

# SOCIALIST PRESS



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**SWP: The politics of 'no politics'**  
Centre pages

The Tory government was elected to a five-year term of office with an impregnable Parliamentary majority a mere five weeks ago. But already the debate is raging within the working class as to how long Thatcher will last.

And those Labour and trade union leaders most openly dedicated to the preservation and strengthening of British capitalism have rushed to declare their opposition to any action that would stop the "democratically elected" Thatcher government carrying through its attacks.

## No answer

They do so in the wake of a budget that has set a definitive course towards runaway inflation, mass unemployment and slump.

[Budget analysis page 5]

Even the latest treasury forecasts show a drop in industrial output next year, a 20% inflation rate this year, and a total of more than 2 million unemployed for the next few years.

Of course there is no answer to this type of crisis within the framework of capitalism.

As a totally anarchic system it is now wracked by an insoluble international crisis.

This is why the Tory attacks represent a familiar echo of similar "austerity" plans in countless other countries, and an intensification of similar attacks carried out by Callaghan's reactionary Labour government.

Every attempt to resolve the problem of falling profits through "reforming" or rationalising capitalism must—particularly in this period of economic crisis—result in attempts to foist the whole burden onto the shoulders of the working class.

But that is not so easy.

## Bravado

Despite the arrogant bravado of Howe and other Tory spokesmen, nobody seriously doubts that the working class, which toppled Heath, and which last winter crushed the Labour government's 5% pay policy, will move massively to resist the Tory attacks.

It is fear and hatred of such mass struggles, and awareness that they have no alternative policy to offer, which has forced Labour and TUC leaders into outright statements supporting the "right" of the Tories to carry out their policies unhindered for the next five years.

Callaghan in particular has repeated his opposition to trade unions taking action to bring down the Tories:

"The Conservative Government was elected through the ballot box and it must be removed from office by the same method."

## Devastate

Callaghan's veneration for the kind of "democracy" that threatens to devastate the living standards of millions of Labour supporters was an echo of a statement earlier in the week by miners' leader Joe Gormley, who declared that:

"We shall have fights with governments of all varieties but we must never give the impression that we or any other union will go on strike in order to change the government."

The reality of course is that unless there is massive working class action to bring down the Tory government, then every one of Thatcher's budget

## Budget means slump and runaway inflation

# PREPARE TO BRING DOWN THATCHER!



Howe

proposals and other attacks will be pressed through ruthlessly by a desperate capitalist class, which has scant respect for the democratic rights of trade unionists or their families.

## No substitute

But 'left' speeches and abstract denunciations of Tory policies by union leaders like Mick McGahey are no substitute for preparing the kind of action needed to oust the Tories.

McGahey last week talked in vague terms about fighting for

the return of a Labour government.

But he significantly declared himself in practice *opposed* to unofficial strikes, in *favour* of improving productivity, and in *favour* of talks with the Tories!

Similarly the NALGO leadership which last week declared support for strikes against the Tory cuts, *opposed* attempts at the NALGO conference to spell out policies as the basis for such action.

And in the Labour Party itself former strikebreaking minister Tony Benn continues

to posture as a "left" opponent and alternative to Callaghan, while refusing to mount the slightest struggle for the removal of the right wing leading clique.

These bankrupt 'lefts' offer workers no lead whatever. The fact is that there is no way of stopping the Tory attacks through speeches, through Parliament, or through mere protest.

The only way Heath's government was stopped was by massive working class action.

In fighting Thatcher's attacks as they emerge on every front workers must look increas-

ingly towards coordinating and centralising their struggles towards such mass action through the building of *councils of action* in each area, comprising delegates from trade union bodies and every working class organisation.

Such *councils of action* can provide an arena within which all sections of workers and socialists can challenge the control and the policies of the trade union and Labour bureaucracy, and fight for the strengthening and spreading of strikes and occupations on wages, against the cuts and in defence of jobs.

## Councils of action

And at a time when growing numbers of workers are acutely aware of the complete treachery of Callaghan's government and of the need to replace the Tories, *councils of action* enable revolutionaries to argue for a principled programme and for demands which can expose to workers in practice the bankruptcy of their existing reformist leaders.

To carry through this kind of political intervention a *revolutionary party* must be built, capable of fighting every form of bureaucratic betrayal and consistently mobilising the working class in defence of its independent interests. This is the vital preparation for the mass struggles ahead.

The Workers Socialist League fights to build such a party. Today's situation above all cries out for the demands we advocate:

**\*Defend living standards! Wage increases must be protected against inflation through cost-of-living clauses giving auto-**

matic rises in line with a trade union cost-of-living index.

**\*Defend all jobs! Occupy to stop redundancies! Demand work sharing between the whole existing workforce without loss of pay.**

**\*Fight for mass action to bring down the job-cutting Tory government of employers and bankers!**

**\*Open the books of the oil monopolies, along with the major industrial firms, the banks and the insurance companies to elected trade union committees! This will prove the case for their nationalisation without compensation, under workers' management.**

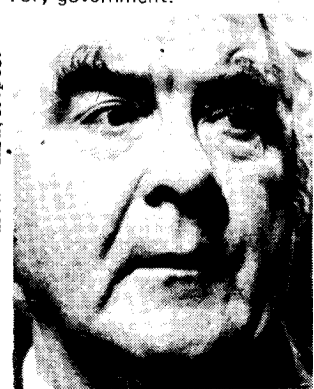
**\*No to import controls! Create new jobs through a crash programme of public works for nationalised industry under workers' management.**

We urge workers, housewives, youth and students to consider the dangers now posed for their living standards and to join the WSL in our struggle for class action to bring down the Tory government.



Thatcher

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report



Gormley



Police car turned over by pickets

# DANISH WORKERS

# FIGHT PICKETING LAW

For the last six years Danish workers have seen their wage agreement extended by the state and laws limiting pay increases.

As usual the 1979 wage round saw intervention in March by the shaky Social Democratic coalition government.

This was received with a sigh of relief by the trade union leaders who had done nothing to fight in defence of living standards even before the intervention.

Only after the government measures had been introduced did the union bureaucracy mobilise what they thought would be token demonstrations in protest at the pay limits. But these 'token' actions turned out very differently. Every day since the government intervention has seen militant strike action.

Bus drivers, for instance, not only supported the protest

demonstration but stayed out on strike, demanding that their claim for higher wages and improved conditions be met.

To strengthen their action they adopted the tactic of mass picketing. Danish bourgeois law forbids pickets from hindering others from working—and the police were brought in to break through the blockade of the bus garages.

But while the union bureaucracy was able to isolate and defuse this struggle, the bus drivers' example has been taken up by other groups of strikers, who have also mounted mass pickets, and faced the onslaught of the police.

### Biggest battles

The biggest battles have centred on the militant struggle by 48 Copenhagen cement drivers employed by F.L. Schmidt—the monopoly producer and agent for cement in Denmark.

The workers struck, demanding a cost-of-living pay agreement, a reduction in overtime and more drivers to be taken on.

Within three weeks sections of the Danish building industry were on the point of closure for lack of cement.

### Pitched battle

When the management attempted to reimport cement recently dispatched to Sweden, the 48 drivers picketed the harbour.

As police were sent in, dockers joined the drivers' picket line and a pitched battle followed, in which the police were eventually forced to withdraw and did not return.

A wave of working class protests the next day against the police violence brought lorry drivers out to blockade bridges and the approach roads to Copenhagen for several hours.

And rising anger at the attacks on picket lines has resulted in dockers and seamen voting to stage sympathy pickets if further cement shipments are attempted.

The employers, increasingly desperate in the face of this class solidarity, are now threatening to lay off 25,000 construction industry workers.

But the cement drivers are not only up against the employers and the police: they face also the scabbing of the Polish Stalinist bureaucracy, which continues to export cement to F.L. Schmidt by train.

This is played down in a cover-up article in the Danish Stalinist daily paper *Land og Folk*, which blandly declares that:

"Even though they [the drivers] are not many in number, their conflict with the firm has already meant big problems for the building industry."

"More problems can be expected in the very near future because cement supplies from abroad are nowhere near enough. The countries in question are Sweden, West Germany and Poland [!]"

"The drivers' appeal, however, to Danish building workers not to use cement from abroad during the strike."

Communist Party members in Denmark and throughout Europe must be confronted with this, the latest case of brazen strike breaking by the Polish Stalinist leaders—whose scandalous record includes sending scab coal shipments to fascist Spain during heroic strikes by Asturias miners.

Our founder members were expelled from the WRP in 1974—two weeks before the annual conference. All discussion was stifled. Recent expulsions were on similar lines.

The suppressed discussion must proceed now. Our summer school offers a unique opportunity for that to take place. We think that all ex-SLL/WRP comrades have an obligation to be part of this.

The WSL has of course been consistently slandered by Healy in the *Newsline* and elsewhere, presumably in order to create a barrier between ourselves and the membership and ex-members of the WRP.

We urge ex-members to examine us on our politics and our practical record and not to be influenced by this approach.

The school will provide the opportunity to discuss all questions on which there may be disagreement.

Write for the agenda of the school plus the practical details. Accommodation will be provided with meals at low cost.

Details from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

# Italy's CP loses votes of youth

If the results of the Italian parliamentary elections earlier this month provided no comfort to the Italian bourgeoisie they were even worse for Enrico Berlinguer and his clique of agents of the bourgeoisie at the head of the Communist Party.

The campaign of the CP was

directed against the Christian Democrats: not, of course, against their anti-working class policies—but against their "arrogance and inefficiency".

### Longer memories

But the voters whom the CP was vainly wooing had longer memories and stronger class feelings than their Stalinist misleaders gave them credit for.

They remembered that since the last elections the "arrogant, inefficient" and, more important, anti-working class Christian Democrat government was supported in office by first the abstention and then the votes of the CP in parliament.

It was those memories which made the CP's campaign for a "New way of governing Italy" fall on hearing but unbelieving ears.

### Lost votes

The CP lost votes throughout Italy and in all social classes.

But the losses were geographically concentrated in the south, and were especially great among the young.

This is proved by the fact that the CP's losses were noticeably worse in the Chamber of Deputies (for which the minimum voting age is 18) than in the Senate (for which voting begins at 25).

The CP has failed to win the loyalty of a whole new generation of working class and petty bourgeois voters.

The CP paper, *Unita*, itself morosely calculated that in 1976 40% of voters between 18 and 25 voted Communist. This fell last week to 28%.

Most of the losses in this age group were to the petty-bourgeois Radicals and probably to the far-left candidates (other than the PDUP) who got nearly 1% of the poll.

The possibility of the CP regaining some of its lost authority in the working class now seems low.

### Last resort

Though in the short term the "historic compromise" government has been removed from the agenda, the bourgeoisie may still be rapidly driven towards trying to hold off the growing demands of the working class by bringing the CP into the government.

But in the present economic and political crisis this would be a last resort which could not be expected to be effective for very long.

### Other solutions

The failure of elections and parliament to hold out the prospect of any political solution must increasingly force leading sections of the bourgeoisie to look for other—non-parliamentary—solutions for their problems.

Already during the elections the growth of terrorist actions by the Red Brigades and other similar organisations was being used by the government to justify an enormous increase in repression against the left.

# Iran regime jails socialists

At least 9 members of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS) have been arrested by the local 'revolutionary committee' in Ahwaz.

Ahwaz lies in the province of Khuzestan, major centre of the oil industry and home of the Arab minority in Iran.

The first two arrests came on May 30, in the wake of the fighting in Khorramshahr between the 'revolutionary guards' and Arabs demanding recognition of their national rights and an end to political repression and violent attacks from Khomeini's supporters.

Further arrests came over the next two days as protests developed.

Armed members of the local 'revolutionary committee' raided the homes of HKS members, contacts and associates, making arrests and confiscating literature.

The HKS is jointly supported by the USFI and the OCRFI.

Its national leadership has demanded the release of the arrested members: The lives of all these revolutionary fighters are in danger. We have no information of their whereabouts or fate.

Such attacks on democratic rights by elements of the new regime show the determination of Khomeini and his supporters to sweep aside with violence any force that stands in the way of their construction of a counter-revolutionary dictatorship in the 'Islamic Republic'.

All socialists, within Iran and internationally, must give their full support to a campaign for the immediate release of the imprisoned militants of the HKS.

# International Summer School

The WSL is holding its annual international summer school from July 21 to July 29 inclusive. The school is open to members and supporters of the WSL.

This year we are extending a special invitation to EX-MEMBERS OF THE WRP—both those who have been the victims of recent expulsions and those who have found themselves outside the WRP in various ways over the past few years due to the political degeneration of the movement and the increasing bureaucratisation of the internal regime.

The WSL from its inception has based itself on developing the continuity of the strengths that were contained in the SLL/WRP International Committee tradition.

We have stated that these strengths in the period of the 1960s and the early 1970s included the correct insistence that, despite the 'boom' capitalism remained a system of crisis and had not changed; the ability to work carefully and systematically in the unions; the insistence on the importance of Marxist theory, and the centrality of the fight for Trotskyist parties.

But such strengths did not mean that the IC was free from major political weaknesses—weaknesses which showed themselves the more the movement was put to the test of practice.

Today, in the most fertile conditions for revolutionary work, the WRP has reached its deepest stage of political degeneration. Its heritage has been liquidated by its leadership.

The WSL now represents the most developed expression of the continuity of the strengths of the IC tradition and the fight for the Trotskyist programme—its principles and method—developed over the last 4½ years.

One of the tasks of the summer school will be to deepen our understanding of this development as a basis for the struggle to reconstruct the Trotskyist Fourth International.

The main presentations will include: Political Economy; Dialectical Materialism; the International Committee; the USFI; the OCI; and the development of the WSL as an International Tendency.

### ITALIAN ELECTION RESULTS

	The Chamber of Deputies				Senate			
	% of votes		Seats		% of votes		Seats	
	1976	1979	1976	1979	1976	1979	1976	1979
Christian Democrats	38.7	38.3	263	262	38.9	38.3	135	138
CP	34.4	30.4	227	201	33.8	31.5	116	109
Socialist Party	9.6	9.8	57	62	10.2	10.4	29	32
Social Democrats	3.4	3.8	15	20	3.1	4.2	6	9
Republicans	3.1	3.0	14	16	2.7	3.4	6	6
Liberals	1.3	1.9	5	9	1.4	2.2	2	2
Radicals	1.3	3.4	4	18	0.8	2.5	0	2
MSI (neo-fascists)	6.1	5.9	35	30	6.6	5.7	15	13
PDUP	1.5	1.4	6	6	0	0.2	0	0
Far Left	0	0.8	0	0	0	0.1	0	0



INTERNATIONAL

# Who is leading the civil war in Nicaragua?

For the first ten years or so after the overthrow of Spanish imperialism, Central America was a federal state.

The following fifty years saw a series of wars between conservative and liberal parties in the different states in which internal conflict was largely structured by alliances with like partners of other countries.

The requirements of the local bourgeoisies compelled balkanization, but in reality Central America is very much a coherent unity.

It is because of this that the civil war in Nicaragua is having such an enormous impact on the rest of the region.

The outcome of events there will have a rapid and deep-seated effect in the neighbouring states, not to mention Latin America as a whole.

## Vanguard

Nicaragua is in the vanguard of the struggle.

On the face of things the reason why it is Nicaragua that will be the first to fall lies in the extraordinary nature of the Somoza regime.

Anastasio Somoza, the present incumbent, is the heir to a family fief that was established in the 30s by his father with the aid of the U.S. marines.

Although there have from time to time been various puppet presidents, usually cousins or nephews, the Somozas have retained personal power over the country for the last 45 years.

With this power they have amassed a huge fortune and maintain control over the infrastructure of the economy.

Should Anastasio succumb to his present 'heart condition', there is always his brother or his son, the runt of the litter Anastasio III, waiting in the wings.

But they are highly unlikely to reap the rewards of the family heirloom—the state—first and foremost because 'somozismo' has now become an impediment to the defence of capitalist relations as a whole.

## Monopoly

The monopoly of the family over political power and its preponderance in the economy has over the years led to the development of a substantial sector of the bourgeoisie that recognised that Somoza governed the conditions of their own existence but became increasingly belligerent about



Sandinista guerrilla

his control over the rules of competition.

This group, allied with various petty bourgeois sectors, formed the Broad Opposition Front (FAO) early in 1978 both to respond to the mass mobilisation and to protect their own interests for the post-Somoza era.

## Split

Since the outbreak of full civil war at the end of August the FAO has split, and a more 'militant' faction that rejects US mediation has formed the National Patriotic Front (FNP).

This group recognises that 'somozismo without Somoza' is quite insufficient to contain the masses, and it has pursued a more radical nationalist and reformist campaign.

This has enabled it to ally itself with the guerrillaist Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) that is leading the mass struggle against Somoza.

It is in shifting alliances such as this that the Nicaraguan

revolution, like all revolutions, goes beyond the simplicity of military confrontation and is in reality a political struggle on several fronts, ever fluid yet always critical.

This is no less true for the FSLN itself. At the height of the insurrection in September last year the Sandinistas were in the process of uniting three internal groupings that had existed for several years.

The capture of the government palace in the capital Managua in August, the subsequent uprisings in the cities of Leon, Esteli and Masaya, and the war without quarter that followed impelled such a unification.

However, the differences between the factions are sufficiently great to have major implications for the political process of the revolution even before the removal of Somoza.

## Insurrection

Only two factions of the FSLN claim to be marxist-leninist: the Guerra Popular Prolongada (GPP) and the Tendencia Proletaria (TP).

These two groups had a long-standing dispute over the strategy of insurrection. The GPP preferred an extended rural campaign, while the TP argued for the necessity of organisation of the urban masses before an armed uprising.

This dispute has now been resolved, as is evident from the co-ordination of urban guerrilla activity and strike action with major military operations in the north and on the Costa Rican border.

## Position adopted

It would appear that the TP is now virtually non-existent, but it is clear that its position has been adopted by the GPP.

The major differences within the FSLN are not, however, over military strategy but over politics and specifically between the GPP and the 'Terceristas' (Third Party).

The Terceristas faction acquired its name through mediating between the other FSLN groups but it has now become the largest section and its leadership is almost entirely comprised of social democrats.

The Terceristas have endeavoured to subordinate all

political differences and discussion to the task of removing Somoza.

The dropping of an ideological identification from the Sandinistas programme is, of course, ideal for the Terceristas' aim.

They seek only a platform around which they can draw optimum support from the middle classes and petty bourgeoisie, retain the support of the masses and yet restrict the movement towards a full social revolution.

## Broader base

There is no doubt that the unification has broadened the base of opposition and facilitated great advances in organising the battle to topple Somoza.

In this sense it bears all the hall-marks of the operation of a united front.

Nevertheless, it is the Terceristas who hold the commanding influence, the cash, and recognition by Venezuela, Mexico and Costa Rica, along with having the main national leaders, and the critical alliance with the bourgeoisie.

The class nature of the struggle therefore remains concealed and is constantly repressed.

On the other hand, the GPP has been to the fore in organising popular resistance, particularly in Esteli and Leon, key centres in the struggle.

Moreover, the extreme brutality of the war (at least 3,000 dead since September) and the very rapid rise in popular mobilisation have brought about a movement that is increasingly challenging not just Somoza but the entire system that preserved him in power and imposed such wretched deprivation upon the masses.

Hence, the experience of the last year poses a grave threat to the popular frontism of the Terceristas and a great political challenge to the 'marxists' in the FSLN.

## Hanging on

The waging of the war remains the most bitter and immediate task. Several times Somoza's fall has been confidently predicted but he has still been able to hang on.

own substantial property, but this would provide them with scant relief.

In the last year unemployment has risen from 45% to 65%. In 1977 growth in GNP was 5.5%; in 1978 it was minus 5.3%.

The foreign debt stands at 75% of GNP and the rise in the cost of living for 1979 is forecast to be at least 50%.

## Violence

In the face of this and the extensive mobilisation of the masses it is hard to imagine how any regime that does not undertake basic reforms could survive without engendering further violence.

To date the Guard has proved loyal and the FSLN strategy of capturing towns and then holding out against the counter-offensive has been unsuccessful—just as the general strikes of the spring of 1978 were insufficient without armed support from the guerrillas.

These lessons have been learnt and in the last two weeks the new revolutionary offensive has combined the strategies.

The FSLN has taken the towns of Leon and Jinotega in the north at the same time as opening a major attack from the Costa Rican border while the urban proletariat has declared a general strike in Managua.

The current offensive came to a head over the weekend of June 2nd-3rd with Managua brought to a standstill on Monday the 4th.

It remains to be seen whether this will be enough to dislodge Somoza, but it is crystal clear that he will go before long.

This will undoubtedly be a heroic and substantial victory for the Nicaraguan masses. But the political battle will be far from over. We need only look at Iran to grasp this basic lesson of the overthrow of absolutism.

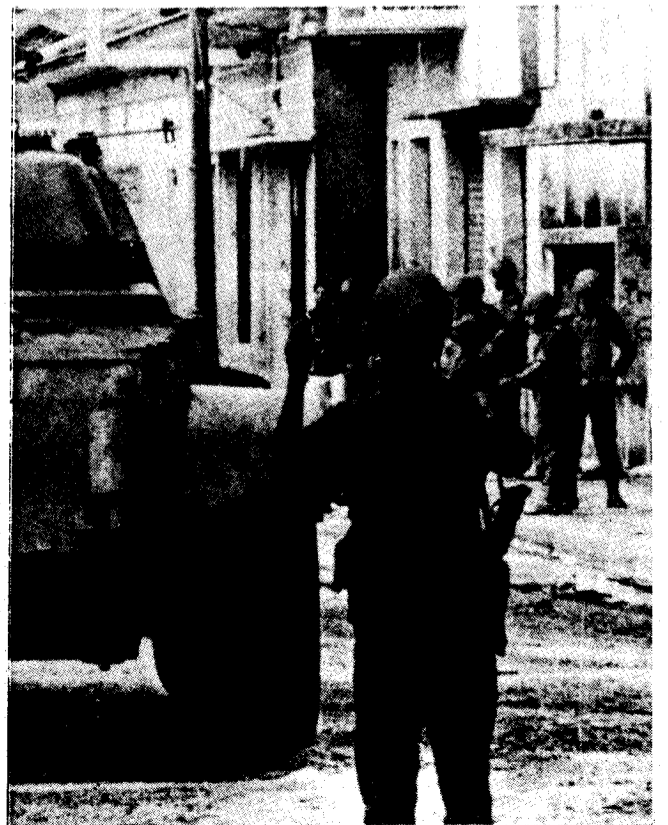
## Trotskyist party

It is on this basis that we must continue to give our fullest support to the anti-imperialist struggles of the masses of Central America and within that support fight for a Trotskyist political leadership that extends the war to an assault on the economic, social and political structure of capitalism.

It is only in this way that the separate struggles of anti-imperialist united fronts throughout the world can achieve a major onslaught on the system itself.



Somoza



Somoza's troops on the streets

# PRESS GANG



Stockbrokers and their clients have been voting with their feet over Howe's budget. The stock market has been plunging ever since.

But no hesitation can be found in the Tory Press.

Unable to resist either the corny pun on Howe's name, or the effect on jobs and prices, the 'pop' papers all settled for some variation of the *Express* headline "Howe's That?"

For good measure the *Express* had a cartoon of Howe as a wicket keeper, shattering three stumps which symbolise the vices that workers are supposedly imbued with from birth.

The press proclaimed the budget as a revolution. At one and the same time it was a budget to restore "incentives" and a budget which put the tax burden 'where it belonged' — on the necessities of life bought by the working class.

The tax cuts were hailed as liberating both "the top and bottom ends of tax paying" (*Telegraph*). Of course, a wage earner on £48 per week had been 'liberated' to the tune of £1.48 per week, while the

company boss on £30,000 had something more to celebrate, with a take-home increase of £83.25 a week.

But the opinions expressed in the press were not economic assessments of the budget so much as political approval for its reactionary aims.

Frances Cairncross in the *Guardian* rambled on for several hundred words trying to find economic reasons for her belief that "it may even turn out to be a good budget" — before admitting that her assessment was based on her own reactionary political beliefs.

"Perhaps people have become impatient with the shortcomings in British society which have caused our economic decline — with undervalued management, anarchic labour practices, class divisions, too much government and too little individual responsibility".

The *Financial Times*, however, did have second thoughts. Having at first cautiously approved the budget as a translating of election pledges into practice it began to admit that the problems all lie ahead.

Samuel Brittan, arch-opponent of Treasury economists, commented:

"It is hard to avoid the

opinion that the budget has been almost deliberately drawn up to vindicate those in the Treasury who confidently expect a wage freeze next Autumn followed by a return to pay controls."

Malcolm Rutherford in the same paper said:

"This is a budget of a government determined that its policies will be carried out. The problem is simply that it has got to be shown that it can be done. The budget therefore remains an act of faith."

Summing up the few days following the budget, the FT, in its leader column, pointed out that workers had learnt to "respond to militancy", and lamented:

"They are more concerned with their relative places in the heap than with the total and real output available to provide real incomes."

The FT declared that unless 'militancy' could be defeated, the budget's benefits could not be gathered in by the Tories.

The FT is the worried voice of British bosses trembling before the struggles to come.

The 'pop' press has opened its champagne too soon.

# Step forward in nurseries fight

Titled 'A Woman's Right to Work and the Need for Day Care', a successful day school held by Leicester Trades Council last Saturday drew an audience of 35 public sector workers and nursery campaigners.

They discussed the way forward in the fight against the cuts and the struggle for nursery facilities.

The main speaker was Ann-Marie Sweeney from the Oxford City Nursery Campaign, who gave a detailed analysis of the TUC's Report on provisions for the under-fives.

Bringing out the Report's strengths and weaknesses, she showed how the TUC is hoping

to stifle any efforts to force them to fight for even a single one of the Report's recommendations.

She stressed that the immediate starting point must be effective action to defend the skeleton nursery provision that exists now and that is threatened by the cuts.

Drawing on the experience of the defence of the South Oxford nursery class, she pointed to the need for occupation, linked to supporting strike action to fight closures.

The day-school was chaired by Helen Flack on behalf of the Leicester Trades Council Women's Sub-Committee. She put before the school a main resolution offering guidance to struggles now on the agenda in

the Leicester area. The resolution which was unanimously passed declared that:

"This school, mindful of the chronic lack of day care provision in Leicestershire and the country as a whole, adopts the following programme as the basis for a campaign of action to secure for women the right to work.

1) No to the cuts in public spending! Restore and improve all social services, by linking spending on those services to the rate of inflation as assessed by committees of trade unionists and housewives.

2) Where cuts are planned they must be resisted — if necessary by action linked with strike action. We also call on the trade unions to defend workplace nurseries where they are threatened.

3) All new nursery classes and schools must be opened.

4) The books of the Local Authorities must be opened to elected committees from the labour movement (including nursery campaigns, etc) to ascertain the way public money is used up in crippling interest charges and profiteering by private firms.

5) The Women's Sub-Committee should initiate a local labour movement inquiry, drawing in parents and tenants associations, to investigate the nature of existing facilities and the needs of parents and children (including after-school and holiday provision)."



# Bombings and the Irish struggle

Dear Editor,

Being a regular reader of your usually excellent paper and its untiring battle on behalf of a united Workers Republic of Ireland I wish to comment on your article Irish Bombings: A Disastrous Tactic (SP131).

I do think that your correspondent gave in this article a very brief and blurred picture of the role of the IRA in Northern Ireland.

When the war developed out of the Civil Rights struggles, the IRA, as Captain Terrence O'Neill said, 'had ceased to exist'.

The Protestants had run the country for 50 years.

Protestant mobs backed by a heavily armed police force, 99% Protestant, and the armed thugs known as the 'B' Specials launched vicious attacks on the Catholic community.

After the burning of the Bogside where they met no resistance to their murderous actions, they returned the next night to finish the job.

## Young and old

They were met by barricades manned by young (e.g. Bernadette Devlin) and old alike.

These people knew what to expect from the Orange mobs from the experience of their parents and grandparents—they knew how to improvise, hence the petrol bombs, etc.

Even after the disbanding of the 'B' Specials the thugs were active again in the newly formed and better armed Ulster Defence Regiment or one of the Loyalist para-military groups such as the UVF, etc.

The recent case of the Shankill Butchers, who wore uniforms and carried arms supplied by HM Government, and the actions of the troops themselves shows the situation in which the IRA operates, in which it has grown and now commands the support it does in the Catholic areas.

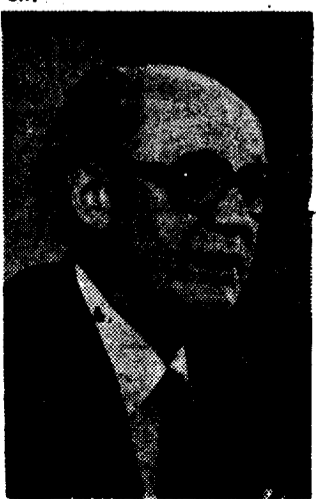
A war of attrition is being carried out in the 6 counties and the British labour movement has by and large remained silent.

The IRA has appealed to the British trade unions and where has it got them?

As to the bombing in Ulster, the IRA have repeatedly said that they will make it impossible for the British to rule Ulster, and they echo the thoughts and hopes of the vast majority of Catholics in the North.

They are not issued with arms or armoured vehicles by HM Government, nor do they have fresh battalions of reinforcements flown in from England and Germany.

They do the best they can with what they can make themselves, and the stuff they make seems to improve as time goes on.



Lynch

I am sure that they aren't happy about civilian deaths in England or Ireland, and I'm sure that they must be very bitter about the Catholic dead in Ulster.

They have seen their people machine-gunned on their way to work, at work, on their way home from work, machine-gunned and bombed sitting having a drink.

I am sure they felt it when Marie Drum was shot in a hospital which was under military control. Her only crime was telling the British to go home and that if they didn't that the IRA would knock Belfast down stone by stone.

There are still plenty of people like Mrs. Drum left and they can't shoot them all.

Your correspondent never mentioned the bombing of Dublin when 34 people died, or the role of the Littlejohn brothers in bank robbing and bombings and who their masters were in England.

## 'Bunch of killers'

Of course the Irish people know that the Dublin bombing was a joint Irish-British affair to make the IRA appear just a crazy bunch of killers and to give the Puppet government of Ireland an excuse to introduce their infamous Emergency Measures.

If you must criticise the tactics of the IRA you have a responsibility to stress the background against which IRA actions in Britain take place.

You must give plenty of examples to drive home to the British people the facts—that it

is the Protestant mobs and the troops who are responsible for the violence, and that the IRA are fighting for the defence of the Catholic community.

Willie Moloney, Coventry

## We reply

As a regular reader of Socialist Press, Willie Moloney must have recognised that our sharp criticisms of some of the tactics employed by the IRA take place within the context of our unconditional support for their right to struggle for national liberation in Ireland, and our fight for the defeat of the British imperialist army.

It is of course absolutely correct for socialists to recognise the material conditions and the sheer weight of military repression that drives some of the most militant of the Catholic minority into armed struggle.

We stand unreservedly on the side of those that are forced to take up arms to defend the Catholic ghettos from the vicious attacks of Loyalist murder squads, army gunmen and RUC/UDR thugs.

But our support for such struggles does not oblige us to support every aspect of the tactics adopted by the republican



forces: on the contrary where such tactics in our view unnecessarily weaken the struggle and strengthen the forces of reaction, we have an obligation to speak out and to stress our alternative.

The problem for socialists in responding to the recent spate of letter-bombs in Birmingham sums up the bankruptcy of the IRA's established tactic of bombing militarily useless civilian targets in Britain and Ireland.

Still no-one has claimed responsibility for these bombs — which have needlessly endangered innocent postal workers. In many ways these bombs have the hallmarks of a clumsy and reactionary provocation designed to whip up hostility to the IRA.

But the IRA's own record means that we cannot rule out the possibility that the bombs were actually sent by honest,

but totally misguided, republican forces.

The very fact that the question "who sent the bombs?" has to be asked indicates the futility of a nationalist strategy that rests on individual terror, and which has historically always failed to grasp the necessity of mobilising the Irish and also the British working class in mass action to force the British out of Ireland and overthrow capitalism, North and South.

We will continue to defend the republican movement against state-sponsored army and Loyalist terror and repression: but as Marxists and as conscious defenders of the Irish struggle, we will continue also to oppose dead-end nationalism and to fight for the working class programme and orientation that alone can lead to an Irish workers' republic.



PHOTO: Derek Speers, IFL

Sinn Fein in conference: offers no lead to working class

# Only a sliding scale of wages can protect against A BLIZZARD OF PRICE RISES

A monumental rise in the cost of living faces the working class in the aftermath of the Tory Budget, though only a fraction of these increases are openly admitted by Tory leaders.

Of course the raising of VAT to an across-the-board 15% will add dramatically to the cost of necessary household items.

But the Budget also included a series of measures that will increase local authority rates; increase the prices of gas, electricity and public transport; more than double prescription charges; further



Howe increase the formidable cost of dental treatment; drive up mortgage rates and the cost of bank overdrafts; and add another increase to the

soaring price of petrol.

This spate of price increases—which directly or indirectly affect every working class family—comes on top of existing rates of inflation—currently estimated at 10.3%.

Indeed the arrival of the Tories in office has prompted every employer

to whack in price increases, secure in the knowledge that they will not have to undergo even the token scrutiny of Labour's toothless old Price Commission.

Last week alone saw a staggering 463 price increases. This of course is long before the inflationary effects of the Budget or the

rocketing price of oil, petrol and diesel begin to make themselves felt.

On top of all this, Agriculture Minister Peter Walker has announced the tactfully-delayed devaluation of the "Green Pound" which will raise prices of staple fresh foods—including butter, cheese, bacon and

pork—and thus gradually drive up also a whole range of processed foods as well.

While Treasury figures disputed whether the annual rate of inflation would turn out to be 16% or 17½%, there can be no serious analyst who doubts that the figure must exceed 20%—threatening to cut the buying power of workers' wages by one fifth!

Against this the ludicrously tiny token tax concessions to workers in Howe's Budget can be seen in their proper context—as a sop designed to head off an inevitable tide of militancy on wages in the coming months.

Clearly major wage increases are going to be necessary if workers are to catch up with inflation.

But simply demanding fixed-figure increases in a period of runaway inflation offers no real guarantee of living standards.

The fight must be stepped up in every union for the submission of big wage claims linked to cost-of-living clauses that will provide automatic increases in line with rising prices.

But at a time when government figures on "average wages" and the cost of living are so obviously miles away from the reality faced by every working class family, it is essential that the fight for cost-of-living clauses is linked *not to the Tories' Retail Prices Index* but to figures compiled by elected committees of trade unionists and housewives.

Such figures would take into account the actual prices of the goods that workers buy, the effects of taxation, rates, mortgages and other factors on the cost of living, and also regional variations in rents, transport costs and other expenses.

In preparing the ground for the coming battle on wages, union branches and stewards' committees should consider setting up such Price Committees to reveal clearly to the workforce on the shop floor the extent to which their living standards are under attack, and the level to which wages must be increased simply to retain existing standards.

## The Tory BUDGET



### PUBLIC SECTOR: LINK SPENDING TO PRICES

Howe's Budget did not spell out dramatic cuts in spending on the National Health Service or Education. He did not have to.

Cuts in these sectors under Labour Chancellor Healey are already laying waste essential services.

And by setting course for a 20% inflation rate, Howe knows quite well that the rigid imposition of existing cash limits on these services will in fact force through a new devastating series of cutbacks without provoking unnecessary advanced public outcry.

Meanwhile the decision to more than double prescription charges and increase dental charges will act as a further means of deterring working class families from seeking necessary treatment.

Public sector workers therefore face a double offensive—on their own jobs, and on vitally necessary social services.

The fight against the cuts requires not the verbal bombast of Geoffrey Drain (NALGO) and Alan Fisher (NUPE) but practical action by workers in the public sector—occupation of threatened facilities; strikes against redundancies, and full-scale blacking of private patients.

In taking such action, health workers, teachers and others must fight through local trades councils, and through forming councils of action, for the broadest possible supporting action from workers in industry and elsewhere in the public sector.

In opposition to the Tory strategy of public spending cuts to boost the profits of private industry, the fight must be for a restoration of the 1974 levels of social service spending, protected against inflation through an end to cash limits and a sliding scale of spending based on figures worked out by elected committees of trade unionists and housewives.

## Jobs axed by the hundred thousand

The day before the Budget, the Tory government revealed that they are carrying out a further review of Civil Service staff levels designed to cut anything from 75,000 to 150,000 jobs over the next three years.

This is over and above the freeze on recruitment and promotion already in force, which is designed to cut 22,000 Civil Service jobs.

On top of this, Howe's Budget has now cut £300m from the local authority rate support grant—part of the money allocated by the Labour government to help defray the cost of the local government pay settlement.

This will herald a new round of cuts in the services provided by councils—

bringing further job-loss and a decline in the living conditions of the thousands of elderly, sick and others that depend upon local authority provision.

But of course the Tory war on jobs is not restricted to direct cuts in government and council pay rolls.

#### First taste

The £1.5 billion spending cuts which Tories now say are only a first taste of what is to come will also hold up building work and other schemes: they will depress the entire economy. Supplier firms to the public sector will see orders cut, and seek to lay off workers.

But at the same time the Budget's simultaneous unleashing of inflation, raising of interest rates, and cutback in demand will have the effect of squeezing whole sections of less

profitable and small businesses out of the market altogether.

Small businesses will be unable to absorb the huge price increases they face in raw materials and services in the same way as their larger competitors: they will be priced out of existence as the slump gathers pace.

Those that gain from their failure will be the monopolies, the multinationals and the bankers who decide Tory policy.

Less profitable firms will be unable to afford the colossal 14% interest payments on bank loans, and will be hit by the overall fall in production and purchasing power.

#### Desperate

In each case, increasingly desperate sections of employers will seek to vent

their fury and solve their problems at the expense of their workforce—through sackings and speed-up.

Already it is forecast that the Budget measures will increase unemployment this year by at least 150,000.

But union leaders who seek only to win concessions from employers within the capitalist system will meekly accept each employer's insistence on preserving his "viability".

The reality is that as the slump gathers pace fewer and fewer capitalist firms will be "viable" at all—and those that remain so will achieve this profitability only through drastically increased exploitation of the working class.

In fighting in defence of jobs in the coming period, workers must start *not* from the problems of the employers—which are

caused by the crisis of their anarchic capitalist system—but from the defence of their own independent class interests.

Employers' pleas of falling sales, empty order books and impending bankruptcy must be met by the demand that the firms' account books be opened to the inspection of elected trade union committees.

The figures revealed will show the connection between the individual firm and the major banks and trusts; the behind-the-scenes wheeling and dealing of capitalism; and the essential anarchy of the system which means that no jobs are safe.

#### Occupation

They will show the necessity for a struggle to defend *all* jobs and hard-won working conditions.

Redundancies must be fought around the demand for *work-sharing on full pay*.

Threatened factories must be occupied by workers who otherwise face an indefinite future on the growing dole queues.

The fight must be taken up against the abject collaboration of union leaders with the employers and for the ousting of the Labour leaders whose own reactionary policies more than doubled unemployment, paved the way for the Tories' return, and now oppose their removal.

Only the nationalisation of major industry and the banks without compensation as part of a planned socialist economy under workers' management offers workers job security and the prospect of improved working conditions.

"Many workers accept the socialist argument but have a healthy contempt for 'fringe groups'. . . . It is true that the ideas of revolutionary socialism do attract groups of people who preach like the Dissenting religious sects of the last century. These people are inspired by the idea of a 'millennium', a sudden convulsive burst into the promised land. But they are terrified by the gulf between this 'promised land' and the stubborn refusal of workers to move towards it. They take refuge in their own smallness. They comfort themselves that one day the workers will move, and will look for leadership. And so they seek to build that leadership among themselves, a leadership which preaches at workers from on high.

Their aim is theoretical purity — but theoretical purity without any contact with real life or real human conditions. So they turn in among themselves, purge themselves of deviants and pour oceans of bile on one another in order to prove their purity. They develop a language peculiar only to themselves which frustrates and embarrasses workers who come in contact with it."

(Paul Foot: *Why You Should Be a Socialist*, p 91. Our emphasis)

**The election of a Tory government presents a new situation for those seeking to build a revolutionary socialist party in the British working class.**

In the first weeks of this government Thatcher, Joseph and company have shown us clearly that they intend to carry out a full-blooded attack on workers' organisations and standard of living.

Already the fake lefts in the Labour Party such as Benn have begun their moves to adapt to the anti-Tory consciousness of workers—all the better to defend and derail the struggles, which will emerge.

Their fake "left" statements are peddled as good coin by the Stalinists of the Communist Party.

In the trade unions, bureaucrats fall over each other in the rush to talk to the Tories, in the vain hope that Thatcher can be persuaded to soften her anti-working class plans.

**Opportunities**

The Tory attacks, combined with fraudulent demagoguery from Labour 'lefts' and Stalinists along with betrayals by the trade union bureaucrats are the obstacles facing those workers who are seeking to defend themselves.

Organisations to the left of the Communist Party are faced with the task of laying before workers their perspectives for an alternative road to that of class collaboration.

Unprecedented opportunities are opening up for revolutionaries for one simple reason: the working class internationally faces the choice—socialism or barbarism.

The Workers Socialist League has been and will continue to be built as an independent organisation.

This is because we are of the opinion that now, *more than ever*, a clear perspective and principled programme of action must be given to workers coming into struggle.

**No perspective**

For us the battles to come will involve not only a struggle against the existing misleaders of the working class but also the sharpest criticisms of those in the "revolutionary left" whose practice time and again proves that they have no serious perspective for the struggles ahead.

We have for this reason frequently polemicised against the International Marxist Group for its catch-all "unity" drive.

This new series of articles is intended to deepen the polemic in an effort to further develop our membership, confront serious forces in the IMG with the bankruptcy of their organisation's present path and to educate those who might take the IMG's conceptions as good coin.

Equally important, however, will be to begin a long-overdue dialogue with the membership and periphery of the Socialist Workers Party.

**Biggest**

As the biggest group to the left of the Communist Party, the SWP will continue to attract to its ranks many people who—if the balance of forces were different—might easily join the WSL.

At the same time the twists and turns of the SWP leaders



Paul Foot

will continue to cause problems for the membership.

As the struggles mount in scale and complexity the SWP's particular brand of syndicalism can only be further exposed.

The SWP has no conception of how to go from here to the socialist revolution.

But it would be wrong to assume that this bankruptcy of programme will automatically lead to its disintegration in face of mounting class struggle.

The SWP leadership has shown in the past that it can opportunistically adapt itself to changing circumstances and find new ways of posing as 'the' revolutionary party.

**Industrial base**

It entered the period of the Labour government with a substantial membership—including a significant industrial base, which had been built during the Heath government.

This industrial base was brought into the International Socialists (as the SWP was then called) on the basis of the most minimal trade union militancy and anti-Tory rhetoric.

On 30 March 1974 the First National Rank and File Movement Delegate Conference was held.

"It was sponsored by the following rank and file papers, Collier, Carworker, GEC Rank and File, London Transport Platform, Hospital Worker, Rank and File Teacher, Tech Teacher, NALGO Action, Redder Tape and Case Con. The CP controlled papers, Flashlight and Building Workers Charter, and the dockers rank and file Dockworker were the only papers of any significance which did not sponsor the Conference. Some 500 delegates from 270 trade union bodies reflecting the main areas of recent rank and file activity attended, a considerable achievement in the face of sniping sectarian attacks from many individual CP members and from the organised right wing.

They included some 51 AUEW bodies, two of which were District Committees, 37 TGWU bodies, 28 NALGO branches, 12 NUT bodies, 9 CPSA branches and 19 Trades Councils."

(S. Jefferys *The Challenge of the Rank and File*, International Socialism 76, March 1975).

The rank and file organisations cited by Jefferys had been built in the period of Tory attacks (1970-74).

On the basis of a significant recruitment from the student radicalisation around the Vietnam war, IS was able to build a big organisation with

many industrial worker members.

Indeed all the self-styled revolutionary organisations grew during this period; but IS grew more than the others.

**Minimal programme**

This was primarily because of its minimal trade union militant programme which refused to struggle for the political development of workers; its populist denunciations of the evils of capitalism and its simplistic and un Marxist economic analysis which put the blame for the mounting crisis of British capitalism on "greedy bosses".

Future articles in this series will examine IS's economic theory, its attitude to building the party and its theory of rank and fileism.

What is important to draw out in this article is the fact that the opportunist political line peddled by Tony Cliff and the IS leaders has not gone unchallenged.

But these challenges were met in each case by ruthless bureaucratic repression.

**Crimes**

Those who think that the SWP's lack of internal democracy is a new phenomenon should consider this catalogue of crimes.

And those who like Foot bemoan the existence of many organisations on the left should know that quite a number of these have been set up in the wake of expulsions from the IS group.

In 1971, for example, Workers Fight, the only organisation to respond to a "unity" call made by the IS leadership in 1968 were expelled.

"No disciplinary charges were laid against the Tendency nor could they have been . . . the IS leadership's explanation for the expulsion move was that the Trotskyist Tendency called IS 'Centrist' . . ."

But this explains nothing. We never characterised IS otherwise, either before the 1968 fusion or after."

(*Workers Fight* no. 1, January 14, 1972).

Today Workers Fight is the International Communist League (ICL).



Southall youth attempt to drive fascists off the streets. ANL sticks to pacifist line

PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

# SWP: THE OF 'NO P

This is the first in a series of major articles by Keith White who Socialist Workers Party, in the context of the new problems facing government.

In 1973 the Revolutionary Tendency was expelled. This opposition—led by, amongst others, the present leadership of the Revolutionary Communist Group—had attacked IS's theories on economics, and its lack of a serious orientation to winning workers from social democracy, and had argued for a programme of transitional demands.

Their platform was not circulated and they were expelled for political differences. In 1974 the Left Opposition was expelled. Its platform 'In Defence of Marxism' was as usual not circulated by the IS leadership. At the 1974 IS conference Left Opposition members were not able to argue for their positions as they did not control

a branch from which they could elect delegates. The National Secretary then wrote individually to each of the LO's supporters as follows:

"Dear ( ), I am informing you that the National Committee on 13 October 1974 has expelled you from the organisation. Yours fraternally, Jim Nichol."

In many ways the LO's critique of IS was the best yet, but it lacked cohesion and an agreed perspective.

The RCG, Workers Fight, IMG and even the WRP recruited members out of the Left Opposition.

The LO had originated in a tendency known as the Left Faction which subsequently split into two. In 1975 the second part of the Left Faction was expelled and formed the present day Workers Power group.

All these oppositions criticised IS from the left.

But there were already rumblings and disputes within the IS leadership itself. Over the next couple of years these differences led to a steady replacement of many of the old guard leaders and their disappearance from the organisation.

In Birmingham 17 IS members in the AUEW left after two others were expelled for wishing to support the Stalinist led Broad Left slate in the union elections and opposing the standing of an IS candidate.

These and others including a number of the old IS leadership came together to form the now

PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report



The 1974 Rank and File Conference



PHOTO: Mark Risher: IFL

Trade union militancy is not lacking in the working class: the crisis is one of leadership

# POLITICS POLITICS'

ch will examine various aspects of the politics of the British  
ing revolutionary socialists after the reelection of the Tory

defunct Workers League. Behind the drift away of the industrial members was the turn IS made—particularly during the life of the last Labour government—away from the building of rank and file groups. Instead it lurched towards 'get rich quick' electioneering stunts and the "Right to Work" campaigns, which were conducted outside of any political struggle against the trade union bureaucracy.

## Routine union work

The central thrust of the IS leadership was around the building of "the revolutionary party" and this reached its logical conclusion in the declaration of the Socialist Workers Party. Many industrial members did not like these developments. They had been brought into IS on the basis of steady, routine trade union work on a programme, centred on the building of rank and file organisations.

The new methods grated on them and many voted against them with their feet. A layer of disgruntled IS ex-leaders in opposition however still clung to the past and regarded the launching of a party as premature. They hankered after the old days. This whole period is a complex and messy one and the purpose of this article is not to give a history of the IS/SWP. Suffice it to say that the departures from IS/SWP have been on such a scale that there now exists a sort of IS "old boys and girls" club, which

defends what it calls the IS tradition."

This group clearly does not as yet know where to go. Calling itself the International Socialist Alliance, it has, along with the SWP, been the primary focus of the IMG's unity offensive.

The IS/SWP has been built on the method of pragmatic empiricism and what accompanies that method—political opportunism.

For the IS/SWP a political line is regarded as correct if it "works"—i.e. if a steady flow of recruits and an increase in paper sales follows from what you say in your paper.

Before 1968 IS had little in the labour movement. But as the May/June events in France brought the working class into the centre of the political arena in Western Europe IS was quick to cash in.

Up to 1974 its syndicalist perspective of mere trade union militancy brought it many members.

## Bureaucracy

But in the final days of the Tory government and throughout the life of the Labour government, more political questions were posed than IS could answer.

How do you fight the trade union bureaucracy and the Labour lefts? What can you do with a programme of mere trade union militancy when the workers are, to judge from surface appearances, accepting the policies of the Labour

government?

The WSL as a Trotskyist movement understood that far from "accepting" the policies of the Labour and TUC leaders, workers were grappling with the problem of *how* to confront Wilson, Callaghan and Healey, *how* to get round the problem of a trade union bureaucracy fighting tooth and nail to protect social democracy.

We battled to give leadership and perspective and we were ready to play a role totally out of proportion to our size when the pay battles erupted.

## Right to work

The IS/SWP who refuse to pose the real political problems facing workers as ones of leadership simply threw up their hands and turned to the easy route to growth through the "Right to Work" and electioneering campaigns.

The election campaigns are in fact another illustration of the IS/SWP pragmatism.

Having declared the Labour Party "dead" and having found the building of rank and file groups far from easy, they stood in a number of by-elections and received derisory votes.

There is, of course, nothing wrong in receiving derisory votes if your election programme and campaign can play an important part in showing the way forward for workers in the day to day struggle for socialism.

The IS/SWP, however, which cannot by its very nature put

forward a clear revolutionary programme or principled perspective for day to day work, turned away from electoral politics declaring that it "didn't work".

## Propaganda

The most recent stunt which the SWP have initiated is the Anti Nazi League.

Here the threat of fascism was "combated" by a propaganda campaign which centred on the evoking of hostility within Britain to the German fascists.

The aim was to be the reduction of the fascist vote through the destruction of its "respectable" image.

The low votes of the NF in the general election have been claimed by the SWP as a vindication of the ANL.

In the process, however, the SWP leadership has created considerable problems for itself at the base of the organisation, where many members—particularly workers—react with embarrassment and disquiet at the ANL's shameless pacifism.

After the Leicester demonstration—where the ANL's plans for a peaceful protest on the opposite side of town from the fascists were frustrated and a sizable counter-demonstration fought to get at the fascists—more problems will certainly arise within the ANL.

## Ditch ANL?

In this situation it is by no means unlikely that the SWP will make moves to jettison the ANL—particularly as the NF have over recent months turned more seriously towards open physical attacks on working class organisations and the black community.

Indeed the IMG seems to sense this possible development and the latest *Socialist Challenge* carries an article stressing the need to continue the building of the ANL, and the importance of more carnivals.

This subservience on the part of the IMG to the latest fad of the SWP runs alongside their appeals to that organisation for the building of a 'united revolutionary party'.

In the battles to come under the Tories the calls for "unity"

will be widespread.

The WSL is, of course, in favour of the maximum unity against the class enemy.

But this unity must *not* be at the expense of the elaboration of a clear perspective for struggles in progress, and the fight for leadership.

More than ever it will be necessary to clarify the theoretical and practical bases of the revolutionary party which must be built.

The boxed quotation from Paul Foot brings together many of the more disgusting aspects of SWP politics.

Its talk of the "purging of deviants" is rank hypocrisy.

But the passage, with its scornful remarks about those who "preach at workers from on high", also rings with the SWP's total refusal to challenge the political limits of spontaneous trade union militancy.

For the SWP the struggle is of course not for theoretical purity—whether in "contact with real life" or not.

## Follow moods

The sole objective is to fit the policies of the movement to the current moods and feelings of the working class, so as not to impede recruitment.

This, of course, is why *Socialist Worker* can so easily avoid the use of Marxist terminology, which is also scathingly dismissed by Foot.

Far from equipping its worker recruits with the scientific knowledge, the method and the programme necessary to lead the socialist revolution, the SWP—both in its press and in its day-to-day work—leaves militants at exactly the political level with which they come into the movement.

There is no attempt to combat syndicalism, adventurism, or opportunism. No training in fighting the labour bureaucracy.

## Patronising

But this is not because workers are incapable of making such political development.

Indeed it is not workers who are "frustrated" and "embarrassed" by the proper explanation and use of the science and language of Marxism

but the patronising petty bourgeois leadership of the SWP, who seek to build a party in the working class by themselves consciously descending to a political level actually lower than many individual trade union militants.

The way to combat workers' "healthy contempt" for "fringe groups" is *not*, as the SWP believe, to abandon the struggle to develop workers politically or posture as a "mass party", but to present to workers an honest, correct and principled programme on which they can carry out their struggles in the union and learn in practice the treachery of the bureaucracy and the inadequacy of other 'left' groups.

## Cynicism

Without such a programme, workers' "healthy contempt" will certainly evolve sooner or later into cynicism and open opportunism.

Foot's statement, however, appalling though it is, does address itself to many of the problems would-be revolutionary socialists must face.

How do you win the working class to revolutionary politics? What is the link between theory and practice?

These questions and the perennial complaint that there are "too many left groups" must be answered by Trotskyists.

In its daily work the WSL does in fact answer them. Our practice shows those interested enough to examine it just how you build a revolutionary party in the working class.

But a revolutionary party is *above all* conscious. It has continually to refine its theoretical understanding so as to sharpen its practice.

This series will attempt to show the link between IS/SWP theory and practice and the bankruptcy of that theory and practice and the way in which the IMG adapts to it.

It will also outline the alternative to SWP/IMG politics and what we think of unity both in the day to day working class struggle and in the relations between ourselves and other left groups.

Continued next week



Stan Pemberton, TGWU Chairman and figurehead of the protest against the closure of Dunlop's Speke factory. He opposed the policy of occupation from the outset, as did the entire 'action committee'. *Socialist Worker* however praised the 'action committee's' paper and refused to offer any criticism of Pemberton.

# IMG AGREE TO CIRCULATE 'POISONED WELL'



We reprint below the text of a letter received last week from the International Marxist Group, British section of the 'United' Secretariat of the Fourth International. The end of the letter has been slightly abridged for lack of space.

Dear Socialist Press

With reference to the letter you published last week headed 'Unanswered questions for the IMG'. We would like to put the record straight for your readers concerning relations between the IMG, United Secretariat of the Fourth International and the WSL.

It is most unfortunate that the WSL leadership has seen fit to make our correspondence public before we have exhausted the possibilities of resolving any outstanding problems which exist between our two organisations through constituted meetings of our two leaderships.

What is worse, however, is not just the partiality of the letters published in simply reprinting one letter from a long file of correspondence between us, but most important of all the outright lie which is perpetrated in your introductory explanation to the letter.

You say categorically: 'No reply has yet been received to any of the points which it

makes'. I enclose a copy of the letter dated November '78 replying to the one you published.

I would hope that you can publish it, too, in full, for the benefit of your readers and draw their attention to your error in claiming that no such letter was received.

But let me also take time out to reiterate our proposals as well as renewing our appeal in front of the readership of *Socialist Press*.

For as you are perfectly aware our proposal in this letter for a meeting between a representative of your leadership, a comrade from the Bureau of the Fourth International and representatives of the IMG leadership did in fact take place in early January on the evening of the school of the Fourth International to which you made a contribution.

It is we who are awaiting a reply from you on these proposals which were also at that time made in the name of

the International Bureau of the United Secretariat.

1. On the document 'The Poisoned Well', we remain of the opinion that the World Congress discussion is not the appropriate place for the discussion of this text.

For us matters and disputes of history of our movement are best dealt with in party schools, educational publications and so on. This was the meaning of our invitation to you to participate in our last party school on the history of the FI.

You attended and were able to make your points. Our movement abhors the concept of "official" party history, voted on and made the basis of party line and party discipline. This was an importation of Stalin into the Comintern.

Nonetheless, as we spell out in our November letter and as was reiterated at the meeting held with a comrade from the International Bureau, we do not want this organisational dispute

over the fate of your text to get in the way of the political discussion between us and are therefore accordingly prepared to circulate this text to the members of the IMG and the Bureau will inform the sections of its existence and encourage them to circulate it.

As we understood it, you undertook to underwrite the organisational and financial burden of this.

2. On the World Congress. Our proposal to you on the world Congress, made at the meeting with the representative of the comrade from the International Bureau, was that you make a contribution on the five main texts being presented to our upcoming world congress by the USec (viz World Political Resolution, European Resolution, Latin American Resolution, Resolution on the Fight against Women's Oppression and Resolution on Socialist Democracy).

All the points you wish to raise on the question of Stalin-

ism and the fight for the transitional programme can be raised within the framework of these texts. In addition, we invited you to make a specific contribution on our text on Euro-communism.

As you know we have published a public bulletin with the comrades of the OCRFI debating this theme.

A serious choice has to be made by the comrades of the WSL. Do you wish to have a serious discussion with us about the possibility of jointly building a revolutionary international?

If so you have to take issue with us at the level of the perspectives which we are offering and make your points about your view of our record in relation to that.

To insist solely on the question of your view of our record is a half way house. If you have a case, show us how it affects our present perspectives.

This is not to say that we wish to avoid a full blooded

discussion on your 'The Poisoned Well'. We have already made a reply to you at our last national school on the history of the FI to which you were invited to make a contribution.

Moreover, as we have suggested before, we are more than keen to organise joint membership meetings with you to discuss some of the questions you raise in 'The Poisoned Well'.

To facilitate this, some comrades of the IMG are in the process of preparing a rejoinder to your text. We will send this to you in due course.

We look forward to hearing your response.

Revolutionary greetings,  
Brian Grogan  
For IMG Political Bureau.

[Grogan's letter concluded with a third point proposing organisational steps to advance the discussion between the IMG and the WSL].



Trotsky

have for revolutionary tactics and strategy in other capitalist countries!

By pressing for the circulation of *The Poisoned Well* and in replying to the USFI's World Congress Resolutions, therefore, the WSL is attempting to turn the entire world Trotskyist movement towards a study of the actual problems of programme and perspective that must be confronted if leadership is to be given to the working class in today's struggles.

As Trotsky points out, dialectical materialism "starts from experience and always returns to it".

We hope that the welcome decision by the IMG and the USFI to circulate *The Poisoned Well* will therefore help USFI members to understand that the experience of their movement did not begin last year or even at the last USFI World Congress—but carries with it all of the post war problems of the Fourth International.

We repeat our public invitation to the members and the leadership of the IMG, the USFI or other groupings regarding themselves as Trotskyists to reply or enlarge upon *The Poisoned Well* in the pages of our theoretical magazine *Trotskyism Today*.

And we will continue to seek every avenue for the furtherance of this much overdue discussion on programme and principle.

## WE REPLY

# Discussion urgent!

Comrade Grogan is of course quite correct to point out that the exchange of correspondence between the Workers Socialist League and the International Marxist Group on this issue now amounts to "a long file".

Indeed it was very much because of our concern at the apparent impasse in such correspondence after three years of written and verbal exchanges that *Socialist Press* took the initiative in publicising the issues at stake.

It is true also that since the letter which we published in *Socialist Press* was sent to the IMG, we have received a reply—too lengthy to reprint here in full.

But it is quite misleading for Comrade Grogan to cite this November letter as in any way an answer to the points raised by us.

### No undertaking

In particular, the IMG's November letter significantly failed to give any undertaking to circulate *The Poisoned Well*, arguing that:

"We stand by our original position that the World Congress debate is not the best format to have a discussion with you about the positions contained in the 'Poisoned Well'."

"However, the last thing that we want is for this organisational question to become the main point of dispute and discussion between us. We want to get down to political discussion with you as soon as possible."

"Accordingly the IMG will press for your document to be circulated to the world movement."



### SE Asian wars have split 'united' USFI leadership

[NB: not circulate the document to IMG members. This was followed by the following let-out clause].

"The USec, of course, will have to make its own decisions. You must appreciate the number of nationally based groups which want to circulate material in our discussion."

(...)  
"In any event there is very little likelihood that the USec would assume the burden of the very large technical and financial costs involved in any decision to circulate your document."

(emphasis added)  
But the evasion of the November letter went further, with the announcement that a member of the USFI Bureau would meet WSL representatives not to speak for the USFI, but "to facilitate a USec decision in this matter".

*The Poisoned Well*, when he says that:

"[We are] prepared to circulate the text to the members of the IMG, and the Bureau will inform the sections of its existence and encourage them to circulate it."

We have already taken steps to facilitate this circulation through the production of French, Spanish and Danish language translations. We welcome this positive step by the IMG and the USFI towards fulfilling their initial agreement with us.

As soon as we receive copies of all USFI Resolutions for the coming World Congress, work will begin on a document in reply to them.

This will indeed show the relationship between the historical record of the USFI as discussed in *The Poisoned Well* and its theoretical and practical positions in today's class struggle—as revealed in these Resolutions (all of which have in fact appeared after *The Poisoned Well* was completed).

Such a reply will in no way contradict but rather build on the basic groundwork laid in *The Poisoned Well*.

We have made it plain from our very first statement on the question of the reconstruction of the Trotskyist International (*Fourth International: Problems and Tasks*) that we do wish seriously to discuss with the USFI and with the other international groupings calling themselves Trotskyist.

The purpose of such discussions in our view is to establish whether sufficient basis of agreement can be created on the

principles and method of the Trotskyist programme for the reconstruction of the International as the democratic centralist World Party of Socialist Revolution.

The emergence in recent weeks and months of further splits and tendencies within the world Trotskyist movement—the 'International Tendency' and the 'Bolshevik Tendency' within the USFI; the split within the USFI which has led to the publication of two opposing positions on the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea; the formation of the 'Fourth Internationalist Tendency' from groups expelled from the OCRFI; and the continued crisis within and waves of expulsions from the Healyite IC—all these developments in our view testify to the urgency of a thorough-going discussion of the programme and principles on which the Trotskyist International must be reconstructed.

Far from simply dredging up abstractions or arbitrary points of dead "history", *The Poisoned Well* attempts to examine the actual experience of the post-war Trotskyist movement in its attempts to implement the programme laid down in 1938.

And just as the USFI has been reluctant to discuss these experiences, we note that the most signal omission from the USFI's Resolutions is any serious attempt to examine the practical experiences of its sections even since its last World Congress in 1974.

The World Perspectives Resolution, for instance, contains no examination at all of the immense revolutionary struggles in Portugal between 1974-76 and the lessons it must



# Mob rule versus Teamster militants

Johnny Byrne reviews *The Hoffa Wars, Teamsters, Rebels Politicians and the Mob*, by Dan E. Moldea, published by Paddington Press at £5.95

*The Hoffa Wars* is essential reading for anyone interested in the American labour movement and for anyone involved in the struggle against the manipulation of power under capitalism.

It is only partially concerned with Jimmy Hoffa, former head of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), the world's biggest trade union with 2 million members.

The book traces Hoffa's murky career from militant trade unionist to the day in July 1975 when he was murdered and his body tossed into a steel-crusher to emerge in the words of his adopted son (who was implicated in the killing) as "a goddamn hub cap... a fender being driven around by someone".

### Fascinating

The Hoffa story is fascinating in itself, but the book is also about union leaders who are still very much alive and in control of the IBT, Frank Fitzsimmons and his son, Jackie Presser, Rolland McMaster and sundry other totally corrupt bureaucrats.

It is also about the penetration of organised crime into the US labour movement and the links between 'the mob' and the CIA/FBI in the assassination of the Kennedys, the plots to kill Fidel Castro and the whole rise to power of Richard Nixon.

But most of all *The Hoffa Wars* is about the long struggle of rank-and-file Teamsters to democratise the union in the teeth of countless killings, bombings, beatings and corrupt deals with employers and the underworld.

### Not socialist

It should be stated that Dan Moldea emerges as a liberal reformist, the book is certainly not written from a socialist perspective and his main hero seems to have been Robert Kennedy.

Yet it perfectly illustrates the urgent need for the revolutionary programme in trade union work.

He makes a brilliant job of exposing Fitzsimmons and the corrupt leadership, and at the same time expresses support for Teamster reform groups, (the latest one being TDU—Teamsters for a Democratic Union) in their tactics of going through the courts.

Yet throughout the book the state and the courts are shown to be totally opposed to the interests of the rank-and-file



Teamster democracy in action

Teamster! Indeed he shows very clearly that the biggest sin Hoffa committed was to hand the strongest section of the American working class to U.S. capitalism on a plate.

Anti-union Republicans and Democrats were able to use Hoffa's gangsterism to discredit and browbeat the whole labour movement.

Moldea's book is also extremely well documented. It shows each little link in the chain from the ordinary teamster paying his union dues and pension fund to that money being used to finance everything

from homes and swimming pools for bureaucrats to the killing of John Kennedy, the plots to assassinate Castro, the dope trade, the election of Nixon and the Watergate cover-up.

### Corrupt practices

The IBT membership has been consistently cheated and ground down for the last forty years—both previous IBT leaders, Dave Beck and Hoffa, were jailed for corrupt practices that represented only a tip of the iceberg of their real

activities and it is clear that Frank Fitzsimmons has only escaped the same fate because of his uniquely balanced compromise with politicians and mobsters.

In case anyone thinks that 'the mob' is some sort of outdated side-show in American politics it may be as well to bring in one or two facts.

A conservative estimate of the net profits from illegal and quasi-legal operations of organised crime in the US shows that it generates more than 10 times the profits of Exxon (the largest corporation in America).

'Organised crime' here refers to the activities of the major 'Mafia' families, the leaders of which all have proven close links with the Hoffa/Fitzsimmons/McMaster power axis in the IBT.

One gangland leader, Tony Provenzano, was an IBT vice-president until recently when he was finally jailed for ordering the kidnapping and murder of a Teamster dissident back in 1961.

### Meat hook

The kind of men you come up against if you speak out of turn in the IBT is well illustrated by the case of David Yaras, a former Capone associate who founded IBT Local 320 in Florida.

Before he was jailed for murder Yaras described how he and his henchmen had tortured a suspected government informer for 48 hours, smashing his joints with an ice-pick, hanging him on a meat hook, and burning his genitals off with a blow-torch.

The term 'Teamster business agent' is synonymous with thug or goon in many IBT locals. The violence of the unionisation struggles in America during

the thirties was transformed into violence against the membership by the leadership during the late fifties, the sixties and the seventies.

Countless dissidents were killed, beaten up and intimidated.

In 1969 unofficial strikers had to fight a pitched battle with guns and clubs as Teamster 'officials' tried to get a convoy of lorries through the picket line in order to make good a routine 'sweetheart' contract with the employer.

In 1976 Peter Camarata (leader of Teamsters for a Democratic Union) was nearly kicked to death right in front of Frank Fitzsimmons at a party during the national delegate conference.

Even so, it is the willingness of workers to come forward and fight that shines through the pages of the book.

### Blown up

This militancy has been most continuous in the huge IBT branch that has been the home of the Hoffa/Fitzsimmons/McMaster clique, that is Detroit Local 299. It is worth quoting from the diary of Jim Leavitt, a Detroit activist who helped lead an unofficial strike and angry march on the union hall in 1970:

"Considering the character of our enemy—of which we were and are fully aware—it must have been a form of insanity that forced frail beings like us to override our fears and confusion, to put aside our sense of responsibility to our families, our own pleasures and security, and openly challenge perhaps the most ruthless, powerful group of social criminals this country has ever known... I entirely reject any position that entails anything less than an absolute and complete repudiation of the present Teamster leadership".

This was written shortly after Leavitt's house, containing his wife and children, was blown up by 'persons unknown'.

Though IBT leaders inevitably use witch-hunts to attack dissidents there is little sense of anything other than pure trade union militancy in the various reform groupings that have flared up and been defused in the history of the union.

### Workers defence

TDU had a cost of living clause in its 1976 programme but only to link wages to the government's own inflation figures.

In addition, spontaneous workers defence squads have been formed from time to time. But in general, principled political leadership has been lacking since Farrell Dobbs was jailed in 1941 for 'sedition'.

Hoffa in fact was the main tool of the state in its battle against the Trotskyist leader. As Dobbs said in a television interview some years later:

"Now it is true that Hoffa was among the IBT goon squads that Tobin sent to Minneapolis... That's actually true. But he says in effect there he whipped us. For instance, he was helped by the Minneapolis Police Department, the courts of the city, the county, and the state... the mayor, the governor and an anti-labour law that had been rigged and put through by the governor of the state, and by the FBI, the US Department of Justice and Franklin D. Roosevelt, who then happened to be President of the United States... Under those circumstances you got to admit that Hoffa had just a little help, didn't he?"

### Tactics

Violence is not the only tactic used by the IBT leadership to maintain its stranglehold on the rank and file.

Obviously the bureaucracy has negotiated better conditions

though these negotiations are usually carried out in collaboration with the employer rather than confrontation.

Indeed since the early sixties it has been unofficial action that has won the best conditions.

### Juries bribed

Many dissidents were simply fired from their jobs (and therefore from the union) with the bureaucracy making deals with the bosses not to fight for their reinstatement.

When the going gets rough then juries are bribed, judges are granted favours or key witnesses removed—and all this in conjunction with the more mundane tactics of ballot-rigging, union jobs for old pals, tampering with minutes and fixing rule changes.

With the power of the bureaucrats, the mob, the police, the courts and the government ranged against them it is amazing that Teamster militants have maintained a continuous opposition since Hoffa came to power.

It is easy to point out their political inadequacies, their reliance on legal procedures, their lack of real programme and their occasional tendency to leave the union rather than continue the battle inside (like the Fraternal Association of Steel Haulers, set up by a specially exploited section of drivers in 1967). Yet having said that, *The Hoffa Wars* still stands as testimony to the gut class-conscious militancy which is an essential part of the fight for a revolutionary perspective.



Hoffa



Fitzsimmons

Meanwhile Frank Fitzsimmons squats at the head of the world's most powerful union, an organisation that has the power to bring the world's most committed capitalist nation to a complete standstill.

American capital knows who its friends are and Fitzsimmons has so far retained his usefulness despite massive and blatant misuse of union funds and blank cheque support for near-psychopathic criminals like Rolland McMaster.

And what of Hoffa, the man who made Fitzsimmons, only to see his creation turn on him?

Whether Hoffa is now a hubcap or a fender, the kindest judgement is to echo Moldea's opening sentence of the whole book: "Jimmy Hoffa's most valuable contribution to the American labour movement came at the moment he stopped breathing on July 30 1975".



Local 299 offices: (seated) McMaster, Fitzsimmons and Hoffa



# NUT chiefs won't fight Tories

By almost 3:1 Jele gates to the NUT Special Salaries Conference voted to accept the sell-out "negotiated" by Fred Jarvis and his team.

For 69 minutes Jarvis laboriously detailed every minute-by-minute twist and turn of the protracted salary 'campaign' which ended on May 21st when he accepted the offer of 9.3% + £6 on account along with the reference of the 36.5% claim to the Clegg Comparability Board.

This will pay the rest of the offer in 2 stages—Jan 1980 and September 1980.



Wilshire

Jarvis was at pains to point out why this offer is worse than the nurses'

("public support was stronger") or the civil servants' ("they were able

to hit at the machinery of government").

He warned that neither the manual workers in NUPE nor the Scottish teachers had secured better offers in spite of their protracted strike actions.

### No action called

He failed to mention, of course, how the leaderships of the manual workers had—like Jarvis himself—refused to call all-out indefinite strike action, or that in one area where such action did take place—Camden—NUPE Council workers won almost the whole £60 35-hour-week claim.

Speakers from the floor,

representing local NUT Associations which have voted to reject the offer—such as a 200-strong meeting in Leeds—demanded to know why the Executive had not taken up the call from at least 50 branches to organise strike action.

### Budget

They pointed out that the latest Budget announcement by the Tories hit even harder at teachers' living standards and jobs.

The importance of this move by the Tories was not lost on Executive member Alf Wilshire, who proposed the motion to accept the offer.

### First to fight?

He argued that to fight against the Tories on wages and the cuts will mean taking on the government "and does anyone seriously believe that teachers should be the first ones to do that?"

After a move by the

President, Murphy, not to count the votes because "any division in the Union might be used by Casey of the NAS for recruitment purposes", a division was called for by a sufficient number of delegates and a card vote taken.

With some right wing delegates breaking their branches' mandates and supporting the offer, the card vote was announced as 188,00:67,000.

### Call to account

A clear assessment must be made of the moves by the Executive over this period, and every Executive member must be called up to account for their actions and votes.

Anyone not willing to lead a serious fight to regain teachers' living standards must be thrown out at the forthcoming Executive elections.

A leadership must be elected which will fight for teachers' wages, jobs and the expansion of the education service.

# Redder Tape puts leaders in the pink

At the Redder Tape conference held recently in Birmingham, the largely SWP-inspired 'rank and file' organisation of Civil Service unions discussed the Tories' cuts in Civil Service jobs.

Redder Tape sees its aim as building a 'rank and file' organisation which will concentrate on increasing membership participation in the unions at all levels.

Indeed several of their ideas—such as implementation of "no cover" policies by placing large notices saying THIS DESK IS

BLACKED on posts which have fallen vacant with no replacement—show an awareness of the need to bring home the immediacy of the cuts to Civil Servants, though often stopping short at the level of mere gimmickry.

### Limitations

The limitations of Redder Tape's political line, however, can be seen in the way they take upon themselves the task of fighting the cuts in the Civil Service "because nobody else will". In taking this position they effectively abandon any attempt to expose those

union leaders and Labourites whose policies and class collaboration have made the cuts possible in the first place.

They avoid the task of exposing the opportunism of the Militant Group in the Civil Service unions through demands on them to fight within the Labour Party to drive out axemen Callaghan and Healey.

And their concentration on the 'rank and file' leaves Ken Thomas and other Civil Service union bureaucrats a free hand to move in from above to sabotage struggles on pay or jobs should they emerge.

Redder Tape's obvious

enthusiasm for workplace campaigning will appeal to many Civil Service trade unionists. But they will succeed only in betraying their enthusiasm unless they break from their myopic 'rank and file' and spell out a programme that can mobilise and develop the strength of the membership in action against the cuts.

Such practical experience offers the best means of exposing and removing the existing mis-leaders and defending the real interests of the rank and file.

# JOIN OUR FIGHT AGAINST TORIES!

Returned to office after five years of Labour betrayals, the Tory government has immediately begun wielding a sharpened axe on jobs, conditions and social services. Trade Union rights face imminent legal attack. Prices are already beginning to rocket upwards.

Plum sectors of state industry will be handed to the Tories' profiteering big business backers; and the pay rises to police and armed forces mark only the prelude to increased state violence against pickets and anti-fascists, and an intensified army crack-down in the occupied North of Ireland.

The Callaghan-Healey leadership has made it clear that it will oppose any perspective other than settling down and meekly accepting five years of Tory devastation.

And, though they have once more dusted off their near-forgotten "socialist" speeches, Labour's "left-wing" MPs have continued to duck away from any fight to remove Callaghan.

TUC leaders, too, have set out to establish a basis for collaboration with Thatcher and the Tory cabinet, paralleling their anti-working class alliance with Wilson and then Callaghan.

But the working class has experienced and overcome such betrayals before—to topple Heath's union-bashing government in 1974, and smash through Callaghan's reactionary Phase 4 of wage controls in a series of monumental pay battles last winter.

These experiences are not dead. They point to the way that jobs, social services and hard-won union rights can be defended against renewed Tory attacks.

But a principled, revolutionary leadership is needed if the Labour traitors, the TUC collaborators and their hangers-on in the Communist Party are to be exposed and pushed aside, and the mass struggles mobilised that can defeat and remove the Tory government.

Such a leadership must fight day in and day out for a programme of *transitional demands* which, starting from today's conditions and today's consciousness within the working class, lead workers to grasp the necessity for socialist revolution.

And in taking up democratic demands—such as an end to racial and sexual discrimination, it must show the crucial role that must be played by the working class as the only consistently revolutionary class capable of leading the struggle for the emancipation of mankind.

And it must fight on an *international* basis—mobilising solidarity for anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggles—whether in Ireland, in Southern Africa or elsewhere throughout the world, and drawing strength and political lessons from revolutionary upheavals such as that which ousted the hated Shah in Iran.

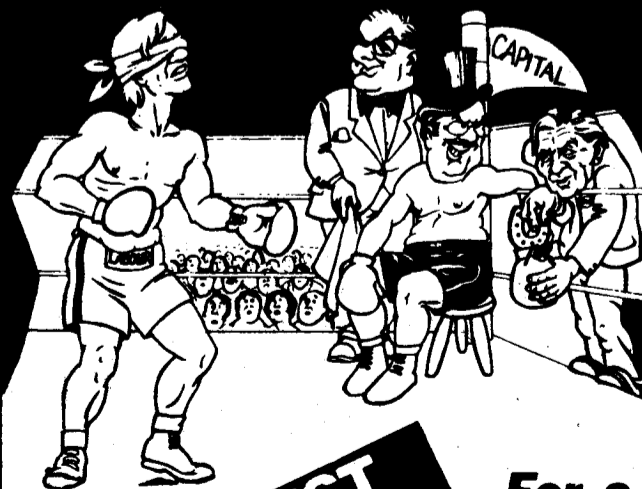
This means fighting for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International.

This method of approach, rejecting any descent to simple trade union militancy, or concessions to any wing of the labour bureaucracy, is the method fought for by the Workers Socialist League.

The next period will see major class struggles in Britain. A principled, Marxist leadership is essential. Our movement though strong in programme remains small in numbers.

JOIN US and take forward the struggle for socialism!

**DON'T GO INTO THE FIGHT BLINDFOLD!**



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# Bosses move against sit-in strike

Yet another attack on the union organisation is taking place at Export Packing Services, Banbury.

Colin Carty, the convenor, already has a TGWU No. 5 Regional Committee inquiry hanging over his head.

Now he has been suspended by the management while they carry out an enquiry into his so-called stopping of maintenance men moving into part of the site.

The case has arisen from a sit-in strike which Colin Carty's own section have been holding for the past week.

This started as an action in support of a group of members who refused to move into another section because they still had work in their own section and also they considered the other section was unsafe to work in.

The safety of this other section has been a long-standing

issue. Indeed even a safety inspector called in by the company said that changes should be made.

The incident with the maintenance men arose when they went to enter the section. Colin Carty told them it was blacked and they went away.

Now the company is trying to build a case, saying that they had been "threatened".

But there are many witnesses on Colin Carty's side; and one of the two maintenance men has declared that all he was told was that the section was blacked.

Most important of all, Colin Carty has the backing of his section (the only packing section left on the site).

They made it clear in a vote at a meeting on Wednesday that if Carty was stopped from entering the site because of his suspension then they would stay out with him.

Meanwhile the sit-in goes on.

# Nottingham picket holds up police



NUJ contingent arrives at 'Post' offices

porting strikes.

But worse than that the SWP members and supporters, who had been in the forefront of the physical resistance to the police, abstained completely from challenging the road to disaster that was being spelled out by the union leaders.

Indeed the special edition of the Rank and File paper *Journalists Charter*, produced for the picket, spoke in terms of abject demoralisation over the call for strike action, saying that the mood in the rank and file had to be rebuilt for the strike.

In fact only by calling the strike will the conditions be created to take up the struggle in the rank and file of the union, who know from their own recent experience of the treachery of the leadership.

## Challenge

Again it was only WSL members and supporters on the march who attempted to challenge the official slogan of 'Boycott the Post'.

All official activity is now centred on building up the sacked journalists' alternative paper *The Nottingham News* towards a workers cooperative.

This disastrous step, which completely removes the cutting edge of the demands for reinstatement and recognition, as well as being doomed to abject failure, must be strongly challenged.

It is a mark of the distance between this end and the correct demands for reinstatement that the edition of the *Nottingham News* on sale at the picket did not even mention the fact that the picket was taking place, and in fact did not mention the dispute on any one of its 28 pages!

## Example

The NGA are now intent on keeping the dispute rumbling along exactly as at present so that they can hold out Nottingham to members on other papers as an example of failing to negotiate a settlement on new technology.

To this end they have called a new picket on September 1—more than two months away, at which the same speakers will no doubt trot out the same demagogic speeches.

All those in the NUJ, NGA, and Slade who are serious about challenging the anti-union management at the *Post*, winning back the jobs of the sacked NUJ members and gaining union recognition for all print unions there, must put maximum pressure on their leaderships for strikes to be called.

Those who are not serious about this fight should stop saying they are supporting the Nottingham cause.

# £14m hotel strike!

In the aftermath of the Garners Strike, another dispute over trade union recognition started on May 29 at the luxurious Grosvenor House Hotel in London—part of the Trust Houses Forte empire.

The strike started when 28 chambermaids took action in support of their shop steward who was being victimised for refusing to change her duties.

As always in the catering industry, the wages are very low—£34 per week nett. But a room for the night in the hotel costs an average of £65!

14 of the chambermaids were living in—and moved out of their accommodation on the advice of their trade union official and a solicitor. They accepted the payment of £70 as wages.

## Official

The chambermaids are in the Furniture, Timber and Allied Trade Union (FTAT), which they joined because they were disgusted by the behaviour of the GMWU of which they were members before.

The strike has been made official and FTAT has called members in the hotel out in support. But only a handful have come out.

Still working are members of the GMWU and EETPU maintenance staff.

These two sections came out for one day—only to hear GMWU official Tilston tell his members that now they had "shown their strength" they should go back to work.

The EETPU followed suit. Last week both groups voted to continue working. But one EETPU member has correctly defied the vote and joined the picket line.

The biggest boost to the strike came when 70 UCATT members working in the hotel preparing for the Antiques Fair refused to cross the picket line.

This has meant the cancellation of the Fair—due to be held this week—at a cost of some £14 million of business.

This shows the lengths to which THF boss Sir Charles Forte is prepared to go to smash any form of militant unionisation inside his hotels.

But no such determination is being shown by FTAT officials—who have called no mass meetings and set a course towards inviting ACAS intervention.

The officials' limited call for blacking has so far received a response only from taxi and coach drivers.

It is now urgent that the strikers call a mass meeting, assess the struggle of the last two weeks and elect a strike committee to take forward demands for:

- \*Full blacking of THF.
- \*Mobilise union support on the picket line.
- \*No more talks with THF bosses without strikers' representatives present!

Donations to E. Gallagher, c/o FTAT, 'Fairfield', Roe Green, Kingsbury, London N19.

# Toy plant walk out

The strike against the victimisation of five TGWU members at Selected Toys (STL), Didcot has come under frontal attack from union officials within its first 2½ days.

District Official Phil Eynan—who has yet to appear on the picket line—called a meeting last Friday evening at which he argued strongly for those of the 20 strikers who have not been sacked to return to work on Monday and carry on working while the victimised 5 continue to picket the gates!

This, he argued, would allow "negotiations" to go on.

## Hard to believe

Though many strikers found it hard to believe their ears and others argued against Eynan's miserable capitulation, his legalistic jargon and pretence of experience conned a majority into voting to return to work.

But as strikers began to realise they had been tricked, a better attended meeting was convened on Sunday evening and a vote taken to continue the strike for union recognition and reinstatement of the five.

Donations to Brian Grimes, 97, Wessex Rd., Didcot, Oxon.

Several hundred police took 40 minutes to clear the road in front of the Nottingham Evening Post at the weekend, after pickets refused to allow scab vans into the building.

Reinforcements were called after a police charge on the picket line was repulsed and the police and vans were pushed backwards down Foreman St. It

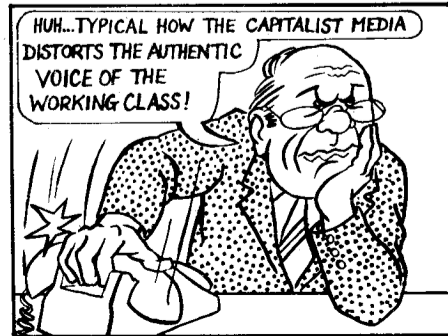
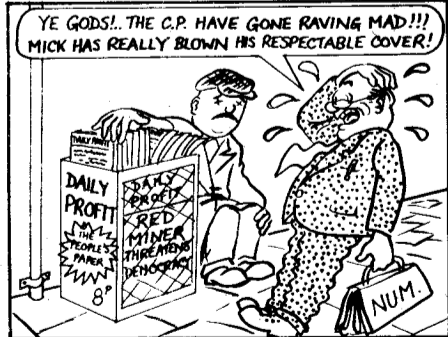
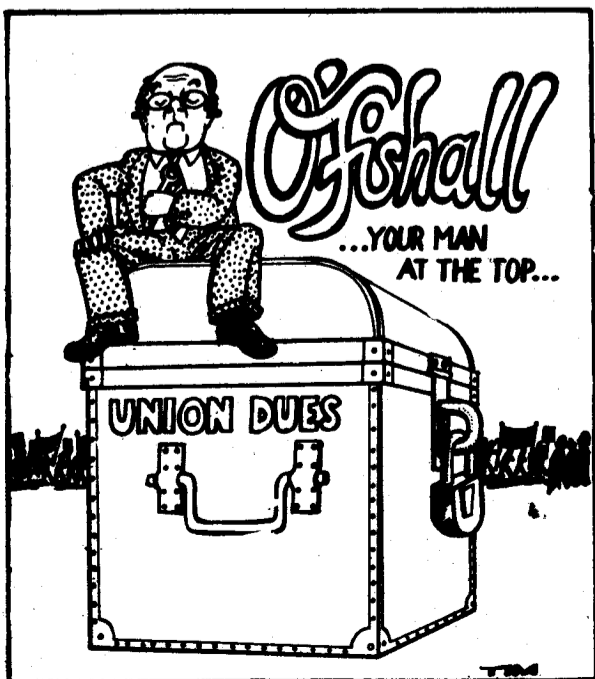
took several further charges before the vans were ushered through.

But the strength of the picket comprised of about 400 printers and journalists, is in sharp contrast to the disastrous state of the dispute.

The demonstration had been called by the NGA and NUJ bureaucracies and a march to the newspaper building was timed to arrive after the scab vans had already gone in.



Pickets outside STL: basic rates vary from 28p an hour to 67p an hour. Top rate with bonus is 71p an hour.



# SOCIALIST PRESS



## Australia general strike call

National strikes across Australia have been called for this week after the arrest of 10 trade unionists in Perth last week.

The arrests came after two officials of the Amalgamated Metal Workers and Shipwrights Union had spoken at a meeting of 200 workers in the mining industry of Karratha, which has been the scene of growing militant action.

Under the state laws of Western Australia, the speeches needed the previous permission of the police commissioner, who was not consulted.

But the officials were not arrested until they had flown the 750 miles back to Perth, as the police argued that sections of the meeting were 'excited and drunk'.

Another official claimed that if the arrests had been made in Karratha, 'there would have been a revolution by the workers'.

So far, the Australian Council of Trade Unions (equivalent to the TUC in Britain) has called a 24-hour national protest strike, while individual unions have called for longer, and in some cases indefinite action.

The arrested unionists are refusing to pay any fines that may be imposed. But Sir Charles Court (state premier) is refusing to 're-examine' the law, and remains determined to press ahead with this attack.

The action of the Court state government is only the latest move in the general offensive by other bourgeois state governments, led by Fraser's reactionary federal government in Canberra, to confront the organised strength and militancy of the Australian working class and its trade unions.

# McNEE DEFENDS SPG KILLERS

Thousands of trade unionists and anti-fascists turned out last week at the funeral of murdered Anti Nazi League supporter Blair Peach.

Peach was killed by a single blow to the head administered in front of witnesses by a thug from the police Special Patrol Group.

But scarcely had the mourners and demonstrators returned home than Metropolitan police chief Sir David McNee was hitting the headlines

with vigorous statements in defence of the SPG.

There had, he claimed, been 'ill-founded criticism' of the SPG from 'certain sections of the community'.

These 'sections' are of course becoming increasingly wide as armed SPG thugs extend their operations to the wholesale harassment of black youth and workers, the smashing of picket lines, the defence of fascist meetings, and violent attacks on peaceful demonstrators.

So brazen was SPG brutality in the massive riots at Southall

in which Peach was murdered that five SPG members have since been transferred to other duties.

And the ritualistic pretence of a police 'inquiry' into the killing of Peach led recently to a four-day interrogation and subsequent release of an unknown SPG driver, along with the revelation that SPG lockers contained over 40 illegal weapons alleged to be 'souvenirs'.

### Total curfew

An indication of the picket-busting role of the police and the SPG can be seen when McNee's report reveals that the force was used last year against workers in 750 industrial disputes—compared with its role in harassing youth at only 300 football matches.

As for the mounting police

PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report



Police in action in Southall

violence against black youth, McNee's answer at a news conference was effectively to propose a total curfew. Replying to a black reporter, he declared that:

**"If you keep off the streets of London [!] and behave yourselves, you won't have to worry about the SPG".**

So much for the police preserving 'law and order' on the streets!

He went on:

**"I understand the concern of your people [!]. But if you don't get into trouble you won't come into confrontation with the police."**

McNee's implicit threat to any youth found on 'the streets of London' was echoed on the

same day by Manchester's Chief Constable James Anderton—who became notorious for the huge police protection he laid on to allow NF leader Martin Webster to march through the streets of Tameside.

Anderton called for the institution of 'penal work camps' for 'marauding gangs of dirty youths and men'.

### Shoot to kill

His own Manchester elite squad, the armed Tactical Aid Group, modelled on the SPG, was shown recently on television in training on military-style manoeuvres shooting to kill at man-shaped targets and in action roughing up youth outside a football match.

There is no doubt whatever that with the class battles to come under the Tories, the capitalist state machine will seek to extend and strengthen such police detachments as a desperate measure to smash picket lines and prevent mass mobilisations of workers and youth in street protests.

### Licensed thugs

In supporting the call for the disbanding of the SPG, TAG and similar squads, socialists must go further, and demand the disbanding of the entire police force which, as the licensed thugs of the capitalist state, are fundamentally opposed to the interests of the working class.

Trade unions and workers political organisations must at once convene a full-scale workers' inquiry into Peach's murder, and take up the fight within the Labour Party for the removal of those right wing leaders who while in government supervised the emergence of the SPG and cold-bloodedly used these killers against mass pickets at Grunwick and elsewhere.

# UTOM march hits at racism

Nearly 300 people joined the 'march against state racism' between Hyde Park and Kilburn organised by East London UTOM last Saturday.

Although there was no

leaflet from the organisers on the march and at the rally afterwards the connection was repeatedly made between the repressive nature of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the Immigration Act and the 'Sus' law.

But a speaker from the Irish

Republican Socialist Party whose membership have been brutally harassed since the Neave bombing, described the victimisation of Jimmy Scanlon, an Irish building worker who had come to work in Britain to escape blacklisting in his native Co. Clare.

Now framed under the PTA, Scanlon is still in Brixton jail awaiting deportation without trial.

A speaker from the Workers Socialist League emphasised the centrality of the demand for troops out now but pointed out that the key to winning this demand was a continual turn into the organised labour movement to secure working class action to force withdrawal of the imperialist troops.

### Kick out Callaghan

This does not mean trying to change the Tories' spots but fighting in the Labour Party to kick out the Callaghan and Mason leadership which had been responsible for the same imperialist policies under the last Labour government and which now opposes action to remove the Tories.



Saturday's UTOM demonstration

# Women fight for safe refuge

Women in Birmingham are in the middle of a fight to establish a proper refuge for battered women.

They have been negotiating with the council for 3½ years but have only been offered totally inadequate short term accommodation.

Previous accommodation was so disgusting that in January the women themselves agreed to vacate an almost derelict property after a verbal promise by the Council to find them proper accommodation.

The latest short stay property they have been offered can only cater for two battered women.

The Tory Council's response to demands for a refuge was to

declare that they had 'no empty property available'.

So on June 2 a group of women occupied a house in Edgbaston owned by the Education Department which had been standing empty for some months.

In the absence of holidaying Tories, the Council passed a motion to reverse an eviction order on the house and to find another refuge for the women.

### Pledged support

But electricity and water have been cut off and the Tories are threatening to reverse the decision when they return.

The women themselves intend to continue the occupation until a suitable house is

offered. Many trade unions and charitable trusts have pledged their support.

### Responsibility

It is vital that the maximum support from the labour movement is gathered and that gas, electricity and water workers are persuaded to reconnect and maintain services.

The Tories see any escape for women from violence as a threat to the sanctity of the family.

The labour movement must recognise its responsibility to defend women who are forced out of their homes for their own and their children's safety.

# FUND

The £2,500 Special Fund, launched to finance our programme of publications over the summer months has now finally passed the first £1,000 with a total to date of £1068.76.

However, the money is coming in far too slowly. We are now only a matter of five or six weeks away from the closing date of the fund at the end of July and if we are to achieve our target on time we need to raise well over £200 a week. The last seven days however brought us less than £50.

While a number of large-scale fund raising events are planned for early July it is nevertheless essential that we maintain a steady flow of donations from supporters into the fund each week.

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

**SUMMER FETE**  
Saturday July 7 from  
12 to 4 p.m.  
Cowley Community  
Centre  
Cowley, Oxford  
Cakes \* Plants \* Games  
Bargains \* Fortune  
teller \* Refreshments  
Organised by the  
Oxford Area Workers  
Socialist League