

SOCIALIST PRESS



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Lessons of
Ceylon 1964
Centre pages

Recall Labour Party Conference . . . p.5
Spanish elections p.2

Iran regime shows its colours

Beneath a wafer-thin 'progressive' veneer of anti-imperialist rhetoric and measures to cut off oil from the Zionist and South African regimes, the new Iranian capitalist government has begun to reveal its true reactionary character.

Even though Prime Minister Bazargan has yet to establish firm political control within Iran itself, his appointed representatives have begun earnestly reassuring world imperialism that its investments and oil supplies are safe.

Most significant was the weekend statement by the new governor of the central bank Dr. Mohammed Ali Mowlavi, who declared that the regime will meet all its foreign commitments, that Western investments are safe and that further investment is welcome.

He went on to deny that there were any plans for nationalising either Iranian or foreign-owned banks.

In other words capitalist exploitation of the Iranian masses will not simply continue unchanged under the Bazargan government, but will have to be actually intensified in order to generate the resources to repay Iran's current £4 billion debts to the imperialist countries.

And while the new managing director of the National Iranian Oil Company has demagogically proclaimed to workers that the role of the BP-led consortium which has milked colossal profits from Iran's oil, is at an end, government spokesmen have repeatedly declared that oil production should this week resume at the old output level of six million barrels a day.

Such a figure requires more than simply "spot sales" of oil: it requires renewed stable contracts with imperialism.

Meanwhile Iranian and imperialist bankers will continue to grow fat on profits created by the sweated labour of the working class.

This, the real face of Khomeini's much-vaunted "Islamic Republic", comes as no surprise to us as Marxists.

We have argued from the outset that the only form of government that can put an end to exploitation, poverty and unemployment and grant the democratic rights so long denied to Iranian women and the working class as a whole is a workers and peasants government, based on the power of workers and peasants councils in each area.

In two major speeches last week Bazargan showed that his regime sees such a government as a real danger.

Threatening to resign if left wing political groups and committees of Khomeini's supporters did not cease to challenge his authority, he gave an idea of the scale already reached by such political forces.

"They persecute people, they arrest people, they issue

Continued page 2, col. 6

Goodyear ... Marathon ... BSC ... BANKRUPT! the union chiefs who sell jobs for profits

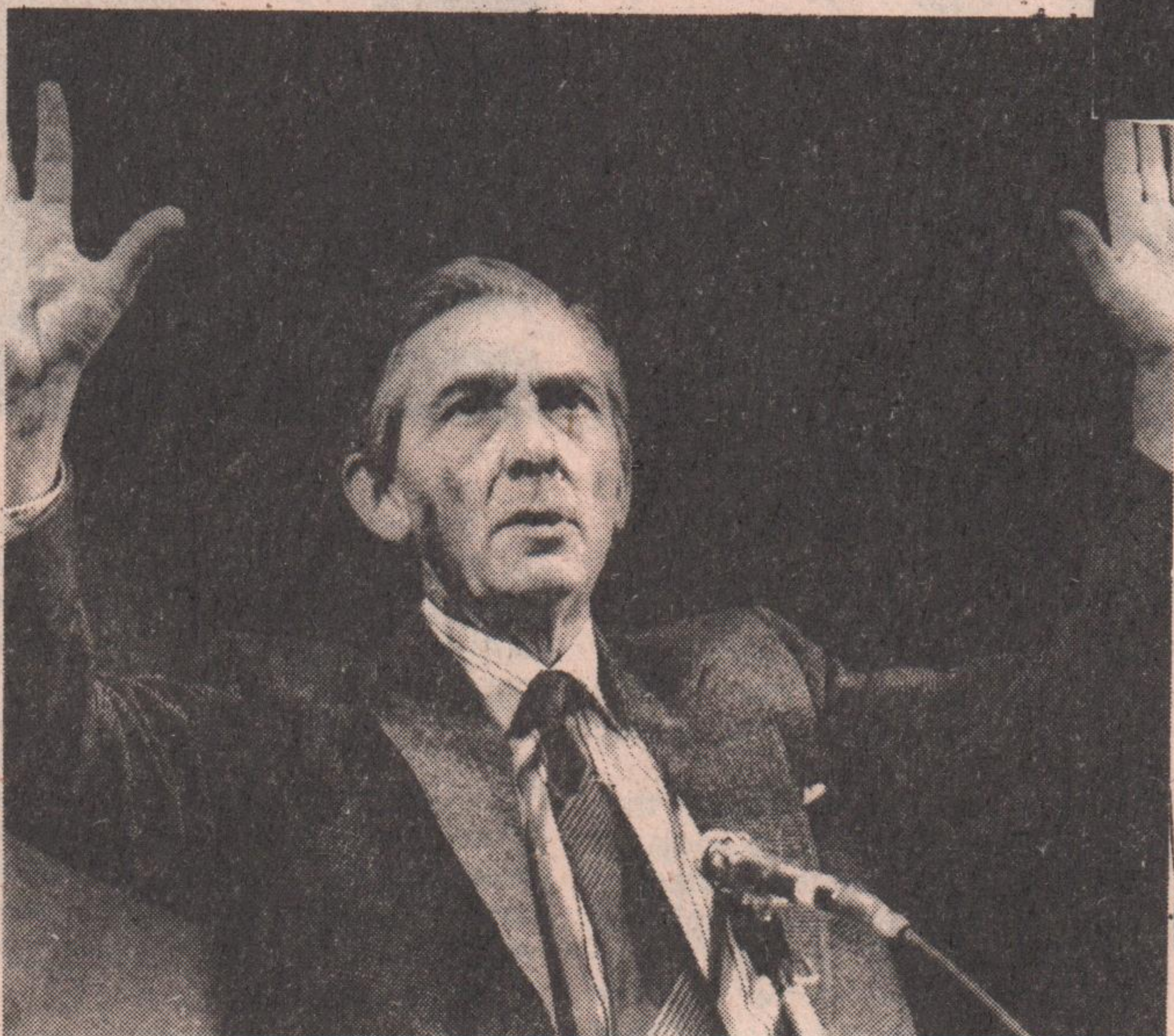


PHOTO: Laurence Spatham, IFL

TUC leader Murray

Employers are hell-bent on a new round of job-slashing rationalisation and speed-up in every section of industry.

But trade union leaders are equally determined that there should be no resistance to these attacks.

They have rushed to sign away hard-won working conditions, living standards and trade union rights in a desperate effort to appease the profit-hungry capitalist class.

*In the Goodyear tyre plant in Drumchapel, Glasgow, TGWU officials John Miller and Hugh Wyper convened a special mass meeting at which they railroaded through a vote to give up the plant's 35-hour week if management would relent on their closure threat.

Management replied that the climbdown had come too late—and that the plant would close anyway: 430 jobs lost.

*Confed union leaders and Falmouth unions responded to threats to close Falmouth Ship-repairers by producing a "manifesto", volunteering a no-strike clause, "more flexible working practices" and other guarantees of good behaviour.

British Ship-repairers management seem unimpressed even with this surrender, and still seem likely to close the yard: 1,200 jobs in the balance.

Flexibility

*At Marathon Shipbuilders in Clydebank, Stalinist-led shop stewards have steered a reactionary package of proposals for speed-up and flexibility of working through a mass meeting in a desperate bid to make the yard "competitive".

As a result, if more orders are won to the yard, less workers will be required to complete them: and if no extra orders are won, then the existing workforce will work itself more quickly out of a job and onto the dole.

*At the giant Singer sewing machine plant in Clydebank union officials and convenors

have forced through a huge package of speed-up and redundancies in the face of a management closure threat.

*In British Leyland AUEW General Secretary John Boyd has moved in to publicly attack the 20,000 Longbridge workers who struck in protest at the non-payment of parity money by British Leyland management—after thousands of jobs had been shed through voluntary redundancy.

'Their firm'

According to Boyd trade unionists should start out from the wish for British Leyland to prosper, and for it to be efficient, since it is their company!

"Every restriction on output, every strike in whatever plant puts another nail in its coffin", he went on.

*At Dunlop's threatened tyre plant in Speke, TGWU official John Miller has begun by conceding that "there would be difficulty in maintaining all 2,400 jobs at Speke."

But, he claimed, "as efficiency increased there is a possibility of attracting new products to the plant."

And in the British Steel Corporation, the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation which, arguing that the corporation is bankrupt, has already negotiated away thousands of jobs, are currently involved in pay talks involving a productivity deal centring on manning cutbacks.

The same story comes up again and again. Wherever an employer pleads bankruptcy or threatens closure, terrified union officials and reactionary convenors come running with their own pet schemes to speed up the workforce, cut jobs and restore the bosses' profitability.

Challenge figures

Not once have any of these leaders thought even to challenge the figures on which companies make out that they are bankrupt.

Not once have they

challenged the 'right' of the employer to safeguard profits while thousands of workers are forced to sacrifice their livelihoods or to face savage speed-up on production tacks.

When called upon to adopt a clear fighting policy, starting with occupation, to defend all jobs, they respond with prevarication, bluster and promises that 'talks' will do the trick.

But as these recent examples show, such 'talks' amount time and again to a complete surrender in front of the employers.

Without a struggle starting from the mobilisation of the workers affected, there is no way in which jobs and working conditions can be defended.

The Workers Socialist League rejects the wretched notion that workers should start out in any way from the profitability of the employer.

In any event the only way this can be tested out is to fight for the opening of the books of these and other firms to elected trade union committees.

Such an investigation would reveal the innumerable link-ups between "loss-making" sections and the state sector and highly profitable sectors of private industry and the banks.

The answer to even proven bankruptcy of a firm is *not* to tailor wage demands to the bosses' ability to pay, but to fight for the nationalisation without compensation under

workers management of those firms which stand as an obstacle to workers earning a living wage.

Such a demand is an empty protest unless connected to the occupation of the threatened workplace and the fight for the widest possible supporting strike action throughout the labour movement.

And this in turn demands the building of a principled leadership capable of challenging and defeating the political bankruptcy now at the head of the trade union and Labour movement and pointing the way forward to the struggle for the socialist overthrow of this crisis-ridden capitalist system.

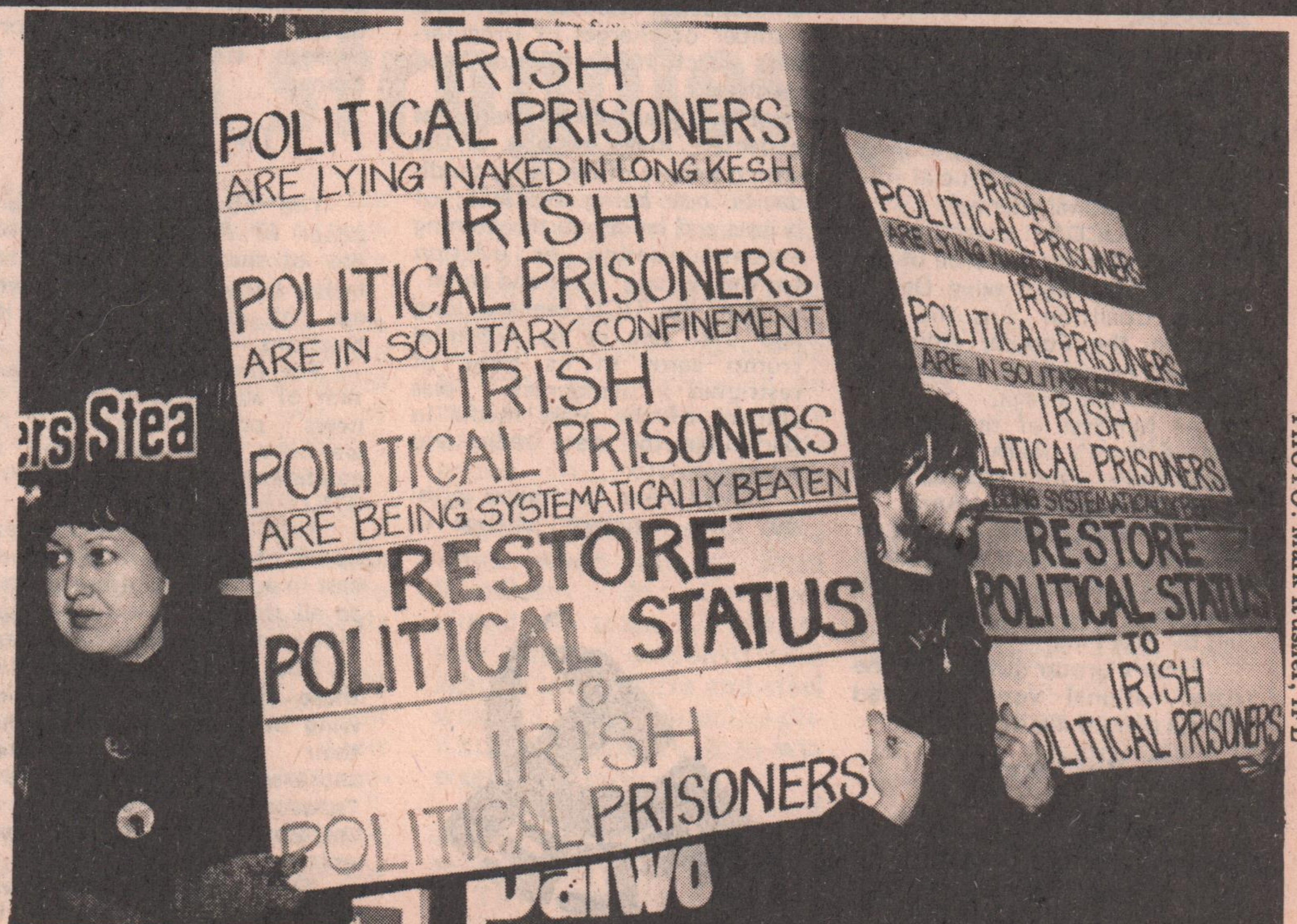


PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL

Picket in support of Irish prisoners last weekend. Ireland article—see page 9

Francoists strengthened by Spanish election

The results of Spain's second general election since the death of Franco are on the surface almost a carbon copy of the results of June 1977.

The ruling Democratic Centre Union (UCD), led by Francoist Premier Adolfo Suarez, gained two seats in the Congress; so did the largest opposition party, the Socialist Party (PSOE).

Yet these apparently undramatic results were nonetheless a clear triumph for Suarez and the UCD who will now almost certainly continue with the existing UCD government.

And it is a triumph which was handed on a plate to Suarez by the leaders of the main workers' parties and in particular by the PSOE under the leadership of Felipe Gonzalez.

First of all, this is because the results were substantially different from what had been predicted in the widely publicised opinion polls which put the UCD and the PSOE almost neck and neck and even held out the prospect of the PSOE becoming the majority party in the Congress.

Second there is no doubt, as Felipe Gonzalez admitted in his post-election press conference, that the election had allowed the UCD to emerge as an organised political party of the right in place of the incompetent ad hoc coalition which it appeared in the June 1977 elections.

The UCD still leaned heavily on the cult of the personality of its leader Adolfo Suarez—the man who was once one of the highest functionaries of Franco's dictatorship and who now projects himself as the bringer of democracy.

Limited rights

Of course, the UCD continued to be assisted in these elections by the severe limitations still placed on democratic rights in Spain.

A number of candidacies of the left wing and the nationalists were of parties which remain illegal by decision of the Ministry of the Interior.

The candidacies were permitted but the parties behind them are not:

The electoral system discriminates strongly against the cities in which the workers' parties have a majority and in favour of the old Francoist strongholds in the less industrial provinces.

UCD's 35% of the votes is thus converted into 49% of the seats in the Congress (lower house) and about 60% in the Senate (which under the new constitution plays a crucial role in constitutional change).

The UCD's consolidation was partly at the expense of the more openly right wing Democratic Coalition (in the last election the Popular Alliance) led by Franco's once trusted censor Manuel Fraga.

As Minister of the Interior after Franco's death Fraga was responsible for scores of murders of Spanish workers.

The Democratic Coalition lost 3% of votes and seven seats. But one of these was gained by the openly fascist New Force led by Blas Pinar.

Pinar's group got 2% of the total national vote compared with a mere 0.4% in 1977.

Ballot rigging

Some of the UCD's votes (though possibly less than in June 1977) came from the time-honoured ballot-rigging practices of the Spanish ruling class.

The final results of the June

Results of the Spanish General Election

	% votes 1979	% votes 1977	Seats 1979	Seats 1977
UCD	35	35	167	165
PSOE	29	29	120	118
CP	11	9	23	20
Democratic Coalition	5	8	9	16
Convergence and Unity (Catalan nationalists)	3	4	9	10
Socialist Party of Andalucia	2	-	5	-
Basque Nationalist Party	2	2	8	7
National Unity (New Force)	2	0.4	1	-
Herri Batasuna	1	-	3	-
Others	11	13	5	14



Gonzalez—he knows all the wrinkles!

1977 elections have never been announced because of the number of charges of irregularities which have still not been resolved.

This year there were, as expected, many reports of the voting papers of left-wing candidacies not being available, of priests and landlords threatening excommunication or eviction for the "wrong" vote and so on.

But the UCD realised long ago that one of its potential trump cards in its game of restricted democracy was control of the mass media in particular the state radio and television.

These have continued without the smallest change—in

either their bias towards the government and the armed forces or their technical incompetence since the days of Franco.

TV coverage

The "liberal" bourgeois daily paper *El Pais* published each day of the campaign a quantitative analysis of the TV coverage of each party in the elections.

The final calculation showed that of all the time devoted to news programmes to the elections, the UCD and its candidates received a staggering 97%!

This gave the UCD several hours of party political broadcast in addition to those allotted to all the parties with a certain minimum number of candidates.

The UCD also controlled these—and several of the left wing or nationalist parties had their broadcasts delayed, censored or cancelled because of "unacceptable" references to the armed forces or the national unity of the Spanish state.

The PSOE's humiliation was not only at the hands of the UCD but also at the hands of parties widely regarded as being to its left.

The Communist Party gained votes from the PSOE and increased its representation in the Congress from 20 to 23 seats.

Public admirer

This, of course, will also please Suarez since CP leader Santiago Carrillo has always been one of his greatest public admirers.

There is little doubt that the UCD has come to look on the CP as its greatest potential ally since Stalinist political control of the Workers Commissions is much firmer than the Stalinist leadership's political control of the rival union federation, the UGT.

While nationally the PSOE's hoped-for support was significantly eroded by the CP, in two regions—Andalucia in the south and Euskadi (the Basque provinces) in the north—it was shaken from more unexpected sources.

In Andalucia the regionalist Socialist Party of Andalucia (PSA), which unlike most other small Social Democratic parties in the last two years, has strenuously refused to incorporate itself in the PSOE, won an astonishing five seats compared with none in the last election.

More hostile

The PSA puts on a "left" face in relation to the PSOE and ran a campaign which was much more hostile to the Suarez regime than was the PSOE's.

The PSA also gained from the growth of national feeling in Andalucia since the advent of the new constitution which gives formal rights to a degree of regional "autonomy" something less than that possessed by a British district council.

But the most striking and important reaction to the UCD's efforts (supported by the PSOE and the CP) to strangle movements towards genuine national autonomy came in the northern Basque provinces.

In the 1977 elections the political party representing the more "moderate" wing of ETA (ETA-political-military) stood candidates with the Maoist Communist Movement and gained one member of the Congress.

Boycotted

But the parties connected with the more uncompromising sector of ETA (ETA-military) boycotted the elections.

In the meantime the right wing Basque Nationalist Party, the UCD and the main workers' parties (PSOE and the CP) have run a massive reactionary campaign against ETA terrorism which, they have tried to argue, has no popular support.



Suarez

The results of these elections in Euskadi decisively give the lie to this claim and show that the anti-ETA campaign has been completely ineffective.

In these elections both wings of ETA had candidacies in the Basque provinces. Euskadiko Eskerra (the left of the Euskadi) was closely linked to ETA political-military and Herri Batasuna (Popular Unity) to ETA-military.



Between them these two candidacies received between 10 and 30 percent of the vote in the four Basque provinces and obtained three deputies and one senator.

And the bulk of these votes went to the more radical Herri Batasuna—one of whose slogans was "Independence and Socialism"—which was clearly identified with those who have killed a member of the police or military on average every three days since the beginning of the year.

In one of the four provinces Guipuzcoa, the two ETA candidacies got significantly more votes than even the right wing Basque Nationalist Party (PNV).

The PNV, however, remains the largest electoral party in Euskadi which implies that nationalist parties of various kinds have a majority in Euskadi as a whole.

Failed

This, following the massive abstention in the constitutional referendum last December, means that one of the results of these elections is the confirmation that the Suarez regime has failed completely to hold back the rising tide of Basque nationalism.

And it is not only the UCD which suffered electorally in Euskadi but also the PSOE and the CP which have become increasingly identified with Madrid and national oppression.

In next week's *Socialist Press* we will assess the political nature of the nationalist parties, the election campaigns of the parties of the left and the implications of the results for the main workers' parties.

IRAN: from page 1

orders, they oppose us, they are against our appointments... They say the army must be destroyed, that councils must run the affairs of the nation, and that the people must be in a state of revolution all the time...

Indeed among the appointments opposed by the masses is that of armed forces chief of staff General Mohammed Veli Qarani. Soldiers are reportedly on strike against him.

Clearly Bazargan is desperate to defuse this political challenge from the working class.

This is why Khomeini's decision to move from Tehran back to the religious city of Qom must be designed to help strengthen Bazargan's central authority, and weaken the power of the committees and councils.

The same motive is behind the proposed referendum on March 30 to formalise the establishment of the Islamic Republic. If such a referendum produces a 'yes' vote it will be used by Bazargan as a vote of confidence in his unelected bourgeois government, and a means of postponing to the indefinite future any kind of elections to a constituent assembly.

It is essential that the Iranian masses are now equipped with a programme, combining democratic and transitional demands, which can focus their struggles against the Bazargan government and point to the necessity for a workers and peasants government to nationalise the banks, all major industry and the land without compensation under workers' management.

Prominent in such a programme must be the demand for immediate elections to a constituent assembly on the basis of a universal franchise, and the demand for the repudiation of all foreign debts.

At the same time the existing workers committees and councils must be extended and developed into every sector of industry and every working class area.

And within this fight a revolutionary Trotskyist party must be built capable of taking forward the struggle for the defeat of Bazargan and the establishment of a workers and peasants government in Iran.

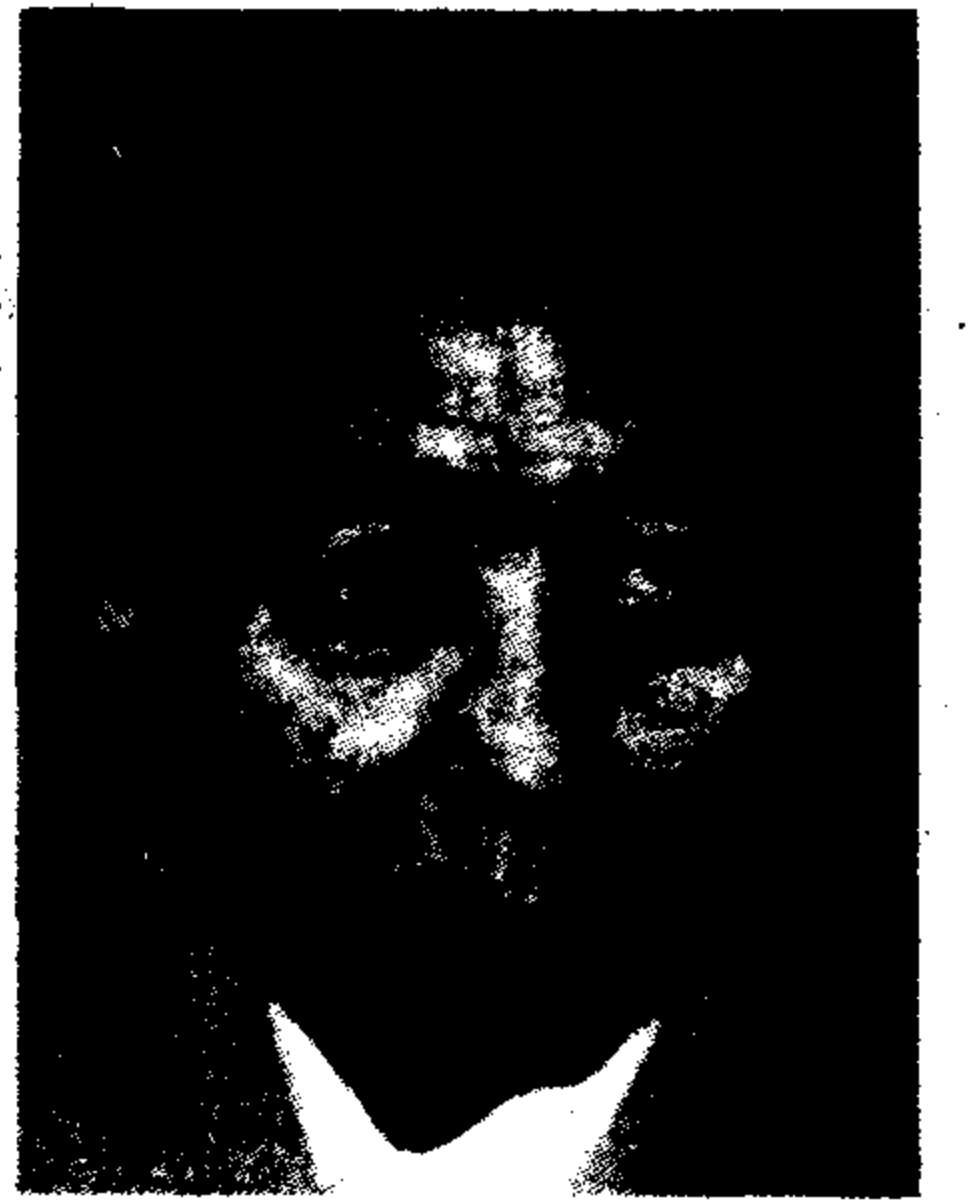


CP symbol

INTERNATIONAL



SIGNS OF OPPOSITION TO DENG'S INVASION MOVE



Hua

the last few days attacking the invasion of Vietnam—a move clearly seen as Deng's brainchild.

It is also hinted that there is opposition to Deng's modernisation programme.

A sudden summons from Peking ten days ago caused the return home of the Chinese delegates conducting negotiations with the Japanese national oil corporation on joint exploration in the Gulf of Pohai.

"Delayed"

Also Chinese import licences have now been "delayed" to the Nippon Steel Corporation who had a £1 billion contract and companies which were to supply chemical processing plant.

Deng may have launched the invasion of Vietnam to build up nationalist sentiments and engender the idea of unity in the face of an outside threat, but he does not appear to have succeeded.

No doubt his recent remarks that China intends to join the IMF and the Asian Development Bank if the Taiwan problem is solved will similarly not go unchallenged.

When we call for Chinese troops out of Vietnam and Vietnamese troops out of Kampuchea, *Socialist Press* has nothing in common with the so-called 'peace' bleatings of imperialism.

We know that the interests of the working class can only be threatened by the actions of the weak and terrified Chinese and Vietnamese bureaucracies.

Though US treasury secretary Michael Blumenthal may issue "strongly worded" condemnation of the Chinese invasion, it has not stopped endorsement of the Chinese regime in the form of the exchange of ambassadors on March 1.

The ferocity of the Chinese attack well into Vietnam, using 250,000 troops with 100,000 inside Vietnamese territory, the taking of the provincial capital of Lai Chau, the battle around Lang Son and the threatening of the strategic route 1A to Hanoi has astounded many observers.

Stalinist theory

However these battles inevitably arise between bureaucracies which base themselves on national, rather than international requirements.

Both regimes adhere to the worn-out Stalinist theory that it is possible to build socialism in one country.

For them, national interests predominate. Several consequences flow from this.

First is the need to secure borders against outsiders; secondly attempts are made to ensure that "buffer" states are acquired to defend the nation; and thirdly, any type of political, economic or military alliances are justified as long as they are construed as necessary to defend the state.



Deng

Of course a major consequence of the theory is that the economic problems of both China and Vietnam cannot be dealt with within the confines of the nation state, let alone the building of socialism.

It is the drive to deal with this contradiction and, particularly in China, the efforts of the bureaucracy to divert attention away from the developing discontent and turmoil in China itself that has led them to move towards war.

Mouthpiece

The only country in South East Asia prepared to be the occasional mouthpiece of China has been Kampuchea.

The Soviet Union has however been much more successful in consolidating its relationship with Vietnam.

As a result, particularly since the signing of the Soviet-Vietnam treaty last November, China has felt itself encircled.

Vietnam itself has extended its control over Laos in which it had until recently 40,000 troops.

But the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea was felt to be something that could not go unanswered by Peking's Deng clique.

The Vietnamese leadership itself faces enormous internal problems and has even turned to the US to beg for assistance.

Bureaucracies always live in fear of the working class, terrified lest it should flex its muscles and cast them aside.

Quaking

In Peking today the Party elite are quaking in their boots. As a reporter from the *New York Times* wrote:

"Before, no foreigner had met a Chinese dissident. Now practically everyone has, and some Chinese students have begun calling newsmen up at all hours of the night with tips on the latest poster."

The opposition to the bureaucratic stranglehold has become more organised with the setting up of such groups as the Human Rights Alliance and the Enlightenment Society.

This latter has recently been selling a pamphlet which included an appeal to President Carter to make a statement on behalf of human rights in China.

19 points

The Human Rights Alliance, with seven authors who have not been afraid to sign their names, has put out a programme of 19 points.



'I don't know what got into me... I went to America... I ate hamburgers and Coca-Cola... I wore a 10-gallon hat, and then I invaded Vietnam...'

Some of these are: for the release of all political prisoners; for the right to elect all state and party leaders; for the right of opposition parties to have a voice and to be elected to the National People's Congress; for a study of Western democracy and culture as well as science and technology; and for a reconciliation with the Soviet Union.

Rally held

It is reported that on 29 January several hundred people held a rally at Peking's Democracy Wall in defence of the leaders of six different civil liberties groups that have declared their intention to fight for free speech.

The bureaucracy has so far not felt strong enough to move against the protesters.

The dominant group around Deng Xiaoping have even tolerated the movement in as far as they have

been able to turn it against Mao and the remnants of his followers.

Now, however, there are

hints of an unsettling of Deng's apparently unassailable position.

Posters have appeared in



Bureaucratic perks in Peking—scarce cars

French job struggles go on

Since last week's mass struggles against 22,000 steel redundancies in North East France, the working class has continued to show its determination to fight.

Equally, the reformist CFDT and Stalinist CGT union bureaucracies have made every effort to divert the movement into harmless protest channels.

While neither the CFDT nor CGT leaders have dared to condemn openly the violent upsurge of demonstrations and occupations centred on the town of Longwy, they have done everything possible to curb repetitions.

A mealy-mouthed CFDT statement declared

"solidarity" with the struggle "even if its expression does not always take the forms one would wish".

The CGT evaded the issues by saying "it is not a choice between vandalism and resignation" but of "firm and bold action".

Wretched plan

Thus, as the French proletariat moves into struggle, the bureaucrats talk of "vandalism".

By "firm and bold action" the reformists and Stalinists mean their wretched plan for "restructuring" the steel industry, while leaving the capitalist system that has created the crisis, untouched.

The CFDT has talked about the need to "avoid a social explosion", the only

mobilisation proposed is a protest march to Paris at the end of March!

And even here the CFDT leaders have attacked the idea of "mixing together all sections and regions in an indifferent manner"—they demand restriction of the action to Lorraine steelworkers.

Such moves came in a week when miners from Houilleres de Cevennes closed the main A7 motorway in a demonstration against pit closures and steel workers in the Bouches-du-Rhone region struck to win wage demands.

The employers, of course, are far bolder than the workers' "leaders".

The metal and mining bosses federation (UIMM) called off the first meeting in the proposed series of

negotiations on the grounds that the union bureaucrats had failed to adequately deal with the violence of their members.

There has been talk of forces serving "interests foreign to those of the nation" and the beginning of the use of the courts.

Enormous questions are now posed before French workers.

Even as the leaders pleaded for negotiations and made militant noises, steel workers seized railway stations once again in the Moselle region—exposing the superficial nature of the supposed "restoration of order" at Longwy.

More than ever grows the need for a revolutionary party in France—section of a reconstructed Fourth International.

OCCUPY TO SAVE ST. COLUMBA'S

Socialist Press spoke to Tom Dyke, NUPE steward at the threatened St. Columba's Hospital, Hampstead.

What is the background to the closure?

A document was put out in July announcing closures in the NW District of the Kensington, Westminster and Chelsea AHA—it was to be either St Charles, St. Mary's or Paddington Green Children's Hospital.

They have been unsuccessful with St. Mary's W9 so far, but they have succeeded in starting the closure of Paddington Green Children's Hospital and the Peter Pan children's ward at St. Charles Hospital.

Because of our resistance to closing St. Mary's and Hereford Lodge, they have been forced to look elsewhere, and that was when the closure of St. Columba's was announced.

What was the reaction in the hospital when the closure was announced?

Surprise and shock at first. Everyone was very upset and there was talk of a fight against it straight away.

I immediately phoned my union branch secretary up and told her what happened, and on the following Tuesday we had a meeting at St. Columba's.

We then decided that we would not take any other jobs and that we would keep on working until we managed to organise some way to defend the hospital.

On the Tuesday night after the meeting the charge nurse and myself approached the CHC to get their backing.

We put our point to the CHC and the vote was won by a majority of 9-2 in favour of keeping the hospital open.

Since then I've been going to every joint stewards and union meeting I could, to tell them what was happening in St. Columba's.

We have finally managed to get in touch with the NUPE full time official, Mr Eastwood, after a lot of trying, and he is coming down to a meeting on Monday to announce the occupation.

What has the support been like so far?

Solid, right from the Nursing Officer to the porters and domestics.

Also the two doctors have expressed their support and local GPs have written to the AHA saying how disgusted they are with the decision.

Our local Tory MP has supported us and we have written to Margaret Thatcher to see if she'll support us, because we get a lot of patients from her constituency.

There is an endowment that has been left to St. Columba's, which should by now have been

about £1 million; but when we investigated it was down to £165,000! We would like to know where this money has gone.

What do you think the next steps are?

The occupation is going to be announced on Monday at a mass meeting and after that we will lock the doors and approach the ambulance convenors to get them to pledge not to take patients out.

We are also going to organise support for picketing the hospital from the other local hospitals.



PHOTO: Laurence Spetham, IFL

Caring for patients during Hounslow Hospital work-in

RALLY POINTS THE WAY FORWARD

Public sector workers from the major unions now challenging Callaghan and Healey's Phase Four of wage control met together on Saturday for a WSL Rally on the low pay fight.

The conference was chaired by Rob Elliott (NUPE ambulance driver) who spelt out clearly the necessity for all-out strike action with emergency cover organised by independent strike committees as the only policy capable of winning the full claim.

The demand for all-out, indefinite strike action is the key demand which the WSL has taken into the labour movement both before and after the token Day of Action on January 22.

Socialist Press has detailed in recent issues the massive victory gained in Camden, where WSL member John Seymour (NUPE steward for Camden dustmen) led a principled fight for the

kind of action which rapidly brought the local Labour Council to its knees.

The Rally also heard accounts of the action in the Westminster Hospital and Oxford's Radcliffe Infirmary.

In each case the role of the trade union bureaucrats was placed under the cold clear light of principled socialist analysis.

Speakers stressed the diversionary nature of working-to-rule, selective actions and tepid protest gestures.

Contributions from the floor broadened the discussion to include the bureaucracy's attempts to sabotage the wages struggle in other areas of NUPE, the CPSA and the NUT.

The WSL has also been centrally involved in the fight against the cuts and several speakers linked up that fight with the wages question.

Callaghan and Healey were clearly looking for more areas to cut to inflict the cost of their

defeat on Phase 4 on all sections of workers and the public sector in particular.

The biggest applause of the afternoon was reserved for Brother Dyke, NUPE steward in St. Columba's terminal care hospital, who reported that the workers there had taken the decision to occupy the hospital against impending closure this week.

Socialist Press urges all its readers to give full practical support to the St. Columba's occupation (contact Brother Dyke at the hospital or the North West Health District Joint Shop Stewards Committee).

A mass lobby of the AHA has already been called for 5 p.m. Wednesday March 14 at 14, Bishop's Bridge Road, Paddington (near Paddington Station).

The Rally ended with a unanimous vote for the following resolution as the basis for action at all levels in the labour

Stalinists in NATFHE sent reeling

The sacking of John Regan, militant NATFHE lecturer from West Ham College of Further Education, has been unanimously confirmed by the appeals committee, a subcommittee of Newham education committee and consisting solely of Labour councillors.

Since the Principal who originally suspended him is no less than NATFHE Executive member Eric Williams, secretary of Outer London Regional Council, feelings ran high at the last Outer London meeting, the AGM. This meeting was

attended by a number of full time officers including Tom Jones, Assistant Secretary, and in fact union chief since the recent death of Stan Broadbridge.

Throughout the past year the Stalinist leadership together with the right wing have narrowly held the majority in Outer London.

At this meeting, however, resolutions deploring the action of the Principal in suspending Regan 'without written warning and without due cause' and calling on Newham Education Committee to reverse the decision were passed by 3-1.

Motion lost

A further vote of no confidence in Eric Williams was only lost by one vote.

Clearly a number of delegates, while prepared to attack Eric Williams for his behaviour as a manager, find the same behaviour tolerable in a union leader!

Following the vote of no confidence Eric Williams stated that he had no intention of resigning.

According to his own counting of the ballot papers he had just been re-elected by a majority of 11 votes over his rival candidate John Wakeman, an IMG member.

Brushed aside

Arguments that the elections should be held again so that members could vote with the benefit of knowledge of Williams' recent actions were brushed aside.

All this took four hours and the main business of the AGM, prioritising resolutions to conference had not begun.

The incoming Stalinist chairman insisted that the Executive can be given the power to choose the resolutions and refused to take a procedural motion to adjourn the meeting.

In fact the meeting ended in uproar. It is hard to believe that the leadership will ride out the year.

'People's Prince' is not just a sick joke Letter

Dear Comrade,

Your columnist in Press Gang last week (Socialist Press 139) gave an accurate and useful account of the treatment of royalty in the capitalist media over the recent period.

The enormous amounts of money lavished on Elizabeth Windsor by the most backward, reactionary and vicious rulers on earth is indication enough of where the real loyalties of the institution of monarchy lay.

Sultan Qabus of Oman duly expressed his thanks to her for the support her army gave in the murderous war against the Dhofari liberation movement for well over ten years.

The remarks of Charles Windsor, ludicrously vague but interpreted by some as being 'against management', were of some importance also.

They indicated once again the way the institution of monarchy is used by the ruling class, kept in reserve as a cloak to its most devious and repressive designs.

To simply ridicule the



PHOTO: Andrew Wield, Report

Elizabeth Windsor

monarchy, complain about its wealth and so forth, would be to miss this essential point.

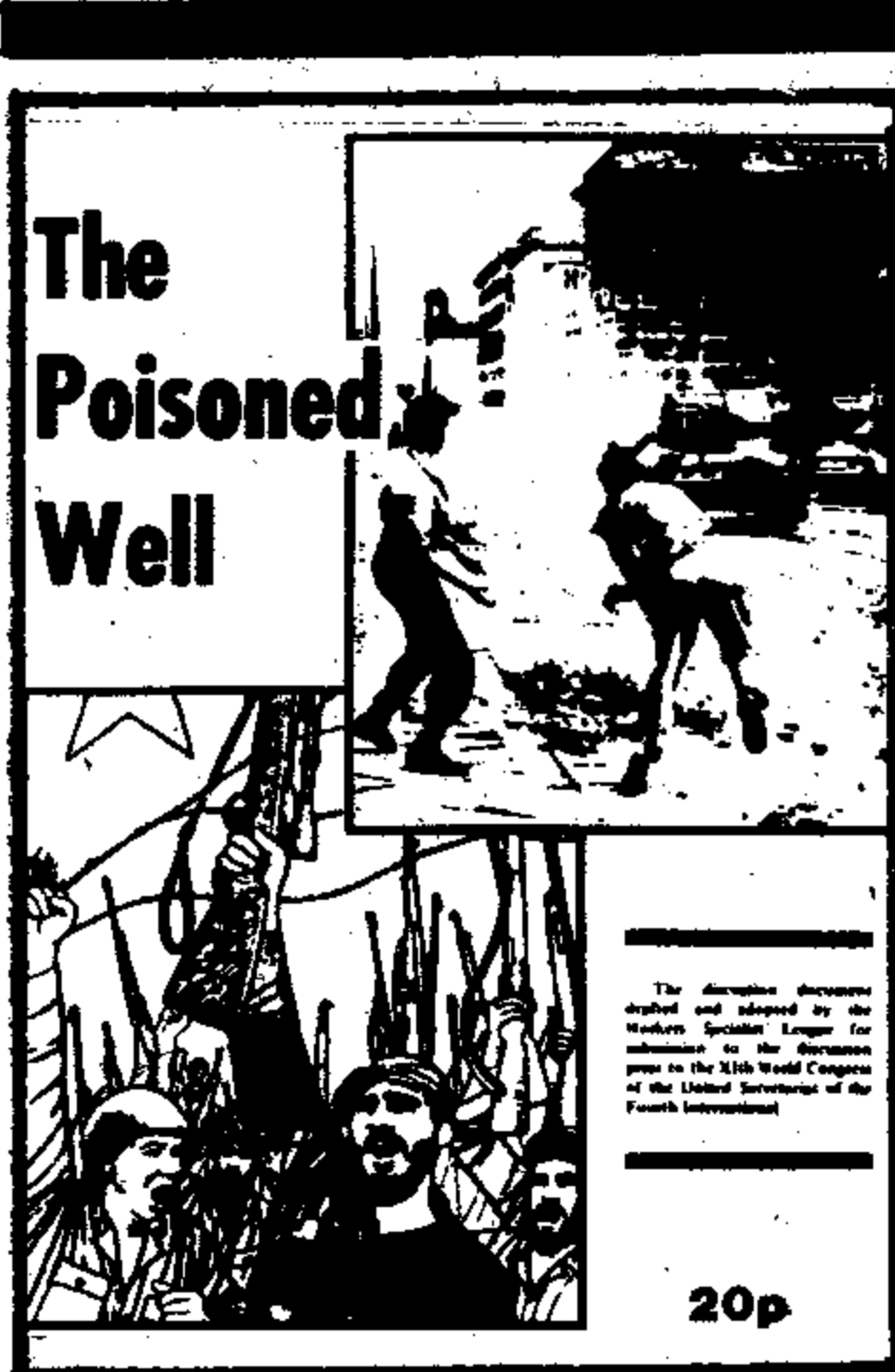
Long ago Trotsky pointed out that "Royalty is weak as long as the bourgeois parliament is the instrument of bourgeois

rule and as long as the bourgeoisie has no need of extra-parliamentary methods. But the bourgeoisie can if necessary use royalty as a focus of all extra-parliamentary i.e. real forces directed against the working class". (Writings on Britain, pp. 40-41).

A ruling class which has been terrified by the strength of the lorry drivers, the hospital workers and other groups in action, with Parliament and its institutions too weak to inflict a decisive defeat on the working class, knows that it may need more than just Callaghan and the trade union traitors. Even Thatcher may not be able to take on the working class any more than Heath could.

The speech of Charles with its 'populist' tone was thus in no way accidental, but reflected the desperation of the bourgeoisie and an insurance policy for what they may need to do in the next period.

Yours fraternally
J.D.
London



NOW OUT! The WSL discussion document adopted for submission to the USFI XIth World Congress. Price 20p plus 10p p&p from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.



Horse (right) with Princess Anne

Stop Tory policies now! Recall the Labour Party conference!



Amid the indications that Callaghan hopes above all to cling on to office until autumn of this year, the need for an emergency Labour Party conference to decide the question of leadership and programme is urgent.

The months since last year's annual conference have been marked by a brazen refusal of the Callaghan cabinet to heed the policies adopted by the Labour Party and the TUC.

Decisively voted down on the issue of Phase 4 of wage control, Callaghan and Healey not only pressed ahead regardless—using every possible weapon to block the struggles

of workers in defence of their living standards—but have launched a virtual cabinet campaign against trade unionism itself.

Callaghan, Owen, Ennals, Rees and others have one after another leapt onto public platforms to declare the correctness of crossing picket lines, and Rees as Home Secretary has time and again laid on gangs of police to protect scabs and attack pickets.

Contempt

Their utter contempt for the lowest paid sections of workers has been demonstrated by their refusal to implement the Labour Conference policy of ensuring a £60 minimum wage.

Their contempt for the old, the young and the sick has been exposed by their deliberate, savage cutbacks in the health service, social services, education and nursery facilities.

Their contempt for the unemployed is clearly revealed by their policies of "rationalisation" of industry, factory and yard closures, and all-out speed-up in industry, adding each day further discarded workers and youth to record-long dole queues.

This leadership has nothing to offer the working class, and regards itself as answerable not to the Labour Party members and supporters that put them in office, but to the capitalist class, for whom they are attempting to "manage" the

economy.

If an election is fought with Callaghan in the leadership standing on the government's squalid record, the result will inevitably pose major problems for the working class.

On the one hand a Tory victory brought about by the wholesale demoralisation of former Labour voters, would unleash a massive wave of Thatcher-style anti-union legislation and further devastation of the social services and nationalised industries.

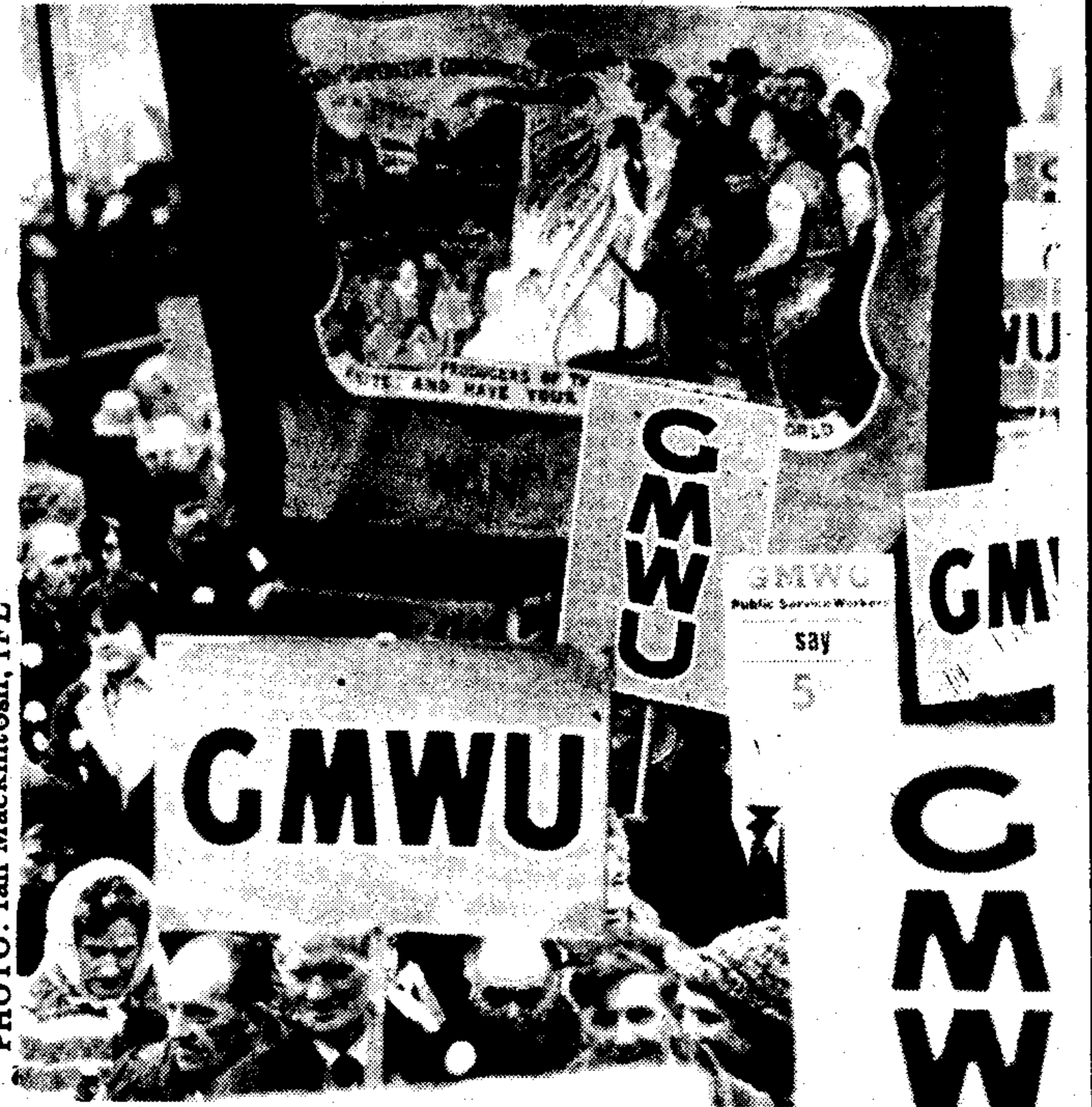
On the other hand a Labour victory on such a basis would be taken by Callaghan as a mandate to press ruthlessly ahead with his full programme of pro-capitalist policies, attempting to brush aside or to crush any opposition within the Labour Party.

Attack pickets

Already the TUC-Labour "concordat" holds out the threat of permanent, rigid wage controls, "voluntary" restrictions designed to cripple picketing and further levels of class collaboration between TUC, Labour leaders and the CBI.

If this is to be avoided it is essential that a recall Labour Party conference be called to offer the chance to remove the Callaghan leadership and adopt a socialist internationalist manifesto for the 1979 election.

Without such a conference Labour Party members will be dragged out as vote-catching



Mass movement against low pay—blocked by Callaghan

cannon fodder canvassing for a manifesto diametrically opposed to the policies adopted by the last Party conference.

Every Party ward and GMC, and every union branch must now be called upon to take up the fight for a recall conference, submitting resolutions to the NEC.

"Left" MPs who attempt to cling on to a socialist reputation by claiming to oppose Callaghan's policies must be called upon to lead a national campaign to fight them in practice—or stand exposed as pompous windbags incapable of offering any challenge to the right wing.

Reselection killed until 1981

Last year's manoeuvre by then AUEW President Hugh Scanlon at the Labour Party conference has effectively postponed any change in the reselection of MPs until at least 1981.

Scanlon pathetically claimed he had "made a mistake" in failing to cast his union's block vote in favour of an NEC minority recommendation which he was mandated to support.

The minority report would have submitted all MPs to a regular reselection procedure, and thus taken a certain step forward in making the Parlia-

to give a chance to undo Scanlon's sabotage.

Right wingers stuck to the "3-year rule" which bars rediscussion of such policy decisions for three years.

While this amounts to a further blow against democracy in the Labour Party, the reselection issue itself is by no means a panacea to resolve the crisis of leadership within the Party.

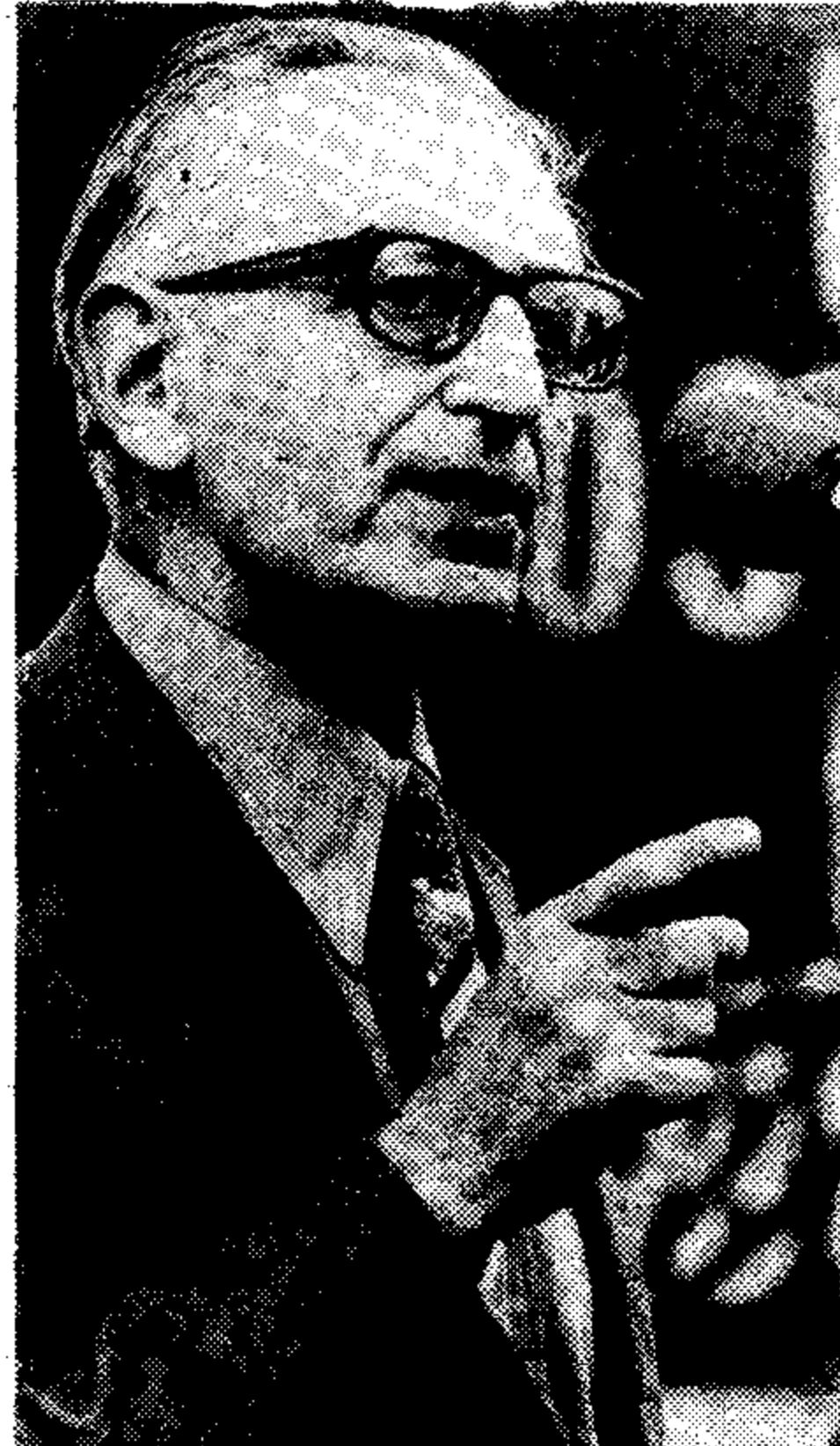
Restrictions

Indeed even the defeated NEC minority proposals were

hedged around with restrictions designed to impede the 'danger' of a rapid movement of trade unionists into Labour Parties to call local MPs to order or drive them out.

This latest setback to the reselection fight confirms the need for the struggle to be taken up at once within the Labour and trade union movement for the ousting of the Callaghan/Healey leadership at a recalled emergency Labour Party conference.

PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report



Frank Allaun

mentary Labour Party accountable to the movement that puts them in office.

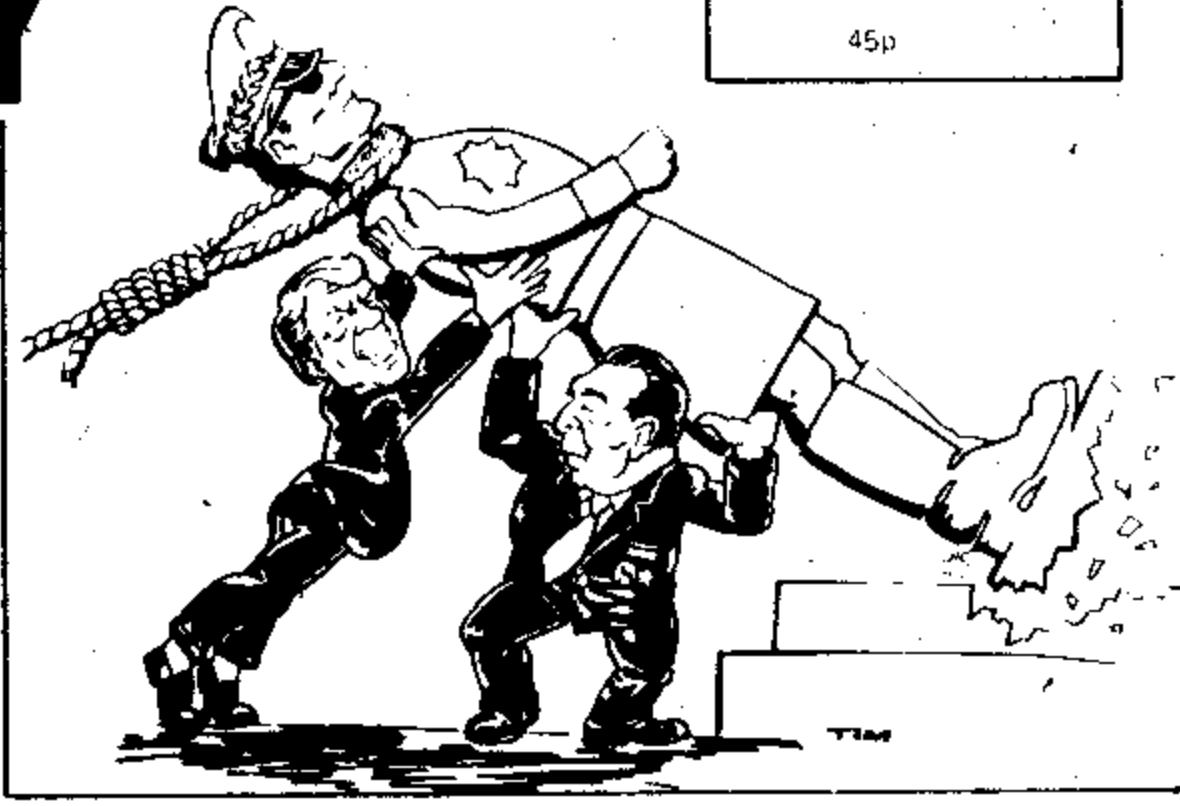
Scanlon's manoeuvre ensured that it was defeated by 394,000 votes, instead of being carried.

In its place the NEC majority recommendation was carried, which is a half-hearted gesture offering no real change in the existing system whereby MPs linger on as candidates unless forcibly removed.

Last week's National Executive meeting rejected a move by Party Chairman Frank Allaun to reopen the debate at the 1979 Party conference, in order

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PRESS GANG



The leaders of the Royal College of Nursing are a conscious force for dividing nurses from the majority of hospital workers.

But it was difficult not to feel a sense of awe at the strategy for "action" put forward by the RCN leaders to prevent their membership turning towards the trade unions.

When the membership voted heavily against taking industrial action, *The Daily Telegraph* searching for the highest compliment it could pay, compared them to bishops (who are apparently being offered an 18% pay rise).

But since the RCN is an organisation which has always ruled out strike action, and since nurses who do not accept this Florence Nightingale approach already belong to trade unions, the 2,639 nurses who voted in favour of taking action must have disconcerted the RCN leadership.

In terms of the 130,000 membership this is a tiny number, but they made up 30% of those 8,500 who attended the special meeting at which the vote was taken.

The RCN leaders began agitating for a special offer from the government to prove that they could get a pay rise without taking action.

The deal was that nurses

should get the money and the Government should get in return an example to hold up to the working class of the success of no action.

Things don't work like that under capitalism. The nurses' "no strike" pledge is similar to the deal junior hospital doctors are trying to negotiate.

If the government were to guarantee the wages in real terms of either or both of these sections, there would be other leaderships in the public sector making a bid to be included.

The Government cannot afford to maintain the wages of any section against inflation without meeting similar demands from such a wide strata of workers that it could not meet the claims without throwing away, not only its 5% policy, but also its defence of capitalist profitability

Weapon

The press does not have to take such considerations into account. In the nurses they have found the perfect weapon against the majority of public sector workers.

Preferring to forget about the thousands of nurses who have already joined NUPE and COHSE, Fleet Street wheels out its clichés about heroines and angels.

It was at this point that the RCN leadership unfolded

their secret weapon. They would hit back with... a 10 million strong petition, and a 'vigil of reproach'.

The Express was ecstatic. So ecstatic that it wanted part of its front page preserved.

The main headline said simply 'Shamed' and below that 'Nurses silent vigil'.

Screaming?

About a third of the front page was given over to a disc with the face of smiling nurse (or is she screaming?) which Express readers are asked to cut out and stick on their car windows.

It reads 'More Pay for Nurses! In smaller letters: 'It won't hurt too much Jim' and in smaller letters again: 'Daily Express. The Paper that cares'.

The text started: 'Nurses pledged never to strike are planning a silent vigil outside Parliament to shame the Government into a decent pay deal... No banners, no slogans, no demos—just a constant silent reproach to MPs and Ministers.'

The paper also said that senior nurses were to go on a 'strike in reverse'—'Giving up four hours each week helping patients in wards'.

Quite what pressure these four extra hours exert, the paper does not say. But then it is the paper with heart—not brains.

CEYLON BETRAYAL 1964

OF THE METHOD OF 'SO

By Tony Richardson

A favourite argument used by the International Marxist Group to justify their opportunist 'Socialist Unity' campaign for fusion with centrist groups is that any political group that has not 'crossed class lines' must be regarded as 'revolutionary'—regardless of how inadequate its programme or method of work.

Anyone who rejects this minimal basis for 'unity' and seeks through a deepened discussion to establish a serious political assessment of the group concerned and a real basis for agreement is branded as a sectarian.

But the complete inability of the IMG's approach to provide a basis for a principled Trotskyist international is clearly revealed by an examination of the bitter lessons of the betrayal carried out by the USFI's Sri Lanka section in 1964.

The events.

A membership conference of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, the Sri Lanka section of the 'United' Secretariat of the Fourth International was held on 7 June, 1964.

At that conference a majority of the members voted in favour of forming a coalition government with the bourgeois Sri Lanka 'Freedom Party, led by Mrs. Bandaranaike.

This decision is correctly seen as one of the greatest betrayals in the history of the Trotskyist movement.

Despite its modest numbers—at the time the LSSP had less than 1,000 members—the party not only had MPs in the Parliament, but a tradition of standing as the only workers party with mass support. It was considerably stronger than the Stalinist party. Mrs. Bandaranaike's motives in bringing the 'Trotskyist' LSSP into her government were clear enough.

Close to collapse

The government was close to collapse in the face of a determined wave of strikes and moves to unify the whole trade union movement behind '21 points' of programme—a step accomplished in September 1963.

As with all "Popular Front" forms of rule, the bourgeoisie turn to incorporate opportunist sections of the working class leadership into their government only as a desperate last resort.

And Mrs. Bandaranaike's gamble paid off. The effect of the coalition was to give her the leeway to save Sri Lankan capitalism at the expense of the working class—thanks to the LSSP.

The background.

How did the "Trotskyist" LSSP wind up in this position? Was it simply an unpredictable



The Bandaranaike 1964 coalition government. LSSP leader N.M. Perera is stood next to Mrs. Bandaranaike

opportunist lurch by the leadership?

No, there had on a number of occasions been clear pointers to the direction that leadership had been headed in, and the development of the LSSP over the preceding ten years had helped lay the basis for the betrayal of 1964.

In the split in the Fourth International that took place in 1953, the LSSP had at first supported some of the positions of the International Committee.

The IC was formed after the split on the basis of a political lead from the US Socialist Workers Party, opposing the opportunist line on Stalinism argued by Michel Pablo, Ernest Mandel and the forces that supported them.

Unity at all costs

The LSSP however saw the primary issue not as clarification of the political differences that had arisen but as keeping the Fourth International together at all costs.

They proposed a postponement of the scheduled Fourth World Congress, as requested by the International Committee; but when this was refused the LSSP remained with Pablo's International Secretariat and participated in the

Fourth Congress in 1954.

In explaining the LSSP's capitulation in 1964, Mandel argued that the first indication of opportunism was at the Fourth World Congress, where the LSSP moved an amendment to the document 'The Rise and Fall of Stalinism'.

Changed line?

Their amendment sought to change a call for freedom for all *working class* parties to a call for freedom for *all* parties after the socialist revolution.

It would be interesting in view of the current position of the USFI to know whether Mandel still believes such a line to be opportunist—and if not, why not.

But 1954 was only a minor mistake compared with the opportunist election policy adopted by the LSSP in 1956. The party adopted the position of "responsive cooperation" with the Bandaranaike government.

Even Mandel admits this showed "signs of wavering".

The LSSP abandoned this stance only after race riots had erupted as a result of Bandaranaike's policies.

Mandel in retrospect argues that this hasty change by the LSSP was:

"the positive side of its

"tail-endism". Each time the workers went into action, the LSSP leadership took a new turn towards the left".

So already in 1956 the supposed "Trotskyist leadership" of the Ceylon masses could be seen to be dragging along reluctantly behind the spontaneous struggles of the working class.

Yet instead of battling out the lessons of this clear advanced warning of the 1964 betrayal, Pablo and Mandel consoled themselves with the "positive" side of the LSSP's opportunism.

In other words the material impact of the LSSP's false positions was in no way understood by the Pabloites: they saw the question of programme and perspective as simply a question of right or wrong *ideas*.

China

The LSSP's ideas certainly were wrong, as was shown graphically in 1957. On the invitation of Chou En Lai an LSSP delegation visited China.

Although the LSSP was affiliated to the International Secretariat, leading IC member Peng She-tse wrote to them asking them to raise the issue of the hundreds of Chinese Trotskyists imprisoned by

Mao's Stalinist regime.

Not only did the LSSP fail to raise the issue, but they issued fulsome praise to their Stalinist hosts, proclaiming China "the stronghold of Asia".

But there was worse to come. By 1960 the LSSP was voting for the Throne Speech and for the Budget of the newly elected Bandaranaike government.

Coalition plan

LSSP leader N.M. Perera went further and put forward a proposal that they enter a coalition government—which was rejected by only a narrow majority.

Mandel's retrospective apology again minimises the importance of this development, which took place four years prior to the actual betrayal:

"A big step had been taken from wavering [sic!] towards betrayal. However once again the Ceylonese working class saved the LSSP leadership temporarily from ignominy".

Yet again the supposed conscious "Marxist" party was baled out by its opportunist adaptation to a new wave of workers' struggles. And yet again the Pabloites failed to draw the lessons from the preceding betrayal of principle.

But worse still Mandel's

approach suggests that the major question involved in the 1964 events was the "ignominy" suffered by the LSSP, rather than the setback the LSSP's treachery inflicted upon the Sri Lankan working class.

There were other tell-tale signs of impending betrayal prior to 1964. In 1963, in particular, the LSSP formed a "United Left Front" with the Communist Party and the MEP.

In a particularly squalid compromise the LSSP refused to argue for the inclusion of the union representing Tamil workers because this would have antagonised the nationalist and racist leadership of the MEP.

Still no attempt was made by the Pabloites—now politically "reunited"—with the US Socialist Workers Party—to force the LSSP towards the path of Trotskyist principle.

The "International" reaction to 1964.

The LSSP's betrayal in entering the coalition was immediately seized upon by leading IC member Gerry Healy as evidence of the opportunist politics on which the "United" Secretariat had been formed in 1963.

In defending themselves against Healy's criticisms,

4: THE BITTER FRUITS 'SOCIALIST UNITY'



Perera as Chancellor introducing his second, viciously anti-working class, budget in 1971

workers from the Stalinists but as "establishing its own political power on a genuine socialist basis"—creating the illusion that the Stalinists would go along with genuine revolutionary policies.

The USFI's willingness to turn a blind eye to the LSSP's capitulation to the racialism of the MEP is also clear.

Nationalist

Even when the LSSP changed its policy from one of defending the Tamil workers to the nationalist line of arguing that their citizenship was a matter for "negotiation" with the Indian government, the USFI found an excuse for it, stating:

"We recognise that there is nothing wrong in the principle of negotiations between India and Ceylon on the subject."

The criticisms that were made, therefore, were soft to the point of being little more than gestures.

It proves little for Mandel to ask where Healy raised criticisms of the LSSP prior to 1964. Healy was a leader of the IC—the LSSP was a part of Mandel's International Secretariat. And Mandel knew what was going on.

For instance in 1960 a resolution written by LSSP leader Perera arrived at the IS centre in Paris, declaring:

"Steps must be taken to bring about a programmatic agreement with the SLFP with a view to forming a joint government." [emph. added].

Reformist view

Mandel also knows full well that the LSSP had a completely reformist view of the capitalist state, and argued that Sri Lanka was an "exceptional" case in which a parliamentary road was possible.

This is argued in an astounding 1960 LSSP resolution:

"And parliamentary struggle is also a struggle for power. Universal franchise does boost the parliamentary struggle. It is no accident of history that in no country where universal franchise obtains has there been a revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist class.

"Though mass struggles leading to the overthrow of capitalism are conceivable, in point of fact such situations have never yet arisen, because the franchise has placed in the hands of the workers a vehicle for achieving power."

Yet Mandel argues that the LSSP had correct basic positions! And then accuses Healy of "lies"!

No discussion.

The weaknesses of the LSSP were well-known but played down by Mandel and Pablo between 1953 and 1964 for factional reasons.

They wished to present themselves as the continuity of Trotskyism—and the LSSP was their biggest and strongest section. They could not afford a fight.

And after the 1963 "reunification" the pressure to

hush up the events in Sri Lanka were stronger than ever. To open up a discussion on the LSSP's process of degeneration would reopen all the unresolved differences between the US SWP and the International Secretariat forces.

This is not speculation on our part: it is clearly documented. Early in 1964 the Secretariat of the USFI wrote a letter responding to a request for a discussion on Ceylon—a few months before the betrayal.

Having described the reunification, the Secretariat went on:

"This required a certain organisational relaxation for a period and a serious effort to ameliorate internal disputes in the various sections and in the components of the united movement—especially disputes inherited from the past [!]-in order to help every area in the common problem of making a fresh start.

"All this was explained and agreed upon unanimously by the delegates who participated in the Reunification Congress.

"The attitude of the United Secretariat towards the situation in Ceylon as elsewhere in the movement has been governed by these broad considerations laid down by the Reunification Congress.

"The United Secretariat 'in essence' as Comrade Anderson puts it, has not modified in the least the criticisms of the LSSP made by the Seventh World Congress. What it has done is to place confidence in the capacity of the leadership of the LSSP to prove responsive to these criticisms.

"The letter addressed to the LSSP was not intended as some kind of public pillorying or as a challenge to pitch into a factional brawl, as Comrade Anderson appears to believe.

"The criticisms which it contained were made with complete good will by the assembled representatives of the world Trotskyist movement and in full confidence that they would be given thoughtful consideration by the LSSP.

"The United Secretariat has sought to maintain this loyal and comradely attitude towards the Ceylonese section, while frankly acknowledging that its members tend to sympathise politically with the left wing of the LSSP.

"However the United Secretariat feels that it would be wrong for it as a body representing the movement as a whole to brush aside the declarations of the majority of the LSSP leadership and refuse to grant them the time needed to prove in action the sincerity of their stand in relation to the United Left Front and the good faith of their assurances.

"It would mean first of all to deliberately heat up the atmosphere in the LSSP by injecting the sharpest kind of factionalism; secondly, to exacerbate matters still further by transferring the dispute to the public arena.

"A divisive policy of this kind would put in jeopardy if not destroy, fraternal relations between the United Secretariat and the leadership of the LSSP. The end result could be highly injurious to the Fourth

International and to the LSSP, including its left wing, which has absolutely no interest to put in question the unity of the party through the creation of undue internal friction and tension from any source."

Of course the outcome of this policy of "leave well alone" was that in a matter of months the "dispute" had reached the public arena and the name of Trotskyism had been tainted by the treachery of the LSSP.

There is of course no guarantee that even a correct policy from the LSSP could have avoided the blows inflicted by Bandaranaike after 1964 let alone led a successful revolution at that point.

But by failing to forewarn the working class of the dangers posed by Bandaranaike and by lending credibility to her rule by joining a miserable Popular Front coalition the LSSP carried through a crucial betrayal.

The Sri Lankan working class had effectively been sacrificed on the altar of "reunification".

The June 1964 Conference

When the fatal LSSP Conference took place the leadership received 507 votes for their coalition policy. There were two opposing positions.

The minority which formed the LSSP(R) received 159 votes, and walked out of the conference.

But the "centre" grouping which received 75 votes was not against a coalition with Bandaranaike—they favoured the coalition including not merely the LSSP but the whole "United Left Front".

The USFI leadership expelled the three members who took jobs as ministers in Bandaranaike's government, and suspended the 584 other majority supporters. But it did nothing about those who supported the "centre's" coalition policy.

Conclusion.

The 1964 betrayal is an unmistakable indictment of the USFI's line of avoiding a sharp clash on programme with the LSSP.

It shows the dangers of any attempt to unite simply those forces that "have not crossed class lines" without any attempt to clarify the programmatic basis and method on which each section operates.

And it raises the question of how many more Sri Lankans are developing within the USFI today—especially when the lessons of the 1964 betrayal, like those of every historical problem of the post war Fourth International is virtually a proscribed topic of study or discussion within the USFI, brushed aside by a glib phrase or wave of the hand.

In raising the issue today our political objective is to stress the necessity to discuss the history of the Trotskyist movement and the programme and political method of sections that have not yet "crossed class lines".

Only in this way can the principles and method of the Trotskyist Transitional Programme be reaffirmed in theory and in practice as the basis for the reconstructed Fourth International.

idea to become a fact it was only necessary for the leadership to win a vote!

It is therefore no answer for Mandel to quote public criticisms made by the Pabloite Sixth World Congress (1960) of the LSSP's support for Bandaranaike's Throne Speech and Budget.

Because that formal criticism was not part of a life and death battle within the IS and the LSSP itself to reverse its opportunist and treacherous positions.

Healy in fact quotes a 1960 IS document which virtually echoes the LSSP's position, declaring that it was possible:

"to permit practical no-cash agreements with the [bourgeois] Sri Lanka Freedom Party".

Mandel shows signs of similar confusion when in his 1964 article he argues that the conditions were wrong to offer Bandaranaike's party a "United Front".

The "right" conditions he feels would be as in 1917 when Lenin offered a United Front to social democrat Kerensky against a rising by reactionary general Kornilov.

But the reality is that the United Front tactic has always been seen by the Communist movement as a front between workers' parties against a common capitalist enemy, aimed at winning over the mass support of such parties to revolution.

The deal with Bandaranaike could only have been an alliance with a capitalist party against the working class.

Stalinists

The USFI's confusion on the tactic of the United Front also emerges in their approach to the LSSP's "United Left Front" with the Stalinists.

This "Front" is seen not as a means of breaking

the USFI feel obliged to attribute to him a charge that he did not make—in order to disprove it.

Thus Mandel wrongly claims that Healy accuses the USFI and IS leadership of not having criticised the LSSP leadership. Mandel then goes on to list instances where they *did* make criticisms.

Formal points

But the question is not whether a few formal points of criticism are made—but whether issues of principle are battled out to a conclusion within the movement.

The USFI of course to this day defend in their talk of "socialist unity" the position that a dividing line can be drawn only *after* a betrayal has taken place.

But in the case of the LSSP the betrayal was a present factor in party politics for eight years before the event: for the

When the chips are down jobs are on the line

Somewhat belatedly it has been recognised in this country that the major developments in technology over the next decades will involve the application of silicon chips.

Furthermore, it has been claimed that these developments are the guarantee of the future of capitalism, and that any major capitalist nation that falls behind is lost, while those in the forefront have a safe future.

But silicon chip technology is simply a further stage in the development of automation, and its impact cannot be gauged outside the context of the general crisis of capital.

A silicon chip is a computer. It is the latest development of the electronic computer—an innovation of the post-war capitalist boom.

Switches

A computer is essentially a network of switches which can be structured in any way.

Because of this plastic quality the same computer can be programmed to do more than one thing.

A programme is a particular setting of switches to create a pattern which responds in a determined way.

So a particular input produces a definite output.

The same computer can do any number of jobs—as many as there are programmes written for it.

Early computers were constructed or assembled with electronic valves, later transistors, as the basic switch element.

In general a computer only does one thing at a time—that is, only changes one switch setting at a time.

The power of a computer derives from the speed with which one switch setting follows another and that speed is granted by the fact that the switching is electronic.

Powerful

The development of the chip was the result of the pursuit of powerful computers, not the desire for small ones.

For the limiting factor in the power of a computer is the time it takes electricity to travel the distance between one switch and

jobs are on the line



“... and so in conclusion, I will demonstrate the remarkable speed of the silicon chip in its immediate processing of our latest project ... your redundancy payments ...”

another.

The smaller the distance between the switches the faster and therefore the more powerful the computer will be.

The drive to diminish size lead to the use of photographic methods of reproduction rather than assembly from already existing parts.

The pattern of switch-elements is etched photographically onto slivers of silicon which are then sandwiched together. Photographic reduction allows microscopic size as well as cheapness.

Even if nine out of ten chips are failures computers can be produced for a few pounds today that would have cost thousands of pounds a decade ago.

Commercial computers currently being installed carry out millions of switch settings a second.

So even if it takes several

hundred such settings one after another just to add two numbers together, the actual time taken is negligible.

The chip gives the prospect of enormous computing power very cheaply, and in a tiny package. The first industrial revolution augmented or replaced the muscle-power of human labour with steampower.

The chip-based 'revolution' would replace manpower in its control or directing functions, offering the prospect of complete automation. However, capital's problems are not solved.

Productivity

In the post-war boom investment meant employment. The increased productivity of new techniques is so great that much more can be produced by many

The capitalists and their apologists see automation creating a 'leisure problem'.

In capitalist reality the leisure problem presents itself to the working class as unemployment.

If the working class is to defend its living standards then the creation of unemployment on the pretext of chip technology must not be allowed.

While it is in capital's interest that unemployment and speed-up and other forms of 'rationalisation' mark the attempts at recovery, it will become ever more obvious that this is not in the interests of the working class.

Potential benefits

Chip based technology can have enormous benefits for mankind, and marks a further development of the productive forces at his disposal.

But the capitalists can only introduce it along with enormous waste and misery.

Only with the rational allocation of resources under socialist planning can the new techniques be used to the benefit of all.

And only the working class is in the position of both benefitting from the introduction of socialist planning and being able to bring it about.

The Luddites tried to check the social consequences of capital's expansion during the industrial revolution.

They set to work quite wrongly by smashing the machines of the new productive system.

It is essential that today the evil consequences of automation are blamed on the out-dated capitalist form of production in which it occurs.

If automation is to be the servant and liberator of mankind rather than an instrument of capitalist domination, a social revolution must be made.

In fighting to preserve their jobs and living standards the working class denies the capitalists the

Chips are not going to be the source of any great surplus value in themselves.

The effort and investment required to produce them are not great.

The labour needed to programme the chips will be greater than the labour needed to produce them.

Investment

Secondly, the replacement of old man-controlled machinery by computer-controlled machinery involves no smaller investment initially.

Automatic machinery is no cheaper to make at the present time than the old machine tools, etc.

This investment has got to come from somewhere, and the present crisis of capitalism is precisely one of profitability.

Thirdly, the expulsion of manpower from the productive process—automation—itself militates against the

restoration of profitability.

Marx showed that ultimately profits can only be derived from exploitation. While a particular capitalist may through some advantage or other contrive to make a profit by trade with other capitalists, if this were to be the only general source of profits then the overall profits of all capitalists taken together would be zero.

Source of profit

It is the exchange between the capitalist and worker that is the source of profit.

The capitalist pays the worker less than the value of the worker's labour adds to the product. The difference is the capitalist's profit.

The more the capitalist lays out in machinery rather than in the employment of labour, the harder it becomes to make a significant profit on the whole outlay.

This inexorable tendency of the rate of profit to fall was first identified by Marx and it is at the heart of the crisis.

The capitalist is forced by the competitive forces unleashed by this crisis to turn to production methods which ultimately make his position as a capitalist more untenable.

This fact is reflected in the reluctance of British capital to re-invest those profits they do make at present. They see no prospect of profits which would justify the amounts of capital invested.

What is required is the restoration of profitability before the new technology can be fully applied. This means that large amounts of capital in the form of old machinery must be written

off.

It also means that further amounts of capital be made available to invest in the new machinery.

British capital, which did not go through the restructuring and renewal which the destruction of World War II brought to Japan and W. Germany, is caught in the vice of capitalist crisis more than most. It appears that the only way out is through new techniques. But this requires a level of profits unattainable under present conditions.

The only way forward for capital is to change those conditions fundamentally. And this can only be done by exploiting labour more under present conditions.

By unemployment, speed-up, inflation, the working class must take a cut in its living standards.

The difference effected by this cut must accrue to the capitalists as profit.

This alone will provide the basis for capitalist rejuvenation in Britain, not this or that technological marvel.

Overthrow

But it is essential in fighting these struggles through that there is the political development which sees the overthrow of capitalism itself as the sole protection of the working class.

It is for this development that Trotsky wrote the Transitional Programme on which the WSL fights for leadership in all struggles of the working class.

*No job-cutting productivity deals!

*Work-sharing on full pay!

*For a sliding scale of wages!



KHUFU: ANDREW WINKEL, K. SPÖCK

Times Newspapers printers march to defend jobs against computerisation.

WRP leaders junk the old Trotskyism

By John Lister



45p.

The only serious examination yet produced of the opportunist political line of Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party in relation to the petty bourgeois nationalist regimes of the Middle East.
45p plus 15p p&p from: WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

POLITICIANS WRITHE IN FACE OF IRISH STRUGGLE

By John Lister

The obvious emergence of growing resistance to British military rule in the sectarian six-county statelet in the North of Ireland, coupled with continuing militancy of the working class in the South, is causing havoc among bourgeois politicians of every stripe.

Jack Lynch, Prime Minister of the 26-county "free state", also attracted considerable support in the last election by posing as a supporter of a united Ireland, has set out in recent weeks to tone down his empty bombast to a more cautious level.

In a speech to his Fianna Fail party colleagues chiefly remarkable for its open hostility to the working class in the 26-counties (now in the throes of a major post office strike in pursuit of a 30-37% pay claim) Lynch pulled back from his previous tub-thumping attacks on the British government.

Lame

Instead he lamely called for new British "initiatives" in the six counties.

Clearly the prospect that any even vaguely anti imperialist speech at this juncture could only fuel an already growing struggle against British imperialism in the North has daunted Lynch.

He knows that his servile capitalist regime clings to power in part through the continued repressive role of the British army in holding back the struggle for national liberation and an Irish workers' republic.

Another Irish bourgeois politician who recognises this fact of life is Fine Gael leader Garret Fitzgerald, who recently unveiled a new party policy document *Ireland—Our Future Together* amid a fanfare of press publicity

Partition

Fitzgerald's "new" plan is to continue partition, with the establishment of a new government in Belfast to function alongside one in Dublin and forming a confederate set-up, jointly tackling security, foreign affairs, and some economic questions.

Alongside its sophisticated attempt to fudge the issue of national liberation which is at stake in the imperialist-ruled six counties, Fitzgerald's plan

contains an undisguised attack on the republican struggle, described as

"the continued violence of a discredited handful of men".

But unfortunately for all of British imperialism's apologists, the continued violence that has been hitting the news recently, has been that meted out by defenders of British rule—whether they be the bestial Protestant murder squad, the "Shankhill Butchers" or the beserk British soldier shot dead by his colleagues after pointing his rifle not at an Irish Catholic but at an army NCO—and pulling the trigger.



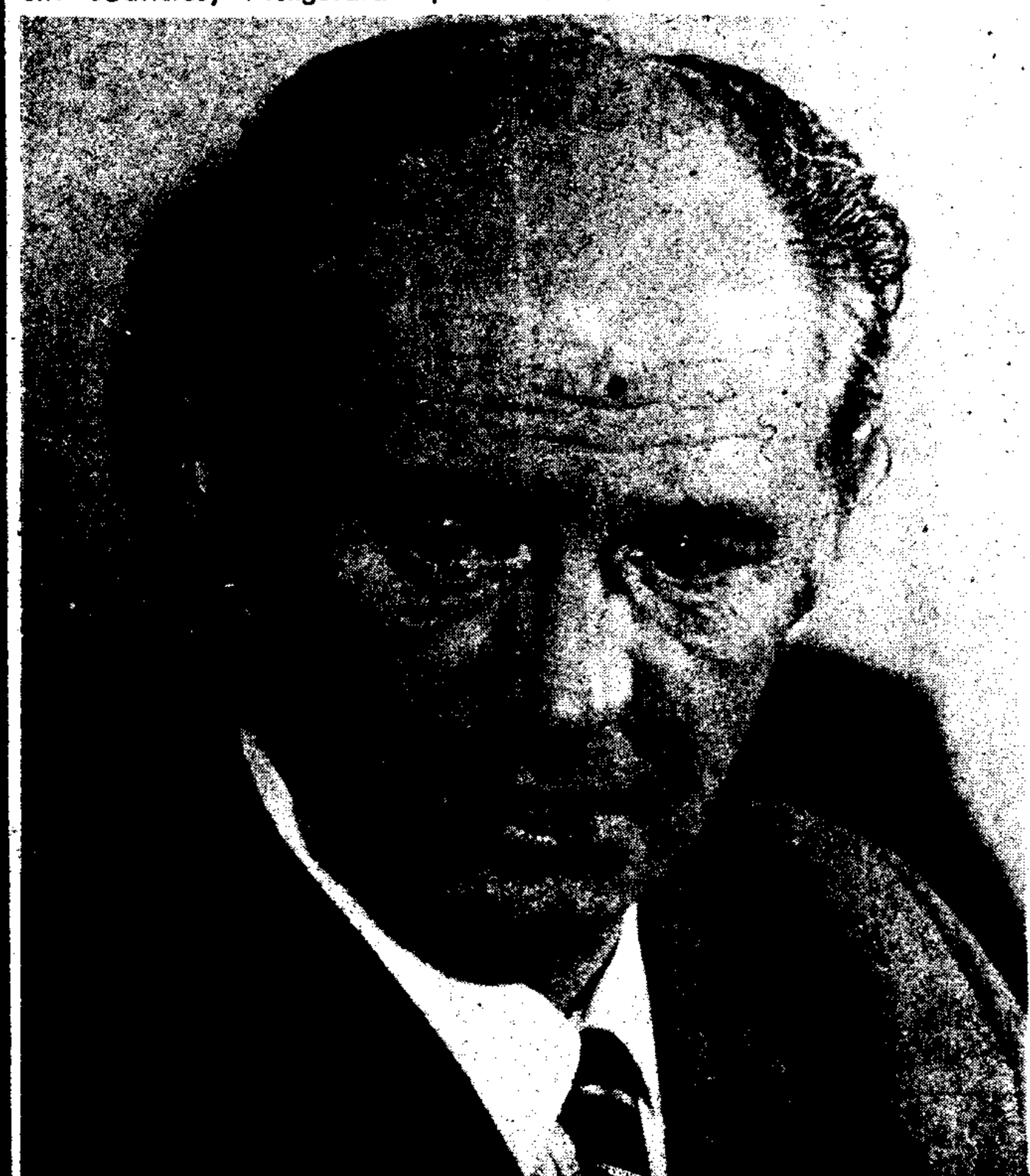
Scargill

A psychiatrist has now pointed out that the pressures that led to Trooper Maggs' frenzy are far from unique.

And he quoted the case of another Trooper, Jeffrey Ridley, who joined the army with hopes of serving in the Catering Corps, only to find himself assigned to a tank division and serving in occupied Northern Ireland. He is now under psychiatric care.

Of course no effort is being spared by British imperialism to protect these licensed thugs and murderers from the consequences of their actions—and perhaps the clearest case in point is that of the two SAS men who have now supposedly been charged with the murder of 16-year-old John Boyle last year.

There is no way of knowing if the assassins themselves were in court or have really been charged at all, since the proceedings witnessed the extraordinary sight of seven unidentified men in plain clothes entering the dock and standing silent as the charges were read out.



Jack Lynch

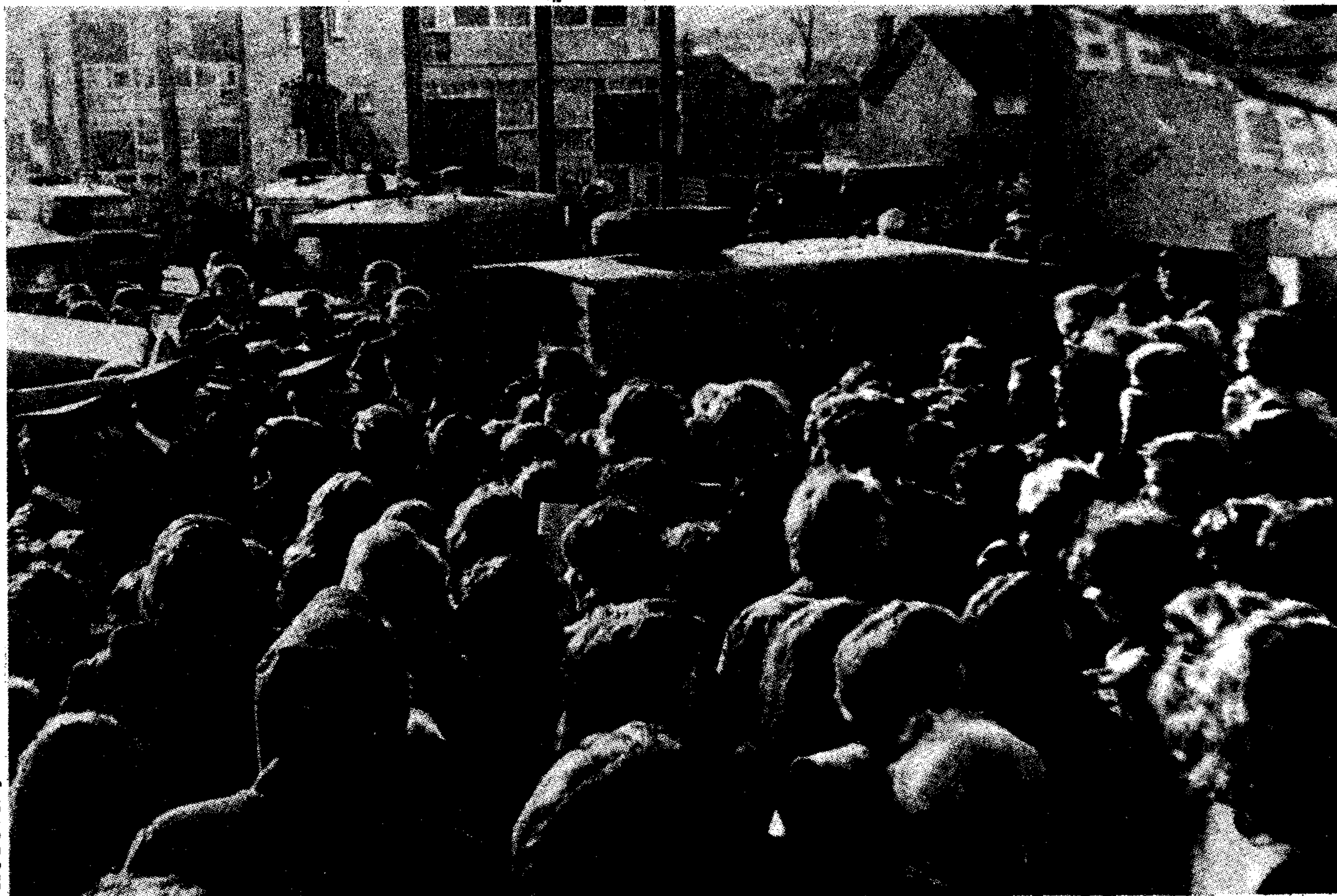


PHOTO: Republican News

Confrontation as RUC men block Sinn Fein demonstration

And since the two unknown men named Tempedy and Bohan were remanded in military custody the whole affair is emerging as a total mockery of even British "justice".

Clearly in this case the SAS is relying heavily on support from its chief ally—Labour's Minister for Torture, Roy Mason.

But Mason himself is under increasing pressure on a number of fronts.

In the occupied six counties a number of large and militant demonstrations have been successfully mobilised by the IRA against the continued maltreatment of republican prisoners in 'H' Block at the Long Kesh concentration camp and in support of their demand for a restoration of political status.

Mason's campaign

And in Britain Mason has felt obliged to launch his own propaganda campaign defending his methods of repression—over and above the regular propaganda pumped out by the Tory press.

Opinion polls are beginning to register a majority of British people in favour of withdrawing troops from Ireland. And now even leading Liberal Party politicians John Pardo and Cyril Smith have jumped on to the Troops Out bandwagon in the hopes of attracting some alienated Irish Labour votes.

The young Liberals have now gone so far as to declare support for the United Troops Out Movement (UTOM).

But more important from the standpoint of the struggle in the Labour movement, the February issue of *Irish Free Press* reports that there are moves afoot within the Labour Party bureaucracy to remove Mason:

"At least twice last year officials from Labour's headquarters in Transport House have urged Labour ministers to transfer Roy Mason to another cabinet position before any General Election is held, arguing that this is the minimum concession needed to halt the erosion of Labour's support among the Irish community"

Scargill

Yet, despite these opportunistic manoeuvres, the scanda-

lous fact is that no campaign to remove Mason is being waged openly by any section of the Labour Party or trade union bureaucracy.

Indeed Yorks NUM President Arthur Scargill, whose headquarters are in Mason's constituency of Barnsley, and whose union sponsors him as an MP, has had the two-faced

cheek to sign a UTOM Christmas card to Long Kesh prisoners while not lifting a finger to remove Mason.

Now is the time to take up a fight on this question in every body of the labour movement—so that the issue of British imperialist repression in Ireland figures at the forefront of the political discussion in the run up

to the 1979 election.

Fighting for Mason's removal and the kicking out of the pro-imperialist Callaghan/Healey leadership must be coupled with the demand for the immediate withdrawal of British Troops from Ireland to make way for the self-determination of the Irish people.

Step forward for youth

By Socialist Press
Reporter

The Socialist Youth League, which supports the programme and perspective of the Workers Socialist League, took a big step forward on 24 February when 100 youth attended the Red Youth Rally in London.

The Rally was the first national event organised by the SYL since its formation last May and attracted youth from London, Oxfordshire, the Midlands, Yorkshire and Scotland.

The first speaker, Ann Evans, a student SYL member from Oxford outlined the role of revolutionary youth in Iran in the struggles which led to the downfall of the Shah's dictatorship.

She went on to explain that religious leaders like Khomeini could not solve any of the problems confronting the Iranian masses.

Party needed

What was needed, she said, was a revolutionary party that could give leadership to the continuing struggles of the workers and fight to transform the workers' committees into the basis of workers' power in Iran.

Graham Russel described the role of British imperialism in Northern Ireland and explained the need to support the



Andrew MacDonald

struggles of the Irish Catholic working class for self-determination.

While defending the right of the IRA to engage in struggle against British imperialism and supporting them insofar as they engage in that struggle, Comrade Russel pointed out that their campaigns of bombing could not win that struggle.

"We need to build a revolutionary party in Ireland that will unite the Protestants and Catholics around a programme of transitional demands", he said.

He ended by calling for the withdrawal of British troops, for the granting of political status to republican and socialist prisoners and for a campaign in

the labour movement to kick out Roy Mason and the rest of the right wing Callaghan-Healey cabinet.

Matthew Jones, a school student from Glasgow outlined the treacherous record of the Callaghan-Healey government in attacking the living standards and democratic rights of the working class and the socialist policies that would be needed to defend working class youth from these attacks.

Other speakers outlined the SYL's record and policies in the fight against racism and fascism and the struggle to build the National Union of School Students in opposition to the bankrupt YCL-dominated leadership.

Red Youth

Red Youth editor Andrew MacDonald told the rally that the SYL had a paper they could be proud of. Unlike other so-called revolutionary youth papers which adapt to the level of consciousness of youth coming spontaneously into struggle, *Red Youth* was not afraid of politics.

The threat posed by the policies of this government to the living standards and democratic rights of working class youth meant that it was essential to develop the only paper which could offer youth policies with which to fight back.

SYL National Secretary Phil Moore closed the rally with an appeal to those youth who were not members of the SYL to join and help build a revolutionary leadership amongst youth.

The Rally was followed by a showing of the film "State of Siege" and a disco in the evening.



INDUSTRIAL NEWS

ICL workers strike for 15%

The 20% government stake in Britain's biggest computer firm, International Computers Limited, will be an extra hurdle to cross if striking ICL workers are to win their demand for a 15% increase on their basic rates of pay.

To fight to defeat not only the government's 5% pay limit but also the eagerness for speed-up among trade union officials and the employers' desperate bid for profits will require a level of political consciousness which trade unionists at the Winsford plant are now beginning to grasp.

EETPU shop steward Richard Dunleavy told *Socialist Press*:

"We are very aware that management are hiding behind the government's wages policy. That means this so-called Labour government are acting solely in the interests of big

business. So, whether you like it or not, this fight is political."

Shop floor worker Jimmy O'Mara said:

"ICL have never had a strike like this before. We're determined to win. We demand 15% because we need 15%. Inflation is rotting our wage levels."

With the unofficial-strike now entering its third week, members of the EETPU, AUEW and TGWU are out at the London-based factories of Letchworth and Stevenage, as well as the North Midlands group at Winsford, Duckenfield, Bradwell Wood and Holmes Chapel.

Rejected

Initially, having rejected the company's 5% pay offer workers adopted the tactic of one day strikes.

This rapidly escalated to an all-out stoppage when management began using "volunteer" scab labour

from the ranks of the office staff.

This national strike comes at a time when an NEDC working party report on the computer industry reveals a sharp deterioration in the balance of trade for the UK's computer products.

Deficit

It says that the adverse balance of trade for the industry in 1977 was £152 million—an increase of 37% compared with the previous year's figure.

It now says the target of achieving a favourable balance of £200 million by 1980 will have to be abandoned.

Although there has been a steady turn over of computer products in recent years (1977 is shown at £705 million; an increase of 12% on 1976), employment has fallen from 53,000 in 1971 to 43,000 in 1977.

The introduction of new micro-electronic technologies, in particular the silicon chip process, will add immeasurably to the employment problem of computer workers.

At the Winsford factory 900 EETPU and AUEW members are picketing 24 hours a day, and their morale is extremely high.

When *Socialist Press* asked what they thought of Frank Chapple's recent 'pickets are terrorists' statement, their replies indicated that if they have their way this particular right wing traitor's days are numbered.



Electricians protesting at role of EETPU leader Chapple in 1977

The fact that local full time officials have not yet come forward with the obligatory "Get back to work" cry is an indication of the tenacity and determination of these strikers.

But in the struggles to come much more than militancy and determination are needed.

A leadership has to be constructed which will defend the jobs and living standards of ICL workers.

This means spelling out the need to win not simply the present claim, but to fight for wage agreements to incorporate a cost-of-living clause to provide regular increases to keep pace with inflation as measured by elected trade union committees.

Open the books

It means challenging moves towards speed-up or redundancies through new technology by demanding the opening of ICL's books to an elected committee of trade unionists, to reveal the ways in which this partly government-owned firm is integrally linked to privately owned, highly profitable electronics monopolies and to the banks—and show the necessity for the whole set-up to be nationalised, without compensation under workers' management as part of a planned socialist economy.

Only in this way can the benefits rather than the possible miseries of new technology be enjoyed by the working class.



PHOTO: Lawrence Spahan, IFL

WSL: we offer a lead

Whichever way you look at the struggles and problems now facing the working class throughout the world, one thing stands out above all: the necessity for a principled leadership capable of leading the struggle for state power and the establishment of a socialist society.

The massive revolutionary upheaval that has now toppled the seemingly impregnable might of the Shah of Iran and which is now already coming into conflict with the restrictions placed upon it by its Islamic "leaders" serves as a vivid reminder that socialist revolution is not only possible, but essential if the apparatus of capitalist repression and exploitation is to be destroyed once and for all.

But such a revolution requires a conscious Marxist leadership. And the fight to construct such a leadership is inseparable from the fight in the day-to-day struggles of the working class internationally for the principles, method and demands of the Trotskyist Transitional Programme. The Workers Socialist League has time and again proved to be the only movement in Britain that fights patiently and relentlessly on such a perspective.

We alone are the movement that does not shrink from even head-on battles with the existing leaders of the working class — whether these 'leaders' be open right wingers, 'left' talking Labourites or Stalinists of the Communist Party.

Of course this policy has made us no friends in the trade union and Labour bureaucracy, or amongst the opportunists and centrists of the British 'left'. But it has meant that the WSL has consistently offered the most powerful lead to workers in struggle.

In each struggle we set out to prove to workers both in theory and in practice the necessity of a new, revolutionary leadership and for a programme of transitional demands which, starting from today's problems and today's consciousness within the working class, lead workers in struggle to grasp the need for socialist revolution.

This is why the WSL has featured at the forefront of pay struggles in British Leyland and the public sector, in the fight against redundancies and closures, in struggles against the cuts, unionisation fights, and the fight for democracy in the labour movement.

This method of approach — rejecting any descent to simple trade union militancy or concession to the labour bureaucracy — is of course essential not only in Britain but internationally.

In taking up international issues in the labour movement the WSL stresses not only the obligation of British workers to support the Irish liberation struggle and revolutionary struggles such as those in Iran and Southern Africa, but also the necessity for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International as the organising centre of the world party of socialist revolution.

The WSL is not the biggest movement on the left in Britain; but its approach to both theory and practice make it the only really serious revolutionary movement.

WHY NOT JOIN US?
Fill in the form below for more details, or approach your local branch, who will gladly supply more information about our programme, policies, and perspectives.

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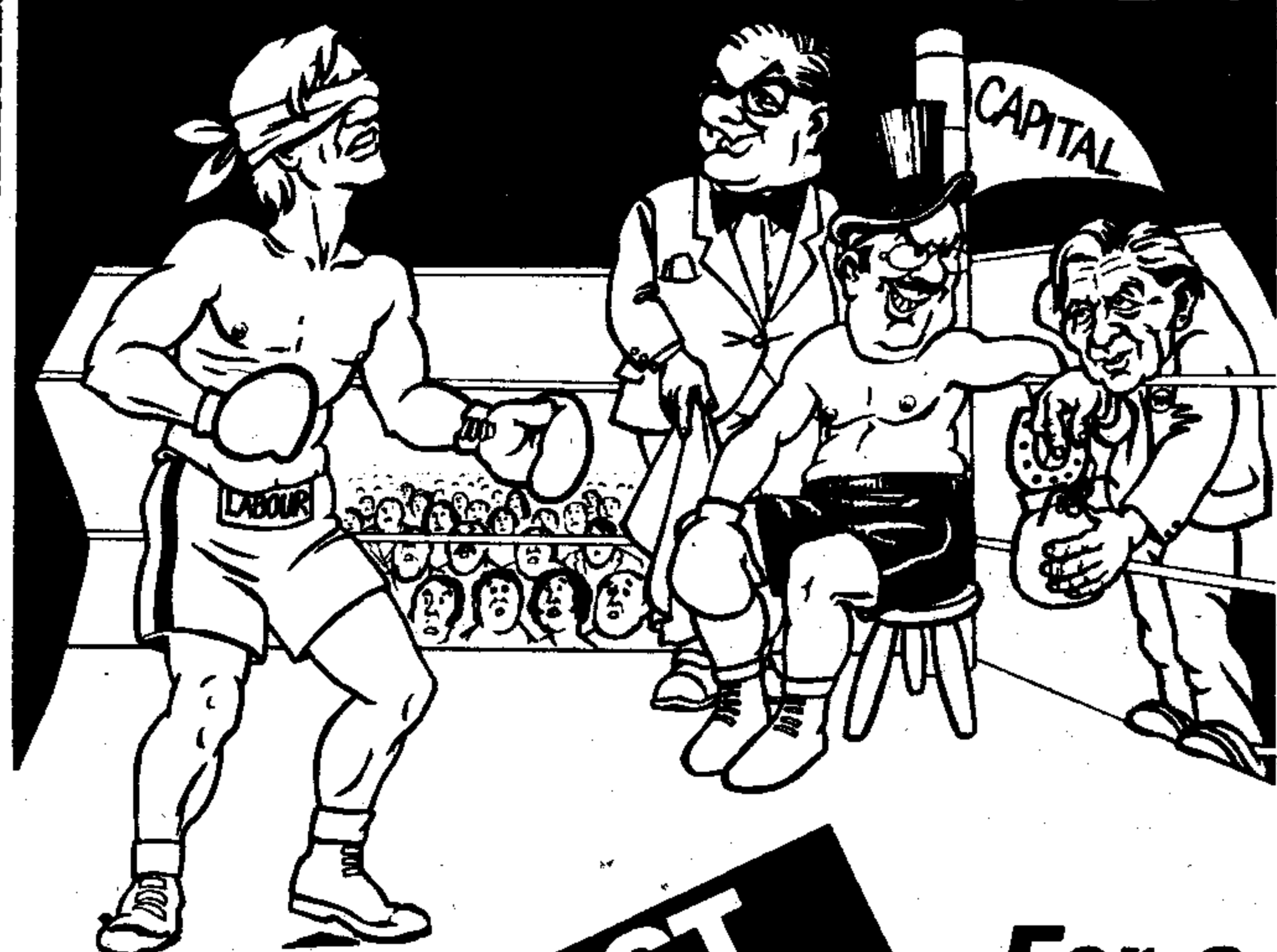
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Smith lines up bus pay sell-out

TGWU officials last week achieved a significant step forward in their plans to abrogate the pay struggle by 150,000 bus drivers, ticket collectors and depot workers.

They successfully steered through a delegate conference a call for a possible national one day strike, possibly to be followed by "further industrial action".

Inquiry

But they made clear that this action is not in pursuit of an adequate wage claim for bus workers—whose current basic rate is below £40 per week—but to press TGWU national officer Larry Smith's ludicrous demand for an "independent inquiry" into comparable rates of pay.

Smith has already declared himself willing to recommend acceptance of a pathetic 6% offer, if only it were linked to such an inquiry.

Yet bus crews have only just seen TGWU lorry drivers take determined strike action and win a 22% pay rise, taking their basic rate to £64. There is no chance of any inquiry producing a similar settlement.

Strike

The demand to be taken up is not protest strike action to force a talk-shop "inquiry" which will sell short the demands of bus workers, but all-out strike action for parity with the haulage drivers.

The only inquiry that should be conducted is a trade union inquiry into the effects of inflation on the pay packets of bus workers.

This would establish beyond doubt the necessity for wage agreements to be protected against rising costs through a sliding scale of wages clause committing the employers to pay regular increases through the year to keep pace with the cost of living.

NUJ MUST STRIKE TO SAVE NOTTS JOBS

More than 200 police were called in to defend scab copies of the *Nottingham Evening Post* last Saturday after 400 workers turned up to picket the building.

Ten pickets were arrested when police from Nottingham and the neighbouring Lincolnshire force charged as the picket line gathered for a meeting.

The picket was called by the NUJ after 28 journalists on the *Post* were sacked for taking part in the recent national pay strike.

Paper

Although NUJ members joined the picket from Glasgow, Ipswich, London, Oxford, Birmingham and other places, a promised mobilisation by the Nottinghamshire NUM and other local trade unions failed to materialise.

The sacked journalists are spending their time producing a professional looking paper—the *Nottingham News*—and are not maintaining a permanent picket on the building.

The *News* is specifically not a labour movement paper, and indeed only decided to drop pin-up pictures from its page 3 after a boll of its readers (which knocks on the head the idea of a public 'demand' for sexism).

The picket was joined by 'left' Labour MP Dennis Skinner, and Labour MP for Nottingham West, Michael English.

Filmed

Among those arrested was Ron Knowles, editor of the NUJ paper, *The Journalist*.

Police lashed out at pickets and drove them from the street as a closed-circuit TV system filmed the scene from a nearby police van.

Two lines of police prevented pickets reaching the scab vans which refused to stop for the two or three NUJ members allowed inside the police ranks.

This week representatives of Newspaper Society chapels meet in Birmingham to discuss a call from the Provincial Journalists Industrial Council for one-day strikes in support of Nottingham.

These strikes must be used to build pickets three or four times the size of last Saturday's to shut down distribution of the paper.



Police hold back Nottingham pickets

Garners day of action called

After weeks of delaying tactics the TGWU Region 1 has finally declared official backing for the March 24 Day of Action proposed by the Garners Strike Committee.

But at the time of going to press the elementary task of preparing adequate publicity has still not been carried out.

While the past week has

seen new violence—with a scab manager at the Haymarket Garners, branch attacking a picket—the union leaders continue to use every method possible to rid themselves of the embarrassment of this 13-month long strike.

No telephones

Despite promises, strikers do not even have adequate access to use of a telephone in the local (Henrietta St)

TGWU offices.

Petty sabotage and evasion have increasingly become the method of the union leaders.

Socialist Press appeals to all readers—and particularly those in the TGWU to answer these manoeuvres with the biggest possible mobilisation for March 24.

The union leaders would no doubt prefer a failure.

Instead bureaucrats like Ron Todd who is now scheduled as a speaker on the Day of Action, must be faced with a resounding call for the immediate implementation of the policies of the strike committee.

*For decent strike pay.

Unions must back Brighton quotas fight

Last Thursday, after a 2-1 majority decision, students moved into occupation of the main administrative building to take direct action against the implementation of quota restrictions against overseas students.

The administration had been carrying out this policy in line with DES policy.

The quotas are a racist attack on a particularly vulnerable sector of students but have wider implications for all students in that they provide a stepping stone to impose more effectively the Labour govern-

ment's consistent attacks on education and other social services expenditure.

The Broad Left union executive had full knowledge of these attacks since last June but had carried out no fight to initiate a campaign against them.

Their opposition to independent action was clearly shown when the leading Stalinists on the Union Executive in a frenzied outburst announced his resignation, being incapable of abiding by the democratic decision of the meeting.

The Broad Left was conspicuously absent from subsequent occupation meetings.

The students' initial demand on the administration—for an emergency Senate meeting and for a reversal of their present policy—was stubbornly refused.

A WSL member on the occupation committee stressed the importance of approaching the various unions involved in the admissions procedure—the AUT and NALGO—to win from them a commitment to carry out in practice their national policy of opposition to the quotas by withdrawal of labour.

NALGO has so far issued only a verbal condemnation of Senate policy.

The NUS Executive must now be forced to take action to make this occupation part of a national campaign.

The issue must also be taken by students fighting to build strong contingents for the grants day of action on 9 March and picket the DES in London.

*For TGWU mobilisation of effecting picketing.

*For full blacking.

*For a TGWU national delegate conference to map out a decisive policy for the winning of the strike.

AS WE GO TO PRESS, the *Socialist Press Fund* to help with the payment of fines inflicted upon WSL members on the Garners Picket line has produced £113.40. We thank those who have donated so far, but we must point out that the fines now total £455 — with 3 cases still pending. Send any further donations to Garners Fines Fund, c/o *Socialist Press*.

Skilled men meet

A mass meeting of all skilled workers in the Cowley Body Plant with the exception of the AUEW members, last week decided to send delegates to the meeting of skilled men's stewards called by the tool-room committee in Birmingham for 10 March.

When one member attempted to mandate these delegates to put down a resolution in favour of immediate strike action Roy Fraser argued against them being mandated and so the resolution wasn't put.

Meanwhile the clerical workers in the plant have voted at a mass meeting for the officials' recommendation that they accept a new corporate grading structure.

This structure will give wages varying between £3632 and £7986 per annum.

This is about £4 per head extra. But it entails acceptance of job evaluation and 'coverage' of all jobs up to and including own level where circumstances require it. This means complete mobility of labour and goes alongside a number of other agreements to accept new technology.

The whole exercise itself is related to the achievement of exactly the same cars per person level as the manual workers within Leyland and will only be paid if this is achieved.

THE BODY BEING SET UP to decide whether local government and hospital workers are worth more has already got a real problem.

The chairman will be on a salary of £18,000. So his job will be to decide whether he is worth six nurses — or MORE than six nurses!

Jobs threatened at CAV

For months now there have been persistent rumours of redundancies and short-time working at the large CAV plant in West London.

As yet the management have not asked for either redundancies or short-time but manning levels are already under attack and jobs are being lost.

Lucas

CAV is part of the Lucas corporation and is a major supplier of components to the motor industry, partic-

ularly of fuel injection equipment.

As the economic crisis is reflected most sharply in the motor industry so the suppliers also feel the pinch.

Management have been pointing at their order books claiming that trade is bad and there is barely enough work to keep the plant ticking over.

In the light of this worrying situation the unions have reached an agreement whereby any jobs falling vacant must be filled from inside the plant and no-one is to be recruited from outside.

This is supposed to be

designed to protect the jobs of workers already employed by CAV but is actually an agreement to demand parts of the site.

The departments with the highest wastage of labour are obviously those where the work is the least desirable, therefore it is practically impossible to get anyone to transfer to them.

Speed-up

Even where transfers are effected they often take months, with the jobs standing empty in the meantime.

As sections become under-manned management is doing its best to enforce speed-up, where necessary, to maintain output.

In accepting the management's figures and their arguments about the viability of the firm the convenors and many of the stewards are bound to go along with measures designed to tide the firm over until the boat comes in.

Workers on the site must draw the lessons from the closure of the AEC plant just down the road.

Run down

The plant was deliberately run down over a period of years, with the management always asking for small 'temporary' concessions in order to avoid redundancies.

In the end the workers conceded everything—including their jobs!

When the management say they are short of money the unions must demand that their books are opened.

This does not just mean the few pages of their books that they show to the JPCC (Joint Participation Consultative Committee) in order to prove what hard times they are having, but all of their books including those of the parent company, Lucas.

In this way the workers will be able to see for themselves what the long-term plans for the site are and on that basis work out the best way to protect the jobs.

Acceptance of the bosses' figures and viability arguments not only means job losses now but also a paltry wage rise in the summer as Leyland's workforce found recently.

No redundancies

In the meantime manning levels must be defended in every section. No jobs must be lost through redundancies or wastage.

If work is short it should be shared out among the workforce with no loss of pay.

Redundancies will not be fought by allowing the plant to be run down but by vigorously defending all existing jobs.



Lucas workers at mass meeting in Birmingham

SOCIALIST PRESS



HEALTH WORKERS

HEAD LOW PAY

FIGHT No confidence votes passed against Fisher

As we go to press it is hard to assess the final outcome of the ballot by NUPE and COHSE on the offer of 9% and an inquiry made in response to their £60/35 hour week claim.

Press reports have concentrated on those areas—particularly among some sections of local authority workers—that have voted to accept the sell-off offer, and scarcely mentioned the cases of heavy rejection of the offer, particularly amongst health service workers.

All-out strike

Indeed the area health committee of NUPE's London Divisional Council voted 5-1 to reject the offer and to recommend all-out strike action in pursuit of the claim.

A similar majority for rejection was registered among Sheffield health workers, and the signs are that NUPE's area health committees all over the country will vote for rejection.

A meeting of NUPE's National Executive on Wednesday will have before it a number of demands for all-out strike action. Since the NEC has already voted to recommend rejection of the offer, the obvious next step is to take up this policy in order to press the full claim.

Accepted

NUPE has the strength to give a lead even to those sections of workers in the GMWU and TGWU, whose supposed 'representatives' have accepted the 9% sell-out on their behalf.

Meanwhile in London efforts to extend the pay victory in Camden (where council workers won a £60 minimum for a 35 hour week) led last week to a meeting of an all-London strike committee, bringing together 28 delegates from nine London boroughs.



PHOTO: MARK RUSHER, IFL

Public sector workers lobby London Region Labour Party conference

All-out strikes are due to begin this week in Hackney, and in Barnet, where the only section still at work—the parks department—were due to stop work from Monday.

The strike committee voted to lobby the next meeting of NUPE's London Divisional Council to press the demand for all-out action to win the full claim.

Ambulance crews—who are also currently voting on the 9% offer—last week staged a further unofficial one-day stoppage.

Blocked

Though the strike was more partial than ever before, there is little doubt that the efforts of union officials to block the strike and the token nature of a one day action played the key role in minimising support.

The ambulance convenors and 'action committees' have

backed down at each confrontation with management.

Now is the time for each area to elect new action committees to spearhead all-out strikes and emergency cover under strike committee control.

But if many self-styled rank and file leaders and local officials have failed miserably in this struggle against low pay, their betrayal is nothing to that of NUPE leader Alan Fisher, who regarded the NEC rejection

of the 9% sell-out as a "personal tragedy".

Branches, including the 2,500-strong Camden General Branch have also begun passing motions of no confidence in Fisher.

The task in NUPE and all the public sector unions is now to construct a principled leadership to replace Fisher and his gang of right wingers and 'left' windbags and lead the defence of jobs and wages in the public sector.

Referendum collapse hastens government crisis

Having offered the working class nothing in the way of socialist policies, and staked its survival on buying off the reactionaries of the Scottish and Welsh nationalist parties through the Devolution proposals, the right wing Labour government faces an acute crisis.

With every indicator suggesting a dramatic Labour defeat if a General Election were held now, the failure of the Devolution referendum on the Scottish Assembly to achieve the arbitrary 40% figure set by right wing English Labourites now questions whether Callaghan's government can survive to the autumn.

Withdrawal threat

The Scottish Nationalist Party are threatening to withdraw Parliamentary support for Callaghan unless the Assembly plan goes ahead.

But the Tories and many Labour members will clearly vote against any attempt to resuscitate the Assembly after the referendum setback—thus making it virtually impossible for Callaghan to get it through Parliament.

But while the capitalist press speculates on the outcome of this dilemma—generally underestimating the opportunism of both the SNP and the Parliamentary Labour Party—workers must be puzzled as to how these events have any relevance to their problems.

Devolution would not have created or saved a single job; it would not affect inflation one iota or increase wages; it would do nothing to preserve the social services, still crumbling under the sledgehammer of Labour's spending cuts.

In favour

But this is the very reason that this anti-working class Labour government which rejects any element of socialist policy felt able to argue so strongly in favour of devolution!



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Callaghan

Now workers in England, Scotland and Wales face the threat of a General Election in which the Callaghan leadership will campaign on the platform of their wage-cutting policies—paving the way for a return of the Tories.

This is why it is a matter of urgency that the Callaghan-Healey clique is removed from the Labour leadership at an emergency Labour Party conference.

The weekend's announcement by Labour's coordinating committee of a half-hearted 'left wing' document of proposals for an alternative election manifesto speaks volumes for the inability of the 'lefts' to offer a way forward.

Nationalistic

Their package of nationalistic, utopian and pro-capitalist measures is itself inadequate. But not one of its policies will be even considered for the manifesto unless Callaghan is removed.

Callaghan publicly favours watering down even the existing right wing draft manifesto drawn up by the NEC.

Yet there is not so much as a whisper from the 'lefts' about the need for a new leadership.

Workers must not wait vainly for a lead from these cowardly 'lefts'. They must move instead through union branches and Labour Party wards the demand for an emergency recall Labour Party conference and call on the 'lefts' to support such a campaign or stand revealed as the true allies of Callaghan and Healey.

Major purge hits WRP



Healy

A wave of disciplinary charges and expulsions amounting to a wholesale purge is taking place within the Workers Revolutionary Party as we go to press.

A crisis Congress of the Party, convened on February 24 in London is still in session on 5 March and seems likely to last at least another week.

Among those expelled is

long-serving WRP Central Committee member and *Newsline* journalist Stephen Johns.

Johns had argued that the WRP's present policies lead it away from the working class, and threatened to resign if his criticisms went unheeded.

In a characteristic manoeuvre, the WRP leadership moved in and put a motion to the Congress that Johns withdraw from it. Once this had been carried out and Johns excluded, a motion for his expulsion was carried in his absence.

The Central Committee has been reduced in number by six, while branch and district leaderships are bearing the brunt of disciplinary action as the Party leadership around Gerry Healy try to heap the blame for the WRP's dwindling membership and organisational chaos on to its remaining local activists.

Disintegration

A picture of the disintegration of the WRP can be seen from one sub-district in which a

paper "membership" figure amounts to 257; this figure however is reduced to around 85 who actually pay subscriptions regularly to the WRP; and of this 85 only 8 can be regarded as active members.

Responsibility

Four branch secretaries in this sub-district alone are included in the present purge.

The daily *Newsline* itself faces a mounting crisis, with one sub-district piling up debts at an estimated £200 per week.

There is no doubt that the political responsibility for this acute crisis flows from the Healy-Banda leadership.

Their refusal to direct towards any practical struggle in the labour movement for the demands of the Transitional Programme and subservience to petty bourgeois nationalist regimes in Libya and Iraq as well as the PLO leadership provide no political basis for the building of a Trotskyist movement.

Their latest attempt to foist

the blame for the present state of affairs onto the membership is a repeat of their behaviour in previous crises: and the expulsion of Johns is an ironic echo of the expulsion of Alan Thornett and 200 other WRP members in 1974 after they attempted to raise political criticisms of the line of the Healy leadership.

Indeed these criticisms anticipated precisely the present liquidation of the WRP's cadre and the Transitional Programme.

Danger

The biggest danger is that the victims of this new purge will become demoralised and drop out of politics at a crucial point in the class struggle. This would be a tragedy.

The WSL invites WRP members past and present to discuss with us the real lessons of the crisis of that Party and our perspective for the building of a Trotskyist party in Britain and the reconstruction of the Fourth International.

FUND

The February Fund finally closed at £483.95, nearly £120 short of our £600 monthly target.

After several months of achieving our fund target this is a real setback, coming as it does at a time of rising production costs for Socialist Press.

Every reader and supporter of Socialist Press should consider whether they can make a regular contribution to the Monthly Fund and help us maintain the income necessary for the production of the paper.

Let's see if we can't retrieve the situation during March. All donations should be sent to: Socialist Press Monthly Fund, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.