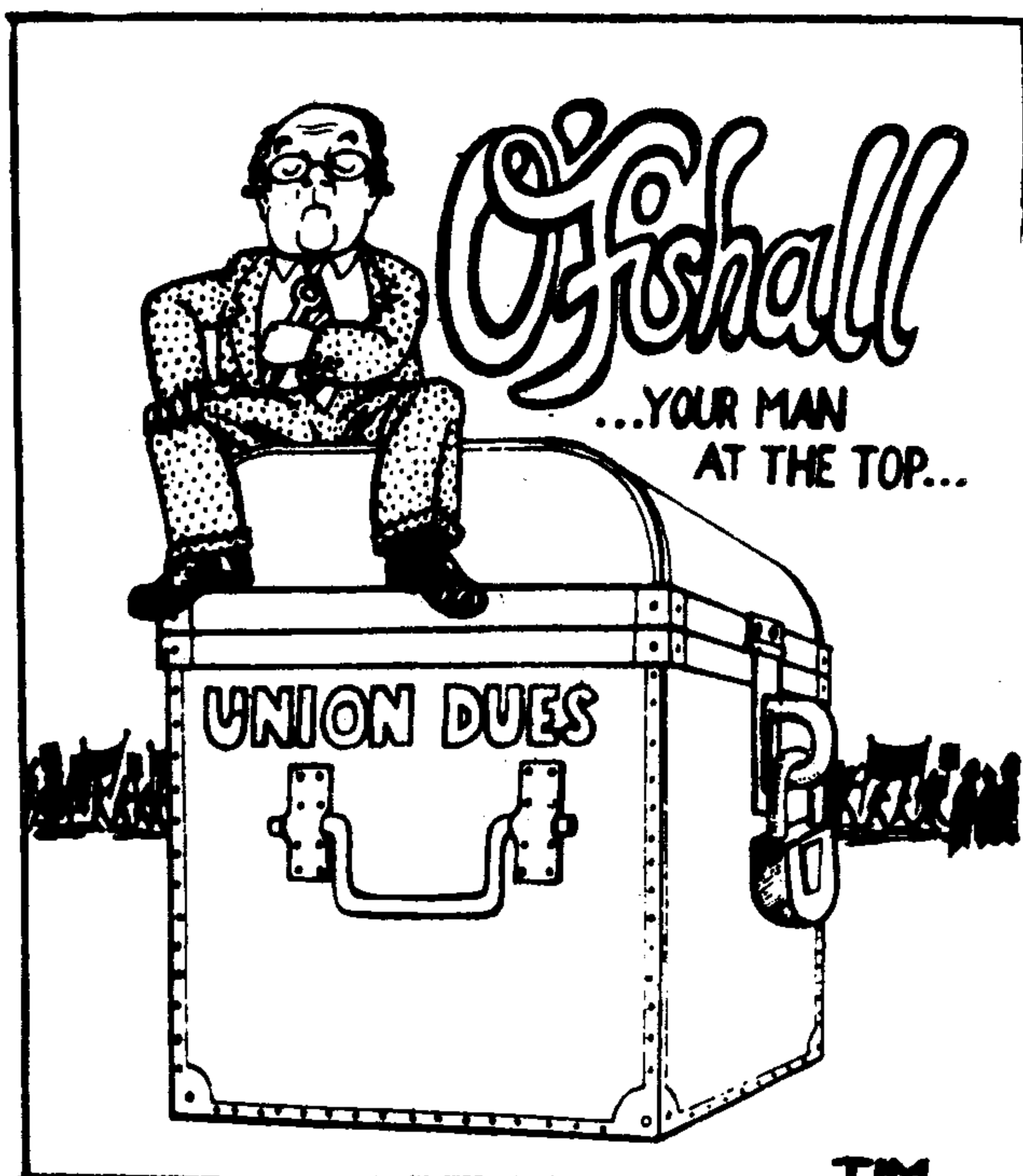
The implementation of the productivity increases is being opposed by the leadership in the Cowley Assembly Plant and by large sections in the Body Plant, while in BMC Service (also in Cowley) stewards last week voted unanimously to oppose the 10% increase in productivity.

The new grading structure

remains so contentious that it is extremely difficult to see the company ever achieving its implementation.

But Leyland workers need more than simply hostility to the company plans if jobs and conditions are to be defended. A new leadership must be built with urgency.

Leyland will feature prominently in the Carworkers Conference called by the CDLM in Birmingham on January 20.



SOCIALIST PRESS



Martial law areas encircling Turkish Kurdistan; the fascists use anti-Kurdish racialism to fuel their campaign of violence.

TURKEY: ONE STEP FROM DICTATORSHIP

Just a day after martial law was declared in Istanbul and several other Turkish cities, 300-400 left wingers were arrested for demonstrating against fascist killings and distributing leaflets condemning martial law.

They will be tried in military courts and face up to 4-5 years imprisonment.

The martial law also empowers Prime Minister Ecevit and the military clique of top generals to suppress strikes, and close down political parties, trade unions and associations.

Military courts have now superseded the civilian apparatus.

Yet while Ecevit continues to claim that martial law "will be carried out carefully without damaging basic rights", the Turkish Communist Party and the reformist leaders continue to pledge full support to his bourgeois RPP government.

Disarmed

Indeed the policy of subordinating the working class movement to political support for Ecevit has effectively disarmed the workers in the face of the biggest, most violent and best organised fascist movement in the world.

It has opened the door for the escalation of fascist attacks and uprisings and now the imposition of military rule under the guise of "saving democracy".

The Turkish parliament, with insignificant opposition from Ecevit's own party, last week overwhelmingly accepted the motion for martial law in 13 provinces.

The right wing parties—and especially the fascists—were enthusiastically in favour. They had for weeks been demanding military rule.

Now they are demanding the resignation of Ecevit's government and establishment of an "independent" government.

The move to martial law was triggered by a fascist uprising in the Eastern city of Kahraman Maras in which 120 people were massacred.

Fascist gangs

The uprising began as thousands of fascists attacked the funeral of two left wing teachers they had murdered the previous day.

In the riots that followed fascist gangs roamed suburbs populated by Kurds and Alevis (a religious minority grouping). Entire families were killed indiscriminately and houses burned.

Individuals were sadistically tortured and then hanged by the fascists. The scene was reminiscent of Franco's massacres in Spain.

11 of the 13 provinces now covered by martial law are within the so-called "devil's triangle" in which the fascists have concentrated their recent terror campaign—particularly against the Kurds who have been encouraged by the mass struggles in Iran.

In Western Turkey also the fascists have been pressing their terror campaign against the workers' movement, students and youth. Last year alone



Street violence as martial law is imposed

1,500 killings took place and thousands were wounded.

The fascists are being utilised now by a desperate Turkish bourgeoisie, faced by growing and catastrophic economic crisis.

Trade deficits amount to billions of pounds; the state does not have enough currency to buy oil supplies for industry

inflation is 50% and 7 million workers are unemployed.

The IMF has demanded that Ecevit implement even further attacks on the working class as a condition for new loans—attacks which would prompt resistance from the trade union movement.

While Ecevit bleats that such measures would bring the

'collapse of democracy', the big capitalists have mobilised the fascists in a frantic bid to intimidate, crush and destroy the organised strength of the workers' movement.

This violence has been made possible by the refusal of the Stalinist and reformist leaders to mobilise the working class in united action against fascist

atrocities against martial law, or in defence of jobs and living standards.

"Progressive"

Instead they have created the illusion that Ecevit as a "progressive" politician is acting solely in the name of "democracy".

None of the lessons of the

Jan 22: start all-out action in public sector!

Over 1½ million public sector workers in NUPE, TGWU, GMWU and COHSE are to stage a one-day national strike and lobby of Parliament on 22 January.

The strike, called by the Executive Committees of the four unions in pursuit of the £60 minimum wage claim is to be followed by selective industrial action throughout the various sections, ranging from all-out strikes to working to rule and overtime bans.

Workers must answer this

call in the strongest possible way, extending it to widespread indefinite strike action and pledging no return to work after the 22 January until the claim for a £60 minimum basic wage and 35-hour week are met in full.

The anger and determination of local authority health, sewage and water workers on the question of wages is now reaching a high point.

Virtually the only place where Phase 4 still exists is in the public sector, and these workers are determined not to

fall even further behind.

It is a fear of losing control of this militancy rather than a determination to win the full claim for the membership, that has forced Fisher, Basnett and Co. to announce the action starting on 22 January.

Fisher was in a position to bring the whole of NUPE out alongside the striking Ford workers from 1 November, the first settlement date in the public sector.

Instead he has hedged and delayed amidst clouds of left rhetoric announcing these measures at the last possible minute in an attempt to preserve his militant image for future betrayals of his membership.

Workers from all four unions must sweep aside the treacherous delays and timid, half-hearted proposals of their leadership, embarking on all-out strike action for the full claim from 22 January.

Fisher, Basnett and Spanswick cannot be trusted to win this claim, least of all with their puny schemes of 'selective action' and protest marches.

Public sector workers must take complete control of the strike from the very start to ensure a full victory.

Mass meetings should be called immediately in all work places and resolutions of all-out

strike action adopted, supported by a 10% levy of the membership in the weeks leading up to the 22 January.

Area and district joint shop stewards committees, joint works committees and individual branches must combine to form local strike committees, to coordinate the collection and distribution of finances on a local level and organise picket-

ing against army and volunteer scabs.

Steps such as these are already being taken in areas of London and throughout the country, and it is only these measures, with the union leadership being forced to give full official backing, that will ensure a rapid and complete victory for the strike.

EGA THREAT

The Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital is facing a new threat to its continuation, while a crucial step has been taken in the abandonment of the struggle to defend Bethnal Green Hospital.

At the EGA the Christmas period and the shortage of staff has been used by the Area Health Authority as an excuse to run the hospital down still further.

On 11 June 1976 this same manoeuvre was used to close down the EGA maternity unit which has never been reopened. Secretary of State David Ennals' last attempt to close the

EGA was made in July 1978. Then, the groundswell of opposition including the threat of London-wide strike action forced him to back down.

Developments at Bethnal Green have now strengthened Ennals' hand. The same failure to mobilise the labour movement has now led to an end of the occupation of the accident and emergency department and acceptance of the plan to turn the hospital into a geriatric unit.

The main objective now is to rebuild support for defensive all-out strike action, starting with a fight in the NUPE London Area Health Committee meeting on 3 January.