



# Labour 'lefts' talk of socialism but UNITY WITH CALLAGHAN CAN'T DEFEAT TORIES!

The aftermath of Labour's election defeat and the unveiling of Thatcher's plan of action in the Queen's Speech have brought a flurry of activity among Labour's left wing leaders.

Taken at face value, their speeches would appear to offer a strident call to the struggle for socialism:

\*Neil Kinnock roused the Welsh Labour Party Conference last weekend

with the demand that "the day after the next Labour government is elected" everything denationalised by the Tories must be nationalised once more, and without compensation!

\*Dennis Skinner turned his left wing rhetoric in the direction of the talks between the TUC and the Tory government:

"Consultations between trade union leaders and the government must cease now that the Tories have made it clear that they are hell-bent on shifting the balance of

power". (*Morning Star*, 16 May).

Skinner went on: "The trade union movement should gird its loins ready for battle. The TUC should now start talking to the rank and file and not to the Tory government".

### Social democrats

\*Ousted Tribune MP Tom Litterick also added his voice to the 'left' chorus. Speaking in Oxford last Saturday he castigated the record of "the social democrats who run the Labour Party" and who had attacked hard-won democratic rights during their five years in government. He nodded silently in agreement when asked if he favoured a fight to kick out the Callaghan leadership.

\*Less reserved on the question was trade union 'left' Arthur Scargill, who on a May Day platform actually called for the removal of Callaghan—only to propose he be replaced with his supple-spined ex-cabinet minister Tony Benn.

### Facade

But what is the reality behind this wafer-thin facade of cheap left wing rhetoric? Have these 'left' MPs, who refused to lift a finger to campaign for the removal of the Callaghan leadership while they were in government actually decided to fight him now?

Have the worms finally turned after five years of meekly crawling into the government lobby to endorse and sustain Callaghan's wage cuts, spending cuts, mass unemployment and brazenly imperialist foreign policy in Ireland and throughout the world?

Not at all! Benn has time and again urged that Labour's election defeat should not provoke "personal recriminations"—in other words should not be used to fight for a change of Party leadership.

Litterick explicitly excused his record of support for reactionary government policies, arguing that his constituents "would never have forgiven him" if he had voted in such a way as to bring down the Labour government.

And Kinnock, Skinner and Benn all sit on the Labour Party's National Executive, yet raised not so much as a whimper of protest as Callaghan steam-rolled through the most anti-socialist Labour manifesto for decades.

### No opposition

Nor did a single Labour 'left' put him or herself forward in opposition to Callaghan in the recent fresh elections of the leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Scargill, for all his tub-thumping and formally correct calls for the ousting of Callaghan, has mounted no campaign on the issue in the trade union movement or the Labour Party, while Yorks NUM continues to sponsor Irish torturer Roy Mason.

Of course replacement of Callaghan with Benn would highlight the fact that the Tribune 'left' have no real alternative programme to counterpose to Callaghan's unashamed policy of subordinating the interests of the working class to the drive of the employers to raise profits.

The 'lefts' offer workers



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Benn



PHOTO: Andrew Wiard, Report

Scargill



PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

Kinnock



PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

Skinner

only a nationalistic programme of import controls and government investment in capitalist industry—a far cry from Kinnock's pie-in-the-sky demand for nationalisation without compensation.

And, far from spelling out the necessity for the working class to mobilise its full, independent, strength in mass struggles to force through the nationalisation of basic industry and the banks without compensation—the only basis for a planned socialist economy—every one of the 'lefts' directs to the utopian pipe-dream of 'socialism' through piecemeal Parliamentary legislation and reform!

So weak, vague and incomplete are their political differences with Callaghan that the 'lefts' have invariably collapsed ignominiously at the very point where a firm stand against the right wing leadership could have provided a rallying point for working class resistance.

### Arrogant

Callaghan, sensing this weakness once more, has again arrogantly thrown down the gauntlet declaring that he will not remain as leader of "a divided party".

He has issued a call for 'unity'.

Unity with Callaghan means unity behind the soiled and tattered banner that opened the route for the return of the Tories. It means unity with the busting, wage cutting Concordat; unity with army repression in Ireland, and international class collaboration.

Such unity would mean prostration before the looming attacks of a vicious Tory government.

Yet last week's union conferences, and continued militancy by public sector workers, teachers, and power workers show that this is in no way the mood of the working class.

### Take up threat

The demand must be that the 'lefts' take up Callaghan's threat to resign, or stand exposed once more as no more than pompous windbags.

The task now is to construct a principled leadership in the workers' movement that will go beyond formally correct 'left' speeches and mobilise the full strength of the working class in defence of jobs, living standards and democratic rights, and to defeat and drive out this reactionary bosses' government.

We urge workers to join us in this task.



Callaghan





# Moves to tighten racist grip on Namibia

In a move which leaves the UN imperialist plan for Namibia even more weakened, the key South African agents in Namibia, the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance voted to transform the existing Constituent Assembly into a pre-independence interim authority with full legislative powers and set up an interim government.

The new National Assembly will be made up of the present 50 members of the Constituent Assembly (in which the DTA holds an enormous 82% of the seats) plus a maximum of 15 other members to be drawn from "democratic parties" not represented in the Constituent Assembly.

Clearly the DTA will seek to use this 15 seat patronage in its ongoing efforts to woo groups and individuals inside the Namibian National Front, SWAPO and the SWAPO Democrats into the South African-orchestrated assembly.

Indications are that over the last few weeks leading members of the NNF were acting as intermediaries between the South African government and the DTA and the five imperialist sponsors of the UN plan.

Although both the NNF and SWAPO Democrats have resisted the invitation to carry their political accommodation with imperialism into active and open collaboration with the new Namibian 'government' the temptation to do so must be great.

## Secret meetings

The recent comings and goings of leading NNF members between the DTA, the South African government and the five imperialist countries are merely a small part of the on-going secret meetings as opportunist collaborators zig-zag and manoeuvre. That they are forced to do much of their dealing with imperialism in secret is clear evidence of the on-going pressure of the Namibian masses against deals which betray their interests.

The steps to reconstruct the Constituent Assembly as a more powerful National Assembly were preceded by a carefully co-ordinated series of attacks on Namibian militants.

\*During March the South African army launched a series of raids on SWAPO bases in Angola—reportedly exceeding the raids of Karinga in intensity.

\*In April more than 40 SWAPO militants were detained as police swooped on SWAPO officials throughout the

country.

\*On 11 May the Advisor General declared de facto martial law over northern Namibia including Windhoek and other white populated areas.

The declaration further increased the enormous powers of the police and army.

Almost immediately afterwards, South Africa proclaimed the setting up of an interim government with legislative powers.

The Advisor General whose appointment was part of the SWAPO-agreed imperialist plan retains executive power and near-dictatorial repressive powers.

## Rhetoric

Faced with the sharpened South African attack on the struggle of the Namibian masses the SWAPO leadership has predictably produced a tirade of left rhetoric. At the same time it remains committed to the same imperialist plan under the guise of which South Africa has been able to strengthen and consolidate the powers of its agents, the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance.

South Africa has been able to exploit to the full the climate of confusion which has been created by the SWAPO leadership's manoeuvrings with imper-



South African troops in Namibia

ialism. Every time the SWAPO leadership makes a 'diplomatic move', every time a further step towards collaboration is taken, South Africa does not in turn compromise but in fact strengthens its hand—increases repression and launches further attacks on the oppressed masses and Namibian militants.

## Banker

Lord Carrington, taking time off from his numerous capitalist duties, including directorships of Rio Tinto Zinc and Barclays Bank has assured the South African government that there

will be no threat of sanctions while negotiations continue.

Obligingly the South African government has assured him that negotiations will continue.

For the oppressed masses such negotiations and the imperialist plan can have only one consequence—increased oppression and exploitation.

In acts of armed struggle, in strike action such as that at Rossing, Omaruru, Uis, Tsumeb, Consolidated Diamonds, Namibian workers and militants continue to show their resolve to struggle against exploitation and oppression. The urgent task

facing revolutionaries is the development of the organisational forms and programme which can defend workers against South African and SWAPO betrayals and provide the way forward to the socialist revolution.

\*Build the armed struggle as part of the class struggle. The first task of the armed struggle is the defence of the workers.

Cadres with military training must build defence squads inside Namibia. Develop a workers' militia as part of a programme to mobilise the of workers in defence of their irredpendent class interests.

# Tories prepare to back Muzorewa

The fake elections in Zimbabwe are beginning to produce the poisoned fruit expected of them.

Relying on the oppression and intimidation of the masses and on the political bankruptcy of the Patriotic Front (PF) bureaucracy, these elections were stage-managed to provide imperialism with an excuse to make a deal over the heads of the masses with a Muzorewa-Smith government, and to increase pressure on the guerrilla leadership to come to terms with Smith and his stooges.

Now the US Senate has voted overwhelmingly in favour of dropping economic sanctions against Zimbabwe and, with Cyrus Vance due to meet the British Tories this week to discuss their next move, it is probable that some form of recognition to the reactionary regime in Salisbury will be considered.

## Noises

The new British government is making noises which show their willingness to build on and extend the effort of their Labour predecessors to achieve a solution favourable to international capitalism. It has been announced that "discussion" with the Smith-Muzorewa set-up will be greatly increased. Lord Boyd (former Colonial Secretary) who led a group of Tory peers to observe the April elections has concluded, in the face of reality, that the elections were fair and democratic.

What is certain is that the option of recognition will be kept open by imperialism who will use it as a weapon in their attempts to force the Patriotic Front (or sections of it) to cooperate in a new "fair" settlement—i.e. one which will betray the mass struggle and attempt to stabilize bourgeois rule in Zimbabwe.

## Weak response

The Patriotic Front's first response to the shift towards a direct deal between imperialism and the 'internal government' has been predictably weak and quite in line with its entanglement with imperialist interests. In Addis Abbaba it was recently announced—yet again—that there would be close political and military cooperation between Nkomo's ZAPU and Mugabe's ZANU. While this 'unity pact' is no doubt partly in response to pressure from below for increased struggle against the Salisbury government, it has been bureaucratically achieved, without consultation with the rank and file.

The motive behind the declaration of unity is clear. After its dismal failure to fulfil its threat to disrupt the April elections, the Patriotic Front has announced this renewed commitment to develop the armed struggle in order to strengthen, hopefully, its position in the sordid secret diplomacy it makes with imperialism.

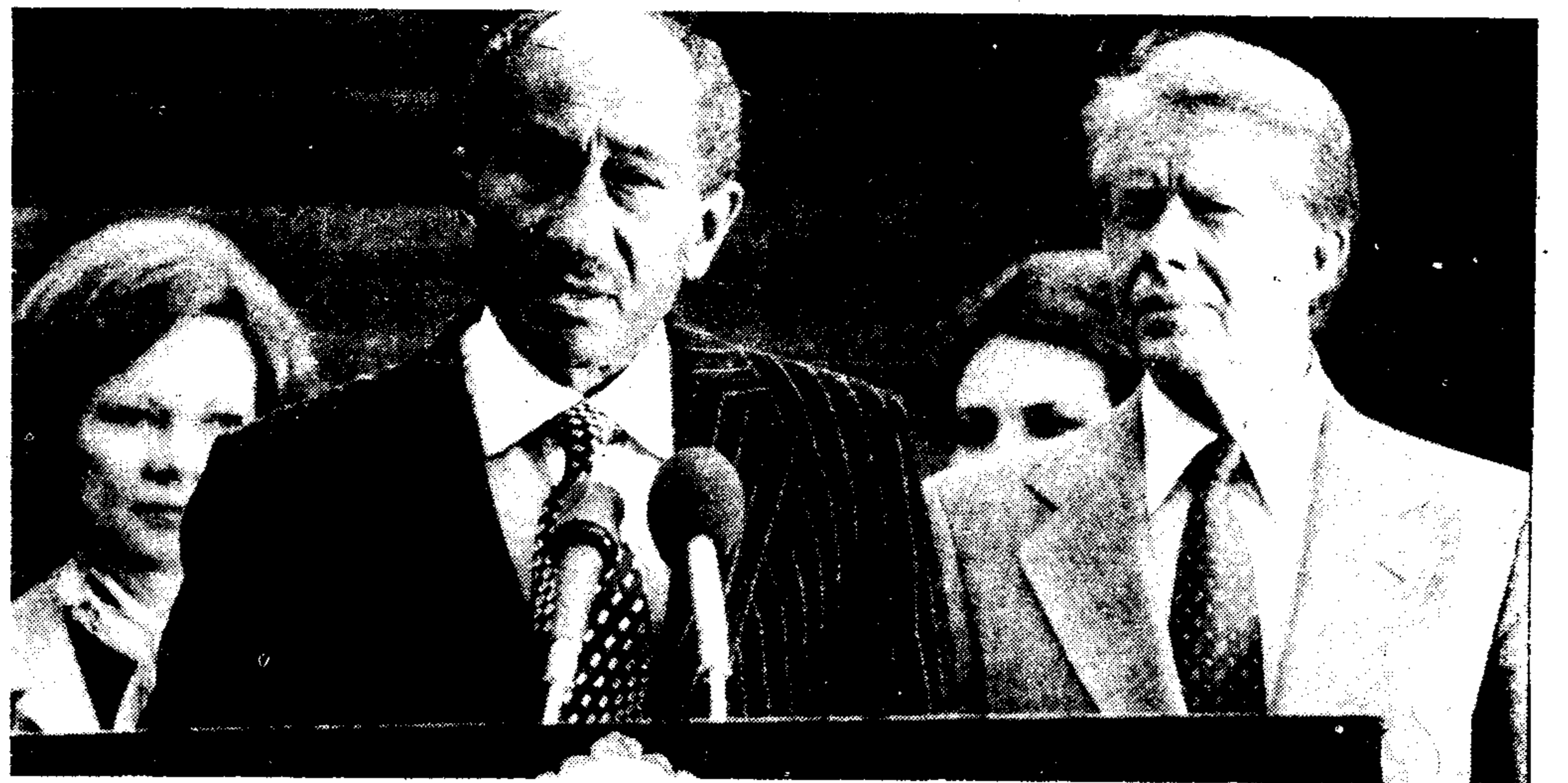
Joshua Nkomo's arrival

in the USA last week was no doubt in order to further this process of secret manoeuvring and to present his case to Carter.

So, while imperialism shifts into a higher gear in its drive for a capitalist solution in Zimbabwe through a deal with the 'internal government' and the petty bourgeois Patriotic Front leadership, Zimbabweans continue to suffer the consequences of the political betrayals of the leadership—betrayals inevitably following on the Front's commitment to the politically bankrupt strategy of pure guerrillism.

## Recognition

In the face of this probable new shift—the likelihood of imperialism recognising Muzorewa's and Smith's stooge government and abandoning the 'economic sanctions' which have proved so futile in helping to produce a stable capitalist regime in Zimbabwe—the tasks of revolutionaries remain the same: Trotskyists must fight to expose the political betrayals of the guerrillaist leadership that is itself engaged in secret diplomacy with a view to reaching an accord with imperialism; the struggle must be taken up to build a Trotskyist party to provide the programmatic demands and develop the organizational forms through which to extend the struggle of the Zimbabwean people to a victory in line with their independent class interests—the socialist revolution.



# Sadat faces ruin

The gamble of President of Egypt, Anwar Sadat, in signing a non-aggression pact with the Israeli government could soon cost workers their jobs.

In particular, workers at Westland, Rolls Royce and British Aerospace may now have to face redundancy.

As reported in past editions of *Socialist Press* Arab governments in the Middle East, quite as reactionary as those of Egypt and Israel, piqued by the prospect of large sections of the Egyptian bourgeoisie making a fast buck as a result of the new deal with the Israeli government, have been applying economic and political pressure in order to beat Sadat back into line.

All these governments must now accept that this is unlikely; but their actions have a logic of their own which is now playing itself out.

On the one hand, the poorest and most hysterical governments in the area insist on maintaining and stepping up the sanctions in order to conceal their own political weaknesses and lack of principle on the question of Palestine, and in the hope of picking up some crumbs of redirected aid and trade.

On the other, richer regimes are now becoming alarmed at the impact of their own actions,

which began as token gestures aimed to preserve the shaky stability of the area through an even shakier unanimity.

But while not many of the individual governments really want to bring Sadat down, fearing the unknown forces that might emerge to replace him, and the possibility of a movement by Egypt's exploited masses, their collective action now seriously threatens his regime.

Not very secure to start with, the Egyptian economy will soon feel the sharp effect of a withdrawal of inter-governmental aid if this isn't replaced by aid from the West.

## Aid cut off

And, so far, whilst aid from neighbouring governments is being cut off, (accelerating a process started some years ago), increased aid from the imperialist powers, on the scale demanded by the Egyptian economy has not been forthcoming.

Indeed, Western financiers are reluctant to lend money to a government which has such strained relations with its neighbours.

As a result of this there is beginning what amounts to a panic withdrawal of money

deposited in Egypt by the oil rich states of the Middle East.

The Kuwaiti government, at the time of writing, for instance, is toying with the idea of withdrawing \$1.1 billion on special deposit with the Egyptian Central Bank, precisely because it might otherwise be lost should Sadat actually fall.

## Investments threatened

But a withdrawal of that size would only guarantee further withdrawals—which could ultimately threaten other Kuwaiti investment in Egypt!

The Kuwaiti government must also be worried that their request for their money back will be met with a flat refusal.

Of more immediate interest however will be the winding up of the Arab Organisation for Industrialisation (AOI), a joint venture sited in Egypt, designed to provide local governments with sophisticated armaments built on licence.

The participants in the AOI are obviously worried about their weaponry falling into the wrong hands and so have decided to shop elsewhere.

Unless some kind benefactor now steps in to prop up the whole enterprise, 15,000 skilled jobs will be lost in Egypt alone and, as the order books shorten, British workers could also eventually face the sack.



# Bazargan speaks out against Iranian workers

The popular agitation against the would-be Islamic capitalist dictatorship in Iran, is still growing.

It is coming now not only from the unemployed working class and the oppressed nationalities but also from members of the Islamic popular committees themselves.

Though, under the guidance of Ayatollah Khomeini and other reactionary religious leaders, these committees have indulged in counter-revolutionary acts against democratic and workers' rights, their power nonetheless remains a threat to the restoration of an authoritative capitalist state in Iran.

## Main aim

Such a restoration, however, is the main aim of Prime Minister Bazargan's central government.

And it is an aim which it strives for in a spirit of growing desperation—as was shown by two remarkably frank interviews



Khomeini

given a week ago by Bazargan and his deputy, Entezam to a visiting correspondent of the French paper *Le Monde*.

Bazargan made his counter-revolutionary aims as clear as possible.

Referring to the Iranian masses he lamented:

"Their demands have reached such a point that they are tending to paralyse us".

Entezam spelled out the tiresome details:

"Just see for yourself what we have to put up with.

"We get thousands of letters and countless telephone calls

from people protesting against a sub-secretary of state, or a head of department, or an army or police officer, a simple engineer or even the lowest official, on the pretext that they served the Shah.

"But who hasn't done that in the public or private sector during the 57 years of the imperial regime?

"This strong popular resistance deprives the government of skills and much-needed help, thus clearly reducing its efficiency.

"That is why Mr Bazargan has issued an appeal for tolerance to the people".

## Unemployment

What he means is in fact that the government would like the people to remain tolerant of the 40% unemployment rate, rocketing inflation, food shortages and the continued denial of elementary democratic rights.

Bazargan, who declared that the Shah's last puppet premier, Bakhtiar, shared his objective of



slow change, went on to make it clear that he wanted help from the repressive apparatus of the old tyranny to restore the order that capitalism needs in Iran.

"We inherited a state largely run by Shah supporters and we don't have the people to replace them . . . The army and the police still have to be rebuilt. It is not easy to go back to square one . . ."

## "Subversives"

The other reactionary theme of Bazargan's interview was its witch-hunting tone towards "marxist subversives".

"They do everything they can to put obstacles in our way. Wherever problems arise or troubles break out, we find the hand of the communists: student demonstrations, workers' strikes, armed conflicts in the provinces: all aimed to stop us reconstructing the state".

He accused the "marxists" of making common cause with imperialism and Zionism.

Bazargan thus openly reveals his contempt for the democratic and material aspirations of the masses which he hypocritically claims to represent.

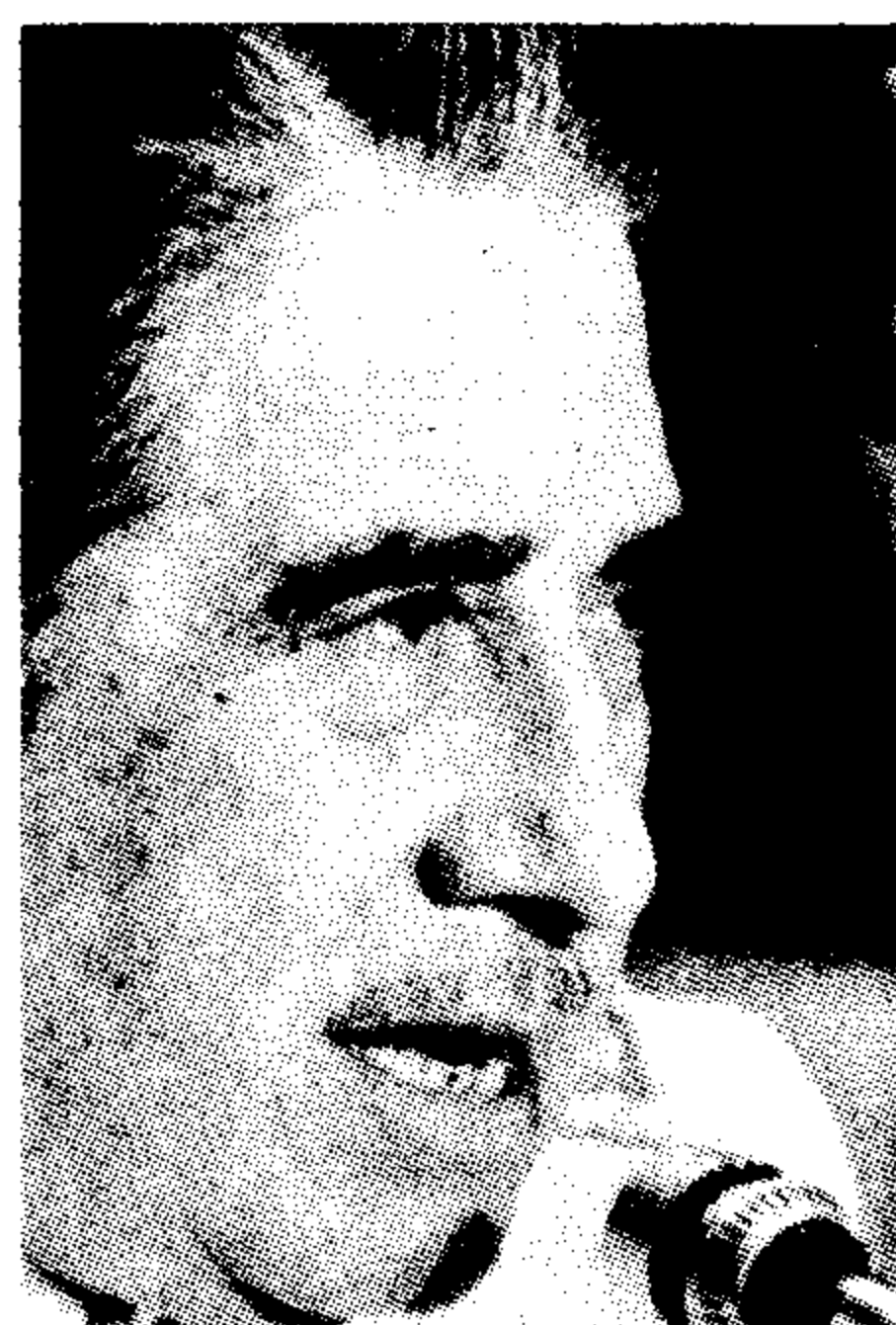
No to the reconstruction of the Shah's state apparatus! Down with the Bazargan regime!

Free elections to a Constituent Assembly!  
Build workers' and peasants' councils!

For a workers' and peasants' government!  
Build a revolutionary socialist party in Iran!

# May Day marchers defy

## Pinochet



Pinochet

Despite the ban on all demonstrations issued by the Pinochet regime and a strong police presence in the streets, 10,000 Chilean workers turned out to march on May Day.

This is twice the number that demonstrated last year.

About 400 people were arrested in Santiago and the port of Valparaiso and 40 of these are to be tried for breaking the numerous

'state security' laws.

The police also broke into a church in Santiago to arrest union leaders who were having a meeting, and a delegation of Spanish trade unionists was prohibited from entering the country.

## Nervousness

Although the armed forces declared themselves 'satisfied' with their handling of the demonstrations, it is indicative that

they are now having to prepare in advance for such events—and not without signs of nervousness.

There are other signs that the regime can no longer rely on its five-year reign of terror and starvation politics to cower the masses.

In the elections for course representatives at the University of Chile, opposition candidates won 68% of the vote against 28% for the regime.

Even more indicative of the growing confidence to display resistance is the increasing difficulty experienced by the pro-government unions in containing the demands of the rank and file.

At an official May Day

meeting, attended by Pinochet, a loyal union leader from the copper mines was strongly critical of the regime's economic policy, and stated that his workers would no longer accept it as a reason for dismissals and extended working hours.

The Chilean working class is slowly building up its resilience after its massive defeat.

This process will undoubtedly be encouraged as Chilean workers observe the new wave of mobilisation in Peru and Bolivia and the strikes in Brazil and Argentina which are causing the local dictators so much trouble.

# Brazil dictator shaken

The strike by 180,000 metal workers in Sao Paulo at the end of March has triggered off a series of nation-wide strikes which are seriously threatening the economic policy of the government of General Joao Baptista Figueiredo.

State employees and teachers in Brasilia and Rio have threatened action unless they are granted a 75% rise, and the regime has been obliged to decree an increase of 45% in the minimum wage.

This, however, doesn't even cover the rise of the cost of living over the last year.

At the end of April only 400 of the 4,000 state schools remained open in Sao Paulo itself.

Most health centres and several hospitals were closed and

many sections of the city administration had come to a standstill when employees struck for a 70% rise as well as a substantial down-payment

The government appears to have entirely ignored the resurgence of union organisation over the last year.

But the ministers of labour and industry are said to be pushing for compromise, for fear of the consequences if the military decides on another round of repression.

The principal thorn in their flesh is the metal workers strike. This has been led by Luis Ignacio da Silva, known as Lula, a prominent union leader.

The government originally offered a 45-day 'cooling off' period before it sent in the police to take over the union. The offer was overwhelmingly rejected by all the unions involved.

There then began the first major strike in Brazil led independently of the 40-year old union structure modelled on that of fascist Italy.

The metal workers stayed out for 13 days before Lula, having previously 'disappeared' for talks with the labour minister, reappeared to recommend a mass meeting to return to work.

He promised full pay for the period of the strike, a 'satisfactory' rise, and no victimisations

Although this call was accepted, the workers showed considerable disillusionment, and even the employers were surprised at the move.

The 'satisfactory' rise that Lula is negotiating is 68%—far less than was originally demanded and only 8% above the employers' offer.

The rising militancy of the workers will not stop with

Lula's manoeuvres, as the widespread mass mobilisation and popularity of the strikes has shown.

The government now recognises that it faces a grave threat. It may well order the federal intervention of the entire state of Sao Paulo.

This might provide them with temporary relief, but important sections of the officer corps and the capitalists are now turning to a 'democratic' opening as a better response to the crisis.

Such a move would without doubt cause great conflict within the ruling class and further weaken their already precarious political unity.

It is clear that the Sao Paulo strike, despite Lula's sell out has accelerated this crisis and that it will continue to grow.



Figueiredo



# Raising the Irish war in the labour movement

"Why do people keep talking about 'The Irish Question?' There is no 'Irish Question' There is only the question of Britain in Ireland!"

These angry words from Brendan Gallagher summed up the main thrust of a highly successful day-long labour movement conference on Ireland last Saturday sponsored by Oxford NUJ and Oxford Trades Council which drew an enthusiastic audience of 120 workers, students and youth.

## Election

Gallagher whose long political struggle against British imperialist repression in Ireland recently included standing against Labour's torture chief Roy Mason in the General Election, had earlier set out to expose the brutal reality that lies behind the catch phrases used in media reports on Ireland.

"People are afraid to face up to the truth", he said.

"That's why they use the word 'terrorist' in Northern Ireland, but 'freedom fighter' in other parts of the world."

"They talk of Britain being a 'democracy'—but how can you have democracy when you have censorship?"

And don't think the Prevention of Terrorism Act is just intended for Irishmen—it's intended for you.

"If you don't believe me remember Blair Peach."

"You have to be blind not to realise it's already happening here. The Irish are just the guinea pigs."



Brendan Gallagher

Gallagher correctly stressed the significance of the fact that neither Mason nor any other supporter of the Labour government's reactionary policies had been prepared to accept the organisers' invitation to attend the conference and defend their position in front of the labour movement.

"Roy Mason is a liar and a war criminal. He knows I can expose it. That's why he's not here today!"

Alongside Gallagher as platform speakers were (in a personal capacity) NUJ NEC member Jonathan Hammond, NUJ Irish Industrial Council member Brian Trench, *Time Out* reporter Ron McKay (recently held under the PTA), ex-soldier Dave Swingler, and former Labour MP Tom Litterick.

Local unions supporting the conference included TGWU, NALGO, CPSA, and other branches.



## Ireland coverage LEGAL BAN ON OBJECTIVE REPORTING

Hammond, taking up the issue of press censorship, one of the main themes on which the conference had been called, traced through a number of case histories of interference in TV coverage of Ireland.

Pointing to the way coverage is slanted, Hammond showed the close parallels between a viciously racist, anti-Irish editorial in *The Times* of 1846 and a similarly racist passage in a Bernard Levin article written in *The Times* of September 1977.

### Conferences

And, looking at the ways of challenging this through the labour movement, he went on to discuss the treatment of Ireland at the last three NUJ conferences.

In 1977 a Book Branch motion calling for troops out of Ireland and the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act was heavily defeated.

A resolution from Magazine Branch, however, calling vaguely for an inquiry into press censorship was carried, after one speaker had effectively shown the contrast between press coverage of the reactionary "Peace People" compared with that of the Troops Out Movement.

### Repeal PTA

Last year had seen another

motion passed opposing censorship. But this year the detention of Ron McKay had created the conditions to carry a demand for the repeal of the PTA.

And though a full motion on Ireland was eventually not put to a vote, a battle had been waged by Oxford delegates and others to force it onto the agenda—setting the stage for a debate at next year's NUJ conference, which is to be held at Port Rush in the six counties.

## Ex-soldier victim of PTA



Dave Swingler

Dave Swingler, a Birmingham NUJ member and claiming the doubtful privilege of being the only ex-soldier to have been arrested three times under the PTA, spoke briefly on his experiences as a serving soldier in the six counties.

Using a volunteer he demonstrated the physical duress under which Irish workers are stopped on suspicion and "questioned" by the army, and went on to list first-hand recollections of army terror tactics against the nationalist minority.



Jonathan Hammond

## LEGAL BAN ON OBJECTIVE REPORTING

Taking up the theme of media censorship, Dublin NUJ member Brian Trench opened his speech by quoting Conor Cruise O'Brien, the former Irish government minister and now editor of the *Observer*, as declaring that:

"Any coverage of Sinn Fein is too much".

As O'Brien's stand indicates, the media censorship of the war in the occupied six counties applies not only in Britain, but also in the Irish Republic, insisted Trench.

### No reply

The media combine to portray the anti-imperialist forces as devoid of legitimate political views, and therefore not even worthy of a serious reply.

This is why the Offences Against the State Act in the South outlaws the reporting of statements from members of "illegal organisations"—meaning the IRA.

This unenforceable legislation is intended above all as a deterrent to prevent journalists seriously analysing the views of the republican movement and

presenting them objectively, argued Trench.

### Based in London

The British press, too, confines its reporting largely to relaying the statements from official government sources—indeed the *Daily Telegraph's* Northern Ireland correspondent is actually based in London, while the *Sunday Times* correspondent resides in Manchester; the *Sun* relies simply on free-lance coverage from the six counties!

While there is physical interference in reporting, Trench continued, this is limited by the gut reaction of most journalists against the existence of open censors vetting their material.

Instead the media largely operates its own restrictions—with occasional intervention from management and even government level.

### Censorship

As a former Minister for Posts and Telegraphs in the South, Conor Cruise O'Brien presided over the high point of censorship of Irish television and radio coverage of the war in the North, said Trench, listing a series of examples.



Brian Trench

The significance of the secret army document recently published by *Republican News* was that it exposed the gulf between the army's real assessment of the strengths of the IRA, and the cultivated media presentation of them as an isolated handful of mindless criminals.

It is skilful media coverage that has helped to push Ireland to the margins of British politics declared Trench.

Such censorship must be seen in class terms—the suppression of debate on an issue for which the British and Irish ruling classes have no solution.





The Oxford conference

# Troops out call passed

The conference went on to vote overwhelmingly in favour of four resolutions.

One, tabled by the Oxford ACTSS 5/833 Branch, called for an end to press censorship, condemned the British military occupation of the six counties, and called for immediate withdrawal of troops as a step towards the self determination of the Irish people.

It was amended to include a declaration of support for the courageous struggle of republican prisoners in Long Kesh and Armagh for the restoration of political status.

Other resolutions called for a campaign for the sending of a local labour movement fact finding delegation to Ireland and the launching of a trade union bulletin on Ireland; and for participation in the 'troops out' demonstration being organised on August 12.

Moving a resolution calling for a campaign to make the NUJ leadership call a national conference on media censorship, John Lister, Oxford NUJ Branch Secretary, stressed that every trade unionist in the hall should also take the lessons of the day's conference into his or her union branch.

### Start of fight

Speaking as one of the organisers of the conference he stressed:

"Your union leaders help reelect Callaghan, Healey and Mason and the Labour traitors who have stepped up the war in Ireland. They must be fought.

"We don't want this conference to be a one-off affair. We want it to be the start of a consistent fight in the unions and the Labour Party aimed at forcing British troops out of Ireland".

# Litterick heckled on troop withdrawal

"These are documents revealing the fall of liberal democracy", proclaimed Tom Litterick, brandishing copies of the Bennett Report and the Shackleton Report on the workings of the PTA.

"Instead of moving forward over the last five years, the social democrats who control the Labour Party moved backwards to abridge the rights of the citizens".

This, declared Litterick, was because the "centres of power are at risk", both as a result of the weakness of capitalism itself and the strength of the organised working class.

Detailing what the PTA means in practice Litterick traced through a case of one

innocent 54 year old Birmingham man, brutally seized and detained by police at 7 a.m. following an unsubstantiated "tip-off" from an alcoholic informant.

### 3,800 detained

3,800 people have so far been detained under this legislation, stressed Litterick.

Brendan Gallagher himself had been arrested 200 times by the military. Imagine the furore about human rights the press would create if it was reported that a Soviet Jew had been arrested 200 times by the KGB!

Parliament, concluded Litterick, is "a fraud, a talk shop".

The first priority must be to look into the labour movement; we need to act in the trade

union and the Labour Party to broaden, deepen and safeguard democracy.

This view that the PTA is chiefly a threat to British democracy was later emphasised by Litterick in his reply to discussion.

But Litterick was loudly and repeatedly heckled by Irish workers as he attempted to prevaricate on the question of immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

Arguing that it was necessary for British imperialism to "set a date for withdrawal" and then discuss "political solutions" with "all those concerned", Litterick provoked most anger when he floated the idea of British cash aid to the Irish Republic to facilitate a "peaceful" withdrawal.

"We don't want your money

—or your justice—just get your troops out", yelled angry workers.

### Hostility

And Litterick faced further hostility when he attempted to justify the Parliamentary support that he and other Tribune MPs had given to Callaghan's reactionary policies, by arguing that Labour constituents "would not have forgiven" the 'lefts' if their actions had brought down the Labour government.

"They didn't forgive you anyway", shouted a heckler, while others in the audience responded to Litterick's statement that "It is up to you to fight in the Labour Party and the trade unions", by asking "what about you, then?"



Tom Litterick speaking from the platform

# PTA—no 'civil rights' issue

Litterick's "humanitarian" view of the evils of the PTA ran completely counter to a strong speech at the close of the morning session by Provisional Sinn Fein member Dave Simpson.

Simpson, an Oxford student, had been arrested the previous week and held for four hours under the PTA for selling *Republican News* in the centre of Oxford.

### Harass opponents

Showing how publicity for his case and local pressure had forced his release long before the permitted seven days' detention were up, Simpson pointed out that the PTA was not intended for use against the IRA but to harass opponents of British imperialism in Ireland.

"What would have happened if I had not been an Oxford undergraduate, but simply a working class republican sympathiser—and arrested not in Oxford but in Belfast?" asked Simpson.

The picture would have been very different. Such victims all too often wind up on the "Long Kesh conveyor belt", which begins with brutal army interrogation, leads on to RUC torture at Castlereagh, a forced confession, a no-jury 'Diplock' Court, and a prolonged sentence in Long Kesh.

"Don't oppose the PTA on the basis of civil rights. Civil

rights don't apply in Ireland", Simpson stressed.

"To fight the PTA means to fight to get British troops out of Ireland".

Speakers from the floor of the conference included a delegate from Leicester Trades Council who drew applause as he reported that his Trades Council had adopted a three point stand on Ireland: Troops Out Now; Political status for republican prisoners; and Repeal of the PTA.

To further applause he stressed the importance of the struggle for the restoration of political status to the prisoners still on their three-year blanket protest at the Long Kesh concentration camp.

This fight, he argued, challenges the right of British imperialism to rule in Ireland and to proclaim its opponents mere "criminals".

Thatcher has made it clear that she wants to "criminalise" picketing and anti-fascist marches, just as Mason set out to "criminalise" republican fighters in Ireland, he said.

### Abstentionists

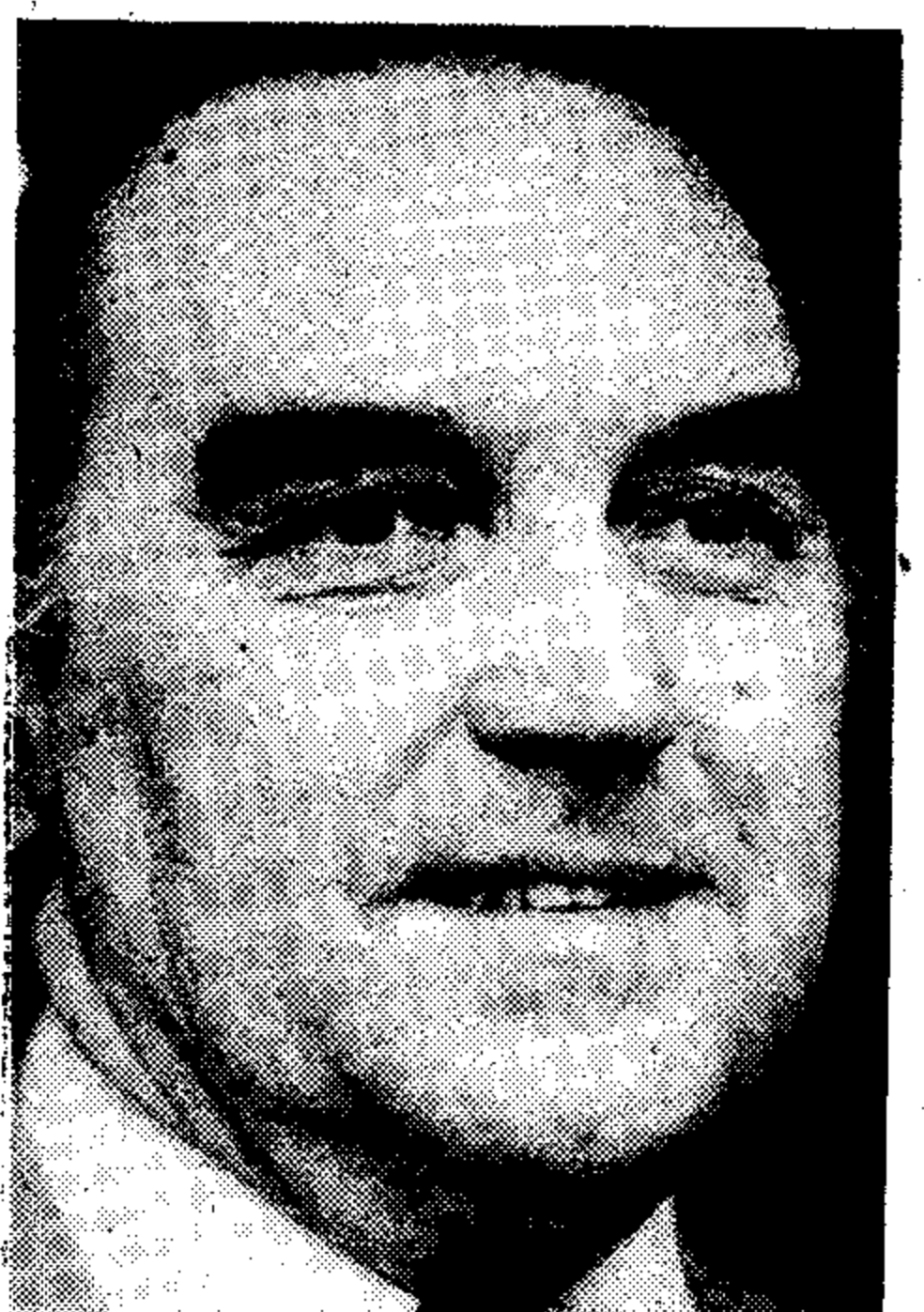
Other floor speakers included RCT/RCG speakers who defended their position of abstention in the last election, which tail-ends the similar stance of the Provisional Sinn Fein.

This was challenged by a WSL speaker who stressed that what was needed was a fight for new leadership in the labour movement.

"The answer is to vote Labour, but kick out Callaghan, kick out Healey, kick out Mason", he said, to applause, and challenged Litterick to say where he stood on such a fight.

Sectarians of the Spartacist League tried to defend their eccentric call for "self-determination" to the Loyalist oppressors in the North of Ireland and made their position clear by leaving the conference before resolutions mapping out a campaign to take the issue of the Irish war into the labour movement were moved and voted on.

A WSL speaker argued the importance of seeing the connection between the struggle to force the troops out of Ireland, and the mounting struggles of the working class in Britain.



Mason

# PRESS GANG



The honeymoon is still on. As the Tory government sails serenely out of harbour, full steam ahead for the nearest rocks, the official cheerleaders of Fleet Street are still waving from the quayside and wishing her good luck.

But the caution that has been evident from the day after the election is coming more clearly to the fore.

Last week the *Economist* warned Thatcher to go easy on 'trade union reform' for a year and to consult with the TUC.

This came hard on the heels of earlier warnings from the *Sunday Telegraph* that consultation with the TUC would be reasonable.

It is characteristically dishonest therefore of the press to hail the Queen's Speech and Thatcher's subsequent speech in Parliament as being confident affirmation of the Tory election manifesto.

The truth is that the Tory government finds war

cries preferable to action and shows considerable hesitation in launching its frontal attack on the working class.

According to the *Daily Telegraph*, Mrs. Thatcher, meeting Callaghan in the corridors of Westminster, remarked "You have left us a lot of problems".

And every single lobby correspondent on the national newspapers wrote unattributed stories during the week declaring that the Tory government had been "shocked" and "horrified" at the state of "the books" on taking office.

Some papers reported that tax cuts were now unlikely; others that the tax cuts would be introduced but that VAT would rise dramatically as a result.

The *Economist* expected at least 2% to be added to the cost of living figures through this increase in VAT alone.

Already therefore the press is preparing the ground for the real Tory budget and for the inevitable angry outcry from

workers that will follow.

Nor is the Tory strategy of heading for massive job cuts to cut the public sector borrowing requirement likely to be any easy answer, as the swing to the left in the CPSA has made clear.

The *Daily Telegraph*, which has its own ideas on how trade union conferences should be run, complained:

"During the conference an excessive amount of time has been spent by Left-Wing militants in attacking Mr. Thomas, his executive and paid union officials".

The *Telegraph* knows that Thomas and his paid officials will be easy to deal with in the coming attacks on civil servants' jobs, but that the anger and militancy of the rank and file, stoked up by the sabotage of the fight on pay, will make the members an entirely different proposition.

The press may have got the best government it could hope for. But that still does not mean it has a government capable of carrying through its demands.



# THE STRUGGLES THAT TOPPLED HEATH

PART TWO BY JOHN LISTER

The agenda of the TUC Congress in September 1971 featured seven resolutions against the Industrial Relations Bill, none of which called for industrial action to prevent its passage into law.

Indeed the right wing at the Congress, led by GMWU Chief Lord Cooper, fought tooth and nail—though unsuccessfully—to prevent even the adoption of a policy of instructing TUC unions not to register under the Act.

Shortly after losing this vote, 5-4, Cooper and other right wing leaders including those of the seamen's union declared their intention to go ahead regardless and register.

But while the fight got underway to force the TUC leaders to expel the rebel unions, the miners, having voted at their July conference to seek wage rises of 35-47% began a national overtime ban on November 1.

By December 9, eight days after the formal opening of the NIRC, the NUM Executive voted unanimously to call a national strike a month later.

That strike was to demonstrate beyond doubt the potential strength of the working class and its capacity to defeat the Tory offensive.

## Flying pickets

From its opening day—January 9, 1972,—flying pickets moved into action, shutting down coal depots, power stations and other selected targets. Massive popular opposition to the Tories facilitated this work.

February 9 saw Heath declaring a state of emergency designed to create conditions to force the miners back to work.

February 10 brought the first power cuts, and by 14 February much of industry faced a three-day week, with massive lay-offs.

So devastating was the impact that the right wing NUM leadership frightened itself as much as the government and ordered a relaxation of power station picketing.

## Defeat for Heath

In desperation Heath intervened personally in the Wilberforce inquiry into miners' pay, and by February 18 a massive £4.50-£6.00 settlement had been recommended, signalling a dramatic defeat for the Heath strategy.

Yet such was the depth of TUC collaboration that... later, on March 9... were

with Heath on wage controls.

These talks were to continue during 1972, despite Barber's inflationary March budget which showed that prices would rage uncontrolled upwards and despite a wave of militant sit-down pay strikes in the engineering industry (particularly in the North West), which showed workers' willingness to defend living standards.

The talks did *not*, however, lead immediately to wage controls. Rather they served the Tories as a test of the spinelessness of the TUC leadership.

This test was carried out on the eve of the first major case brought before the NIRC—the case of the TGWU's blacking campaign against the container firm Heaton's.



Tory Chancellor Barber

The blacking was part of a rearguard action by the dockers to stem the flood of container firms using lower paid non-dock labour in depots close to the main dock areas.

Dockers correctly saw this trend as a threat to their hard-won wages and conditions and to the very survival of the registered dock labour scheme itself.

While TGWU officials squirmed and manoeuvred, seeking top level collaboration with container bosses and other employers—which culminated in the job-slashing Jones-Aldington Report—rank and file dockers on Merseyside and in London turned the screws on selected 'cowboy' container firms Heaton's, Chobham Farm and Midland Cold Storage.

The Heaton's case was the first taken to court after a blacking campaign on the docks had begun to have a crippling impact on its St. Helens operation.

The case opened on March 23. By March 29 the TGWU had been fined £5,000 for not stopping the blacking and by April 20 this was stepped up to £55,000.

That same day, April 20, the NIRC, still flexing its muscles, intervened in a work to rule staged by rail unions in support of their pay claim, and ordered a "cooling off period" of 14 days.

This attack on the rail unions served to prove two things: that the union bureaucracy were willing to go along with any instructions handed out by the court; and that the membership were willing to fight.

## Ballot ordered

As soon as the 'cooling off period' had elapsed, the NIRC ordered a ballot of railwaymen prior to any further industrial action.

While the leadership willingly climbed down and participated in this ballot, the membership registered

government might have been forced to retreat from confrontation.

The Appeal Court on that day cancelled the £55,000 fines, and declared that the TGWU was not legally accountable for the actions of its shop stewards.

But only three days later on June 16 the NIRC ordered two London docks stewards Bernie Steer and Vic Turner to jail for contempt of court.

The stewards had refused to stop picketing the Chobham Farm container operation.

The confrontation was staved off at that point by the intervention of the hitherto almost unheard-of Official Solicitor, Norman Turner, who argued at the Court of Appeal that there was insufficient evidence as to their picketing activities.

But the crisis point loomed once again when on July 7 the NIRC ordered seven London dockers, including Steer and Turner, to stop threatening national blacking against firms using Midland Cold Storage Ltd., an East London depot.

## Talks with Heath

But far from throwing the full weight of the official trade union movement behind these embattled shop stewards, TUC leaders continued to engage in official talks with the Heath government, at a time when Heath himself was talking openly of the prospect of unilateral government action to impose wage controls.

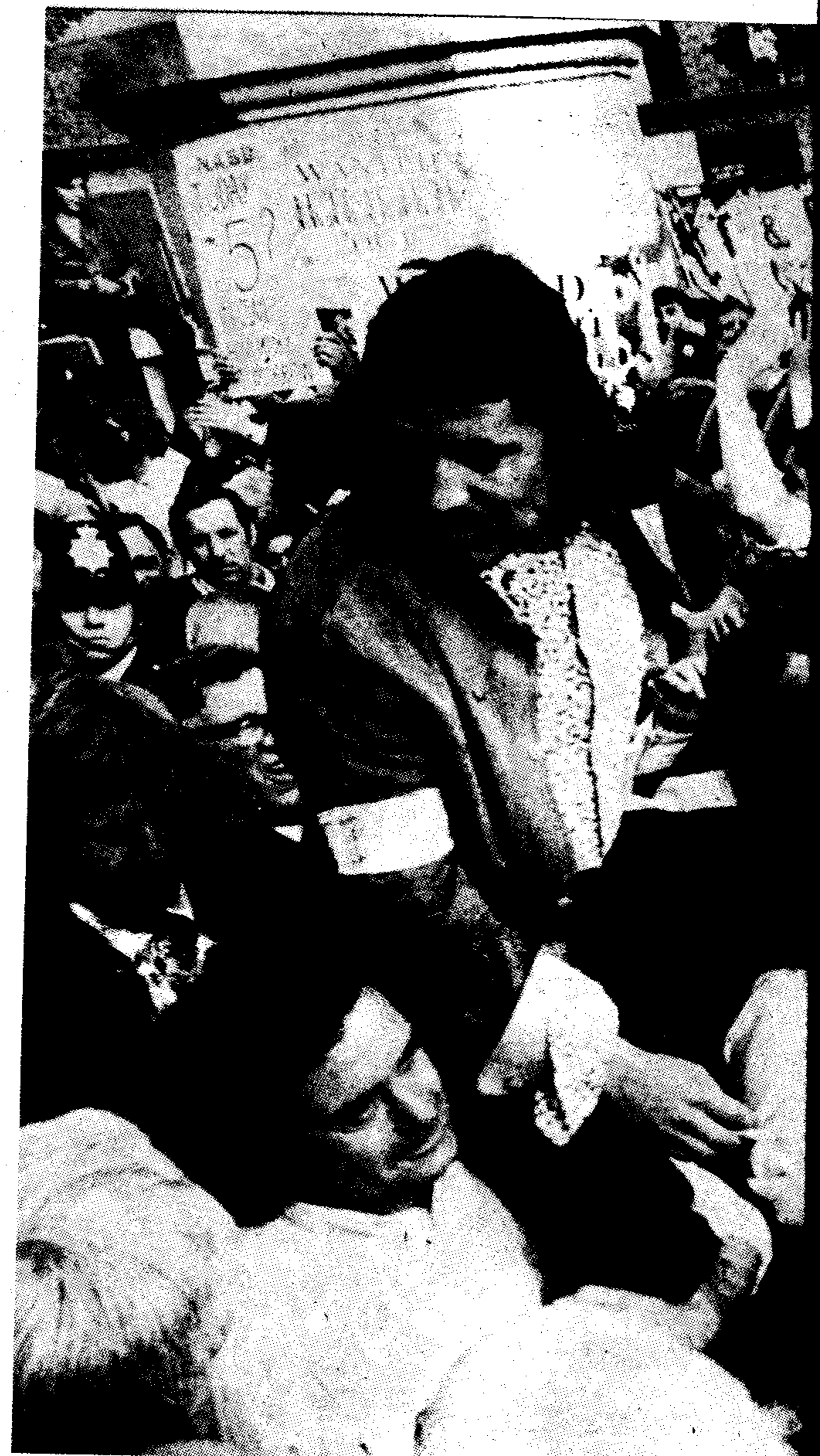
On July 10 a reluctant CBI agreed to tripartite talks with the government and a much less reluctant TUC. And on July 13, only a week before the major confrontation was to take place, CBI leaders and TUC bureaucrats agreed to the establishment of a new voluntary "conciliation and arbitration service" (ACAS), designed to shackle the working class in a network of spuriously legalistic but completely impotent machinery.

But despite the grovelling of their official leaders, the dockers pressed ahead with their struggle against the container bases that they saw as a threat to their jobs and conditions. The NIRC order was ignored.

## Dockers jailed

On July 21, five London dockers—Anthony Merrick, Cornelius Clancy, Derek Watkins, Bernie Steer and Vic Turner—were arrested and imprisoned in Pentonville Jail.

The response from the trade union movement was swift and massive. Print workers, 42,000 dockers, transport workers, engineers, blastfurnacemen, miners, airport workers and building workers all over the



Pentonville picket—freed by massive

country—a total of over 2 million all told—joined in the spontaneous near-general strike wave that erupted as soon as the news of the arrests was broken.

And this was at a time when millions of workers were already on works holidays.

## Protest gesture

Such was the scale of this massive movement that the collaborators in the TUC General Council were obliged to make a gesture of opposition themselves.

And gesture it was—a one-day General Strike call, limited strictly to pressuring the Tories to release the five dockers.

Seven TUC leaders—EETPU leader Chapple, and GMWU leaders Lord Cooper and Basnett, along with delegates from NALGO, the NUT and the Dyers and Bleachers Union even voted against this token action, which was proposed by AUEW leader Scanlon.

And only one speaker—NUM General Secretary Lawrence Daly—called for all-out indefinite action.

After five days in jail, the dockers were released by Donaldson in the wake of a House of Lords judgement on the container case.

This judgement reimposed the £55,000 fines on the TGWU and added another £25,000 bill for costs.

It reaffirmed the strategic principle of the Industrial Relations Act, that *trade unions*, as collective bodies, and *not individuals*, should be held responsible for industrial action taken by members.

In other words it relied on blackmailing servile union bureaucrats into more ruthlessly policing their rank and file members—and where necessary expelling shop stewards and others that have the nerve to pursue the interests of their members in defiance of the anti-union laws.

Donaldson spelt this out: "Every union has its dissenters, and they have a real contribution to make, but members who act in defiance of the union policy of obeying court orders are a liability which the union could well be without".

There was to be no attempt by TGWU or any other union leaders to challenge this position and build on the immense strength reflected in the spontaneous strike movement.

Instead, the release of the five dockers was wel-





Heath



wave, not by TUC action

came with a sigh of relief by frightened union bureaucrats, who at once called off the one-day General Strike and then devoted their energies to "normalising" the situation and returning to their reactionary dialogue with Heath.

On Friday July 28, however, Jack Jones was defeated in his efforts to prevent a docks delegate meeting rejecting the voluntary redundancy proposals contained in the Jones-Aldington Report, and a national docks strike was called.

Delighted dockers who had formed a 1,000-strong lobby outside the Transport House meeting, brushed aside surprised police and staged an impromptu illegal march to Parliament shouting 'Tories Out!'

**More talks**

A mere three days later, however, with 42,000 dockers on national strike action and the Tories' legal axe balanced over the neck of the organised labour movement, the TUC leaders raised loyally once again to 10 Downing Street for tripartite talks with Heath and the CBI!

Jones' cold-blooded betrayal of the dockers'

fight reached a new pitch when on August 16 he managed to force through a docks delegates' meeting a decision to call off the strike and to accept a reshaped version of the discredited Jones-Aldington Report.

Furious dockers stormed into Transport House and abused Jones and docks officer O'Leary—one docker throwing a tumbler full of water in Jones' face.

Heavy squads of police were eventually needed to get Jones from the building in one piece.

But, despite this humiliation for this supposed 'left' trade union leader, the basic job was done. Unofficial resistance to the return to work in Liverpool eventually folded and the jobs massacre on the docks got under way.

But at the same time another major struggle that had been smouldering since the end of June was bursting into flame—as the building unions pressed ahead for their £30/35 hour week claim.

Drawing on the lessons of the successful miners' strike, mass pickets and flying pickets were gathering forces and demands on the leadership to call all-out action were increasing.

These demands, too, were to be brushed aside by bureaucrats hell-bent on controlling and defusing the mass militancy of their own members.

The result of this was to be not only the sell-out of the pay claim, after many sections had been out on strike as long as 12 weeks, but also the notorious 'Shrewsbury 24' court case in which a group of builders' flying pickets were to be victimised and imprisoned in a new extension of the Tories' legal clampdown on union rights.

In the midst of these major class battles, the TUC met under difficult conditions at Brighton.

**Collaboration**

The Congress agenda was once again devoid of any resolution calling for action to bring down the Tory government and force the repeal of the Industrial Relations Act.

And rejected, by 5.6 million to 3.4 million votes, was a resolution which attempted to prevent unions using "any facilities of the Act".

This decision cleared the way for full scale collaboration between union officials and the NIRC.

Satisfied that despite the profound setback over the 'Pentonville Five', this arm of Tory anti-union strategy had locked into an embrace with the TUC bureaucracy, and under acute international pressure, Heath then moved forward on September 26 with his so-called "anti-inflation" plan.

Of course there was no way that this plan—a £2 limit on wage rises and a supposed 5% ceiling for price increases—could control inflation, which was galloping away on a world scale, and had nothing to do with the size of workers' wage increases.

Currencies had been fluctuating in value wildly for over a year in the wake of President Nixon's decision in August 1971 to sever the fixed relationship between the dollar and gold—effectively opening the floodgates to a round of inflation and economic anarchy.

One result of this instability had been Heath's July 23 1972 decision to float the pound, which had produced a rapid fall in its international exchange value, and a corresponding

rise in the price of imported goods, including foodstuffs and raw materials. By October it had fallen in value by an astonishing 10%!

Under these conditions the sole practical impact of Heath's "anti-inflation plan" was to hold back workers' struggles to defend their living standards against the rising cost of living.

The 15 months since Heath had been elected promising to "cut prices at a stroke" had brought a 22% increase in the cost of living.

**Chequers talks**

But the TUC was not in the least deterred from its collaboration with Heath. October 16 saw talks on inflation at Chequers, which were continued ten days later at Downing Street, even while power workers prepared for industrial action on their £5.50 pay claim.

The talks resumed once more on October 30—the very day that the NIRC began an offensive against the AUEW.

It issued an instruction that the AUEW must appear before the Court to answer the claim that the union's branch at CAV Sudbury had ignored a court order.

This was a NIRC ruling instructing the AUEW branch to admit expelled scab James Goad to branch meetings.

The case highlighted the way in which the NIRC carried power to dictate the rule-books of unions and impose swingeing penalties if they did not act in accordance with its dictates.

When the AUEW refused to appear on November 8, it was at once fined £5,000.

A week later the AUEW Executive correctly voted not to pay this fine—but failed to call all-out action to defend itself against this mounting attack.

On November 29, therefore, despite mounting anger in the workers' movement, AUEW leaders allowed their bankers, Hill, Samuel, to respond to a writ of sequestration and hand over the £5,000 with an additional £1,000 costs.

Nor did this end the case. Though refusing to launch all-out action to defeat the Tory anti-union laws, the AUEW leaders also refused to appear before the Court.

December 8 therefore saw a further £50,000 fine laddled out by Donaldson against the AUEW for contempt of court. 1,200 workers at the CAV plant promptly took strike action in protest—but still there was no call to action from the 'left' talking AUEW leadership.

**Not worried**

Instead a one-day token strike was called by motor industry and newspaper workers on December 18 in protest against the £50,000 fine, followed by an even bigger one day strike in the motor industry and on the docks on December 20.

But the Tories who had quailed before the mounting General Strike movement in July were not worried by such stage-managed protests.

The day after the second strike, the Commissioners for Sequestration moved into the AUEW headquarters and seized £50,000 which was then paid to the NIRC.

Meanwhile, the secret talks with Heath had borne bitter fruit—in the form of Heath's November 6 Counter Inflation (Temporary Provisions) Bill, which legislated a pay, prices, rent and dividends freeze for 90 days with power to extend it another 60.



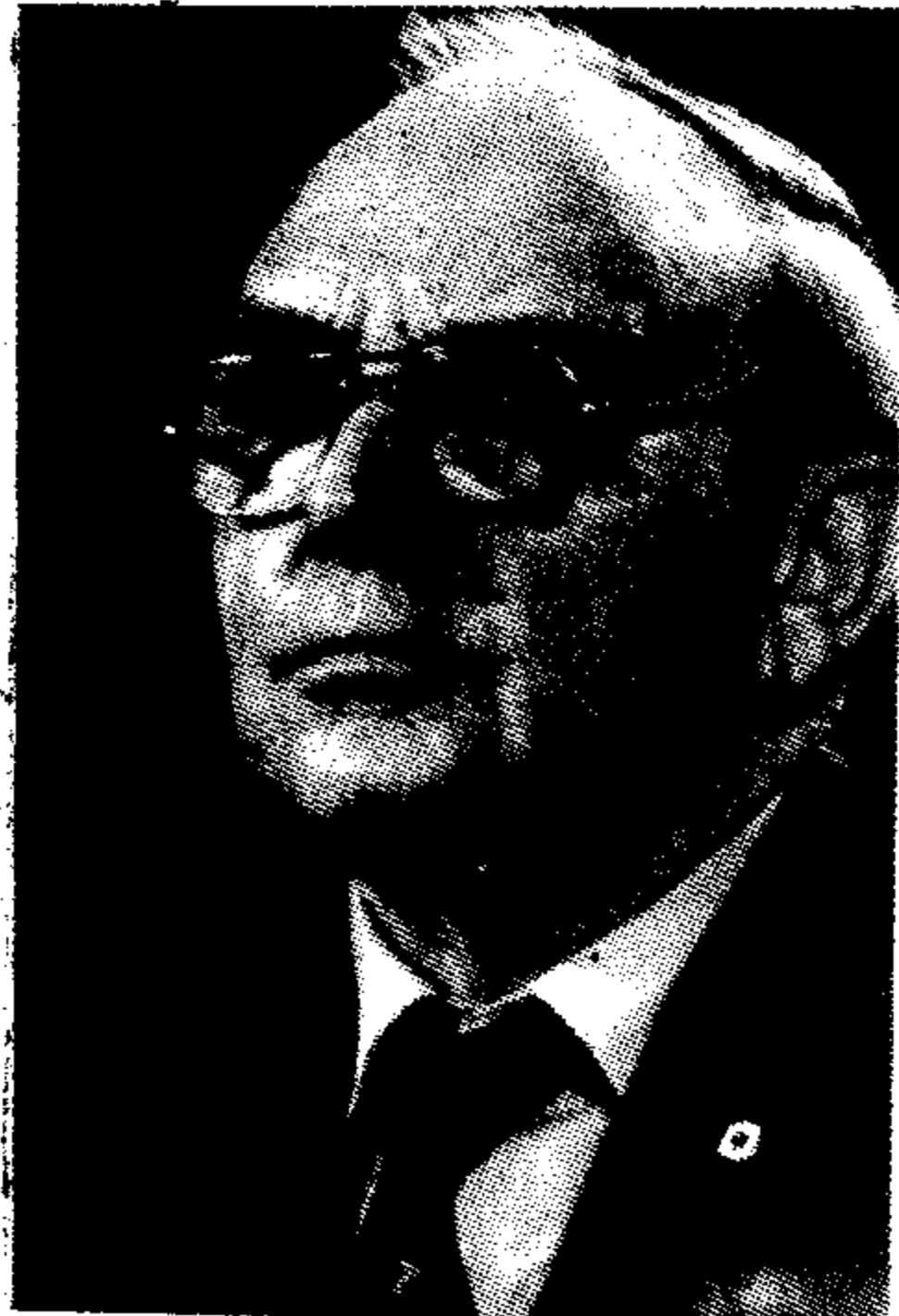
Victims of builders pay betrayal: the Shrewsbury 3

The talk of price controls was of course a complete fraud. Exempted was all fresh food, along with all imported goods and products.

And food prices had risen at an annual rate of over 15% during the "stand-still" period!

Such a step, taken at what is normally a peak time for wage negotiations, could only have been considered by Heath once he was convinced that TUC leaders would fully cooperate in preventing pay struggles.

And by January 17 Heath had unveiled his



Jones, Fisher, Scanlon: each headed off full scale action against Tory attacks

Phase 2 limits—£1 plus 4%—which were to run from March 31 until the autumn.

Phase 2 plans also declared it illegal for workers to take industrial action to secure wage increases less than 12 months after their last settlement, and illegal for deals to be concluded without Pay Board approval—with fines ranging upwards from £400 for anyone who broke the law.

Yet wages militancy continued to grow amongst a number of sections of workers including gas workers and hospital ancillary staff.

In each case union officials set out to take the steam from these pay struggles by restricting action to "selective" stoppages and working to rule.

**Lay-offs**

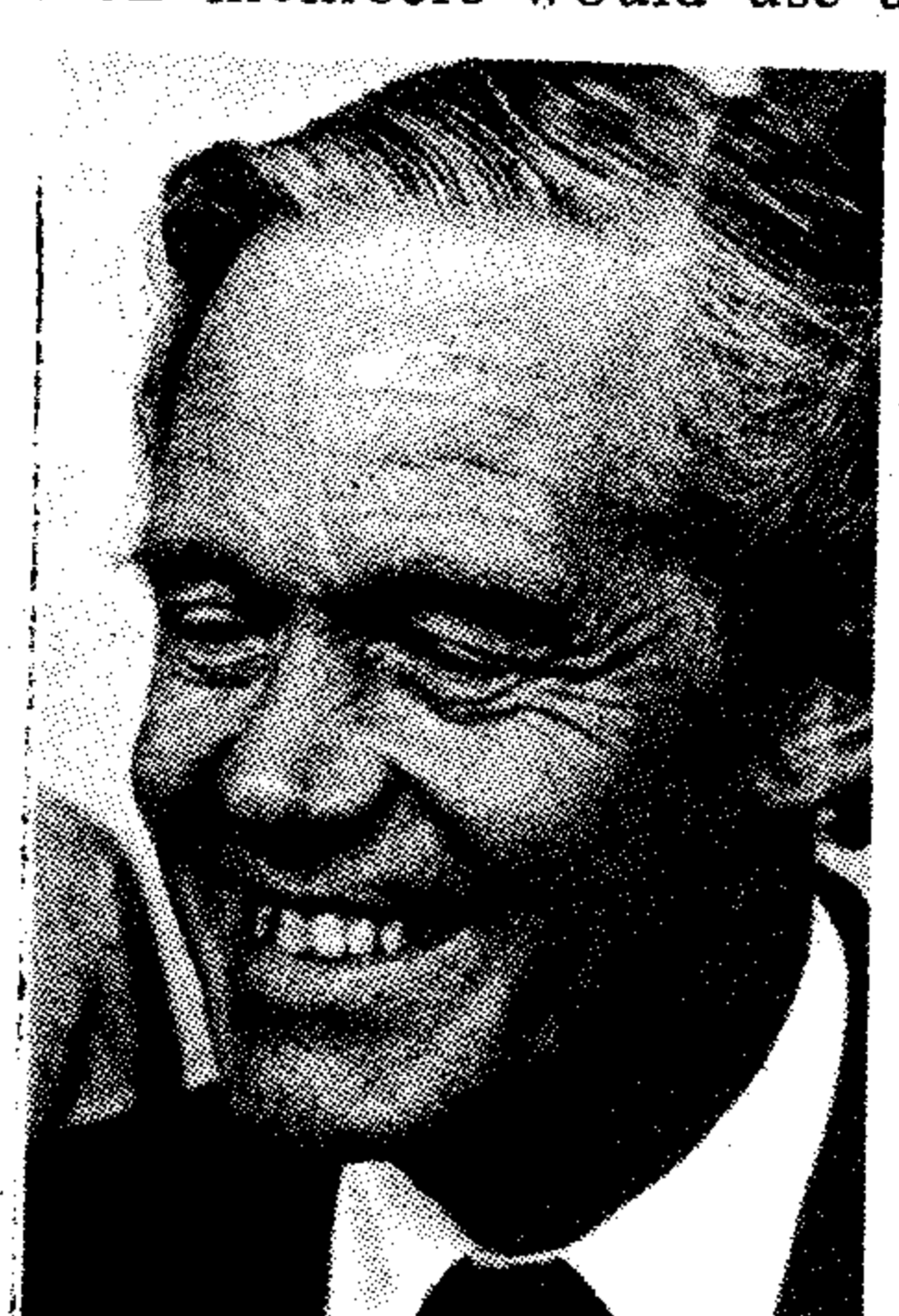
But by mid-February Midlands firms were facing lay-offs as a result of the gasworkers' action, and by March 1 27,000 health ancillary workers were on strike, with 80% of the total 230,000 workforce engaged in sanctions in pursuit of their £4 claim.

On March 5 an emergency TUC Congress called for a day of strikes

and demonstrations against Phase 2, as well as voting to support unions in struggle against the pay laws.

The hollow mockery of this latter pledge was soon to be exposed. Not only did TUC leaders lift not a finger to back the gasworkers and hospital workers, they went so far on March 18 as to attempt to head off the ancillary workers' fight by calling for a government inquiry into their pay.

By mid April TUC leaders were vying with each other to be the most emphatic in denying that their members would use a



big settlement for the ancillary workers as a precedent.

Even the earlier empty language of class struggle was being cast aside. TGWU leader Jones publicly declared in a statement that was to set the scene for years of class collaboration under the Labour government that:

"We are standing four square with management in building a better Britain".

Millions of workers were not convinced it was a "better Britain": as food prices soared again to a 28% annual rate of increase 1.6 million workers went on strike on May Day in protest against Phase 2.

But in stark contradiction to this solid militancy, the next day the Daily Mirror revealed the continuing secret talks taking place between TUC leaders and Heath on the shape of a Phase 3 of wage controls!

But by now the impact of the world economic crisis—powering forward inflation—was creating a situation beyond the control of the Tory government or the union bureaucracy.

The plummeting value of the dollar and other capitalist currencies had for some time been annoying the oil producing states of

the Middle East.

But when the 1973 Middle East war showed imperialism once more energetically supporting its Zionist puppet state, this economic grievance combined with political pressure from the Arab masses demanding a cutback in oil supplies to the West.

By October 1973 these cutbacks began to take effect, hand-in-hand with a 66% increase in crude oil prices.

In Britain, working class militancy was still on the increase. The miners voted on October 11 to throw out a 7% pay offer. By November 12 they were to begin an overtime ban in pursuit of their claim.

But at the same time feeling was growing again on the NIRC, which at the end of October fined the AUEW another £75,000. Fleet Street workers walked out in protest and on November 5 264,000 workers struck against the fine.

A week later, as oil supplies dwindled, the miners began their overtime ban, and power engineers took action over pay, Heath declared a state of emergency.

By November 29 petrol ration coupons were being issued, and a fortnight later as the energy crisis sharpened Heath announced that the 3-day week would operate from the New Year.

Rather than acting in this situation of acute crisis for Heath to mobilise action to bring down his hated government, TUC leaders embarked on a series of pleading and grovelling approaches designed to secure a settlement with the miners as a "special case".

Pressed by their rank and file, the NUM leaders were unable to strike the deal

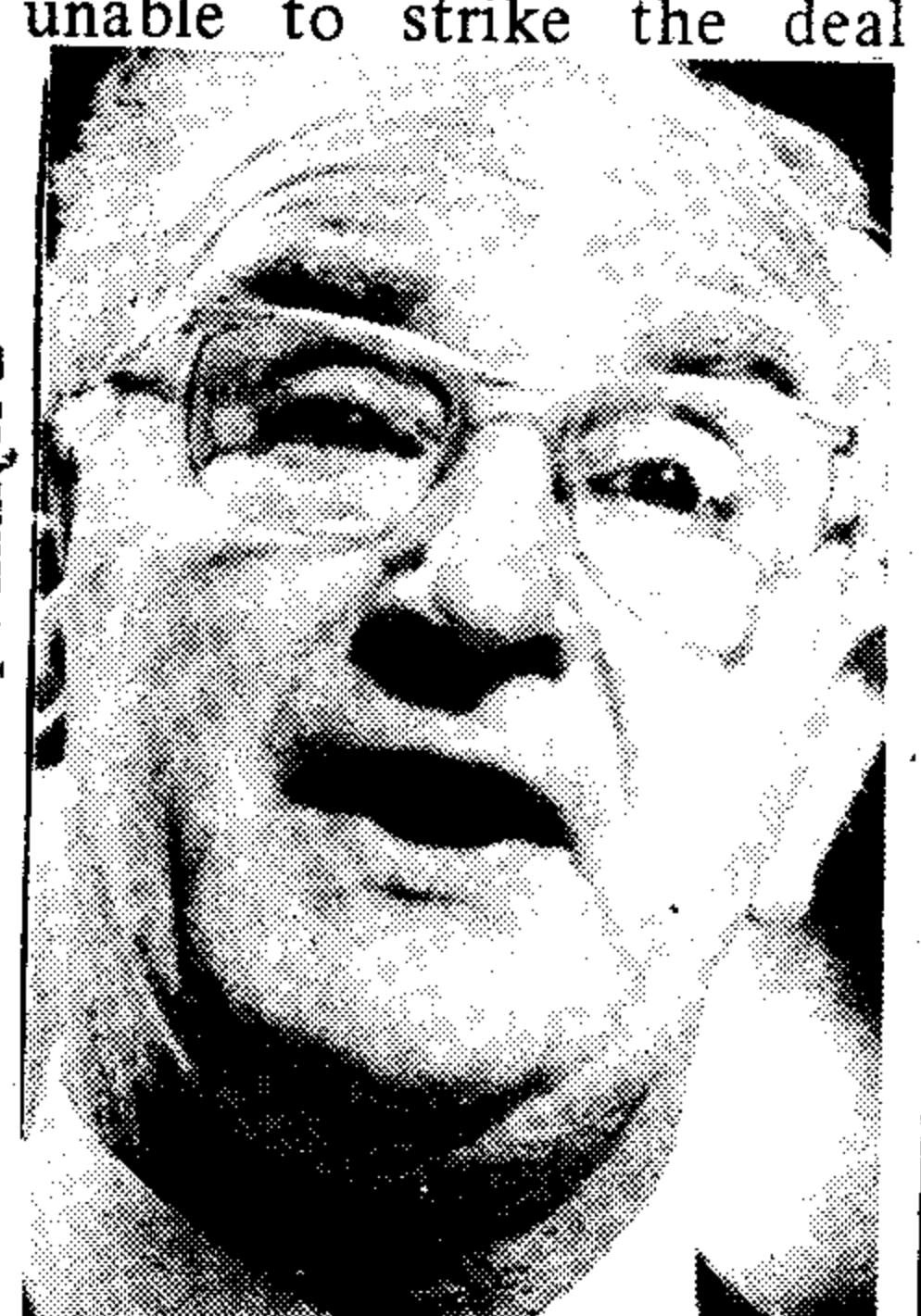


PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, JFL

with Heath they longed for.

Instead on January 24 they held a ballot on strike action. The result was an overwhelming 81% vote for all out action—a clear reflection of the mood of the vast majority of workers.

The NUM leaders on February 5 announced that the strike would begin from February 10.

Two days later a desperate Heath, hoping to win on an anti-union "who runs the country" platform, called a General Election for February 28—and vainly appealed to the NUM to call off their strike during the election.

The Tories were to lose the February 1974 election; and they lost again in October 1974.

But the lessons of the Heath government prove beyond doubt that it was only despite the most abject class collaboration of their official leaders that the working class were able to beat back the Tory attacks and eventually drive Heath's union-bashers from office.

This message, and its principled revolutionary leadership is essential in the struggle against the class enemy—must be thoroughly absorbed for the coming struggles against the Thatcher government.



# SURELY THERE MUST BE SOMETHING BETTER

Tony Richardson reviews "Warriors", directed by Walter Hill.



At the beginning of this film the viewer may get the impression that some kind of political point is being made.

The gangs of New York each send 9 delegates to a rally called by Cyrus—the leader of the biggest gang.

The people attending the rally represent 60,000 "soldiers", and, as Cyrus says, there are only 20,000 cops in

New York.

So instead of fighting each other and gradually take over the streets?

Cyrus is getting big support for this when he is shot dead. His shooting is timed to coincide with the arrival of the police.

The gang leader who does the shooting blames the gang of one of the witnesses. This is the "Warriors" gang.

The Warriors have come the

150 miles from Long Island to the Bronx: the rest of the film is about the journey back.

The actual killer of Cyrus phones somebody to say the job is done. But don't get too interested in who is behind the murder. From this point onwards it is dropped from the "plot" altogether.

Although the author of the book, Sol Yurick, had chosen the name Cyrus for mythological reasons. But the viewer will

find no hint of this either.

For the rest of the film we are back on familiar territory.

The excitement is there as the word goes out on the street to get the "Warriors".

That is, there is excitement if you are excited by waiting to see whether the next victim of violence will be smashed to the ground with a baseball bat, run over by a train, kicked to death or simply shot in routine fashion.

The "Warriors" have every-

one against them—the other gangs and the police.

Yet they battle against every obstacle and defeat them.

They confront gangs with knives, gangs dressed up as baseball players, gangs on roller skates and a gang of women with guns and knives; but they beat them all as well as innumerable police.

Messages informing on their whereabouts are relayed by a disc jockey.

This is almost exactly the same as a movie five years ago called "Vanishing Point", starring Barry Newman.

He too was being chased and innocent of the "crime" he was accused of, but driving a stolen car.

And he too had all the forces of the law against him.

The only differences were that he was driving right across America, while the DJ was on his side and was playing Stevie Wonder instead of Martha and the Vandellas.

The great similarity is that both films glorify the "great" individual or groups of individuals against the system.

"Warriors", a film starting out about unity ends up being a hymn to individualism.

But this is the favourite stock-in-trade of the American movie industry.

Director Walter Hill calls it "escapism". In a sense this is true.

The girl that the "Warriors" pick up on the way announces that she doesn't want a future of looking after five kids: "I want something now".

And when they arrive back at

Long Island and look at the slums, the "Warlord" asks "is that we fought all night to get back to?"

A hint of reality seems to arrive in the scene when a group of rich people get on one of the trains. But they go on their way and nothing is said.

The ending of the film doesn't even have the saving grace of "Vanishing Point" in which Barry Newman is blown to oblivion when his car crashes into a snow plough.

Here the couple end up walking off into the sunset. The message is that there is hope for individuals against the system.

This is the first of a wave of US "gang" films to come to this country.

It obviously has nothing to do with the reality of gang life, in which the streets are controlled by the Mafia, drug syndicates, bent cops and other small-time hoods.

For them fighting is no joyous celebration—it is a means to an end. They are thugs and thoroughly lumpen elements reduced by the capitalist system to an existence of brutality, exploitation, rape and robbery.

"Warriors" however is obviously no more than a vehicle for the ideas of the director. Walter Hill's ideas are obviously about as deep as those in "Saturday Night Fever". In either case it is the odd individuals who can fight or dance that can escape reality and find a certain freedom for themselves.

The song that ends the film sums it up completely: "There must be something better".

# TV Eye with tunnel vision

Wednesday May 9th marked the 150th Anniversary of the establishment of the Metropolitan Police Force.

The day passed completely unnoticed by the so-called "public" the police are alleged to protect.

The reason for this is no doubt because the police are as hated now as they were when they first stepped on to the streets of London in 1829.

It was at that time that names, some of which are now used affectionately, such as "Peelers", "Bobbies", and "crushers" were invented to ridicule and insult the newly formed force.

The setting up of such a body of armed men to protect the parasitic minority within society whose power is based upon exploitation and corruption, inevitably meant the police force itself would be riddled with men who reflected that society.

Indeed within eight years of 1829 over 5,000 men were dismissed for one reason or another.

## No change

Things haven't changed much in 150 years.

On the day of the anniversary, the head of Northumbria Police drug squad was forced to leave—having been sentenced to seven years for stealing and pushing drugs in London!

With this kind of record (as long as the arm of the law) it is not surprising that the British working class did not feel inclined to celebrate this anniversary.

But it is surprising that the press and media were also reluctant. The only programme I could find on television that week about the police was TV Eye (Thursday 10 pm).

It dealt with the difficulties

TV review by Howard Lloyd

of making a complaint against the police and making it stick.

The making of a complaint is not difficult—you just tell a policeman—but following it through and getting action even with overwhelming evidence on your side is extremely difficult.

The programme showed the complaints procedure to be a complete sham.

## Closed shop

Complaints are dealt with by the police themselves (and the Tories moan about closed shops!).

A report is sent to the Police Complaints Board, described in the programme as a cosmetic to satisfy the public.

If your complaint fails, you then face the possibility of yourself being prosecuted (and persecuted) for "wasting police time".

Complaints are dealt with by C1B2 (formerly A10) a group of 100 police drawn from the CID in London.

This means that very often when investigating complaints they are investigating people they may have worked with recently and know personally.

Information is therefore often "leaked" to remove the element of surprise and enable cover-ups to take place.

Of the reports that are sent to the Police Complaints Board by C1B2 99% are accepted and there is no appeal against its findings.

Members of the Board are paid £5 for each report they deal with.

The programme gave the example of a Board member, a magistrate whose husband is a

judge, dealing with eight reports in two days, therefore getting £40 for just rubber-stamping police reports.

## 9,000 complaints

In London last year there were over 9,000 complaints against the police which resulted in 145 being disciplined, 3 convicted and 10 resigned.

Although attempting to give the impression the authors were involved in investigative reporting and tough interviewing, the programme was kept at a very superficial level.

The makers refrained from using the many reels of film to which they have access and which would have illustrated visually the stuff that complaints are made of.

They kept well clear of the very topical subject of complaints against the violence the police use against pickets, anti-fascist demonstrators and in the harassment of black youth.

## Stopped on SUS

They showed only one snippet of a group of black youth stopped on 'sus'.

Instead the programme was content just to titillate our curiosity with vague innuendos and references to a 'firm within a firm'.

The problem the makers of the programme faced is that in dealing with one issue, another, more serious and more damaging to the police image, kept arising—that of corruption.

The references to 'a firm within a firm' is to corruption on a large scale and well organised.

It is a network of police



Hackney Trades Council joins march against SUS laws

officers with contacts in high and low places who are used in many ways—such as putting pressure on people or bribing them to drop complaints; getting charges against criminals dropped; and actually organising crime.

At the moment an investigation is under way into police involvement in bank robberies at the Bank of America, and Williams and Glynn, as well as wage snatchers at the Daily Express and Daily Mirror, where a security guard was shot dead.

## Exposed

It was said that the existence of a 'firm' in London was exposed ten years ago by a report in the Times newspaper—and that is something every Police Commissioner dreads.

But when Deputy Commissioner Patrick Kavanagh was questioned directly about corruption, he denied know-



Whitelaw

ledge of any and refused to answer specific questions on the grounds of "Sub Judice".

There is, however, one section of British society who have no complaints about the police and who do appreciate their value.

## Huge rises

This of course is the ruling class and the Tory Party. The Tories have marked their return to office by instantly awarding huge pay rises to the police.

These pay rises should be seen as a combination of loyalty money, protection money, and bounty money for bringing in pickets and anti-fascist demonstrators—dead or alive.

PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL



# WORKER DISSIDENTS NEED A TROTSKYIST LEADERSHIP

Tony Richardson reviews "Workers Against the Gulag", edited and introduced by Viktor Haynes and Olga Semyonova, published by Pluto Press, price £1.95.

Pluto Press are to be thanked for the publication of the documents contained in this book.

That said, as with many such books, the political implications of the documents are almost destroyed by the preface by Eric Heffer MP and the introductions.

The documents are mainly from the "Free Trade Union Association of the Soviet Working People" and are almost all the products of workers—whether as individuals or as groups of signatories.

So they are of the greatest importance in terms of helping us to assess this movement.

## Moralist

This is where the problem of the Preface comes in.

Heffer argues the question as a moralist, and says that we must protest against the suppression of the FTUA because as "socialists [we] should not be seen to have double standards".

He stresses that we protest about suppression of "human rights" in Chile, Argentina, etc., and that therefore we must protest about Russia.

This is a completely wrong starting point. It puts the deformed workers states on a par with capitalist dictatorships.

This view of course is completely compatible with Pluto Press's mentors—the British Socialist Workers Party, who do view the USSR and the deformed workers states as "state capitalist" regimes.

But this is a concession to the right wing and causes confusion amongst those that want to do something about these workers' struggles in Russia.

## Socialist revolution

The problem facing the working class of Chile is the necessity for a socialist revolution to overthrow capitalism.

The problem facing the working class of Russia is the necessity to overthrow the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy by a "political" revolution in which the basis of nationalised property relations has already been achieved.

Out of Heffer's moralistic approach to rights and his non-historical, non-class position on the USSR come all the problems both of the preface, the introductions and the documents.

Heffer's position is a conscious evasion of his responsibilities. He was able to sit back and watch the Wilson/Callaghan governments attack the working class with only a rare gesture of opposition.



Heffer

Now he feels he can clear his conscience by sitting back in his armchair and 'protesting' about Chile, Argentina, and Russia with no intention of acting to resolve the problem.

But the introductions produced by Viktor Haynes demonstrate a different political position.

Not one of the introductions mentions Stalin or Stalinism, despite the fact that they appear to go back to the roots of the problem—as far back as The Second Congress of Trade Unions (1919).

They vaguely refer back to the last independent organisations of workers in the '1920s'.

Haynes makes no attempt to understand the degeneration in the Soviet Union.

In fact the whole book fails to refer to any degeneration having taken place.

Similarly the introductions present the solution as lying simply "through the fight for basic political and trade union rights, the fight for a better standard of living". (p.15).

The documents themselves show the confusion

created among Russian workers by the forcible suppression not only of Trotskyism but also of people like Solzhenitzyn, followed by the build up of them by the capitalist class, and by all of those that they come into contact with from the West, presenting the question of human rights as a 'moral' issue.

So when we find that many of the documents are addressed to the UN, to US President Carter, to anti-communist US trade union boss George Meany or to the Helsinki Agreement signatories, this error must be understood, blamed on the oppositionists' "friends" and fought against.

## Confused

In reality the only references to Stalin come in a confused attack on the "cult of personality" and in the one mention of an international issue (Czechoslovakia).

The book is divided into five sections, the first of which is 'The Right to Organise'.

Within this there is a great deal of interesting material with regard to the FTUA.

It began with a worker called Vladimir Klebanov, who began speaking out against abuses in 1958.

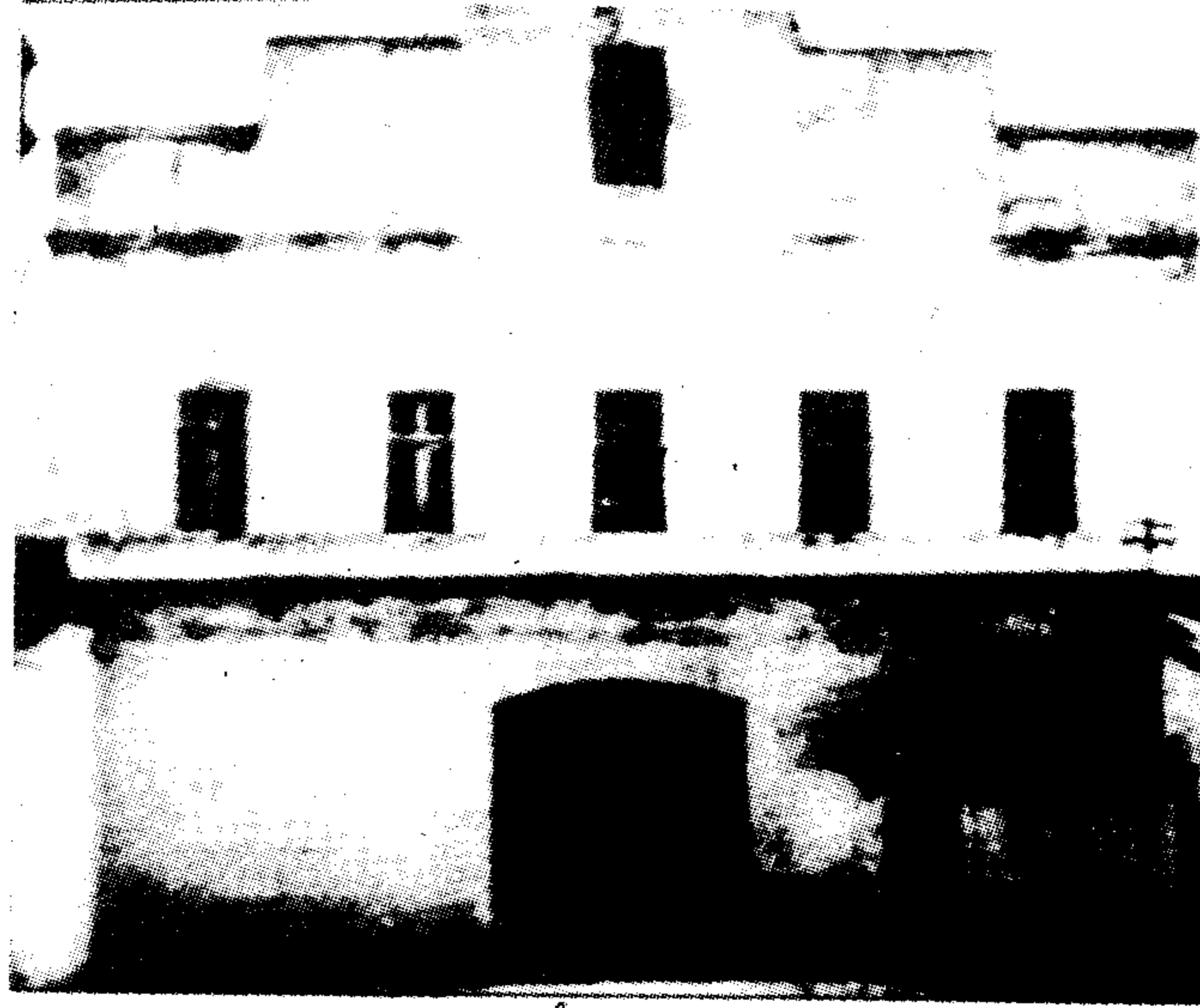
From then on he faced a series of attempts at dismissal which finally succeeded in 1966. He went through every kind of imprisonment and several confinements in mental institutions.

## Waiting room

Klebanov met together with those who were to form the FTUA in the "waiting room of the Central Committee of the CPSU".

All the others were complainants like him, and, as the book shows, had received similar treatment from the bureaucracy.

What is shown is that although it is alleged that there is no unemployment in Russia and a worker can be prosecuted for being out



Stalinist jail (top) and political prisoners

of work for more than four months, in reality many of the signatories of the documents have been unemployed for years.

They maintain that they are only the tip of the iceberg, and that there are tens and maybe hundreds of thousands like them.

The FTUA was formed in November 1977, and all its members are unemployed.

They claim to number in the hundreds of members and candidate members.

The various documents in this section show what the so-called 'trade unions' are today in Russia.

The 'elections' are prepared beforehand and after the preparation:

"The workers evidently do not get a look-in. In the end, although workers outnumber staff by ten to one, nearly all those who attend the conference are technical-engineering

personnel—that is, those for whom the workers' interests are not important". (p.32).

This system is of course designed to back up bureaucratic privileges.

One of the interesting things about the cases in this section is that many of the workers have been victimised for complaining about corruption.

## Revolt

In the next section on "The Right to Strike", some of the major struggles of the working class are described.

Particular attention is given to the revolt of workers in 1962 in Novocherkassk in which a mass strike was put down with a massacre.

It is important to note that on the protest demonstration:

"the columns of people fly red flags, a portrait of Lenin, and banners bearing peaceful slogans". (p.76).

One of the documents also shows the mentality of protest that ends up something more like a petition to a Czar rather than to the government of a workers' state.

## Activists

The third section on the "Right to Protest" is not particularly strong except to show that one of the writers appeals to "activists of the Communist and Socialist Parties".

The "Right to Emigrate" section is particularly weak except for one statement on the plight of the working class.

"Our intelligentsia may not be allowed freedom of creativity, freedom of thought or speech, but it's far worse for the workers—they don't have the freedom to work, to eat, to rest, to strike or to form their own trade unions". (p.115).

What, then, are the general questions raised by this important book?

Firstly, when Heffer argues that it is all a moral question, he gives something to the Soviet bureaucracy, who seize on the opportunity to argue whether the FTUA is a trade union or not.

The Kremlin bureaucrats argue that the FTUA is not mass based. Their fellow bureaucrats in the British TUC accept this argument.

But this is not the question. What it is necessary to understand is the degeneration under Stalin in the Soviet Union that both took away free trade unions and, more importantly, usurped the power of the working class from within the Soviets.

## Suppressed

A bureaucratic dictatorship was installed. All opposition was persecuted. And it has remained suppressed from the 1930s—with the Moscow Trials—right the way through to the present day.

The independent interests of the working class, represented at first in the USSR by the fight of Trotsky and the Left Opposition, and then by the Fourth International, against the imposition of the Stalin dictatorship find no mention in the book.

Without this background it is impossible to grasp why it is not possible to work openly in the USSR to build a mass trade union.

Just as with the Corresponding Societies before the formation of trade unions in this country, or the Workers Commissions in Spain, clandestine organisation always begins with the sacrifice and struggle of the most resolute few.

The FTUA has only the possibility of being the embryo of trade unions. Indeed its members must in reality recognise this, since they have in their constitution that it is a democratic centralist organisation—a form of organisation not possible in a genuine trade union.

In reality the FTUA is a group of people fighting for the right to have trade unions. It is therefore a worker dissident group.

## Defensive

But this still does not solve the problem for the working class in the Soviet Union.

Trade unions are only defensive organisations. They can only expose or act against abuses.

What is required in the USSR is a clandestine Trotskyist political organisation that includes in its programme defence of the right of workers to have trade unions for action against bureaucratic excesses, but which goes much further.

Such a party would fight for the reconstruction of Soviets on the basis of the political revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy.

These Soviets would then constitute the workers' form of rule.

Such a party, requiring the utmost clarity on the origins and international role of Stalinism in the 62 years since the October Revolution, would have to be part of the reconstructed Fourth International.



Haynes' introductions do not mention Stalin or Stalinism



# New front with Liberals planned by Stalinists

At a conference at Central London Polytechnic next weekend, the Stalinists of the Communist Party and their fellow-travellers in the Broad Left, together with members of the Union of Liberal Students will be launching a 'new alliance' in the National Union of Students.

Although the conference has been called on the basis of an "Open Letter" signed by various 'independents' as well as prominent members of the Broad Left (including NUS President Trevor Philips) and of the Union of Liberal Students (ULS) it is clearly the brainchild of the Communist Party, whose policies completely dominate the Broad Left.

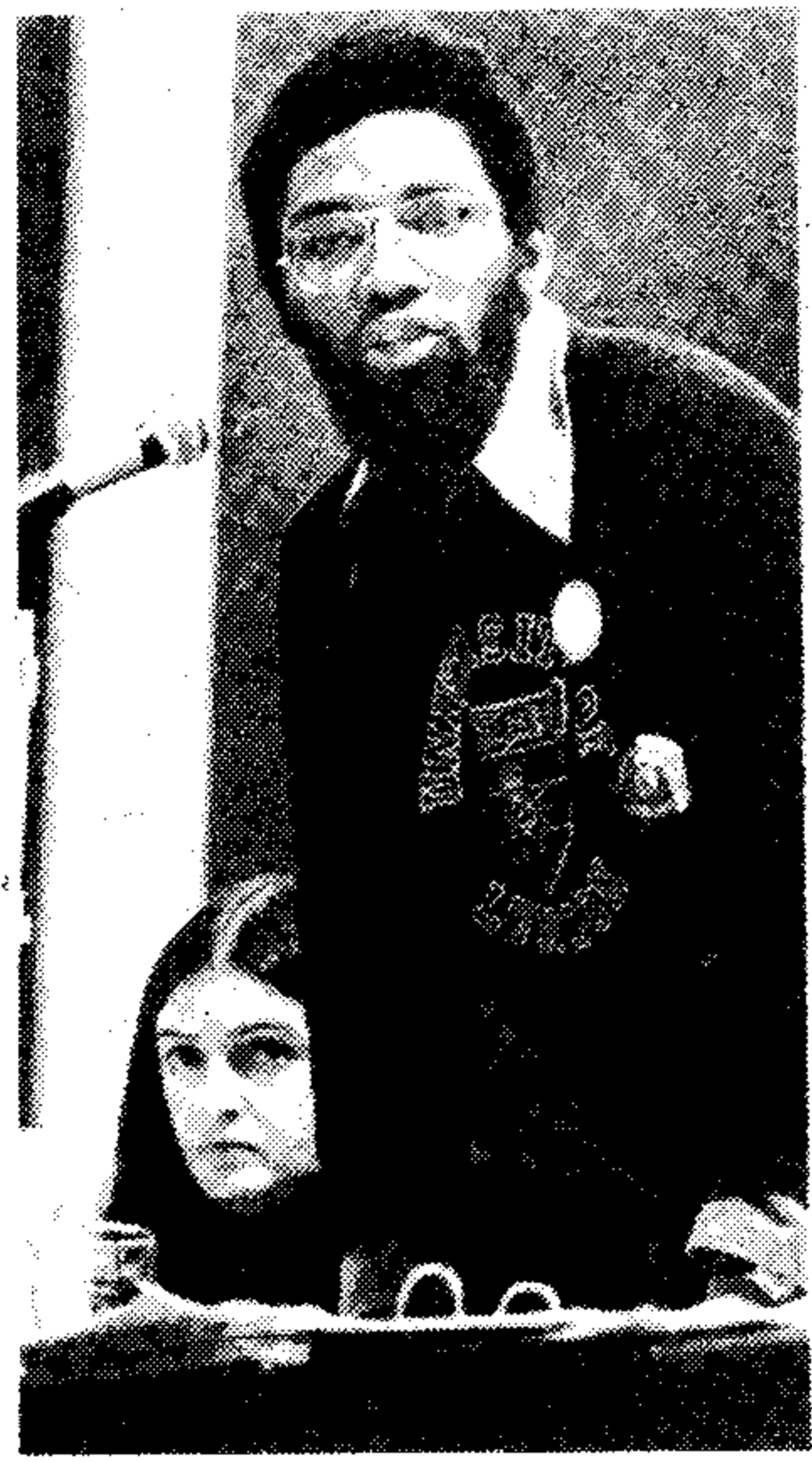
## Open Letter

The "Open Letter", originally circulated at the Easter Conference of the NUS, cynically argues that:

"We . . . need a political force, embracing all those on the left active in the student movement who are arguing and fighting for fundamental and radical change in society".

It argues that 'the Left' in the NUS has to:

"renew and review its approach, ideals and purposes: we cannot allow ourselves to become complacent, stagnant and trapped in the practices so cliqued and traditional to the student movement".



Trevor Philips

No doubt the 'cliqued practices' Philips, Aaronovitch and Co. are talking about are the militant actions against education cuts, such as occupations and rent strikes.

The 'ideals' that need to be reviewed are doubtless a whole range of socialist policies that NUS has taken up, on paper, over the years.

Behind the radical rhetoric of the 'Open Letter', the intentions of the Communist Party are by no means original.

This 'new alliance' represents nothing more than the consolidation of the 'democratic

strategy' that the CP have pursued in their leadership of NUS.

The essential part of that strategy has been an alliance, not just with the Liberals, but also with the Federation of Conservative Students (FCS).

The Stalinists have adopted and fought for policies that are central planks of the FCS's platform.

On student union democracy they have attacked general meeting sovereignty and fought for elections by cross-campus secret ballots.

In NUS elections FCS members have been guaranteed seats on the National Executive, purely by the votes of Broad Left members.

The Stalinists' strategy in NUS, as everywhere else, has been to build alliances with bourgeois forces in order to hold back and head off militant struggles by students or workers.

The 'new alliance' proposed for NUS is a logical step in that process. It has nothing to do with uniting 'the Left': the main purpose is to draw the ULS, part of a capitalist party, into organisational unity with the Stalinists and to try to extend the base of the Broad Left's support.

There will doubtless be a number of rank and file members of the Broad Left who will be dubious about the establishment of this 'new alliance'—especially since it has been proposed by the leadership (acting as individuals rather than as representatives of political organisations) without any discussion or consultation among the membership.

The conference, therefore, gives revolutionaries the opportunity to intervene, to expose the treacherous record of the Broad Left and to link the proposed alliance to their whole history of betrayal.

That task will not, however, be carried out by the Socialist Students Alliance, the IMG's 'left unity' organisation in the NUS.

The IMG, and therefore the SSA, have taken the decision to take a 'positive attitude' towards the new alliance.

Hoping to get a better hearing if they say nothing about the Stalinists' intentions in creating this new organisation, the IMG have expressed the astonishing and baseless 'hope' that the conference:

"... will see the birth of a socialist alliance that will unite students against the attack of Rhodes Boyson and his cohorts in the Tory government."

(*Socialist Challenge*, 17 May) The expression of such a forlorn hope shows how little the IMG understand the manoeuvres of Stalinism, and how desperate they are to find something progressive in their every twist and turn.

They regard the inclusion of the Liberals as a side-issue, barely worth a mention in the SSA's initial reply to the "Open Letter".

## Essential

The Liberals, of course, do not just 'tag along' in formations of this kind: they are essential to the success of the Stalinists' strategy.

Substantive parts of the Liberals' programme must be incorporated into the policies of the new alliance to ensure their co-operation.

The reactionary leadership of NUS will only be defeated in a principled fight to expose every aspect of their treachery and manoeuvring.

Snuggling up to them in the hope that they might change course is no substitute for a clear fight for a socialist programme based on uniting students with the independent strength of the working class.



# Teachers' claim swallowed already

As we go to press teachers' leaders are in negotiations with the local authorities in the Burnham Committee over their 36.5% wage claim.

This claim is being answered by a 9.3% offer plus £1 a week to teachers on less than £5,000 a year pending its referral to the Clegg Comparability Board.

But any further offer made by Clegg will mean further massive cuts in jobs and supplies to schools, since Thatcher and Carlisle have promised to impose the cash limits introduced by Callaghan's Labour government far more severely and to bring public spending down to below the £8,500 million level aimed at by Healey.

Yet the price increases in gas, electricity, petrol, etc., have already, in the short period of the Tory government made the 36.5% claim inadequate and it must be updated.

Teachers and all other workers seeking wage rises must now see that the only way to defend their wages from inflation is by a sliding scale of wage clause by which their take home pay rises automatically with price rises.

## 50 motions

The National Executive of the National Union of Teachers, overwhelmed by some 50 resolutions from its local associations calling for strike action, has decided to ballot in 'carefully selected areas' on the question of some form of strike action

if the present Burnham talks are not successful.

## All-out strike

It is clear, and has been from the start of the negotiations, that the only way for teachers to restore their Houghton levels of pay is to learn the lessons from the Camden NUPE workers and to call indefinite national strike action against Thatcher's cash limits and the comparability board proposals.

The demand must be for the immediate offer of the full claim and extra to update and offset the last week's increase in the cost of living, with no strings whatsoever about loss of jobs or cutbacks in the state education service.

# Final sell out at Dunlops

A month after the closure of the Dunlop Speke Plant, which resulted in the loss of 2,400 jobs, the company has announced the re-employing of 140 of the original workforce who had refused to accept the redundancy money.

In return for this tiny concession the Dunlop "action" committee has agreed to lift its picket of the Fort Dunlop plant, the Walton Footwear Plant and the golf ball factory in Speke.

This is clearly a face-saving cover for the final abandonment of any pretence of a fight to save the plant and the whole 2,400 jobs.

Throughout the long, protracted closure period since January of this year, the "action" committee, headed by TGWU Executive Council chairman Stan Pemberton, has skillfully manoeuvred to avoid an occupation to save all the jobs and have attacked demands to open the books to an elected trade union committee.

The WSL was witch-hunted in two of the first mass meetings for raising these demands.

The Dunlop workers not only had to face the problem of a right wing led "action" committee, but were also presented with the spectacle of nearly every other left wing group acting as "left cover" for the "action" committee.

## Misleaders

From the beginning it was only the WSL that stressed in its leaflets that the key problem facing the Dunlop workers was their own mis-leaders who accepted that the "viability" of the company is more important than the viability of the members—that jobs had to be sacrificed for the sake of the company profitability.

The WSL argued that there

was a need for a new leadership which would represent the independent class interests of the members.

What was the position of the rest of the left?

The Communist Party was represented on the "action" committee by Tony Lane, Liverpool University sociologist and author of one book "Make the Union Strong".

He was co-opted onto the committee as public relations man and apologist for the right-wing "action" committee leadership—repeating the role played by Huw Benyon at the Triumph closure.

Lane was 100% in favour of the job-cutting, workers' 'viability plan' and enthusiastically sold it to the workers on radio and in the papers.

He has consistently backed every cynical manoeuvre of the "action" committee right from the start.

CP District Secretary Roger O'Hara also attacked WSL leaflets at a public meeting, defending Pemberton and demagogically calling for unity—the spurious "unity" which leads to the dole queue.

## Boosting Pemberton

The WRP did not produce a single leaflet throughout the whole closure and the only *Newsline* journalist to report a mass meeting in any way mildly critical of the leadership—Stephen Johns—was subsequently expelled from the Party!

The Militant Group laid on a special LPYS public meeting in Speke to boost Pemberton and Loyden in their attempts to sell-out the struggle.

Far from criticising them and calling for occupation, the tame cat "Marxists" of the Militant Group preferred to revel in their newly acquired "credibility".

To cap it all, a leading spokesman for the Merseyside Militant Group, Richard

Venton, had the gall to accost members of the WSL during the May Day march in Liverpool and demand to know why we had "sabotaged" the struggle against the right wing at Dunlops by attacking Pemberton!

He apparently objected to our apt characterisation of Pemberton as a "con-man" and of Loyden as a "windbag"! The IMG failed, similarly, to criticise or expose the witch-hunting "action" committee.

Their single leaflet put out at the plant during the "Socialist Unity" campaign at Edge Hill failed to criticise the bureaucracy at all, implicitly blaming the membership for the inaction and thereby tail-ending the "action" committee.

## Grovelling

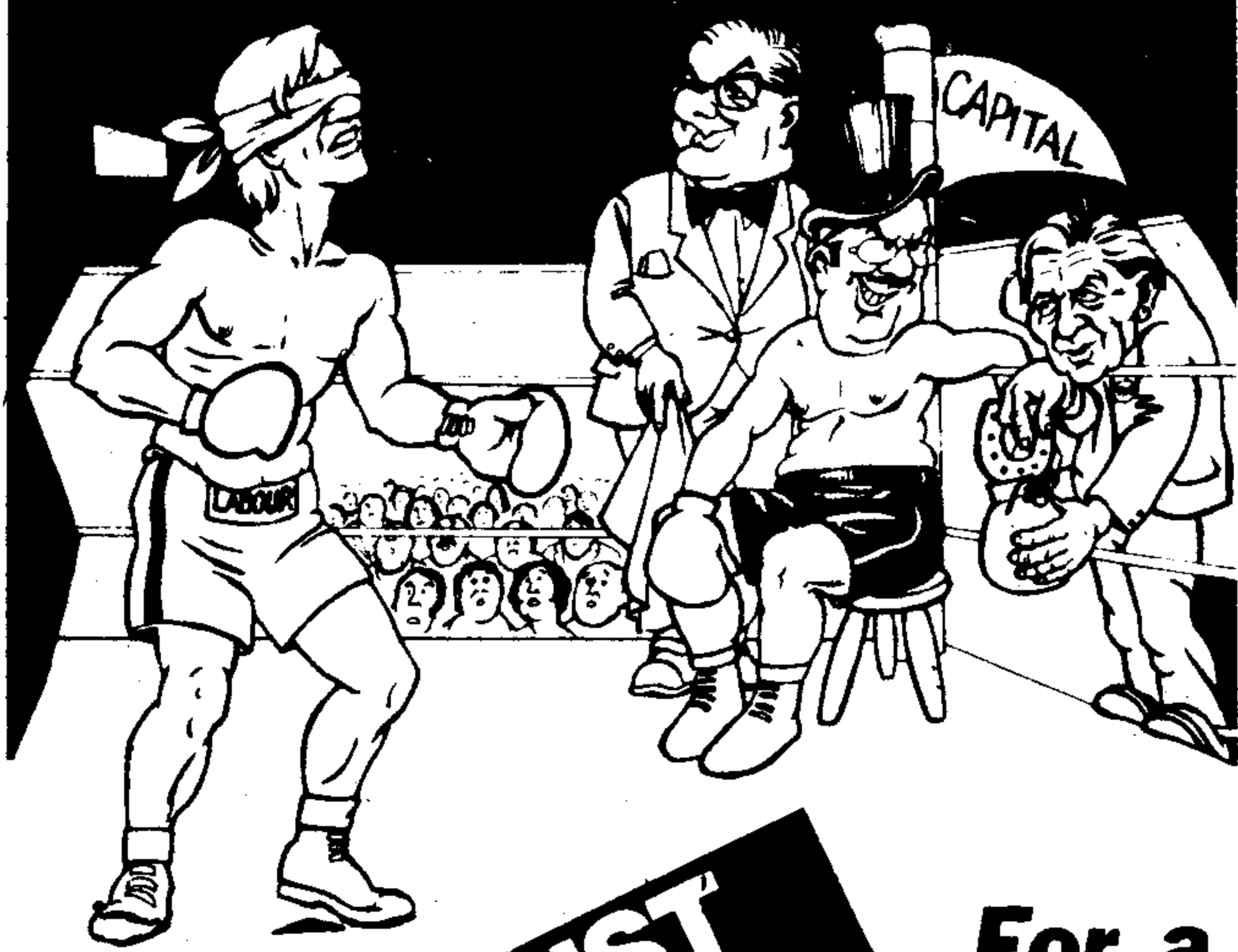
But the Socialist Workers Party have led the field in terms of uncritical and grovelling articles about how wonderful the protest stunts of the action committee were and how the whole campaign was:

"an example to trade unionists. The road blocks and occupations, the regular mass meetings, the excellent workers newspaper have built up the morale and confidence of the work-force to fight for every job".

To add the final irony to the whole charade of their intervention in this closure, the SWP have had the shameful gall to invite the action committee to their Rank and File conference where they will no doubt be put on a pedestal as an example to all of how to sell out your members.

Only the WSL, despite its limited forces in the area, has carried out a thorough-going campaign designed to expose Pemberton and the "action" committee as the betrayers of the Dunlop workers.

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# FBU SLAMS ARMY SCABS

With the bitter experience of their nine-week pay strike against Callaghan's Labour government, firemen are in no mood to accept similar treatment again—let alone from the Tories.

This was the clear message from last week's FBU conference in Bridlington.

One resolution opposing one of the union-bashing plans of the Tory government was moved by London delegate Terry Beckwith and seconded by Mick Rowlinson of the Bucks brigade, that:

"In the light of the recent change of government of the country, conference affirms that it would strongly oppose any attempt to withdraw the right

to strike from trade unionists".

This was carried by the conference, as was a Bucks resolution demanding that the TUC take the position of total opposition to the use of the armed forces as strikebreakers.

The Bucks motion went on to call on the TUC to "support fully any trade union members against whom the armed services are being used to break their industrial action".

### No criticism

Mick Rowlinson, moving, pointed out that after the TUC had voted not to support the firemen in their lone battle against Phase 3, army strike-breaking continued without criticism—let alone without TUC action.

This must never be allowed

to happen again, he said.

He went on to speak strongly against a Cheshire amendment seeking the campaign for unionisation of the police and the army—which was defeated by the conference.

Rowlinson was also the only delegate to take issue with the otherwise generally accepted formulation on pay by the FBU leadership, summed up in a composite motion that declared:

"This conference demands that on satisfactory settlement of the 1978/9 pay agreement, the EC take immediate steps to maintain Fire Service pay at a minimum of the upper quartile of the male manual workers' earnings. This position to be maintained regardless of any future government pay policy".

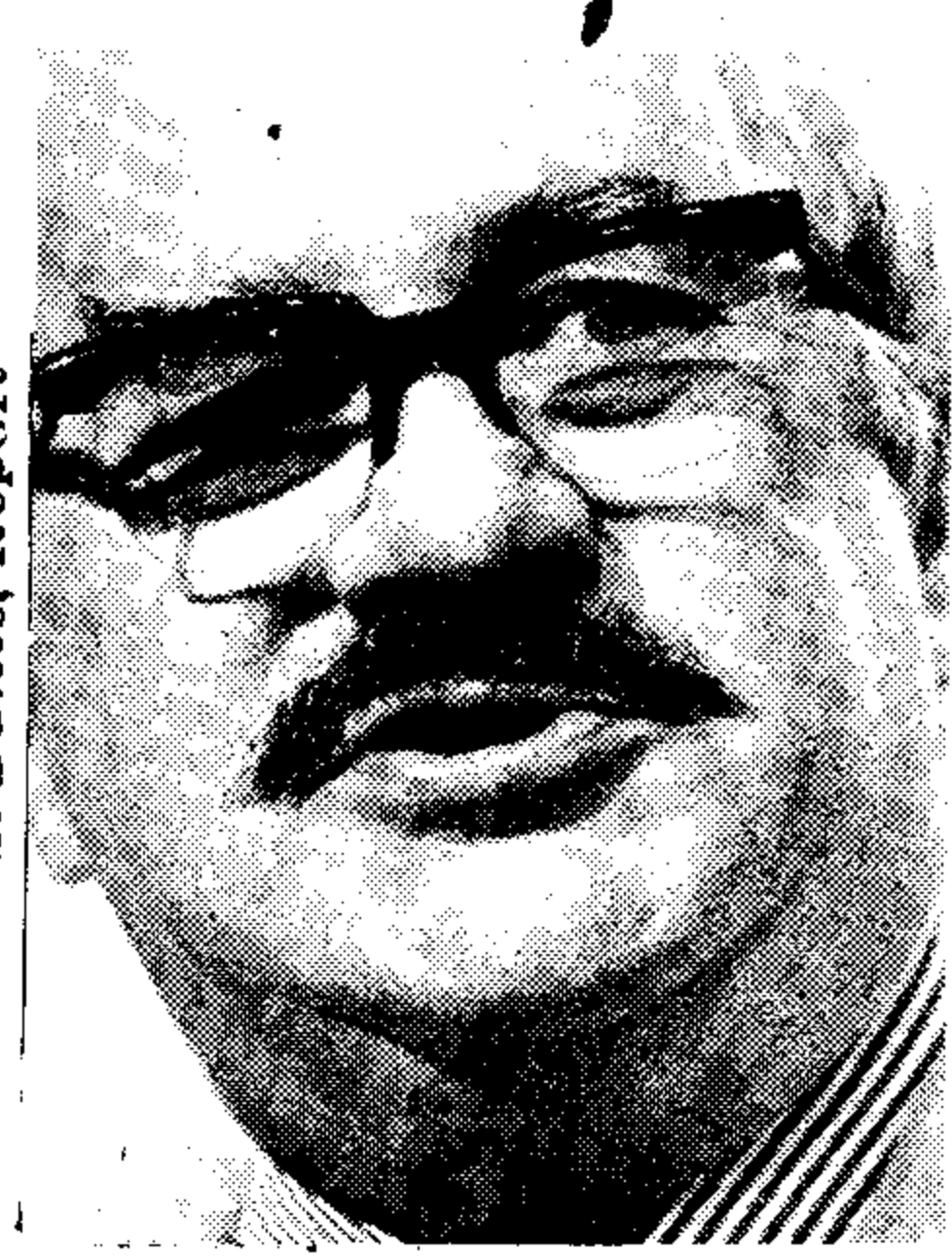


PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

FBU leader Parry

Speaking in the debate on the emergency "right to strike" motion, Rowlinson warned that linking pay to the upper quartile

did not offer any protection against inflation.

"If the top paid 25% of male manual workers accept pay restraint and offers below the inflation rate, then we, too, are tied to that", he stressed.

The conference went on to pass a witch-hunting resolution urging the Executive Council to "take immediate steps to find the source" of leaks of information to the press.

This was generally understood not to mean the Tory press, but the WRP's daily *Newsline*, which has closely followed the struggles within the FBU.

FBU members should shun such witch-hunting—and concentrate rather on the unprincipled manoeuvres that their right wing leaders are so keen to carry out in secrecy.

## Left swing in IPCS

The Institution of Professional Civil Servants has for a long time been the most "moderate" of the Civil Service Unions; even affiliation to the TUC, accepted only in 1976, is still viewed with suspicion by a proportion of the membership.

However, the recent pay struggles have quickly given the membership a far greater sense of their identity as a section of the organised working class movement, as was shown by many of the decisions taken by its Annual Delegate Conference at Eastbourne last week.

### Censure vote

There was strong censure of General Secretary Bill McCall and the National Executive Committee over their handling of the one-day pay strike on April 2.

The leadership's attempts to defuse the dispute by unilateral acceptance of an offer a day or so before the strike without full consultation of the NEC or the membership was the subject of harsh criticism and a motion from the floor of 'No confidence' in McCall.

### Scabs

A third of the members of the NEC had actually scabbed on the 2 April strike and of those who stood for re-election two did not succeed and others came well towards the bottom of the poll—a healthy indication that the union is at last beginning to see the absolute necessity of collective action with brothers and sisters in other trade unions.

This change of attitude was reflected in other decisions taken at conference.

These included a rejection of secret ballots before strike action is taken; a commitment to issue a public policy statement pledging support for gay members discriminated against at work; affiliation to the National Steering Committee Against the Cuts; the need for a Freedom of Information Act to keep Official Secrets to a minimum; and the implementation of a monitoring system against racial discrimination recommended in the "Application of Race Relations Policy in the Civil Service".

The task for IPCS members in the coming year must be to ensure that these progressive steps do not remain as 'paper' motions only.

# Trades Councils given no lead

The annual conference of Trades Councils ended at Harrogate on Sunday without giving any clear lead to the labour movement on fighting the forthcoming Tory attacks on the closed shop, picketing, union democracy and benefits to strikers' families.

Emergency motion no. 1, whilst registering "total opposition" to the Tory government's intention to shift the balance of power "further" towards the employers, simply called on the General Council of the TUC to:

"refuse to co-operate in any way with these proposals and to mount a campaign to ensure they never reach the statute book".

Conference chairman Terry Parry of the FBU however, defended recent talks between the TUC and Tory Employment Secretary James Prior with the claim "we only went there to tell them it was not on".

### No discussion

Although the platform carried this motion without serious challenge—mainly because hardly any discussion was allowed on it—they did not have all their own way.

Early in the conference a motion to make available a register of trades council secretaries' addresses was carried against the platform.

Later several sections of the report submitted by the Trades Council Joint Consultation Committee were remitted with strong opposition from the platform.

### Proscribed

Most significantly, they were defeated on section 15 of the TCJCC report which would have effectively proscribed Trades Council support to the Campaign Against a Criminal

Trespass Law.

Hounslow secretary Pete Rowlands successfully secured the reference back by a slim margin of 21 votes in the teeth of opposition from the platform.

Later the platform were defeated when they asked conference to remit a motion condemning the document "A Better Way".

### Right wingers

The document, drawn up by right wingers such as Terry Duffy, Tom Jackson, Geoffrey Drain and Ken Thomas, was a set of Thatcherite proposals amounting to permanent wage control and so-called 'trade union reform'.

The platform argued that because the signatories were in a personal capacity the union leaders involved had the right to sign it.

A WSL member, however, pointed out that the "Better Way" was not simply a "maverick" document written by a group of right wingers but reflected the whole method of the TUC.

It stood midway in the direct line of continuity between the Labour Party/TUC Liaison Committee document and the Concordat.

That Concordat had been accepted by the General Council of the TUC without authority, and then used by Callaghan in electioneering broadcasts to boast that Labour was more able than the Tories to control the working class.

A clear break from such treachery was needed in favour of policies based exclusively on the independent interests of the working class, he asserted.

A motion on "technological change", which pointed to the unemployment created by such developments as silicon chips, was carried.

Seconding the motion, Jack Dromey made a spirited defence

of import controls.

He said it was right to support import controls to protect the working class in imperialist Britain against unemployment in the same way that it was right to support those fighting for national liberation against imperialism!

He went on to defend the NEB "a step towards socialism".

Section 36 of the report dealt with facilities for the under-fives.

## TOY WAGES

Conditions of super-exploitation among women workers have been brought to light by unionisation moves in a factory at Didcot near Abingdon.

Rates of pay in the firm, Selected Toys Ltd are 40p an hour, which leaves full time workers, even including so-called 'bonus payments', with only marginally over £20 for a 40 hour week!

Like more and more of those faced with similar conditions, where women and immigrants are particularly affected, a breaking point was reached and interest began to build up in trade union membership.

From a meeting organised last week a shop steward was elected and all but a couple of the workforce of thirty had been recruited into the TGWU by the end of the week.

Despite evidence that the employer has already turned for outside advice to prevent the union's growth, and open threats to close the factory rather than recognise a union, the workers are not deterred.

Alan Thornett, delegate from the Oxford Trades Council contrasted the strength of the report to the total inability of the TUC to implement it.

It had, he said, become "a monument to the division between theory and practice".

Whilst publishing the report on provision for the under-fives the TUC had acquiesced with wholesale cuts in nursery provision, education in general and the whole of the social services.

He said the struggle in Oxford to defend nursery provision had shown that only direct action was effective.

A further rebuff to the platform came soon after with the platform's failure to obtain the remission of a motion from the Oxfordshire County Association which called for an end to the present system of appointments to Regional Health Authorities

and to "replace it with democratically elected representatives of the community and all those involved in the NHS".

The motion was carried overwhelmingly.

An Emergency Motion on the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital condemned the Islington Area Health Authority for its "current, back door attempt to close the EGA on the grounds of insufficient nursing cover".

It failed to mention the EGA occupation, which followed a WSL initiative in 1976 and which was decisive in defeating the first plans made to close the hospital.

No mention was made of the crucial question of strike action throughout the London health service and no opportunity was given to discuss the motion from the floor.

## Law backs "spy"

Alan Law—the shortly-to-retire Midlands official of the TGWU—went on TV last week saying that he was recommending acceptance of the lorry tachograph "spy-in-the-cab".

Up to now the TGWU has opposed their introduction, as has the government despite the fact that it is a "European" law.

Both sides fear the explosion that the tachographs would provoke from lorry drivers.

When Law was asked by the TV interviewer why he had changed his position, he replied that the TGWU was "not above the law".

This is the exact opposite of his last statement earlier in the year that the European parliament was "not above the TGWU".

The other reason he now gives is that "I have my bosses".

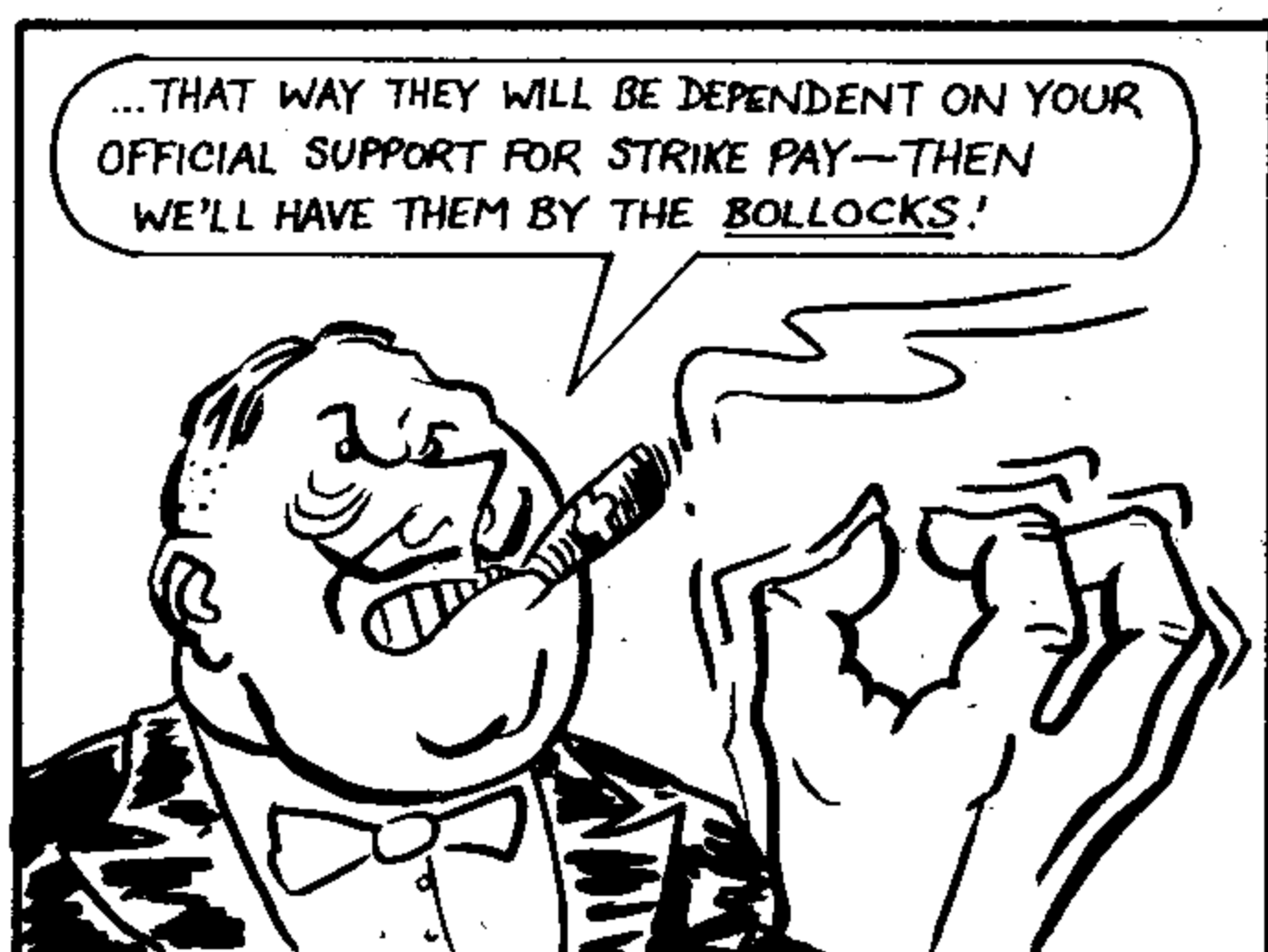
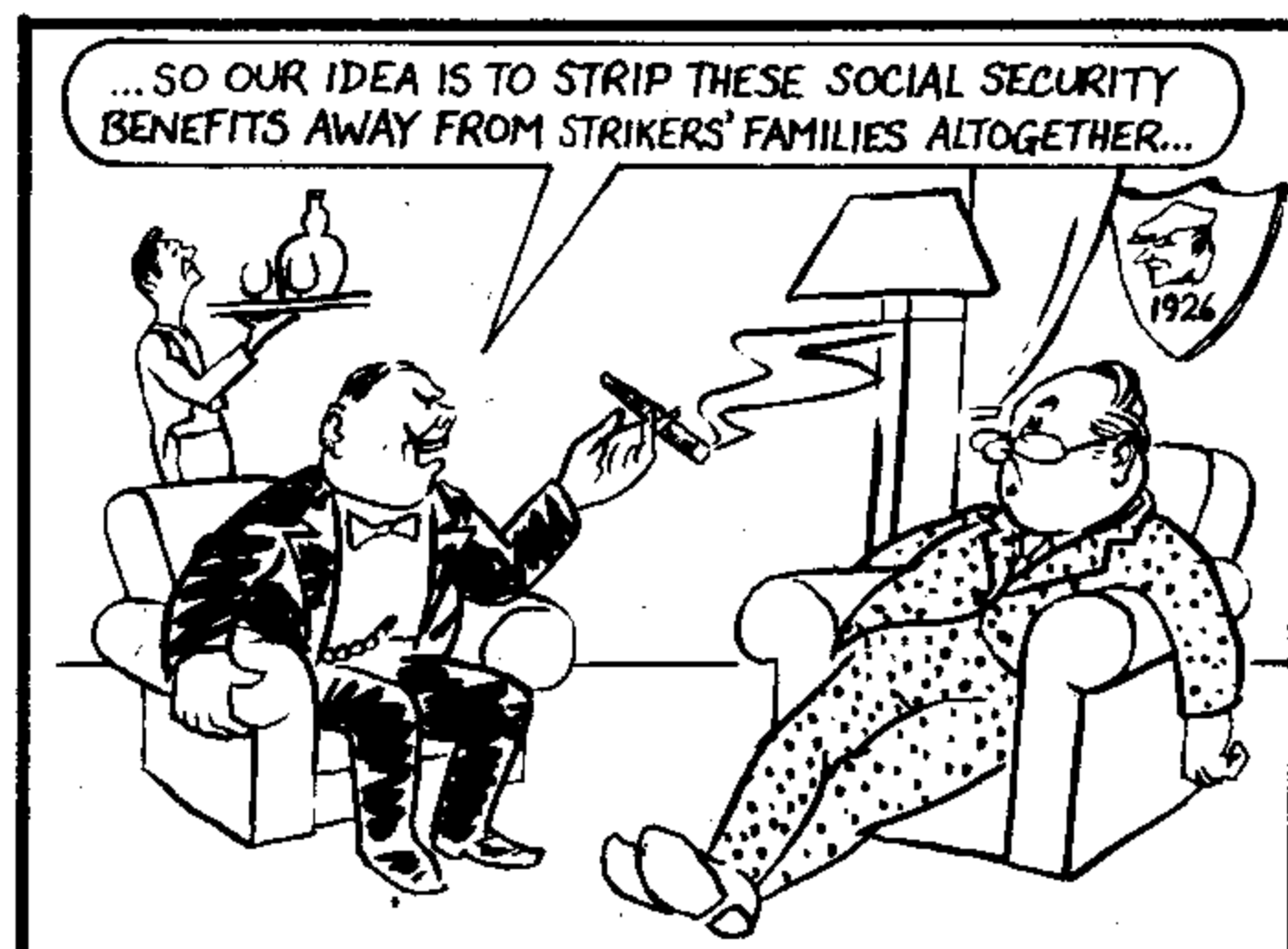
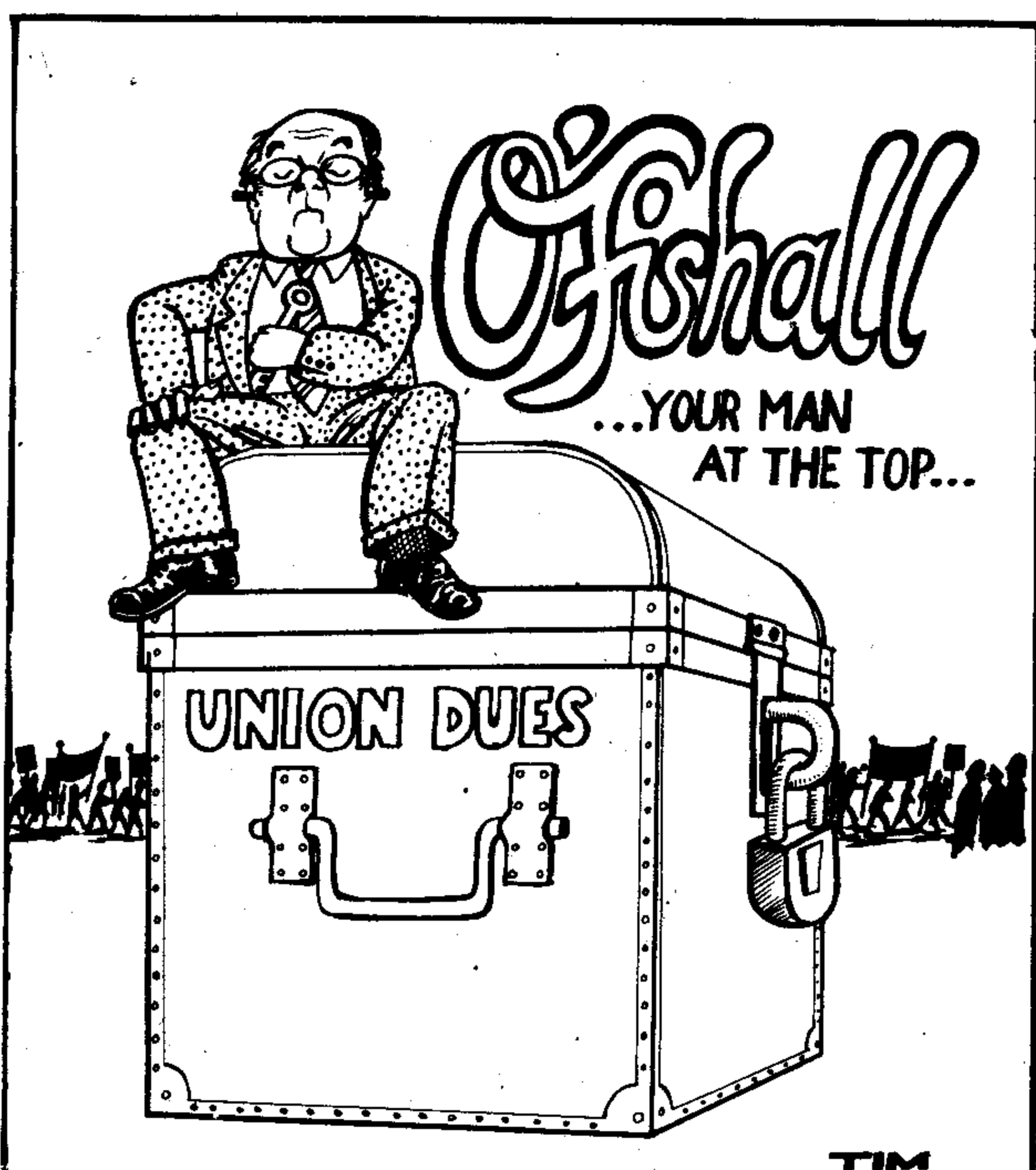
This clear hint that he has been pressured on this by the leadership of the TGWU tends to bear out reports that a secret full-time officials' meeting has decided their position.

Already the chairman of Law's own 5,000 strong drivers' branch has said that his branch will ignore Law's position.

And Eric Rehnitz, commercial drivers' representative on the TGWU Executive has said there was no question of the TGWU dropping its opposition to tachographs.

It is lay members who decide policy changes, he declared.

But if they are to do so on this question, lorry drivers will need to fight Law and the TGWU hierarchy as well as the employers.





# SOCIALIST PRESS ★

## Defeat for CPSA right wing shows workers' mood

The series of humiliating defeats suffered by the right wing leadership of the Civil Servants' union CPSA last week is a reflection of the militancy that has developed inside the working class during a winter of major pay battles.

The CPSA bureaucracy proved less well able than their stable-mates in NUPE, ASTMS and the UPW to contain this revolt—and therefore the outcome was that much more spectacular.

General Secretary Ken Thomas in particular faced the brunt of the onslaught by delegates angry over the sell-out of the CPSA's own pay struggle.

Thomas was censured for his signing of the pro-incomes policy document "A Better Way".

A motion censuring the NEC's handling of the campaign and its refusal to call out members in the DHSS and Department of Employment was also passed.

The NEC was further censured for its failure to press the fight for a closed shop, and told to take up this fight now, in the teeth of the Tories' anti-union plans.

And Thomas came perilously close to being forced out of office as General Secretary when he threatened to resign if conference passed a motion to withdraw his nomination to the TUC General Council.

He was relieved by the motion being allowed to fall under standing orders.

And an emergency motion calling for CPSA withdrawal from the Pay Research Unit and the 1974 Pay Agreement was defeated by only 4 votes in a 444-440 split.

Another emergency motion, calling for a withdrawal from the Whitley Council system was only defeated by 635-339—even after vicious witch-hunting speeches were made against it by full time officials.

Though extreme right winger Kate Losinska was elected President—after Tribune supporter had stood against Communist Party member Peter Colman, splitting the left vote—last year's rigged right wing majority on the NEC was dramatically overturned with the results producing a 20-6 majority for assorted left wingers.

But the bureaucracy were not completely routed and succeeded in holding back some crucial debates.

While the conference was meeting in Brighton, the new Tory government was already making attacks on civil servants' jobs in the Customs and Excise Department.

It was also clear that Thatcher's plans to denationalise profitable sections of public sector bodies would affect jobs in the Post and Telecommunications and National Giro sections



Ken Thomas addressing CPSA members

of the CPSA.

Despite this, Ken Thomas, CPSA General Secretary, in his opening speech to conference insisted that there was no need to embark on confrontation with the new government and that the union should "wait and see what happens".

In keeping with this, emergency motions on cuts and cash limits were not heard, leaving the union without any policy on the cuts.

And other motions which called for CPSA to oppose Tory anti-union legislation or the right to strike and picket and the right of strikers families to receive supplementary benefit were also kept off the agenda.

### Join police

Ken Thomas, under fire, defended the pay settlement, and to delegates who had contrasted its meanness to the huge pay increases given to the army and police, suggested:

"You should join the army and the police if you want the pay that they get".

Attacking the motion proposing to withdraw from Whitleyism, Thomas threatened that:

"If you vote for this motion you are voting for the union to be taken over by self-appointed shop stewards, the SWP and the bloody Communist Party".

Throughout the conference, it became obvious that there was a growing feeling of hostility between the majority of the delegates and the full-time officers, particularly Ken Thomas, General Secretary and Alistair Graham, Deputy General Secretary who displayed their complete contempt for the membership.

Another battle with the full-timers was over motion 12 which sought to limit the

number of full-time officers on selection committees.

Alex Ritchie, CPSA National Organiser, made an emotional speech and threatened that the full-time officers' APEX branch would immediately go on strike if the motion was passed!

Not surprisingly it was defeated.

Several good motions were passed on new technology, the closed shop, the 35 hour week, maternity leave, workplace creches, and gay rights.

However it is clear that such conference decisions cannot be implemented, or Losinska and the full-timers be ousted without the building of a new revolutionary leadership within the CPSA.

## FUND

**£38.75! That is all we received this week towards our £2,500 Special Fund! On that basis we simply won't make the target by the end of July.**

Most of the target has been covered by pledges but these pledges need to be turned into hard cash to be the tune of £200 a week if we are to reach our target in time.

All contributions should be sent to: Socialist Press Special Fund, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

London SP Lottery—April  
Winning number—144

Oxford Lottery  
Winning numbers—15/14  
Winning card number 164

## Screws on Garners strike

Enormous pressure is now being placed on the Garners strikers approaching their 17th month in the fight for union recognition.

This Thursday strikers will meet Syd Staden and other TGWU Region 1 officials, where another bid will be made to weaken the strikers' morale and resolve to continue.

At a similar meeting last week the bureaucrats gave a flat refusal to lift a finger in support of the Garners strikers.

They declared they had no intention of giving official backing to the conference (see below) called by the strikers to bring their struggle before the TGWU membership.

There is a great danger that if the labour movement does not rally to the defence of union and picketing rights at Garners, the bureaucrats will succeed in dealing a blow not only against catering workers but against the whole working class.

In July the Biennial Delegate Conference of the TGWU meets, and steps are already being taken by officials to ensure that the Garners' struggle is not discussed there.

There is no doubt that the bureaucrats would like to see the death of this strike (and the marathon recognition struggle at Sandersons) before their reac-

In two weeks a minority of the British electorate will elect 81 MPs for a European Parliament.

Members and supporters of the Workers Socialist League will not be voting. We call for a boycott in every EEC country, no matter what candidate is offered.

The EEC Parliament is one piece of banditry piled on top of another; a sham parliament of an organisation designed to attack workers on an international scale.

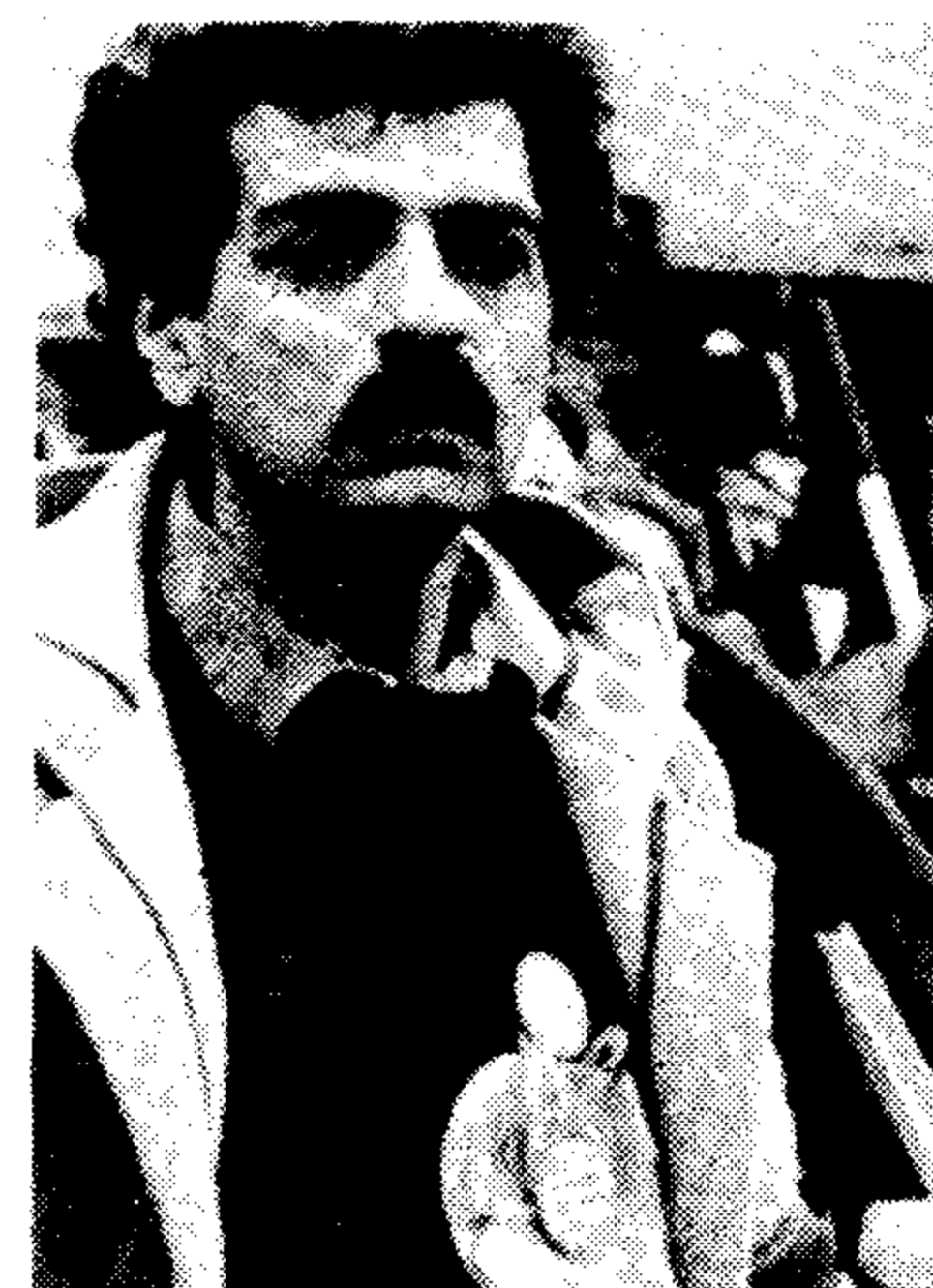
It bears the same relation to a workers republic of Europe as the United Nations to a communist international: the complete opposite of it.

The EEC is a capitalist block to counterweight to the capitalist blocks of the USA and Japan, and to combat the economic power of the degenerated workers' state of the Soviet Union and of its satellites.

It shields member states from attack by their own working classes. It is the economic wing of NATO.

### Communist vote

Communists vote in elections for national constituent assemblies because constituent assemblies have a progressive element and, while providing a cover for the work-



Election mad—Ali

ings of capitalism, appear to the working class to offer some way forward.

By standing candidates or offering critical support to other candidates, communists are able to demonstrate that the assemblies exist to maintain capitalism, and to expose those within them who claim to represent the working class.

The EEC parliament contains no such contradictions. Not only does it have no control over the EEC bureaucracy (being merely a 'deliberative and advisory' body) but even if it did have such nominal power it would remain an open expression of international capitalism.

### Reform

Those in the Labour Party who once argued not to join the Common Market now argue for 'reform' as if the EEC's appalling waste of human and material resources, the international attacks on jobs and the rampant nationalism and competition between the member states, was an accident capable of correction.

The "internationalism" of the EEC states is like the internationalism of the Olympic Games where in the spirit of "internationalism", athletes are encouraged to cheat, foul and maim their opponents just so long as they win.

Why not stand candidates on such a platform? The answer is probably blindingly obvious to every class conscious worker.

It has not proved obvious to the opportunists of the USFI and their British section, the International Marxist Group.

Tariq Ali is standing in West London on a slogan which *Socialist Challenge* says can be 'summarised' as "Against the capitalist EEC—for a Socialist United States of Europe" as part of a USFI intervention in all the nine countries where elections are taking place.

### How many votes?

In France the local section of the USFI (the LCR) has united with Lutte Ouvriere to field 81 candidates.

But the question in these elections is not at all which candidates from which parties are elected—but how many go to the polls and how many stay home. This is as true in Luxembourg, Germany and France as in Britain where the poll is certain to be low.

Even to vote for an 'anti-EEC' candidate is to play into the hands of the bourgeoisie.

To stand candidates is to do so a hundred times over, precisely because it lends credibility to an election, which should be denounced from the rooftops.

The Workers Socialist League stands for true internationalism, for international unity in struggle against capitalism, for the international liberation of the proletariat, the destruction of the EEC, for the overthrow of capitalism in every Western European country and for a Socialist United States of Europe.

In the spirit of internationalism, stay home on June 7.

AS WE GO TO PRESS, Socialist Press correspondents at the UPW, NUPE and ASTMS conferences are still reporting on developments for which we have no space in this issue. Full reports on each of these important conferences will appear in a round-up in next week's Socialist Press. MAKE SURE OF YOUR COPY!

## GARNERS

Conference

Discuss the Implications of the Garners Strike

Open to delegates and visitors from all unions

Saturday June 9

Details from Strike Committee, 12/13, Henrietta St., London WC2