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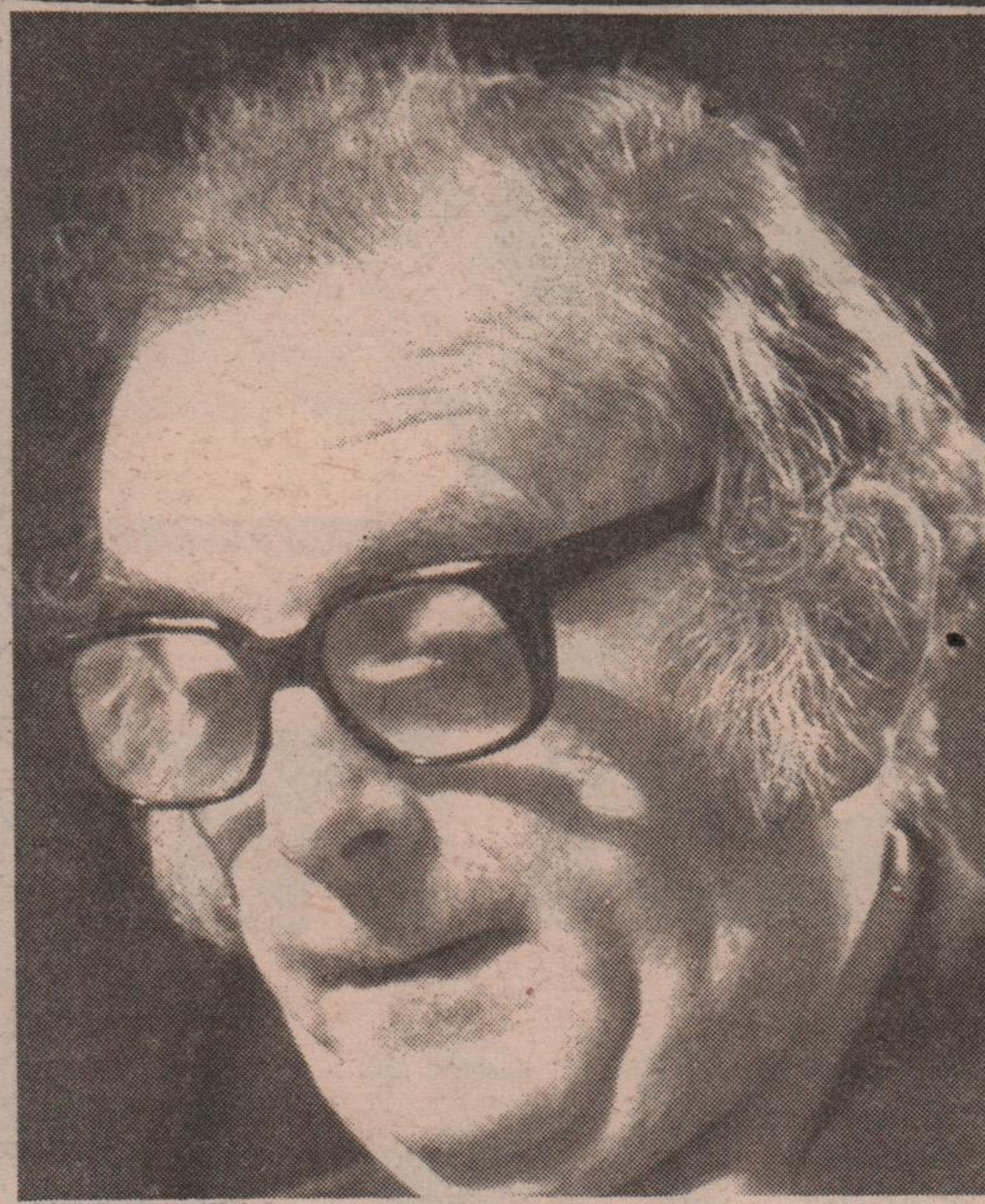
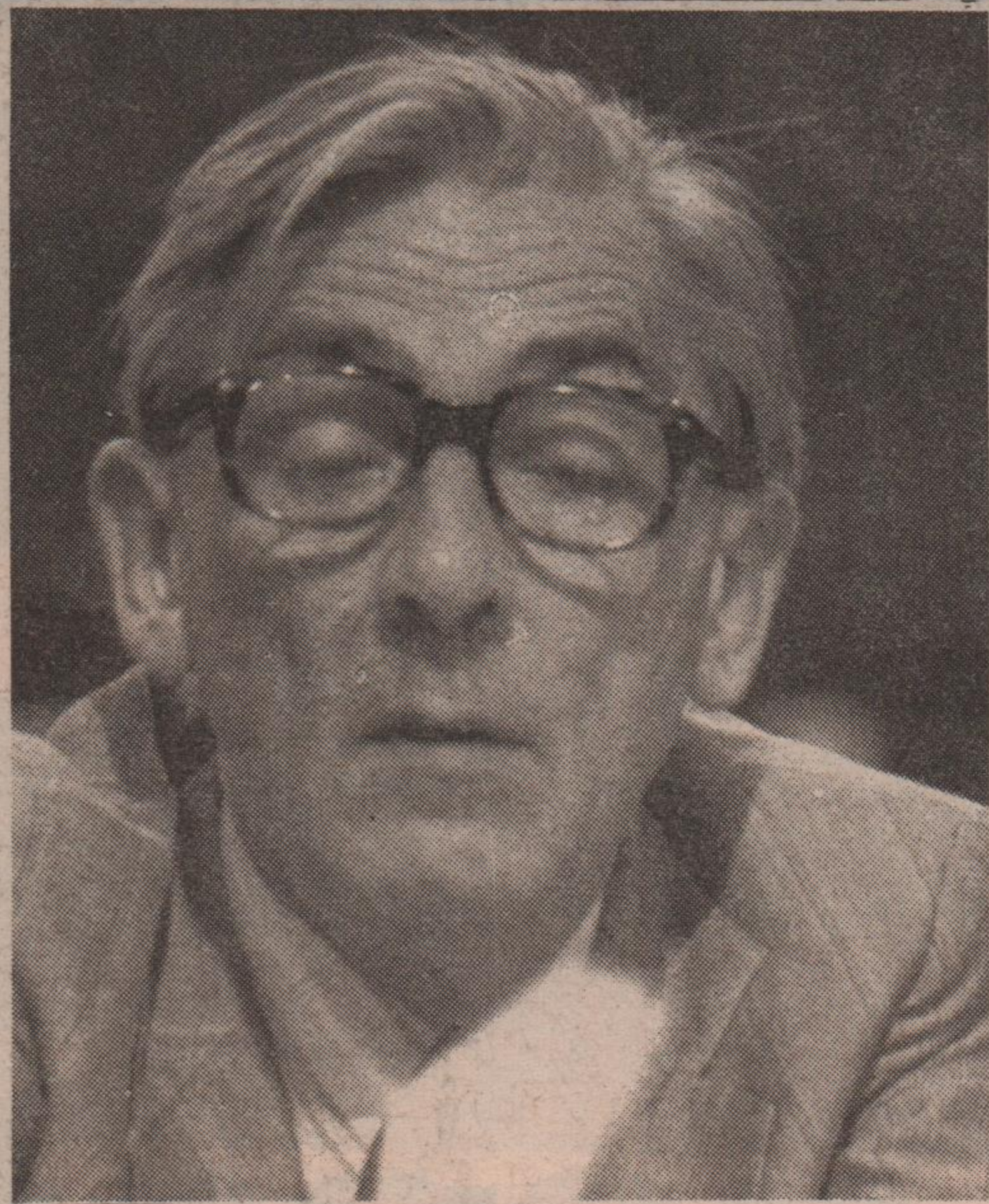
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DUFFY, MURRAY, KITSON: at last, the general staff of the trade union movement mobilises — to sink the strike

BETRAYAL!

by Alan Thornett

BL WORKERS have been sold out by their leadership.

Last Tuesday morning, 3rd, as BL workers prepared to vote on the 3.8 per cent pay offer every national newspaper gave prominence to AUEW president Terry Duffy's call for acceptance.

"I am backing England", said Duffy, who had called an emergency meeting of the AUEW Executive to endorse his back-to-work call. Appearing on television after the vote to return to work, he seemed to see himself as a part of BL management, saying, "We do not intend to gloat".

BL workers had been absolutely solid on Monday morning when the strike began, with virtually every plant 100 per cent out and heavily picketed. The workforce was willing to fight. Yet they had clearly been shaken by the collapse at the top.

The prospect of entering into a major confrontation with the government with their top leaders openly against them proved too much for most of the plants: and the mass meetings turned the original 8-to-1 majority for strike action into a 25,000-to-19,000 vote to accept the deal.

The sell-out began last Saturday, 31st, when Edwardes appealed directly to the general secretaries of the 11 unions with members in BL. A meeting organised by ACAS, with Edwardes and the general secretaries and Len Murray, went over the heads of the Joint Negotiating Committee.

The urge to escape confrontation stung these TUC leaders into united action such as they have never organised to support workers' struggles, or their unions' policies against the four per cent limit.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



Behind the BL betrayal

The fight was there...

CONVENORS FACE MASS LOBBY

"REJECT! REJECT! DUFFY OUT! DUFFY OUT!" chanted hundreds of BL workers as convenors gathered in the Birmingham AUEW hall on Monday to discuss the "improved" offer being put forward by the General Secretaries.

Three coachloads had come up from Cowley and hundreds had made their way into town from Longbridge. They vented their fury on Alex Kitson, the Acting General Secretary of the TGWU, who had managed to face both ways at once throughout the previous few days—Sell-out merchant! Scab! they shouted.

AUEW chief negotiator Ken Cure—the most open advocate of surrender—wisely avoided the lobby and sloped in round the back way.

The lobbyists burst into the main hall and refused to leave until Bob Fryer, the

by Jim Denham

popular Cowley convenor, gave an assurance that he would move a motion for rejection of the deal.

It was a show of rank and file involvement that contrasted sharply with the behind the scenes negotiating that had taken place over the previous days.

The lobbyists waited outside for three hours before they finally heard the outcome of the meeting—a recommendation for rejection.

As one angry Cowley worker commented, "We stand outside with no infor-



Bob Fryer

mation while they talk. In Poland there'd be a loud-speaker out here so we all knew what is being said."

JOHN HARRIS



Longbridge bitter

Jim Denham reports on the Longbridge militants' verdict

ON Monday at Longbridge, the mood after the close vote to accept the "improved" offer was bitter.

Most workers, including those who'd voted for acceptance, headed straight home, glum faced.

Some bravely returned to the picket line refusing to accept defeat until the convenors' meeting later that day.

Most gathered in the 'stewards' hut' to drink tea and carry out a post-mortem on yet another defeat.

Leadership

"We're sick as pigs," said Pat, an inspector from the ADI. "Lack of leadership was the number one reason for this. The media campaign

like the Mirror's headline "Go back to work says union boss Duffy" made it worse. But the weakness of Duffy and Kitson was decisive. Kitson and the TGWU were if anything even worse than the AUEW. Duffy was at least honest. But Kitson never made his position clear. It makes me sick to read the front page of the TGWU Record saying they'll support all those who fight the 4% limit. We should demand to know why they didn't apply that policy at BL."

A finisher in CAB1 agreed. "We lost this time because of the national leadership or lack of it. No-one thought the new deal was any good. But after all the secret talks and wheeler dealing over the weekend, people obviously felt confused and demoralised."

Bring to order

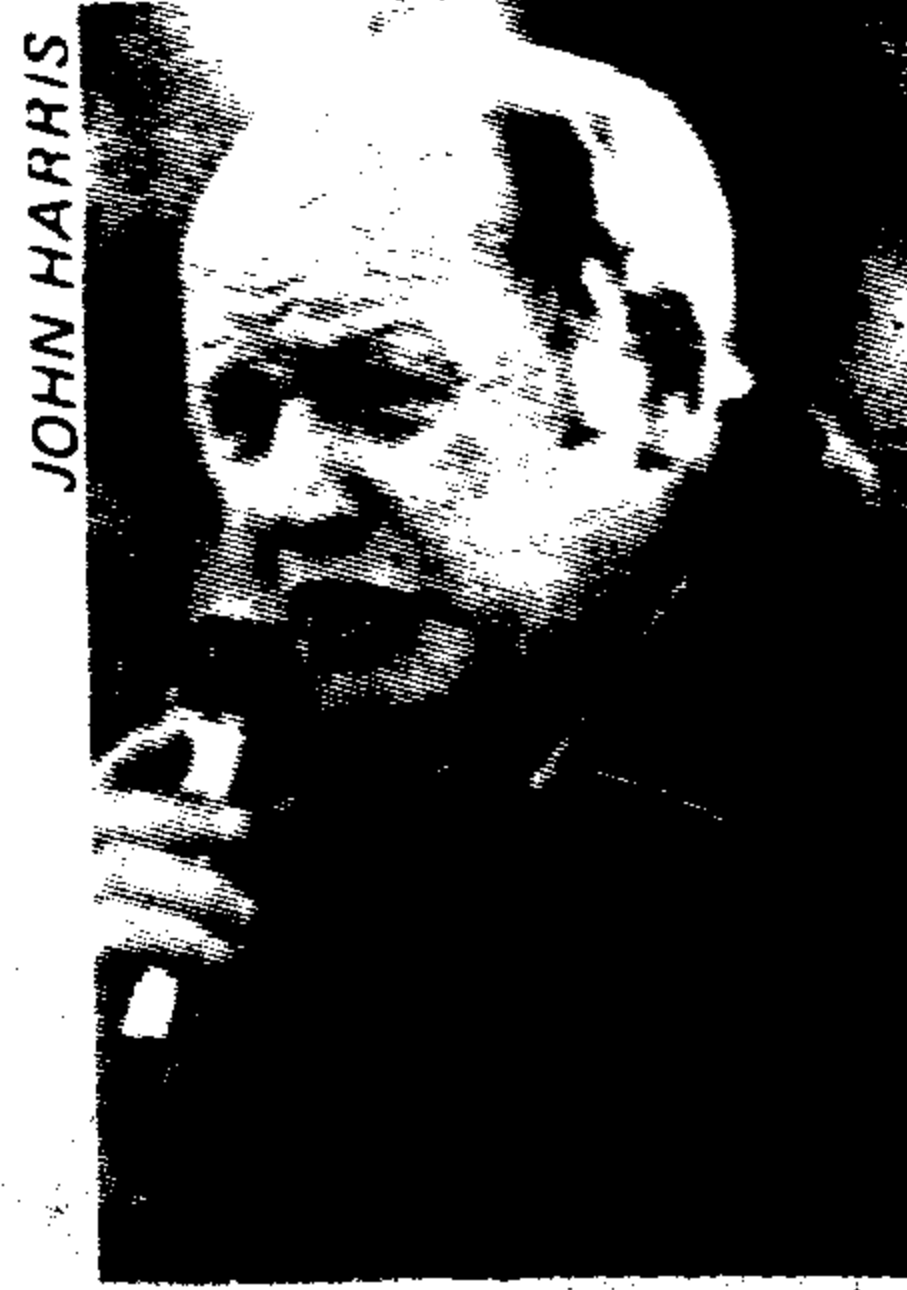
Vic, like many of the active pickets at Longbridge, had changed his views over the last few weeks. "I wasn't a militant in the past but I do care about a decent job and a living wage. If that makes me a militant, then so be it. What we've got to concentrate on now is bringing Boyd, Duffy, Kitson and the others to order. This betrayal must never be forgotten."

Miners

And not only AUEW and T&G

The miners thrashed the government. I'd like to know if they are going to settle for four per cent. Gormley has set the miners' review for later this month. He knows it could be dangerous if the miners came out in support, not only for us, but for their claim as well."

"Everyone talks about democracy and accountability in the Labour Party — in political parties", said Ken. "Well, you've got to talk about democracy in the unions as well. It goes in line with it."



Jack Adams

Bob, a TGWU steward from the experimental department, joined the discussion: "You can't blame the members. They showed their willingness to fight at the first mass meeting. It was when the General Secretaries stuck their noses in that the members became discouraged and confused."

Philosophical

I think Kitson and Boyd are scared of a fight with the Tories."

The only dissenting view came from Dave, a TGWU steward in CAB1 who belongs to the Communist Party: "No, that isn't true. You could blame the leadership last year, but not this time. You can't lay the blame anywhere but with the members. We know Duffy's no good, but the members just didn't have the bottle when it came to it."

A more philosophical attitude came from Dennis, a T&G steward from the East Works. "I'm obviously very disappointed, but it's not the end of the struggle, it's the beginning of a new stage. Edwardes was obviously frightened by the militancy that the blokes showed. He knows he nearly pushed them too far this time."

I hope we'll build on that. If the gaffers think this vote is a green light for more bullying, they'd better think again. If they try anything, we'll be out again without fail."

Les, a T&G member from the West Works, echoed this more optimistic view: "People put their faith in princes, or in this case officials. We've got to be willing to fight alone in future."

Initiative

But even challenging Edwardes this far is something. They'll think twice before trying this again. The management's got the wind up — the way they removed

the files and documents from the plants proves that".

Billy, a Sheet Metal Workers' steward from the West Works, gave his analysis: "We haven't yet got an organisation in the plants capable of taking an initiative independently from the officials. But the events even after the general secretaries' intervention show a substantial minority is developing who are willing to fight on regardless of the officials."

Unfortunately, the majority are still geared to officialdom. We give the Duffy and the Kitsons a power they should never have."

Logically, we've now got the ingredients for building a strong rank and file movement in the plants. What's lacking is political answers to the closure threat."

New layer

Pete, an AUEW steward from the West Works, agreed. "This dispute has drawn a lot of previously apathetic people into action, and opened their eyes. The picketing on the West Works gates was fantastic all through Monday, including the night time, and into Tuesday morning."

A whole new layer of activists has sprung up who are willing to fight — whether that means fighting the police on picket lines, or fighting the officials in union meetings."

Now we've got to prevent these people becoming demoralised and lapsing back into passivity. That means building a real grass roots movement and expanding the Leyland Action Committee."



Cowley women angry

Steve Akers and Rachel Lever report from Cowley's picket lines

Women at the Cowley picket lines on Monday morning were shouting and waving flags at the

The women strikers were particularly vehement. They told us what they thought of the so-called offer: "Nothing, nothing. All management want to do is make us believe that we're going to get something we're not. Bonus deals! We can produce 100 per cent working there, and we'd still get nothing in the end."

"All we get is empty promises in this place!" Another woman joined us: "Last week I got 43 pence out of the bonus scheme! 43 pence!"

"Don't spend it all at once!" laughed the others. "I was going to send it off to a charity!"

Dennis Kilgallon told us: "The officials are

playing down the fact that they're not negotiating for us wages. They're just trying to sell us on it. It's a totally one-sided deal with a few huge benefits and doesn't touch anything at all. We want money on the basic rate, and that's what the officials should be negotiating."

"We have got to make a stand, because Edwardes has taken on the unions and weakened them at Cowley", said Alan. "Over the past four years we've seen it on the lines. Management tactics have been to enforce policies without even consultation with the unions. The officials have got to take stronger action."

The others around agreed. "It's the people at the top, the officials, who are breaking".

"You look at the TUC",

said Ken. "our governing body, so-called. It would have been more reassuring for us if they would give us backing from the workforce of other industries. Like the miners, the power workers, transport — the lot. If that happened I would force the government straight away to think twice about not stepping in."

"There should be more pressure by the TUC on the government", stated another picket. "I don't know why there hasn't been."

There was bitterness and anger that Edwardes' bullying was not met by the leadership with promises to pull out all AUEW and T&G members in solidarity.

"That's what should have happened in the first place", said Ken. "The government's aim is to

break the unions. If we want to have a union, we've got to stand together and fight together. Picking us off one by one is easy."

Behind the BL betrayal



...but the union leaders sabotaged it!

BETRAYAL! -from front page

Most of the general secretaries agreed to the 'revised' offer put by Edwardes. According to the press this included George Guy of the NUSMW, a member of the Communist Party: when Socialist Organiser phoned the NUSMW, Guy was unavailable for comment.

Alex Kitson of the T&G refused to make a recommendation.

Since the offer could be rejected only on the basis of a determined struggle against Edwardes and the Tories, this silence meant support for the new proposals.

Sir John Boyd (acting for Duffy), along with Frank Chapple and Len Murray, wanted the strike called off while the 'offer' was considered at the convenors' conference on Monday and the mass meetings on Tuesday.

Murray said he supported the deal because it was "premature to take on the government". Boyd said he would have nothing to do with any fight with the government.

The Joint Negotiating Committee (of convenors

and full time officials), who had been kept in the wings for 12 hours, rejected the deal and insisted that the strike went ahead while the meetings were held.

But Edwardes had got his foot in the door. He had got fresh mass meetings, which he had been calling for all week, and now he had the general secretaries on his side.

The senior stewards met, with the plants at a standstill and mass pickets on the gates. Their meeting was besieged by militant pickets from Longbridge and Cowley.

Under this pressure they voted 210 to 13 to reject the offer and recommend the continuation of the strike. Their decision was an important principled stand, but in the event was not enough to nullify the effect of the general secretaries' betrayal.

And in the big Longbridge plant, convenor Jack Adams gave a very weak call for continuing the strike at the mass meeting on Tuesday.

BL workers have therefore returned to work betrayed but not defeated. They are like an army who got half way out of the trenches, but were ordered back by their generals before the real battle could begin. Edwardes has once again been saved by the intervention of the trade union leaders.

The sell-out formula is actually worse than the original offer, since one of the 'concessions' agreed was a commitment to negotiate a new procedure agreement - the one Edwardes has been trying to get in for the past year, which contains far-reaching no-strike clauses!

Despite their victory, which has serious implications far beyond BL as far as Thatcher's four per cent policy is concerned, management was shaken by this strike.

At Cowley they were panicking so much they sent managers to leaflet the mass meeting at the gates. And Edwardes had put back the

sacking threat for the second time.

But that is little consolation to BL workers facing low wages and harsh conditions in the plants now. They must very seriously examine the roots of their betrayal.

A new drive must be made into the BL unions for democratic reforms which will tie the leadership to the decisions of the membership. A fight must be waged, despite the commitment to the new procedure document, for a democratic negotiating structure which will not allow itself to be pushed aside by the general secretaries.

The BL sellout also underlines the need for democracy in the unions, and the replacement of leaders like Duffy, Cure, Hawley and Kitson by those who are prepared to fight in the interests of the working class.

And throughout the labour movement, the sell-out of the BL workers by Duffy and Kitson and the general secretaries must be condemned.

Leyland ACTION

The Leyland Action Committee brought together militants from different BL factories to get the £20 claim adopted and then to help develop the strike. Now it will be working to draw out the lessons of the betrayal and organise to prevent repetitions.

Contact: Leyland Action Committee, 194 Dawlish Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham 29.

Spurring on Thatcher's attack

Socialist Organiser EDITORIAL

BY BETRAYING the BL workers, the union leaders have betrayed the whole working class.

The sell-out has an obvious and immediate impact on the pay struggle in the public sector.

Millions of workers up against Thatcher's 4% pay limit had looked to BL as the spearhead of the struggle to defend living standards: some might well have been able to use the BL strike as a means of strengthening their fight for strike action.

Now many will be discouraged, fearing isolation and similar betrayals at the hands of their union leaders.

In the private sector, too, the sell-out will have an impact. BL had emerged at the forefront of claims in the car industry and in engineering as a whole.

Now the abject capitulation of union leaders has given every employer the green light to follow Edwardes' example and stand firm on offers well below the rise in the cost of living.

But the setback is not restricted to the wages front. Trade union rights will come under fire throughout British industry. In BL itself management will forge ahead with still more attacks on shopfloor union organisation - including a new procedure agreement involving no-strike clauses.

Leaders' sabotage

And the labour movement as a whole will bear the price of the union leaders' sabotage of an opportunity to mount a struggle that could, by drawing in other sections, have challenged and defeated the Thatcher government.

Thatcher herself heard of the betrayal at BL while putting the finishing touches to her

speech for the reopening of Parliament (Wednesday).

At the forefront of the latest package of anti-working class policies tabled for session of Parliament are savage new attacks against the unions.

Queen's Speech

The Queen's Speech is expected to outline plans to open unions up to claims for damages for losses caused by strikes; to step up the drive to break up the closed shop and increase compensation paid to workers sacked for refusing to join a union; and to legalise wholesale victimisation of "disruptive groups of workers".

The BL mass picketing in defiance of provisions of Prior's Employment Act has demonstrated that action by the working class can sweep aside such legislation: but the betrayal of this struggle will spur on Tories and employers to legislate and to consider using their new anti-union laws, relying on the same timid union leaders to hold back any resistance.

Among the other Tory plans are shackles on council spending, attacks on nationalised industries and an assault on the rights of private tenants.

On top of this will come a new barrage of spending cuts.

Such attacks could have been halted, still can be halted by mass action of the working class. Even Edwardes was forced to draw his most extreme threats in the face of the BL strike.

The BL experience confirms that a leadership is needed, that is, prepared to confront and defeat the Tories: we urge re-energised by the sell-out to join with us in the fight to build such a leadership.



World news

MUGABE'S REGIME

TIGHTENS SCREWS ON WORKERS

JIM FARNHAM looks at the developments in Zimbabwe since Robert Mugabe's landslide election victory

RECENTLY, Prime Minister Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe has found it necessary to go on a rally tour of parts of Zimbabwe to try to recover the failing support for his government and ZANU party.

These rallies have given Mugabe the chance to use the same radical rhetoric which won him such electoral support from the oppressed masses.

He speaks to them in Shona, the language of the majority of those who voted for him. Previously, when Mugabe and others of his ministers have spoken in Shona, they have won massive support for defiant statements and promises of fundamental improvements in the living standards of the masses of black working people.

More than once such defiant and militant statements have been followed by official government statements in English, assuring whites and the bosses that the government did not really intend to take all the land from the rich landowners, that workers in the factories would not immediately get a living wage.

Rhetoric

We do not know whether such 'corrections' have also been made in Shona to the masses. It seems less than likely. But whatever the rhetoric of Mugabe and his government, it is precisely because the promises are not being translated into reality that it is now necessary for him, not so long after his enormous electoral victory, to have to tour those regions where he could once rely on almost total support.

Each day the balancing act on which he tries to maintain his position is coming under greater and greater challenge. A government which claims on the one hand to be there to meet all the needs of the masses, and on the other, promises to protect the property and profits of the capitalists is always attempting to achieve an impossible balance.

When capitalist property remains more or less intact, as is the case in Zimbabwe, when the capitalists have



Zimbabwe's unemployed have made few gains out of Mugabe's election

their own representatives sitting in the cabinet, when the forces of the state are used to protect private property, then the government, whatever it says or promises, is a bosses' government.

That always was the case with Mugabe's bosses' government. It is now coming to be seen to be the case. Workers and peasants are seeing before them a government which sends out the police if they strike, the army if they try to occupy

land. And at the same time, their daily standard of living is continuing at the same appalling level without any sign of the improvements which Mugabe and ZANU promised.

Mugabe tries to attract investment through creating and maintaining conditions of productivity. He uses the resources of his government to show the capitalists watching that the capitalists already investing inside Zimbabwe are reaping profits from their investments.

And the profits of any capitalist come only from the exploitation of workers—particularly in a situation such as Zimbabwe where technology is limited and concentrated in a few areas of production, capitalist profits must mean cheap labour.

That is what Mugabe has really set as his task when he talks about attracting investment and search for IMF loans.

Restricted

In these circumstances, the reforms which Mugabe undertakes have to be severely restricted and make no real impact on the standards of living of the masses.

Inflation is rising—presently at more than 20%. The unemployment under Smith remains more or less unchanged.

The redistribution of the land, absolutely central to Mugabe's appeal to the mass of people without land or jobs in the rural areas, is moving extremely slowly. It is being speeded up only by those who seize land—

whether unused or even some land used by big landowners—and defy the attempts of Mugabe's government to move them.

For thousands who fought against Smith, for millions who listened to Mugabe's promises of radical change, the fact that their own daily poverty and hardship continues creates a climate of growing confusion and dissatisfaction.

Crawl

This climate makes it possible in turn for the rejected reactionaries and opportunists of yesterday to crawl out of their holes and try to pose as the champions of the masses against Mugabe's government today.

Muzorewa and Sithole, who joined Smith's government, have both been greatly increasing their political activity over the last few months.

But for the moment, at least, Nkomo, with his ZAPU party holding a minority of cabinet seats and himself owning enormous amounts of land is probably too wedded to both to take the great risks of any real attempt to build the growing opposition against Mugabe.

The bosses sitting in Mugabe's government and controlling the economy view the developing political instability with a great deal of trepidation. Mugabe has never been the first choice of the imperialists and the capitalists.

His election, over their favoured stooges, was a heavy blow to their direct

control. He still remains in their eyes, far too easily able to mobilise a mass base against them again.

They will try to keep their options open. At the moment, there is at this stage no real alternative for the imperialists to promote.

But in a sense there is no need for them to try to promote any alternative. For, since he has come to power, Mugabe has been able to do what Smith and Muzorewa could never do for the capitalists. He has disarmed the guerrillas.

He has renewed the state of emergency imposed by Smith. He has banned all demonstrations and marches without the permission of his government and the police. He has made sure that some of Smith's cabinet ministers are still sitting in the cabinet today.

He has appointed one of Smith's generals to head the army. His ministers have warned workers that strikes will not be tolerated. And over the last week, it has been Mugabe who has sent Smith's old police to arrest hundreds of strikers.

Threat

Mugabe argues that the repressive measures he has taken are necessary to guard against the threat of reaction—both from the right wing inside Zimbabwe, and the South African army on the border, and the South African agents operating inside.

He is correct to see a threat from these sources. South African agents have

just murdered an ANC leader in Zimbabwe. South African troops are terrorising parts of Angola, South African troops occupy Namibia.

The generals who sit in the apartheid regime of the South African bosses are ready to use any measure of brutality and barbarism to protect stability (i.e. capitalist rule) in Southern Africa.

Stretch

But the Southern African rulers are not ready to further stretch their army, which has enough to do already and is faced with the growing development of struggle by black workers inside South Africa.

They would be reluctant to take on the still militant and relatively mobilised Zimbabwean masses.

Of course it remains a real threat, and will become more real the more desperate the South African rulers become.

But there is only one way that this threat can be fought, only one force strong enough to destroy it—the strength of the workers of Zimbabwe, united with the peasants and drawing on the strength of the black workers of South Africa.

Shoot

Mugabe talks about a 'mass militia' of armed workers and peasants. But how does he act to arm against reaction? He sends Smith's army to disarm the guerrillas with the help of British imperialist troops, and gives them the right to shoot on sight any worker or peasant with a weapon.

His actions create exactly the confusion and growing dissatisfaction which make it possible for the reactionaries to start looking for any kind of popular support.

Mugabe is under enormous mass pressure. He can not ignore it if he is to maintain his position.

This makes it possible that he will zig-zag from increased repression to new, limited reforms. But while capitalist property and profits are being protected, the scope for reform is minute.

Marxists will support any progressive measures forced on Mugabe, but at every point promote the independent strength and organisation of workers, necessary to defend any gains and extend them so that human needs are met.

Topple

At the moment, the reactionaries have nothing like the strength necessary to try to topple Mugabe. The big capitalists do not have the political will and confidence to move in that direction in an effort to re-establish their direct control of the government through the Smiths and Muzorewas.

Mugabe and some of his Ministers now speak more and more openly of the possibility (sometimes the 'necessity') of a one-party state. There is no doubt that they will try to present this as a measure to clamp down against the forces of reaction.

In the same way they have already presented their recent moves to clamp down on meetings, demonstrations and rallies as being aimed at

the Muzorewa and Sithole right-wing.

But the reality has already become unmistakably clear. Hardly had new measures of control been announced than they were being used against strikers, with several hundred being arrested.

The nurses and teachers on strike are amongst the most articulate and organised in Zimbabwe. Their strike represents much more than their own anger at the lack of improvements in their living standards under Mugabe's government. It is a sign of the deep undercurrents of anger and dissatisfaction building up right throughout the working class and amongst the peasants.

Mugabe's recent measures to tighten control have also included the formation of a new crack police unit, under his direct command.

Poverty

The situation is not getting better. The nurses and teachers face real poverty and hardship, but they are not the most oppressed or poverty-stricken people in Zimbabwe by a long way.

There is a real danger that they will be portrayed as the rich and fat of the cities, trying to get more for themselves at the expense of those in the countryside who grow poorer and poorer.

Through presenting such a distortion of reality, opportunists can use the current situation to rally support in the countryside, directing it against urban strikers.

It is exactly the conditions of scarcity and confusion which are developing in Zimbabwe today in which the oppressed and exploited can be turned against each other—those in the countryside against those in the towns. Only a bold political campaign, to unite in struggle the workers and peasants of the rural areas with those in the towns can remove that danger.

If they fight behind a revolutionary programme which will draw the peasants into struggle behind their leadership, the workers of Zimbabwe can move forward to carry their gains already won in struggle through to the struggle for the only solution which can meet the needs of the masses—the defeat of the capitalists and the bosses government under Mugabe, and the building of socialism and a workers and peasants government, as part of the Southern African and world revolutions.

To move in this direction workers need their own revolutionary party, based at every point on the independent strength and interests of the working class.

This means independence from the bosses, to whom Mugabe is trying to tie workers in 'participation'-style collaboration committees; independence from the petty bourgeois forces who lead ZANU and ZAPU and act to promote their own careers at the expense of workers; independence from the forces of the state which Mugabe presents as defenders of the masses, but uses against workers and peasants in struggle; independence from the bureaucrats who are seeking to establish a trade union bureaucracy from above.



Mugabe

-World news

Solidarnosc call to end strikes

by Alexis Carras

THE Presidium of Solidarnosc has called upon its ten million members to immediately cease all strike action

"The economic situation is critical. On the one hand, numerous problems continue to remain unresolved and lead to injustices and provocations which only heighten public indignation. On the other hand, there are protest actions of a wildcat character . . .

"Wishing to salvage all that we have gained as a trade union and to safeguard the possibility of carrying out actions which are not contrary to society's interest, we therefore call on the members of Solidarnosc to cease immediately all strike action."

The three-hour general strike called officially last Wednesday by the Union's Presidium, has not quenched the desire of the rank and file workers. In fact, of the 49 provinces, 23 either still have strikes or are planning some strike action in the proximate future.

Continuing food shortages, the breakdown of the distribution system and the shortages of fuel and other heating materials, which will become more and more urgent as winter comes into its own—are sweeping apart the last remnants of the Polish workers' and farmers' patience.

One of the main justifications for the new appeal to the union's membership is that the union risks

losing the support of the population: the realisation of the union's political objectives will become completely void of all meaning."

On both accounts the "justification" for the call to end unofficial action is erroneous.

The wildcat strikes are an expression of dissatisfaction with the moderate, compliant politics of the Walesa leadership. Rather than popular anger becoming dissipated and sapped, a new deeper and fiercer wave of protest and anger is sweeping the country, threatening to explode.

The riots in Katowice and Wroclaw, the continuing strike in the Jelenia Gora district, the demanding the replacement of a local Com-



Walesa

munist apparatchik and the louder proclamations of Solidarnosc militants like Jurczyk (runner-up in the Solidarnosc leadership elections) of the need to pull out of the Warsaw Pact, all point in the opposite direction from Walesa's prognosis.

The union's objectives and political/social aims, can only be those which the rank and file desires to argue and fight for. Right now, the rank and file in its hundreds of thousands are voting with their feet against CP control in the factories and farms and against the deprivations they are daily suffering—and, no doubt, against the plans the bureaucrats, the Church and the Solidarnosc moderates have for dumping the burden of putting the country back together again on their

shoulders.

In a new government reshuffle, General Jaruzelski, trying to create a "broader social and political consensus" around the government, has co-opted into ministerial posts, the head of the small Democratic Party, Edward Kowakzyk who will have the unenviable task of sorting out internal trade, wages, etc; a leader of the PAX movement, and other assorted technocrats.

After months of angling for a broad National Front type government which would have sufficient moral authority as well as physical muscle to impose order on the country, the Stalinists have had to temporarily settle for this rather less grandiose "raprochement" with society.

Refused

So far, the increasingly independent Sejm (Parliament) has, in exchange for Walesa's appeal, refused to ratify Jerzelski's request that a statutory ban be imposed on all future strikes and industrial action.

Walesa's appeal was bolstered up by threats to resign if it was not accepted by Solidarnosc members, and if Solidarnosc's National Commission—a much more radical body than Walesa's virtually hand-picked Presidium—was not prepared to discuss disciplinary action against leaders of unofficial strike actions.

Policing

The Presidium is openly becoming a policing agency for the bureaucracy within the workers' movement. The victimisation of militants would be a disastrous and morale-destroying enterprise, giving the initiative to the bureaucrats and their Moscow paymasters.

The Polish workers' movement must reject all such attempts by Walesa, and tell both the bureaucracy and the Parliamentarians that any passing of anti-strike legislation will be met with the contempt it deserves.

However—and this is undoubtedly the gravest of all problems—the wildcat strikes and the new militant wave must be channelled and geared to the construction of a durable, combative workers' power, taking over the production, distribution and maintenance of industry and services.

Salvaging

Only by the eradication of bureaucratic parasitism and irrationality can a workers' economic plan provide the possibility of salvaging the economy and preventing the degradation of our class.

So far, the power of the workers has been like a veto, checking all initiatives taken by the bureaucracy, and levelling to dust their most well laid plans.

If Poland is not to be taken down the road of bureaucratic salvation—shackled in perpetuity to the IMF and the World Bank, this powerful veto must be turned into an organised power, democratically running society from local to national government level.

Due to pressure of space, the third part of John Lister's series of articles 'Marxism and the Polish Revolution' has had to be postponed.



Turkish cops in

Turkish fascists relieved

THE TRIAL of the leaders of the fascist National Action Party (NAP) has been one of the most sensitive issues for the military junta headed by General Evren.

Prosecutors have sought capital punishment of around 300 fascist leaders of NAP.

Also on trial were around 300 leaders and militant members of fascist front organisations, bringing the total number to around 600.

This combination (the official party leadership tried alongside militant fascists who are responsible for murders and massacres of workers, leftists and democrats) should have meant that heavier charges were laid against the official party leadership as well as greater political discredit for the Party.

But it didn't go this way. After the first sessions of the trial, during which the prosecutor's 1,000 pages of documents were detailed, the judges decided that the 285 fascist killers should be excluded from the NAP trial.

Happy

Cumhuriyet (a pro-RPP-Ecevit paper with bourgeois radical views) reported that all the fascist leaders were quite happy with this decision.

Turkesh, the leader of the fascist movement then spoke in his own defence against the prosecutor's document and claimed it was prepared from a "Marxist" viewpoint.

He went further, and threatened the prosecutors, saying: "There is a tomorrow of today" and "I would not like to sacrifice the prosecutors. And I don't think that these views are their own product. I think that this documentation was prepared under pressure."

These words amount, in

fascist terminology, to death threat. And it is understood as such. In the following session two of the judges resigned.

The fascist leaders delighted by the resignations and cheered judges by saying "That will be done."

This was obviously as a victory for Turkesh's junta. But two weeks later came a shock decision by the Generals to shut down the major right-wing newspaper, Tercuman.

But it was not only right wing which attacked for criticising Generals.

RPP leader Ecevit produced a critical reply to Evren's speech introducing the decree to ban all political parties.

Ecevit now faces a certain charge for this comment.

Meanwhile the High Court of Arbitration which decided on all matters of wages and working conditions has swung the pendulum at workers' living standards.

Referring to the juny figures for inflation the court has cut the increase already conceded.

The cuts range to as much as 50%—and in factories money already will actually be taken in some instances where face increased tax payments for wage rises they will never receive!

As the Evren balances between the parties of the fascists and the party of the working class, he can't complain that the main beneficiaries are Turkey's workers and peasants.

A revolutionary leadership is needed to mobilise these forces in the struggle to oust the junta, and to throw the crisis-ridden system which the Generals and the fascists see defend.



Spanish troops out!

IT WAS revealed last week that the Spanish government has sent 1000 combat troops to Equatorial Guinea, which is a former Spanish African colony. The Spanish government, and the bankers and bosses behind it, were involved in the military coup that toppled the bloody dictatorship of Macias Nguema in 1979.

The new military regime under Lt-Col Teodoro Nguema set out to stabilise

capitalist control over this impoverished country. As the sending of imperialist troops shows, this task of disciplining the oppressed masses, of crushing resistance to poverty (and worsening) to terror, cannot be left to the neocolonial puppet regime alone.

For the Spanish working class, the task is to mobilise the maximum supporting action to help the working people in their courageous struggle.

Peru crisis

LAST WEEK Peru's Interior Minister resigned from the government, and President Belaunde Terry carried out a major cabinet reshuffle. This crisis in the top ranks of the bosses' government reflects the underlying crisis of the bosses' rule in Peru.

The world capitalist crisis is having a devastating effect on the economy — inflation is at least 80%, and rising; manufacturing industry is suffering a

severe crisis of profits, which has already led bosses to lay off thousands of workers (one in seven textile jobs have already been destroyed).

Mounting

The anger, militancy and resistance of working people is mounting. Union leaders have been forced to threaten the government with national protest strikes. Guerilla fighters have stepped up their attacks on the army.

It is clear that many other struggles and developments are not being reported in the capitalist press. In their increasingly desperate efforts to control the masses, the government has already declared martial law over some regions, and launched a wave of repressive attacks.

Opportunist

The Interior Minister resigned after the murder of a student by police, declaring that the 'incident' had 'caused repugnance to my democratic conscience'. This opportunist, who has long been happy to serve the bosses in government, now senses that the tide is flowing strongly against Belaunde's regime.

The working people can never rely on such bosses' politicians — no matter how 'democratic' they try to appear, their first concern is always the protection of bosses' rule, which is the root of the poverty and oppression forced on working people.

Jim Farnham

Emergency

The year-long state of emergency recently declared by the government was presented as a weapon against any sabotage of the economy by right wing forces. In fact, as the law banning all strikes ('economic sabotage') shows, the main target is the working class.

Many militants have been arrested since the Sandinista leaders came to power. As the struggle sharpens, this repression will escalate.

Action

While the government has been forced to take action against the more open capitalist right-wingers, they have at the same

FSLN jails trade unionists

THREE bosses' leaders and four trade unionists were last week sentenced to seven months' jail in Nicaragua for 'undermining the economy'.

The policy of trying to balance between the classes followed by the Sand-

inista leadership every day weakens the position of the working masses, and opens up opportunities for the bosses. This leadership was swept to government by the mass uprising of the oppressed against the bloody Somoza dictatorship — and then proceeded to act in defence of the private property of the anti-Somoza capitalists.

Mass pressure has forced the leadership to approve some of the real reforms that workers and peasants have brought about through their actions and organisations. But all the time it has remained tied to an alliance with the bosses.



When even holding hands is 'against the law'

This week's column from the Labour Campaign for Gay Rights comes from Chris Beer.

EVERY DAY, week in and week out, the police forces in England, Wales and Scotland are preparing and occasionally executing attacks on men and lesbians. To some extent this is surprising. Being gay (at least partly) is not a crime. The police see their job as exerting the sort of control over society that we think it should have. Two activities are incomplete. It isn't simply a question of gay sex being illegal in ordinary circumstances (which is the case), for which (and thus Welsh) law is such that almost any act can be seen as illegal. The challenge to the police is best to secure conviction.

Disapprove

In this respect at least the police don't discriminate against gays any more than against other sections of the community of whom they disapprove.

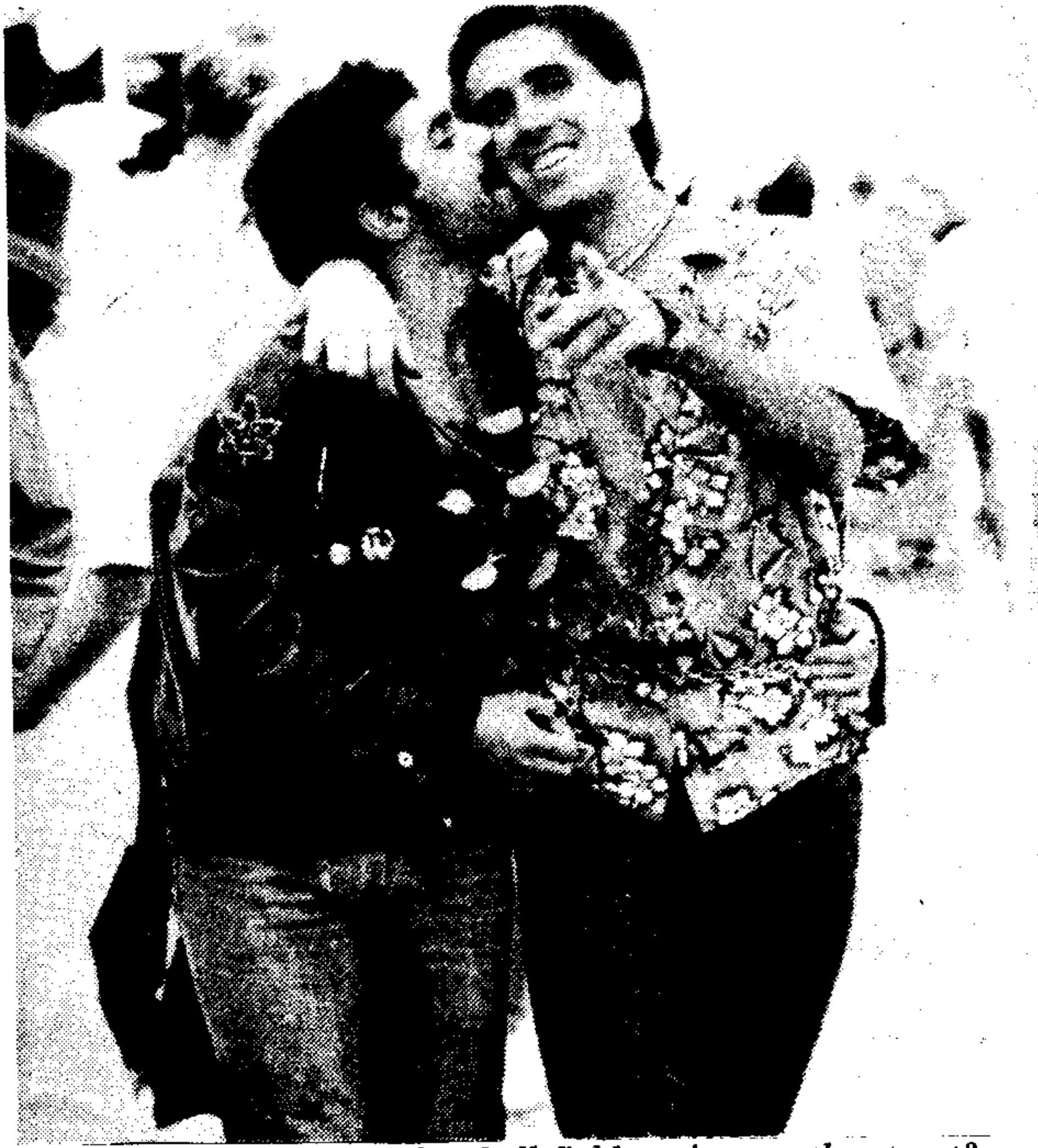
At times it seems that the police find the prospect of gay sex so disgusting that it may only take place between two men over 21 in a place where the most ardent "member of the public" cannot possibly be without using a pick-

For example, men have been convicted because they had sex in a locked hotel room - for hotel rooms are regarded as "not private" enough for the purpose. But even this is not a law but for zealous police officers.

Recently there have been prosecutions brought under the Public Order Act, which is supposed to deal with fascist demonstrations since the 1930s.

Lesbians

And pretty much anything you do can be seen as behaviour likely to occasion a breach of the law, particularly as there is no legislation which specifically restricts lesbians.



Accepted behaviour on football fields: why not the street?

The Report of the Working Party on Community/Police Relations in Lambeth*, on which I worked, found evidence of police harassment of gay people which is typical of the cases which gay organisations come across.

For example, one gay man told the working party: "In October 1979 I was walking along Streatham High Road in the early morning with my lover. We were holding hands as we often do.

Walk

A police car went past us, then stopped, and three uniformed officers jumped out. They came towards us, and one said "What do you think you're doing?" I replied that we were just going for a walk, and he said "No, what do you think you are doing?" I repeated that we were going for a walk and he said "That's against the law", obviously referring to our holding hands.

I asked him which law it was against, and he got a bit flustered and said "Never you fucking mind, don't come the cunt with me."

going on."

But the police know that this is one place where they can get easy convictions and they regularly drive across the common searching for gay men. One witness whose home overlooked the common and didn't know or care about the gay sex said of the police:

"They would come punctually at one o'clock, with the searchlights beaming across the common, going pretty fast they were too."

Priorities

So this was one of the priorities of the Lambeth police at the very time that the SPG was being drafted into Brixton to deal with what they then described as a large increase in crime.

The Working Party found that generally—and particularly in the case of black people—the police attack on the streets was complemented by their complicity in attacks on the home. That is, the police were reluctant to take action on crimes committed against those whom they harassed on the street.

There was evidence that

"We walked on... about 5 minutes later the same police car came down the road and followed slowly behind us... The car caught up with us and one of the policemen called out, 'If you don't fuck off home where you belong, we'll give you a good hiding. We don't like queers around here.'"

We also had a report of a lesbian who had been detained and harassed by police at Waterloo Station because she was wearing a badge with a lesbian liberation slogan.

But the main police attack is on us gay men who meet and enjoy sex in more public places such as toilets.

It has to be stressed that such police activity is hardly ever the result of a complaint from a member of the public. As one gay group said of Streatham Common where gay men meet to have sex:

"You could walk over that common at night and never notice that it is going on... you can walk along official paths and see cigarette lights almost like fairies disappearing in the dark. You wouldn't notice unless you really know what is

this was precisely the case in their dealings with gay people. One gay man told us that he had invited another man, Steve, whom he had met in a pub, to go back to his flat.

Coffee

Whilst he was making coffee Steve let two more men into the flat. All three then attacked him with a knife, stole his money and smashed up his flat.

He told us:

"There was blood all over the place. The police came straight away... (the following day) I described what had happened to me and said I wanted to make a statement.

In answer to their questions I stated explicitly that there had been no sexual contact between Steve and myself. I was asked how old he had been, and I replied that he was 20ish. (The Detective Constable) then suggested that I should reconsider whether I actually wanted to press on with my complaint, which surprised me.

He said that poofs were

all the same, it was probably a lover's tiff and I could be prosecuted for wasting police time. He also said that I ran the risk of being prosecuted if Steve was under 21.

The policeman who was with him suggested that I 'put it down to experience' and told me that 'in five weeks time, when all your injuries have healed up, then you won't be so mad about it. Do you really want to cause all this trouble?'

The police refused to take a statement that day, and indeed had only done so when a witness went to the police station with a legal advisor. By that time it was almost inevitable that "Steve" and accomplices would not be caught.

Attack

In a separate incident, when a drunken man had made a "murderous" attack on the houses of gay people near the Railton Road Gay Centre, the police detained seven of the victims and allowed the attacker to return later to the same house, this time armed with a hatchet. This attack, and others like them, was only

resolved by a group of gay people finding out where the attacker lived and threatening him with violence.

Although these examples are all culled from the Lambeth Report, they do not reflect only the behaviour of the police and gays in that Borough. Gay organisations, particularly the Gay Rights Committee of the National Council for Civil Liberties, have files of similar incidents from many parts of the country.

Some cases are far worse indictments of police attitudes to gay people: the cases in this article show the general pattern. Next week we will analyse the nature of the police attack on lesbians and gay men.

*Report of the Working Party on Community/Police Relations in Lambeth, published in January 1981 by the London Borough of Lambeth, London SW2.

Contact Labour Campaign for Gay Rights, c/o 61a Bloom St, Manchester M1 3LY.

FIGHTING SEXUAL OPPRESSION

TWO RECENT decisions have brought the question of sexual rights into the news, and give hope that the issues may finally be being taken seriously.

*The European Court has just ruled that Britain is violating the rights of homosexual men in the North of Ireland. All male homosexual acts are illegal there.

When Britain imposed direct rule over the province, legislation was drafted to bring Northern Ireland into line with British laws on homosexuality. But the law was not introduced because of pressure from the Unionists, led by Ian Paisley and his campaign to "Save Ulster from Sodomy".

It was the Labour government which drew up the

legislation and then dropped it in an attempt to get a pact with the Unionists.

Of the four out of 19 judges in the European court who voted against the decision, one was the judge from the Irish Republic where homosexuality is also illegal.

It certainly seems like a text-book illustration of James Connolly's prophecy that the partition of Ireland would lead to a "carnival of reaction" both sides of the border.

*An industrial tribunal ruled last week that Julie

Hyatt, who gave up her job because of her boss's persistent sexual advances, was entitled to compensation for unfair dismissal.

This is the first decision which recognises that victims of sexual harassment at work are entitled to legal protection.

*According to a report by the British Association for the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect at least four children are sexually abused every 24 hours. Their figures explode the popular myths about the subject: "Lolita's" and strange men.

Three quarters of all abuse is committed by relatives and close family friends. 40% of the child victims are under 11 and 13% are under the age of 6.

Worryingly, the Report points to the reluctance of social workers to intervene or even acknowledge the situation. Their reluctance is probably understandable, though not defensible, in the context of glorification of the family and the overriding need to "keep the family together" which clearly conflicts with the rights of children to be protected from assaults by their fathers, uncles, etc.

The report also finds that adults who had been sexually abused as children found it particularly difficult to form relationships which combined attachment with sexuality.

This seems to confirm a claim made by author Andrea Dworkin that there is a direct correlation between incest and child abuse on the one hand and women going into prostitution. She claims 75% of prostitutes surveyed were incest victims.

Even if the figures are open to dispute, the conclusion of the reality behind the "happy families" myth is pretty devastating.

*What civilised folk they have at the Beeb! Dr Robert Burchfield has been investigating BBC English and advising on correct pronunciation. The acting programme organiser of Radio Carlisle objected to some of his verdicts: "If we pronounced everything the way suggested here, our Northern listeners would feel we're a bunch of poofers". Never mind the accents, feel the bigotry!

Where we stand

- * Organise the left to beat back the Tories' attacks! No to attacks on union rights; defend the picket-line; no state interference in our unions! No to any wage curbs. Labour must support all struggles for better living standards and conditions.
- * Wage rises should at the very least keep up with price increases. For a price index calculated by working class organisations, as the basis for clauses in all wage agreements to provide automatic monthly rises in line with the true cost of living for the working class. The same inflation-proofing should apply to state benefits, grants and pensions.
- * Fight for improvements in the social services, and against cuts. Protection for those services against inflation by automatic inflation-proofing of expenditure. For occupations and supporting strike action to defend jobs and services.
- * End unemployment. Cut hours, not jobs. Fight for a 35 hour week and an end to overtime. Demand work-sharing without loss of pay! Organise the unemployed - campaign for a programme of useful public works to create new jobs for the unemployed.

labour movement. Organise full support for black self-defence. Build workers' defence squads.

* The capitalist police are an enemy for the working class. Support all demands to weaken them as a bosses' striking force: dissolution of special squads (SPG, Special Branch, M15, etc.), public accountability, etc.

*Free abortion on demand. Women's equal right to work and full equality for women. Defend and extend free state nursery and childcare provision.

* Against attacks on gays by the state: abolish all laws which discriminate against lesbians and gay men; for the right of the gay community to organise and affirm their stand publicly.

* The Irish people - as a whole - should have the right to determine their own future. Get the British troops out now! Repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Political status for Irish Republican prisoners as a matter of urgency.

* The black working people of South Africa should get full support from the British labour movement for their strikes, struggles and armed combat against the white supremacist regime. South African goods and services should be blacked.

* It is essential to achieve the fullest democracy in the labour movement. Automatic reselection of MPs during each parliament and the election by annual conference of party leaders. Annual election of all trade union officials, who should be paid the average for the trade.

* The chaos, waste, human suffering and misery of capitalism now - in Britain and throughout the world - show the urgent need to establish rational, democratic, human control over the economy, to make the decisive sectors of industry social property, under workers' control. The strength of the labour movement lies in the rank and file. Our perspective must be working class action to raze the capitalist system down to its foundations, and to put a working class socialist alternative in its place - rather than having our representatives run the system and waiting for crumbs from the tables of the bankers and the bosses.



Bigot Paisley

Labour Party

MASS SUPPORT VERSUS CORRIDOR POLITICS

Jeremy Corbyn continues the debate on whether a new campaigning Left alliance is needed in the Labour Party after the Brighton conference.



THERE CAN be no doubt that the Left suffered some setbacks at Brighton as a result of massive media coverage of the Right's activities aided by lavish campaigning and resources from their apparatchiks.

The contrasts of the Brighton results are clear to see: Tony Benn's near miss in fact represents a massive achievement for the campaign — to lose by less than one per cent after an unprecedented media hatchet job shows what support there is in the labour movement for a leadership determined to carry out our policies.

The new NEC membership amply demonstrate the results of right wing corridor politics and the farce of 'left' unions voting for right wing candidates to get their

favoured person on.

However the constituency sections of the Conference voted 83 per cent for Benn and solidly for many of the policy changes — much work still has to be done in building support in an organised way in the constituencies, but the priority of work and organisation to get a leadership that will carry out the policies must be in the trade unions.

The activities of union leaderships can be amply demonstrated in the role of

the unions in voting for nuclear disarmament and then supporting a candidate for deputy leadership who has promised not to serve in a Labour Government committed to this policy. Quite clearly a large number of union conferences took policy decisions at their conferences and then allowed their General Secretaries and delegations to cast the vital votes for both the NEC and the deputy leader of the Party.

The crucial question is, where do we go from here?

If the policy gains of the Party are to be carried out and Labour voters are to be given any confidence that the Party means to elect a Labour Government committed to fundamentally altering ownership and distribution of wealth, we must campaign for changes in the PLP constitution and in NEC membership.

A new campaigning body is needed that will harness the energies of all the groups who supported the deputy leadership campaign and will transfer the

demands to the trade unions.

A Labour Government will only be sustained in office on massive rank and file trade union support, and that support cannot be won and kept during a three week election campaign. It has to be sought now, and this means taking the campaign outside all the normal orbits and questioning the way in which trade unions cast their votes and how they elect their delegations to Party conference.

The first objective of any campaign must be to gain agreement on seven candidates for the CLP section of the National Executive, twelve for the trade union section, and campaign for the alteration of PLP rules to end the position where they are in effect above and beyond the party.

The election of women members to the NEC is an insult, where the union block votes were used to dominate this section with members who show no allegiance to the policies of the women's conference and, with one exception, no determination to even attempt to represent them.

The other objectives must be to extend our campaigning and involvement to all the groups who became involved in the deputy leadership campaign who had hitherto not been involved in Labour



Benn

politics because they felt it was not relevant to them — women's groups, ethnic minority organisations, gay groups. This calls into question the role and state of Party organisation that restricts affiliation to a strictly limited sphere of trade union and Party branches and a small number of socialist societies.

The purpose of such campaigning must be to win people to the Labour Party to enforce the carrying out of Party policy by electing leaders who are prepared to do that.

Mass support for the policies of the Party and a determination to carry them out will not be achieved by wheeling and dealing in conference corridors but only by a thoroughgoing campaign at all levels.

[* This article previously appeared in the November 'London Labour Briefing']

Hands off Wall

BRADFORD North Labour Party GMC has registered a sizeable step forward with the ousting of arch right-wing MP Ben Ford.

Connected with a string of reactionary dictatorships and sporting a wallet full of business interests, Ford has held the seat for 17 years.

The GMC delegates voted 35 to 28 in favour of recommending Pat Wall, president of Bradford Trades Council and a leading Militant supporter.

This setback for the Right comes at a time when Bradford West MP Edward Lyons has already deserted Labour to join the SDP, along with a small number of old-time reactionaries. The remaining right wing are beginning to clot around Councillor Mahon (of buy your own council house fame) in a newly formed 'Democratic Group' whose prime aim is to halt the influence of Militant.

Squaring

Ford, ever master of the understatement, comment that the result was 'not entirely unexpected' presumably squaring the union that only six trade union branches or Labour wards supported him, compared with around 20 supporting Wall.

Delegates were doubtless motivated by Ford's cynical disregard for accountability, his vote for Healey despite GMC views and his continuing support and membership of the all party group on Namibia in the teeth of public denunciation by the GMC from its last meeting.

Despite his long association with the Right of the party, Ford was able to begin his contribution by waving a letter from Michael Foot testifying to his 'good works' in the Commons over the years.

Sheaf

His twenty-minute speech, meticulously read out from a sheaf of notes, was an A to Z of reaction, extolling the 'Englishman's character' defending the realm, decrying mandatory reselection, and, of course, calling for a united party.

Since the selection meeting Ford has announced his intention to appeal to the NEC against the decision and the right wing Manifesto group of MPs has signed a letter calling on the NEC to refuse to endorse Wall. It is essential that all socialists defend Bradford North's selection

BARRY TURNER

Right-wing on the offensive

BOTH the Labour right wing and the new Foot-Kinnock 'centre' are staking out the ground for their strategies after the Brighton Labour Party conference.

The Manifesto Group of 55 right wing MPs sent a deputation to Michael Foot last Thursday (29th).

They said they were writing to Labour's National Executive demanding that Pat Wall should not be endorsed as candidate for Bradford North — on no apparent grounds other than Wall's left-wing views. They are calling for a purge of 'Militant' supporters from

the Labour Party, and of left wingers from NEC sub-committees.

Future

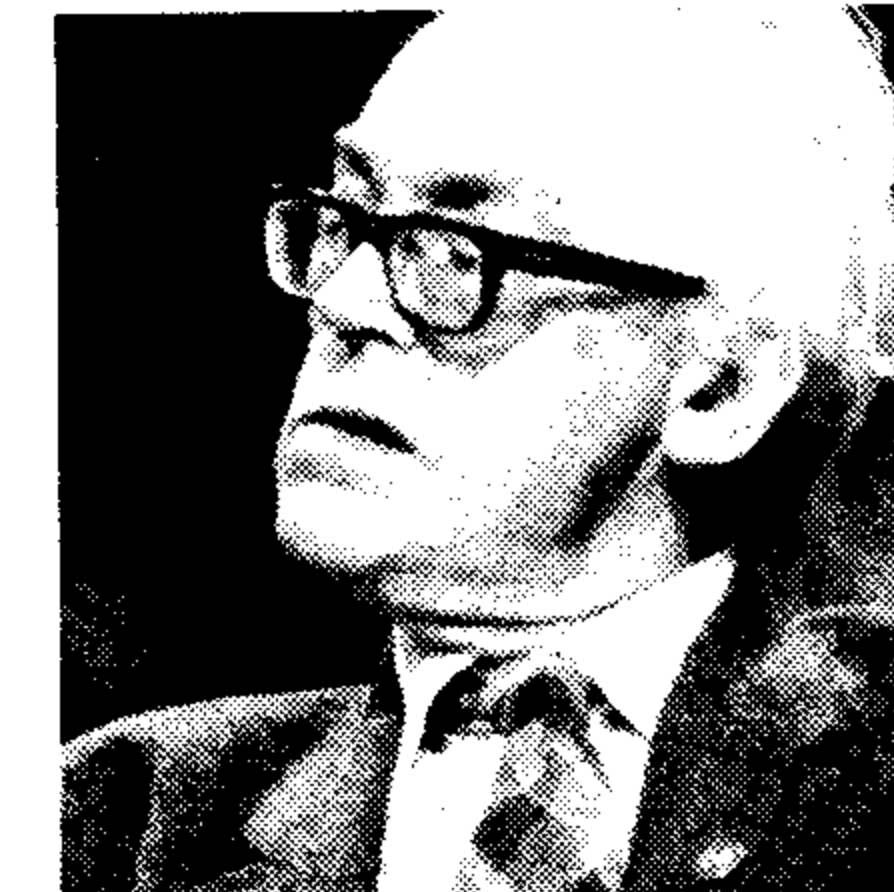
Manifesto Group treasurer Ken Weetch said he wanted "clear signals... showing that the party was



Shore

going to be more moderate in future." The right-wing MPs want "an accommodation" — i.e. a watering-down on issues like unilateral disarmament, incomes policy, and EEC withdrawal.

Peter Shore—who owes his tattered 'left-wing' repu-



Foot

tation solely to nationalist anti-EEC demagoguery—followed up the next day with a demand to 'turf out the Frots' and an attack on 'organised subversion' (i.e. conference delegates voting for policies Peter Shore doesn't like?)

There are a lot of signs that Michael Foot is willing to go along with "an accommodation" on policy. He and his co-thinkers, however, want to couple that, not with sweeping purges, but with a cooption of the Left into the watered-down consensus.

Thus the support by Foot, by general secretary Ron Hayward, and by the

NEC majority, for keeping Tony Benn as chair of the Home Policy sub-committee, and for changing the sub-committees' make-up only slightly.

The two policies can, of course, mesh together—the 'centre' can offer cooperation in the NEC and the Shadow Cabinet in 'exchange' for accommodation on policies.

Minimum

Everything will be done to brand firm insistence that conference policies are carried out as extremism. But in reality that insistence is the bare minimum the left must fight for.

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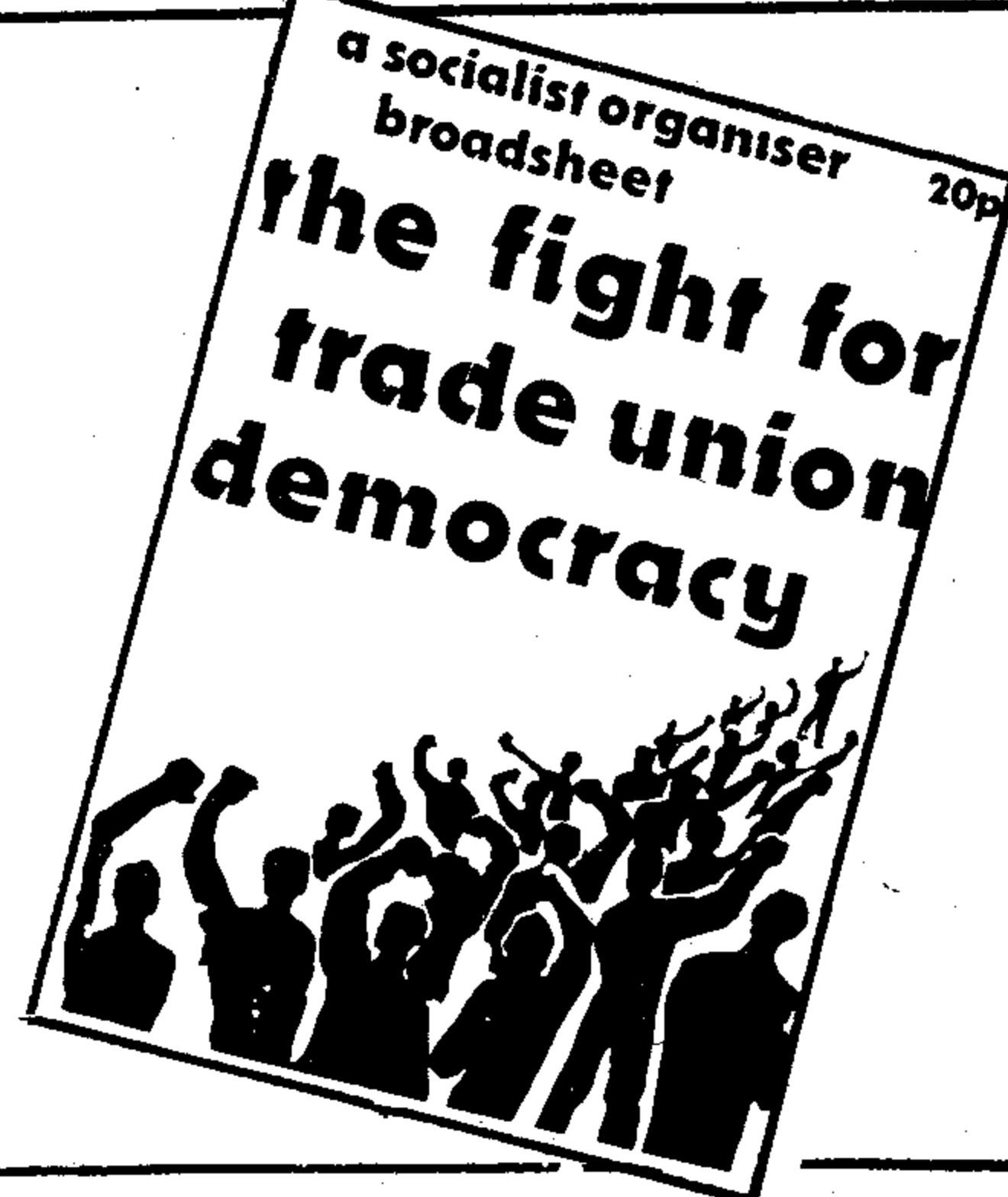
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REVOLUTION

1981 marks the 25th Anniversary of the Hungarian workers' uprising, which was brutally suppressed by the tanks of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

JIM FARNHAM looks at the lessons of a heroic struggle which has served as a landmark of the post-war fight for the revolutionary overthrow of Stalinist rule.



Toppled statue of Stalin—symbol of workers' struggle

THE POWER struggle in the Soviet Union following the death of Joseph Stalin in March 1953 was more than a simple matter of succession: it marked a crisis of political control which reached an agonising climax in the Hungarian revolution of 1956.

Militant working class opposition to Stalinist oppression grew throughout the early years of the decade and it found more space as divisions within the ruling bureaucracies became clearer and resulted in vacillating contradictory strategies within the Stalinist states.

The bureaucracies of Eastern Europe were totally dependent on the USSR for their power; inevitably they were demoralised and weakened by the purges and paranoia which followed the Yugoslav bureaucracy's 1948 bid for independence from Moscow.

As the Soviet bureaucracy struggled through the crisis of this period (particularly on how to control the working class—whether through a continuation of Stalin's terror or a programme of economic and social reform) the satellite rulers were made particularly vulnerable.

When Moscow sneezed, Budapest and Warsaw caught a cold—were in danger, moreover of succumbing to pneumonia. The conflicting signals from the Kremlin made them confused and irresolute.

And the working class, which had no need of Khrushchev's 'secret speech' denouncing Stalin to make them aware of the truth of his three decades of dictatorship, were showing every intention of claiming changes beyond anything dreamed of by Khrushchevite reformists.

Berlin strike 1953

The first unquestionable signal came three months after Stalin's death, in East Germany, where a general strike broke out in the Soviet zone in April 1953. It was a spontaneous expression of the workers' anger at the economic hardships led to a brutally crushed uprising. But the reformist wing of the Polish CP, under Gomulka, better organised and prepared than their Hungarian equivalents were to prove, was able to come to a deal with Khrushchev and to abort the threatening Polish



revolution with a combination of reforms and repression.

But in Hungary it took the military might of Soviet invasion, many months and tens of thousands of lives to destroy the workers' revolution that began on the streets of Budapest on October 23, 1956.

In a liberal echo of the Stalinist revolution was an anti-communist anti-fascist uprising of the Western bourgeois intelligentsia. It was essentially a movement of the Hungarian intelligentsia and students, reaching for 'intellectual freedom' and the other 'freedoms' that decorate bourgeois democracy.

Many intellectuals and students did rally to the revolution; for the most part, though, the intelligentsia had rallied to the grow-

ing Opposition movement incorporating reformist elements among the bureaucracy—centred on Imre Nagy.

Before October, this Opposition was the loudest and most obvious symptom of resistance to oppression, acting in the space created by an irresolute government and an increasingly militant working class.

But during and after the struggles of October most of the Oppositionists were left in the ante-chambers of Parliament—bewildered and indignant at the revolutionary reality which was rising above their plans for an orderly reform of Stalinism.

October and November saw a genuine working class revolution, originating in the misery and oppression of the masses. It was born in the factories and mines, and fought by workers on the

streets and in the independent councils they created.

Student demonstration

Yet the immediate, definitive start to the revolution was made by the students of Budapest. Their meeting on 22 October included a resolution that went beyond the timid reformism of the Writers Union and the intellectual Petöfi Circle.

Their demonstration on the streets the following day, joined by increasing thousands of workers, broke into fighting: an insurrection. The enormous statue of Stalin, glowering over the city, was toppled—but only when workers arrived with acetylene torches.

That incident is in many ways a sufficient illustration of the revolution and its

essentially proletarian nature.

By the following day, Budapest was a theatre of war: Soviet troops entered the city in the early morning, as they were to enter all the industrial centres of Hungary as the revolution spread.

Workers and youth armed themselves from arms stores and barracks: the earliest stages, seems mostly to have handed over its weapons when it was unsure of its role. Increasingly, the soldiers would come over to the side of the workers.

Fighting bands seized the Soviet tanks and the loathed political police, the AVH, in the streets. More or less organised, inadequately armed, these bands had at their service a determination and a courage born from the strength and solidarity of



Hungarian demonstrators burn portrait of Stalin

a class fighting for its human needs.

One commander recalls a tram conductress in his fighting group, who kept her hand grenades in the pouch used for carrying tickets and money. She lobbed three grenades at a Soviet tank and missed. "Then she must have got mad. A Russian officer appeared in a turret for a moment. She ran forward, clawed her way onto the tank, but to make sure she waited until she had almost reached the turret before she blew up the tank—and herself."

The Hungarian bureaucracy brought to power Imre Nagy (pronounced Imreh Noyi)—the darling of the reformists, and a man whose large personal prestige among the masses was to diminish steadily in those bloody revolutionary days.

Nagy promised much—on condition that the workers would abandon their weapons and bring to an end the general strike that had halted Hungary's factories. The government even recognised the factory councils—it hoped to restrict them by bringing them under the influence of the bureaucracy's trustees.

But the workers were reaching for power, though they were only beginning to realise it, as the national insurrection grew into a proletarian revolution. Workers' councils in the factories had proclaimed workers' control there.

Workers in the streets were fighting to control their lives, learning that this meant control over government and all political matters as well as over the economy. Their delegates, they knew, were not in Nagy's coalition cabinets of 'National Unity', but in the factory and regional councils.

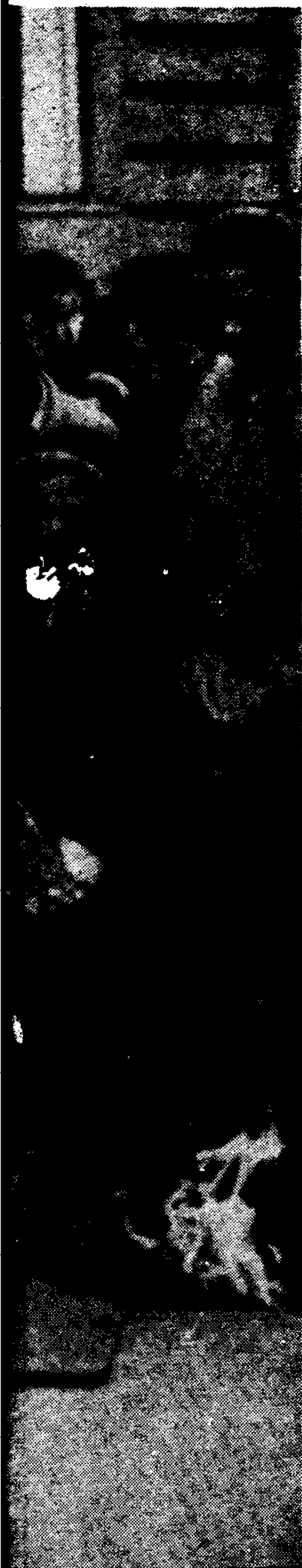
Dissolve Parliament

From the most militant of these came the response that was to be the expression of the general mood: Nagy would be supported—to the extent that he adopted the workers' programme. The 'National Council' of the city of Miskolc, as well as demanding the withdrawal of Soviet troops, and an economic programme to satisfy the demands of "workers, students, miners and soldiers", demanded that:

"The government must propose the formation of a Revolutionary National Council, based upon the workers' councils of the various departments and Budapest, and composed of democratically elected delegates from them. At the same time the old parliament must be dissolved."

Nagy, always the prisoner of his own Stalinist bureaucratic politics, now became the hostage of the revolution. As a reformist, he was

IN HUNGARY



40 years after the Bolshevik revolution had given power to the Soviets, Stalinist tanks crushed the power of workers' councils in Hungary



Khrushchev



Ousted-Rakosi

inadequate to the revolution. But also he was forced to go far in his promises in order to distance himself from the Soviet overlords: to the Kremlin bureaucracy, too, he was inadequate.

On Sunday 4 November, after some days of peace when the streets had been deserted by the tanks and the workers were being advised by their leaders to end the general strike, Budapest was attacked for the second time by Soviet arms.

Stalinism came with as great a ferocity and savagery as counter-revolution has been able to muster from the putting down of the Paris Commune onwards; it came with tanks blazing phosphorus and shells, with artillery and bomber aircraft. Over the next four days Budapest—above all the working class districts—was reduced nearly to ruins.

Many of the rank and file Soviet troops, enclosed in their tanks, had thought at first they were in Berlin fighting fascists. But the fighting now was too desperate to allow for any fraternisation—which must have been the bureaucracy's greatest fear.

In fact, after the first Soviet attack, there had been substantial moves towards fraternisation. On 25 October, Parliament Square witnessed what an American journalist called 'the most joyous fraternisation between a populace and foreign troops I had ever

seen."

The joy had been ended by provocative gunfire, probably from the AVH; and rumours of massacre and betrayal fractured the fragile coming together of the combatants. The fresh, misinformed troops of the second wave were allowed no chance of learning, with the Hungarian people, of their true common enemy.

Janos Kadar, formerly a leading reformist in Nagy's government, now came to power, astride a Soviet tank. He called his regime the 'Revolutionary Workers and Peasants Government'—but the Hungarians were only too aware of the bureaucracy's lying abuse of language.

A striking factory responded sarcastically to Kadar's lying accusations: "The forty thousand aristocrats and fascists of the Csepel works strike on!"

By November 8, the ruined remnants of revolutionary Budapest were occupied by the ruined remnants of the Red Army—which Trotsky had once built in defence of proletarian revolution.

But the workers' struggle continued. They had entered the insurrection unorganised, with no vanguard political party to lead them. Stalinist rule had destroyed the workers' trade union and political organisations, replacing them with the monolithic bureaucratic institutions of the deformed

workers' state.

And the leadership which had emerged spontaneously as the workers established their control over the industrial enterprises, was tested again and again in the fire of struggle and of proletarian democracy.

Often when leaders were found inadequate to their task, or used the strength of the workers' councils as a basis for compromise with Kadar, proletarian democracy saw to it that they were replaced.

Inevitably, with the working class groping towards full awareness of its own strength, the limits of spontaneity began to have their full effects.

Process of Revolution

No proletarian revolution is simply the result of some mystically-raised class consciousness, of the workers having perceived in any clear way the needs and conditions of its social, political and economic oppression, and from such a perception proceeding to take the necessary counter-measure—revolution.

It is a process in which the proletariat gathers together all its forces, mental and physical, and transforms itself, as a class, into a power which can govern the social reality which had until then seemed to implacably govern it.

Marx spoke of this

process in *The German Ideology*.

"Both for the production on a large scale of this communist consciousness and for the success of the cause itself, the alteration of men on a mass scale is necessary, an alteration which can only take place in a practical movement, a revolution. The revolution is necessary, therefore, not only because the ruling class cannot be overthrown in any other way, but also because the class overthrowing it can only in a revolution succeed in ridding itself of all the muck of ages and become fitted to found society anew."

Marxism offers a programme of action through which this process can be carried through, and it is only the active intervention of a vanguard party based on the perspective of Marxism that such a programme can be carried through.

As it was in Russia in the months between February and October 1917, so the process of developing the seeds of a new society, particularly through the soviet-type bodies of proletarian democracy, was begun in October 1956. The Hungarian workers' councils were to become, in the months that followed, the embodiment and expression of the workers' struggle, the site of growing workers' power.

From the strikebound

factories, mines, etc., came demands—for democratic rights, for the break-up of the monolithic Stalinist rule, for the immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops, for the replacement of bureaucratic administration of the economy by a system of elected workers' councils which would have power at all levels.

"The most pressing demand in our free life is the building of effective workers' councils. Their members, workers and young people, will know how to heal the wounds of the past. Let us show that we can manage things better than our former bosses."

Denouncing the Stalinist lies, they emphasised that their goal was not capitalist restoration, but genuine socialism:

"We repeat, we will not return the land to the great landowners, the factories to the capitalists, the mines to the barons and the direction of our army to the Horthyite enemies of the people."

Efforts towards coordination and joint action between workers' councils had been made from the start; regional councils were re-organised and extended when fighting died down after the second invasion.

The Central Workers Council of Greater Budapest (CWC) was formed on 14 November, with delegates from all the major factories and districts of Budapest. Already on 31 October a Parliament of Workers Councils had been convened for the whole of Budapest, in recognition of the need for more centralised organisation and direction.

Political power

Some of the authors of this thoroughly socialist programme refused to accept that it could be realised and defended only by the councils taking into their own hands the political programme implicit in the revolution: they tried to restrict the councils to 'purely economic matters' as far as possible.

Yet they were all the time dealing with a wider and wider range of matters—of food distribution, power supplies, transport provision, etc.—matters which were being understood by the mass of workers as being not merely technical, but political, insofar as they were revealed to contain the questions "Who controls such things? In whose interests are they run?"

Sandor Bali, the general secretary of the CWC, opposed the most radical section of the Council: "We know quite well," he declared, "that the workers' councils cannot be political organisations."

Yet the councils were the organs through which the political as well as the economic thrust of the revolution moved. It was the role of a revolutionary leadership to develop them as such, to their ultimate potential.

In the general strikes which were the backdrop to the growth of the councils, the question of power was continuously posed. But the revolutionary answer to the question was not given by those in leadership.

Many, in fact, acted to

turn back the tide of general strikes, in favour of negotiating with Kadar's government. The leading regional councils had, after all, proposed to end the strike, only days before the invasion of November 4.

Under the influence of the Compromisers, on November 16, the CWC again called off the strike, primarily to facilitate negotiations with Kadar. (After making this decision, CWC members came close to attack from workers and provincial delegates gathered outside. One recalls that they "were called all possible names: scoundrels, traitors, etc.")

Two days after the return to work, delegates from throughout the country assembled in Budapest to discuss convening a National Workers Council. Soviet tanks surrounded the venue and rumours spread that the delegates had been arrested. Within hours the workers were on strike again. Only days after the leadership had called off the strike because, they claimed, the workers were exhausted, it was forced to recognise a 48-hour protest strike.

Irresolute leaders

But the following day, the Csepel regional council, now committed to compromise at all costs, condemned the strike, pleading the need for avoiding collision with the government. Proletarian democracy swung into action—Csepel workers immediately sacked and replaced the Council.

If anything could exhaust the workers it was an irresolute leadership which could offer no perspective for victory; which could not make clear to workers the tendencies of the revolution; which had insufficient faith in the proletariat's strength.

Only much later—too late—did it become clearer to the majority of the CWC that even if they were willing to negotiate and to attempt to placate Kadar by surrendering the workers' greatest weapon—their control over production—Kadar himself was not willing to negotiate.

On the contrary, he was looking for every sign of weakness—then he would attack. By November 27 the CWC was convinced of this and ready to declare:

"We can categorically state that the real interests of the working class in Hungary are represented by the workers councils, and that in addition there is no stronger political power in existence than theirs. . . . We have received our mission from the working class and we shall work with all our might for the strengthening of the workers' power."

But throughout the period of negotiation and indecisiveness, Kadar was rebuilding the repressive apparatuses of Stalinism, particularly the AVH police, and using them to attack the councils.

Occupying army

The bureaucracy was growing stronger and getting bolder as the revolution failed to move forward. It

was only the taut mobilisation of workers throughout the country that prevented him—for a while—from taking decisive action against the councils.

But a state of extreme tension cannot be maintained for long. And always there was, blocking the revolutionary road, an occupying force of 3,000 tanks and 200,000 troops. For success it was vital that either those troops be won over or at least neutralised, or that the revolution should spread to the other Stalinist states.

On 9 December, Kadar found the signal for the bureaucracy's definitive assault in the delayed inaugural meeting of the National Workers Council. That meeting would finally have unified the struggle on a national scale—at a time, moreover, when fewer workers' leaders had any remaining illusions in the road of negotiations and compromise.

A majority of the Budapest CWC was arrested, the CWC itself was declared dissolved. Around the country brutal and often bloody repression was stepped up as, yet again, a general strike broke out.

The final decisive battles of the Hungarian revolution took place. The government declared a state of emergency—and disbanded all workers councils above those at factory level. The bureaucracy's managers re-entered the factories—protected there, in many cases, by occupying troops.

Armed clashes, strikes and demonstrations recurred, to be beaten down. The government extended the death penalty to striking or inciting to strike.

Later it was further extended: the so-called Revolutionary Workers and Peasants Government had to be immune from all criticism—especially that of the workers and peasants.

Enemy of revolution

Nevertheless, throughout 1957 sabotage, passive resistance, even occasional strikes and demonstrations continued. But the Hungarian proletariat had been decisively defeated—though it was not until November 1957 that Kadar felt able to decree the final dissolution of the last remnants of the factory councils.

Forty years after the Bolsheviks had fought for "All power to the Soviets", the ruling bureaucracy of the degenerated workers' state had sent all its might to crush the workers' councils, the workers' revolution, in Hungary—decisive proof yet again, that the Stalinist bureaucracy is the betrayer, the outright enemy of proletarian revolution.

The Hungarian workers never attained in 1956 the power achieved by the Russian Soviets in 1917. But the faith and determination of Lenin, when the Russian Revolution was also endangered by counter-revolutionary invasion, was redeemed again in 1956:

"We may not be able to hold out for long, so let us do such things during our brief tenure of power that the working classes of the world will remember them for ever."

Letters

Bitter reality of Israel's

"labour movement"

This week we are giving extended space to a letter received from a Palestinian Trotskyist. The Workers League of Palestine is affiliated to the Fourth Internationalist Tendency.

I AM a member of the Workers' League (Palestine), a Trotskyist group struggling for class organisation and national liberation, writing in my personal capacity.

I receive your paper from our comrades in Tel Aviv, and find it useful with the reports on the class struggle in Britain and the world.

I would like to use your paper in order to throw some light on some misunderstandings which exist in the international workers' movement about the basic facts of the class struggle in Palestine.

Zionist propaganda does not limit itself to the lies and slanders designed to hide the murderous oppression of the Palestinian people. It also hides the basic facts about the breaking of every workers' struggle in 'the only democracy in the Middle East'. For that, they misuse all the names used by the workers' movement.

The biggest bourgeois party is called the 'Israeli Labour Party'. The biggest industrial concern is called a 'trade union' (the Histadrut). The second largest bank (with the lowest-paid workers) is called 'The Workers' Bank'.

The institutions designed to outlaw every strike are called 'Workers' Councils', and the pioneers of the expropriation of the Arab peasants and colonisation are called 'socialist communes' (kibbutzim).

I would like to give some examples of this system of lies by showing the reality.

Attacks on election meetings of Ma'arakh (Israeli Labour Party plus the 'United Workers' Party', which decided, last week, to buy an American bank) have been described as expressing Nazism.

It's important to mention



Daily brutality against Palestinians trapped in racist state of Israel

that the attackers were not members of the fascist 'Gush Emunim' or 'Kakh' movements, but people from slums and the working class (which generally hates the Ma'arakh).

It's true that racism exists in the slums and the workers' neighbourhoods, but from my experience its own difference from the racism of the petty bourgeoisie which emigrated from Europe (which votes for Ma'arakh) is that the Europeans are also racist against the Jewish working class, which is mostly Oriental — from Asia and Africa.

The Ma'arakh is not identified with the Arabs; the Israeli Communist Party is identified with them, and its meetings were not attacked.

Nor is Ma'arakh a 'mod-

erate' party — all through the election campaign the Ma'arakh criticised the government from the right (opposing the retreat from Sinai, for example).

Illusions

The last illusions, if any one still had any, were broken by Mota Gurr, an ex chief of the general staff, when he shouted at some 'Oriental' people that disturbed a Ma'arakh election meeting, 'We'll fuck you just as we fucked the Arabs...'

Really, the Ma'arakh represents:

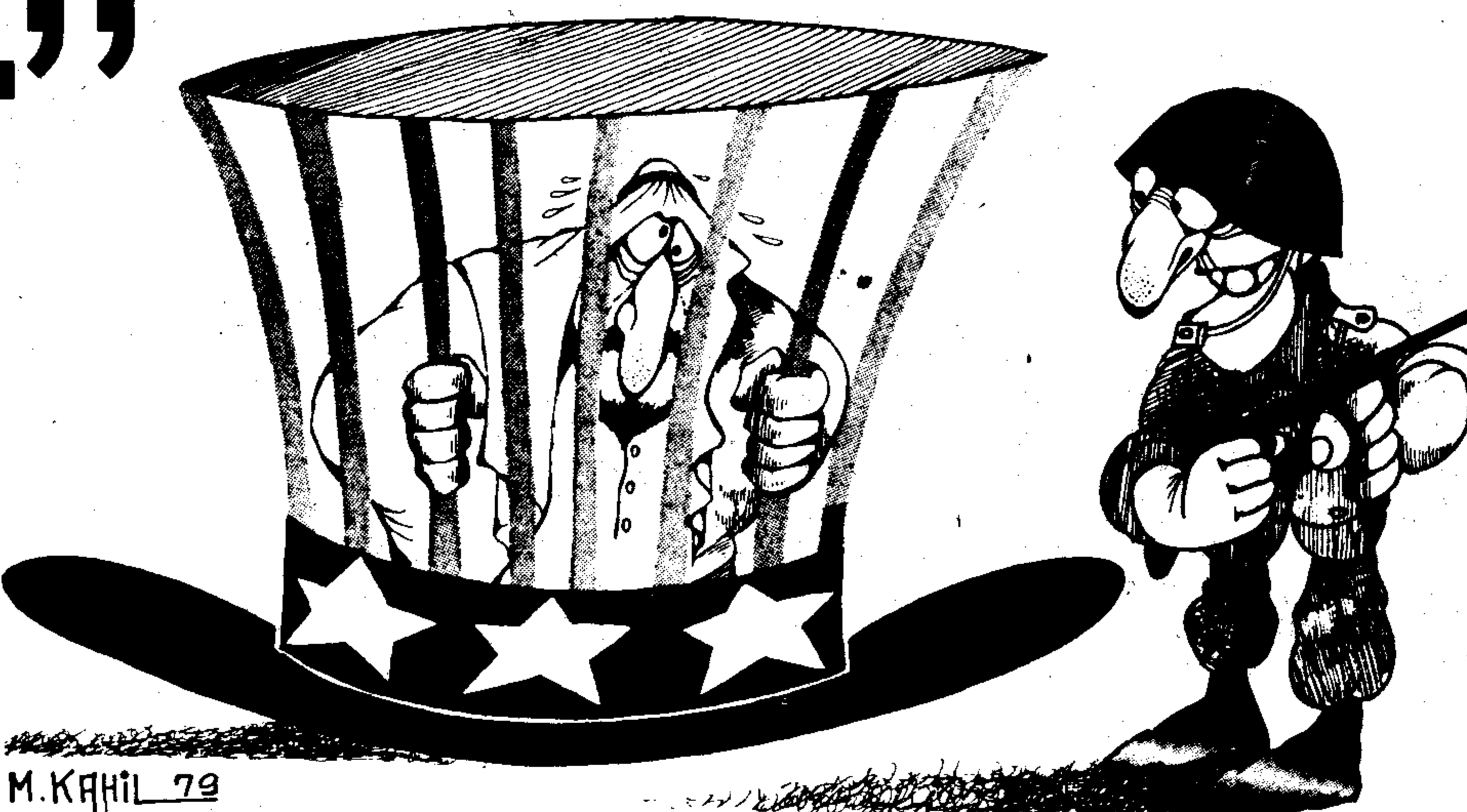
- 1. The 'European' authority. (Most of the bourgeoisie in Israel is European). This is the authority which brought Oriental Jews from their countries in

order to create a Jewish worker class (to work after the expulsion of the Arabs). It dropped them in slums and in settlement areas called 'development towns' — urban settlements which were built artificially, without an economic or social base, near the borders, for 'defending the country' and near kibbutzim, to provide cheap labour power for their factories. These towns are 70% slums.

This authority is hated by most Jews, as it oppresses them as workers and as 'Orientals'.

2. The Histadrut. It is supposed to be the local trade union, but it is the second biggest employer in the country, after the state itself.

Its factories are not under any kind of workers' control. They are directed



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on a basis of competition — which means that the Histadrut is trying to get the biggest profit possible — the lowest pay to the workers.

These factories are in co-ownership with private local and foreign capital, with profits running to the capitalists' pockets, and not a cent to Histadrut members.

Membership in the Histadrut is not according to workplace. Histadrut membership includes workers, petty bourgeoisie, and factory owners.

Ironic

For example, Horovitz, the former minister of finance, an owner of investments here and in South America, and until a month ago owner of 'Tene-Noga', the second dairy in Israel, is a member of the Histadrut, and led his private list in its elections last spring — a list with the ironic name, 'List of Israeli Workers'.

Everyone can be a Histadrut member if he pays taxes. The reason almost all the workers are Histadrut members is that it is the owner of the biggest health insurance scheme, (health insurance by the state does not exist), and not because they think it represents them. You can see it by the way people

talk and from the fact that less than 60% took part in the Histadrut elections. (It was a lower percentage among workers, as the government and Histadrut bureaucracy, the kibbutzim settlers, and the petty bourgeoisie, voted!)

The Histadrut elections are general elections every four years, to a general assembly, for political parties (as in the parliament), and are not based on workplaces.

The 'trade union' department takes less than one-tenth from the Histadrut budget and it is subject to the decisions of the generally elected 'executive committee', which is a direct representative of the bourgeoisie, built on the pattern of any bourgeois state.

The workers' committees in the factories (the only bodies elected by the workers themselves) are very limited — the elections are under the aegis of the Histadrut, which has the right to disperse them. Many times representatives of the management win the elections to the committees.

Many of the committees are afraid to do things against the orders of the Histadrut. (The law says that the union that includes most of the workers is the only legal representation — and most of the workers join just to get the health insurance).

At times of struggle, action committees are sometimes built against the Histadrut, and these are the only committees that really struggle. By law, the state itself takes an 'organisation tax' from most workers who refuse to join the Histadrut and gives the money to it.

Only the strikes that the Histadrut permits are legal.

Most of the strikes don't get this recognition, and even the few that get it, don't get strike money, although it is collected every month (part of the organisation tax).

Breaking

The Histadrut is not a trade union but a state-like institution (which preceded the Zionist state itself and played an important part in creating it). It specialises in breaking every attempt by the working class to organise itself independently to protect its rights.

3. The Ma'arakh depends to a certain extent on the 'kibbutzim', where it gets more than 90% of the votes. It is very proud of them.

The kibbutzim are only 7% of the Jewish population, but are subsidised more than any other part of the population (besides the rest of the bourgeoisie).

They got lands stolen from the Arabs, more than anyone else. They have the best education network here, and are not ready to accept children from 'development towns', where the schools are on a very low level, in the kibbutz schools, so as 'not to damage the level'.

In the kibbutz factories the work conditions are some of the worst in the country. All the foremen and privileged workers come from the top — from kibbutz members — and the workers cannot advance.

Profit

Besides, the foremen have a straight interest in the factory profit — so they oppress their workers more than usual. From the other side, the Histadrut doesn't give them even the forged defence they give others.

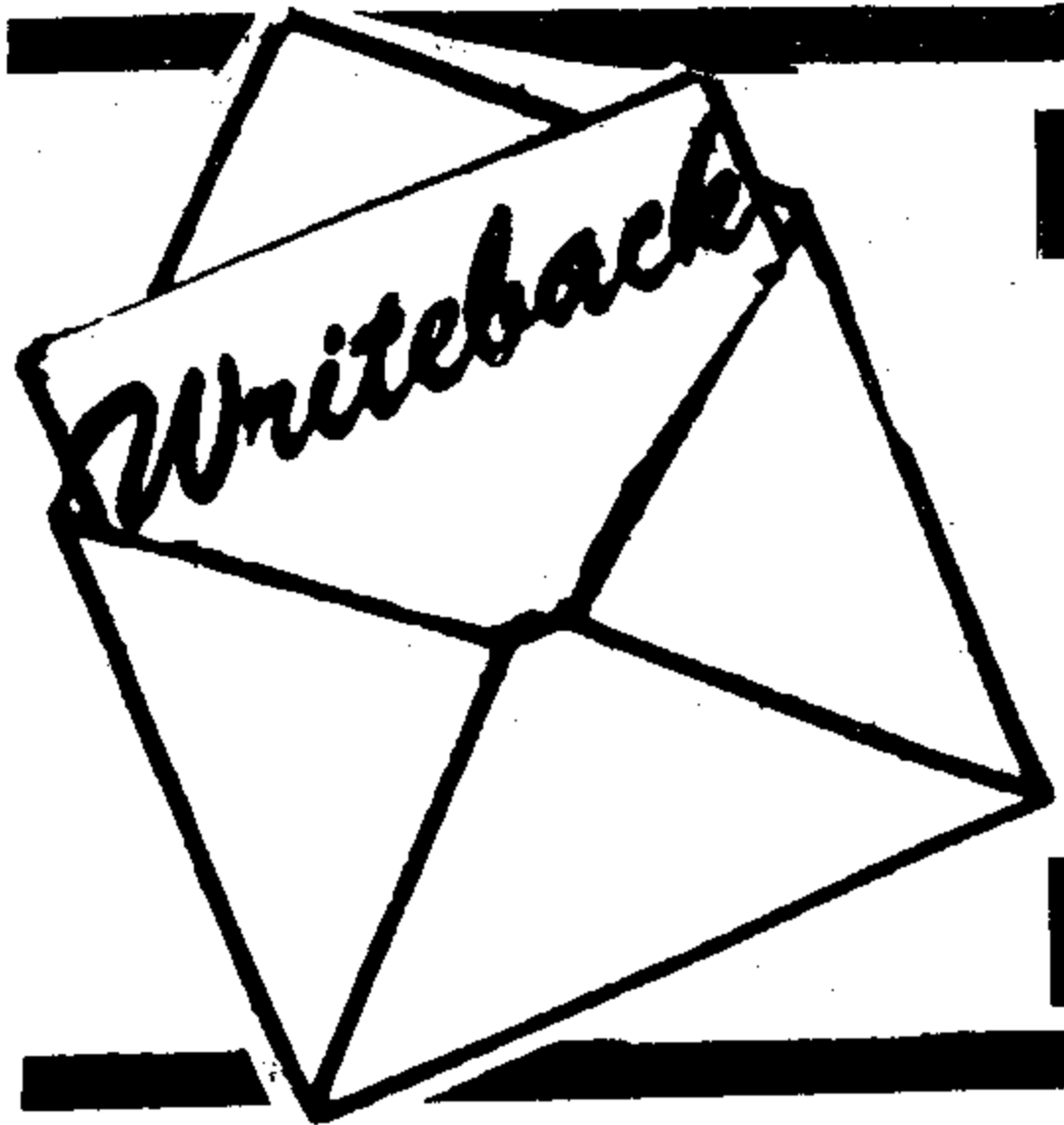
The Ma'arakh isn't even a reactionary party of the Jewish working class, as it is sometimes described. In the slums and workers' neighbourhoods, there was a crushing majority for Likud. Ma'arakh is a bourgeois party, Likud's Siamese twin.

Anybody who wants to help and express solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian nation and of the Arab-Jewish working class should not defend one or other part of the Zionist bourgeoisie, or call for conciliation between the PLO and Zionism.

We have to fight for independent trade unions, and for a democratic workers' party of Arabs and Jews without any connection with Zionism. These things, unfortunately, do not exist even in embryo.

IRIS LEDEZ

A God-awful leaflet!



Writeback to Socialist Organiser 28, Middle Lane London N8

ON Saturday at the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, the Workers' League of Palestine published a leaflet which was entitled 'Nazi Nazism'.

It started like most leaflets do, on the horrifying perils of nuclear war. Half way through, it starts to tell you how you can manage to survive the war and why there is going to be one. Its main theme was trust in God, follow a few simple instructions and you will be saved.

"If the people would just turn to the Lord and repent of their sins and ask for His forgiveness, He would lift the curse and remove the whole thing, but they won't. So He has to let the war come and all the horrors of man that man is bringing

into the world, what a terrible thing to do, without the Lord's blessing! He can save you!

"Man has sinned against his own iniquity, his own sin, his own hand... untold suffering and pain and starvation, sickness, savagery, all because of his sins and his refusal to receive the Lord, follow God or obey His word."

Sick

The leaflet ended with the most sick paragraph I could imagine.

"Then even if you can't dodge the nukes or the kooks, He can protect you, for he cares for His own. And if you do wind up a target for an H-Bomb, your

worries are over! You'll wake up for ever in the heavenly kingdom of God with peace and joy and happiness and bliss and love and beauty... even the hell-fire made of sulphur fires. Ask Jesus into your heart and get your shelter together today! God bless and keep you!"

The reading of the leaflet made me feel quite ill to think that anyone could believe in something quite so low and unbelievably stupid.

Throughout history religion has been used against the working class. How people can say God stands for love and peace when more wars have been fought under his name than anything else I do not know.

This leaflet which is aimed at an average person

could just as well have been written by the government itself.

All it is saying is that God believes in the government's defence policy. A nuclear war is part of God's plan to separate the good from the evil, another in the line of Noah's Ark.

The church has always lived off the back of the working class, always taking money from the people.

In mediaeval times the church took a tenth of food from starving people in order to make itself rich.

All it told them was if they were good a place would be saved for them in heaven.

If anyone opposed the church, it murdered them, e.g. burning at the stake, saying that they were trying to save the person's soul. But

as in most things, if you have got money the problem can be solved. In earlier times if you were excommunicated a bag of gold would help God forgive you.

The church has always ruled on a bully tactic. If you don't believe in it, something very nasty will happen to you, but if you believe and give it a lot of money you will go to a wonderful place called heaven.

The church, like the capitalist system, is now falling to pieces. Instead of believing in it wholeheartedly people are beginning to question it.

This leaflet was trying to sell God like a fall-out shelter. If the war came, neither would be much good.

LINDA MOULSDALE



'Gush Emunim'

Cuts policy debate DON'T SWING TORY AXE!

Our London cuts motion

Graham Bash of London Labour Briefing explains the 'majority opposition' policy for Labour Councils against the cuts advocated by Briefing

Socialist Organiser is suggesting the following draft resolution for the London Labour Party conference:

I WAS asked by Socialist Organiser to prepare, on behalf of London Labour Briefing, an article on our strategy for fighting Heseltine's proposed legislation. The clearest exposition of the collective Briefing view is contained in Frank Hansen's article in the November issue of London Briefing, and we are pleased to submit this to Socialist Organiser.

I addressed a workshop on these issues at the Workers' Socialist League rally on October 10, and was asked why Labour councils should disengage from office rather than allow themselves to be thrown out by the Tories.

This is not a fundamental divide: but I think that disengagement has two important advantages over what is in effect a bankruptcy strategy.

1. It can be coordinated on an all-London and national level, rather than allowing Labour councils to go bankrupt one at a time, and,

2. it means that we can fight from a position of defending all existing services and jobs, which would not be possible once a Labour council had been forced into bankruptcy.

Finally, I must make it clear that Briefing supporters are still carefully considering all the options. Criticisms will be carefully considered and discussed, and if sent to Briefing will of course be printed.

GRAHAM BASH

(Briefing address: 158 Thorold Rd, Ilford, Essex).

The essence of the position outlined is based on the following:

1. On the understanding that the old routinist methods of running local government are quite clearly at an end; and,

2. on the basis of a determination that this time round, it will be necessary for the Government to be put on notice that they will be able to rely on the representatives of our movement to carry through their policies.

Rather than Labour councils implementing the cuts, means a commitment from them to collective disengagement from office, confrontation, and a pledge to use their majorities in council to vote down all budgets imposing any cuts.



THE LONDON Labour Party's special conference on December 12th will face the difficult but vital task of formulating an action programme which unites Labour councils, trade unions and the labour movement in general, in a united campaign against Heseltine's law and the massive cuts which the Tories are determined to oppose.

One thing is absolutely clear: the all-out confrontation with central government which has been looming for the past two years can no longer be postponed. Thatcher's summer Cabinet reshuffle which ousted the 'wets' (now affectionately dubbed 'blue chips' by the media) represented nothing less than a declaration of war on the local government public sector.

With Tebbit (employment), Joseph (education), Fowler (social services) and Heseltine now firmly at the helm, local authority workers now face a strengthened dose of the monetarist medicine which has already been inflicted on the industrial sector (BL, British Steel etc.) Hundreds of thousands of redundancies and drastic cuts in living standards are now the order of the day.

Thwart

Some Labour Councils (not the majority!) have managed to thwart the Tories' plans to 'slim down' the local authority sector by the defensive option of large rate rises. Thousands of jobs have been saved by this 'time-buying' exercise, although the political price in terms of middle (and working) class alienation from Labour has tended to escalate.

Time has now run out. The Tories have given up the attempt to coax and push the recalcitrant Labour Councils into large-scale cuts. They have opted for the big stick in the form of Heseltine's law.

Even without the new legislation, the level of rate rises sufficient to avoid cuts would have been astronomical. With ceilings on commercial rates and local plebiscites coming into force next year, the rate

rise strategy will not just be politically undesirable, it will be redundant as a means of halting cuts.

Labour Councils now have a clear choice: fight back and challenge the Tory law, or buckle under and implement Heseltine's diktats.

Since the Lothian experience represents all our tomorrows, it is important that we absorb the lessons of that defeat.

Firstly, Lothian showed that it is possible to mobilise widespread support among public sector workers on a 'no cuts' platform. However, once the council stepped on to the slippery slope of 'minimising cuts', support waned and eventually evaporated.

Crumbs

While the Heseltine law provides an opportunity to unite the movement, its implementation will undoubtedly be selective. Heseltine will try to buy off weak Labour councils by offering them crumbs.

Secondly, there may be pressure from trade union bureaucrats to retreat to an illusory 'second line of defence', such as 'no redundancies', or 'only 100 redundancies', or whatever.

This pressure can only be overcome if Labour Groups and local parties forge a firm alliance with rank and file trade unionists on the basis of no cuts in jobs or services.



Heseltine

Above all, Lothian demonstrates that it is extremely difficult (although not in every case impossible) to fight a central authority on an isolated, local level. Unity in action is the key to forcing the Tories to retreat and make available the funds they have stolen from us.

Challenge

Only when they are faced with a challenge which threatens their power to rule will they make the slightest concession.

So where does this leave us in London?

We have the GLC, and after May 1982 we will probably have a few more radical Labour councils. The problem is that we can't wait until May 1982.

Existing Labour councils must be forced to act. They must refuse to draw up the 'savings' budgets which Heseltine is demanding. If necessary they should immediately disengage rather than endorse cuts budgets, thus challenging the local Tories (or Social Democrats?) to do their worst, and then voting down the budget they present.

This will provide the Labour Party in London with the opportunity of mobilising the working class now against the Tory plans. Moreover, it will clear the decks for an election campaign based on no cuts/no rate rises and a confrontation with the government.

Of course, there is no guarantee that existing Labour groups will be bound by the discipline of the London Labour movement. Nevertheless we must bring maximum pressure to bear.

Otherwise the election will be utter confusion, with Labour councils imposing cuts and rate rises, while their local parties campaign against such policies.

What happens after May 1982? Clearly at this point we can only outline the bare bones of a strategy.

The first priority is to ensure that, immediately following the May elections, the London Labour Party conference is reconvened to allow the full-

est possible discussion on tactics to take place.

The essence of the policy, however, can be formulated already: it involves councils acting together, facing up to the threat of surcharge, refusing to make cuts, and setting an all-London date - notified clearly in advance - for collective disengagement and confrontation.

Following a specially-convened meeting of the Briefing Editorial Board, this 'Fighting to Win' strategy (outlined in earlier contributions to Briefing) was amended and clarified through the tabling of two model resolutions for the December 12th special conference.

The first is designed to apply to existing Labour Groups, while the second applies to in-coming groups following the elections in May. Wording from either resolution can be used to amend the EC statement to be presented to conference.

The text of the model resolutions is in the November issue of Briefing: 20p plus postage from 158 Thorold Rd, Ilford, Essex.

No to referendum gimmick

HESELTINE'S proposed law to stop business rate rises has forced many supporters of rate increases to change their policy.

While still arguing that rates have been a form of wealth re-distribution to working people, Ken Livingstone of the GLC and Lambeth Council Ted Knight have now come out with a policy of 'No cuts - freeze rates'.

An emergency motion to Labour Party conference, moved by Knight and carried against the NEC's recommendation, called for a mass campaign against Heseltine's legislation and for Labour councils to refuse to cut in order to balance the books.

For such a policy to succeed, council unions and tenants must be mobilised.

Exercise

But Ted Knight has responded to Heseltine's call for local referendums as follows: "Labour Councils would stand in a referendum of our own, on a clear policy of no cuts, a freeze on rates and more government cash. This would reduce the referendum to a straight 'yes' or 'no' vote".

Turning Heseltine's referendum gimmick upside down is not the best way of answering it. Referendums generally prove what the people who set the

question want them to prove. In practice, Knight's proposed referendum would probably meet an effective boycott from local Tories and SDPs.

Rather than trying to organise their own pseudo-democratic farce to counter the Tories', Labour councils should be organising labour movement conferences and meetings to root their anti-cuts fight firmly in democratic accountability to the local working class in the factories and offices and on the estates.

The task is not to 'prove our case' with a cleverly staged voting exercise, but to mobilise local workers and tenants in struggle to defend their services, jobs, and living standards.

CHEUNG SIU MIN



Ted Knight



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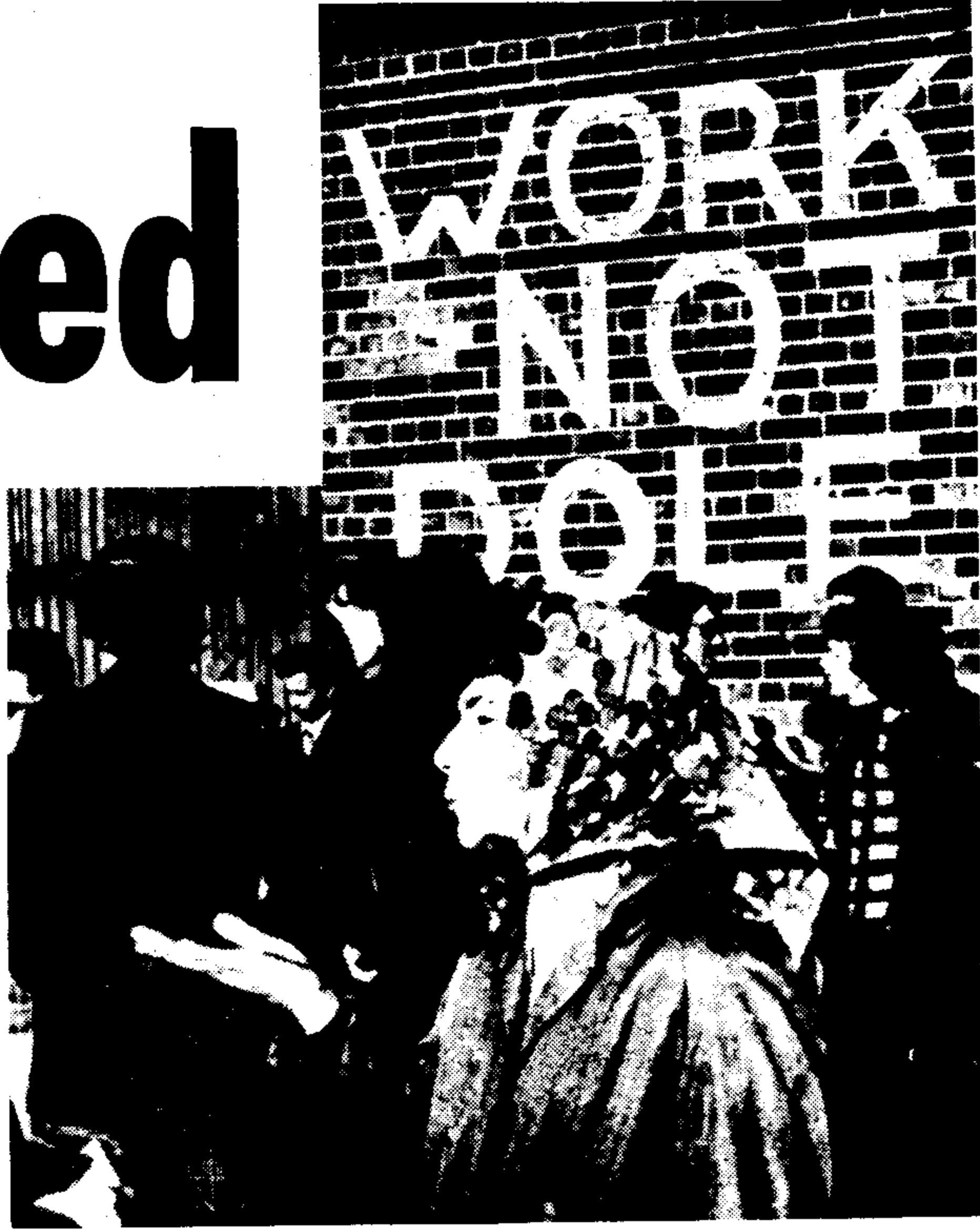
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Unemployed Workers' Movement formed

A National Unemployed Workers' Movement was established at a conference in London last weekend (31 October/ 1 November), attended by almost 200 people from 40 different unemployed groups. JO THWAITES reports.



Hamlets have made a special effort and reported that afternoon classes in how the benefit system works had proved very successful. The UWM has to make a point of trying to go to where unwaged women are—mother and toddler groups, community centres, laundrettes and shopping centres. And all groups should provide creche facilities.

A charter for unemployed and unwaged women drafted by the previous day's women's conference was approved by the workshop with a few amendments added, including support for the campaign by the Action Committee for a Woman's Right to Work for a national demonstration on the issue.

Condemned

Rachel Lever from the Action Committee addressed the full conference so the discussion wasn't just limited to those women at the workshop.

The workshop on Youth Opportunities Schemes (YIPS) condemned these schemes as a barrier to women's employment and discussed how they should be attacked.

We discussed the support of the National Unemployed Workers' Movement (NUWM) and discussed how they should be attacked.

Region

The conference adopted a constitution and elected a National Co-ordinating Committee of 15 members with provision for additional representatives from each region.

Many unemployed groups are active in supporting employed workers' fights to maintain their jobs. Edinburgh Unemployed Association took the opportunity to visit the Staffa workers in East London, and conference passed resolutions back-

ing them and supporting the BL workers in their struggle against Edwardes' sacking threat.

This conference gave notice that the unemployed won't be hived off into a nicely structured file in TUC HQ, but will link up with employed workers at the rank and file to fight closures and campaign for the right to work.

Reaching jobless women

MANY WOMEN who are unemployed or unwaged don't go anywhere near the dole offices.

Single women with kids don't have to sign on. Married women don't register because they won't get any benefit, and many unemployed women regard themselves as housewives.

So unless at the best queues are not enough to attract women to meetings or unemployed centres.

This was one of the problems that a meeting organised by women from Islington and Southwark unemployed action groups tackled on the day before the national unemployed workers' movement conference.

We also discussed a charter for unemployed and unwaged women, which commits the unemployed workers' movement to recognising that women are oppressed in all areas of society.

It calls for measures like

CP opposes links with S.African workers

Joan Lee reports on the Anti-Apartheid conference.

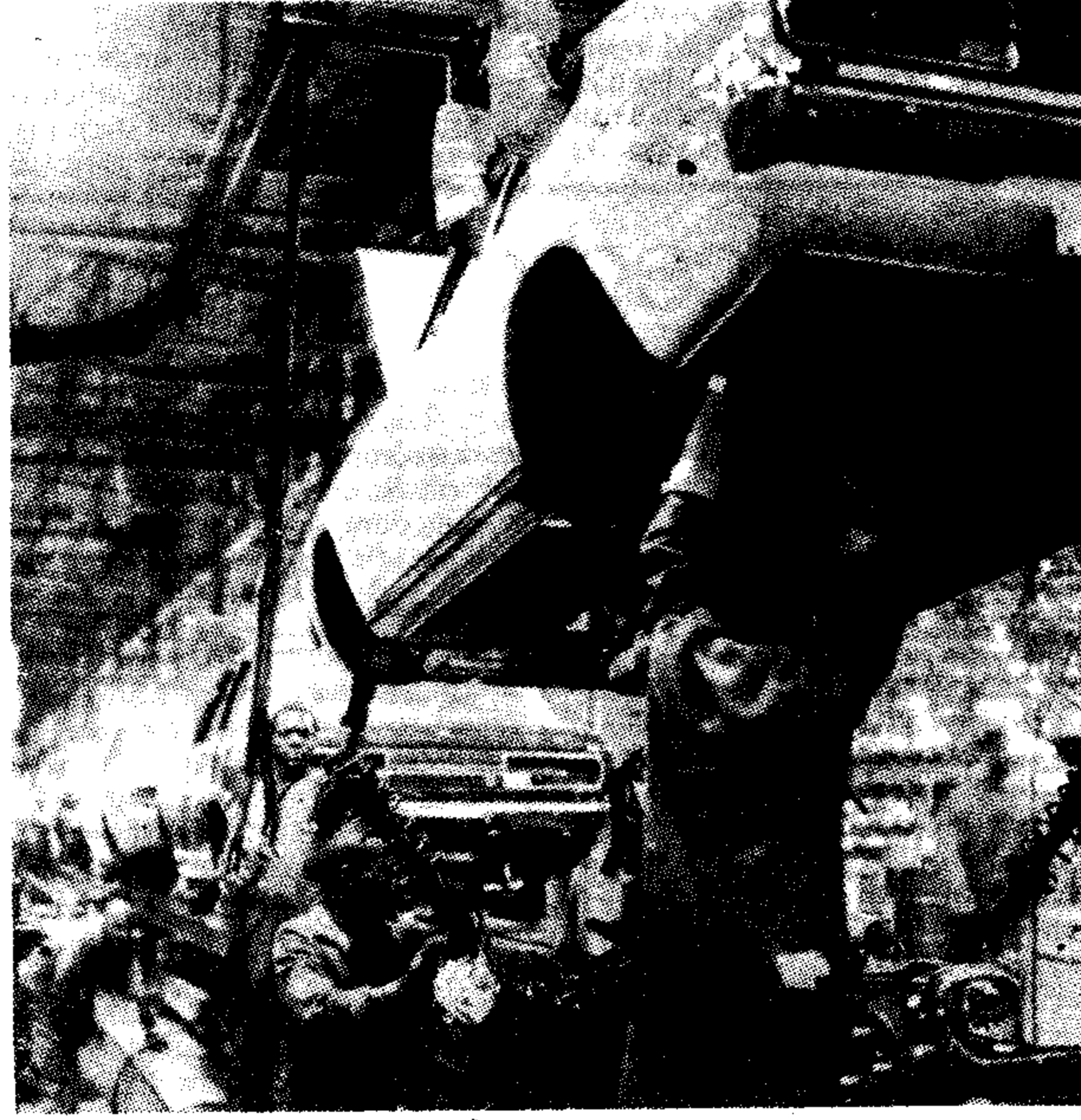
THE unacceptable face of Communism (CPGB-style) was well in evidence at the AGM of the Anti-Apartheid Movement on 1 November.

A motion from Oxford Trades Council and SO supporter Bob Fine and other members of the Socialist Forum on Southern African Solidarity (SFOAS), a discussion action group for Trotskyists and libertarian Marxists, as well as a variety of Militant-inspired motions so alarmed the CP-dominated National Committee and Executive Committee that they packed the meeting with members from the London area who could be relied upon to support the line.

Links

Central to the day's struggle was a motion put by Bob Fine and other SFOAS members asking the AGM to resolve that the Anti-Apartheid Movement should encourage the formation of direct fraternal links between all independent, non-racial trade unions in South Africa and unions in Britain; to encourage the exchange of visits between active trade unionists in Britain and genuine, independent, non-racial unions in South Africa; to support the invitation of trade unionists from the independent non-racial trade unions in South Africa to international combine meetings and that AAM should make every effort to receive report-backs from those who visited South Africa on this basis and publicise all findings not prejudicial to the security of the South African unions.

So crucial did the EC consider the defeat of this resolution that they went to the lengths of putting forward a complete substitute



resolution arguing that the AAM should encourage trade union solidarity work in Britain along the lines of the AAM's National Committee statement of 27 June.

This had been put out in response to a proposal from Coventry South-East CLP at an Anti-Apartheid Conference in March.

The statement had confirmed the existing AAM line of support for South African trade unions solely through the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) which is, of course, an underground organisation, and follows the same ideological line as the African National Congress.

The statement rejected totally the Coventry SE CLP request for direct links between combine committees and factories in the UK and South Africa. It did so on the grounds that a) any visits to South Africa by British trade unionists would inevitably endanger South African trade unionists; b) that all information from trade unionists' visits to South Africa, be they by Bill Sirs and Terry Duffy with management's blessing or by British shop stewards at the invitation of South African black workers in struggle, are unnecessary;

c) that international visits are often treated with suspicion. The statement did not specify whose international visits and whose suspicion.

Leaflet

SFOAS circulated at the meeting a leaflet documenting the strength of the underground, independent, non-racial trade union organisations, such as FOSATU, whose affiliates include the unions active in Leyland South Africa and SAAWU which has been leading the Rowntree struggle.

Bob Fine reminded members that both FOSATU and SAAWU as well as other underground trade union organisations involved in the recent wave of struggles have asked for direct visits by UK trade unionists in related firms and unions.

The Executive's amended resolution was principally recommended by Chris Easterling, SCPS bureaucrat. He and his supporters played the 'danger to South African trade unionists' card strongly and also claimed that such visits would also endanger the British trade unionists who took part.



'Isolate apartheid', the AAM leaders say—and they use as an excuse to monopolise contacts between British workers and South African strikers (above).

They spoke as if hundreds of shop stewards intended to try and fly into South Africa. They tried to draw parallels between shop stewards' visits and the proposed visit of Sirs and Duffy, playing down the fact that Sirs and Duffy have not been invited by the workers themselves.

Vote

Even with the support of Militant, the vote went 116 to 48 against the original resolution 14 as put up by SFOAS, and for the Executive amendment which showed the extent of the Anti-Apartheid Movement platform's voting strength.

The EC and NC of the Anti-Apartheid Movement organised the day's business to suit their own purposes.

Before taking resolution 14 they brought a leading SACTU comrade onto the platform to make a strong attack on the proposal for direct links.

Having defeated resolution 14 and knocked the stuffing out of Militant, the platform got the meeting to vote that three more resolutions be referred to the National Committee's next meeting.

These included the resolution from Oxford Trades Council, calling for direct links, for British workers to open their bosses books, for full blacking action and for nationalisation under workers' control of all companies and banks involved in South Africa.

Not much imagination is needed to envisage what the NC would do with this resolution.

A major plank of AAM programme is for comprehensive sanctions against the South African government by the British (i.e. Thatcher) government.

Militant speakers who explained that neither sanctions nor the withdrawal of British companies from South Africa could be achieved within the framework of capitalism were hissed and harassed at the AGM.

It emerged that the AAM constitution is grossly undemocratic. The AGM does not decide policy but merely recommends it to the National Committee of which 30 members are elected at the Conference and over 30 co-opted from affiliated organisations by the existing NC after the AGM.

South African solidarity is of paramount importance. Not only do we have to decide how best to deal with the problems of the AAM oligarchy, but also what solidarity work we can undertake outside Anti-Apartheid.

South African solidarity work should be discussed at SO meetings and should come up for full discussion at SO delegate meetings.

SINN FEIN TURN TO CONTEST ELECTIONS

AT ITS conference last weekend, Provisional Sinn Fein made some important shifts in policy.

Firstly, the congress agreed to contest local and parliamentary elections in both North and South. Although they maintain their previous position on not taking seats in the Westminster and Dublin parliaments if elected, Sinn Fein will allow members to take seats on Northern Ireland local councils (whose power is next to nothing anyhow).

This shift can be explained by the effects of the campaign waged during the hunger strike. The election of Bobby Sands and Owen Carron showed the political value of elections; a political campaign in support of the prisoners brought thousands onto the streets. The SDLP, which has previously dominated the Catholic community electorally, was severely isolated by its refusal to take a clear position on the hunger strike.

One of the main motivations given at the conference for the shift was the belief that Sinn Fein can now beat the SDLP on their own ground.

Failed

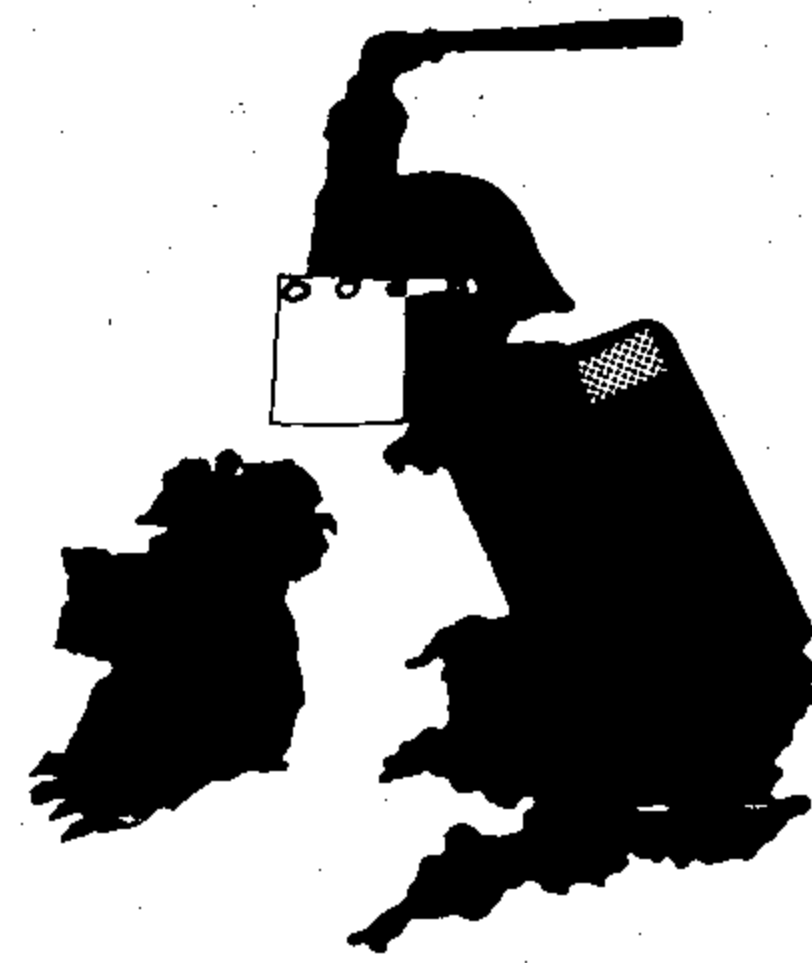
Although many delegates emphasised that this political campaign was not counterposed to milit-

by Bruce Robinson

ary action, there must be in which they sought to win Protestant support in the North for a united Ireland. But last weekend one speaker condemned it as a 'sop to Loyalism'.

The other main shift was that Sinn Fein abandoned its policy of a federal Ireland, with assemblies based on the four provinces of Ireland (Leinster, Munster, Connaught, and Ulster), in favour of a more centralised government.

Federalism was a key policy in the Provisionals' programme, 'Eire Nua',



LCI CONFERENCE CALLED

THE Labour Committee on Ireland, together with the Committee for Withdrawal from Ireland, are organising a major labour movement conference to take place on February 27th, 1982, in London.

This conference aims to present the case for the labour movement to support British withdrawal. Trade unions and constituency Labour Parties are asked to sponsor the conference, to make a donation, and to agree to send delegates.

Details of the secretary, Labour Movement conference, 37 Carden Road, London SE15.



Rent-a-million

A NICE surprise for quarter of a million people. A fat cheque should be coming for them in the post.

And that's just in Britain. Another million folk all over Europe should also be happy recipients of same.

That's if Robert Moss of the Daily Telegraph and the CIA is to be believed (though why he should with his record is another question). He has uncovered a devious Moscow-gold plot to flood the streets of Europe with unilateral disarmers.

The Reformatory Dagblad, a Dutch religious newspaper (well-known to Hitchhikers' Guide devotees as creator of the world) reveals the ghastly details. Vadim Vassilevich Leonov (who sounds like a dyslexic's identikit Bolshevik), posing as a correspondent for the TASS news agency in Holland, was expelled as a KGB agent.

The said Leonov, in an unguarded moment, let it slip out to an unidentified (surprise, surprise) church activist that his real role was to orchestrate mass anti-Bomb demonstrations according to instructions forwarded from Moscow via the top-secret telex in the KGB Referentura inside the Soviet Embassy in the Hague.

Confused? You won't be when you hear Leonov say: 'If Moscow decides that



50,000 demonstrators must take to the streets in Holland, and then they take to the streets. A message through my channels is sufficient. Everything is organised with military precision...

'I should know because not only am I involved in these clandestine activities on a daily basis, but I am also one of those who transmit the orders coming from Moscow.'

So there you have it, clear as mud and twice as pretty. All those multi-millioned anti-nuclear war protestors summoned together by a few wires and a telex tip-tapping away in secret rooms in Soviet Embassies across Europe.

Marvellous what modern science can achieve, even if it is a bit of a fragile basis on which to build a movement. What worries me and the other comrades in the secret Socialist Organiser code room somewhere in North London is, where's our pay-cheque?



Blind justice

DAVID Miller and Simon Los are both students and both have got themselves into a spot of bother with the law for youthful excesses. But there the resemblance ends.

After serving only five days of a four-month jail sentence for throwing two lighted fireworks into a hall in Queen's College, Oxford, and causing £20,000 worth of damage, David Miller had his sentence reduced to a £250 fine. He is a final year maths

student and hopes to get a first class degree, the Appeal Court judges heard.

Simon Los, a student in Nottingham, was jailed for three years for giving out 200 leaflets headed 'Anarchy for the UK', which it is admitted nobody took any notice of. So much for freedom of expression.

Judges, it seems, are more prepared to tolerate the dangerous pranks of the young of their own kind than ideas, however ineffectual, aimed against the system.

Nuclear shuffle?

STAND BY for more backstabbing in the Tory Cabinet. They've now got a material interest in it.

In answer to a Parliamentary question from Labour MP Frank Dobson, Home Office minister Patrick Mayhew revealed that 17 places have been allocated for MPs in nuclear shelters. All are for ministers, who will be appointed sub-regional commissioners.

But there are more than 17 in the Tory Cabinet. Watch out for fireworks.

Mason to take over?

ALF Robens, Richard Marsh... ex-Labour right wingers always seem to make the most ruthless bosses for state-run industries.

And, according to the Sunday Telegraph on November 1st, former Northern Ireland minister Roy Mason is set to follow. Examiner Mason may become the next head of the Coal Board this summer.

Mason has reportedly already said that he will not stand again for the Shadow Cabinet. If he wanted to stay on as MP, he would face a big battle for reselection in his Barnsley constituency, where left wing miners' delegates are strong.



Republicans celebrate electoral victory of Owen Carron

SCIENCE Down in the dumps again



CERTAIN themes keep cropping up in this column. This week it's toxic wastes time again, folks!

It's the Hyde Park dioxin dump and it makes Love Canal* look like the proverbial picnic.

First of all, it's not our Hyde Park - it's near Niagara River, a few kilometres downstream from the Falls (and from Love Canal itself) in New York State, and it contains hundreds of kilograms of dioxin!

Compare that with only 1/4 kilogram which was all it took to cause the Seveso disaster in Italy.

A single spadeful of the dioxin waste would be enough to kill all life in Lake Ontario, a stretch of water 50% bigger than Wales,

which Niagara River empties into. The dump contains four times as much chemical waste as Love Canal and there is now evidence of leakage through fissures in the underlying rock towards the river.

This information comes (via New Scientist) from "The Ravaged River", a report issued by the Public Interest Research Group (PIRG), a US citizens group. PIRG accuses the US government of lying to the Canadians (who own the other bank of Niagara River and half of Lake Ontario) by covering up the extent of industrial pollution.

About 2000 million litres of dangerous waste water is dumped in the river every day, posing a serious health hazard to the 400,000 people who get their drink-

ing water from it. Part of the cover-up was the concealment by the US of the breakdown of a waste treatment plant after only 6 weeks operation.

Canadian tests found 24 chemicals from the US government's list of "priority" pollutants in the outflow from the "treatment" plant into the river.

Both the Hyde Park and Love Canal dumps are owned by Hooker Chemical and Plastics who have made a secret deal with President Reagan's new-look Environmental Protection Agency.

This deal would involve clearing up 90% of the dangerous waste (says Hooker). But the 10% left would still include tens of kilograms of dioxin alone - enough to kill off Niagara

River and Lake Ontario and a few more besides.

Nothing less than removing all the waste and burning it will remove the danger. But this would cost Hooker \$200 million - their plan would only cost \$10 million.

By the way, previous studies have already shown Lake Ontario to have the highest concentration of dioxin outside of Vietnam. The Great Lakes area seems to be the most polluted area of the Western World.

*Love Canal in New York State was the site of a secret dump of hundreds of barrels of dangerous chemicals. A working class community living on top of it finally had to leave after years of suffering mysterious illnesses and high rates of miscarriage and deformity.

Left-wing Youth get organised

THE FOUNDING conference of the National Left Wing Youth Movement of the LPYS will be held in London on November 21st-22nd.

This conference will thrash out our policy document, expanding on our basic 'Where We Stand' debated and voted on at the June conference where the nucleus of the NLWYM first met.

Since June we have held meetings up and down the country and produced two issues of our paper Class Fighter, as well as a special issue on the riots.

We had a contingent of 50 youth at the YS summer camp, where we made a big impact.

We ran a workshop at the Workers' Socialist League rally at the beginning of October, where a discussion was started on organising black self-defence and the links between youth culture and music. That's a discussion which will be continued at the November conference.

We'll be having sessions on unemployment, YOPs, fighting racism and fascism, youth culture, women's and gay liberation, and lots more. There will be films and exhibitions, and we'll be electing a new Steering Committee.

There'll be a gig on Saturday night. Food and accommodation will be

available both days. All this for only £2, if you have a job, and 50p if you haven't or are on YOPs. You can't afford to miss it.

Write in now for conference documents, registration, and details of transport from your area, to NLWYM, BM Box 5277, London WC1N 3XX.



New issue of Class Fighter, paper of the National Left Wing Youth Movement.

10p, plus postage, from BM Box 5277, London WC1N 3XX

Industrial News

NALGO knives typists' strike

AFTER five months on strike for a regraded pay structure to give female office workers equal pay with their male colleagues, 400 Liverpool City Council typists now face defeat — not at the hands of their employers, but at the hands of the NALGO national executive.

The typists' dispute is on the verge of bringing the city council to a standstill. Suppliers are not being paid and are threatening to cut off deliveries, contractors are threatening to sue the mayor for non-payment of bills, and hundreds of thousands of pounds in rent are not being collected. The city council is now being run by a seven-person emergency committee.

Knighthood

Liberal leader Sir Trevor Jones (I wonder why Thatcher gave him that knighthood?) had arrogantly refused to negotiate

the council's original and inadequate offer. Now, suddenly, he wants to talk.

But what happens? Instead of pushing the full claim, the negotiators take the noose from around Jones' neck and offer him arbitration. Breathing audible sighs of relief, the condemned man grasps this welcome reprieve and accepts.

Return

The typists, however, are not so delighted. Arbitration may take up to 12 months. Meanwhile they have to return to normal working and take the pressure off the council. And of course there is no guarantee of a suitable settlement at the end of it all.

Many of the typists feel they have been sold out. They didn't make sacrifices for five months for it to end like this.

What then made a major-

ity accept arbitration at a mass meeting? Quite simple — NALGO national officials said accept or we withdraw all support, including strike pay, and the local branch officers recommended this solution to the meeting.

It is not clear at the moment why the branch officers made this recommendation. They and the typists have already learnt in this dispute that sometimes you have to fight the union as well as your employers. Only a few weeks ago they secured strike pay by picketing NALGO national headquarters. This fight was obviously necessary again.

Morale

The typists' claim could and should have been won in full. The employers were cracking while morale among the strikers was rising. Support from other trade unionists employed

by the council was increasing the pressure for a just settlement, but the NALGO national officials didn't have the 'bottle' for seeing the fight through like these women had.

Dump

This story of betrayal by those paid out of our union subs to serve our interests is a familiar one. Out of this betrayal, however, yet another group of workers has learnt a very valuable lesson.

Unless we take seriously the fight to dump these well-fed, union-car-driving, 200-guinea-suited parasites, and replace them with a leadership accountable to the members and with the guts to fight our battles with us to the end, Thatcher and her friends can sleep easy in their beds at night.

I suspect, however, that NALGO national officials cannot. Liverpool typists have long, long memories.

SUE ERSWELL

Strike call against Barking cuts

by Chris Giles

BARKING and Dagenham Council has forced its Education Committee to plan cuts of £2.7 million from the education budget over the next two years. With last year's £1.2 million cuts, this constitutes the largest proportional cut in education spending in the country.

The Education Committee have themselves admitted that there are no grounds in terms of falling rolls for these cuts and that the education of children in the borough is certain to suffer.

Clubs

The borough is likely to lose some 150 teaching jobs in schools. 200 'dinner ladies' are to go, 10 Further Education jobs will be lost, and 15 nursery assistants and five youth clubs will disappear.

Most mind-boggling of all is the plan to cut the educational unit of the borough's Assessment Centre. Unless the council plans not to educate children in this unit at all, they will have to go to local junior and secondary schools, adding further problems to an already over-worked school system.

Protest

Teachers in the borough are officially operating no cover action and have withdrawn goodwill as a protest against past and future cuts. Children have been sent home in some comprehensives, but the effect on primaries, where no cover could be devastating, has been minimal.

Unlikely

The local NUT Association has proposed 'rolling strikes' as an alternative; this would result in the orchestrated closing of schools in rotation. The NUT Action Committee, on past form, are very unlikely to back this.

Since these cuts seem to be the largest in the country, it is up to them to make a test case of Barking and act now to coordinate a campaign of industrial action which will close schools and bring home to the council, parents and children alike the opposition of workers in schools to their plans for the next two years.

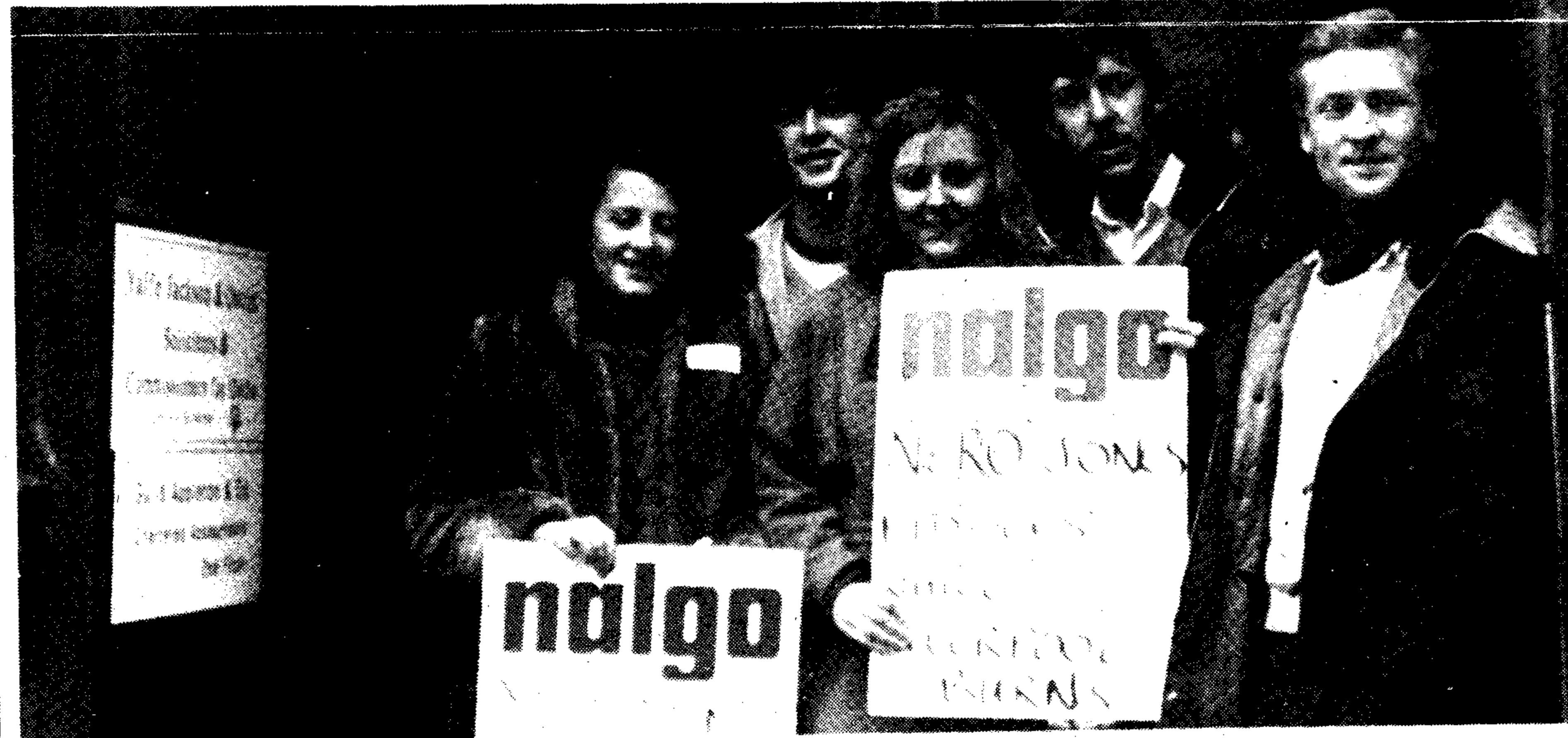
Workers in Barking and Dagenham often forget that their employer is supposed to be a Labour Authority. 'Socialist' councillors are carrying out government policy without a whimper of protest.

Unified

They would do well to follow the example of Waltham Forest council, who have made no cuts at all in public expenditure.

Councillors in Barking should take notice of their comrades in other boroughs and join in a unified campaign against the government's plans to undermine state educational provision, health and social services.

NUT members in the Labour Party should make sure that motions urging this approach are sent from their CLPs to the forthcoming Regional Council Special Meeting on 12 December.



Typists on the picket line

Rolls Royce workers fight back

Stan Crooke explains the issues behind the strike of 1500 production workers at Rolls Royce, Hillington (Glasgow).

"YOU can get punched on the jaw so many times before you punch back, you can only be hit so often before you take a stand. And that's what has happened here."

This is how one of the shop stewards at the Rolls Royce plant at Hillington (Glasgow) summed up the background to the strike which began there on Tuesday 20 October when management cut by an average of 7½% the standard times allowed for jobs on the production line.

Recent years have seen a succession of speed-ups, minimal wage increases, cut-backs in the workforce and a general worsening of working conditions at the plant.

But now management has pushed its luck once too often and is receiving the kind of treatment it has deserved all along.

Immediately after the announcement of the speed-ups, the production operatives held a mass meeting

where they voted overwhelmingly for strike action and walked out straight away.

Management has reacted to the strike by adopting the Michael Edwards approach. Notices were posted up around the factory claiming that the strike was endangering the factory's future and could lead to its closure.

Denounced

McLean, head of Rolls Royce operations in Scotland, denounced the workers' fightback as: "A mean and contemptible demand for money" and threatened to transfer all work being done at Hillington to factories in England.

Management are cynically using the strike to push through the 500 redundancies announced in September.

In the absence of any lead from the convenor or regional union officials, workers are grabbing redundancy money while it is still on

offer.

If management is successful in pushing through the 7½% speed-up, then it will inevitably lead to even more job losses, since a smaller workforce will be required to produce the same amount of work being done at present.

"They can't change the times and keep on the same workforce. It will mean another loss of jobs and that's what we're fighting about," a shop steward told Socialist Organiser.

Bosses at the plant are also refusing to begin negotiations about this year's pay rise (assuming they do actually offer a rise) until the strike is over.

Just as last month, they were saying they would not begin negotiations until they had the 500 redundancies they wanted.

So the strike is not just about the latest speed-up; it is inseparable from this year's pay claim.

This makes all the more amazing the attitude of local

AUEW full timers and of the shop stewards' convenor and Communist Party member George McCormack.

AUEW full-timer Gavin Laird reacted to the walk-out by lining up with management. In an open letter to the workers he claimed that management was perfectly within its rights under the terms of last year's pay agreement to implement the speed-up.

Instead of working to bring the rest of the factory out in support of the 1500 strikers McCormack was quite prepared to let them carry on working, so that stockpiled production could be sent out.

This made an eventual lock-out inevitable.

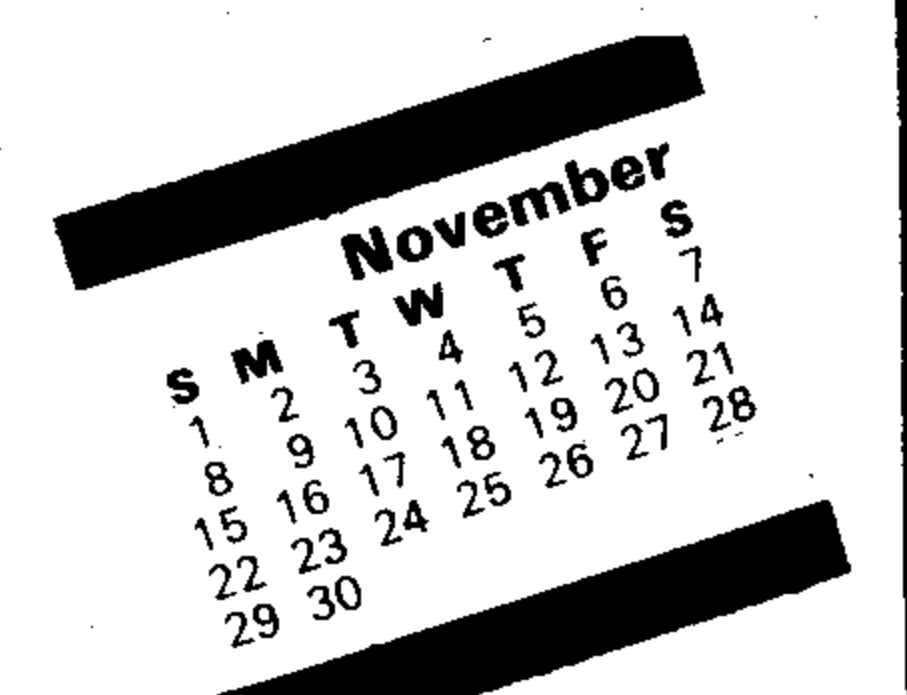
"We've only been kept on because it suits management—they're still getting the work out. But once that's over then we're out along with the last job. We're going to end out on the street whatever happens, so we might as well go the

whole hog and come out on strike as well" said the shop steward only days before the inevitable lock-out happened.

Last Wednesday (28 October) management announced they were laying off the 2,500 workers not on strike. McCormack didn't seem to be perturbed by the announcement he was meeting with management and AUEW officials (the very ones who refused to make the strike official) to try and engineer a return to work.

Overwhelmingly

But in spite of the lack of any lead from McCormack, in spite of the refusal of the AUEW to make the strike official, and in spite of the witch-hunt by the mass media, the strikers have refused to back down. At a mass meeting held last Thursday, they again voted overwhelmingly to continue the strike.



WHAT'S ON

Oxfordshire County Association of Trades Councils conference: Ireland — where does the labour movement stand? Saturday December 12, 10-5 at West Oxford Community Centre, Binsey Lane, Oxford. Delegate's credentials £3, observers £1.50 (unwaged £1) from Marie Campbell, 167 Walton St, Oxford.

Greenwich Labour Party DAY CONFERENCE: IRELAND—A WAY FORWARD? Saturday 28 November 9.30-5.30 Goldsmith's College Students Union New Cross, London SE14 Creche available. Lunch provided. Registration £2.50 Details from Greenwich Labour Party, 32 Woolwich Road, London SE10

LAMBETH LABOUR LEFT has called a meeting on 28 November at County Hall at 7.30 for all those on the left in the Labour Party in London who are taking a no cuts, no rate rise stand, in order to hammer out a policy to confront the Tories.

Camden Socialist Organiser meeting: 'Smash the 4% wage limit', with speaker Alan Thornett (TGWU Cowley Assembly Plant, in personal capacity). Wednesday November 11, from 7.30 at Camden Labour Club, Carol St.

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament Conference November 13-15, at Queen Mary College, London. Details: CND, 11 Goodwin St, London N4.

St Mary's Hospital, London W9: support conference for the struggle against closure. Saturday November 21, from 11am at Porchester Hall, Porchester Rd, London W2.

South West London Socialist Organiser meeting with John O'Mahony (Socialist Organiser EB) plus a BL shop steward: Tuesday November 17, from 8pm at the Fox and Hounds, Upper Richmond Rd (near Putney BR station).

Liverpool Socialist Organiser meetings: Thursday at 7.30 at the Swan Hotel, London Rd. Nov.5: The Russian revolution, the rise of Stalinism, and Trotskyism. Nov.12: Bennisism and the need to organise the Left. Nov.19: What is fascism?

Oxford Socialist Organiser Marxist classes. Oxford Community Centre Wednesdays, 8pm at 44b Princes St. Nov.18: The Russian Revolution Dec.2: The crisis of the 4th International Dec.16: The nuclear threat.

The Campaign for Democratic Rights in Turkey is organising a conference for Saturday December 12, from 10.30 to 5pm at NUFTO Hall, Jockeys Fields, London WC1. Labour movement organisations are invited to write to the CDDRT, 29 Parkfield St, London N1, for credentials. Delegate's fee is £3.

KICK OUT THE TORIES
Labour democracy and the fight for a WORKERS GOVERNMENT

A Socialist Organiser Pamphlet

40p plus postage
from Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8

Pickets fined after rig dispute

The labour movement's leaders have been silent about the carve-up, victimisation, and prosecution of 48 trade unionists in Scotland. Stan Crooke reports.

ON TUESDAY October 13 41 trade unionists were fined a total of £2,050 by the Sheriff's Court in Kilmarnock. The previous week the High Court in Edinburgh had imposed fines totalling £300 on five others.

The 46 are members of the Boilermakers' Society, arrested and charged with 'breach of the peace' in September of last year during the Hunterston oil rig yard dispute.

Two other members pleaded not guilty in Kilmarnock, and are due to reappear in court in mid-February.

The Hunterston dispute began as a fight for safer working conditions; it rapidly grew into a fight for reinstatement after management had sacked all 900 strikers, and for trade union democracy.

On Thursday August 28 last year, the yard walked out in protest at the unsafe working conditions.

But union officials met the bosses and issued a joint statement accepting:

- no change in working conditions 'until the appropriate time',
- automatic sacking for anyone who struck without going through procedure,
- no payment for 'time lost' due to the walk-out.

Rejected

An official recommendation to return to work was overwhelmingly rejected by a mass meeting of the strikers on Thursday September 4th.

AMC, the yard's owners, sacked all 900 strikers. Phillips Petroleum announced that they would have the platform towed away for completion in Holland. The union leaders threw all their energy into smashing the strike. And the police went into action against the pickets.

In a military-style operation carried out on Wednesday 10th, police arrested 70 pickets. 48 of them were charged. In the sequel to the arrests was a fresh attempt by the union bureaucrats to force their members to return to work.

Lemmings

The new conditions for a return to work agreed by them and the bosses now also included: cutbacks in the workforce at the yard, the use of sub-contract labour, and individual reapplication for jobs by all who had been sacked.

On Monday September 29, a mass meeting of GMWU members voted for a return to work, but the Boilermakers' mass meeting voted to continue.

"The boilermakers are acting like lemmings and complete anarchists", raged Scottish GMWU regional secretary Jimmy Morrell.

Scabbing

The Boilermakers' general secretary and the GMWU issued a call for organised scabbing: "it is imperative that our joint membership respond to this directive and apply

to employment".

On Monday October 20, the Boilermakers' members were finally persuaded into a return to work on the bosses' terms. 300 permanent jobs at the yard were lost, the more militant workers were sacked, union organisation was smashed, sub-contract labour was brought in and strikes were effectively banned.

But the bureaucrats had not yet finished their dirty work. After the Hunterston ex shop stewards organised a meeting in Glasgow on Monday November 17, attended by over 100 trade unionists, in order to publicise the betrayal by their misleaders, and to carry on and broaden out the fight, Scottish TUC general secretary Jimmy Milne denounced it as an attempt to break up the STUC!

And the Hunterston stewards were barred from addressing the annual conference of Scottish Trades Councils secretaries and chairpersons and the STUC convention against unemployment last December.

We need to build a campaign in defence of the two trade unionists still to be tried, and to make sure that the lessons of the Hunterston dispute are not lost.



Three months on the picket line while the officials do nothing but fuss about tribunals

Glencroft faces union sabotage

The fifteen women on strike at Glencroft Knitwear, Glasgow, for reinstatement and union recognition, now face the threat of their union withdrawing official support.

At a meeting on Friday October 30, national officials of the NUHKW told them that the union would continue to pay strike pay for the next three weeks, but would then review the situation, depending on how much support came in.

But so far the union officials have often done more to hinder than help support. Before the women can speak

anywhere, for example, it has to be vetted by union officials.

Events the women have been told not to attend include the Laurence Scott support conference on November 14 and last weekend's demonstration commemorating the Jarrow march.

And the blacking at airports, generally assumed to be in operation, is in fact non-existent at Glasgow airport.

The TGWU full timer told Socialist Organiser that the correspondence he had received from the NUHKW

(the Glencroft workers' union) had been passed on to the shop stewards at the airport, but he did not know what was happening about it.

Blacked

"Our members will be looking out for Glencroft stuff", he said. "And it will be blacked if they spot any. But really I've been so busy with my job at British Airways that it has taken up all our time".

No-one at the freight terminal at the airport knew anything about the supposed blacking. TGWU members at the British Caledonian, Servisair, and Lepair depots said that they had not even heard about the dispute and did not handle Glencroft products anyway. At the KLM and SAS depots, cuts in manning levels have resulted in office staff (in APEX) handling the freight. But they too have never heard of Glencroft. "The British Airways people might do that kind of thing (i.e. blacking) but it's not the kind of thing we go in for", an APEX member at SAS amiably remarked.

But at the British Airways depot it was the same story: the shop steward had heard nothing about the dispute. And although British Airways used to handle Glencroft products, he said, it was years since anything from them had passed through the depot.

Depots

Other depots at the airport are run by cowboy firms, and non-unionised.

What has to be done now, and should have been done a long time ago, is establish just where Glencroft products are shipped out, and implement effective blacking. If they are going through non-unionised depots, this would mean getting CPISA members to black the customs and excise forms.

The other thing that has to be done is build support for the picket line. The NUHKW officials should spend less time preparing for the industrial tribunal, and more time organising support from other trade unionists for the picket line.

Picketing at Glencroft Knitwear, 128 Ingram St, Monday-Friday, 7.30am to 4.30pm.



Laird moves in on Hoover

FRESH from trying to sell out the workers at Rolls Royce Hillington (see facing page), AUEW official Gavin Laird this week

chaired a joint committee of shop stewards and officials to discuss Hoover's job-cuts plans. Hoover want to shut their

Perivale (West London) plant and cut hundreds of jobs at Cambuslang (Glasgow) and Merthyr Tydfil.

Laird said that the unions would back the Perivale workers if they took action to resist the closure, and stewards from Cambuslang and Merthyr said that they would black the transfer of work if Perivale took action.

But Cambuslang and Merthyr are planning no action against their own job cuts. And Perivale has initiated no action either.

Instead of meeting a firm commitment from the unions to take action against any job cuts, anywhere, the Hoover bosses have been able to trade on the relief of Merthyr and Cambuslang at not being shut, and the despair of Perivale.



Laird-Duffy's crony

SNIPE'S BIG LIE

LAST WEEK Laurence Scott boss Arthur Snipe failed to reopen his Openshaw factory with a management-selected workforce and the loss of 500 jobs.

This week, after an emergency board meeting, he announced that as far as he was concerned, the dispute was finally over.

The factory will remain permanently closed, he stated because it is impossible to reopen it in working order. He claims that 'vandalism' by the strikers has caused thousands of pounds worth of damage.

Snipe is an accomplished exponent of the philosophy that if you are going to tell a lie, make it a massive one.

His contemptible invention so far off beam as to be laughable, has simply strengthened the determination of the strikers to see the dispute, now entering its eighth month through to the bitter end.

The problem is that the workers are still fighting on two fronts. Their leaders, Sir John Boyd and Terry Duffy are just as determined that the Scotts workers should spend a lot more than eight months on

the dole queues. The AUEW Executive's refusal to pass onto the final appeal court important papers relating to the dispute meant that the court felt it was unable to adjudicate on the workers' claim that the Executive were in breach of rule in making the dispute unofficial and withdrawing the District levy.

The courts passed a motion of censure on the Executive. This is the third time in the last 12 months that the Executive have totally ignored the body which has attempted to provide a basic safeguard for members against Executive disregard of the union constitution and NC decisions.

It emphasises yet again Duffy and Boyd's contempt for their membership. The problem is that despite protest resolutions and censure motions, they have got away with it.

In the case of Boyd's dismissal of Eward and Hughes, the two researchers, the misuse of the union journal by Boyd to influence Duffy's election and now by totally bypassing the powers the rules give District Com-

mittees.

It is an ironic comment on the anarchic workings of the capitalist system that, as 260 Scotts workers fight for their jobs in Openshaw, the Aurora Group have declared the intention of closing their factory at Ecclesfield in Sheffield with the creation of over 100 extra jobs in-guess where—Openshaw.

The Scotts strikers have no intention of benefitting from the misfortune of other workers. This move is being fiercely resisted by the Sheffield stewards and these jobs should be blacked by the whole Manchester labour movement.

For the Scotts workers the realisation now must be that only picketing and blacking can take their dispute forward, helpful though resolutions and messages of support may be.

It is the organisation of this kind of action which should be made the central theme of the solidarity conference in Manchester on November 14.

* Conference: Saturday Nov. 14, from 10am, Univ. of Manchester Institute of Science & Technology.

STAFFA workers in East London are still picketing their plant to save jobs after being evicted from it by 300 police.

Mass pickets have been called for each Monday morning, from 7am to 8am at

Argall Ave, London E10.

The workers are also calling for blacking of Staffa products, and messages and money can be sent to: Staffa AUEW strike committee, 39 Somers Rd, Walthamstow, London E17.

10p

WOMEN'S FIGHTBACK

10p

IT'S A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO HAVE A JOB

LABOUR WOMEN MAKE Policy, NOT TEA!

YOUNG WOMEN IN THE MARRIAGE TRAP

New issue of Women's Fightback — 15p plus postage from 41 Ellington Street, London N7

ST MARY'S

WORKERS

STEP UP FIGHT

Socialist Organiser

SUPPORT ST MARY'S HOSPITAL!
Labour Movement Conference
Saturday November 21, 11am to 2pm, at
Porchester Hall, Porchester Rd, London W2.



Rita Maxim

by Dettie Clinton

DRAMATIC new developments have changed the nature of the struggle at St Mary's Hospital, Harrow Road (London).

The last week has seen the occupation of the sector administrator's office, a raid on Ward 2 with the aid of the boys in blue, and the suspension of two workers.

The new stage in the fight has come from the clash between the ruthless desperation of the administration and the determination of the workforce to save the hospital and to put an end to their harassment and intimidation.

The key figure in the build-up of confidence and willingness to fight was Rita Maxim, T&G shop steward and a ward orderly.

Browbeaten

She refused to be browbeaten by yet another call to a disciplinary hearing for her refusal to do the work of others. "There are so many without work", she said, "it is wrong for them to expect us to do the work of two or three people".

She would not accept the validity of the meeting with

the administrator, Julian Nettal, and a personnel officer.

"I would not sit down with them. I told my union district officer, Mr John Newe, but he wanted me to take part in the meeting, as they could decide to sack me anyway without me being there.

"But I said no. "I went into the meeting with Mr Newe and Mr Beckles, my branch secretary. When they told me to sit down and talked to me like a naughty boy in front of the teacher, I got very angry and told them they were not my judge and I

would not stay to hear them. I walked out.

"My supporters outside walked into the room and refused to move until the disciplinary charges and intimidation against me were dropped".

24 hour

After Rita left, the 35 or 40 other workers, domestics, porters, nurses and lab assistants, gave the 'judges' a hard time. Mr Nettal went out and was then not allowed back into the room. The other great man ran off like a frightened rabbit.

In a long discussion on the next thing to do, the link was drawn between the harassment of Rita and others and the rundown of the hospital and closure of wards. It was decided that the occupation needed a permanent office to coordinate the fightback all over the hospital and where someone could always be contacted with information, questions, or problems.

A vote was taken for a 24 hour occupation of the office. That has been in operation for the last week.

Nettal has had to camp out in other offices since, with only a bleep to keep him in contact. He has been pushing silly letters under the door stating he gave no permission for this occupation and pleading for his filing cabinet back, and trying to harass the switchboard staff into cutting off the phones.

Axeman

This more pathetic picture of Nettal, however, is only one side of the axeman of St Benedict's hospital, where he opened the gates to the scab ambulances.

His more vicious self



Making a point at Monday's mass meeting

was soon to be displayed. Two days later, on Friday 31st, he organised the kidnapping of patients from Ward 2 under the watchful eye of the police.

found herself being returned to a male ward. (The administrators now call it a 'mixed ward', since putting these hijacked women in there).

She bravely refused to cooperate, and insisted on being returned to Ward 2. She was eventually brought back - but left locked out and unattended for more than 20 minutes, getting more and more distressed and unhappy.

This sight would surely be enough to make them see reason and relent? Far from it! Instead, Miss Morrell, with the help of a police inspector, wheeled her away and suspended two of the workers, a porter, Mick Woods, and a nurse, Adrian Herzmark, for refusing to go along with this heartless act.

Police

The police were again used to clear away the pickets so that the last patient could be dragged away.

Her husband, who was constantly at the side of his 86 year old wife, said, "I have seen things like this before - when I was in a concentration camp".

These actions have made the workers and their supporters more determined than ever.

A deputation of nurses and others demanded Adrian's immediate reinstatement. The petition going round the hospital has been well supported.

It is reported that the locks on the other wards have also been changed. But the workforce must prepare too. Any hint of an attempt to clear a ward again must be met with an immediate stoppage of work and a mass picket at the door of the ward.

Each group of workers must begin to prepare their own work rotas, to be able to do away with the supervisors.

Any compromise must be rejected - such as the offer to reinstate Adrian, while investigations and inquiries are carried out, at St Mary's Hospital, Praed St, W2!

Support must flow in from outside bodies. The conference in Porchester Hall on November 21 is designed to build that support and decide what action other groups of workers can take to back up this vital fight.

Pickets are even more urgently needed now, including some to stay in overnight.

Support

The London Ambulance Service workers have formed a close alliance with St Mary's, and keep the occupation committee informed of who they are bringing in and out.

And the local Trades Council (Westminster) passed a resolution of support at its November meeting.

FIGHTING FASCISM IN ISLINGTON

by Anna Sullivan (organiser, Islington Anti Nazi League)

CHAPEL Market is a large, busy market in the south of Islington which is open all day on Saturdays and until one o'clock on Sunday. It is placed in a part of the borough where the population is predominantly white working class. For fascist groups like the National Front, it is seen as breeding ground for their extreme racist and fascist policies.

Although the National Front took a real beating at the polls in the general election and the GLC elections, and suffered tremendous disintegration because of their faction fights, they have used the present political climate of economic slump and mass unemployment to regroup and rebuild, mainly among youth.

They came back to Chapel Market a year ago on Sundays to try once more to put across their filthy politics as the answer to everything. The Islington Anti-Nazi League organised once more to oppose them.

We produced leaflets exposing their policies for what they really meant.

Conference for action against racism and fascism in Islington
Sponsored by Islington Trades Council, Islington ANL, and Islington Labour Parties.

Sunday November 29, from 10.30am at Caxton House, St John's Way, London N19.

They at first tried to put on a respectable face. This didn't last long. They launched one attack after another on members of the ANL, the Other Bookshop (where a woman in the shop was injured so badly her skull was fractured), and an arson attack on the Community Press.

They have sworn to get rid of any opposition to them by any means available - and we all know what that means in fascist terms: violence and intimidation.

Streets

The people of Islington have made it quite clear that they do not want them selling their filthy literature, and we have collected 1,000 signatures from the local shoppers stating their opposition to the sale of NF literature at the market. However the Nazis have made it quite clear that they are determined to smash, literally, any opposition to them.

The ANL has the official support of the Trades Council and many union branches in the area, also the support of the local Labour Party wards. We still need, though, the support on the streets on Sundays, to show visibly that there is a strong opposition from the labour movement to their politics of genocide.

Stabbed

The isolated Asian families who live in the south of the borough have also been

under attack and harassment for a long time, and we have to say and to show loud and clear that we are not prepared for this situation to go on any longer.

Two weeks ago a member of the ANL was almost stabbed to death by a fascist lunatic. In other parts of London there have been attacks by fascists on blacks and Asians that have resulted in death.

We have to form a strong united front to fight this threat to our community, and show that we will not be intimidated. The Islington ANL ask for support at Chapel Market on Sunday mornings from 10am, on the corner of Liverpool Road and Upper Street.

We need money to fight back

£150 from Leeds and Bradford, and smaller extra amounts from London, came in this week in response to our call for money to help the work of Socialist Organiser and the Leyland Action Committee for the BL strike.

Now the strike is off. But work must continue to organise the militants who came forward in the strike into the Leyland Action Committee and to combat demoralisation. That needs money, too.

And the basic £2,000 a month, for our regular bills, is also vital. It's no good complaining about the role of Duffy and Kitson unless we put the necessary resources - including money - into the work needed to replace them with leaderships prepared to stand up to Edwardes and the Tories.

Send money to Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8 (cheques payable to Socialist Organiser).