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March backs metal workers strike

As 40,000 metal workers in Turkey enter their seventh month of strike, a march of their supporters in Britain will travel from Birmingham to London next weekend.

The strike, based on 42 factories, has brought virtually the whole metallurgical industry and sections of manufacturing industry to a standstill.

It was called in opposition to attempts by the Metal Employers Federation (MESS) to impose a single, centralised system of pay bargaining and scrap existing plant negotiations.

Avoided

This would have the effect of weakening the 80,000-strong metalworkers' union, which is one of the last surviving strongholds of Communist Party control in the Turkish unions.

Despite the high stakes involved, the Turkish Stalinists have steadfastly avoided attempts to extend the strike to other unions and have actually handed over control of the strike to the bourgeois leaders of the 'left' union confederation DISK.

However, the CP-dominated march in solidarity with this struggle—which departs from and passes through Coventry and Oxford en route for London—should be supported by British trade unionists and cash aid for the Turkish strikers raised in union branches.

TANKER DRIVERS. POWER WORKERS: STRIKE NOW!



FBU Executive in session, chaired by Terry Parry

PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL

Whichever way the vote goes at the FBU recall conference in Bridlington on Thursday the crucial question facing the working class is the willingness of the leaders of unions with outstanding claims to call their members out in support of their claims.

If the FBU conference votes to stay out, such action will be essential to break the isolation imposed on the firemen by the TUC.

If on the other hand the conference votes for a return to work, the result will be the outcome of the most squalid manoeuvring by the FBU leadership, who have calculated the critical point to move in and recommend a sell-out.

Parry and his cronies on the executive allowed militant members' anger to wane after the TUC refusal to support them, put no demands on those who claimed to support the firemen and began carefully to cultivate the view that "nothing more can be done".

Impression

And by leaving a week between their recommendation for acceptance and the recall conference they allowed the press to build up an impression of growing forces for acceptance.

Whether or not firemen defy this pressure and vote on Thursday to reject the offer, their first job must be to clear out their reactionary executive committee which from the outset opposed the strike and after losing the vote has spent the whole nine weeks biding their time for a sell-out attempt.

Scottish FBU militants hit the right note this week when they lobbied their regional committee with the demand "Fight on—with new leaders".

Their next job must be to step up the demand that those 17 TUC leaders who claim to support them put their words into action.

100,000 power workers who took unofficial action last November are being held back by extended negotia-

goes through the motions of votes in support of the firemen and verbal threats to the government.

Thousands of oil and petrol drivers, who also recently took unofficial strike action, have been manoeuvred by TGWU leaders into timewasting meetings with ACAS whilst Moss Evans, General Secretary elected seconded the motion at the TUC supporting the firemen.

Both these sections of workers have enormous industrial power and could shut Britain down within days.

If the isolation of the 1 month rule was ended and another section of workers joined the firemen on strike both sections could be united through councils of action in a struggle to extend the strike and break wage controls.

This is the only policy which offers a way to win the strike.

Discuss claim

Firemen must take the initiative and approach other sections of workers whose claims have been rejected.

Go to the tanker depot, press the drivers to take action. Contact the power workers and discuss the claim.

The longer these sections delay, the greater the chance that they too face betrayal by the TUC and by their own leaders in the fight against the 10% limit.

Such a campaign would create completely new conditions for the firemen's strike and show the way forward for the whole working class.

Only action to destroy the 10% limit can prevent the Callaghan-Steel government proceeding with its plans to impose a Phase 4 of wage controls, and force a split in this wage-cutting Lib-Lab coalition.

Beware

But one lesson from the FBU strike is unmistakable: even a 98% solid official strike by a whole union showing the utmost tenacity, sacrifice and determination of its rank and file members can founder if the leadership shrinks from the political consequences of an all-out fight.

Power workers and tanker drivers beware! Militancy not enough. A political leadership prepared to confront the TUC bureaucracy

New right wing coalition formed in Turkey

Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit's new coalition government has won the approval of President Koruturk.

The new government consists of Ecevit's Republican People's Party, backed by two small right wing parties and eleven deputies recently resigned from the Justice Party.

Thirteen out of 34 ministries go to Ecevit's partners in the coalition.

Two deputies

In order to secure a vote of confidence Ecevit increased the number of government ministries and gave 10 posts to the 11 resigned deputies.

The tiny National Confidence Party now have two deputies in the government and the Democratic Party one ministerial post.

This gives Ecevit's govern-



Ecevit

The right wing combination in the coalition and its reactionary policies openly illustrate its anti-working class nature.

The 11 right wing deputies and the two small right wing parties agreed with Ecevit

policies and "unite the nation" to get through the crisis.

One of them said: "This is the last chance. We are trying to solve the economic crisis of the country. If this fails, we must try to convince the generals to take over".

Another task the government must face is to end the political violence that has greatly increased over the last two weeks.

But the reactionary nature of the government is exposed when it declares both left and right wing extremists responsible for the violence and that it will use state forces against both left and right.

This clearly means police and army will be used to smash any struggle by workers.

Independent fight

There must be no illusion

Workers can only defend their living standards and democratic rights by taking up an independent fight against the government and its policies.

The trade unions must be forced to break their support for Ecevit, and workers must be mobilised independently to overthrow it.

The workers' parties, the Communist Party, the Turkish Labour Party, the Socialist Revolutionary Party and the Turkish Socialist Labour Party must be broken politically from the RPP and its government and fight for an alternative government.

But the fight must begin today, mobilising the working class against the fascists and government attacks.

United front

The fascists can only be disarmed and smashed by building a united front of the working class and an armed



INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS SPLITS OVER TACTICS

The tensions within the Indian Congress Party reached breaking point last week with an organisational split in the party ranks.

Strain has been increasing since the electoral defeat last March which ended the Gandhi dictatorship.

After failing to gain control of the party apparatus, Gandhi called a meeting to declare her faction the 'real' Indian National Congress.

Already a third of the Working Committee (the party's highest policy-making body) was in support of the former Prime Minister, and this is probably an accurate reflection of her support throughout the party.

Build party

At the meeting Gandhi announced that she had been 'elected' President, but only 'for a while', and that she would build up the party with the slogan 'Forward to Socialism'.

Both groups which claim to be the 'real' Congress have now expelled each other. These moves open up the possibility of a major realignment of the dominant political parties.

The last major split within the Congress took place in 1969, again engineered by Gandhi.

Landowning

This split was not an expression of different class interests—both factions contained the same alliance of landowning and industrial capitalists—not a question of 'personal' conflicts, despite the autocratic practices of the Gandhi leadership.

Its roots lay in a disagreement as to which tactics should be applied to preserve and develop bourgeois rule. The results of Gandhi's victory were clearly seen in the anti-working class policies of the 'Emergency' dictatorship in 1975-77.

Many of the forces which lost that struggle in 1969 are now to be found in three of the five parties which form the ruling Janata coalition.

The Janata has been under severe internal pressure since it took office, and sections may well seek to renew their association with the Congress faction led by Brahamananda Reddy.

Mass opposition

The coalition was swept into power last March by the mass opposition to the Gandhi dictatorship.

It never offered any serious programme to resolve the economic and social problems of the workers and peasants, and its present policies shuffle in pathetic confusion from the encouragement of imperialist investment and aid, to attempts at establishing a stronger native bourgeoisie.

The government has now at last moved to abolish the vicious and hated Maintenance of Internal Security Act, only after it has ensured the state similar, if less flagrantly dictatorial powers with the Criminal Procedure Code.

The MISA was consistently used against union militants and strike leaders, and the Janata itself detained 500 people without trial in

By DAVID
WHITFIELD

as hostile to the interests of the working class as its Congress predecessor.

The thousands of workers who have moved into strike action in attempts to regain the living standards slashed by the dictatorship, have met with betrayal and repression.

As this movement has gathered strength, landless peasants have come into violent conflict with the big landowners, as they have tried to implement the long-promised land reform measures themselves by seizing land to save themselves from starvation.

Dramatic growth

In this turbulent situation there has been a dramatic growth of support for the radical parties of the peasantry, and those groups struggling for regional autonomy or independence as a solution to the misery imposed by the international dominance of capitalism.

The same developments have had a major impact on the parties of the working-class.

The Socialist Party of George Fernandes has found itself not only compromised by the increasingly obvious anti-working class character of the Janata coalition in which it participates, but also squeezed into insignificance by faction struggles within the coalition.

Huge fall

The fate of these class collaborators has been paralleled by the huge fall in support for the pro-Moscow Communist Party of India, the CP(I).

The CP(I) provided the most outspoken backing for the Gandhi dictatorship, and even now continues to hail the fallen dictator as the leader of the 'progressive bourgeoisie', though its pronouncements have become less frequent and more cautious.

There have been mass resignations from the party's base, especially in the states of Gujarat and West Bengal, where they have taken the form of defections to the Communist Party (Marxist).

Denounced link

In West Bengal the CP(I)'s youth organisation has denounced any link with either faction of the Congress and may well fuse with the CP(M)'s youth organisation.

The CP(M) consistently struggled against the dictatorship, but its reluctance to mobilise the independent strength of the working class is as determined as that of the CP(I).

Popular front

While the CP(I) remain in the popular front state government of Kerala, the CP (M) used its absolute majority in West Bengal to institute a 'left-front' government with the Janata, and has made a whole series of electoral alliances with the Janata



Mrs Gandhi. She split the party after failing to gain control.

But this agreement appears to be breaking up under pressure from the rank and file membership: there was no such alliance in the recent state elections in Tripura where the CP(M) won a sweeping majority.

Neither party has yet declared its intentions for the February elections in five states, including Karnataka where the Janata government has imposed direct rule from Delhi, claiming that the fighting within the Congress had made the state government ineffective.

Complete chaos

But nothing reveals more sharply the development in the political situation than the regrouping of the Naxalites, who were thrown into complete political and organisational chaos during the emergency, with sections supporting Gandhi while the regime imprisoned and killed members and sympathisers in a concerted campaign.

The so-called 'Central' and 'Unity' Committees have now

doubt attempt to resurrect the CP(M-L) in the image of its ancestor as a peasant-based guerilla movement.

As the Indian workers and peasants are drawn daily into increasing conflict with the formidable array of Stalinist and other forces striving for their political controls, Callaghan has arrived to combine a relaxing tourist trip with some business designed to aid the Indian and British bourgeoisie, and betray the international working class just a little further.

British Labour MPs such as Foot and Lee were notorious for their eulogies of the Gandhi regime, and Callaghan even sent her a telegram of commiseration on her electoral defeat!

His visit is to include an interview with this architect of oppression, a step not yet taken by any visiting diplomat since legal proceedings were instituted against her.

But Callaghan is hedging his bets, and will also have lengthy discussions with

The British PM will also be attempting to enforce further trade restrictions such as have already been imposed by the protectionist policies of the EEC on the Indian textile industry.

The economic interests of British capital and the British state are vital for the continued life of the Indian bourgeoisie.

In addition to the heavy investment of British based multi-national companies, government aid for 1977-8 is to total £144 million—an increase of 30% over last year and one quarter of all bilateral aid provided by the British government, which is the largest single donor of aid to the Indian State.

Major advance

This imperialist intervention is central to the oppression of the Indian masses. A major advance in the fight for international proletarian revolution can be made by British workers campaigning to strike this crucial prop from under the Indian ruling

CP bids for place in Tory cabinet

It now seems certain that the Italian Communist Party is on the point of sliding one stage further into the slime of class collaboration.

Since last July Italy has had an undeclared coalition government, the ruling minority Christian Democratic cabinet being supported in office by the CP and other parties in exchange for an agreement on the government's programme.

This agreement is now on the point of breakdown essentially because the working class is saying louder and louder that the government's programme is unacceptable.

The CP and trade union leaders, therefore, see their leadership of the working class threatened unless they can wrest what appears to be a 'concession' from the Christian Democrats.

Convince workers

The only ways in which they can now hope to convince workers that it is furthering their interests is by demanding a formal place in the government.

This grand popular front coalition has been the official aim of the CP since Italy's last general election in June 1976.

Now, however, is the first time that its leaders have been seen to push for seats in the Cabinet as an immediate objective.

Now is also the first time that some of the Christian Democratic leaders who have so far been publicly hostile seem to be changing their minds.

An open class coalition government including the CP would be the first of its kind in any NATO country since the formation of the anti-Communist alliance in 1948.

German loans

Until very recently, however, it has been vetoed by imperialism as a whole, especially by Nixon, Wilson and Brandt (who has arranged German loans to meet the more pressing needs of the Italian ruling class).

Carter and Callaghan, however, appear to have agreed to a more flexible approach and the improvement in Italy's balance of payments (the result of the country's deep slump) has freed Italy from its financial dependence on Schmidt.

The expectations of the capitalists and the CP leaders in the 'historic compromise' government cannot be very high.

Wage cuts

It would be explicitly committed to government austerity measures, wage cuts and measures to force speed-up in order to restore Italian capitalism's catastrophically low rate of profit.

As the CP and Christian Democrat leaders deliberate on how best to force the working class to accept the sacrifices required by capital, the union leaders have 'postponed' the threatened one-day general strike in protest against the austerity measures.

But the scale of recent demonstrations has amazed



INTERNATIONAL

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report



Chile referendum according to plan

Dictator Pinochet's 'referendum', held on January 4, was mainly a manoeuvre to strengthen his personal position in relation to the rest of the dictatorial regime.

Under a renewal of working class pressure the Junta is beginning to show increasing signs of inner strain.

Over the last few weeks Pinochet has come under increasing pressure from two sources.

'Weakness'

From among the military officers Pinochet has been criticised for 'weakness' in the face of the rise in labour militancy of the recent period.

The symptoms of the 'weakness' are seen to be Pinochet's offer at a meeting of 600 stooge 'trade union' leaders of a faster rate of money wage increase (at a time when inflation is officially falling), and a promise at the same meeting to 'review' the case of 60 miners who were sacked

during the recent strike at the El Teniente copper mine.

Pinochet has also come under fire from former members of the fascist Fatherland and Freedom movement, whose leaders want to become the heads of a civilian base organisation in support of the dictatorship.

Too isolated

The military, they say, is too isolated from the people.

Pinochet answered these internal dissenters with his referendum.

Voting was compulsory and voters were asked to vote 'yes' or 'no' to the following proposition:

'In the face of international aggression unleashed against the Government of our country, I support President Pinochet in the defence of Chilean dignity and I reaffirm the legitimacy of the Government of the Republic to lead with sovereignty the country's process of democratisation'.

'Result'

Pinochet decided that the most convincing result for

such a referendum would be 75% 'yes', 20% 'no' and 5% spoiled papers. So that is how the 'result' turned out.

Oust rivals

Pinochet clearly regards this as a sufficient answer to his rivals and certainly in going ahead 'successfully' with the referendum he appears to have scored a victory over the other Generals of the Junta who had publicly opposed the referendum.

It could be, therefore, that Pinochet is on the point of an attempt to oust all potential rivals in the military.

'No more elections'

The day after the referendum he gave an example of the 'democratisation' for which 75% of the population had allegedly voted.

There would be, he said, 'no more elections, no more voting and no more consultations' in Chile for another ten years.

He seemed to be in no doubt that he would by then still be dictator.

WAR IN S.E. ASIA?

The all-out verbal war which broke out ten days ago between Kampuchea (formerly Cambodia) and Vietnam certainly reflects many months of sporadic border fighting between the two countries over the last year.

It is at the present time impossible to know whether it reflects more than this because of the extremely unreliable nature of the reports.

equiped than the Vietnamese, who have Soviet and captured American arms including many aircraft.

Hard to believe

It is also hard to believe widespread reports of a full-scale Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea whose objective is to seize the capital Phnom-Penh and install a puppet government.

Such a move would contrast very sharply with the Vietnamese leadership's continued stress in its public statements on the urgent

chean ambassador in Peking announced that Vietnam had invaded deep into Kampuchean territory.

The Vietnamese leadership has admitted that it has occupied territory but that it has said, was in self-defence against continued food raids by the Kampucheans.

The Vietnamese call negotiations on the dispute has been echoed by Moscow which has blamed the dispute on provocation by Peking.

Hanoi began by presenting the dispute as one between brother countries and called on the present Kampuchean government to join an Indo-Chinese federation of states.

But the Vietnamese newspaper later characterised the Khmer Rouge 'reactionaries'.

The Chinese bureaucracy has hinted that Vietnam has territorial ambitions fanned by Moscow, but has also called for negotiations.

It is only a few weeks since delegations to Peking from Vietnam and Kampuchea received dramatically different receptions.

New alliance

Pol Pot, the Kampuchean leader, was given a possible public honour by the Chinese leaders, who have arranged a new alliance between the Kampuchean and the military dictatorship in Burma.

Peking also tried to promote a closer relationship between Kampuchea and new right-wing pro-Chinese military dictatorship in Thailand.

And Vietnam too has sent out its diplomats to solicit capitalist support in the region.

The Vietnamese foreign minister, Nguyen Duy Thi, has made a hurried tour around the countries of the reactionary imperialist sponsored ASEAN alliance: Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand.

Behind this dispute is the desperate material need of the Indo-Chinese mainland, especially Kampuchea, which is calculated to have one of the most economically backward countries in the world.

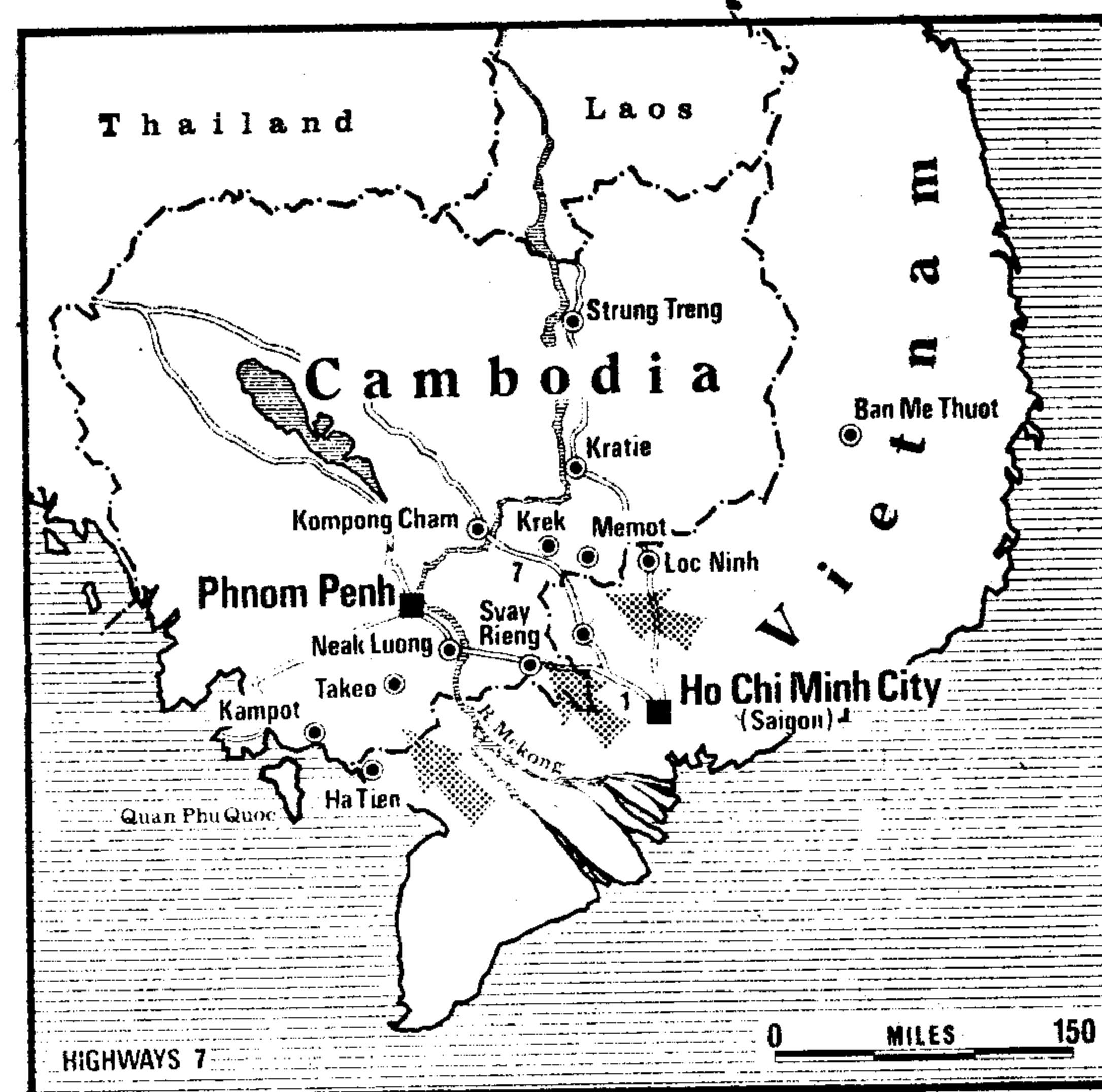
The leaders of the Khmer Rouge from their imposed isolation entirely the international perspective which would be necessary to resolve the problems.

Build leadership

Nor, despite their call for a federation, can the Vietnamese Stalinist bureaucracy tied up with the interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy of the USSR offer a convincing proletarian internationalist conception of socialist unity of Indo-China as part of the unity of the socialist state of the world.

Both Vietnam and Kampuchea must be defended by workers' movement against any attempt by imperialism to exploit this conflict to undermine the victory against imperialism in 1975.

But it is only through the building of truly revolutionary leaderships in Kampuchea and Vietnam and a proletarian revolution to overturn the bureaucracies that protect internationalism and material needs of the people.



It is almost impossible to believe, for instance, the claim reportedly made by Kampuchean radio on January 6 that 30,000 Vietnamese (and some Soviet) soldiers had been killed or injured in one day's fighting.

Astounding

This would be astounding in view of the fact that the Vietnamese armed forces consist of an army of 615,000, plus 50,000 frontier security guards and an armed militia of 1,500,000 while the Kampuchean army is not much more than 80,000 strong and much less well

need for a negotiated settlement.

Most of the fighting appears to have been in a region known as the Parrot's Beak, a part of Kampuchea which juts into Vietnam and comes within sixty miles of Ho Chi Minh City.

The Kampuchean leadership has long made the nationalist complaint that Vietnam has over the last century confiscated rightfully Cambodian territory.

It has rejected plans by the Vietnamese leadership for an Indo-Chinese federation as 'Vietnamese imperialism'.

The latest war of words broke out when the Kampuchean

Pakistan martial law defied

Defiance of the Martial Law Regulation, restricting political activity and strike action, still continues in Pakistan.

On January 2, police fired on thousands of industrial workers demonstrating in Multan, killing five and injuring two.

In protest, workers in Multan have continued to demonstrate every day.

Arrested

So far official figures of workers killed and demonstrating are restricted to 100.

The casualty figures are feared to be much higher, since 55 workers from the textile factory in Multan are still missing.

102 people were arrested in Peshawar and Mandan, under the charge of 'planning a demonstration'.

Large scale arrests of



made in order to contain demonstrations for the PPP's planned Democracy Day (January 5), calling for Bhutto's release, and for an early general election.

The government has continued its manoeuvres to

leader before the promised election.

As the pro-Moscow Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) has long since proved its inability to provide a viable 'national' leader, Wali Khan, the leader of the defunct National Awami Party (NAP) has been bailed out of jail by the Hyderabad Special Tribunal as an alternative to Bhutto.

Illegal

The NAP is still illegal. But the Special Tribunal has granted bail to 14 of its leaders.

Immediately upon his release Wali Khan began to negotiate with the PNA leadership.

Statements so far show

General Zia-ul-Haq.

He might not however, be able to enjoy the leadership of the National Democratic Party (NDP: front for the illegal NAP) as a single organised formation.

Some prominent NAP leaders who were granted bail with him, have refused to leave prison until the martial law authorities agree to reverse the consequences of the military operations carried out by Bhutto from 1973.

There are moves towards further regroupments and splits affecting the PPP and other formations as various factions jockey for position.

Meanwhile General Zia has managed to secure diplomatic and economic aid from the western bloc and from 'third

In brief

TUNISIA

The leaders of the UGTT (the state-sponsored union federation) have called off the phosphate unions' dispute even though the government has granted only some of its demands. But the atmosphere of dispute has now spread to agriculture with a 24-hour agricultural workers' strike.

MOZAMBIQUE

The government of Somara Machel has nationalised—with compensation—virtually all the international banks in the country.

POLAND

Fourteen leading CP members, including Edward Ochab First Secretary of the Party for a time in 1956 and later Head of State, have written a public letter demanding

World slump at root of dollar crisis

Trade war measures stepped up to cut US deficit

At the beginning of 1977 there was much discussion in the capitalist press of the forthcoming boom.

Now, one year later, they are looking back on the wreckage and asking whatever happened.

One characteristic common to all the major capitalist countries in the last year has been the failure of the growth of the economy to reach the levels which were being officially predicted as the year began.

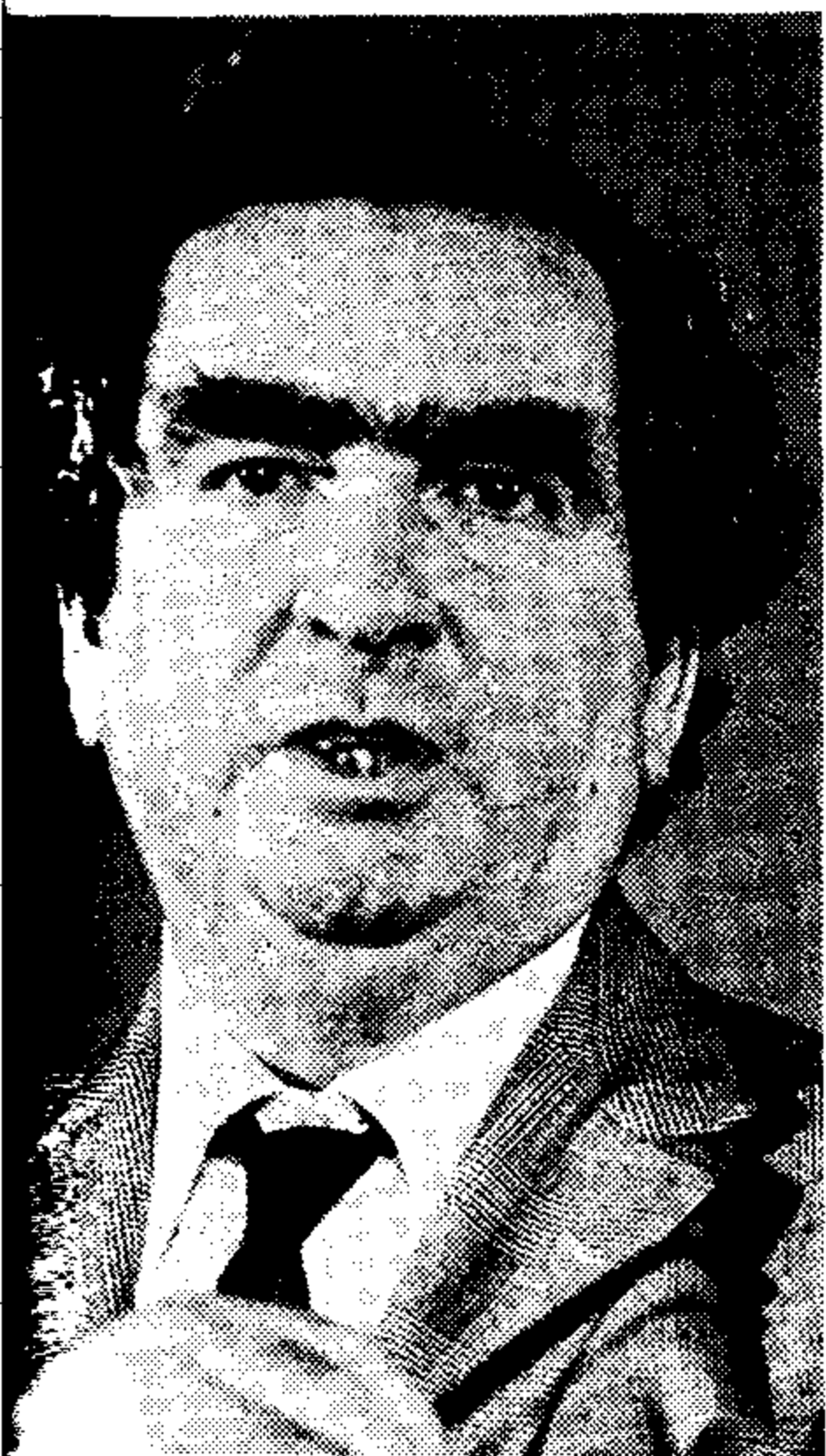


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

These figures show that the problem was most severe in Western Europe and worst of all in the country we are so frequently told experienced an economic miracle in 1977—Britain.

Manufactured goods

Japan's relatively high economic growth last year was achieved, despite a fairly stagnant home market, through a sharp increase in the export of manufactured goods which has given it a huge trade surplus.

The trade war measures recently taken against Japanese exports by the US and the European Economic Community will make it increasingly difficult to maintain this growth rate through exports.

The profound imbalance in the world capitalist economy is also shown by the fact that the

United States economic growth rate, which was also comparatively high, was maintained only at the cost of a gigantic trade deficit.

At the beginning of the year the official forecast was that the USA would have a balance of payments deficit in 1977 of 3 billion dollars.

In the event it turned out to be 20 billion dollars, an unforeseen disaster which has once again been shattering confidence in the dollar.

The international value of the dollar in terms of other currencies has fallen about 10% in the last six months.

US capitalists have been divided about what to do about this fall.

Some, fearing domestic inflation above all, have wanted it stopped.

Others, especially exporters

and those that compete with imports, have seen the fall of the dollar as another protectionist device which also cuts real wages.

The Carter administration has implicitly gone along with the latter position by not intervening to hold up the dollar's value, hoping also that the worsening international position would twist the arm of the US Congress into passing the energy bill which, Carter hints, will solve the problem by reducing oil imports.



Carter



But last week Carter came up against the contradictions in the policy of 'benign neglect'.

In particular he was told in Saudi Arabia that unless firm action was taken to stop the dollar's slide, Saudi Arabia would cease to argue for stability in the oil price.

A monetary 'swap' arrangement was hurriedly made with West Germany, and old ones reactivated, so as to give the American Federal Reserve Board (the equivalent of the Bank of England) reserves of foreign currency with which to buy up dollars in the market and hold up the price.

This policy worked wonders—precisely one day.

On Friday last the value of the dollar fell back about as much as it had risen the previous day.

Reluctant

The announcement of the West German bailing-out operation was, therefore, not enough.

The US Government seems reluctant to actually use the new foreign exchange it has acquired to buy dollars.

No doubt it fears that the

material forces putting down the dollar are so strong that these extra reserves may last no time at all and so worsen the situation.

Contradiction

As an alternative, the Federal Reserve had raised interest rates to attract speculative finance capital into the US.

This new measure carries the contradiction that it may tend to hold down the already depressed level of capitalist investment.

It has been calculated that at 2.36 pm. on January 27, the Gross National Product of the USA will, thanks partly to inflation, for the first time reach the annual level of 2,000 billion dollars.

The fall of the dollar and the failure of the United States capitalism to lay any new foundation for secure expansion and accumulation, however, suggest that this 'event' will not be greeted with much waving of the stars and stripes.

One symptom of capitalists' reaction to 1978 is that last week the Wall Street stock exchange index fell to below 800 for the first time since 1975.

Jones talks his way to a wealthy retirement on full pay

Asked why he was awarded the Companion of Honour award, TGWU leader Jack Jones announced it was because of his national role in co-operating with the government.

This is clearly correct. Jones' bureaucratic actions have been the mainstay of the defence of the government's three phases of wage control.

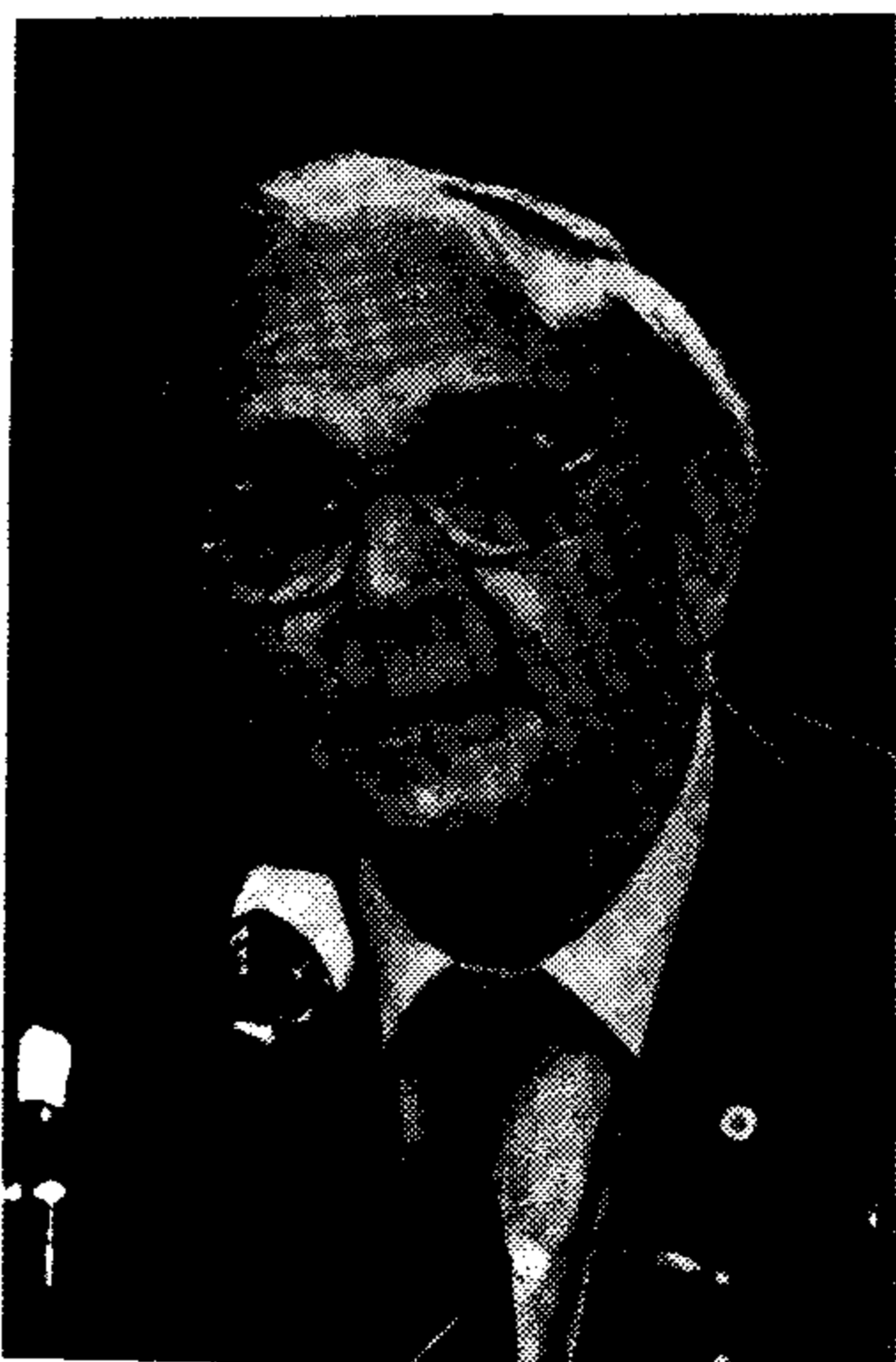
Recompense

So great has Jones' role been in inflicting wage cuts and robbing profits that a little and a drink in themselves might seem a paltry recompense.

Even the £1,500 of part-time government 'jobs' on a full-time salary of £7,500 and a £1-week three-day holiday do not seem to be a reward for his services to the government.

Heart-rending

Jack Jones, who has been a leading figure in the defence of the government's three phases of wage control, is seen here in a moment of heart-rending distress.



Jones

lifting a finger to do anything to raise pensions—has made preparations for a well-heeled retirement for himself.

He has revealed that he hopes to be doing some 'overseas lecture tours for the Government'. This is bureaucratic double talk for denying free holidays boosting the interests of British imperialism.

British investments abroad and attempting to win trade union bureaucrats overseas to his own class collaborationist positions.

He is treading the well-worn path of many American labour bureaucrats who have accepted lavish CIA handouts for international speaking tours.

Lib-Lab coalition

Except that Jones will be paid not by the US bourgeois government but by the British Lib-Lab coalition. Not so much a Companion of Honour as a Companion of Capitalism.

Jones has had the nerve to claim that he accepted the royal bauble 'on behalf of' the trade union movement.

Workers who have had more than enough of Jones' policies should join together with one voice—through their union branches and shop stewards' committees—and give Jones clear instructions as to what he should do with it.

FLEET ST. LAYS DOWN FAMILY LAWS

Fleet Street had a field day last week 'exposing' the doctor who allowed lesbians to have children through artificial insemination.

The dreadful threat to their immaculate conception of family life was supposed to chill the marrow in our bones—despite the fact that children born to lesbians who have no sexual contact with men are by definition wanted children.

The papers dragged out their right wing 'outrage' spokesmen including Jill Knight.

Acceptable?

As one lesbian mother told the *Observer*, (which rejected the gutter press approach):

"Does she think it would be acceptable for somebody like myself—an admitted lesbian—to have sexual intercourse with a man—which I find repugnant, and then give birth. Would she like me to resort to picking up a man on the streets?"

Women and men who invaded the offices of the *London Evening News* to protest at the story made lesser headlines.

The *Daily Mail* for example, (which operates from the same building as the *News*) did not carry a single word about the protest.

Cheered

Obviously they feel it better to keep mum about these family disputes.



PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL
Confrontation at the Evening News as protestors demand the right of reply to the witch-hunting article.

The protestors were cheered by some of the journalists on the *Evening News* and succeeded in forcing the management of the paper to give them right of reply to the article attacking the doctor and the women.

'Left' MP, Neil Kinnock, appears on the TV.

propaganda programme, *Any Questions*, began by defending the women, to howls of protest from the audience. Seeing which way the wind was blowing Kinnock rapidly revised his views to assure the audience that he of course was not homosexual.



Audrey Wise retreats again on firemen's pay fight

Firemen and their supporters demonstrated in Coventry town centre on 6 January as part of their campaign for a 30% rise. Coventry Trades Council helped organise the march and there were banners from Rolls Royce and the LPYS.

Though small—perhaps 100-150 attended—the demonstration reflected the

determination of the firemen to continue their strike.

The interviewers, looking for cracks in the strike came away disappointed.

"Indefinitely"

To the blunt question "How long can you stay out?" they received a blunt reply "Indefinitely".

But the problems of political perspective and the inadequacy of the firemen's self-styled 'supporters' was

highlighted by a speech at the end of the march by 'left' MP Audrey Wise.

While she praised the organisation of the strike, Wise refused to take a position on whether the firemen should accept the government's offer (although she did ask firemen to "look with considerable skepticism on promises for the future" and "take note of the public support they had").

In place of her earlier

denunciation of wage controls and rejection of the line that firemen are a "special case" she merely threw in the remark that she doesn't view government pay policy "with any particular sympathy".

Pernicious

But Wise sidestepped all the main questions. The whole emphasis was on the fact that the claim was "just", the firemen were "skilled" and the even more pernicious idea that:

"There's no way the government can defeat the firemen, whatever form the struggle takes".

But Wise did call on the trade union movement to continue financial support and castigate the TUC General Council for not reflecting the views of the labour movement.

She finished her speech by calling on the firemen to "keep united, keep determined and keep on fighting for fair wages because your job is important to us".

Tribune's opportunistic dead end



PHOTO: Mike Tomlinson, IFL

Tribune meeting

The dead-end futility of the evolutionary road to socialism peddled by Labour 'Lefts' is plainly illustrated in the latest edition of their shabby weekly journal Tribune.

Contrasting the depth of the capitalist crisis with the fortunes of the 'left', the 'What Tribune Thinks' column bleats plaintively 'Why is not the Left in the ascendancy everywhere?'. Deliberately ignoring the

reactionary policies vigorously pursued by social democratic parties in almost every country on the globe—their collaboration with wage cuts, job-cuts, speed up, social service cuts and anti-union laws and their involvement in bourgeois coalitions—Tribune gropes around for another answer.

'Leadership'

'Is it possible', the column continues, 'as some on the ultra-Left argue that it is all a

matter of 'leadership'. If only the working class is given the paper 'leadership' then all will be different?'

Such a view would mean that the grovelling reformists that swell the ranks of the Parliamentary Tribune Group cease to troop into the lobbies time and again to support the Lib-Lab Coalition.

Obligation

It would mean them accepting their obligation to break the Coalition and fight for the removal of the Callaghan/Healey leadership—putting forward a socialist alternative to wage controls and mass unemployment.

This is too much for Tribune to swallow. Dismissing all thought of a fight for principles the editorial goes on to point out the yawning gulf between left reformist theory and practice that renders them impotent.

'To put it very bluntly the left has its utopian vision and its very proper analysis of capitalism's failure, but its concept of transition from one to the other is



Heffer

incoherent'.

For these cynical opportunists this is simply a round-about way of saying that there should be no fight now for socialist policies. But Trotsky showed in the *Transitional Programme* the real nature of such 'socialism'.

Two parts

'Classical Social Democracy, functioning in an epoch of progressive capitalism [the nineteenth century] divided its programme into two parts independent of each other: the minimum programme which limited itself to reforms within the framework of bourgeois society, and the maximum programme which promised substitution of socialism for capitalism in the indefinite future.'

Between the minimum and the maximum programme no bridge existed. And indeed Social Democracy has no need of such a bridge, since the word *socialism* is used only for holiday speechi-

fyng...

Insofar as the old, partial, 'minimal' demands of the masses clash with the destruction and degrading tendencies of decadent capitalism—and this occurs at each step—the Fourth International advances a system of *transitional demands*, the essence of which is contained in the fact that ever more openly and decisively they will be directed against the very bases of the bourgeois regime.

Superseded

The old 'minimal' programme is superseded by the *transitional programme*, the task of which lies in systematic mobilisation of the masses for the proletarian revolution'.

(*Transitional Programme* Folrose Ed. pp8-9)

What alternative do the Tribune opportunists have to offer to this clear perspective?

They blather about 'capturing the minds' and appealing to 'reason and intelligence', characterising the fight for socialism as a grand armchair debate in which the best arguments will win out.

Gradualists

Like the gradualists of the little-known Socialist Party of Great Britain, who believe in doing nothing until a majority of the whole population has been won to its ageing banner, Tribune virtually announces that its tacit support for Lib-Lab policies will continue indefinitely.

'In political terms that means the Left working hard to convert the majority to its policies. There is no other way. No little band of theorists provides an alternative'.

Alternative?

Two million unemployed and fifteen million workers suffering wage cuts at the hand of the Callaghan-Steel government will wonder whether Tribune offers an alternative.

'No self appointed 'leadership' will be able to lead where the majority will not follow,' blusters Tribune.

But neither can the 'majority' follow unless a 'minority' is prepared to come forward and give a clear lead. Tribune has openly scorned such a task, thus ramming home the need for a Trotskyist leadership based on the method and demands of the *Transitional Programme*.

To build such a leadership is the task undertaken by the Workers Socialist League.



Wise

Her speech, for all its weaknesses, was well received by the firemen but the dilemma they are in was summed up afterwards when one of them said to a TV interviewer:

"Our problem is we've got no way of getting at the government".

Audrey Wise could have begun to solve that dilemma with a strident call for industrial action on wages alongside the firemen and a clear statement of her intent to fight to break the Lib-Lab coalition, drive out the coalitionists and fight for a new leadership in the Labour Party.

She was not able to make such a call because she clearly not prepared to lead struggle with such revolutionary implications.

Colquhoun baled out

Labour's national organisation committee has ruled that the successful attempt to move Maureen Colquhoun as Labour candidate for Northampton North at the next election was unconstitutional.

The Labour leadership have learned much from the Tory infiltrators at Newham in the way of tactics. They have paid particular attention to the kind of technique used by McCormick and Leis in the courts.

Having lost the fight in the constituency, the party bureaucrats have ruled that the process began where the local process had been called with insufficient notice. The committee is commending that the party executive upholds Colquhoun's appeal on January 11.

PRESS GANG End of the line

Stand by to shed a tear for ex-NUR President. Dave Bowman.

Up till last week he had all the trappings of his £4,000 a year union post, plus the prestige of an 'important' job. In short, a man to look up to.

And this week? Well, things are not quite so hot for this loyal servant of the trade union movement.

As his job came to an end he looked forward to his reward.

Nothing too grand. Just a simple management job in the personnel department, stopping strikes and keeping down wages, the kind of work he was used to.

But for some inexplicable reason he has been scorned by his management colleagues and have sent him back to the footplate of a train.

He told the *Sunday Times* "I would think I could do a job for the Board in industrial relations. It seems

that someone in the Department of Transport does not want my expertise... As it is I have already been measured up for an engine driver's uniform".

The *Express* felt sympathy for poor 64 year old Bowman who will spend all of three months on the footplate.

"Mr Bowman, a lively and cultured man, who can recite the Robert Burns epic poem *To a Haggis* in dialect, was formerly a member of the Communist Party and fought seven elections on its behalf.

But he resigned from the Communist Party in 1970 and is now regarded as far from being a trouble maker".

It is not just indignity of a former Communist Party member having to go back onto his job. At £47 a week the pay is so lousy!

One reason why the FBU leadership needed a week's grace before the recall conference was to give the press time to do its job.

The moment the Executive sellout became known the strike went into the past tense in the newspaper columns and Party and his Executive were elevated to the status of statesmen.

But the *Sunday Times*—resolute with support for wage cutting policies—was not having any of this soft talk. The promise of pay next year outside the planned 5% limit was too much to swallow.

'It is right to be pleased that the firemen's strike looks like ending, but not with the way it has been resolved... Even as Ministers are themselves warning that yet another phase of pay restrictions will be needed, they are working out special exceptions'.

The solution? If the unions want to avoid wage control they must learn to control their wage claims—using the Basnett formula of permanent wage controls.



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Callaghan

Ireland

ROOTS OF

TODAY'S

CRISIS

PART 10

BRITAIN SENDS IN

THE TROOPS

The uneven development of capitalism in Ireland, which contrasted heavily industrialised areas in the North-east of the country with an agrarian economy in the rest of the country, was gradually altered after the establishment of the Northern State in 1921.

The decline of the traditional Northern industries (textiles, ship-building, engineering) in the face of increasing foreign competition continued throughout the period, but reached a point in the late 'fifties when large scale lay offs of workers in these industries led to unemployment among skilled Protestant workers as well as Catholics.

Subsidies

At the same time the Northern government was pursuing its traditional protectionist policy and adopting a strategy of attracting foreign investment through subsidies. In 1958 the Control of Manufactures Act, which guaranteed that majority holding in any company should remain in the possession of Irish capital, was repealed.

An Anglo-Irish trade agreement was concluded in 1960. The development of major investment and trade between Britain and Southern Ireland led not only Britain's trade towards both parts of Ireland, but also changed the relations between North and South as well.

Opposed interests

The crucial factor in the development of the Northern State in the first place was the diametrically opposed economic interests of Belfast and the rest of the North.

While the Southern native capitalists needed a protectionist policy (a major part of the 'tariffs and subsequent the Rule campaigns), such a policy would have meant the death for Northern industry wholly dependent on trade with Britain.

The developments of the 1960s undermined this con-

lict of interest and a period of North-South economic co-operation began.

Talks between the two Premiers, Lemass and O'Neill began in 1965.

Reaction to these talks within the Unionist Party was extremely hostile.

Right-wing petty bourgeois elements led by the Rev. Ian Paisley used these talks as the platform for a campaign to remove O'Neill, who was regarded as being



Paisley

"soft on Catholics".

The actual progress of O'Neill's economic policies did not bear this out.

Like Lemass, O'Neill had since 1963 been wooing multi-national corporations to invest in Northern Ireland.

However, his policy of establishing efficient transport facilities to mainly Protestant areas in the East of the six-counties, rather than to the depressed Catholic areas, like Derry, demonstrated his continuation of the policy of discrimination in favour of Protestants.

Discrimination

Male unemployment in Derry and Newry remained at around 20%, whereas in the Protestant towns it rarely exceeded 3%.

Discrimination was also applied in housing. The existence of a housing qualification for local council elections meant that refusing a person a house effectively

disfranchised him.

In places like Derry the Unionist Party only held control by gerrymandering the electoral ward boundaries (30% of the population elected 12 Unionist councillors, while 70% elected 8 anti-Unionists).

Homeless

Resentment among the Catholic community against this discrimination broke out initially over the question of housing.

A Housing Action Committee was set up in Derry agitating for homeless families to squat, and organising various protest activities.

However this was restricted to minor incidents such as blocking the road with caravans.

The Civil Rights Campaign only developed into a mass movement after the demonstration in Derry on October 5, 1968.

Barricade

This march had been banned by the Home Affairs minister William Craig. Nevertheless the organisers decided to proceed.

The 2,000 strong march was stopped by an RUC barricade about 200 yards from its starting point.

A police cordon moved behind the marchers and the police in front launched a baton charge.

This attempt to smash the Civil Rights campaign at its inception had the opposite effect to that intended.

A march over the same route on November 16, 1968 attracted between 15,000 and 20,000 people.

Attack

The crowd was only prevented from attacking the police barricade protecting the city centre by the intervention of the Citizens Action Committee, an organisation of middle class Catholics, whose role was to restrict the demands of the Civil Rights movement to the democratic ones of "One Man - One Vote".

They attached themselves to the movement in the hope of attaining a share in the power of their Protestant better-half.

"One man, one job" and "One man, one house" showed its real content.

The aspirations of the Catholic working class were not for formal legal equality with the Protestants, but for an end to their economic deprivation.

The demand for "One man - one house" got its sharp edge not from discrimination against Catholics, but from the fact that in 1967 no houses at all had been built in Derry!

The "One man, one job" demand derived its force

from the increase in unemployment in Catholic areas.

While it was necessary for socialists to demand an end to discrimination and privilege, it was even more important to recognise that many Protestants had the "privilege" of living in 19th Century houses, which were unfit for human habitation, and the "privilege" of working for wages one third lower than that in the rest of Britain.

While many socialists formally recognised this, they

failed to develop this recognition into a programme which could have provided a concrete alternative to the legalistic outrage of the Catholic middle class.

Demands for a programme of useful public works and for work-sharing without loss of pay could have posed solutions to the housing and unemployment situations which could have decisively broken from the endless protest demonstrations to pressurise the Stormont government to 'redirect investment' to Catholic areas.



Eamonn McCann after the Peoples' Democracy march from Belfast to Derry in 1970



Concluded next edition

IN REVIEW

REFORMS AND THE FIGHT FOR GAY RIGHTS

A review of 'Coming Out—Homosexual politics in Britain, from the nineteenth century to the present' by Jeffrey Weeks, published by Quartet Paperbacks at £3.95



Gay Rights rally in Seattle last June. Militant/Karl Bermann

dom and equality—at this level the dictatorship of the proletariat was merely accomplishing the democratic tasks of the bourgeois revolution.

Sexual oppression and the distortion of sexuality are inherent in all forms of class society.

They can be abolished finally only by a development of the productive forces sufficient to end universal want, and allow the development of socialism.

Hampered

But in different societies these forms of repression are present to different degrees, and the task of the dictatorship of the proletariat is to socialise domestic life and replace the bourgeois family unit.

Advances were undoubtedly made in this direction by the Russian Revolution, but they were severely hampered by the economic and political problems facing the revolution.

Even these limited gains were ruthlessly and inevitably swept away by the Stalinist bureaucracy: in 1934 homosexuality once more became a criminal offence, with heavy penalties.

Opportunities

The lessons of the Revolution and Stalinist degenerations in Russia must be fully integrated in developing a thorough Marxist analysis of sexuality and sexism.

The opportunities to make such an advance are far greater today than they were for the Bolsheviks.

The bitter experience of the restoration of the family in the Soviet Union must be used to enrich our political understanding of sexual oppression.

In developing and putting into practice such an analysis, the investigations of bourgeois science (particularly psychology and anthropology) cannot be completely ignored.

Insights

They also need to be employed alongside the insights provided by the feminist movement in recent years.

Coming Out in no way completes that vital project. But in bringing together his own research with previously scattered information, Weeks has provided a useful source.

The homosexual reform movements do form a significant area of 20th century politics, and at present there is no fuller account of their history in Britain.

The book cannot be recommended for its analysis (or its price), but comrades will find its information a valuable contribution.

By DAVID WHITFIELD

Ten years ago, the Sexual Offences Act legalised homosexual activity between males over 21. But since the passing of this 'liberal' act, there has been an increase in prosecution of homosexuals.

'Queer-bashing', police harassment and the sacking of gays who 'come out' accompany the day-to-day deprivations and restrictions experienced by gay women and men alike.

The recent prosecution of *Gay News* for blasphemy followed the press witch-hunt of Thorpe, and in the US, Anita Bryant has launched the campaign against homosexuality in the name of 'decency'.

Localised

If we see them separated from real historical developments, there seems to be nothing new about such attempts to repress homosexuality.

Homosexual behaviour has been present throughout history, and the reaction of different societies has ranged from total acceptance to the most vicious repression.

But the existence of specific homosexual social groupings and sub cultures has been far more localised.

In the advanced capitalist nations of the late 19th century the growth of such a community was deeply rooted in the massive transformations of society which were produced by the Industrial Revolution.

Crucial

Urbanisation, and above all the changes in the structure and function of the family were crucial in shaping this process.

The bourgeoisie did not in any sense plan this phenomenon. But once it had emerged as an inevitable side-product of the social changes wrought by capitalist development, then it had to be controlled in some way.

The ruling-class responded through various channels—organised religion, medical 'science', liberal ethics, the legal system.

Reform movements

But classification as social, sex deviant, pathologic, a menace to public health and safety, served to strengthen the solidarity and self-defence of the many homo-



200,000 join march against Anita Bryant and for gay rights in San Francisco.

sexuals, who resisted all these attacks in various ways.

A major form of self defence was the creation of the homosexual reform movements. Over the last century, these have fallen into three distinct phases.

The first emerged in the last quarter of the 19th century and was closely bound up with both the growing terrorist movement and the beginnings of scientific study of sexuality.



Thorpe

Particularly in Germany, where the movement was at its strongest, homosexual organisations also formed close links with socialist movements.

From 1897 until the split between reformists and revolutionaries, the German Social Democracy consistently supported the repeal of repressive legislation, and the Communist Party continued this tradition up to 1930.

This international movement collapsed almost totally with the defeats inflicted on the working class in the 1930s, by the betrayals of Stalinism and the rise of

fascism.

The second phase was very different in character—slowly coalescing during the long boom, it was thoroughly reformist in its politics and generally conservative—especially so in Britain, where its activity centred on lobbying the establishment with discretion and decorum.

This polite relationship was rudely shattered in 1969 by the eruption of the Gay Liberation Movement with the Stonewall riot in New York.

Increasingly associated with the counter-culture and 'the Movement', Gay Liberation emerged along with the 'New Left' and the Women's Liberation Movement, placing a heavy emphasis on youth, bravado and individual liberty.

Chaos

Typically petty-bourgeois its politics were at once utopian and reformist.

The Gay Liberation Movement has been in a state of political and organisational chaos for several years now, and *Coming Out* is very closely a product of that crisis.

Increasing numbers of gays have recognised that attempting to reform capitalist society is no way to resolve their demands.

They have turned in varying degrees, towards revolutionary socialism, and as a member of the *Gay Left* collective, Weeks represents part of this new orientation.

Partial story

In *Coming Out* he attempts to provide a history of 'Homosexual Politics in Britain, from the Nineteenth Century to the Present', but, as he comments himself, the

book 'tells only a partial story'.

It is not so clear that he recognises why the story is 'partial' in a way that makes it at least as frustrating as it is informative.

Material basis

The homosexual reform movements cannot be understood without analysing both the material basis from which they have sprung and the wider range of political responses and activity which developed alongside them.

Weeks partially recognises this necessity, and surrounds his accounts of the movements with a framework which connects them to wider social and political developments.

But this framework is none too robust in itself, and provides only occasional and flimsy support for the central structure.

However enticingly

garnished, the book remains a collection of essays on related themes in social history.

What Weeks has not recognised is the contradiction which is fundamental to the attempt to present a history of the reform movements by concentrating heavily on the movements themselves.

Basic failing

They simply do not possess sufficient autonomous existence or continuity of tradition for this to be a viable approach.

Such a basic failing accurately parallels the political weakness of the 'revolutionary' elements in the gay liberation movement who insist on autonomous political organisation.

This position has its origins as much in the attitudes of supposed revolutionary socialists in the recent past, as in the internal history of the gay organisations.

Weeks points out that the support of socialists for the demands of homosexuals has been almost exclusively on the basis of support for legal reform.

The inadequacy of such a position was sharply characterised by Lenin:

'He who forgets his obligation to be in advance of everybody in bringing up, sharpening and solving every general democratic problem is not a social democrat'.

What is To Be Done

This level of support was expressed clearly enough in 1917 when the Bolsheviks repealed all the repressive legislation of the Tsarist autocracy, and only coercive sexual behaviour remained punishable.

But a democratic legal code does not ensure free-



Militant/Lou Howat

OUR POLICIES COUNCILS OF ACTION

First part of a two part series on the historical experience of Councils of Action.

Councils of Action were the names given to all-inclusive local workers organisations set up in Britain on a number of occasions during the great class battles in the years that followed the 1917 Russian Revolution.

They represented an advanced form of organisation for struggle and implied a challenge to the reformist leaders of the working class movement, even to the running of capitalist society itself.

However, because they did not mature in a way that was promised at their birth, it is

was small, isolated, and divided, especially before the setting up of the Communist Party in August 1920.

In the meantime the horrors of the imperialist war, the inflation and the speed up in the factories increased the militancy of ordinary workers in the union branches, the Labour Parties and the Trades Councils.

First impetus

The first impetus to expand on the local workers' organisations that already existed was provided by a meeting known as the Leeds Convention, called in May 1917 to commemorate the February Revolution in

Party, Tom Quelch, was Chairman of the National Committee set up by the Convention to establish the new councils.

Banned

Conferences of councils of workers and soldiers were held in a number of towns throughout the country.

In Glasgow, a meeting was banned by the police and the one in London was broken up by hired hoodlums.

Leaders of the ILP like Phillip Snowden were also hostile to the new organisations, and the Leeds Trades Council was driven to conclude that their 'promising propagandist' work could 'best be done by

directly affiliated' which discussed dealing with the existing situation in regard to provisions and other necessities.

The first time that Councils of Action leapt to national prominence was in August 1920 during the culmination of the campaign against the War of Intervention by imperialist forces against the Soviet Union.

Development

It is significant that the development of new organisations and new policies in the workers' movement coincided with the defence of the first successful workers' revolution.

In May 1920 dockers in London refused to load a ship called the *Jolly George* with munitions to be sent to the Poles to fight the Russian Red Army.

Later in the summer it seemed possible that the British Army might itself be sent there to help the Poles.

After a series of local demonstrations, a meeting on August 13th of over 1000 representatives of various different working class bodies and including all the main trade union and Labour Party leaders, agreed to strike action in the event of the extension of war against Russia.

'Strictly limited'

A national Council of Action was set up to support and make propaganda for these policies.

The national leaders of the unions and Labour Party who were members of the Council began to negotiate with Prime Minister Lloyd George to persuade him to call off the war against the Soviet Union.

At the same time, they called on local organisations to form all-inclusive Councils of Action, carefully pointing out that their 'mandate was strictly limited', and the new local bodies were 'not in any way to usurp the functions of Trade Union Executives', especially so far as the withdrawal of labour is concerned.

Councils of Action

The local Councils of Action set up during the next few weeks usually by meetings of trades council executives, Labour Parties and union branches, found it necessary to go beyond their instructions in a number of ways.

Firstly, they *did* discuss and prepare strike action,

though they did not carry it out.

The Liverpool Trades Council Executive for example decided 'to use all possible means in its power to stop recruiting and transport of munitions'.

Secondly, the Councils of Action tried to take up questions other than those for which they were originally established, notably opposition to the war against Irish independence and to unemployment.

The third way in which Councils of Action went beyond the limits set by the leaders was in organising themselves to perform functions not generally considered by local workers' organisations.

Sub-committees

Thus at Merthyr Tydfil a network of sub-committees was set up to cover every phase of the life of the workers.

This was said to be necessary because 'the normal functions of trade unions are over and there is no machinery to take up the functions in a systemic way, preserve order and carry out necessary administrative work'.

It was actions such as these that led the Directorate of Intelligence to write to the Cabinet on September 16th that the Councils of Action were 'taking on more the form of Soviets' and that in some places they were 'forming plans for the seizure of private property and means of transport'.



TUC 'left' Cook

This was not really true, but what was obviously causing concern in the highest circles was evidently the plans to exempt essential services in the event of strike action. Speaking in the following

October, Lenin drew out the same significance in the setting up of the Councils of Action.

Although it did not call itself a soviet:

'that is what it was. It was the same kind of dual power as we had under Kerensky from March 1917 onwards'.

Possibilities

In other words, it opened up revolutionary possibilities, though it did not necessarily get near to achieving them.

Even though local Councils of Action remained in existence until well into 1921, the national Council of Action was disbanded as soon as it became obvious during the previous autumn that British troops would not be involved in the war against the Soviet Union by Poland.

In the years from 1921 to 1925, various forms of joint activity showed the momentous possibilities that remained.

In April 1921, before the leaders of the Railwaymen and Transport Workers indicated their refusal on 'Black Friday' to support the miners in their fight against wage cuts, many local forms of joint action were discussed for the widely expected general strike.

Prepared permits

In Birmingham a 'Joint Trades Union Emergency Committee' was set up which prepared permits to allow the transport of essential goods and also food vouchers to be issued through the cooperative society.

As well as a number of similar schemes during other struggles in this period, a National Federation of Trades Councils was also set up during 1922-3.

This came increasingly under the influence of the Communist Party and opened the possibility of a chain of command within the trade union movement, separate from the reformist leaders.

Control

However, since neither the rank and file trade unionists who set up the new Federation nor the Communist Party could see the possibility of acting independently, the bureaucrats set up in 1925 a so-called Joint Consultative Committee of Trades Councils which has served to retain their control until the present day.

By John Docherty.



The Russian Revolution was the inspiration for British Councils of Action.

necessary to say something about their nature and limitations.

The treachery of the leaders of the trade unions and Labour Party in supporting the imperialist war in 1914 and agreeing to limit wage increases and strikes, led to a series of revolts amongst rank and file workers.

Outmanoeuvred

The shop stewards' movement provided the most militant response, but they were defeated by their lack of political perspective and outmanoeuvred in the end by government and union leaders.

Many militant workers looked for leadership in the Independent Labour Party, but this was limited by a pacifist attitude on the issue of Macedonia and the Balkans, as well as by its reformist leadership.

Russia and attended by a wide range of delegates from various working class organisations including 207 from local Labour Parties and trades councils.

The most important decision of the Leeds Convention was to set up councils of workmen and soldier delegates.

According to one of the future founders of the Communist Party, Robert Williams of the Transport Workers Federation, these were 'to break the influence of the industrial "machine", and according to Sylvia Pankhurst of the Workers Socialist Federation, they were to prepare for a 'provisional Government like the Russian Socialist Government.

New Council

existing organisations'.

The ambiguity of function of the all-inclusive organisations of 1917 did not prevent the development of a number of similar bodies during the many important struggles of the period.

Strikes

In January 1919, two months after the end of the war a number of strikes took place in the big engineering centres for a forty hour working week.

In Belfast the Trades Council constituted itself a 'Council of Action' to run the strike.

This was apparently the first use of the phrase, but similar arrangements were seen for example in Huddersfield during the railway strike of November 1919 where a special committee 'comprising the EC and representatives of the societies

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

SPEKE STAYS OUT AGAINST SPEED UP

Shop stewards feel that the full time officials who have supported the 9-week strike by 4,000 workers at British Leyland's Triumph plant in Speke, Liverpool, are beginning to change their position.

The reason for these doubts are the leaked statements claiming that Leyland's new Managing Director, Michael Edwardes, is planning to close the plant.

The cause of the strike was the sudden refusal of management last October to honour the mutuality agreement—which provides for manning levels to be mutually agreed prior to implementation or subject to a mutually agreed temporary arrangement.

The following clauses are at issue:

"Difficulties associated with Manning Levels, methods, equipment, layout, individual or group ability which are raised will be discussed objectively and a genuine and constructive attempt made to resolve them.

"If these difficulties cannot be resolved then the appropriate representative of management and the steward (s) must agree a temporary arrangement on which the job will continue while an initial or further study is conducted."

This section of the agreement was a substantial obstacle to Leyland's drive for speed-up and total management control of manning levels.



Edwardes

The value of mutuality on manning levels is demonstrated by the contrast between working conditions in Ford's Halewood plant and in the Triumph Speke plant.

And even as Leyland attempt to tighten the screw to attain Ford's rate of exploitation, Ford management is itself imposing further speed-up as the current Halewood strike shows.

Triumph workers must ignore Edwardes blackmail and stand firm in defence of working conditions.

PHOTO: John Sturrock Report



CP defeated on policy

The conference called last Sunday by the Liverpool Trades Council in support of the firemen provoked a very important discussion on the way forward for the strike.

The motion from the organisers in front of the 160 delegates—half of them firemen—called for general support including a one day solidarity strike on January 16; this was modified by the authors to read "a one day strike if called for by the FBU recall conference on the 12th".

In opposition to this policy was an amendment, moved by Bucks FBU and seconded by Darlington FBU, calling upon those trade

union leaders who say they support the firemen to call their members out on their own claims now.

Moving the main resolution, Terry Fields, a new member of the FBU executive from the North West who voted against acceptance of the deal, made no mention of the tanker drivers or power workers in a 45 minute speech.

The successful amendment said:

"In order to break the isolation of the firemen and win the full claim it is crucial that other sections of workers take strike action now on their own claims.

This conference therefore calls upon all sections with claims outstanding, in partic-

ular the power workers of the EETPU and the tanker drivers of the TGWU to come out now alongside the firemen to break the 10%.

Further delay would not only leave the FBU in isolation but would make their own claims much more difficult to win if the firemen are beaten.

Both the TGWU and EETPU supported the firemen at the TUC. Now is the opportunity for them and the rest of the 17 who voted with the firemen on the General Council to put their words into action."

The amendment was bitterly opposed by the Communist Party controlled platform.

The chairman said that it

the TUC Finances and General Purposes Committee decision to accept the 10%.

"If they were in the AUEW we would lose no time in getting them back to work", he added.

At this point uproar broke out, with militant stewards shouting him down, much to the embarrassment of the Communist Party members.

The meeting of well over 100 stewards then voted full support for the firemen and

overwhelmingly passed a WRP-sponsored motion calling for the setting up of a Council of Action based on engineering union branches and stewards committees to back the firemen against the 10%.

The Stalinist-dominated District Committee has, of course, done nothing about this.

Not a single AUEW banner was to be seen on the local firemen's demonstration the following Saturday week despite official invitations from the FBU.

In fact the District Committee in its minutes covering the quarterly seems to have reversed the meaning of the stewards' vote.

Clearly, however, most of the stewards who voted for this motion also want to fight for it.

Action

This fight for a delegate council of action must be taken up in every engineering union branch in the area, directing against the treacherous District Committee and fighting for real support for the firemen.

This means engineers organising action to smash the 10% themselves. Only in this way can the fight be broadened out to include other areas of the local labour movement—most importantly the Yorks miners.

Camden Council of Action

The development of support for the firemen's struggle beyond mere words was shown by the setting up on 3 January of a Council of Action in Camden.

This followed discussions within the Trades Council, local Labour Parties and the FBU in the area, all of which centred on co-ordinated and real action in support of the strike.

Meeting

A letter from the Kentish Town FBU sent to the Trades Council during December urged the setting up of a Council of Action and Camden Labour Party Secretary John Braggins, as the result of discussion in the North Party GMC, wrote to the Trades Council Secretary R. Dunnett urging joint action.

The result was a meeting held on 3 January between the Trades Council Executive representatives of the four Camden FBU branches and the Labour Party.

Demonstration

The Council of Action have now published a leaflet calling for support for a demonstration on Tuesday 10 January, and in general terms for industrial action.

What is necessary now is for a further development of this policy directed at those union leaders and 'left' MPs who have expressed support.

Other groups of workers in Camden can now be approached, notably the large number of NUPE members in the area to take part in joint action to defeat the 10%.

This struggle will go on whatever the outcome of the Firemen's Recall Conference.

Dock strike continues

Liverpool dockers on January 8 voted overwhelmingly to continue the strike which has shut down Merseyside Docks Harbour Company.

This is the first major strike by Liverpool dockers for four years.

The strike was provoked before Christmas by a management refusal to pay men of the twilight shift who

they claim left early to catch their buses.

The two men involved went on strike and management reallocated their work to other gangs without going through established procedure.

The issue involved is clearly a management challenge to the measure of union control of allocation of gangs.

The Dock Company have

tried to force independent arbitration but this has been rejected by shop stewards.

On January 5 the tugboatmen, shore gangs and gig boat men voted to black any ship attempting to leave the port, so the docks are now at a complete standstill.

Today the remaining 2,000 dockers who work for independent firms came out in support.

was wrong to point the finger at particular trade union leaders. What was required was "general solidarity".

Moving the amendment, Mick Rowlinson from Bucks brigade argued that the only effective way to break the isolation of the firemen was for those sections with claims outstanding to come out now.

One day solidarity strikes he said would solve nothing and direct away from real action.

Supporting the amendment, Alan Thornett, a delegate from the 5/293 Branch pointed out that since the Lib-Lab coalition was formed in order to continue the wage control policy it could well fall if that policy was destroyed.

This fact he said had motivated the TUC and the entire official leadership of the trade unions since day one of the strike, to ensure its isolation.

No mention

No-one who held the view that the present government must be supported above all else could in reality support the firemen.

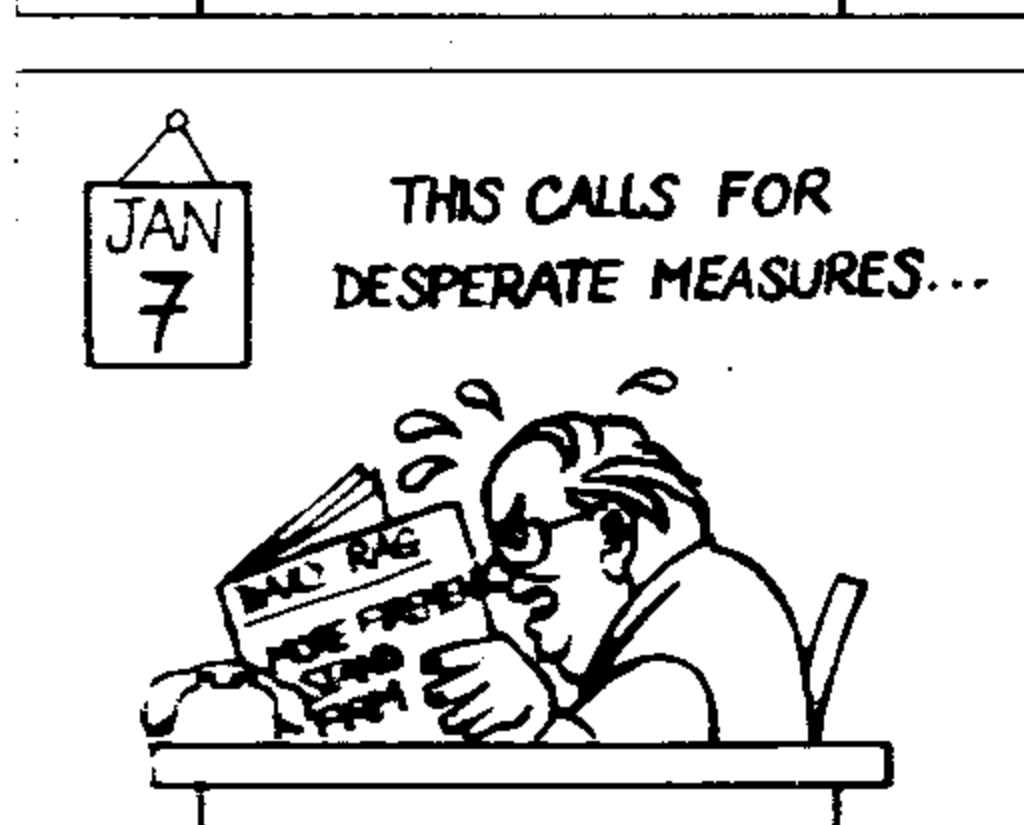
Eddie Loyden, a local 'left' MP pledged his full support to the firemen but went on to say that the government must be protected at all costs.

He defended one day strikes and made no mention of the tanker drivers or the power workers.

The WRP moved an amendment calling for a "campaign to bring down the conspiratorial coalition government" which was narrowly defeated.

The conference, although small, provided the forum for an important discussion on the way forward for the strike.

It is essential now that the perspective in the Bucks-Darlington amendment, which was carried overwhelmingly by the conference, is taken into the recall conference on Thursday and used as the basis for rejection of the offer.



Harsh lessons of Metropole strike

On the Wednesday before Christmas the 11 week old strike at the London Metropole Hotel ended in defeat and the sack for the seven members of the General and Municipal Workers Union still out.

Since October 10, after over 200 voted to strike for a £50 minimum wage, the Metropole dispute passed through a number of phases and inevitably, critical turning points where decisions had to be taken.

Tendencies

Tested out in this struggle, which challenged the 10% pay limit and the TUC's 12-month rule were not only the hotel workers themselves and the fight against their

front in support for previous wage control policies, played a leading role in forcing the 12-month rule through the TUC.

Wages Council

Aside from this, they have for many years actively participated in maintaining low wages in hotel and catering by propping up the class collaborationist

Wages Council which sets minimum wages for the industry and which had by October already produced proposals in its Green Paper for a paltry £4 rise on rates scarcely above £30 a week.

Quite apart from their long and dishonourable record of sell-outs and 'sweet-heart-union' style agreements with the likes of Trust Houses Forte, it was inevitable that they would take any measure

they made an impression on the weaker sections who had in the main not been active on the picket.

The combined effect of these being driven back to work and others who had found jobs elsewhere left only 60 strikers remaining.

From then on it was clear that this number, which was to dwindle still further, by themselves could not win.

But what had happened at the Metropole was not taking place in isolation from events elsewhere. In fact it soon became apparent that a wages movement was building up throughout the London hotels workforce which raised mass action around the £50 minimum wage as a real possibility.

The fate of the Metropole claim was to depend on the

Workers in a majority of the city's largest hotel chains, including Centre, Rank and Grand Metropolitan had, by now, submitted claims for this demand. That this figure though GMWU official policy is considerably below what could be considered a decent living wage (and lacks the vital call for an inflation proofed cost of living clause) is not, in itself, the issue.

The fact was that a strike was already underway on this policy and its unifying effect created conditions for many thousands more to be brought out alongside them.

Super-profits

In this sense the stakes were high as under threat were not only the super-profits of the hotel owners but the far from remote possibility of such a move-

company had sent out letters urging the remaining strikers to return to work. With a new situation developing the danger of isolation was growing and the possibility of saving the jobs of those still out would not last long.

Sacking

A report at the beginning of November that the GMWU officials were attempting to reorganise the union in the hotel was further indication that sacking was imminent.

Unlike struggles over basic union rights where the numbers involved are almost entirely subordinate to the principles at stake, a fight on wages provides room for tactical retreats.

Certainly, when forces combine to make victory impossible the major consideration must be to get back inside and begin the work necessary to prepare for a new situation.

This was the view taken by the Workers Socialist League, and in fact argued openly by a WSL Action Committee member at a meeting on November 5.

Accepted

The only option open apart from this would be in the unlikely event of the Rank Hotel membership overturning their leadership's support for the 10% at meetings early the following week. Ranks voted to accept.

A battle then broke out between those who argued for this position and the Metropole Strike leadership itself, and in particular John Bruce, GMWU Senior Steward, who refused to accept either the assessment or the conclusions.

It was, however, not the first time the call for a return to work had been made. In fact after the first few weeks it had come from the Workers Revolutionary Party, who threw considerable resources into the strike and had influence within it.

Counting heads

Their call, based completely on an impressionist 'counting of heads' method and failure to grasp the dialectical relationship between the lessening of pickets at the Metropole and the build-up of a movement in the other hotels, was correctly rejected with justified hostility.

Subsequently, the WRP's involvement was negligible, though with supporters in

PHOTO: Laurence Spahm, IFL



Centre Hotels, they could have been an important force in preventing the sell-out there.

Support

Though when the time came the WSL argued with the strikers at every opportunity for a return to work (while at the same time organising and declaring public support for strikers' continued fight) a majority voted to stay out. By the end of the following week the company circulated dismissal letters to the do or so who remained.

By the fifth week of strike the main questions had been fought out and decided. At about this point and from then on the Socialist Workers Party began to orient towards the dispute with increasing activism.

Echo

Their anti-political combination of Discos and fund raising activities at the expense of any attempt whatsoever to offer either analysis or perspective, not surprisingly found an echo with the strike leaders who shared their distaste for a scientific assessment of the struggle. Unfortunately, now even for those who not, it was too late.

The strike ended in demoralisation and defeat, all more so as what was there to be salvaged was lost as well. The experiences are worth giving time to consider nevertheless. For those opposing forces were inevitably be driven into conflict under different conditions as new struggles emerge.



Mass picket of the Metropole

own leaders, but also a number of political tendencies.

Drawing a balance sheet of the strike and in particular the lessons it holds for militants who will be involved in future struggles in the hotel industry, must mean at the same time an assessment of the method and practice of these organisations.

It is important to place the start of the Metropole strike in its political context.

12 Month rule

The Lib-Lab coalition Phase 3 strategy of a 10% limit on wage rises had been introduced shortly before along with the 12-month rule.

The GMWU bureaucracy, who had been at the fore-

necessary to defeat a strike which challenged their strangle-hold on the independence of their membership.

No support

Despite assurances to the contrary from GMWU full-time officials before the strike began, within days it had become clear that official support from the union would not be given.

On the contrary, Tilston, the union recruiting officer, who had led negotiations with management, on the second night tried unsuccessfully to get the strikers to disband their picket lines.

The following day regional official Romp instructed them to return to work. Though these attempts failed

spreading of the fight to these other sections of the working class.

It was this assessment and perspective which had been fought for by supporters of the Workers Socialist League within the Hotels Action Committee, which, from the earliest days of the strike, had given assistance.

Production of strike bulletins, appeals for finance and support for the pickets was organised from its regular and frequent meetings.

Action

But it was on the key issue of mobilising action on the £50 minimum wage from other groups of catering workers that the Action Committee concentrated.

ment spreading beyond the industry and linking up with those others opposing Phase 3.

All this was not lost on the GMWU national leadership and they quickly organised to head off and derail the pressure that was building up.

Adjourned

Centre Hotels, among the best organised of all the hotel chains, were their first and biggest problem. The workers London branch had a policy of action unless the claim was met and negotiations seemed unlikely to produce concessions from the employer. The GMWU's tactic was simple; to prepare a claim in excess of the £50 and send in Fred Cooper, the National Officer, to play for time. The outcome was a three-week adjournment for the company to 'reconsider' and the first of similar setbacks which left the Metropole isolated.

Grand Metropolitan's claim, submitted as far back as August, was two months later, suddenly found by union officials to have been 'misaid'. And Rank Hotels, whose workers had previously thrown out a compromise deal were then able to convince leading shop stewards in the company to argue for the 10%.

It was rapidly becoming clear that the balance of forces was swinging heavily in favour of the alliance of bureaucrats and employers, and Metropole management were not slow to recognise it.

complicated by the fact that much information will be held at the Weir Group's major Cathcart complex in Glasgow.

The likelihood is that the Communist Party union leadership there will follow the notorious example of their comrade James Airlie at Govan Shipyards and turn a blind eye to workers' problems in order to 'save' their own skins.

But the fight remains vital. There must be no question of trade unionists blindly accepting management arguments about falling

orders.

And if orders are falling, then the answer to be fought for is not redundancies—'voluntary' or otherwise—but work-sharing on full pay to divide the reduced amount of work among the whole existing workforce with no loss in earnings.

Nationalisation

This must lead to the demand for the nationalisation of all the remaining private sector firms in the steel industry.

Steel sackings plan

20% of the 1200-strong workforce at Osborn Hadfield steel-founders in Sheffield are threatened by a management announcement of planned redundancies. 40 staff and 250 shop floor jobs are to be axed.

Management are blaming a 'fall in orders' for this latest attack, which will aim to utilise 'natural wastage' and voluntary redundancy to erode resistance in the plant.

The necessary fight to open the books of the firm is

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Racist speech from bench

High Court Judge Neil McKinnon, stretched out the hand of friendship to fascism last week by dismissing a charge against National Party leader John Kingsley Read.

Read—who told an East End audience "One down, one million to go" when an Asian youth was murdered in 1976—was set free with the words "I wish you well".

Rubbish

Judge McKinnon delivered a statement lauding British imperialism and saying that racists were right to protest against immigration.

"By all means propagate the views you have but try to avoid invoking the sort of action which has been taken against you".

McKinnon had already told the all white jury (the defence objected to one black juror) that the evidence against McKinnon was rubbish and vague.

In June 1976 400 people had listened to Read make jokes about "niggers, wogs and coons" as well as the infamous remark about an Asian youth who had been knifed to death.

McKinnon placed himself clearly on the same platform as Read before and after the Jury acquitted him under the 1965 Race Relations Act of intending to incite racial hatred.

No doubt

His summing up left no doubt as to which way the jury was to decide. He told them:

"You have got to look at the circumstances and you have got to allow toleration and freedom of the individual otherwise we are all caught in the grip of dictatorship, repression and slavery."

"The fact is that a large number of our forbears went abroad. They took their families, they made their homes and they worked with the local indigenous coloured population."

"Such was the affection (!) engendered by those of our forbears in the local indigenous population—in the West Indies, Jamaica, Bermuda, Guyana and many other parts of the world—that no sooner did the white man grant independence and freedom to govern themselves than the black man wanted to follow the white man to England."

"IN THIS ENGLAND OF OURS AT THE MOMENT WE ARE ALLOWED TO HAVE OUR OWN VIEWS STILL, THANK GOODNESS AND LONG MAY IT LAST"



"Of course we cannot accommodate here unlimited numbers of immigrants coming into this country, but it is not something to be ashamed of."

"Goodness knows, we have one and a half million unemployed already and all immigrants are going to do is to occupy jobs that are needed by the local population."

"Homes are scarce. It is said that immigrants will occupy homes which are needed by ordinary English folk in this country."

Political content

The case is notable not for its outcome but for its open political verbal content. The bourgeoisie keeps the fascist card up their sleeve ready to

play at crucial moments. Judge McKinnon has laid his cards on the table.

Other judges at other times would have delivered the same content of judgement in a much disguised form.

True nature

Communists do not look to the courts to deliver us from fascism and McKinnon is to be thanked for revealing rather than disguising the true nature of the judiciary and state apparatus.

McKinnon has demonstrated the nonsense of 'impartiality' by the courts or that judges rule on 'laws' abstracted from social conditions.

The labour protests delib-

erately ignore this truth.

Like the infamous *Socialist Challenge* scoop (where one magistrate was moved and ten more took her place) Labour MP Martin Flannery demanded that McKinnon be replaced. Presumably by a judge who will be more careful not to sound off so loudly.

David Lane—head of the impotent Commission for Racial Equality—called for prosecutions to be brought under the stronger 1976 Act where motive does not have to be proved.

Bewigged

Dennis Skinner, 'left' MP for Bolsover declared that the judges should be elected; thus presumably promoting those trade union and Labour magistrates into the bewigged world of the high court where they can impose longer sentences on workers.

'Stronger' Acts will solve nothing. Fascism is the last resort of the bourgeoisie against the working class. Forced to choose between the working class and fascism the courts will choose fascism every time.

It is a breach of principle as grave as that of Scargill who turned to the courts with equal lack of success over the NUM wage claim and, like the Labour lefts, used the courts as a substitute for action.

Defence squads

Those who oppose fascism must oppose by mobilising the working class against it—the only class capable of dealing with it.

Defence squads must replace defence lawyers and full support be given to Asian and black communities who organise defence squads, by drawing in the whole labour movement to join them.

The answer to Read and his little bunch of fascists is not a stronger Race law. When the working class has dealt with him then will be the time to say 'one down, not many to go'.

In the fifth week of strike action by 188,000 US coal miners, a 65-year old picket died after being shot five times by a pit security guard in Kentucky.

Mack Lewis was gunned down as pickets manned a level crossing attempting to halt non-union coal trucks. The guard has been charged with murder.

Meanwhile in other areas miners are going onto the offensive in a bid to shut down the non-union pits that at present produce 60% of US coal output.

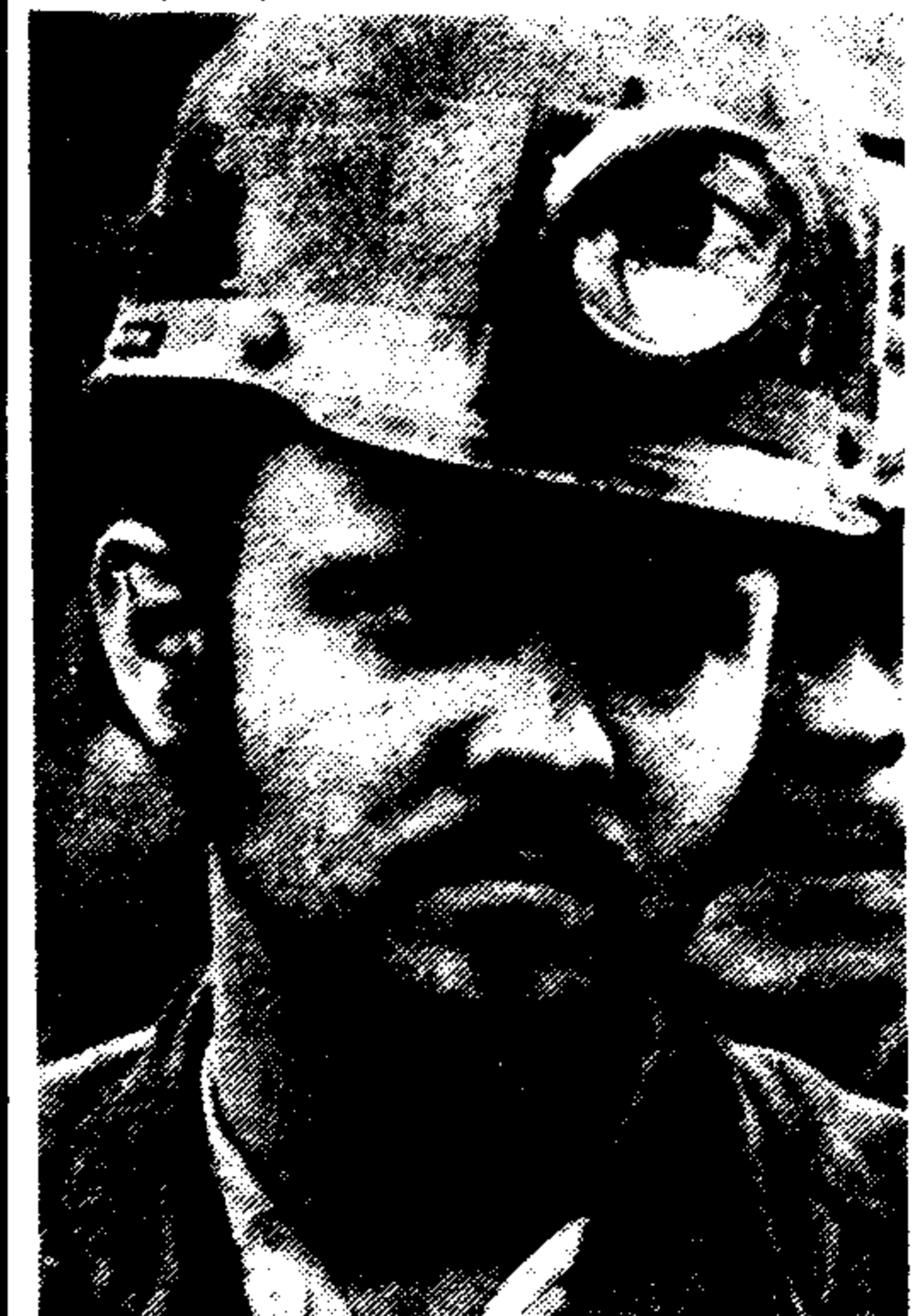
Dynamite

Teams of flying pickets up to several hundred strong and armed with guns, pick-handles and dynamite have been roving highways in Kentucky, Ohio and West Virginia.

On one day alone last month these teams caused five truck loads of scab coal to be dumped by the roadside.

And last weekend 500 strikers firing guns and throwing dynamite fought a battle with riot police at a wharf in Indiana which handles coal from three scab pits.

Three lorries and two cars were blown to bits and two haulage company offices were firebombed, causing damage estimated at £700,000. 194 strikers were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct.



Railway depots and power stations have also been picketed by miners determined to ensure victory against the employers, whose strategy is to starve out the strikers while relying on non-union coal.

Meanwhile UMW president Arnold Miller has been doing his best to sell out the action in negotiations which are reported to have conceded to the employers a 'right to fire' clause enabling the automatic sacking of miners who initiate unofficial strikes or participate in flying pickets of non-union pits.

Taken support for the UMW was voted at last month's AFL-CIO convention—but so far no official action to back the miners has been called.

Strikers must challenge this and demand that steel, power and transport unions are mobilised to block scab coal deliveries and ensure the miners win their life and death battle on pay, conditions and union rights.

And in mobilising the independent strength of the trade union movement, miners must also take a lead in the fight for a political party to represent the independent interests of the working class—a labor party based on the unions.

GERRY LARKIN

AS WE went to press details were coming in of a tragic building accident in Dartford in which four tunnel miners were killed and five seriously injured when their lift plunged 140 feet down a shaft on Monday afternoon.

Among the dead was Gerry Larkin, a union activist well known to 'Socialist Press' sellers in London during the recent unionisation fight. We extend our sympathy to the relatives and friends of these victims, with the hope that the accident will spur on the fight for unionisation in this sector of industry.

More Phase 4 talk

Never a week now passes without further signs that a fourth phase of crippling wage controls is being prepared by the Lib-Lab government and TUC leaders.

Last week was no exception. Transport minister William Rodgers, speaking in the convivial atmosphere of an industrialists' meeting in Leicester, announced:

"The time has now come to stop thinking of incomes policy as a temporary expedient and to begin to accept it

is a necessary—and obvious—component of economic management and social planning".

Wilfully ignoring the bitter resentment that is rife throughout the ranks of the trade union movement, Rodgers claimed that the "mood of the country" was "ripe" for:

"... a constructive discussion of how a settled incomes policy can evolve alongside, and in conjunction with a substantial measure of collective bargaining".

TUC backing "would be

essential", he added—clearly confident that it could be engineered.

Rodgers' speech came hard on the heels of similar statements by Treasury minister Joel Barnett, and both those hirelings of the capitalist class were echoing the words of Healey and Callaghan over the holiday period.

Repetition

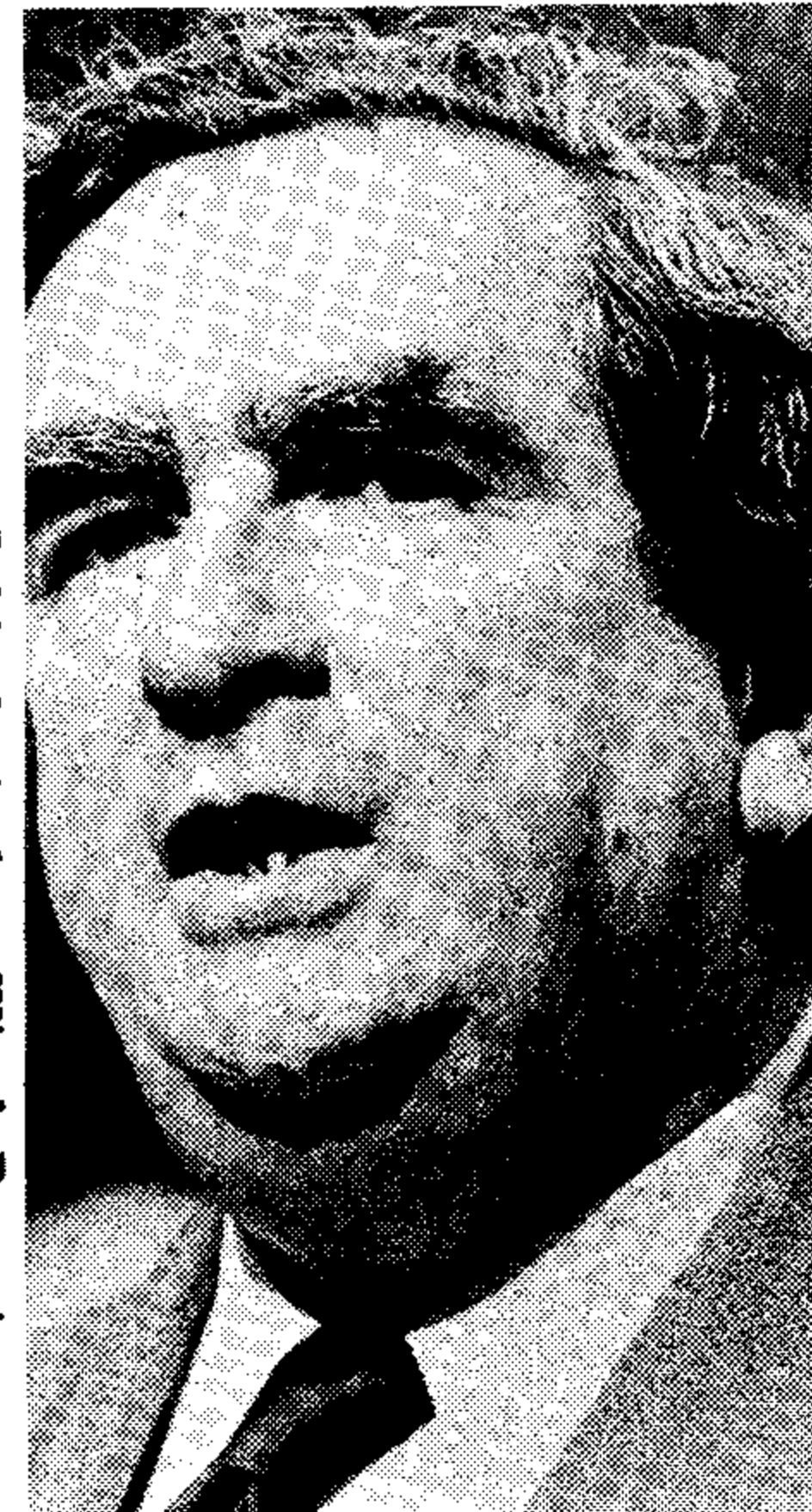
The figure widely predicted for this new straight jacket on pay is 5%—a repetition of the Phase 2 limits which cut living standards by an unprecedented amount during 1976-7.

Meanwhile the TUC has turned all its energies to upholding the current 10% pay limit—thus easing the way for Phase 4.

Take action

Len Murray's appeal to the firemen to accept the 10% offer must be seen in this light.

Only if wage control can be kept intact this year can



Healey

the Lib-Lab coalition hope to impose it next year.

Workers must take action to ensure that these plans are defeated, and that the coalitionists that support them are driven from the Labour and trade union movement.

Monthly Fund

The December Fund finally closed at £538.42—over £60 short of our target. January has started well with £130.40 arriving in the first nine days but a greater effort will have to be made if we are to achieve our fund target of £600 a month.

Among the donations received were: Oxford car workers, £3.05; Hackney, £13; Health Service workers, £50; Oxford, £4.55; Islington, £12; Portsmouth, 0.50; Hull £4.

All donations should be sent to:

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