



## STOP GENEVA TALKS!

While the leaders of Zimbabwe's black political parties strain to agree some sort of compromise with imperialism across the conference tables of Geneva, 6,000 miles away the real struggle against white racism is intensifying in Zimbabwe itself.

Smith, hoping to take advantage of confusion among the black masses created by the behaviour of the "Patriotic Front" of Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe, has returned to Salisbury to supervise his regime's biggest military offensive so far against the freedom fighters.

On at least two occasions in the last months white Rhodesian forces have invaded Mozambique to attack guerilla and refugee camps. For the whites this is a desperate attempt to preserve their racist system in the face of a massive build up of guerillas.



Far from Geneva, a guerilla fighter

There are now reported to be 2,000 freedom fighters in Zimbabwe itself and probably as many over the border. Although Smith's defence expenditure has risen by a third this year compared with last, and although the white army and airforce have sophisticated weapons, the Rhodesian military is not particularly large and includes black troops who Smith knows he may not be able to rely on if the liberation struggle makes many more gains.

### BLOODIEST

The last month has been the bloodiest of the war so far. The black liberation forces have conducted a number of successful attacks, including one in which they killed nine assistant district commissioners, one of whose tasks is to police the "strategic villages" into which 250,000 peasants have been forcibly

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# CAR COMPONENT WORKERS STRIKE AGAINST WAGE FREEZE

Two pay strikes are now in progress in Midlands component firms which challenge the most basic plank in the TUC's 'social contract' with the Labour government - the 4½% wage limit.

While only small numbers of workers are as yet involved, such struggles represent the feelings of the vast majority of the working class, which has never accepted the pay deal.

Both claims result from time-workers finding their wages falling rapidly behind piece-workers. At Rubery Owen in Darlaston, 120 engineers demanding increases of £10-£20 per week voted unanimously last Friday to continue their dispute which is already shutting down British Leyland factories in Birmingham Oxford and Abingdon; and at Salisbury Transmissions in Birmingham, twenty-four heat treatment workers are also on strike.



Callaghan

Their case is a common one, affecting millions of workers on flat rate payments subject strictly to the pay freeze, while piece work rates, which cannot be controlled in the same way, have continued to rise.

The employers are only too aware that the example of these struggles could be dynamite within the working class, and could trigger a whole series of struggles over wages from sections only held back with difficulty by their bureaucratic union leadership.

Such struggles could spell doom for the social contract, and the end of the road for the right-

wing Labour government, which is now on its knees before the IMF investigators, and offering to further slash working class living standards in exchange for additional loans.

### PRESS BLACK-OUT

It is for these reasons that the Tory press at first imposed a virtual blackout on these disputes, going to great lengths to suppress the demands of the strikers - though in the usual way even the tiniest dispute in British Leyland is seen as good headline material.

Only as Leyland actually faces closure has the dispute begun to receive any prominence.

But any section of workers fighting to maintain living standards must now come up against not only the 'voluntary' TUC-government pay policy, but the entire weight of their own union bureaucracy.

This emerged most clearly in the case of the seamen, whose entire union was threatened with expulsion from the TUC and with TUC organised scabbing to smash the NUS as a union.



Murray

And the Rubery Owen strikers have been told by officials to return to work. The workers' response was short and sharp - they excluded the officials (along with the press) from their meetings!

This denied the officials the chance of adopting their most frequent tactic - of harping on the supposed "isolation" and "weakness" of their members, in the attempt to defuse struggle.

Indeed the central question being raised by workers on wages, is not whether it is necessary to

fight the wage freeze - only Labour and TUC bureaucrats maintain this position, telling workers to sacrifice everything to "save the Labour government" - but how to fight under conditions where the officials do everything to ensure they fight alone.

All the time the officials keep telling workers they are weak, and that any struggle could bring the return of a Tory government.

But they ignore the fact that the miners showed that a Tory government can be defeated. The task now is to prevent a Labour government carrying out Tory policies, and if this brings the fall of the Labour government, then the blame will rest on the Callaghan-Healey leadership, and the spineless 'lefts' who refuse to fight to remove them.

### NOT CONCERNED

In any case, as TUC leader Len Murray showed in a statement to the *Sunday Express*, the union bureaucrats themselves are not at all concerned to save the Labour government. They are prepared to make exactly the same treacherous deals even with Margaret Thatcher - so long as they preserve their own privileged positions. He pointed out that:

"any government that treats the trade unions fairly will get fair treatment from the trade unions." Workers now face a historic crisis of leadership.

On the one hand the working class shows its willingness to fight

wage-cutting; but on the other, the CBI and the Labour government are already drawing up their proposals for a stage three of wage control.

The whole of the effort of the leadership of the working class is now concentrated on preserving the pay freeze. At the centre of their manoeuvres is the Communist Party, (theoretically opposed to wage control) whose tactic of calling for a "return to free collective bargaining after July 1977" in order to get the 4½% accepted this year is now being adopted by the right-wing.



NUM Gen. Sec. Daly

Where this manoeuvre is not adopted, the diversion of "fringe benefits" is dragged out - as in the case of the seamen, and now with the right-wing miners' leadership calling for 'early retirement', with no mention of basic wage. Obviously miners should vote "yes" for industrial action for early retirement - but this should

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Part of the 80,000-strong march and lobby on November 17th. See pp 4 & 5

## ONLY STRIKE ACTION CAN STOP THE CUTS!





## ITALY: IMF demands wage cuts

The political shadow-boxing in the Italian Parliament last week over the relationship with the Vatican served principally to disguise questions of more direct class importance.

The minority Christian Democratic government of Papal protegee Giulio Andreotti — kept in office only by Communist Party support — presented the Chamber of Deputies with a new draft pact with the Vatican which preserves most of the economic privileges for the Church written into Mussolini's 1929 Concordat.

### COMPLETE FREEZE

Meanwhile the Stalinist and Social Democratic leaders of Italy's main trade union confederations began 'consideration' of the legal wage-cuts demanded by the IMF.

Andreotti has withdrawn his proposals for a complete freeze on increases for higher wage earners. But the IMF is now insisting, as the condition for a further loan to support the lira and underwrite

government spending, that the production costs of Italian industry be drastically cut in order to restore their profits.

### SAVAGE CUTS

Andreotti is now demanding that the 'escalator' clauses built into many wage agreements, which provide for automatic pay rises reflecting increases in the official cost-of-living index, should be set aside.

The effect of this — with price inflation continuing unabated in all basic consumer goods — will be swift and savage cuts in real wages.

The willingness of the trade union bureaucrats even to consider these demands spotlights how little the 'escalator' clauses have to do with a sliding scale of wages under workers' control — the only policy that can actually defend workers' living standards against price increases.

The 'escalator' clauses, in any case, have never given anything like full protection against inflation. And now, in the hands of the

bureaucracy, they are being turned into bargaining counters at part of the 'historic compromise' whereby the Stalinist and Socialist Party chiefs back the Andreotti-IMF attacks on the working class.

At the same time the threat is being levelled that if living standards are not cut in this way they will suffer through other policies — basically transferring employers' social security and insurance contributions into taxes falling directly on workers.

In Italy as in Britain the role of the IMF — acting as the undisputed economic instrument of American imperialism — is to demand (and get) the fullest cooperation of the labour bureaucracy in forcing through policies to make workers, and workers alone, carry the burdens of the economic crisis.

### SMOKESCREEN

In Italy the 'critical' noises being made by the Stalinist and Social Democratic deputies over relations with the Vatican are nothing more than a smokescreen to divert from

their collaboration in state-imposed wage-cutting.

The Communist Party leadership in particular feels the need to rescue some political capital for themselves in this field. Their support, particularly among working women, is threatened by the fact that they have all along sought to reach a reactionary compromise with the Church against the provision of abortions.

The fact that the Church enjoys all the privileges and power it does on Italian soil is the direct responsibility of the Communist Party. It was Stalin's faithful servant in the leadership of the CP, Palmiro Togliatti, who demanded in 1946 that the agreement between Mussolini's fascist state and the Vatican should be written intact into Italy's post-war 'democratic' constitution.

Their inclusion was opposed even by the Social Democrats, but Togliatti — acting with the full approval of Stalin — demanded them "in order not to alienate ourselves from Christian workers."

## DENMARK govt fights for life

Denmark's minority Social Democratic government is fighting for its life against growing working class resistance to its reactionary policies.

The government's policy is to restrict wage increases to 6% a year from March 1977 for two years. Its problem has been how to prevent this policy being destroyed before it even begins.

### DRACONIAN MEASURES

A series of unofficial strikes over the last few weeks culminated in last week's unofficial stoppage by 12,000 oil tanker drivers which threatened to bring industry and transport to a halt.

Jorgensen's Social Democratic government agreed with the bourgeois parties, whose parliamentary votes keep it in office, on a wage and price freeze until March, along with draconian measures against all strikes (which are already subject to large fines if they last more than two days).

### POLITICAL CRISIS

This agreement was rejected out of hand by the TUC, under colossal pressure from the increasingly militant workers.

The Social Democrat leaders then withdrew their proposals, thus threatening their parliamentary majority.

This political crisis gives the working class the opportunity to make a giant stride forward in destroying state wage control — but only with the most principled and decisive leadership, which the TUC has shown itself quite unable to offer.

## SPAIN: Repression stepped up

Spain's Francoist regime secured a large majority in the fake parliament, the Cortes, for its "democratic" constitutional reform.

This will now be submitted to a national referendum of December 15th.

In this democratic referendum campaigning for abstention (the policy of virtually all the workers' parties, including the Stalinists and reformists) will be considered illegal and, Interior Minister Martin Villa implied, repressed without mercy.

Only officially registered political parties will have radio and television time: that excludes all parties except the few composed of Franco's ex-cabinet ministers.

The bourgeois parties of the Democratic Coordination, however, along with the small reformist Popular Socialist Party, have, with a predictable lack of principle, indicated that they will participate in the referendum.

This breaks previous agreements within the class-collaborationist

opposition and probably marks the end of the Democratic Coordination.

The regime's "opening towards democracy" has coincided with the further stepping up of political repressive measures.

150 members of the LCR-ETA 6 (sympathising section of the "United" Secretariat of the Fourth International) were arrested while holding a clandestine meeting in a monastery near San Sebastian in the North.

In Madrid five members of the Communist Party were arrested for distributing leaflets.

Action against the striking building workers in Euskadi has continued, meetings of workers being violently broken up by armed police. Such actions can be expected to mount as the regime tries to suppress all signs of independent political or trade union activity during the referendum.

The last two weeks it has brought militant demonstrations from a new source.



Spanish police in action.

In Barcelona and Madrid hundreds of women have protested against the trial of a woman under Spain's barbarous adultery laws.

Women face imprisonment of

up to six years for adultery. For men (who are anyway hardly ever prosecuted) adultery is only an offence if it is "flagrant and persistent."

## LEBANON: WITHDRAW SYRIAN TROOPS!

Nowhere in the world today is the truth of Lenin's aphorism that the state consists of special bodies of armed men more vividly illustrated than in Lebanon during November.

With the disintegration of the Lebanese army and the development of elements of popular control during the bitter civil war, the Arab bourgeoisie was faced with the serious problem of which particular body of armed men could represent their interests.

The careful balance in the Lebanese constitution between different religious groups and political factions was shattered by the advancing Palestinian Revolution and the pro-CIA, pro-Zionist Phalangist forces who were and remain active.

### FORGOTTEN

Faced with the bloody confrontation between these groups in Lebanon, all the conflicts within the various Arab ruling groups, 'progressive' or reactionary, and such disagreements as those between Egypt and Syria were forgotten.

An agreement was foisted on the Palestinians in Cairo on 26th October and early in November the 'green berets' of the Syrian 'peace-keeping' force were to be seen throughout Lebanon on their second and much more successful invasion of the year.

Though allegedly acting on behalf of the Arab League, few of the Syrian troops even bothered to adopt the insignia of the other organisation and a number of the tanks carried large and threatening looking pictures of President Assad.

### BATTLE-WEARY

As late as 10th November, when the Syrians entered Beirut, no news of troops from any other Arab country had been received by the correspondents in the country.

Despite the groups of battle-weary people who cheered as the troops arrived, despite the fact that the Phalangists still wander around in their uniforms, the purpose of this invasion was to hold back the advance of the Palestinians.

As the *Times* correspondent put it on 15th November:

"It is President Assad, not Mr Sarkis (nominal President of the Lebanon) who holds power. Peace, security and the administration of justice, the physical rebuilding of Beirut and the political credibility of Mr Sarkis are all dependent on the Syrian army that has spread itself across Lebanon."

The reason why it was necessary to mobilise the strength of all the warring factions of the Arab bourgeoisie was clear from some of the reports that came out as the Lebanese army took over.

From Tripoli in the North came the news of the rule of the leftist-Palestinian alliance in the city in recent months.

### ORGANISED

Faroq Moqaddem, commander of the leftist-Palestinian alliance told reporters how they had set up their own police force, courts and a theatre. They had even run the telephone system. As Moqaddem put it:

"We have organised our own affairs and that is the reason we fought in this war. It was not about religion...what we wanted was control of our lives."

Whatever the efforts of the Syrians and their backers at this point, the struggles of the Palestinians and the Lebanese working class will inevitably throw up phenomena of this kind in the future, in many forms.

### OPERATIONS RESUMED

The Palestinians have clearly resumed operations against their Zionist enemies. Battles at sea were reported during the month, and on 22 November the first raid into Gallilee for some months.

They will not be held back by the Phalangists who are operating quite openly now with the Israelis in the southern part of the country in an effort to prevent Palestinian raids being resumed there.

The Syrians of course are leaving the border area free for this. It would be interesting to know which aspect of these operations were discussed in the meeting on 19th November between fascist leader Amin Gemayel and Soviet diplomat Vladimir Kolotoucha.

Whatever dirty deals are hatched up in discussions such as this, there can be no resolution of the struggles of the Palestinians and

Lebanese masses under the agreements worked out in Cairo, Moscow or anywhere else.

As the *Times* correspondent expressed it with some accuracy on 20th November:

"The Syrians, who have no experience in police operations, are just beginning to realise — as European armies have in the past two decades — that peace-keeping is not a role in which they can necessarily expect the support of the population."

There can be no doubt but that 'lack of support' will ultimately express itself in terms of the most violent and bitter struggles.

The Syrian troops must be withdrawn and the Palestinians allowed to pursue their just struggle for national liberation.

As on every other question, the road to the liberation of Palestine goes through a struggle against the bourgeoisie of the Lebanon, and their masters in Damascus and their patrons in Moscow.

The need for a socialist programme to bring together the disparate efforts of the Arab masses is made necessary now more than ever.

# FRANCE: CP woos the middle classes

The split in France's main capitalist political grouping, the UDR, between Gaullist supporters of dismissed Prime Minister Jacques Chirac and backers of President Giscard d'Estaing has reached an acute point with the runaway success of Chirac in by-elections in his own constituency.

His supporters are now planning a national campaign to build up the demagogic, anti-working class support among the middle classes from which Gaullism has traditionally drawn its strength.

At the same time the government, headed by Giscard d'Estaing's appointee as Prime Minister, Raymond Barre, is preparing the ground for wage cuts, giving support to the demands of the employers' federation (the French equivalent of the CBI) for further legal limits on pay rises.

Despite accelerating inflation, price controls on the products of major industries are expected to be relaxed at the beginning of January, leaving controls only over services and small businesses.

The government intends to throw its weight with a vengeance behind the demands of big capital for higher profits.

So Chirac looks to build a basis of support among shopkeepers, small businessmen, farmers — all the middle class layers who will be squeezed in the process.

What is the reaction of the

official 'leaders' of the labour movement? Far from leading any struggle for working class unity which could draw behind it the intermediate social layers who are threatened by the economic crisis and inflation, they are busy seeking new allies from the disintegration of the ruling class 'majority' in Parliament.

## NEW PLATFORM

At the beginning of November, Communist Party leader Georges Marchais announced proposals for a new electoral platform of the 'Union of the Left' — the loose bloc of the Stalinists, Social Democrats and Left Radicals through which the CP leadership are seeking to reconstruct a 'Popular Front' on the model of the 1930s.

And he added an explicit invitation to 'dissident' Gaullists who are unwilling to support Chirac to join the 'Union of the Left', undertaking that their 'contribution' to the joint platform would be valued — provided they were genuinely concerned "for the economic and political salvation of France."

The Popular Front policies of French Stalinism, far from giving any protection against the development of the Right, represent the most dangerous political trap for the French workers' movement.

## INDICTMENT

In the attempt to outflank ultra-reactionary nationalism on its own ground, Marchais and his



Chilean troops round up 'suspects'

# SOUTH AMERICA stop arms to dictators!

According to General Pinochet there are now fewer political prisoners in Chile than there are in the United Kingdom.

After the release of several hundred prisoners over the last three weeks there remain, he claims, only 18 still in jail. These include the Communist Party General Secretary Luis Corvalan, whom Pinochet demagogically offers to release in exchange for Vladimir Bukovsky, the Soviet dissident.

The claim of course is utterly fraudulent. Some of those released in the last month have already been rearrested.

In any case the official figure is arrived at by excluding about 1,100 prisoners who have gone through some kind of "trial" and conviction.

Also left out are those who since the coup of 1973 have (in the official jargon) "disappeared", which in most cases means that they have been murdered by the DINA, the secret police.

The Chilean dictatorship has discovered that, when it comes to asking for money from the United States or international agencies, political prisoners are more of a problem than dead ones. Release can be made the condition of a loan; resurrection cannot.

## MURDEROUS

This year, therefore, the proportion of opponents who have "disappeared" in detention has risen from 5% in January to well over 50% in recent months. These "disappearances" are now believed to number about 2,000.

The same murderous technique is being used by the Argentinian military dictatorship whose head, General Videla, has just paid a friendly call on General Pinochet in Santiago.

Videla's police have never issued lists of those it has arrested.

In recent weeks they have been

claiming dramatic successes in pitched battles with the "left" Peronist guerillas, the Montoneros.

There is evidence, however, that the suspiciously high ratio of guerilla to police casualties is influenced by the dumping of the "unidentifiable" bodies of "disappeared" detainees at the scene of the battles.

This probably accounts for a good number of the 50 or so "subversives" killed two weeks ago in La Plata after a bomb had injured eleven policemen.

The American Embassy in Buenos Aires has produced a report on civil rights in Argentina which the State Department refuses to release, even to members of the US Congress who commissioned it under the Arms Trade Control Act. Leaks say it is "dynamite" since it shows the role of senior army generals in organising the ultra-right death squads.

## FAILED

The events of the last month have shown that, despite all the bloody repression, the Videla dictatorship has failed to crush the fighting ability of the working class.

A major strike of electric power workers in Buenos Aires lasted a month at which point the regime moved to draft the strikers into the army. Even then a go-slow continued, bringing frequent power cuts to Argentina's main urban and industrial centre.

In addition, work at the ports has been cut by nearly a half as a result of a go-slow by dockers.

It is the responsibility of the Transport and General Workers Union in Britain to effect immediate and concrete solidarity with this action by blacking work on all ships from or to Argentina.

\*Black all trade with the Chilean and Argentinian dictatorships!

\*Force the Labour government to impose a total economic and arms boycott!

\*Send arms to the workers resistance movements!

# Less than 6 000 on 'Peace' march

The reactionary nature of the Northern Ireland "peace people" was again clearly demonstrated last Saturday.

The organisers of the 5,900-strong march were given unfettered access to Trafalgar Square — a right which has been systematically denied to those fighting British rule in Ireland.

Moreover, hundreds of police were in attendance, both to shepherd the flocks of nuns and priests assembled there, and to intimidate and harass the 1,000 militants who were protesting at the "peace people's" policies.

## "TRAGEDY"

The speeches from the platform were also suitably pro-imperialist, holding forth on the nature of violence in Northern Ireland and lamenting the "tragedy" that had befallen the "province".

Not one reference of course was made to the material basis of that violence — the existence of the Northern Ireland state, and the presence there of 15,000 British soldiers.

But despite the massive support given to the "peace people" by the State, the Churches, the media and the British Communist Party — less than 6,000 people turned out to support the rally.

A limited step towards a fight for a principled lead on the struggle for Irish liberation was taken at the Student Conference on Ireland held recently at Kent University.

The conference which was attended by over 100 delegates and observers, affirmed that the fight for principled positions on Ireland would have to be conducted within the NUS, and directed against the existing Broad Left leadership.

The conference failed to clarify on what programmatic basis this fight would be conducted — and this is a central weakness.

But the general orientation is correct, and represents a possible basis for the elaboration of a coherent struggle to get the troops out of Ireland.

# THE WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

The Workers Socialist League is a Trotskyist organisation fighting to build a revolutionary leadership in the working class in opposition to the betrayals of both "left" and right wing Labour and trade union leaders and the Communist Party.

In the daily struggle to take the demands and principles of Trotsky's *Transitional Programme* into the trade unions, the WSL has been at the forefront of the fight for the sliding scale of wages, and work sharing on full pay — demands which at the 1975 T&GWU Conference were the only alternative to Jones' £6 pay plan and the wholesale acceptance of redundancies by the bureaucracy. In today's fight against the TUC's 4½% pay cutting deal with Healey this demand for a sliding scale of wages (rising according to the rising cost of living as assessed by trade union committees) is the essential basis of consistent opposition.

In the Health Service WSL comrades have led the struggle for a sliding scale of NHS spending, for the start of workers' control of the service (beginning with opening the books of the Health Authorities), along with the fight to end all private practice. Perhaps more important we have led the growing call for *strike action* to defend the NHS against the cuts and to implement these policies, fighting those like the ASTMS and NUPE leadership who substitute the words for the action.

In London this policy has already won a big response with the one-day action against the closure of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital — when 2,000 hospital workers in the area struck and 400 marched to lobby MPs against the cuts.

In local disputes also, WSL comrades have tested and developed the demands of the *Transitional Programme*, putting forward in every case the only real opposition to the Stalinists and the right-wing. Our struggle for the "open the books" demand in the motor industry and against all forms of "workers' participation" have won mass responses.

At the same time we have put forward a policy to fight unemployment, calling for unity of employed and unemployed through the fight to mobilise the trade union movement.

The WSL is the only movement that fights consistently for transitional demands, going beyond mere trade union militancy to pose the political issues to workers.

In doing this our comrades have been forced also to lead struggles for trade union democracy against the bureaucratic manipulation of the Stalinists and right-wing.

But our struggle for the continuity of the principles of Trotskyism is in no way a task confined to Britain. It requires an attention and involvement in the international struggles of the working class and moves to rebuild the Trotskyist Fourth International.

So while many interventions in Britain have developed the League's grasp of Trotsky's *Transitional Programme*, there has been a consistent drive to deepen and enrich the movement's understanding of the history and the present crisis of the Trotskyist Fourth International, as an essential part of any serious initiative towards its reconstruction.

We urge all readers who agree on the need for revolutionary leadership and the demands we put forward to find out more about the WSL and join our fight in the labour movement.



One of the Argentinian political prisoners is Jose Paez, PST Vice Presidential candidate in 1972.



# CUTS ...

## ENFIELD SIT-IN WINS DIRECTOR'S SUPPORT

In the face of a two week occupation against discrimination and attacks on overseas students, the director of Middlesex Poly, Dr Rickitts, came out in support of the demands of the occupation.

These demands centred on opposition to the increase in fees and the recent DES circular on overseas students.

### OPPOSITION

The director proposed a motion passed by the academic board of the Poly which called for opposition to all fee increases and stating that:

"In any event overseas students fees should be decreased to the level paid by home students in 1976/77."

His motion further called on the Joint Education Committee which controls the finances of the Poly to "oppose any recommendation from the DES to increase overseas students fees."

The occupation which started on November 10th was seen clearly by all involved as a fight against all cuts in education and not just in defence of one section. However

this victory does not mean that fees will not increase next term. They will.

This is because the Joint Education Committee will overturn the decision of the Academic Board. One Polytechnic in isolation cannot change government policy.

It was ironic that half way through the occupation against racist circulars from the Labour government came the Labour Party and Trade Union Congress demonstration against racism. This hypocrisy of the Labour leaders must be fought at every level in the Labour Party and the trade union movement.

But what the occupation at Middlesex Poly does show is the extreme willingness of students to fight this Labour government. This reflects the growing opposition within the working class to the attacks on its rights and living standards.

### CAMPAIGN

Yet the only way to change government policy is by a national campaign of strikes and occupations by students and workers against all cuts.

Throughout the occupation there were demands and calls upon

the NUS Executive to carry out such a policy in the interests of its members.

This was in no way taken up by the Stalinist dominated Executive. Yet the large numbers of students on the huge November 17th lobby of Parliament stands in sharp contrast to their leaders' complacency.

The motion calling off the Enfield occupation contained the statement that if the demands passed by Academic Board are not implemented by January 31st 1977 then further direct action should be taken.

And at the same meeting a motion was passed calling for a joint union committee to coordinate action between the unions in the Poly against the cuts.

This committee was also called upon to:

"gather all information necessary to the non-implementation of the DES circular and the policy of discrimination against overseas students."

Within this context the fight against the cuts at Middlesex will continue next term. Whether it is successful depends upon the success of a national campaign of direct action against the cuts.



Above and left: leading sections of the 80,000-strong national demonstration and lobby of Parliament against the cuts on November 17th.

# TEACHERS ALLIANCE

200 teachers from all over the country met at an open left-wing conference on November 20th in London.

Many organisations were present — the International Marxist Group, International Communist League (ICL), other radical and left groupings — as well as non-aligned militants wishing to fight the bureaucratic leadership of the National Union of Teachers (NUT).

Many were members of the 'Rank and File' group, disillusioned with the dead-end centrist politics of the International Socialists (IS) who dominate it.

Teachers of the Workers Socialist League (WSL) attempted to win the conference to a programme of struggle against the NUT leaders and in defence of union democracy, the social services, jobs and pay.

Others, however, had different ideas.

The morning saw discussion of a 'unity resolution', carefully designed to avoid all serious questions of programme and leadership.

It was clear that groups like the IMG had little serious intention of

giving political leadership to militant teachers.

They aimed to get 'unity' at any cost and give birth to yet another 'rank and file' centrist organisation.

Speakers for the WSL's resolution pointed out that the 'unity' of a handful of people meant little unless it had a programme which could give perspective and leadership to thousands of teachers and workers in defence of their conditions.

Only policies like the sliding scale of wages and public spending, nationalisation of firms milking the social services dry for profits, public works to expand education and provide jobs, could do this by rejecting capitalist crisis and pointing the road out through workers' control towards socialism.

But the leaders of the conference stuck to pleas for abstract 'unity'. And though the IMG at a smaller conference last year had voted for a programme almost identical to that of the WSL, they demonstrated yet again that their support for transitional demands decreases as fast as the audience and the possibility of a fight for them increases.

Perhaps the new journal is to consist of blank pages, until a policy is found to fill them? The spirit of compromise for apolitical unity was best grasped by the teacher who proposed an annual membership subscription of £2.50 when £2 and £3 had been suggested.

Yet the absurdity of the whole thing was not lost on all present. Many speakers pointed out that all the important questions had been ignored.

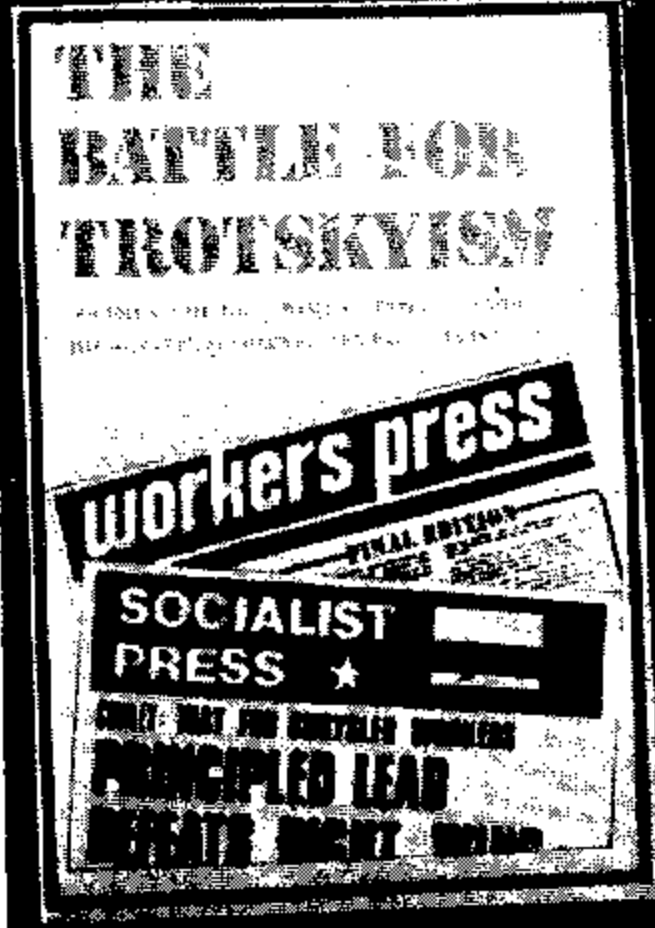
The platform conceded that another conference should be held early in 1977 which should discuss what the programme of the new organisation should be.

It is the outcome of that conference which will provide the real test of the 'Socialist Teachers Alliance'. All that exists at present is a paper unity.

The end result of it all was the founding of a 'Socialist Teachers Alliance', along with a journal. The discussion on a 'Guide to Action' came only in the last half-hour — and then no votes were taken!

This was the debate on what the policies of the new organisation are to be, and what it will do!

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Documents of the Opposition expelled from the Workers Revolutionary Party in 1974, with an account of the expulsions. Price £1 plus 20p p&p

All titles available from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.



PHOTO: Courtesy of Camden Chronicle.

EGA workers demonstrating during a one-day strike earlier this year.

# NEXT STEP: WORKERS' CONTROL

The occupation of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital for women in London is now in its third week.

Over that period support for the campaign to save the EGA has grown daily and increasing numbers

of workers from outside the hospital are now supporting the 24-hour picket of the main gate.

So far the Area Health Authority has made no move to break the occupation by moving patients or equipment and the latest rumours suggest that the

government's plans to close the EGA by the end of December have now been postponed till March.

There are two reasons for this: firstly the wards at the Whittington Hospital which are being renovated to accommodate a reduced EGA service will not be ready until

the New Year; and, secondly, the AHA hope that by postponing any confrontation with the workers at the hospital, they will encourage the occupation to die a natural death.

## PLACATE

At present the leadership of the occupation including NUPE and ASTMS Divisional Officers are playing into the hands of the AHA by not enforcing control by the EGA workers and in attempting to placate the EGA consultants by allowing management to control the running of the hospital.

By failing to call mass meetings of the workers the leadership of the occupation has been kept firmly in the hands of the union officials and remains a protest activity — albeit a more forceful protest than the lobbies of MPs and petitions which have hitherto dominated the campaign.

By not calling on their membership in surrounding hospitals to stage supporting strikes, they are leaving the EGA workers isolated from the mass of hospital workers in the area.

## CONTRAST

In spite of this the occupation represents a real step forward in the fight against hospital closures and by its very existence opens the way for the development of elements of workers control.

Already there is talk in the hospital of the need to expand the EGA services — possibly by the opening of either a 'well woman' clinic or a menopausal clinic.

These are seen as ways of improving treatment at the hospital in line with the needs of the local community, and are in marked contrast to the government's closure of hospitals irrespec-

tive of workers' needs.

Nevertheless, the only way in which such expansion of services can take place without increasing the workload on the present staff is by demanding the AHA provide the cash to employ extra nurses, technicians and ancillary staff.

Such a policy is completely incompatible with the AHA's plans to save money by closing hospitals and poses the question of a workers' inquiry into the finances of the AHA as well as those of the drug and medical suppliers.

## SUCCESSFUL

Such a programme would not only give a real perspective for EGA workers but would unite all hospital workers in the area as well as local labour bodies in an inquiry into the running of the NHS and it is along those lines that the occupation needs to develop if it is to become a successful fight against government cuts.

One real step in the fight to save the EGA has been the calling of a Conference on December 11th by the EGA Joint Shop Stewards Committee to discuss not only the experiences of the occupation but also the future campaign to defend the NHS as a whole.

This conference is open to delegates from all working class organisations and NHS Shop Stewards Committees and trade union branches are especially encouraged to support it. Credentials (50p) can be obtained from:

Tim Shallice, Chairman, ASTMS Central London Medical Branch, 6, Wilmington House, Highbury Crescent, London N5.

# ... STRIKE ACTION IS THE ONLY ANSWER!

THE HOSTILITY throughout the whole of the workers' movement to the Labour government's programme of massive cuts in public spending was clearly reflected in the 80,000 strong demonstration through London on November 17th.

But the complete refusal of the leaders of the public sector unions to lead any struggle beyond such protest gestures will only be strengthened by such a clear indication that a serious fight to halt the cuts is now absolutely possible given only a clear national call.

Indeed the complete contempt shown by the Callaghan government for the huge demonstration

on the 17th November was shown only days later with the announcement of plans for wholesale closures of London hospitals and the devastating attack on the rate support grant — which even government sources predict will slash a further 20-30,000 jobs in local government, along with a whole range of services, while jacking up the rates for every working class family.

*The alternatives are therefore clear. EITHER there has to be prolonged, all-out strike action in each and every area and sector as each and every cut in manning, in services or conditions is threatened, — with the demand for national support; OR the cuts will be*

*wormed through by manoeuvres, backstairs deals with union officials, attacks concentrated on poorly or unorganised sections of workers, 'natural wastage', and the whole battery of means available to the administrators.*

In this context, the new moves by, in particular, NUPE local officials to call restricted one-day 'token' strikes must be seen as part of the continuing efforts of the bureaucrats to restrict the struggle against the cuts to harmless and useless protest.

This Labour government takes its orders not from the labour movement, but from the IMF bankers — and only the mobilisation of the industrial strength of

the public sector unions on a national level, fighting for backing from other sections of workers, can prevent the cuts proceeding.

The call from November 17th onwards must be therefore to resist absolutely and on principle the slightest erosion of manning levels, services and conditions. Once the cuts have got well under way the fight to stop the rot will be that much harder. We say clearly:

\*Strike to Stop the Cuts in each area.

\*Demand national strike action in support — make Fisher, Drain and others 'Stop the Cuts: Save Jobs'.

\*To reveal the true picture, elected trade union committees

must fight for access to the accounts, future plans and manning levels in every area of the public sector — Open the Books!

\*This will reveal the main suppliers profiting from the public sector. The books of these industries must be opened also, in the fight to nationalise them, without compensation and under workers' management.

\*Demand the restoration of the social service budget in full, linked to a sliding scale of spending to protect against inflation.

\*Demand the 'left' Labour MPs oppose the cuts by voting against them in Parliament and fighting for the removal of the Callaghan-Healey leadership!

# EGA-SUPPORTING ACTION VITAL

The occupation at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital in Central London is the beginning of the fight against the hospital closures being implemented by the Labour government.

EGA workers have shown the way forward in fighting cuts in general and closures in particular.

However the unanimous vote for occupation was a result of the bitter experiences the staff had been through in their struggle for the defence of the hospital against the Area Health Authority and Barbara Castle, the then Minister of Health.

It was only when all protest actions and pressure to change the government's policy — like lobbying the AHA and discussions with Labour MPs — failed, that the staff themselves took action to keep the

hospital open. As the NUPE shop steward told *Socialist Press*:

"It was Barbara Castle who broke her promise — she first offered a whole unit at the Whittington but ended up offering only 3 odd wards, which meant we couldn't have operating facilities and our own nurses. It is they who broke their word, and the AHA never consulted the unions."

The occupation has had the complete support of the patients, who are not only backing the fight by the staff to defend services but are also themselves joining the fight.

When asked what she thought of the AHA policy of closing the hospital, one of the patients told *Socialist Press*:

"It is a disgrace. I will give full support to the staff, they do a marvellous job. I blame the Labour



Fisher

government. I think Members of Parliament should take a cut in their salary."

Ambulancemen, too, have given their support — refusing to take any patient out of the hospital without the agreement of the shop stewards.

The occupation has drawn out some very important lessons for the EGA workers in particular and public service workers in general. It is clear that the EGA fight is against the policies of the Labour government, and because of this the EGA workers in their struggle have exposed the role of both "left" wing Labour MPs and their trade union leaders.

These issues were brought out by Arthur Churchley, NUPE shop steward, in an interview with *Socialist Press*:

"We are in occupation to save the EGA and we are aware that this means taking on the government's policy", he said.

Asked his opinion of the 'left' MPs his reply was clear:

"They should fight the cuts by voting against them in Parliament.

As for the Social Contract: "What kind of contract is it that means cuts and unemployment? Under these conditions Alan Fisher should give us support, which he has not done up to now. After all, the November 17th demonstration made the feeling of the working people clear."

Clearly as the struggle to defend the EGA means taking on government policy, the way forward must be to widen the struggle. As Arthur Churchley said:

"We need support from all hospitals facing closures. This support must not be in words only but they must do what we do."

The proposed all-London solidarity conference on 11th December is a step forward in this direction.



# DEFEND THE METHOD OF THE TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMME

## Lessons from the split in the Workers Internationalist League (Greece).

This is the concluding instalment of the Document by the Communist Internationalist League, (the expelled majority of the Greek Workers Internationalist League. The majority of the WIL were expelled after the intervention of Gerry Healy, (then General Secretary of the British Workers Revolutionary Party) acting in the name of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

### PART FIVE.

The petty bourgeois Healy sect and their puppets are today treating in the struggle to prove that the split in the WIL was instituted by Sklavos ...

We will narrate the facts. But before that, let us ask: Why should Sklavos want a split? Is there perhaps even one member of the WIL who did not consider that a crushing political defeat of the Healy clique would have been certain in a party conference?

If the Healy sect and their puppets are really in a position to oppose Sklavos' critique of their positions on philosophical and political questions, they have in their hands all the related documents and they can do so publicly, if it even now.

### PROPHET

Let them *prove* in this way that the split was 'organised' and 'perpetrated' by Sklavos because he was not in a position to defend his views in front of the whole International Committee and the members of the WIL.

Let them *prove* in this way that he left in panic in the face of the 'fire' of their critique!

We do not want to play the prophet but we are afraid that their mighty guns suffer from incorrigible...damp powder!

Let us now take the most important of the facts, in their actual sequence.

On the 9th April 1975 L. Sklavos proposed a short draft resolution to the Central Committee of the WIL under the title "On our tactics against the Karamanlis Government".

The text of the draft was sent immediately to the IC and for the criticism of the English leadership.

It is true the draft resolution is not characterised by maturity, but it contains a central idea which was never really abandoned by its author, and which he now defends irreconcilably.

This idea is summed up in the following extracts:

"The objective situation in the country is ripe for the socialist revolution from every point of view. The consciousness of the working class is determined by this objective situation. But not in a mechanical and automatic way...

"We say clearly we are going through this preparatory period, the period of preparation of the political and organisational pre-conditions for the conquest of power by the working class. This preparation has not yet proceeded enough. On this basis, we consider that the slogan "Down with Karamanlis" does not correspond to the preparatory character of the situation as it is today and to the concrete correlation of forces of the class struggle and to the level of development of this struggle....

"While our strategy is characterised by the revolutionary character

The first four parts of this document have outlined the political differences between the leadership of the Greek section and the leadership of the International Committee of the Fourth International. This concluding section gives an account of the split itself - in which the General Secretary of the Greek section was expelled, in circumstances extraordinarily similar to the expulsion in Britain of some 200 members of the Workers Revolutionary Party by the same leadership in 1974.



Healy ... 'hysterical'

of the period we are in, in our tactics we must take into account the concrete correlation of class forces and to so popularise our programme by formulating appropriately our slogans without retreating an inch in the essence."

We considered then, that the slogan "Down with Karamanlis", which was a slogan for immediate activity, was disorientating the organisation by obscuring the preparatory character of the period we were in.

In our view this was limiting the struggle to the level of propaganda and in practice it meant the negation of the struggle for the overthrow of Karamanlis and was disarming the organisation in front of the Stalinists within the mass struggles.

We shall soon present an extensive analysis of the objective situation and a concrete determination of the tasks of our movement.

We will there have the chance to refer extensively to the question of the struggle for the overthrow of the Bonapartist government.

For the time being we only want to show that with the submission of this document to the IC, the factional activity of the leadership of the WRP against the secretary of the WIL began.

At that time neither the first document by Thornett nor Banda's reply to it had yet been translated or circulated in Greece.

The leadership of the WRP had fraudulently presented the question of Thornett as being an 'organisational' question and it was spreading the story that Thornett had left the party and refused to discuss, while they were trying to 'persuade' him to stay in the party and defend his views at the conference.



Banda ... 'a mistake'

This method, employed by the leading clique of the WRP, aimed at minimising the importance of the political questions and diverting the members from studying them with the necessary zeal. They had much success in this attempt.

In this first document Thornett criticised the method of the WRP leadership in essentially the same spirit as that in the draft resolution presented by L. Sklavos.

Thornett accused the WRP leadership of having a mechanical conception of the relationship of economics and politics, and that in the formulation of its slogans the Healy leadership "starts only from the economic basis".

### EXPELLED

He put forward the question of tactics by citing the following quotation from Trotsky:

"...the achievement of this strategic task is unthinkable without the most considered attention to all, even small and partial questions of tactics."

*Transitional Programme*, p8.

That meant that the secretary of the WIL put forward these conceptions to the IC while a short time before Thornett and a number of members of the WRP had been prevented by organisational measures from presenting essentially the same questions to the party and had been expelled on the eve of the conference.

It was impossible that the secretary of the Greek section should receive any different treatment, when he presented the same views.

Healy and Banda started working factionally for the expulsion of the secretary of the Greek section.

In the last analysis this meant

working against the section itself, in the sense that they did not care about what would become of the WIL, as they had the chance to declare openly. (See "Monistic or Dualist Conceptions of History" by L. Sklavos, [to be published by Folrose Books in the New Year, Ed]). And they would rather see the section liquidated than face additional problems, while they were engaged in a life and death struggle against Thornett's critique.

They proposed and they got the postponement of the Greek conference, so that it would take place after the conference of the International Committee.

During the international conference they tried to undermine the prestige of the secretary of the Greek section, and at the end of it they proposed the signing of an enigmatic document, where it is stated that "The IC does not aim at creating a fraction within the Greek section".

### REJECT

The enigma of this document has now been solved.

In the Greek conference that followed, the IC was represented by Banda who attacked the whole line of the leadership sowing tremendous confusion and disorientating the members completely.

Our organisation was never as confused as after its 7th Conference, where it was obliged, after Banda exploited the prestige of the IC, to reject its whole previous policy without having anything to put in its place.

Banda personally attacked and used insults against those comrades who were warmly supporting the views of the secretary within the Central Committee. He was



Greek police open fire with tear gas on construc

obviously told who they were and he tried to morally intimidate them. We can say that he succeeded in this attempt.

The next stage was at the International School. There, after certain lectures by Slaughter on Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach*, and by Healy on the basic conceptions of matter in motion, the secretary of the Greek section found himself in disagreement with their philosophical conceptions which bore no relation to dialectical materialism but rather represented Kantianism and relativism.

### SCANDAL

But when they were criticised, Healy and Slaughter reacted hysterically, as panic-ridden bureaucrats. Within the school, Banda held private discussions with the rest of the Greek delegation, where he advised them to start fighting for the expulsion of the secretary.

Healy was obliged to intervene to avoid a scandal. He stated in front of all the Greek delegation that Banda had made a "mistake" and that he was... "separating the opposites".

At the end of the school a statement was presented according to which L. Sklavos should present his conceptions in writing to the IC for discussion.

This statement aimed at preventing the discussion by intentionally referring to the danger of a "split". It also stressed that the discussion would take place under the direction of the IC.

### STRANGLE

The statement said that the differences were... on an "international level", but despite that it said that the discussion will start in Greece, with a meeting between the Central Committee of the Greek section and the IC, (the representatives of which would naturally be the leaders of the WRP!)

In the period between the Inter-



national School and Healy's visit to Athens on the 14th January, 1976, the London leadership made every possible effort to gag the secretary of the Greek organisation and to strangle any critique coming from the ranks.

Within the leadership of the Greek movement, the London clique had found valuable colleagues, since, at the 7th Conference which was held in the summer, the criterion for the election of the members of the Central Committee in Greece was the degree of servility displayed for the English leadership.

After a proposal by Banda, Sklavos ceased to be the editor of the newspaper, being allowed to "relax" from this duty, and to devote himself "uninterrupted" to his leading tasks!

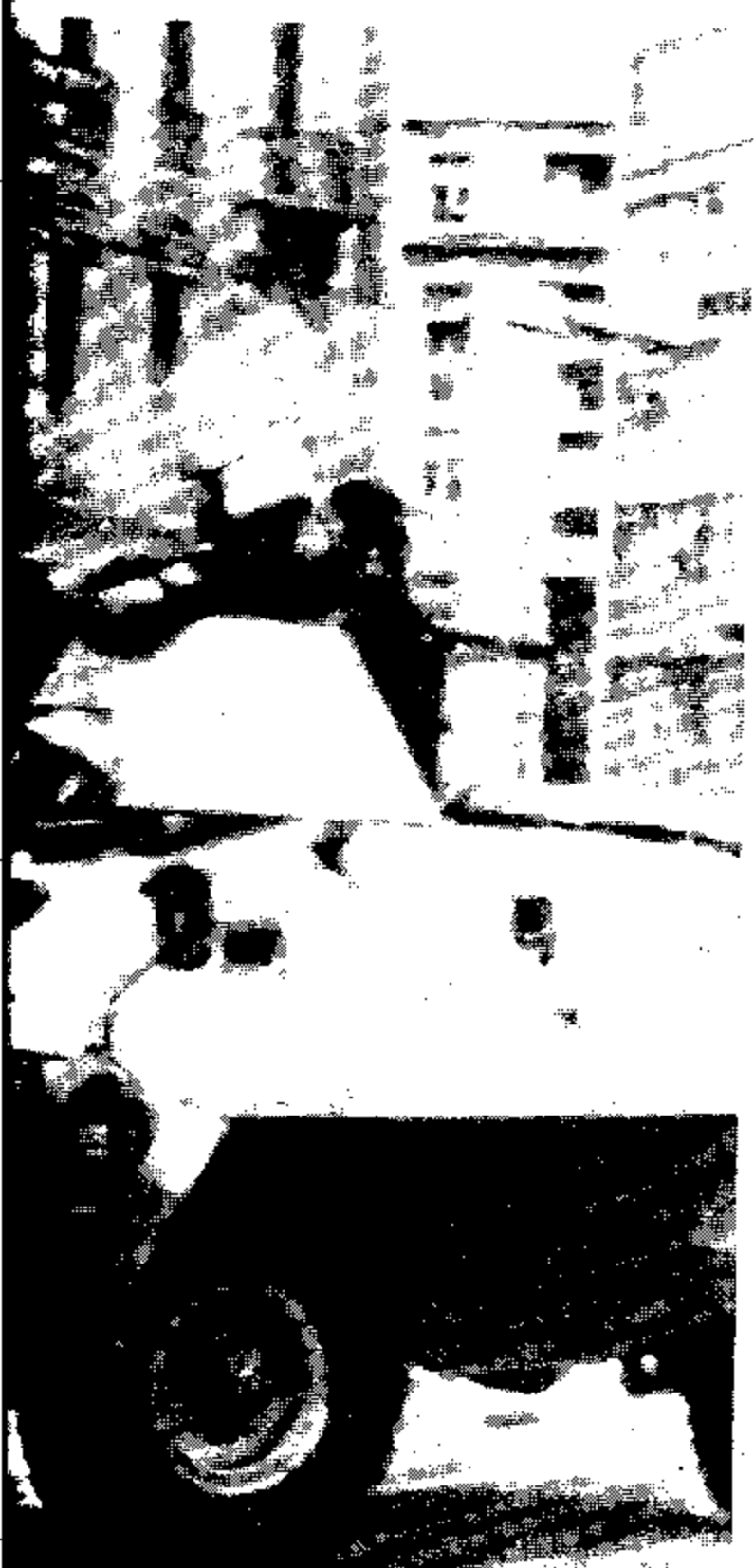
In the local branches of the WIL people servile to the English clique were openly acting as a faction, calling on the members to fight for the expulsion at all costs of Sklavos from the party.

**PUPPETS**

The secretary of the organisation had been banned not only from fighting for his views in front of the membership as a whole but also from discussing the differences which appeared in the International School even within the Central Committee to whom, as the leader of the Greek delegation, he was obliged to give a descriptive and informative account of what had happened there.

The last conference of the organisation, after rejecting completely the perspectives put forward by the Central Committee had decided explicitly in favour of the continuation of the discussion, the circulation of internal bulletins and a new conference in December 1975.

During this time, Healy's puppets in the Greek leadership dissolved dictatorially one aggregate



workers on strike in July last year.

of the organisation (the only one that took place) and one branch meeting.

They then asked the Control Commission to interview all the dissidents on questions of "moral order".

They halted the transformation into full members of all the candidates who were under Control Commission investigation and, despite a decision for an intensive recruitment campaign, they refused to accept new members, being afraid that an even more unfavourable correlation of forces for their clique would be formed.

**MURDER**

After the intervention of the English leadership, the recalled conference of the WIL was postponed many times - even though it had been fixed by the 7th Conference.

Healy stated clearly that he was opposed to the holding of a conference before the international discussion on the philosophical question, because Sklavos wanted, by gaining the majority within the Greek section, to fight within the IC from a stronger position.

The "international" discussion finally fixed for the 3rd-4th January 1976 was then postponed to the 15th on the pretext of "security reasons" arising out of the murder of the American agent Welch in Athens. In reality this postponement was necessary for Healy's factional activities.

**PRETEXT**

Finally, Healy arrived, but did not appear at the first meeting, at which the international discussion was supposed to open up.

He did not once meet the General Secretary of the WIL, using the cheap pretext that he had not come as an "official" representative of the IC.

Instead, Healy remained at his hotel where he held meetings with members of his faction inside the Greek section, to organise and carry out the split. A rather "green" member of the faction said later that Healy did not appear because he had been accused of going to the US and expelling Wohlforth!

**RESIGN**

The arch-factionalist of the WRP could not, however, keep up appearances in this way.

At the Central Committee meeting which was supposedly to open the so-called "international" discussion - but without the presence of an IC representative, L. Sklavos was forbidden to speak on the political implications of the philosophical questions (such as for instance the participation of the WRP member White on the 'corporatist' "joint management" bodies of Leyland.

Under these conditions L. Sklavos was forced to resign from his position of secretary and CC member, in order to deprive Healy and his factionalists of every excuse and to enable him to struggle for

his views at the base of the organisation.

The majority of the CC, which arbitrarily broke the clear decision of the 7th Conference of the organisation for the continuation of the discussion and for a new congress by December 1975, considered that the resignation of the secretary was...unconstitutional and decided to expel him!

At the same time the CC distributed forms within the organisation carrying a declaration of loyalty and condemning the secretary - on the model of the declarations which, during reactionary periods, the police used to force communists to sign, in an attempt to smash their morale.

Each member was called up individually and was heavily pressured to sign. All the members were considered expelled and the signing of the declaration was a condition for their re-admission into the party.

**POLICE**

Now, after the mass expulsions, the organisation has been reconstructed as the Workers Internationalist League (Majority) [now renamed the Communist Internationalist League, Ed.]. But the factionalists of Healy intervene to prevent public meetings of the majority by provocatively informing the owners of the various halls that "there will be incidents" and urging them to cancel the bookings. They even call in the police



November 1973: Trolley buses with burned out tyres line the street after battles between Athens students and riot police.

against their comrades of yesterday and, having lost all sense of propriety, they publicly admit this in the columns of their paper.

Without doubt this practice, of calling on the police to intervene in the differences among Trotskyists, unprecedented in Greek records, does not start from themselves, but is done on the advice of the cowardly leaders of the WRP, and particularly from Healy.

This clique has completely corrupted people who perhaps might have something to contribute to the Trotskyist movement and the working class.

**VIGOROUS**

The fact that this middle class sect of the WRP and the servile and careerist elements which surround it tries to present Sklavos and the other members of the organisation as responsible for the split, reminds us of the old proverb of the "thief who yells to frighten the householder".

In any case, we do not feel sad at this split. The incidental events could only influence the form of the outcome but could not prevent it.

We have to understand its necessity. To draw the political lessons from it. A split can become a new starting line for a new vigorous development of the movement only if it is a break with a wrong method and policy which did not simply belong to a certain group in the organisation but which was also our method.

Otherwise there is not a split but dissolution. The construction of the present is possible only by the dialectical negation of the past.

Throughout the whole post-war period the Trotskyist movement in Greece and internationally was not able to base itself on the method established by the Fourth International, the method of the Transitional Programme.

This has to be done now. The split reflects precisely this historic demand which is posed sharply due to the sharp economic crisis.

All the preconditions have been completed for a re-orientation of the movement and its return to the road laid down by Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks.

Without doubt this will not take place without toil. Whole decades of small circles and 'propagandism' have left a clear mark on our movement.

Even more important an obstacle in the struggle for a dialectical approach to the problems of the workers movement is the fact that the leading militants, who are sick of the treacherous compromises of the Stalinists and reformists have a tendency to be pulled to the other extreme and not be able to distinguish, as Lenin says, between compromises and compromises.

"We must" - he writes in *Left Wing Communism* - "learn to distinguish between the man who has given up money and firearms to the bandits so as to lessen the evil they can do and to facilitate their capture and execution later, and a man who gives his money and firearms to bandits so as to share in the loot." (pp21-2).

**HASTY**

Undoubtedly in politics things are more complex than in this simple example. However, if we do not grasp its essence, if we do not learn not to lose the content behind the form, to distinguish the wood from the trees, it is not possible to build a revolutionary party or indeed to assist the workers in the overthrow of the capitalist yoke.

Our duty is not to train people to propagandise unbending schemas, but revolutionary leaders, armed with the dialectic method, able to open up, within the masses, the road to revolutionary perspectives.

This means that we must consciously base our activity on the *Transitional Programme*.

On the other side there are undoubtedly several comrades who should be in our ranks.

It is not necessary to be hasty with them. It is better that they delay and they break by rejecting critically the sectarian and opportunist policies of the clique rather than come with us in a hurry bringing with them their erroneous positions. Fruit cannot be gathered before it is ripe.

We must open up the Trotskyist road among the masses. This is our basic task. Every new member recruited from the undeveloped mass is worth ten people who have crossed over from the other side to us in a hurry.

It is in any case these fresh forces that will assist the best elements who remain in the old WIL to come over to us.

**NUCLEUS**

We remain, more than ever, loyal to the principles and programme of the Fourth International. This is enough to consider ourselves uncompromising Fourth Internationalists.

The crisis in the International Committee which is provoked by the action of historical forces independent of our subjective will, unavoidably, in all the sections will provoke splits and realignments.

From that will come the nucleus for the building of the world revolutionary party.

We have to intervene consciously in this developing process, to see it as a process of reconstruction of the forces of the International Committee on the basis of the *Transitional Programme* and the dialectic method which permeates it.

The petit-bourgeois Healy sect will be destroyed. We will assist in this. Trotskyism can now triumph. February 1976.

Concluded



# REVIEW: BRECHT 'POEMS'

Brecht: 'Poems' Published by Eyre Methuen, 3 volumes, £1.95 each, paperback.

By guest reviewer, Terry Eagleton.

Bertolt Brecht is the greatest socialist artist of all time, and — many would claim — the greatest revolutionary theorist of art as well.

Influenced by the Bolshevik Futurists and Constructivists, Brecht remorselessly demystified the sacred, privileged status assigned to art by bourgeois idealism: art for him was a social practice rather than a visionary inspiration, a process of material production rather than a mysterious object.

Dismantling the bourgeois theatre of 'illusion', which hypnotised its audience into emotional self-indulgence, Brecht produced instead a form of drama ('epic' theatre) whose very structure was dialectical — which played off scene against scene, script against song, actor against audience, in order to shock its observers into consciousness of historical contradictions.

Nothing in such a theatre was taken as 'natural', taken for granted — not even the script, which Brecht and his collaborators would constantly re-write on the basis of an audience's reactions.

Nothing was to be hidden: the actor showed himself as an actor, rather than pretending to be someone else, the stage mechanisms were on show to remind the audience that they were in a theatre rather than the real world.

Only by insisting on its own artifice could the drama send its audience out of the theatre into political society, to put their changed consciousness into practice.

Most of Brecht's literary output, however, consisted of poetry; and these three volumes bring to the English reader for the first time roughly half of the thousand or so poems in the collected German edition. For revolutionaries, then, this is a publishing event of some importance; for bourgeois literary critics, it can only add to their embarrassment.

For Brecht is clearly one of the major poets of the twentieth century: and for most bourgeois criticism it is simply self-contradictory that a writer can be at once as openly agitational and as artistically superb as Brecht.

He can't be patronised, in populist fashion, as an artist who oversimplified his work in order to 'bring poetry to the people'; for what makes Brecht's writing so instantly communicable — its terse, concrete, dramatic quality — is exactly what makes it so artistically fine.

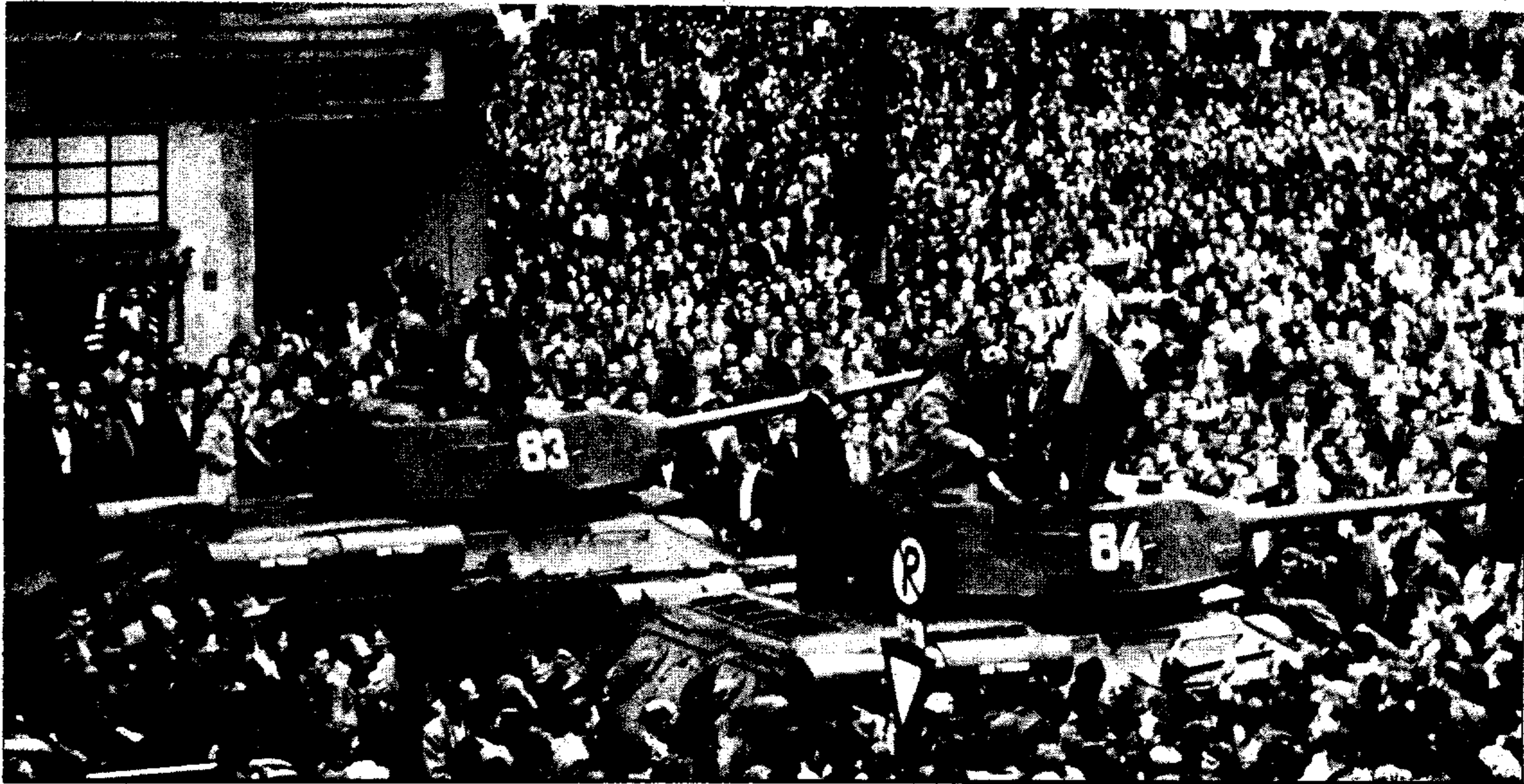
Nor can he be praised as some 'proletkult' hero sentimentally glorifying the masses; for

his poetry is always polemical, aggressive and ironic, intervening into proletarian consciousness rather than slavishly reflecting it.

The first volume (1913-28) takes us through the years of Brecht's apprenticeship in Marxism, up to the point of the Wall Street crash.

This is the period of the young, 'bohemian' Brecht, more anti-bourgeois than anti-capitalist, more pro-underdog than pro-proletariat; and the poems oscillate accordingly between lyrical vision and deliberate crudity, sensual and sardonic by turns.

The second volume (1929-38) represents the high point of Brecht's art, from the growth of German fascism to his exile; and as his writing becomes leaner and tougher under that political pressure, it reaches a peak of stark, almost intolerable dramatic power surely unrivalled in modern literature.



The East German workers' uprising 1953 - "Brecht was politically complicit with Stalinism; but the form of his art was a denial of all it stood for".

impoverishment of poetic quality.

For how was Brecht to write in Los Angeles? And how was he to write in a Stalinist state?

Brecht was politically complicit with Stalinism; but the form of his art was a denial of all it stood for. Critical, experimental, interrogative, open-ended, ironic: nothing could be further from the closed dogmatism of the Eastern Europe to which Brecht returned.

That he was himself a man riddled with contradictions is clear: grim and angry yet impudently deflating, fiercely committed but always with a canny eye to his own interests, a brilliant art-theorist with the practical shrewdness of a tramp, a tough-minded rationalist who relished humour and sensuality, a master of simplicity who dealt with the most complex contradictions of his time, a magnificent Marxist artist who didn't care whether his poems survived or not.

But it is precisely Brecht's acceptance of impermanency, his liking for things fluid and half-finished, his hatred of deadening 'perfection', which shows us the deeply historical perspective which informs all his work.

It is a perspective which he is able to turn on himself, thinking of how future generations will remember him and his comrades:

"For we went, changing countries oftener  
/than our shoes  
Through the wars of the classes,  
/despairing  
When there was injustice only, and no  
/rebellion.

And yet we know:  
Hatred, even of meanness  
Contorts the features.  
Anger, even against injustice,  
Makes the voice hoarse. Oh, we  
Who wanted to prepare the ground for  
/friendliness

Could not ourselves be friendly.  
But you, when the time comes at last  
And man is a helper to man  
Think of us  
With forbearance."

Brecht

Stripped of imagery, the poetry of this period can find its artistry in what often seems simple reportage — as in the poem about the carpet-weavers of Kuyan-Bulak, who use the money they had scraped together for a bust of Lenin to fight swamp-fever instead:

"So they helped themselves by honouring  
/Lenin, and  
Honoured him by helping themselves, and  
/thus

Had understood him well."

With typical resourcefulness, Brecht makes use of every literary form that comes to hand — ballad, song, aphorism, Chinese epigram — in order to render the experience of the German masses in the 1930s.

His constant artistic emphasis is on what is useful — on what will work, be of service, expose contradictions, communicate and transform. And it isn't surprising that the work of the final volume (1938-1956), the years of his exile in America and return to East Germany, should betray a certain

## SPOTLIGHT

## ON REFORMISM

# WHAT IS THEIR 'ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY'?

As the pound collapses still further on the foreign exchanges, Callaghan announces his determination for another year of strict wage control and the official economic forecast predicts increasing unemployment, the 'lefts' the Labour Party have only one thing to say — the Labour government must be saved.

Yet the 'left' wing Tribune Group has recently published, under the name of Brian Sedgemore "The Alternative Strategy" for the Labour government, a document which concludes:

"We must choose now...between the catastrophe of current policies and the socialism of the alternative strategy..."

However a closer look at this "alternative strategy" of the Tribune Group reveals the answer

to this riddle.

The 'lefts' do not disagree with Healey and Callaghan because they defend capitalist policies, but because the 'lefts' want to maintain capitalism in a different way.

Number one in their list of 'alternatives' is the call for import controls. Import controls, they argue, would reduce unemployment, reverse the balance of payments deficit and lead Britain towards socialism.



Callaghan talking to Brian Sedgemore

The document carefully puts forward not one argument for this cure-all, but instead insists that the arguments are "well known".

What then are their arguments?

They claim: that 'unfair competition' by overseas competitors is undercutting the prices of British goods at home, forcing British manufacturers to close their factories and increase unemployment; that restricting imports would mean a larger market for British goods at home and more British workers employed while in

addition reducing imports and improving the balance of payments; that within the protection of import barriers, full employment and industrial expansion would be brought about; and that, moreover, all this would be brought about without the need for the Labour Party or the 'lefts' to raise one finger against the profits of the capitalists!

The attractions of this 'strategy' for the 'lefts', who are petrified at the prospect of raising even one finger against Healey and Callaghan,



One of the last remaining sugar coatings of the bitter pill of the Social Contract was wiped out by the Lords early in November.

This was the defeat of the Dock Work Regulation Bill (1976), which has been continually attacked by the right wing as a 'dockers charter' since its introduction into Parliament in December 1975.

The defeat of this Bill proves that the Callaghan leadership has absolutely nothing left to offer the working class.

The final death-blow to the Bill was struck by the Lords' amendment restricting the new Dock Labour Scheme (replacing the one established in 1967 and which was responsible for the ending of casual labour on the docks) to only half a mile from the waterfront.

This makes a complete nonsense of the original Bill, which in any case, in the view of many dock workers, was itself totally inadequate. This set out to create a five mile corridor for the scheme around the coastline and the major inland waterways.

This would have protected the jobs, wages and conditions of those workers employed outside the major ports but who were involved in cargo handling at inland container bases, warehouses and cold storage depots, which have been set up there by the employers in an attempt to operate with cheaper labour in pursuit of profit.

This is the reason for the massive campaign against the Bill launched by the cold-storage and warehousing monopolies, coordinated by Tory central office and aided and abetted in the Commons by Labour scabs Walden and Macintosh (who sat in the press bar whilst the vote was taking place!)

After T&GWU leader Jack Jones had asserted that he would not challenge the government on the defeat of the Bill, the National Docks Delegate Conference (T&G) at its meeting on November 22nd, voted by 55 votes to 18 to press instead for new legislation in the next session which would reestablish the original 5-mile limit.

This was passed after a previous resolution calling for national strike action to defend the Bill was ruled out of order by Jones.

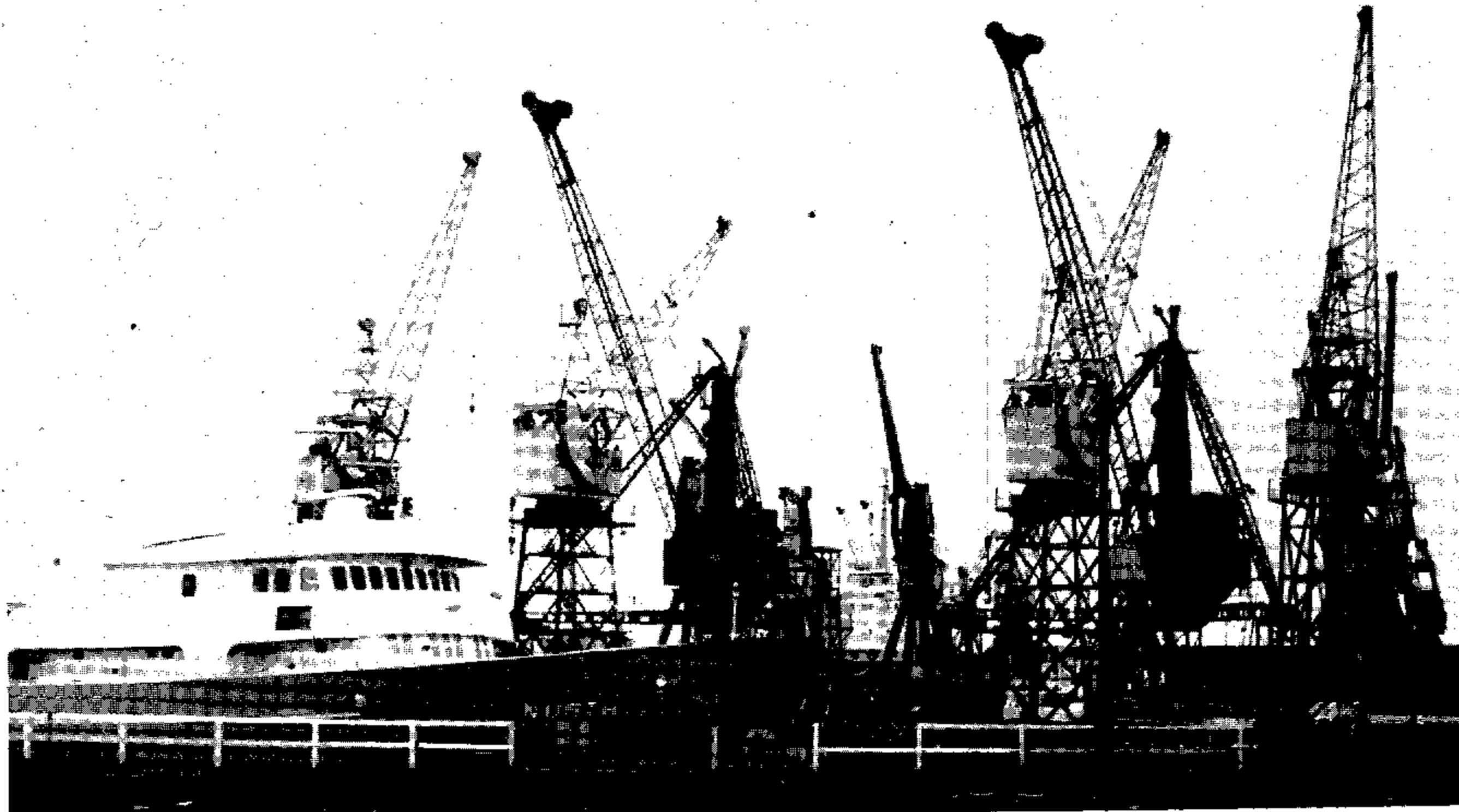
In this Jones and the rest of the T&G bureaucracy have avoided the necessary fight to defend the Bill, claiming that the Bill is still a "partial victory" since it brings the unregistered ports into the scheme.

Whilst this is the case, the 1/2-mile corridor still allows 'cowboy' firms to run cargo-handling operations outside, but still close to the docks - while in some cases the half-mile doesn't even reach the boundaries of traditional docks already registered!

The Docks Bill, far from taking away jobs from other workers - as has been lyingly asserted in every capitalist journal from the *Daily Express* to the *Economist* - would

# JOBS KNIFED ON THE WATERFRONT

A look at the consequences of the defeat of the Dock Work Regulation Bill (1976).



not only defend the jobs of dockers but would have extended the rights they have won in 30 years of struggle to thousands of less organised workers.

The need for such a Bill to cover unregistered ports and wharves began to arise during the late sixties and early seventies with the emergence of container bases, warehouses, cold storage depots and the build-up of unregistered ports outside the influence of the 1967 National Dock Labour Scheme.

These were being set up by employers who, faced with a strongly organised labour force, found themselves at first unable to impose speed up, redundancies and low wages in the industry.

As time has gone by, however, the National Dock Labour Board - with full collaboration of the union leadership - has been able to impose redundancies and the run-down of manning levels. This has taken place mainly through "natural wastage" (voluntary redundancy schemes) and severance (early retirement) - while basic wages are now so low that fish-bobbers in Hull who will be brought into the scheme fear that

they may lose money through it!

Yet the much worse conditions for workers in the non-registered ports led to much work being taken away from the traditional areas and diverted to the unregistered ports, such as Portsmouth.



Jones

These wharves and ports are able to operate profitably and offer lower handling charges, and even higher wages in some cases, than firms in the scheme who have to comply with all the regulations, charges and levies in the scheme which protect the jobs and conditions of the dockers.

The non-registered docks are free to operate with minimum manning levels and rely on casual labour with no guarantee of work or pay.

Faced with the fact that jobs were being taken away from the traditional areas to badly organised areas, the dockers began a series of actions culminating in the bitter strike of 1972.

However, the only outcome of the strike was the abolition of the Temporary Unattached Register (TUR) and dock jobs continue to fall dramatically while tonnages increase. (At Hull, for instance, the number of dockers has fallen from 4,500 to 1,800 in less than ten years.)

The Barge-Aboard Catamaran (B.A.C.A.T.) system (which until recently was blocked on Hull docks) was the latest attempt by the employer to reduce operating costs.

By operating a system where barges were filled with cargo at Rotterdam, transported by a mother ship to Hull and disconnected and sent up river far inland for unloading at an unregistered port, they would by-pass the major ports altogether and cut out any costly handling by registered dock workers.

The result was the collapse of world trade and record unemployment in every country.

Behind their protective tariff walls, the capitalists mounted a steady attack on the working class; prices were increased, wages cut and anti-union laws introduced to try to break the strength of the working class.

Import controls were accompanied not by socialism, but by reaction.

Of course none of the Tribunes who advocate protecting British capitalism by import controls would advocate such an attack on the working class. While they are not prepared to lead a fight against the right-wing in the Labour Party who act entirely for capitalism, neither are they willing to act openly against the working class. . .

Instead they would like to find a way in which they can reconcile the demands of the working class with capitalism and retain their own standing as "left-wingers" without fighting the right-wing, let alone the employers.

But none of this is possible. The sharpening of the economic crisis internationally reduces their schemes for revitalising British capitalism to daydreams with which they deceive and confuse both themselves and the working class.

The policy of import controls.

The mood amongst dockers, therefore, is that it will bring un-registered ports into the scheme, thus benefiting workers at these ports, but there is no guarantee that work will not continue to be diverted to them from the traditional ports.

The latest indication of this has been at Portsmouth where the T&GWU bureaucracy has acted in such a way that dockers at this non-registered port lifted a principled blacking they had imposed on freight diverted from registered ports, such as Southampton, Poole and Weymouth.

Southampton dockers have now imposed a strong picket at Portsmouth to enforce the blacking.

2,000 additional jobs are now threatened with the proposed closure of Preston docks, which has suffered heavily through the build-up of non-registered ports such as at Heysham.

The demand by the Preston dockers that their union, the T&GWU, call for national action to defend their jobs has to be supported and extended to include any threatened loss of jobs through management run-down and closures in all industries.

The struggle on the docks against job-cuts through modernisation and speed-up began with the introduction of containerisation in the sixties and the principled position then was that mechanisation could only be accepted on the basis of no loss of jobs and through the nationalisation of the docks under workers management.

However containerisation was sold to dockers by the leadership through the promise of de-casualisation, better conditions and a guaranteed wage.

In the same way today, the fight has to be for the defence of the Dock Work Regulation Bill in its original form and for its extension to cover all areas of cargo-handling.

Tied in with this, the fight has to be taken up for industrial action to defend all docks and cargo jobs through work sharing on full pay.

To prevent the closure of docks the demand has to be for the opening of the books of those owners threatening closure, for inspection by elected committees of workers.

This would lay the basis for dockers to prepare a plan for running the docks and for nationalisation without compensation under workers management.

Such a struggle will require the building of a new political leadership on the docks able to challenge the present bureaucratic T&GWU leadership.

From our correspondent in HULL



The TUC: voted for both wage control and import controls.

are obvious. Its benefits to the working class are however non-existent.

For this so-called strategy is nothing but an illusion, a cheap conjuror's trick.

If the magic of import controls could make the economic crisis disappear for British capitalists, Healey and Callaghan, who in every other way serve the employers, would have used it months ago.

At present they refuse to impose import controls - purely because they fear retaliation from their competitors imposing similar restrictions on British exports.

Of course in their struggle to

survive, various capitalist countries have attempted and will attempt to force other capitalists to cede their markets to them, both by economic competition and diplomatic pressure.

The Labour government has just completed negotiating such agreements with Japan over shipbuilding car imports, televisions and electrical goods.

But these policies are not socialist. (It is no accident that Fascist Spain has the most extensive system of import controls of any of the European capitalist countries.)

They are part of the attempt of

British capitalism to protect the profits of its ailing and backward industry from its competitors.

The steady introduction of import controls by the major capitalist countries would herald a slump on a massive scale with the collapse of world trade.

It would be combined with an attack on all the gains won by the working class.

It was in the 1920's and 30's that such policies were last applied world wide. The capitalist countries including Britain, attempted to cut their competitors' throats by under-cutting their export prices and protecting their home markets.

setting jobs for British workers against jobs for Japanese, German, Indian or Brazilian workers is a muddleheaded, reactionary diversion.

Most treacherous of all their attempts to dress their nationalist positions in socialist clothing is the argument voiced at the Labour Party conference that import controls are of benefit to workers because they prevent the sale of cheap goods produced by workers on starvation wages in Asia.

This is not a policy to aid the workers in the ex-colonies to fight their continued exploitation by imperialism, but to side with imperialism to starve the workers in the colonies.

Import controls are no alternative to Healey's policies; they neither lead towards socialism, nor defend jobs.

The alternative is a fight directed towards the nationalisation of the property of the British capitalist under the management of the working class.

In this fight British workers must find their allies in the workers and peasants of Asia, Africa and the rest of the world.

It is socialist internationalism, not the nationalism of the 'lefts' which will defend the interests of British workers.



# LABOUR PARTY WITCH-HUNT HOTS UP

The storm over the appointment of leading 'Militant' group member Andy Bevan as Labour Party Youth Officer is an indication of the general nervousness of the Labour right wing rather than any serious prospect of the 'Militant' group taking up the fight against the Callaghan-Healey leadership.

Indeed the Militant's position is the same as that of the Tribunites — that the Labour government must be kept in office to keep the Tories out:

"It would be a serious mistake, as the 'Tribune' group recognises, to vote in such a way as to bring down the government."

(Militant, 6th August)

## Foot backs right wing



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Foot

As the Callaghan leadership adopts more and more openly Tory policies, embracing the IMF with open arms, the atmosphere of witch-hunt within the Labour Party itself is being massively stepped up in a conscious attempt to isolate any forces offering even the most feeble prospect of a fight back.

This is drawing out the real

## Newham 'coup' fails

The contempt of the right-wing for workers' democracy has again been exposed in Newham North-East Labour Party.

Right-wingers Eddie Lee and Ray Massey, in a bid to save the career of coalitionist MP Reg Prentice, took control of the Kensington branch of the party.

Officers and General Management Committee delegates were 'removed' when 20 members (mainly OAPs), who never previously attended meetings were brought to a meeting for a 'coup' against the left-wing.

This branch leadership had not only opposed Prentice, but had fought for policies like labour movement defence against attacks by fascists on immigrants, and for a sliding scale of wages against the 4½% pay limit.

The local Tory paper, the *Newham Recorder* was ecstatic at this victory for Prentice. Yet their next edition had to change its tune with the headline 'Prentice Shocker: Ward Vote Probe'.

The former officers had been reinstated following objections to the methods used by the right-wingers.

The reasons? Not only had no notice ever been given of intention

They have taken a similar stance on the fight to throw out Healey and Callaghan, refusing to expose the 'left' MPs who verbally protest against Tory policies but do nothing to remove their advocates.

And on November 17th the *Militant* appeared sporting completely uncritically, a front page article by NUPE bureaucrat Alan Fisher — who has consciously restricted the entire cuts campaign to empty protest gestures.

The witch-hunt against Bevan is therefore aimed not so much at him but against all militants within the Labour Party. But for this very reason it must be fought by every Labour Party and union branch. The demand must be for an end to all bans and proscriptions — and the removal of the Callaghan-Healey leadership.

position both of the extreme right wing — ganging up with the Tory press to attack Labour militants — and of the so-called 'left' wing.

### CATASTROPHES

While the 'Tribune' Group stays politely silent about the by-election catastrophes brought about by Callaghan and Healey's policies, seeking only to "save the Labour government", one-time 'left' Michael Foot has gone so far as to write a personal endorsement of beleaguered right winger Neville Sandelson — grimly seeking to cling onto his constituency nomination in Hayes and Harlington.

### SPEAK IN SUPPORT

Foot has even offered to go to the constituency and *speaks* in support of Sandelson — who was the mainstay of the doomed 'save Reg Prentice' campaign last year.

Yet this, together with Callaghan's recommendation was fortunately insufficient to save Sandelson, whose constituency party voted against him by 23-17. His next step must be to appeal to the Labour NEC.

to remove officers in the branch letter, as required by party rules; but a *secret* notice had been distributed to selected members of the branch in order to whip up pro-Prentice supporters where his opponents would have no right to reply.

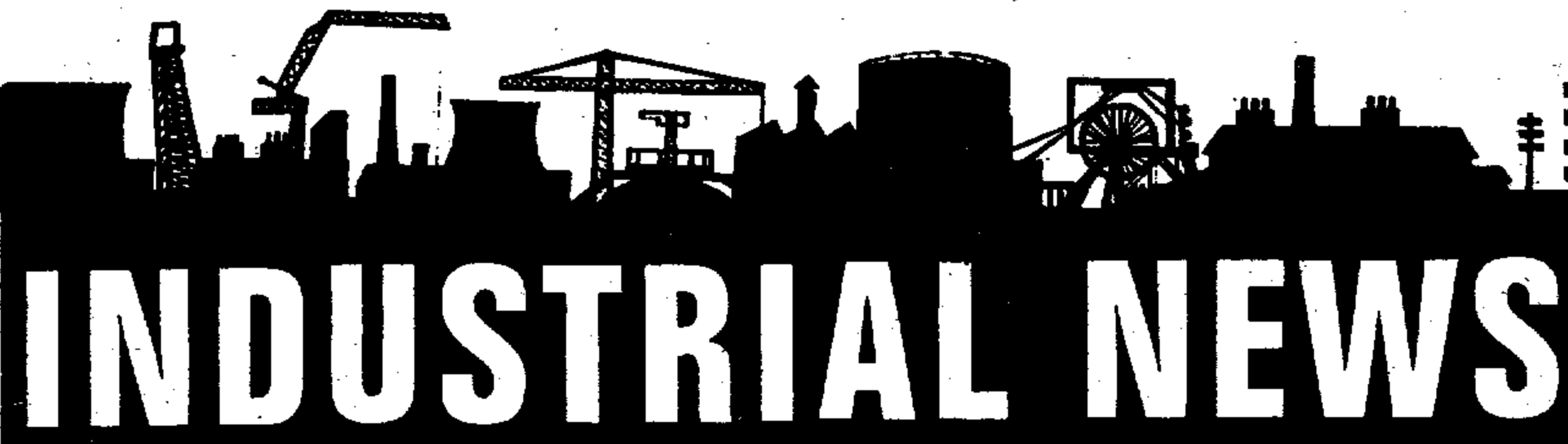
On top of all this the meeting which saw the 'coup' was entirely orchestrated by a particularly obscure individual from Oxford — 70 miles away — named Mr. Julian Lewis.

All that is known of this gentleman is that he has a legal training and was once a member of the Tory Party.

Investigations are still taking place, but this affair raises important questions for those members of the Labour Party who wish to fight the right-wing.

What other dirty tricks are being used? Who dredged up Mr. Julian Lewis? What is his relationship to the extreme right-wing Social Democratic Alliance?

Already other investigations are in progress concerning the activities of a right-wing dominated ward where someone may have inadvertently signed up fictitious members — with the no doubt entirely accidental effect of increasing representation on the Newham North-East General Management Committee.



# INDUSTRIAL NEWS

## NUT CRACKDOWN

The savage crackdown by the bureaucratic leadership of the National Union of Teachers against their rank and file members now seems to be leading towards the disciplining of two NUT Executive members.

They addressed a group of over 300 teachers who had lobbied the Executive meeting at the Union's headquarters, in support of teachers at Little Ilford school, Newham, who are under threat of suspension from the union.

The Executive refused to meet a delegation from the teachers, and a large number of lobbyists replied by invading the meeting room — eventually causing the meeting to be abandoned.

It was after this that the two Executive members spoke to the crowd gathered outside.

The basic cause of this struggle has been the use of disciplinary action by the NUT leadership to prevent Little Ilford teachers carrying out a decision to implement action to enforce union policy — refusing to cover classes from which the teacher is absent for more than three days.

The teachers were immediately

instructed by Fred Jarvis, NUT General Secretary, to cease "unofficial" action. When this was not done, the entire membership at the school were suspended, until they sign a form undertaking not to carry out unofficial action.

In other words, while education is savaged by government cuts and thousands of trained teachers join lengthening dole queues, Jarvis'

main preoccupation is to stop militant "unofficial" action by his membership.

The Little Ilford teachers must be absolutely defended against these bureaucratic attacks — and an offensive must begin against the reactionary NUT leaders who gang up with management against their own members.



PHOTO: Mark Rubner, IFL

Part of Saturday's lobby of the NUT Executive

## FIGHT IN HOTELS

Strikes at two of the biggest hotels in Oxford hang in the balance after the start of a major drive for union recognition in the town.

Determination by workers in both hotels has transformed what first appeared as a desperate situation into a united struggle with a major chance of success.

The hotels — the Randolph and the Linton Lodge — boast seven stars between them and pay wages that would have seemed an insult ten years ago.

### VICIOUS

For a 60 hour week some workers take home as little as £20 a week.

The strike at the Linton Lodge won official recognition from the T&GWU after just four days — a measure of the viciousness of the management position — but the too little, too late policy of the full time official Geoff Hulett has since become clear.

In six weeks at the Randolph — the four star prestige hotel of Trust Houses Forte — he failed to call a single mass meeting of workers, or to see that a single shop steward was elected. During this time, while union membership allegedly reached 60%, the management cleared the decks for action.

### SACK

They brought in a new, tougher manager, threatened union members at face to face meetings with the sack and loss of their rooms, and gave written warning to the worker who had been handing out union forms.

They even chose the date of the action — giving six chamber maids an ultimatum — either work weekends for no extra pay or be sacked.

The chambermaids, most of whom have families and took the

jobs because they did not involve weekend work, walked out taking with them all their colleagues bar two.

This attack on the strongest section of workers was deliberately aimed to test the strength of the union.

### 'WAR'

Despite advance warning Hulett had been away for the weekend and attended a routine meeting in Banbury while the women were being sacked. The 'war' he had declared on the hotel started without him.

By the time he turned up the women had rejected any compromise and Hulett had no choice but to call all the workers out.

It was for this that workers at the Linton Lodge have waited impatiently for two weeks. In that time they had built up enormous support for 16 workers who were sacked for asking for union recognition.

### PICKET

In response to calls from the strike committee and the Oxford Student-Trade Union Liaison Committee pickets of up to 200 workers and students massed on the hotel forecourt at peak times and up to twenty police were called in to pilot blackleg labour and scab guests into the foyer.

Linton Lodge workers even went to the extent of going into the Randolph Hotel and begging workers to come out and unite the actions.

The strikes are a major step forward for some of the most repressed workers in the town. The actions are being fought with deadly seriousness by the management.

The emergence of this struggle amongst hotel workers in Oxford is just part of the national picture of



PHOTO: Laurence Spearman, IFL

Birenda Singh, one of the suspended Little Ilford teachers.

new layers of workers coming forward into struggle.

All over the country workers are turning to the unions as their only means of beginning to meet the attacks on wages and conditions, and they are finding that these aims throw them immediately into struggle.

The Randolph in particular has demonstrated that among these new workers are a high proportion of women workers beginning to play their full role in the trade union movement.

The call now must be for the T&GWU to make the Randolph dispute official and to treat both disputes as part of the same battle.

Certainly the workers involved see clearly that in fighting different employers they are fighting the same faces, and in extracting support from their own official they must fight every inch of the way.

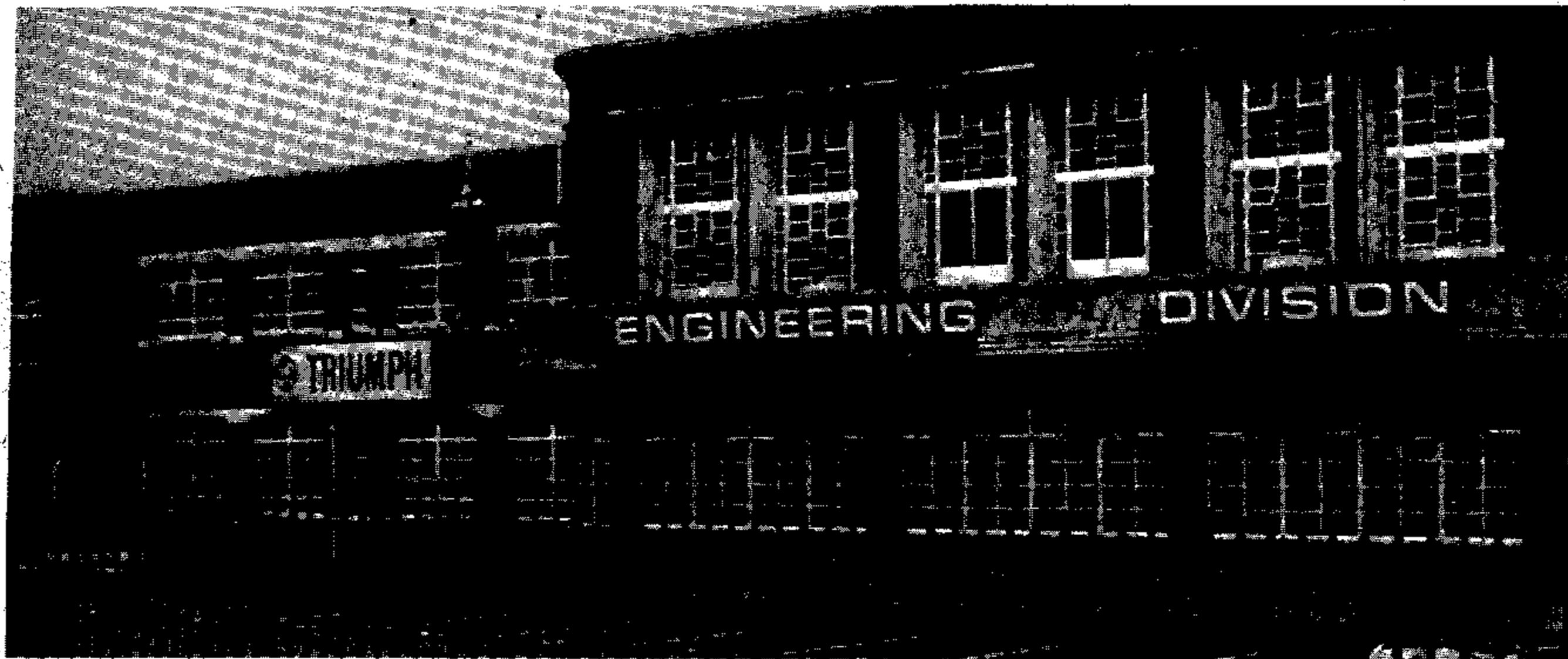
### BINGO STRIKE SOLID

THE WOMEN STRIKERS demanding union recognition at the Club One bingo and cinema chain in Coventry remain solid in their official dispute.

Pickets are still outside the firm's premises every day, winning a considerable response from would-be customers, though the local T&GWU bureaucracy seems to be doing little to broaden the action and ensure a rapid victory.

A fund-raising social has been organised in support of the strikers to be held on Friday December 10th at Transport House, Coventry.





# TRIUMPH JOBS IN DANGER

When British Leyland announced the ending of car assembly at Triumph, Canley, in Coventry workers were assured that there would be no compulsory redundancy.

However, a report on Leyland's 'Confidential Plans' for Canley's workforce, has now appeared in the *Coventry Evening Telegraph*. (25.11.76).

The report states that between now and the end of next year some 2,000 of Canley's 4,000 assembly workers will lose their jobs.

At the same time the number of workers producing engines, gearboxes and axles will also fall.

## BURDEN

BL have always said that when the plant goes over full-time to engine production there will be jobs for some assembly workers. Why then will the number of engine jobs fall over the next year?

The burden of finding replacement jobs now falls most heavily on the other Leyland plants in the area - Jaguars, Coventry and the expanding plant at Solihull which is a long way from Canley to which many Triumph workers already travel considerable distances.

Management obviously hope that the offer of jobs at Solihull will be turned down by some workers daunted by the major distances involved.

## DRAW BACK

Those turning down work at Solihull would not be eligible for redundancy pay.

Workers at Canley are worried over job security and have begun to draw back from the changeover.

Shop stewards have refused to allow a test run (at Solihull) of the Dolomite due to begin a two-stage changeover in July 1977.

Meanwhile, stewards at Solihull, worried over a lack of concrete job assurances, have resisted the transfer of workers from Canley.

They have argued that Canley men should be treated as newcomers to Leyland cars; that their service at Canley should not

count; and that higher grade jobs should go to Solihull workers first.

Leyland management now feel in a position to play off different sections against each other - with the job fears lurking in the background.

This is shown by Leyland Cars Personnel Director, Geoffrey Whalen's comment that:

"I cannot believe the unions will take a position that will lead to men being out of work, rather than a position that will keep them in work." (*Coventry Evening Telegraph* 25.11.76).

Leyland would be quite happy to see disputes over jobs break out between the Canley and Solihull stewards.

## FULL ACCESS

Stewards in both plants must instead demand full access to Leyland's books as the *only* way to check on the management assurances of job security and establish a firm basis of unity between all Leyland workers in the struggle for the nationalisation of Leyland under workers' management.

## Act Now For T&GWU Conference

T&GWU branches are being asked over the next few weeks to submit resolutions to next July's Biennial Delegate Conference - the supreme policy making body of the union.

It was the previous T&GWU Conference - in July 1975 - which was used by Jones and the Wilson-Healey leadership of the Labour government to introduce the £6 pay limit.

## ACCEPTED

At that Conference the social contract was accepted on the basis of a number of stringent conditions including a reduction in unemployment, a price freeze and a massive increase in public spending.

But the subsequent action of the T&GWU General Executive Council in support of the present 5% pay policy under conditions where none of those conditions have been

fulfilled is clearly *contrary* to the policy of the union.

Branches wishing to raise these issues and who wish to propose a policy to defend the living standards of the working class must submit their resolutions now.

Callaghan has announced in the Queen's speech that he wants a further year of wage controls after July 31st, when the 5% policy ends. The T&GWU Conference will draw to a close only two weeks before that date.

The timing is again perfect; the likelihood is that Jones will once again try to use the conference to put the seal on a further blistering attack on the working class.

For this reason, and as part of today's fight against the reactionary wage controls imposed upon T&GWU members by its leadership, a full-scale fight against any future controls and for policies to maintain the value of the wage packet must be launched in the union.

# WHERE DID DOCKS MILITANTS GO?

The first registered dockers to be compulsorily sacked in nearly 30 years are to be effectively abandoned by the one-time militant docks delegate conference.

This is the outcome of the move by the conference chairman, at the instigation of T&GWU General Secretary, Jack Jones, to rule "out of order" a motion for action in defence of 180 dockers facing redundancy with the proposed closure of port facilities at Preston.

The employers have not attempted to sack registered dockers since 1949. The moves at Preston are clearly a curtain-raiser to a wholesale attack on docks jobs as the employers scent the abject collaboration of the T&GWU leadership, and move in on a full-blown offensive to drive up profits.

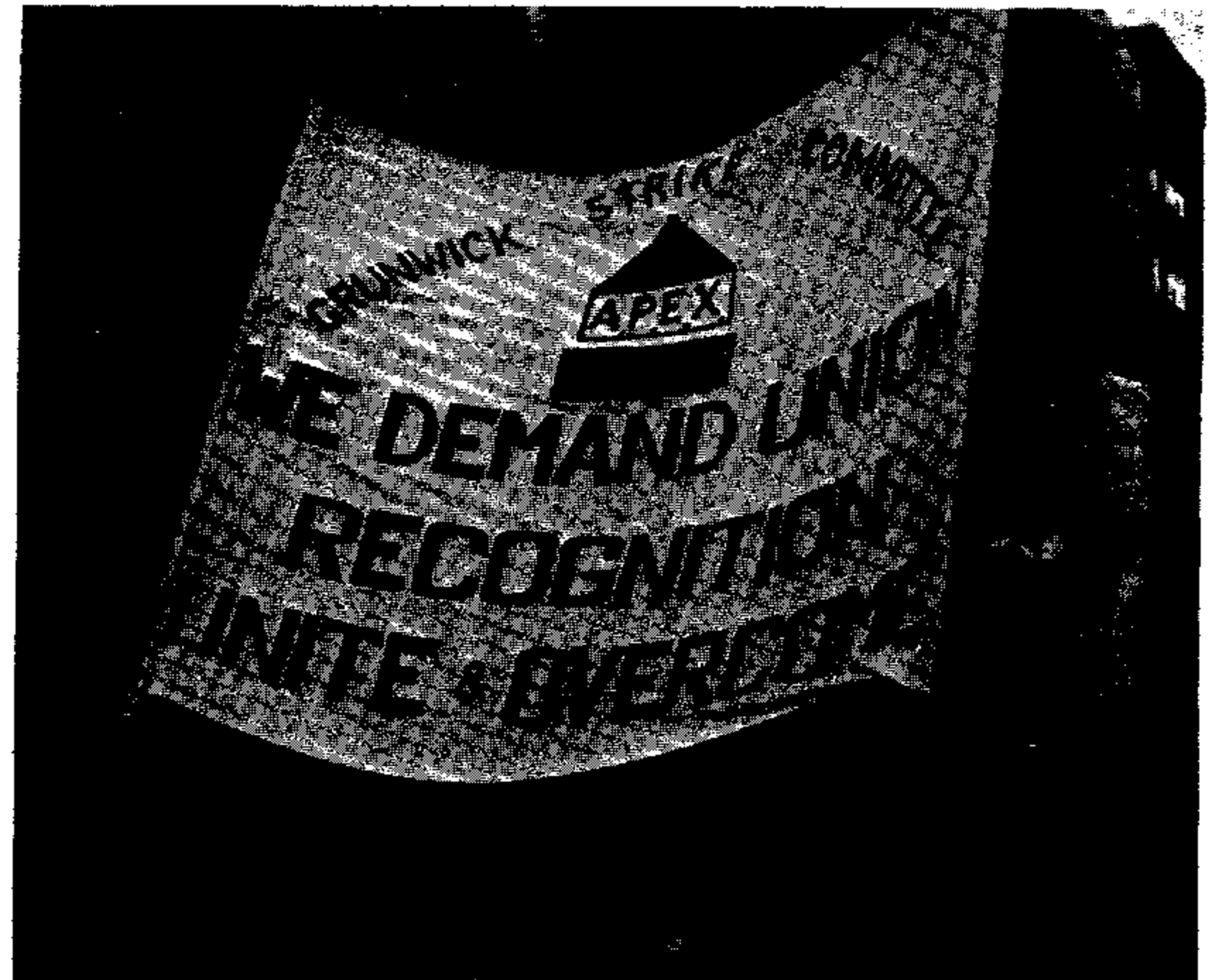
While Jones was clearly at the centre of the decision not even to discuss active support for the Preston dockers, this must not divert from the fact that the docks delegate conference itself is now clearly unable to give any independent lead to the membership. Yesterday's militants have today become simply Jones' errand boys - meekly accepting bureaucratic injunctions and decrees.

This is why, for instance, on Hull docks the 19 T&GWU stewards who had their credentials withdrawn by the Regional Committee lifted not a finger to fight the officials - but instead caved in to the officials' demand that they act to lift blacking action from the employers' job-cutting Barge Aboard Catamaran (BACAT) system.

The stewards lifted this blacking without even consulting the mass meeting which had overwhelmingly voted to impose it - and were rewarded by the officials with the return of their stewards' credentials!

The fight in defence of jobs in Preston and other docks now cries out for the building of a new leadership prepared to fight on principle against both the employers' offensive and the bureaucratic dictatorship of the T&GWU's army of appointed officials.

\*FOOTNOTE. It would appear that in reaction to the betrayals of the T&GWU officials on Hull docks the 'Blue' union has gained a number of stewards positions in the recently held (and previously twice postponed) elections to the Docks Unofficial Shop Stewards Committee.



The banner of the Grunwick's strike committee is seen here on the recent demonstration against racialism called by the TUC and the Labour Party. The strike, now several months old, is over a demand for union recognition by the workforce, many of whom are paid scandalously low wages.

# BEHIND NUM 'EARLY RETIREMENT' CALL

The unanimous decision of the NUM Executive to ballot miners on the question of further action in pursuit of early retirement is a conscious fraud.

Not of course that the miners do not have an unbeatable case for early retirement. On the contrary: the fact that at this stage in the twentieth century British miners are still forced to work on to the age of 65 is a crushing indictment of the treachery of successive right-wing NUM leaderships.

Gormley and his allies now glibly argue how much better retirement conditions are in other Europ-

ean countries and in the USA - as if they only discovered these facts yesterday!

Why has the retirement issue suddenly come to the fore after years of being swept under the carpet? Because like all other sections of workers, the miners are now beginning to recognise the massive scale of the wage cuts inflicted upon them by the TUC's 4½% deal with Healey - imposed with the central collaboration of the NUM leadership.

To head off the feeling on wages, Gormley had to come up with a classic diversion of some kind - and the obvious candidate was the retirement issue, on which

everyone agrees, and which could at least in theory be conceded by NCB and government through various manoeuvres arguing it is not covered by the social contract.

## SAFE TOPIC

In any event it will provide a safe topic for talk among union militants, while Gormley and Daly get on with the serious job of policing the pay laws alongside Jones and Murray.

A heavy vote for action to back the early retirement demand is therefore guaranteed, though it is also more than likely that the Executive will take it *not* as a mandate for all-out strike action to win conditions miners should have

had 30 years ago, but simply use it as a diplomatic bargaining counter in their talks with the NCB.

But it is crucial that NUM militants use every avenue within the union to press for a fight to reject the 4½% deal, to restore the cuts already made in living standards by wage controls by demanding a substantial increase tied to a sliding scale of wages to protect against inflation. If this is not done now, huge cuts in real wages will be felt by every miner by the next NUM Conference.

Early retirement is a vital demand, particularly for miners. But you can't eat it. Gormley's diversion must be seen for what it is.





# SPIES PROTECTED BY "CIA" EXPULSIONS

The Labour government still intends to deport the American citizens Philip Agee (a campaigner against the CIA) and Mark Hosenball (a journalist) on grounds that they are a threat to "national security".

Despite a mounting campaign in the Labour movement, and opposition by almost 100 MPs, Home Secretary Merlyn Rees has refused to give any details of the "evidence" against them allegedly produced for him by the spies and informers of the secret services.

## NOT TOLD

Rees is using the "Star Chamber" provisions of the 1971 Immigration Act under which foreigners can be deported as a danger to "national security" but without being told any of the specific accusations against them.

Agee - formerly a CIA agent in Latin America, but now working to investigate and expose the CIA's activities - gave notice at the Home Office on Monday of his intention to appeal against deportation. As he explained afterwards, he is in a position of having to account to a Rees-appointed three man appeal panel for any acts on his part in the almost four years he has been living in Britain, but without ever being told the precise charges.

Agee hoped that Rees would



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

prove to be a 'reasonable man' who would see through the "scenario" painted by the secret services. We doubt it! Rees is using this procedure because he has no "evidence" that would stand in public.

His three "wise men" are picked to do his bidding. One of them, Sir Richard Hayward, is a former leading official of the UPW and later on the Post Office Board.

The hand of the CIA in Rees' actions is obvious. The depor-

tation threats against Agee and Hosenball can be carried out within days. They must be stopped. This demands the widest possible mobilisation in the labour and trade union movement to counter this attack on democratic rights.

Activity organised by the Agee Hosenball Defence Campaign include:

- A picket of the Home Office (Whitehall) every Wednesday 12-2pm.
- A picket of the Home Office on Saturday 12th December at



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Agee

noon and at the American Embassy in Grosvenor Square at 2.30pm.

- A day of action on Wednesday 8th December, and public meetings and a "teach-in" on the CIA.

They have also published a pamphlet "CIA Briefing" giving details of CIA plots - as set out in official US Senate and Congressional papers. (Price 20p from the Agee-Hosenball Defence Campaign, c/o NCCL, 186, Kings Cross Rd, WC1 to which donations and resolutions of support should also be sent).

## GENEVA...from Front Page.

herded.

The white regime continues to claim they are inflicting heavy casualties on the black nationalists in return for very few losses on their side. Even given the predictable exaggerations of these figures, there seems no doubt that the white forces have in the short run inflicted significant casualties on the liberation forces.

One of the main reasons for this is the confusion which must have been created among the liberation forces by the abject compromises being made by the leaders of all four of the black Zimbabwean delegations in Geneva.

The delegations of the "Front Line" states, including Angola and Mozambique, share this responsibility, since they have all used their influence to promote compromise with the racists and imperialists.



Smith

The "Patriotic Front" delegates claim to have won a concession by getting the British government to "fix" a firm date for independence under majority rule on March 1st, 1978.

This "concession" means nothing at all since British governments have made quite clear for the last 53 years that they are not prepared to lift a finger to support democracy in Rhodesia.

The only thing which can guarantee the overthrow of white racist rule in Rhodesia is the successful pursuit of the armed black liberation struggle.

The purpose of the Geneva talks is to defeat this struggle. The only principled course open to those who profess to offer leadership to the black workers and peasants is to break off those talks at once and to give unambiguous support to the armed struggle.

## WAGE FREEZE...from Page 1.

go on top of and not instead of an increase in the basic rate.

The Workers Socialist League calls for full support to the workers at Rubery Owen and Salisbury Transmissions. Other workers must be brought into action by their side - but we have to adopt a policy that does more than simply fight for more money.

We must challenge capitalism's right to make the working class pay for the crisis.

This means that on top of substantial catching-up increases, wages must be defended against inflation through a sliding scale of wages clause providing automatic increases to keep pace with the rising cost of living as assessed by elected committees of trade unionists and housewives.

## BROKEN

This means the Social Contract must be broken. For this reason the fight on wages must go alongside the fight for the removal of Callaghan and Healey, and their replacement by any Labour MPs prepared to fight for their removal and for alternative socialist policies.

These are the policies around which the recall conference on Wage Control and Union Democracy will be held by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement in March next year.

## Monthly & Special Fund

With only two days to go the November Fund still stands at only £446.34. We know that much of the outstanding £160 is there, but just has not been sent in yet. It is vital that comrades fight to achieve the fund target by the end of the month and not delay into the following month.

So can we have a big effort to collect the outstanding fund and make an early start on the December Fund which we would like to see completed before Christmas if at all possible.

The Special Fund continues to come in, but at a slow pace. We have now collected £702.09 out of a total target of £1,000. Again a big effort is needed to raise the outstanding £300 as quickly as possible.

All donations should be sent to:

Socialist Press Monthly Fund  
31, Dartmouth Park Hill  
London NW5 1HR

Militant action was expected to result from a meeting of students at North East London Polytechnic (NELP) on Tuesday, called to discuss the expulsion of Andy Strouthous, President of the Students Union.

## "VIOLENCE"

Strouthous, a member of the International Socialists, who is taking a course in sociology at the Poly was expelled under a rule which states that no student may "threaten violence against any person at the Polytechnic or incite others to do so."

Fellow student Geoffrey Fryer received a reprimand for the same offence which arose out of the occupation by students of the director's office in which a meeting of the Governors was taking place earlier this year.

The decision to go ahead with the expulsion has clearly been deliberately timed to coincide with the end of term in the hope of avoiding militant action from the students at NELP.

But with enormous cuts-back in education the order of the day, it is essential that NELP students take any action necessary to defend their President from this attack.

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