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Firemen: TUC 17 MUST ACT

In the wake of the TUC's 20-17 vote against the firemen's fight to break the 10% pay limit, the call must ring out loud and clear to the 17 General Council members who voted to support the FBU: Make your action match your words!

By publicly declaring that the firemen are right to fight the 10% rule they echo the overwhelming view of shop floor trade unionists.

Huge response

Were these union leaders to call on their members to take action now alongside the firemen in pursuit of their own pay claims there would be a huge response.

But the TUC has set out to isolate the firemen. If their claim is to be won, then it is crucial the firemen themselves act now to break that isolation.

Firemen must drive home this point at every meeting they attend. Resolutions should be moved at brigade meetings, area and regional committees demanding that these 17 union leaders call action on wages.

The FBU leadership, which has consistently pulled back from exposing the role of the TUC leaders, must be forced to put demands on the 17 General Council members who claim to support them.

Frank Chapple, EETPU General Secretary, for example, is on the point of confrontation with the Electricity Council in pay negotiations for 100,000 power workers.

Their claim, like that of the firemen, is for 30%.

"Bloody war"

A few months ago Chapple was threatening "an awful bloody war" if the claim was not conceded. Now he has to put up or shut up.

He knows there is no prospect of the employers agreeing to the 30% figure, but has made no preparation for action.

Power workers must

demand Chapple obtain an immediate reply from the employers on the claim, and call strike action alongside the firemen to win it in full.

Split three ways

Similar moves must be made by workers in ASTMS, TASS, SOGAT, CPSA and ASLEF, whose General Secretaries voted to back the firemen's action against the 10% limit while doing nothing to regain or defend their own members' living standards.

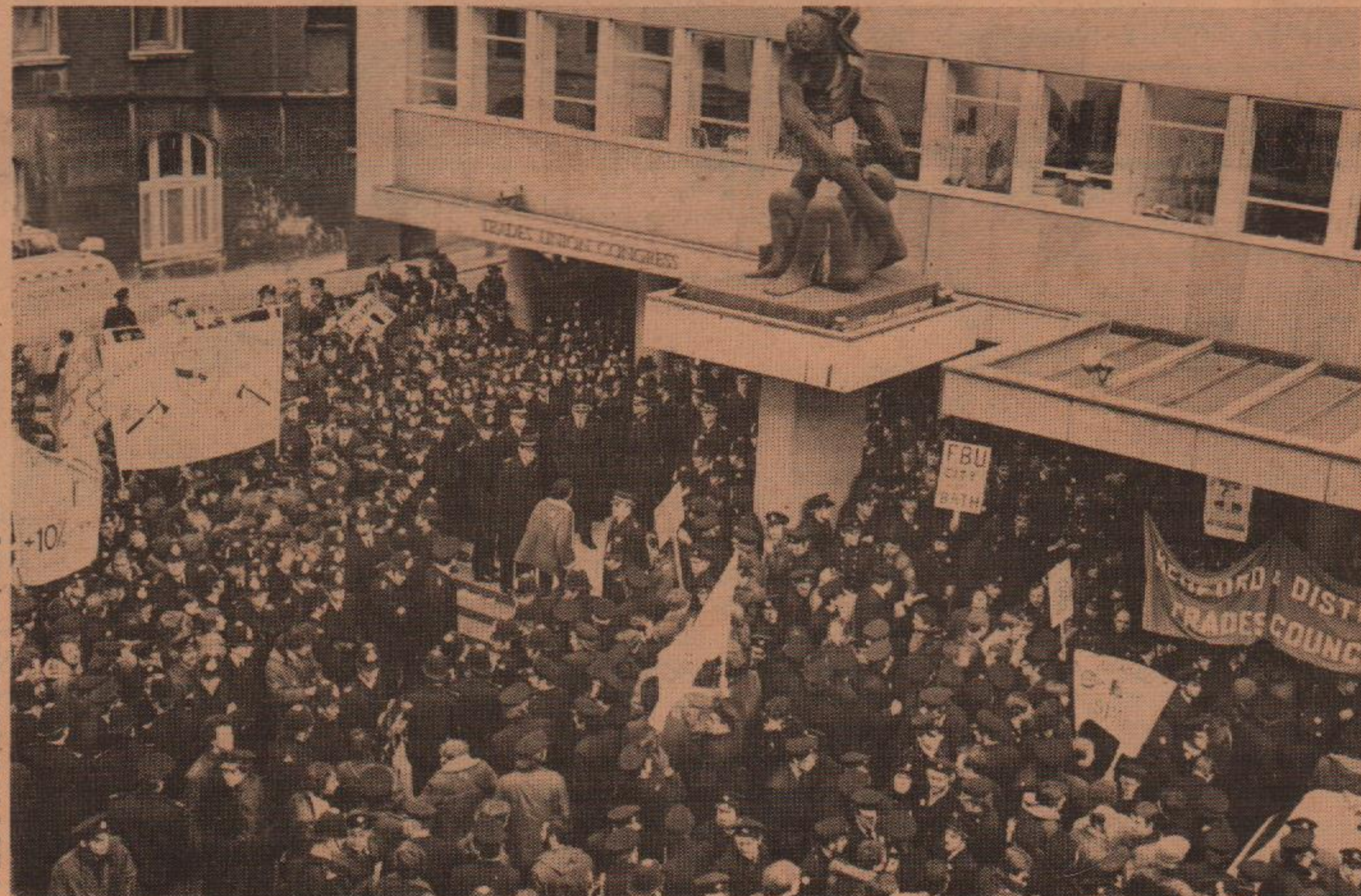
The TGWU delegation was split three ways—with women's officer Marie Patterson defying conference policy to vote against the firemen, deputy general secretary Harry Urwin abstaining and Moss Evans and Harry Pemberton voting to back the firemen.

Stalling

Evans himself is currently stalling long-running pay negotiations involving thousands of oil and petrol tanker drivers, who are demanding 30% rises.

ACAS is attempting to head off this claim until after the firemen's strike.

But the government means to hold the 10% against these



Firemen on the December 21 lobby

PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

troops from Germany to scab on the tanker drivers should they take strike action.

TGWU branches and stewards' committees must demand Evans mobilises the enormous industrial power of this section of workers to win their claim and help the firemen destroy the 10% policy in the interests of all.

And the whole trade union movement must be alerted to the dangers of the military strike breaking that has already prolonged the firemen's strike to 9 weeks duration, and which now clearly stands as a threat to all sections of workers.

Sold out

Meanwhile the 17 bureaucrats who voted to back the firemen have no intention of translating their votes into action.

Among the, for instance, was Joe Gormley, fresh from his efforts to destroy the miners' pay claim, and Alan Fisher, who only a week before had sold out 1 million local authority workers by accepting a 10% pay offer, despite a clear mandate for rejection.

Permanent pay laws planned

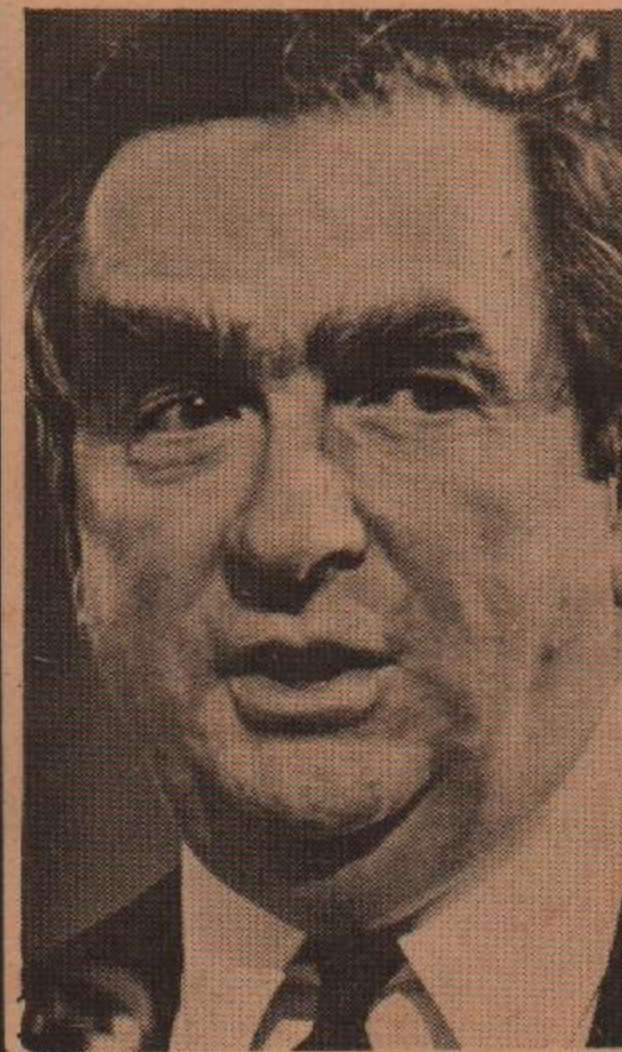


PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Throughout the New Year holiday the bell of permanent wage controls was rung loud and clear by Chancellor Healey and coalition Prime Minister Callaghan.

Healey began this latest series of informal announcements and speculation last Thursday when, interviewed by the right wing Labourite magazine *Socialist Commentary*, he blandly announced that:

"More and more people are coming to realise that no Government can avoid having an incomes policy so far as its own employees are

concerned".

In the name of "fairness" Healey said this would mean a pay policy for the private sector too.

By Sunday these comments had been amplified, and the *Sunday Express* revealed that top ministers are now intent upon restricting pay rises to 5% after the current 10% limit expires in August.

Fraudulent connection

When questioned in a New Year's Day interview Callaghan confirmed that this is the figure the government has in mind.

Drawing a completely fraudulent connection between wage settlements and inflation figures, he announced that the government were looking towards a 5% inflation rate in 1979—which would, he said, mean only 5% pay increases.

The arrogance of Healey and Callaghan in brazenly floating proposals for permanent, rigid wage control at a time when millions of workers have yet to be forced to settle under the 10% policy may seem surprising. It is certainly an embarrassment to their TUC lapdogs.

But, as *Socialist Press* has consistently pointed out, only the breaking of wage limits by workers in struggle can prevent Healey's arbitrary Phase 3 from being extended into an even more vicious Phase 4, 5 and 6.

The TUC, who postured and manoeuvred to avoid a clash with the government over Phase 3 have now become the policemen enforcing the 10% limit.

Avoids fight

And already they are beginning to line up for a repeat performance on Phase 4. Moss Evans, TGWU General Secretary-elect announced empty:

"There is no question so far as the TGWU is concerned of there being a Stage Four pay policy".

But such talk avoids a fight to break the 10% Phase 3 limit—and in doing so prepares the ground for the next round of attacks.

These long term moves against the unions must meet a united response. Workers in every industry must recognise that until pay limits are broken free collective bargaining will remain a pipe-dream.

They must act now, submit catching up claims linked to cost of living clauses and take action alongside the firemen.

The wage-cutting Lib-Lab coalition must be broken—and the architects of wage control within the Labour leadership removed from office.

up at local level for councils of action comprising delegates from workers' trade union and political organisations to strengthen and spread the firemen's pay fight, mobilising additional sections of workers on their own claims, and organising to

But under the pressure of the firemen's lobby and the demands of their membership these leaders were pressed into a vote that nearly brought a sharp setback to the 10% policy and could have meant collision with the wage-cutting Lib-Lab coalition.

Joint action

That pressure must be stepped up in every union. In this way wider layers of workers will come to see that joint action on their own claims alongside the firemen is the only way to break the 10%, and 'left' talkers like TASS leader Ken Gill and ASLEF leader Ray Buckton can be put to the test by their membership.

Those that opposed the firemen on the TUC must be challenged by their own members taking action on their pay claims.

We support the call of the FBU executive for a recall of the full Trade Union Congress to discuss the 10% policy. But this must not become a substitute for immediate calls for action.

The fight must be taken



Fisher—sold out 1 million but voted for firemen

cut fuel and other supplies to scab army firefighting depots.

In this crucial fight to break the 10% policy the wage-cutting Lib-Lab coalition can be broken and those who openly or tacitly defend it can be driven from office.

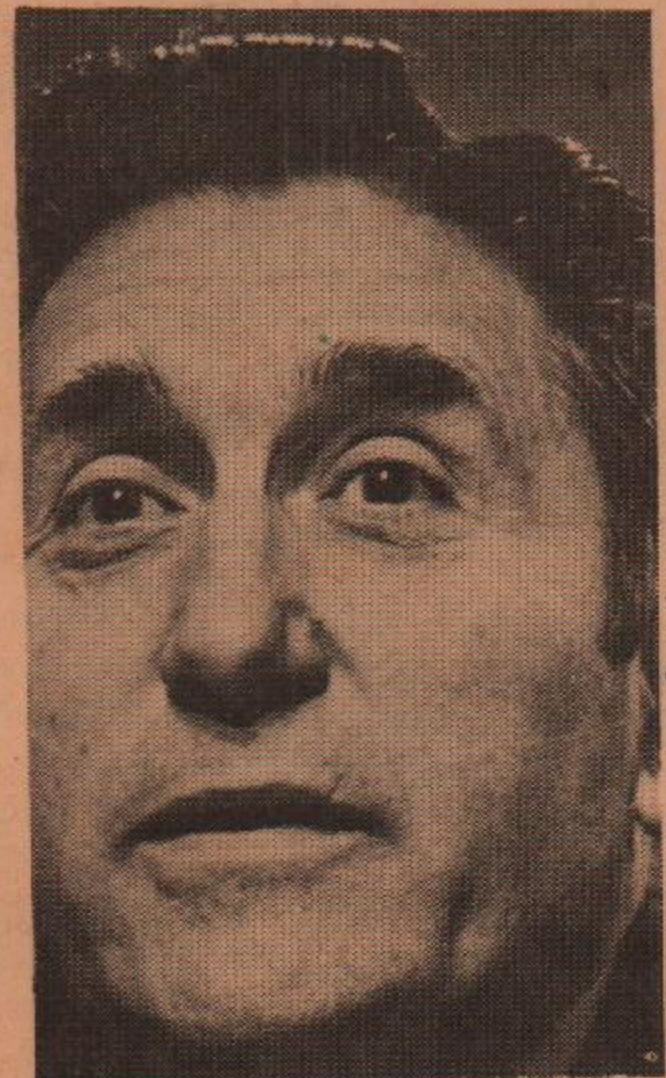


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Chapple

drivers. Already they are preparing to build on the precedent set in the firemen's strike by shipping in thousands of

Portuguese Stalinists stab strikers in Popular Front bid

Socialist Party leader Mario Soares is in the process of forming a popular front government to replace his minority Socialist administration defeated in parliament last month.

The SP policy of 'leaving office in order to return stronger' has made some headway.

After his defeat Soares began by insisting that the largest of the opposition parties, the bourgeois Social Democratic Party be forced to try to form a government.

The Social Democrats got no support from the other main capitalist party the Social and Democratic Centre (CSD).

Only person

The previous formal alliance of these parties has for now more or less collapsed.

Soares has, as he intended, produced a situation where he is the only person who could possibly form a government based on the present parliament.

His designation by President Eanes as his own successor as Prime Minister was welcomed by the leadership of both the CSD and by the Communist Party.

Soares clearly cannot set up a replica of the defeated minority government.

The formula he is now hawking to the other party leaders in a 'government on a



Soares

Socialist base with personalities.

The CP and the CSD both accept this formula on the understanding that it means some of their own leading members will be offered ministries.

Already this amounts to a reversal of the CP's position before Christmas that there should be either a CP/SP government or fresh elections.

But the CP's compromise

is filthier than that.

The CSD has said that their support for such a government required further moves to reverse the gains made by the working class since 1974.

They want further reversals of the land reform and the return of more nationalised property to the capitalists.

It is in full knowledge of these conditions that the CP Stalinists have given their support to the new government formula.

Austerity

They know that the only possible programme of the popular front government now being set up will be one of economic austerity measures directed against the working class.

They have already publicly agreed on many occasions to give undertakings to the International Monetary Fund— from which the Portuguese state desperately needs an \$800 million loan.

If the Stalinists seriously wanted a programme for the workers then they would

mobilise the working class.

It is in fact doing precisely the opposite, as it showed by its conduct in the recent strike of pilots on the state airline, TAP, in support of higher wages.

Manoeuvred

Instead of linking the pilots' demand to the needs of the rest of the workers, the CP leaders—like the Soares government—characterised the strike as 'against the national interest' and manoeuvred to isolate the pilots from the workers' movement.

The combination of this with the Socialist government's use of the airforce to break the strike forced the pilots back to work.

But Stalinist and SP leaders are aware that they cannot have long to work out a deal with the capitalist parties and the IMF before other sections of the working class see militant strike action as the only answer to their rapidly deteriorating economic conditions.

Strike wave sweeps Tunisia

The great wave of industrial action which continues to sweep over Tunisia has caused a governmental crisis within the one party regime.

President Bourguiba emerged from retirement to supervise the dismissals and resignations which have produced a new cabinet, solid in its determination to crush the working class.

Reliable technicians and bureaucrats have been appointed to replace those politicians who, from various motives, sought to negotiate with the strikers and demonstrators.

Workers' demands for higher wages and improved conditions have become sharper as the Tunisian economy has experienced the ravages of the capitalist crisis in an acute form.

At present these struggles have been expressed through the UGT, the only legal trade union, whose highest officials automatically occupy leading positions within the ruling Destour Socialist Party.

The union's general secretary, Habib Achour, has declared that the strikes and demonstrations are 'not

political movements' Prime Minister Hedi Nouria has characterised the presentation of wage demands, which employers are unable to meet, as 'indecent'.

More importantly he has prepared troops for a major offensive against the striking miners and railway workers.

Strike action

The phosphate miners began indefinite strike action on 30 December, to be joined in a general strike of all miners on 2 January, when the railway workers began their three-day strike.

But those factions who oppose the present policy have no interest in mobilising the independent strength of the working class.

Their aim is to exploit this stage of the class struggle so as to assist their manoeuvres to become the ruling faction themselves.

The violent struggles to come will provide a harsh school from which the Tunisian workers can draw the necessary lesson that they must break organisationally and politically from the one-party Bonapartist regime which oppresses them in the interests of capital.

Reject West Bank buy-off

The whirlwind development of diplomatic activity in the Middle East over Christmas—and further important meetings are promised over the next few days—still hold great dangers for the Palestinian liberation movement and the struggle against imperialism in the Arab world.

The Ismailia talks on Christmas Day between Sadat and Begin showed that it is the fact that these bilateral talks are taking place rather than the actual issues being

discussed which heartens the imperialists and the Zionists, their friends in the Middle East and the capitalist press.

The issues discussed show clearly that the Zionists do not intend to hand over an inch of conquered territory without the most stringent conditions.

Fact obscured

To call the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Sinai peninsula "occupied territories" is to carefully obscure the fact that the whole of

Palestine and the surrounding area is "occupied" by colonialists who have established with the help of imperialism a state based on racial exclusiveness, the exploitation of poor Jews and Arabs, and the driving out of the Palestinians.

Because of his own internal problems and the pressure of US imperialism Sadat is prepared to discuss only the fate of the more recently-grabbed parts of Mid-East territory, and whether or not there should be an independent Palestinian State set up on the West Bank of the Jordan.

Buy-off

Some Palestinians support this as a step towards a multi-racial state, but as far as those Zionists who support the idea are concerned, it is intended to buy off the Palestinian struggle for good.

One of the purposes of the Carter world tour is to gain support for as much as possible of such a settlement, i.e. a West Bank State.

However, even Sandhurst trained King Hussein of Jordan knows that he cannot yet be seen to be part of such a sell out.

Multi-racial

The Americans will no doubt continue to place pressure on Hussein and also on the Syrians to support this new Bantustan.

The solution for the Palestinians as well as for the mass of Jewish workers oppressed by the Zionist state rests only with its destruction, and the creation of a multi-racial Palestine within a Mid-East



Suharto (right) with Generals

Suharto regime dons velvet glove

On December 20, the Indonesian government announced in a blaze of international publicity the release of the first 10,000 of 30,000 suspects held without trial since 1965.

The others are to be released over the next two years.

However, "release" appears to be a rather inappropriate term.

40% jobless

For instance, they must find jobs, and with the prevailing political regime in Indonesia and 40% unemployment it is difficult to believe employers will offer jobs to communist suspects.

The remainder will be deported to labour camps on the underpopulated and largely infertile islands of Kalimantan, Sulaves and Bara.

The 30,000 have been held since the right wing coup led by General Suharto overthrew the government of President Sukarno which had rested on an alliance of the nationalists (PNI), the army, and the Peking-dominated Communist Party (PCI).

The PCI had pursued the policy of the "block of four classes", according to which the national bourgeoisie

interest with the peasants, workers and petit-bourgeoisie in resisting world capitalism.

The PCI therefore attempted to hold back radical movements for land reform and workers control, but these movements were quite strong enough to frighten the national bourgeoisie and their friends among the army officers.

As a result of the PCI's policy, the workers and peasants were totally unprepared for the right-wing coup, and it is estimated that one million communists were killed.

Destroyed

The PCI which in 1964 had three million members and 16 million in its affiliated organisations was destroyed within a few weeks.

Indonesia has a diverse population of 150 million people, the fifth most populous country in the world.

Apart from small ethnic minorities at Stone Age levels of development, the great bulk of the population is concentrated on the island of Java, and lives by intensive subsistence agriculture.

The major problem facing these peasants is the falling

necessary industrial goods, and their increasing indebtedness to landlords and money-lenders.

By protecting the free market rights of imperialism and the property rights of the bourgeoisie, Suharto's regime makes these problems insurmountable, for all his rhetoric about development.

So-called 'amnesty'

It is therefore not surprising that open opposition to the regime is once again growing rapidly, although at the moment it appears to be very unorganised.

The increasing need of the Suharto regime for foreign assistance in holding down the Indonesian population is probably behind the propaganda nonsense of the so-called "amnesty".

To transform the peasants' situation in Indonesia it is necessary to end private ownership of capital and land.

Only a working class leadership could provide the basis for such a transformation, which would have to be carried out in determined opposition to the Indonesian bourgeoisie.

Such a leadership remains

IN BRIEF

SOUTH AFRICA

A new wave of anti-government demonstrations has spread through South Africa's black towns in the last two weeks. Police violently broke up demonstrations near Port Elizabeth after the funeral of Mzukisi Nabadula another political prisoner who met his death while in police captivity.

CHILE

Dictator Pinochet has called a referendum on January 4 to solicit "popular support" against the condemnation of Chile by the United Nations. But the junta has been publicly divided on this tactic. The Socialist Party and the Christian Democrats have both called on Chileans to vote 'no' if the referendum finally takes place.

ITALY

The Andreotti government has proposed compromise austerity measures to Italy's main trade unions in an effort to prevent a one day general strike later this month. In any case Andreotti says he will not resign if the strike takes place. The Communist Party continues to press to be brought into a government, which according to leading CP member Giorgio Napolitano must "shift income away from consumption towards investment" (that is cut wages to help profits). As last Thursday's 'Morning Star' pointed out, "the Communists and five other parties have propped up" Andreotti's government since August 1976.

Castro launches attack on Trotskyism

The following article was published in November 1977 in the section of the Cuban Communist Party newspaper 'Granma' reserved for 'political education'.

We publish it to give readers an opportunity to see at first-hand the scandalous method of lies and slanders employed by the Cuban Stalinist bureaucracy.

The policy of Trotsky—the "Judas Trotsky" as Lenin would say—was characterised by disguising its capitulationist essence in an ultraleft phraseology, sonorous but empty as the sea shells.

While Lenin gave the Party the orientation that revolutions are not "made" but arise out of historic crises and turning points which have matured by virtue of objective laws, independently of the will of parties and classes, Trotsky considered that revolutionary leaps were the result of the action of a certain select group which could "accumulate" the will of the proletariat for the revolutionary transformation of society.

He sought to cheat history with cunning, claiming that social leaps are produced in a completely voluntaristic way.

In his fake theory of permanent revolution he claimed that steps could be leapt over, that history always proceeded by leaps.

Lenin reckoned that in certain conditions of social development some phases of it could be avoided.

He was expressing what we are sensing and witnessing today. In the epoch of powerful socialist forces not all countries and peoples have to pass through all the historical phases of social development known to humanity.

But that didn't mean that when the corresponding conditions didn't exist that it was scientifically admissible to leap over certain stages whose premises must be tactically used.

In the case of the Russian revolution, what was indicated was not leaping over the stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, but to work within it to convert it into the socialist revolution.

Time and history have shown that the genius of Lenin was right.

The bourgeois-democratic revolution of February 1917 was converted, following the inexorable course of the materialist dialectic, into the Great Socialist October Revolution.

Trotsky denied the revolutionary potential of millions and millions of peasants who made up the majority of the Russian population.

He always had a contemptuous attitude towards the role of the workers of the countryside in the revolution.

Trotsky had prophesied that the peasants would make war against the working class and would place the conquests under mortal threat.

And what happened? What Lenin had foreseen. The alliance of the working class with the working peasants

Although this filth is not untypical of what passes for political education in Cuba, it also marks a new stage in the Castro bureaucracy's fight against revolutionary socialism.

Although the Cuban leadership has never left any doubt of its hostility to Trotskyism, and although slanders

references to Trotsky have become increasingly common in recent years in official publications this is the most emphatic and flagrant attack on Trotskyism to have been made up to now.

'Granma's' slanders are lifted from the standard Stalinist works published in Moscow. The fact that they feel obliged to publish them again

testifies to the continued insecurity of Cuba's counter-revolutionary bureaucracy.

The bureaucracy must be overthrown by the working class under the leadership of a party based on revolutionary socialism, on Trotskyism—the political force which the Cuban leaders are forced to revile because they fear it.

We do not intend to use the limited space of these pages to reply to these hoary old slanders. Readers who wish to follow up by reading Trotsky's answers to such attacks are referred to the books advertised on Page 9.



Castro the self-proclaimed "marxist" chatting with US vice-president Nixon soon after the downfall of the Batista dictatorship in 1959.

soviet power.

On the eve of the October Revolution, Trotsky declared that the imperialist epoch left no place for national revolutions.

He denied the possibility of a socialist society in one country.

He wanted to raise the slogan of a United States of Europe without monarchies, without standing armies, without feudal governing castes and without secret diplomacy.

This slogan, which has nothing to do with the proletarian revolution, as is seen, made perfectly plain the cosmopolitan and capitulationist character of Trotsky's "theory of permanent revolution".

In proclaiming this idea, precisely when the Russian people were advancing towards a revolution, he was expressing his lack of faith in the possibility of the triumph of the working class and its allies in one country, his forgetting of the national peculiarities of the class struggle.

After the October Revolution Trotsky, on the pretext of carrying the Russian revolution to other countries on the points of bayonets, showed his revolutionary capitulationism and his lack of faith in the Russian proletariat.

But Lenin argued:

"... radical change now consists in the creation of the Republic of the Soviets of Russia; ... the supreme thing, both for us and from the international socialist point of view, is to preserve this republic which has now begun the socialist revolution".

History proved that it was possible to set up and maintain the workers' and peasants' state in one country and that revolutions, as Lenin pointed out, don't break out all at the same time.

the class struggle in concrete countries and they grow on political terrain which cannot be the same in all national circumstances.

Trotsky considered that the revolution should "spread" to the whole world by means of armed detachments from Soviet Russia.

His Atilla-like pseudo-revolutionary adventurism was not limited to theory.

In the peace negotiations, in Brest, he tried to drag the Russian people into a war and



Castro

place it under the threat of military defeat.

The genius of Lenin needed to consolidate the socialist state, whose victory would be a model and a stimulus for the development of the world revolutionary process.

The international revolution would be the sum of a chain of national revolutions which would follow one after the other at different stages, in accordance with the objective and subjective conditions of each case.

Imperialism would go on being smashed through its weakest links.

Sixty years have passed since the October Revolution.

Practice has thrown down all the metaphysical and capitulationist scaffolding of

Trotsky and the Trotskyists.

For 28 years the first socialist state in the world held out, working and developing itself alone. It did not export armed detachments, but it spread around the world that the workers could emancipate themselves from the yoke of capitalist exploitation and take power for ever.

Attacked by fascist hordes, it threw out its enemies from the vast soviet lands; it pursued them mercilessly to their final bunker in Berlin, leaving in the footsteps of the glorious Red Army a constellation of new socialist states, not imposed but born out of the historic premises.

Today when the red star shines its light of salvation on the reality or the certain hope of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America; today when national liberation movements ask for and receive the cooperation of the Soviet Union and of all the peoples of the socialist community; today when the international workers' movement is converted into a potent force; what will the Trotskyists say in relation to true proletarian internationalism and the world revolution?

It was not, nor could it be, what Trotsky wanted; but it was as Vladimir Illich Lenin wanted and knew it would be.

However, there remain pseudo-revolutionaries, petty bourgeois minorities who, in the face of the summit of socialism and the unhideable truth of the Soviet Union, try to revive Trotsky, to take his ashes and shape them into mud images and empty reeds blowing with lies.

Rodney Arismendi, first secretary of the Uruguayan Communist Party, accurately called these Trotskyist remnants "jetsam from a sunken boat".

The cruiser Aurora continues its triumphal course.



Polisario Front fighters

Sahara French troops move in

The prolonged guerilla war in Western Sahara has now provoked direct military intervention from French forces.

Last month French aircraft bombed sections of the Polisario Front, killing and wounding many prisoners as well as guerillas.

The damage inflicted by these attacks was the heaviest yet sustained by the liberation army during the course of the war.

Growing concern

The French government has always provided the major supply of arms, advisers and technicians to the Moroccan and Mauritanian occupation forces.

This new stage of involvement indicates the growing concern of international imperialism with the inability of those armies to contain the activity of the Polisario Front, and safeguard the substantial capitalist interests in the region.

The air raids took place after French Communist Party leader Georges Marchais had successfully negotiated on behalf of the French government for the release of French hostages held by the Polisario.

This incident will no doubt be used to justify continued aggression to 'protect the rights of French citizens'.

Meanwhile all the parties in the Moroccan parliament united in giving unanimous approval to Hassan's vastly

increased defence budget which absorbs one third total expenditure.

Amid constant denunciations of Algerian aggression a deputy from the PPS (front party of the Moroccan Communist Party) spoke demanding greater support for the troops in Western Sahara and the introduction of general conscription!

The Polisario Front possess neither the technical nor human military resources to resist for long these rapidly growing antagonistic forces.

This urgent situation requires an immediate appeal for support to the Moroccan masses who have been dragged into this imperialist adventure.

At the same time the governments, which in the past have mouthed the solidarity with the liberation struggles of the Sahara must be forced to translate these fine words in concrete assistance.

Petty-bourgeois

Here the role of the petty bourgeois 'socialist' regime in Algeria is crucial. Traditionally the international sponsor of the Polisario Front, Boumedienne's government now seeking a way to extricate itself from this dangerous position without compromising its 'progressive' reputation.

Geographically and economically Algeria is in the best position to aid the Sahara but an all-out struggle against the regime will be needed to ensure that such a commitment is realised.



Zimbabwe: The negotiations between Ian Smith, Bishop Muzorewa, Rev. Sithole and Chief Chirau have continued. The black delegates have not dared accept Smith's demand that the whites should have a third of the members of any new parliament—enough to give them a constitutional veto. But they have apparently accepted the principle of reserved privileges for the Whites and Sithole for one has said he expects a settlement within days.

MAJOR STEP IN TRADE WAR

In the history of the present capitalist crisis 1977 will go down as the year in which the protectionist skirmishes of the last few years began to take the form of a full scale war.

At the centre of this war was steel with the deeply unprofitable steel industries of Western Europe and the USA erecting a system of tariffs and import controls, 'voluntary' and compulsory. These are directed especially against imports from Japan but also against those from other sources.

Provisional system

The EEC ended 1977 by introducing a new provisional system of 'trigger' prices for steel which would prevent imports from underselling EEC products. While this system is in

operation the EEC Commission is charged with negotiating 'voluntary' agreements to limit steel exports to the EEC from Japan, the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Sweden, Brazil, South Korea and South Africa.

'Voluntary' agreements

Meanwhile the British government has been trying to negotiate its own independent import control agreements with the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries.

On December 31 Trade Minister Edmund Dell revealed just what these 'voluntary' agreements mean.

When, unlike other East European countries, the Soviet Union failed to give 'satisfactory assurances' about limiting its steel exports to Britain, Dell imposed a total embargo on all imports of Soviet steel.

The significance of this move is infinitely greater than the tiny quantities of steel involved.

Dell's move is probably the most nakedly protectionist action yet taken by any capitalist government.

It is now expected that the Soviet Union will retaliate and so the trade war will receive a new boost from an unexpected quarter.

Crisis hits Kremlin plan

The USSR's refusal to give 'satisfactory assurances' is not based on any principled opposition to economic nationalism.

From figures revealed to a



Not feeling the pinch of the crisis - Brezhnev

meeting of the Supreme Soviet in December, it appears that the Soviet economy in 1977 has had its lowest growth rate since 1945.

The national product grew by only 3%, the worst sector

being agriculture which declined by 5% instead of growth by 10% as planned.

Next year's target has also been scaled down which means that the targets of the present 5-year plan cannot be achieved by the target date of 1980.

Serious setback

This is a serious setback for the Soviet bureaucracy.

And its seriousness is emphasised by the fact that

the only answer which Brezhnev appears to have for the are worn-out cliches and more hectoring of the working class.

The economic wisdom of Brezhnev consisted in saying: 'Choosing the concrete sectors where, with a minimum of expense, one can rapidly get the maximum possible effect; that is the art of planning and of guiding the economy in general.'

He also declared with near-blinding originality, that the solution was 'the rational use of economic resources'.

When it doesn't know what to do the Stalinist bureaucracy still has its old answer—blame the workers.

So Brezhnev spoke harshly of:

'violations' of plan discipline tolerated by some leaders'

and demanded:

'order and discipline in all spheres of economic activity

... Work today better than yesterday and better tomorrow than today, that is the slogan; and better means: quality, efficiency, productivity.'

Battle of efficiency

He called on the trade unions and the youth organisations to join the battle of efficiency and show intolerance towards those who violate discipline.

In other words keep the creative force of the Russian working class under the heel of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

1977: year of the rat

While the coalition government's honours list includes the usual gifts to police chiefs and to supervisors of the imperialist occupation of Northern Ireland, the most glittering accolade was reserved for TGWU leader Jack Jones.

This fact pinpoints the central feature of a year in which the police role of trade union bureaucrats at local and national level has been crucial to the survival of the Lib-Lab government and its wage-cutting programme.

Only through such "leaders" could Callaghan hope to restrain a working class that continues to show its willingness to fight.

Increase

Indeed even as unemployment rose to new record levels, and TUC leaders joined the government's efforts to hold down wages, the year saw an increase in union membership including new unionisation in the public services and catering.

Throughout the year unionisation strikes were in progress.

The marathon Grunwicks battle, the six-month strikes for unionisation against Trust Houses Forte and other hotels, and the Desoutter recognition strike.

Victories

Though the THF battles were lost and the Grunwick strikes continues, there were victories as well, in spite of the union bureaucracy.

every level the Social Contract has certainly meant more than wage control—it means an end to confrontation with the employer on all fronts.

But the wages struggle raged on—from the wave of strikes in the New Year, to the BLMC toolroom strike that brought the downfall of the Labour government, through the Heathrow strike, the Port Talbot electricians, the Lucas toolroom workers, the power workers and now the firemen.

The same wages militancy was reflected in the summer union conferences which made formal acceptance of Phase 3 by the TUC impossible.

But while union leaders were unable to deliver Phase 3 openly, they set out to wheel it through the back door.

The 12-month rule was manoeuvred through the TUC to isolate and weaken any section that fought Healey's 10% limit.

A comparative handful of workers at Fords were given slight concessions until a relatively weak group of public sector workers, like the firemen, could be picked off by government and TUC alike.

Throughout these struggles the method of approach fought for by the Workers Socialist League started clearly from the objective needs of the working class.

Foremost requirement remains to mobilise the full strength of the working class against its treacherous bureaucratic leaders, in order to break the Lib-Lab coalition and wage control, and prepare a revolutionary leadership.

Bitter opponents

Throughout the THF, Desoutter and Grunwick struggles in particular, we have fought to expose the role of the bureaucracy, and to direct workers towards lobbying key union committees that stood as obstacles to their struggle.

Most bitter opponents of such a course were the Stalinists of the Communist Party.

And it was the Stalinists who were most thoroughly exposed when Desoutters strikers pressed ahead and lobbied the North London AUEW District Committee for a district levy and blacking action.

Suspended

Leading Stalinist George Anthony opposed a strike levy—even while parading around as a main CP speaker on Grunwick.

Similar lessons on the nature of their "leaders" were learned when Grunwick strikers lobbied the TUC, only to be suspended by the APEX bureaucracy, and threatened with expulsion if they called a mass lobby.

Despite these attacks Jack Dromey, the darling of the CP and the International Marxist Group, has continued



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Scanton met by Desoutters strikers picketing AUEW HQ

to divert away from the fight against the bureaucracy.

Meanwhile the Socialist Workers' Party's policy of rank and fileism continued to ignore the need to defeat the bureaucracy if the full power of the working class is to be unleashed.

In their calls for rank and file "solidarity" the SWP have been joined over the last year by the "unity at all costs" merchants of the International Marxist Group.

Yet the whole experience of recent struggles indicates that only when the focus is firmly on the question of leadership do workers make real gains.

The firemen's lobby visibly shook the TUC leaders to their roots, and virtually split them down the middle, with 17 voting for the firemen.

Stand exposed

This opens new possibilities for demands on the 17 to bring out their own members on their pay claims

or stand exposed as tacit supporters of the 10% policy.

The Workers Socialist League's fight over the last year to direct every struggle towards the central issue of leadership has been completely vindicated by events.

The coming year must see the expansion of the WSL and its work in every area, as the only political force currently capable of offering principled leadership and an independent programme to the working class.

Fight

We must intensify our fight against wage control and for cost of living clauses to protect against inflation, against speed-up, sackings, unemployment and against all forms of 'worker participation'.

In doing so we will at the same time be mobilising the forces necessary to break the Lib-Lab coalition and to fight for the removal of its supporters at every level in the workers' movement.

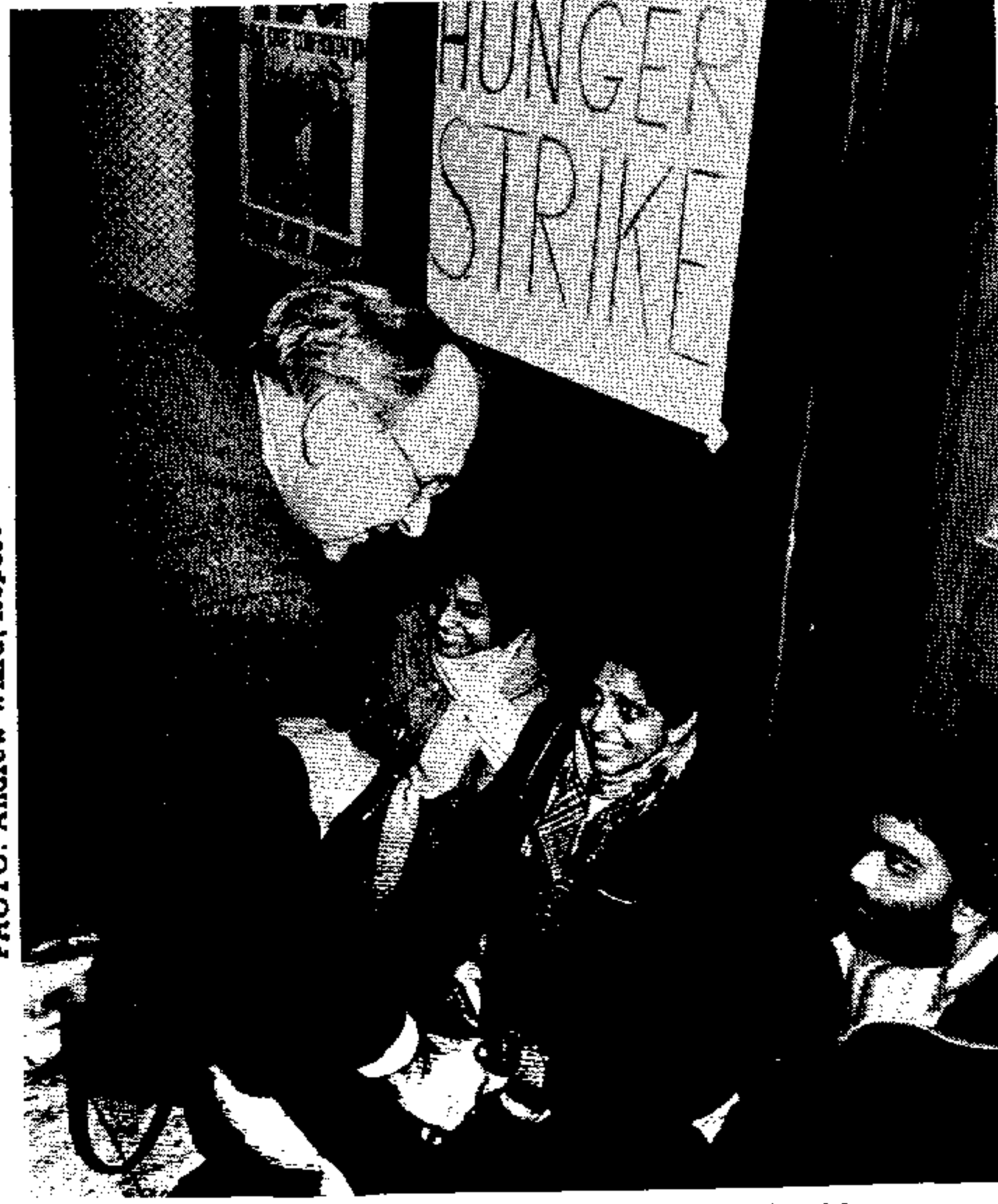


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Left offers a hypocritical hand to Grunwick TUC lobbyers

Singing for his supper



When Tribune MP Norman Atkinson was elected as Labour Party Treasurer, the Tory press hailed it as a victory for the 'left'.

But Atkinson's latest effort at fundraising for the Party's new headquarters is an unmistakable sign that, like so many other Tribunites he is completely in cahoots with Labour's coalitionist right wing leadership.

In appealing desperately for an astounding £1.6 million Atkinson embarks on an extended defence of the bloodstained history of the Labour Party:

'Soon after the First World War ended in 1918 the Labour Party set about the task of building a new Socialist movement in Britain based on mass individual membership. Primarily it was to be an electoral machine geared to winning a parliamentary majority.'

Atkinson, with cap in hand, is tactfully silent on the record of leading reformist politicians in supporting their own ruling class in the First World War—and on the 'pacifist' stance of the ILP 'lefts' who held back from support for the war effort while refusing to lead all-out struggles against the British capitalist class.

And of course he stays mum on the treachery of the Second International—to which the Labour Party is still affiliated—which found its parties in each major capitalist country lined up alongside their 'own' ruling class in the war.

False pretences

But while such dishonesty is to be expected of any reformist, the next sentence indicates that Atkinson is determined to appeal for finances on false pretences:

'The whole concept developed as a consequence of trade union opinion moving away from the idea that industrial power could persuade Tory and Liberal governments to bring in progressive legislation capable of ending the dreadful conditions suffered by working people.'

Atkinson feels it necessary to cover up the fact that, through the Lib-Lab deal, the Callaghan government has gone back and attempted to reverse this early and partial move towards working class political independence.

For this reason he ignores the fact that the government's programme for the current session of parliament is dictated entirely by Call-



PHOTO: Chris Davies Report

Norman Atkinson

aghan's determination to appease the Liberals and to abandon any hint of progressive socialist legislation while providing a stable foothold to impose a further round of wage controls.

And he ignores the fact that today's TUC leaders, by propping up the Lib-Lab government and its wage controls, have also to turn back the wheel of working-class history.

Meanwhile the reality of working-class hostility to the wage-cutting, job-slashing policies that have distinguished the Lib-Lab coalition and the Labour government that preceded it, is lost on Atkinson.

From the comfort of the House of Commons leather armchairs he straightfacedly

suggests that shop stewards organise shopfloor collections towards the new Labour Party headquarters!

'Memorable years'

For anyone foolhardy enough to attempt such an exercise there is little doubt that, in Atkinson's words, 1978-79 will be 'memorable years'—in which they were lucky to escape lynch-mobs.

And for anyone still harbouring illusions that Tribune MPs are in any real sense politically distinct from the Lib-Lab coalition, Atkinson's begging bowl patter makes sobering reading.

The Lib-Lab deal must be broken and its grovelling defenders—both 'left' and right alike—driven out of the Labour Party.

From Socialist Press of 5 January 1977



Social Contract.

1976 gave an idea of the determination of the TUC leaders to

complete determination to hold it at all costs.

Such tensions with

THE ORDER OF THE SCAB

The annual awards by the British bourgeoisie to the labour leaders who serve their interests scooped one of the biggest rats of all this New Year by awarding a Companion of Honour to Jack Jones.

The order was instituted by King George V to reward 'conspicuous national service' and Jones will rub shoulders with Tory and Labour politicians most of them peers.

Jones has been rewarded with the highest honour that the bourgeoisie can give without the embarrassment of having to take a title. There are only 65 Companions of Honour in the whole country.

Embarrassment

News of his elevation was relayed to Cuba where Jones was spending his Christmas break.

More than anyone Jones has been responsible for holding three years of wage controls against the will of the working class and inflicting the bosses' policy on his members. Through such an open admission of his role Jones will no doubt suffer a few moments of embarrassment as he hangs the golden bauble around his neck.

Camel

But as he swallowed the gnat of the MBE, as he took a job as Crown Agent and as he pocketed Quango salaries on quasi Governmental posts, so Jones has eventually swallowed the camel of the Companion of Honour.

In doing so he has found his true place in society—shoulder to shoulder with the bosses against the working class.

But if Jones is the king rat, the list includes others whom the capitalist class wish to regard.

Sir George

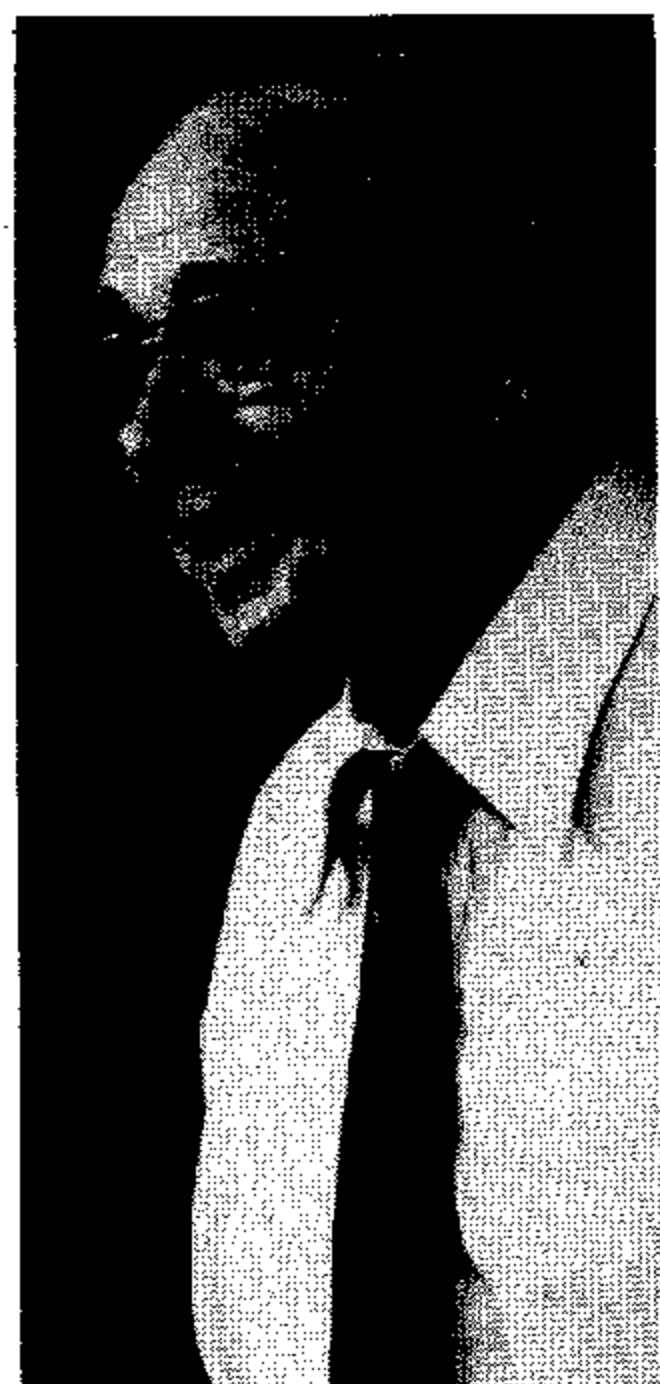
George Smith, General Secretary of UCATT, has become a knight—surrounded in the list by big capitalists, and police chiefs.

While Jones was the mother and father of the social contract then Sir George—as he will no doubt demand to be addressed by his members—was the midwife.

It was Smith who refused to accept a vote of the UCATT Conference against the Social Contract, saying that it was 'undemocratic', so bulldozing 'support' for Phase 2 through the union.

Small wonder then that this policeman of the working class is given the same award as among other, Kenneth Newman, the Chief Constable of the RUC torture brigade in Northern Ireland, and David MacNee, London police chief of Grunwick and Lewisham fame.

Ken Morgan, who retired as General Secretary of the NUJ in September after a ten year history of betrayals becomes an Officer of the British Empire.



Jack Jones CH MBE & Crown Agent

His recent record includes his services to East Midland Allied Press in isolating and sabotaging a six month strike by journalists at Kettering and striving—albeit failing—to wrap up the Darlington strike for a closed shop before he left.

So, in a list camouflaged by nearly 900 nonentities, the Lib-Lab government has singled out a few loyal servants—to encourage the others still waiting in the wings. Hugh Scanlon should not have long to wait.

PRESS GANG Cooking the books

In the old days newspaper pundits used to test public opinion by going to the end of the street and asking the first half dozen people wearing the right school tie what they thought.

The technique has been refined for the computer powered 70's but the principle remains the same and nowhere has it been put to better effect than in the pages of the *Daily Mail*.

On the day that the FBU executive met to discuss the future of the strike the *Mail* decided to run an opinion poll among firemen to find out what should happen next.

Which firemen—or indeed how many firemen—*Daily Mail* reporters spoke to is not at all clear, indeed it is not so much hinted at, except that they are divided into two categories 'The North' and 'The South'.

In a strike which was supported by 98% of the membership voting with their feet and a 2-1 vote at the delegates conference the *Daily Mail* pollsters managed to find only 49% who were in favour of the strike to begin with.

This total they divide into 85% in favour among the wild

men of the North and a mere 34% in favour in the South.

Even in this sample, of which the larger southern element is clearly unrepresentative of the truth, the *Daily Mail* could find just 9% in the South and 6.5% in the North who said they would vote to accept the employers' offer.

But the most brilliant stroke was in answer to the following question: 'Should the union delegate conference be recalled?' (What for is carefully excluded from the question).

To this 47% of those in the South and 7% in the North said yes.

Loaded sample

So the *Mail*, with a loaded sample and a question almost devoid of real meaning find in their most favoured area a minority in favour of a recall conference. Surely this must be a story to tuck away on page 23!

In fact the *Daily Mail* displayed their figures proudly on page one and draw the following startling conclusion.

'The results of the survey are remarkable and show a definite cracking in the firemen's resolve.'

And the minority? That's easily explained away.

'The men questioned were

on picket duty and deliberately chosen as such, and so could be expected to be antagonistic to any kind of climb-down.'

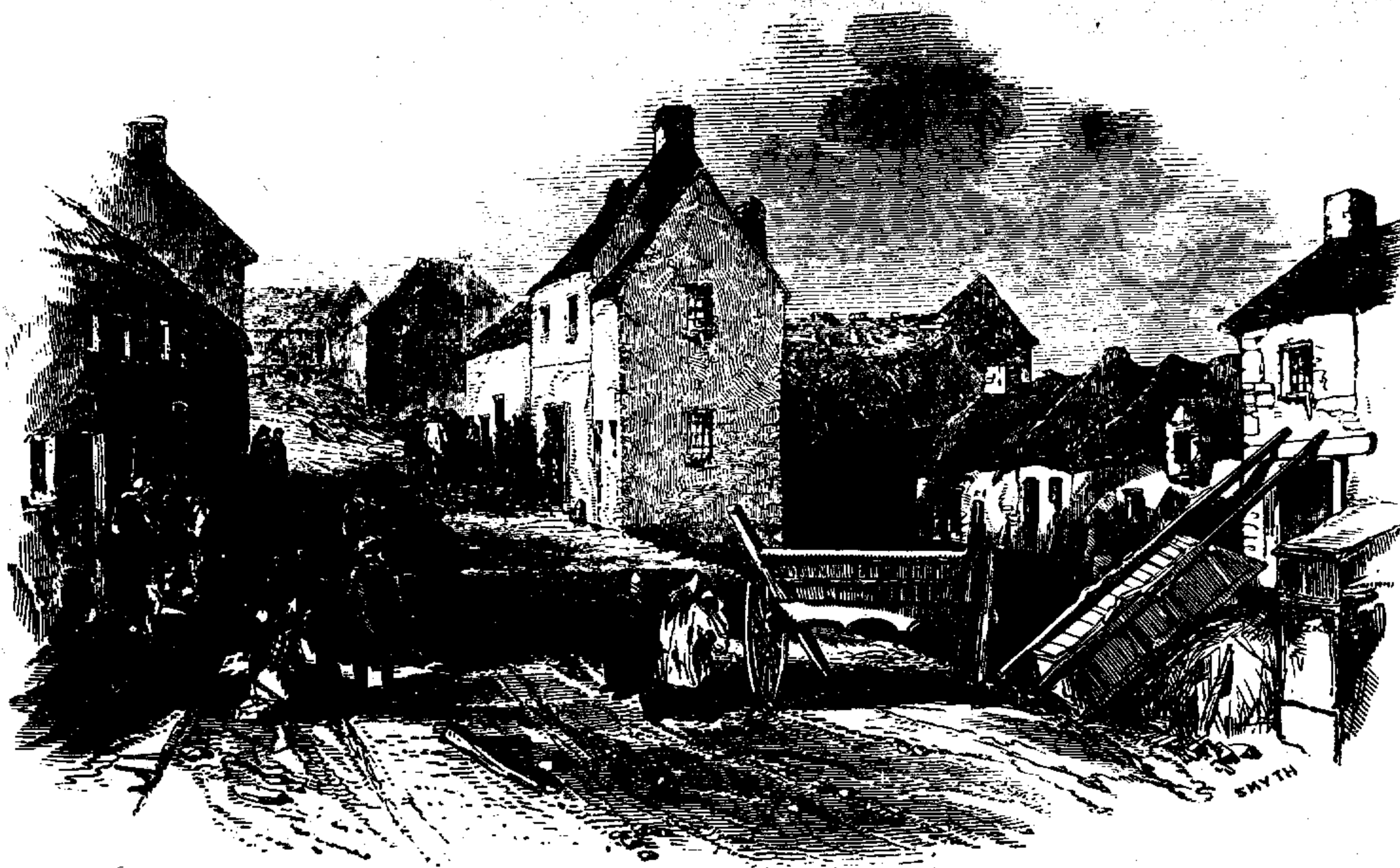
It should not be lost on readers that although the 'crack in resolve' bears no relation to reality it bears a close resemblance to the message that the *Daily Mail* wanted to give to the FBU executive at its meeting that very day.

It also bears a remarkable similarity to the wish fulfillment practiced by the Press after the firemen's lobby of the TUC.

On that day as hundreds of firemen besieged the TUC and even threatened the traitors with physical violence, the ability of the Press to twist events through 360 degrees was shown in its full glory.

The almost universal position adopted the next day by the Press was that the firemen surrounding the bureaucrats were not firemen at all—but 'left-wing extremists' dressed up as firemen!

Perhaps there is no strike either. Left wing extremists may have simply kidnapped the firemen and be masquerading as FBU members on the picket line.



At the time of the Act of Union with Britain in 1801, Ireland was economically poor and backward in relation to much of Western Europe, which was caught in the fever of the industrial revolution.

The leaders of the Grattan parliament (see Part I of this series) which the Act of Union brought to an end had, however, spread boundless hopes of the economic possibilities of an independent Ireland.

In 1791 Wolfe Tone had said:

... if Ireland were free and well governed . . . she would in arts, commerce and manufactures, spring up like an air balloon and leave England behind her at an immense distance. There is no computing the rapidity with which she would rise'.

Tone's words were fanciful. But in an exaggerated form they still carried some truth.

Plunder

Despite the economic damage and plunder already inflicted by Britain on Ireland, despite what the great political economist Adam Smith called 'the invidious restraints which at present oppress the trade of Ireland', an independent Ireland at the beginning of the nineteenth century could still perhaps, like other nations of Western Europe, have formed the basis for an independent capitalist industrialisation.

But the collapse of the movement for Irish independence at this time put paid once and for all to this possibility for Ireland.

Degradation

The next hundred years of British imperialism were to bring a level of economic degradation upon Ireland which was as bad, if not worse, than occurred anywhere in the world.

The coming catastrophe was hidden at first by the impact of the Napoleonic wars. High demand led to something of a boom in Irish exports of food and clothing especially for the British army.

Production, exports and wages all rose and Irish agriculture became able to support a growing population.

After 1815 came the post war slump. Irish wages fell by nearly one third over the next 25 years.

But the population continued to grow—from about 4½ million in 1790 to well over 8 million by 1841 (about half the population of Great Britain).

The vast majority of Irish people were poor peasants farming tiny holdings with the most primitive techniques. Their main food crop was potatoes.

But this was not the main production of Irish agriculture. That was grain and cattle for the English market. Throughout the nineteenth century the pattern of this production shifted from grain to cattle.

Cattle as well as sheep and pigs were exported live and fattened for the market in England.

Bankruptcy

At the end of the years of 'prosperity', tenant farmers were increasingly forced into bankruptcy and evicted by the landlords who increasingly turned land over to pasture and cattle-feed crops.

This form of production was profitable to the landlords. The tenants, however, benefited little even in good years due to the prevalent rent system (except in parts of Ulster) where a high proportion of any increase in production was simply creamed off by the landlords.

It was a system which discouraged any kind of technical progress such as was taking place elsewhere in Western Europe.

Unproductive

Irish agriculture remained unproductive, the landlords continued to do well; the tenants produced enough on which to live (potatoes) and a surplus to pay the rent (cattle or feedcrops).

As the population grew, and industrial growth remained negligible the pressure on the land increased especially in the West and the peasantry's livelihood became increasingly precarious.

In places emigration to the United States had begun. And everywhere the slightest failure of the potato crop signalled famine.

Six famines

At least six famines occurred between the end of the Napoleonic wars and the early 1840s. These terrible events have been forgotten.

That is because they have been overshadowed by the Great Hunger of the 1840s. From 1845 to 1848 there were major failures of the potato crop.

There was no shortage of other kinds of food in the country. Livestock and grain were there in great quantities.

But at least 1 million people died in these years of starvation because it was not profitable to feed them. Exports of meat and grain to England continued



Wolfe Tone

undiminished during the years of the famine.

The British government practised a kind of economic genocide. In the eighteenth century it had been, as Adam Smith complained, restrictions on free trade through which the British government stifled the development of an independent Irish capitalist class.

Now it was via the obsessional insistence on free trade that the British government murdered one million Irish peasants and workers.

All measures of relief were rejected on the grounds that they would interfere with the law of demand and supply. The shortage would produce new food supplies as capitalists saw the chance to make a profit.

But social need, however, acute, does not in the capitalist system represent profitable demand. No food came.

Emigration

The famine prompted an extraordinary increase in the rate of emigration, especially to the United States. Death and emigration brought the Irish population down from over 8½ million in 1845 to under 6 million only ten years later.

The Irish population continued to decline for a further century so that even taking the population of Ireland (North and South) it is still less than it was at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

This experience is historically unique. In the nineteenth century Ireland became the barracks for a vast reserve army of labour for Britain and the USA.

It was an even more dramatic example of the role which has been played more recently by some Caribbean countries, by Portugal and Turkey in relation to the capitalist countries of Western Europe.

The 1840s were a new turning point for the Irish economy not only because of the famine but also because of the abolition in 1846 of the Corn Laws.

This meant the end of protection of grain (especially wheat) in the British market.

Campaigned

It was a measure long campaigned for by British industrial capitalists. Cheaper imported grain, they believed, would lower food prices and enable them to pay lower wages.

It was directed particularly at the Irish landowners whose feudal systems of tenure were now the most primitive in the British Isles and who helped to keep up grain prices as long as they had the protection of the Corn Laws.

Both the famine and the abolition of the Corn Laws gave a sharp boost to the trends in agriculture which were directly going on.

Deaths, evictions and emigration allowed landlords to consolidate holdings, some-

Ireland ROOTS TODAY CRISIS

PART 9 IRISH CAPITAL

thing which was necessary for the conversion of grain-producing land to cattle pasture.

For the abolition of the Corn Laws was the final death blow to grain production in Ireland.

Thus Ireland became the 'Emerald Isle'—an unconscious euphemism for the transformation of its agriculture by imperialism.

Exaggerated

To some extent these changes represented the growth of capitalist agriculture. But that shouldn't be exaggerated. Irish farming continued to be based on relatively small-scale peasant holdings.

Even as late as the 1960s over 70% of holdings were less than twenty hectares; and only 15% of those working in agriculture were wage labourers.

Even Tsarist Russia experienced a more radical degree of land reform than most of Ireland in the nineteenth century.

It was long after the 'emancipation' of the Russian serfs that British governments decided to make some kind of 'reform' to Irish land tenure.

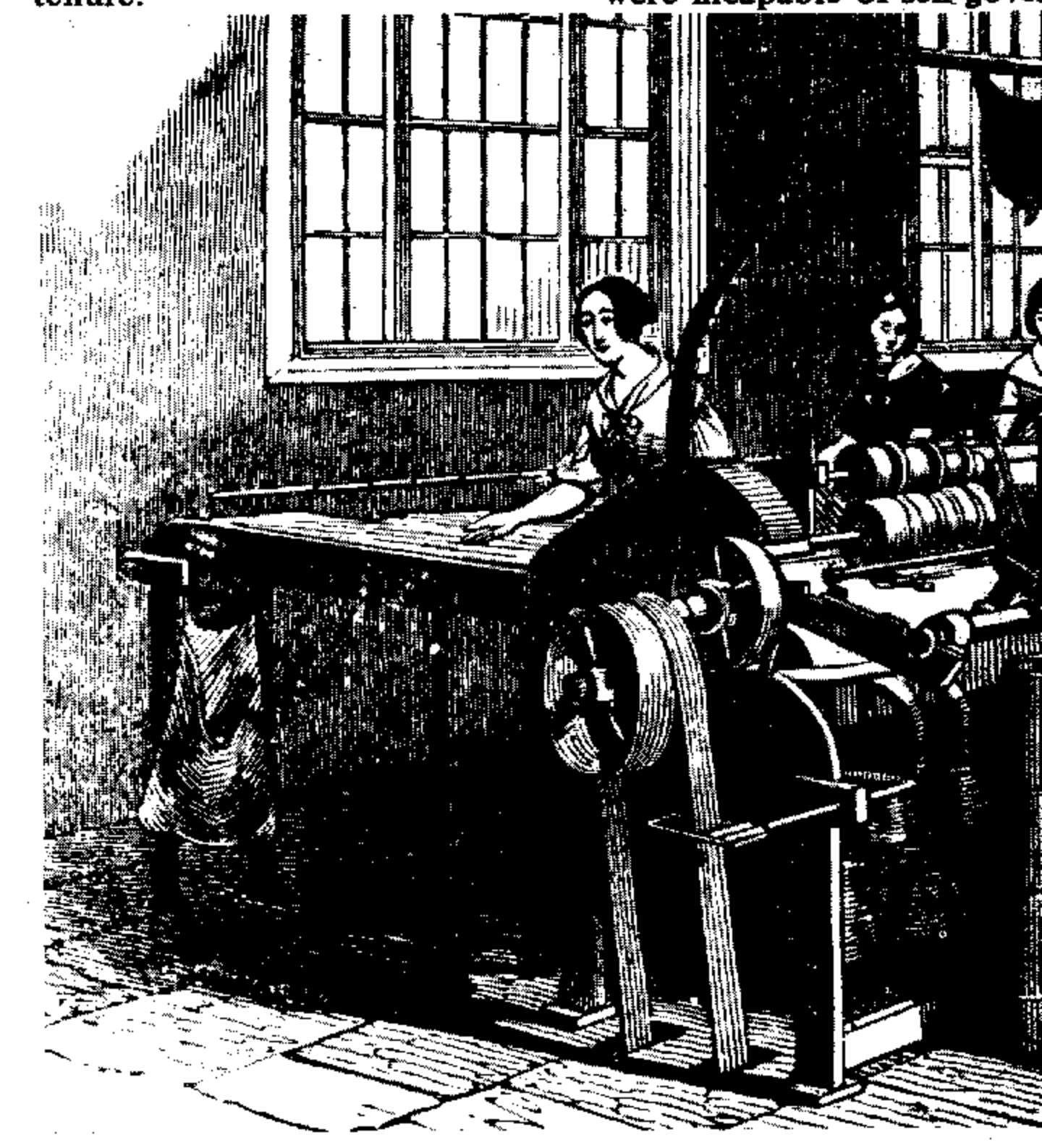
Gladstone's Land Act 1881 was prompted by the new wave of agricultural depression following the economic crisis of 1873 and new famines in the late 1870s.

For the first time (except in Ulster where such a system was already common) the Land Act fixed money rents for statutory tenancies for fixed periods and allowed the sale of remaining portions of unexpired leases.

But falling prices made these fixed rents even more burdensome and a companion Act to waive some arrears was defeated by the House of Lords.

The failure of Gladstone and the Irish Party to get Home Rule through the Commons in 1886 brought power a Tory government backed by Chamberlain and the Liberal Unionists and headed by the arch-imperialist Lord Salisbury.

The *Annual Register* 1886 (the official record of parliamentary debate) reports a speech by Salisbury in which he 'maintained that Ireland was not a nation but two nations; held that they were races, like the Hotentots and even the Hindoos, who were incapable of self-governance'.



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ISM

ment; and refused to place confidence in a people who had acquired the habit of using knives and slugs . . .

'My alternative policy is that parliament should enable the government of England to govern Ireland. Apply that recipe honestly, consistently and resolutely for twenty years, and at the end of that time you will find that Ireland will be fit to accept any gifts in the way of local government or repeal of coercion laws you may wish to give her'.

Devolved power

What Salisbury meant was that it was necessary to build some kind of capitalist class before any form of devolved power could be risked. It became Tory policy to create such a class.

The 25 years after 1886 saw a real acceleration in both industrial and agricultural growth. Tory Land Acts encouraged the purchase of land holdings by the richer peasants which itself expanded the tiny home industrial market.

Farming cooperatives were officially encouraged. At the same time prices and demand began to rise again for exports both of livestock and of



Labour in an Ulster flax mill



An emigrant on a Dublin quayside

industrial goods.

Many light industries developed during these years but most of them were on a very small scale.

The major heavy industry developed was shipbuilding, concentrated in Belfast. The annual tonnage produced rose from 40,000 in 1880 to over 250,000 in 1914. Between these years the population of Belfast doubled.

In these crucial 25 years, therefore, developed the classes and social groups which participated in the dramatic events of the class and national struggles between 1910 and 1924.

The industrial working class grew, especially in Belfast and Dublin. According to a census in 1907, there were 290,000 industrial workers, more than half of them in Ulster.

Peasantry

This certainly represented some growth but there were almost certainly more Irish workers in New York or in Boston than in the whole of Ireland and the peasantry remained numerically a much larger class.

This was the period of the construction of workers' organisations (see part 3 of this series). But these figures make plain how a revolutionary proletarian policy at that time required the development of a policy for the liberation of the peasantry from landlordism, poverty and oppression.

But this alliance was what Connolly and other labour leaders signally failed to build, preferring to tail-end the would-be oppressors' class of the bourgeois nationalist movement (see parts 6 and 7 of this series).

Weak class

Both the industrial and agricultural bourgeoisie also grew though it remained a weak and dependent class. One section (basically the Unionist bourgeoisie in Belfast) were completely tied to the world market and opposed the protectionist outlook which went hand in hand with nationalism.

The leaders of the nationalist movement represented the small aspiring bourgeoisie which saw its future as being based on a home market.

While Wolfe Tone had one hundred years before seen the economic future of Ireland as a second United States, the aims of the petty bourgeois

nationalist leaders were now more modest.

But they still saw Ireland becoming an industrialised, capitalist, imperialist nation—even though the model was now not the USA but Hungary or perhaps Germany.

Sinn Fein leader Arthur Griffith argued for a policy of industrialisation behind tariff barriers. It was to be the economic dimension of a political settlement in which Ireland's relation to England would be like that of Hungary to Austria—a dual monarchy.

In 1905 Griffiths wrote: "A nation cannot promote and further its civilisation, its prosperity and its social progress equally as well by exchanging agricultural products for manufactured goods as by establishing a manufacturing power of its own."

"A merely agricultural nation cannot ever develop to any extent a home or foreign commerce. . . it will never acquire important political power or be placed in a position to influence the cultivation and progress of less advanced nations and to form colonies of its own. A mere agricultural state is infinitely less powerful than an agricultural-manufacturing state. . ."

Higher price

Griffith added for good measure that it was "the duty of the individual to pay where necessary a higher price for Irish-made goods"—that is, to accept a cut in the standard of living in order to foster the growth of the imperialist ambitions of the budding Irish capitalist class.

The fact that these positions were well-known shows up again the criminal failure of the leaders of the labour movement to build a political movement independent of the would-be imperialists of Sinn Fein (see part 8 of this series).

In the crucial years of 1916 to 1924 it was these policies of the labour leaders which contributed in great measure to the form which Irish "independence" took—a divided country, with the squabbling petty bourgeois nationalists in political control.

The economic auspices of "independence" in 1922 could hardly have been worse for the grandiose projects of the new petty bourgeois leaders.

The wartime and post-war

boom in Britain had changed in 1921 to a deep slump with a catastrophic effect on Irish exports.

The most industrialised area (the 6 counties) were split off from the new state. And important installations (especially dairies) had been wantonly destroyed by the Black and Tans.

For ten years the pro-treaty government of William Cosgrave pursued an economic policy which claimed to be moderately protectionist but was in reality based on the old formula, so reviled in nationalist rhetoric, of stimulating meat and dairy exports to Britain.

The main architect of this strategy was the Agriculture Minister Patrick Hogan who coined the slogan: "One more cow, one more sow, one more acre under the plough."

In 1932 the Fianna Fail under de Valera won the elections on a pledge to introduce all-out protectionism in order to develop industry and shift agriculture from its export orientation.

The new Industry Minister Sean Lemass had said in 1928: "We believe that Ireland can be made a self-contained unit, providing all the necessities of living in adequate quantities for the people residing in the island at the moment and probably for a much larger number."

From 1932 to 1938 he gave protection to any industry which requested it. But a tiny home market based on a stagnant, primitive agriculture and a declining population was no base for industrialisation.

The failure of the pathetic scheme is shown by the fact that the national income per head calculated at 61% of the British figure in 1931 had fallen to 49% by 1939.

Incapacity

In 1938, therefore, the Fianna Fail in effect recognised the incapacity of the puny Irish capitalist class to resolve any of the country's economic problems.

The government signed a new British-Irish Trade Agreement which once more ratified the neo-colonial situation of the Irish economy.

This agreement was renewed in 1948 and then developed into a Free Trade Treaty in 1965.

Protectionism

But in other respects the protectionism of the Fianna Fail continued until well after the Second World War. Foreign investment was discouraged and Irish capitalists subsidised.

It was in 1949 that the Irish bourgeoisie began to put aside dreams of becoming an 18th century USA or a 19th century Hungary or Germany and to replace them with something closer to a 20th century Hong Kong or Singapore, Taiwan or South Korea.



Conditions in today's Northern Ireland textile mills



Cartoon of Britannia choosing between Tory coercion and Gladstone's Home Rule Bill

The Industrial Development Agency started hawking for foreign capitalist investment, first from Britain and then later in the 1960s from the Common Market, Japan and the USA.

The Irish bourgeoisie became economic pimps prostituting cheap Irish labour to imperialism and pocketing a share of the profits.

And the profits are very high. The United States Department of Commerce estimates that Ireland is the most profitable country in the world for American overseas investment.

Its average rate of profit is 29.5% compared with an international average of 11.7%. For Britain the figure is 5.5%.

Attract capital

In this they have, of course, been competing with the North, where British governments have also tried to attract foreign capital.

Today there are 680 foreign operations in Ireland. 206 of these, with a capital value of £271million, are American. The second largest investors are Japanese whose projects are worth £80million. The third largest are British.

The kind of manufacturing which is done is predominantly, as it was in the protected industries of the 1920s and 1930s, assembly operations based on imported raw materials.

So, even if it provides a certain amount of employment, it does little to solve Ireland's permanent trade deficit. From 1924 until today Ireland has been a chronic debtor country.

This kind of "industrialisation" has been very concentrated in and around the main ports. Nearly 50% of all industrial employment is in Dublin.

Growth based on foreign investment, especially since the late 1950s, is sometimes described as Ireland's "economic miracle". Miraculous it may seem only in relation to the country's past economic failures.

But Ireland's growth rate has been the second lowest in Western Europe in the post-war period. Though it has the slowest growing labour force in Europe, the unemployment rate (probably about 16%) is the highest in Europe. And it has since the 1960s had one of Europe's highest rates of inflation.

The closest parallel with this economic experience is that of the 6 counties of Ulster.

Dependent nature

The border has not stopped both sections of the Irish bourgeoisie from continuing to show their dependent nature in relation to imperialism, and to demonstrate that in the epoch of imperialism they have no progressive role to play.

Through preserving its "divisions" and the border then both sections of this pitiful class have to some extent managed to conceal the utter bankruptcy which has been its characteristic for nearly two centuries.

IN REVIEW

PRINT JOBS UNDER THE AXE

NUJ member Peter McIntyre reviews 'Journalists and New Technology', a new pamphlet published by the NUJ to develop a policy on the threat to thousands of jobs.

Thousands of print workers in the newspaper industry face the dole in the next ten years, regardless of whether newspapers are making profits.

New newspaper technology has given the employers a golden opportunity to remove up to 40% of their labour costs, with a relatively small capital outlay.

A complete production line of highly technical, low-staffed machines is now feasible.

The introduction of technology, which has been taking place rapidly over the past ten years, is expected to increase, outstripping the 63,000 print jobs lost between 1967 and 1976.

The loss of these jobs has almost without exception taken place with not a finger of resistance being lifted by the print union leaderships.

Converts

Far from trying to protect their members, the leaders of NGA, NATSOPA and SLADE have become converts to the wonders of job-cutting as a means of solving the economic problems of the Fleet Street papers.

A joint management/union document, *A Programme For Action* was presented to Fleet Street printers and journalists late last year with the full backing of the print union leaders.

Despite their best efforts this programme for the acceptance of technology and the loss of a massive number of jobs was decisively rejected by the membership.

Despite this vote, the 'reasonable' men who lead the big three print unions are so impressed with management arguments for getting rid of their members, that they intend to resubmit a similar programme to their members.

Most dramatic

In Fleet Street the battles and betrayals are still to come.

In the provinces, where newspapers are highly profitable businesses, much of the technology has already been introduced.

The next phase—where thousands of more jobs are at stake—is in many ways the most dramatic.

The technology exists for reporters to type copy on a visual display unit straight into a computer.

It can then be edited and sent for printing without ever being seen or handled by a compositor.

The technology also exists for the pages to be designed on the visual display units without printers having to paste up pages. (This method is now being introduced at the *Daily Mirror* in London although printers are operating the machine).

Endless

Much of this is already in use in some British papers and many more papers in America and Europe. The technical possibilities are seemingly endless.

Television can already be adapted to receive news and advertisements at will by calling them up from data

with 'lefts' and has produced a report which adopts a militant hostility towards the technology. It will nevertheless be totally inadequate to defend those jobs.

Muddled

It presents a muddled amalgam of lines of defence, ranging from refusing to negotiate the introduction of the technology to little more than displays of bad temper once the machines have been introduced.

The pamphlet contains some useful research and an accurate description of what the new technology represents:

'New technology' as used in our industry, is a euphemism for automation, whereby routine work that has been carried out manually or at least under the control of a worker is transferred to a machine which follows precisely defined instructions'.

It produces figures to support the 1976 Royal Commission on the Press contention that the employers' investment in new technology will be recouped within one or two years if they are allowed to carry out job-cutting on the scale that they require.

Desperate

At 1975 prices every paper in Fleet Street could re-equip itself with 'cold type' machinery for £20 million, spend another £30 million in getting rid of workers and 'save' 7,000 jobs yielding £20 million a year.

The crisis of Fleet Street will even then not be so easily solved. The employers point to great 'gains' because they are desperate to cut the jobs.

In fact they know as well as anyone that rising newspaper prices and cut throat competition for sales, as well as competition from television and radio advertising will leave the future of several Fleet Street papers far from secure.

Cut jobs

The latest stage of technology does more than just cut jobs. It also deskills traditional craft areas of work making it easy for the management to introduce scabs to get the technology introduced.

'Theoretically, workers are offered the elimination of drudgery. In practice, automation is applied selectively



PHOTO: John Sturock, Report

NGA General Secretary Wade banks operated by the Post Office, BBC and ITA.

Faced with this wealth of technology traditional methods of defending jobs at a local level become inadequate.

The simple truth is that printers and journalists will either find a joint defence against the massive job cutting which is already in process or they will go down to a shattering defeat at the hands of the employers, in the knowledge that the paid army of bureaucrats inside the print unions have done as much as anyone to bring defeat about.

Last year the National Union of Journalists called for a year's ban on the introduction of 'direct entry' technology (that is visual display terminals) while a committee set up by the annual delegates conference produced a policy.

The committee was larded

by management to cut jobs; lower the price of labour by reducing dependence on expensive skills; progressively remove from the worker control of the process and transfer it, via the machines to management'.

Non-union labour

The report outlines what happened at Media General, an American firm in Richmond Virginia in 1970.

'In preparation for disputes with printing unions, the company had trained non union labour—secretaries, advertising and management personnel—to operate the new equipment which it had already installed.

When the unions walked out the paper was produced by this non-union labour; few of the 180 print workers who went on strike ever got their jobs back.

Since then the paper has been produced by cheap, non union labour with a turnover of 30-35% a year in the composing room'.

Inadequate

In Britain the Nottingham *Evening Post* broke the back of the NGA (while NUJ members scabbed on a strike) and now have journalists operating visual display terminals with the loss of 120 production and editorial jobs.

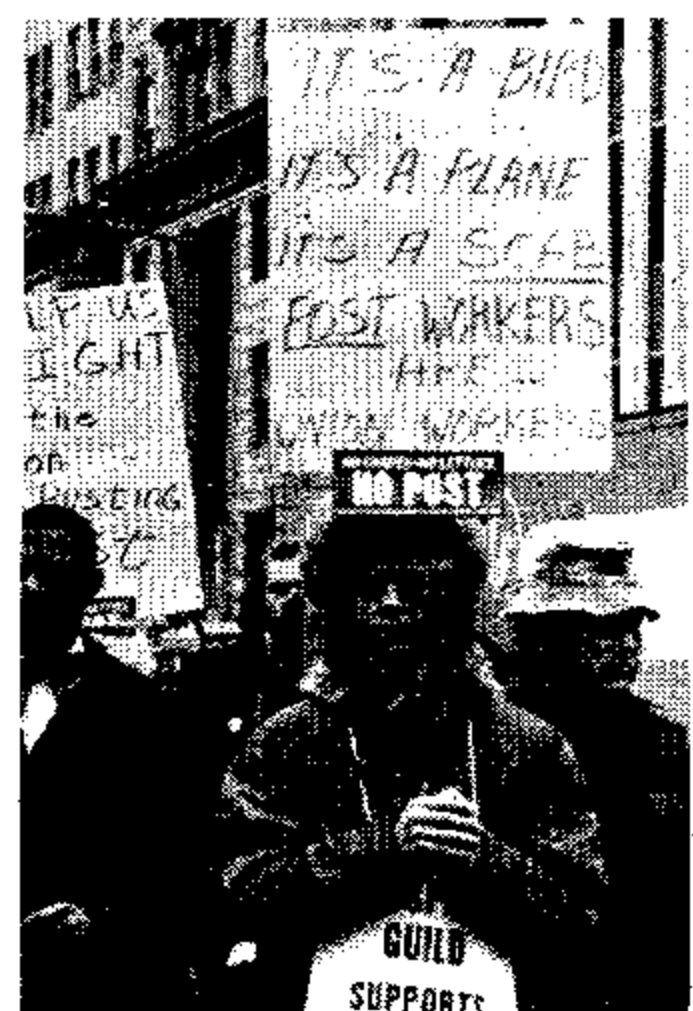
The company owns a new non union printing plant just fifteen miles away from Nottingham which could, if need be, print the paper.

The policies put forward for the NUJ to adopt are totally inadequate. The committee talks about not accepting loss of jobs due to the technology without at any stage showing how this major battle can be lead.

It says moreover that the NUJ should seek agreements

with the print union (correctly) and that it should only enter into negotiations to work direct entry machines when other unions (basically the NGA) have already agreed to give up that area of work.

That means that in two important cases the NUJ will be forced to accept job cuts where they take place with the connivance of the print union bureaucracies, and where an NGA chapel has been defeated.



Striker at US Washington Post

The only policy that can resist this attack on jobs is one that draws the unions together.

NUJ members will have to reject motions of waiting to see if the NGA agrees to the new arrangements and instead make it clear that it will not accept direct entry as part of its work—whether the printers accept it or not.

This first line of defence must then be used to strengthen the resolve of demoralised print chapels to a stage where they believe that a successful united fight can be put up.

As a second line of defence printers and

journalists alike must fight jointly at a local level for work sharing on full pay.

All the work available must be shared out among the workforce with no loss of pay.

To do this it is essential to win manning agreements which fix the levels of jobs.

The policy of no loss of jobs, coupled with no acceptance of job cutting technology goes beyond a static trade union defence.

It must lead to the workers under threat going on the attack.

Managements which claim they must have the new technology to survive must be made to throw open their books, plans and all secret workings, to elected committees of the workforce.

Nationalise

If their claims of insolvency turn out to be true (as is likely in Fleet Street) then workers must demand that the papers are nationalised without compensation under workers' control.

They must demand that the complete control of all editorial matters passes into the hands of the workers and that the private businessmen who manipulate and control the press at vast profit in the provinces and at some risk to their fortunes in Fleet Street are stripped of their instruments of propaganda.

For print union members much is at stake. Side by side a fight to provide closed shops for the NUJ throughout the newspaper industry must go hand in hand with a united and determined fight to resist job cuts—based not on the limits of trade unionism but on scientific understanding of the forces involved.

OUR POLICIES

Defend the trade unions



Trotsky

Trade unionism is under attack. The assault is not new and takes many forms.

Wilson's *In Place of Strife* and Heath's Industrial Relations Act both tried to emasculate the unions.

Phony 'workers' participation' schemes are being used to undermine the shop stewards' movement.

In 1977, the Grunwick and hotels' strikes were just two examples of vicious reaction by employers and state to extension of union rights.

Dead end

Despite such resistance and despite repeated betrayals membership continues to grow as workers move to defend wages and conditions.

For this reason the WSL fights at all points to defend the unions.

Without trade unions the British working class would be powerless. If the working class cannot defend the independence of its unions now, it will never be able to build the organisations necessary to establish socialism.

But energetic defence of the unions does not mean that the Trotskyist programme of the WSL is simply 'union militancy'.

Today, this is a dead-end. Determined strikes are often lost precisely because they are led by militants whose aim is restricted to simply squeezing concessions from

the employers.

When the economic crisis makes it impossible for capitalism to grant serious concessions, such a policy hides the truth from workers.

The firemen's strike again highlights the political questions posed by the wages' struggle—including the survival of the government.

Bitter struggle

Under such conditions, the only 'realistic' policy is not one which aims solely at concessions, but one which also prepares the working class for the revolutionary overthrow of the bankrupt capitalist system.

Defence of the unions now demands a more bitter struggle than that necessary to build them. And, as the TUC's betrayal of the firemen demonstrates, the main enemy of independent trade unionism and free collective bargaining is the enemy within.

In the 'boom' of the 1950s and 1960s capitalism could afford to toss a few crumbs to the workers.

Transform

Then, the cap-in-hand policies of reformist leaders, like Jack Jones, appeared 'realistic' and 'common sense'.

Now, under the onset of international economic slump this is transformed into its opposite.

The TUC bureaucrats can no longer walk a tight-rope



Heath

between labour and capital—they must show their true colours.

They now act openly as agents of the bosses.

This process is inevitable. Periods of crisis push privileged bureaucrats into their role as policemen of wage control and unemployment, in order to save their elevated positions.

Socialist Press has detailed their use of witch-hunts, kangaroo courts and sharp election practices against opponents of these betrayals.

There is hardly a rule in the book that remains unbroken in the attacks on militant members.

The outright betrayal of the Grunwick strikers bears out the WSL's analysis of the bureaucracy in the unions.

No fight

These officials are so concerned to preserve their

'peaceful coexistence' with the bosses that they will not even fight to build the organisations from which they eke their parasitic existence.

Transformation

This defence of the unions means first and foremost driving out misleaders like Jones, Murray and Scanlon.

Preparation for the battles ahead requires the thorough transformation of the unions. The fight for this is a task of the WSL.

Genuine union democracy—that allows the rapid removal of treacherous leaders and the open fight for a programme to defend jobs and wages—is essential.

All officials should be elected and subject to instant recall. Self seeking careerism should be ended through payment of average workers' wages to union leaders.

Tory media

Manoeuvres like postal ballots must be opposed. They are aimed at allowing the Tory media to appeal over the heads of active unionists and gather support for the right-wing from the most isolated and ill-informed sections.

Voting should take place in the open in meetings, open to all members.

Each candidate should be given the right to be present and appeal for support on equal terms at such meetings. Only voting in this way can end the situation in which the whole electoral machinery is controlled by the trade union bureaucrats themselves.

The fight for union democracy is an integral part of the fight for the new leadership; a leadership that fights for transitional demands, such as the linking of pay to prices under workers' control, as the alternative to capitalist crisis and wage cutting.

Record of fighting

That such demands—which both answer the burning needs of workers and also open up the prospect of a struggle against capitalism itself—can win a response from workers, was shown in the recent elections at British Leyland Cowley.

There, militants with a record of fighting for such policies, were elected to senior positions despite bureaucratic opposition and witch-hunting. (Significantly, the Cowley workers had organised a guard to ensure no interference with the ballot boxes).

For the WSL, the fight for our programme in the unions, and for the action necessary to implement it, is indispensable to the preparation of the working class for power. The alternative is

increasing misery for the working class while the bureaucrats are left to use the unions for their own personal benefit.

Yet the fight in the unions is only one terrain on which the class struggle takes place.

The unions can in no way be a substitute for a revolutionary party which must take up the struggle against capitalism at every level of society.

Wholly possible

Without revolutionary leadership, the unions are like a muscular body that is not directed by a brain.

Thus, in our fight in the unions, the WSL sets out to win the most class-conscious fighters to our understanding of capitalism, and train them in the Marxist theory vital for a consistent struggle against it.

In 1940, Trotsky warned that unions led by the reformists could never be truly independent and would become 'concentration camps' for the working class.

His words ring true today.

But: 'Wholly possible are revolutionary trade unions... In this sense the programme of

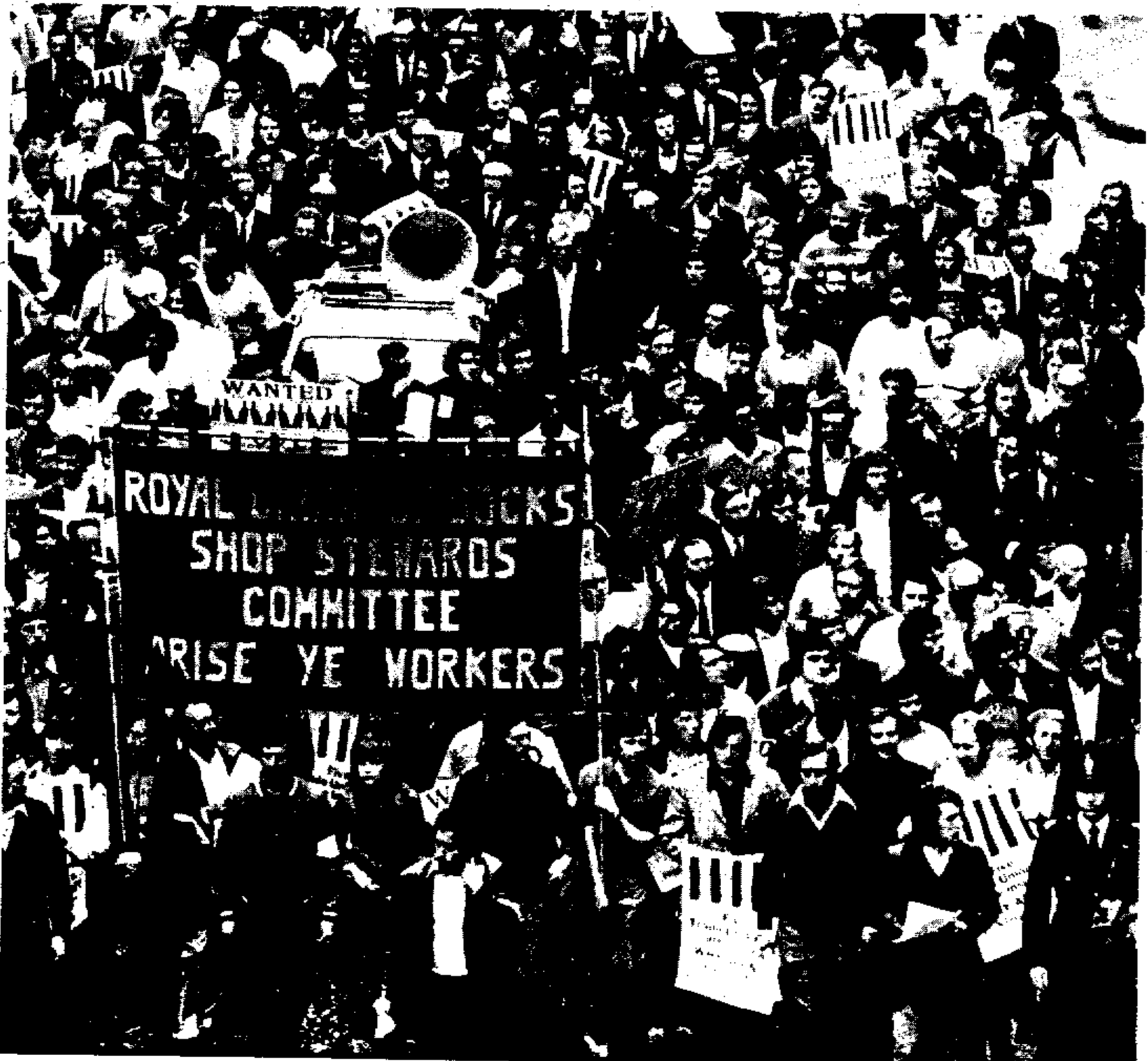
transitional demands... is not only the programme of the party but... the programme for the activity of the trade unions'.

The battle for leadership in the unions must take place in order to transform them into 'revolutionary trade unions'.

Nor do we believe that this battle can be won through the simple repetition of revolutionary-sounding phrases.

The new leadership in the unions will only be built by those who are willing to give the most detailed attention to the day-to-day questions that arise in the unions, and to give a practical lead in every movement that arises from the experiences of the workers themselves—even when the demands of the struggle appear partial and limited.

It is through countless such battles that the working class will develop confidence in its ability to fight capitalism, will come to understand the role of the union bureaucrats as a barrier to victory, and will recognise the need for a revolutionary party as fought for by the WSL.



The release of the dockers jailed under the Industrial Relations Act.

BOOKS

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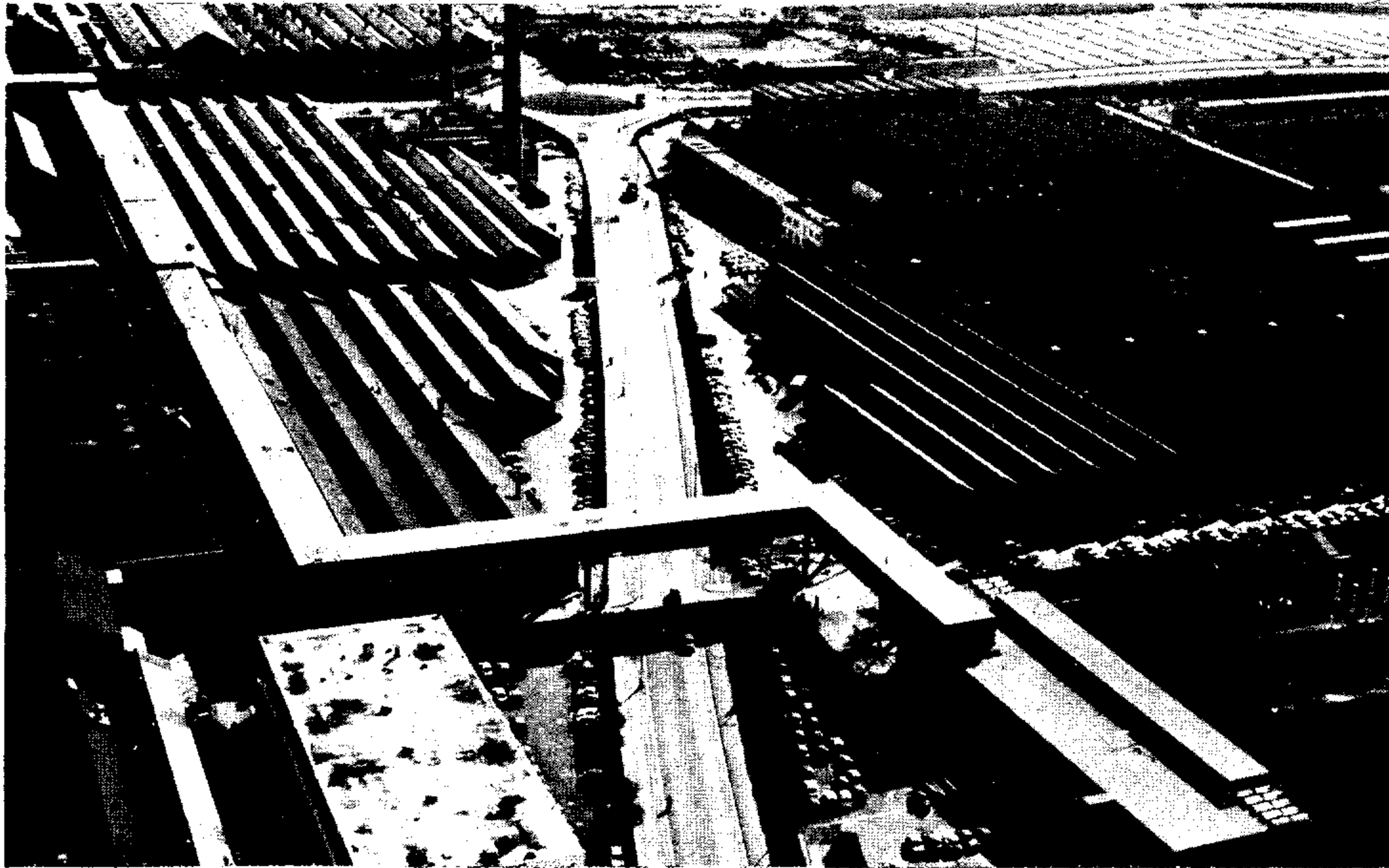
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1974 Victimised 1977 Re-elected

4 YEARS STRUGGLE FOR PRINCIPLE

The banner of new leadership for the trade union movement in the car industry was unmistakably raised last month when the existing right wing leadership was overturned in a shop floor ballot in British Leyland's Cowley Plant.

Defeated was Reg Parsons an extreme right wing witch-hunter who was promoted by the right wing of the TGWU at Regional and National level in 1974 and installed by a national witch hunt.

Elected was Bob Fryer the left-wing convenor removed in 1974 and Alan Thornett, a Trotskyist who had been deputy convenor for six years up to 1974.

Speed up

This result overturned four years of work by the right wing designed to create the conditions to reorganise Leyland, prepare for speed-up and control wage rates.

Although directed mainly from Regional level Jack Jones, General Secretary of the TGWU, was involved from the outset in the moves against the Cowley leadership.

It was his decision in 1974 to act on a witch-hunting letter from Parsons.

This was sent during a three-week strike of the transport section in defence of Alan Thornett after the management withdrew recognition from him as a deputy convenor and as a shop steward.

The outcome of the strike was an inquiry by the TGWU Regional Committee.

Cleared of charges

The inquiry completely cleared Thornett of all the charges levelled at him by the company—but found Fryer, who had never even been charged with anything, guilty of bringing the union into disrepute.

This finding was used to

floor ballot. It also ordered a new branch to be set up.

The secretary and chairman of the new branch were to be elected at a paid mass meeting on the plant.

The right wing knew that the continuous three-week witch-hunt had done its job and that Thornett and Fryer and other left-wingers such as Tim O'Sullivan had little chance of winning.

Big victory

Parsons' election was a big victory for British Leyland and one to which they had devoted considerable resources, with the whole hearted backing of the TGWU bureaucracy.

The conclusion drawn by most left groups was that the Fryer-Thornett leadership had become isolated from the workers in the plant.

It is true that certain wrong policies, flowing from the influence of the Workers Revolutionary Party in the plant, had played a part.

But set against this was their long and principled record in unionising the factory, raising wages, opposing redundancies and anti-trade union legislation, and fighting the imposition of Measured Day Work—forced in after a 6-week strike in 1970.

Programme

A leadership which fights on behalf of the working class will have periods in office and periods out of office; the important question is on what principles and programme is that leadership built.

The test of how firmly the Cowley leadership was rooted in the working class would only be tested in their ability to withstand the attacks of the right wing following Parsons' election and the way they fought to rebuild majority support.

Parsons had made his objectives clear from the start—to drive the Trotskyists from the factory.

In December 1975 Parsons

Tom White, a Central Committee member of the Workers Revolutionary Party on his slate and with a much reduced majority.

In the same weeks Alan Thornett was elected as Chairman of the 5/293 Branch.

This was achieved under conditions where the Parsons candidate withdrew in favour of Tom White—who became the right-wing nominee with a left face they hoped would be useful.

The Branch elections were the first major blow against the right wing since the victimisation 18 months earlier.



Tom White

They were a shot across the bows of the right wing and had demonstrated the ability of the previous leadership to win support through the fight for programme.

This had been demonstrated by the support for the open the books committee in the months prior to the elections and in the fight against the 'participation' scheme enthusiastically supported by Parsons.

This was narrowly accepted by the shop stewards shortly before the elections through the crucial intervention of the Stalinists.

This was the first time the Stalinists had emerged in any significant way in the factory. But they were to play an increasingly important role as the main hard line support for Parsons.

Branch elections was to call a meeting of selected right wing stewards and members and to publish a statement throughout the plant saying a new organisation had been set up comprised entirely of those "dedicated to the destruction of extremism".

More substantial

The bureaucracy itself made a more substantial move. They knew that the support gained by the left over the previous months would be multiplied now the Branch leadership had changed.

Jack Jones personally appointed David Buckle, Oxford District Secretary and a fanatical right winger, as official for the Assembly Plant.

The appointment was of particular importance because it completed a reliable chain downwards from Jones himself, through Mathers as Regional Secretary, Buckle as local official and Parsons as convenor.

Anti-Trotskyist

The importance of every link in this chain being unshakably anti-Trotskyist emerged as crucial in the following months as the bureaucracy met the strengthening opposition with the only weapon they had—increasing bureaucratic dictatorship.

On his appointment, Buckle abolished the Joint Shop Stewards Committee to which Thornett had just been elected chairman and set out to isolate the 5/293 Branch by refusing to deal with in on any industrial matter—a decision endorsed by Mathers.

"Plan"

Parsons publicly boasted that a "plan" now existed which would result in the Trotskyists being driven from the plant.

In August 1976 four shop stewards from the North Works were victimised by

to defend a sacked worker by the obvious and scarcely concealed collaboration of Buckle and Parsons.

At the mass meeting called to defend them Parsons defended the management's action whilst Buckle said that a strike would result in the permanent closure of the plant.

Second blow

Despite this the meeting voted them down and supported the four, shutting down the North Works.

The decision of this meeting was the second major blow against the right wing. Although they were able to bring an end to the strike after two weeks with the announcement of a Regional Inquiry, Parsons had lost his support in the North Works and he was never to regain it.

The bureaucracy held the inquiry back until December and withheld its findings until April 1977.

They then turned it to their own advantage and used it as the framework for the final stage of Buckle's plan.

The report found the four stewards guilty and withdrew their stewards' cards.

It also recommended further reorganisation of the TGWU structure on the plant and gave the Oxford District Committee (i.e. Buckle) the authority to decide the shape of the reorganisation.



Tim O'Sullivan

Buckle's recommendation was another new branch in addition to the existing 5/293 and 5/55 and the formation of a TGWU stewards' committee with a constitution written by him.

His mistake was to call mass meetings of TGWU members in the plant in an attempt to get his recom-

mendations endorsed.

The meetings turned into the third major blow against the right wing. On the day shift Buckle and Parsons were jeered and abused when they refused to allow Thornett, Corti and O'Sullivan to speak as officers of the existing branches to answer the stream of lies and witch-hunting coming from the platform.

Buckle got over the problem by claiming that the meeting had voted in favour of his proposals when no vote had actually been taken.

Minority pressured

The result of all this was a disaster. Although Leyland invested hundreds of thousands of pounds in the new branch, releasing 30 hand picked right wing stewards from their job on full pay to work full time for three months recruiting into the new branch only a minority of workers could be pressured into joining.

The failure of this operation posed a difficult problem for the right wing. The biennial election for convenor was looming in December and their support was at an all time low.

The TGWU stewards committee had been set up with a straight jacket constitution but they had lost the support of the stewards.

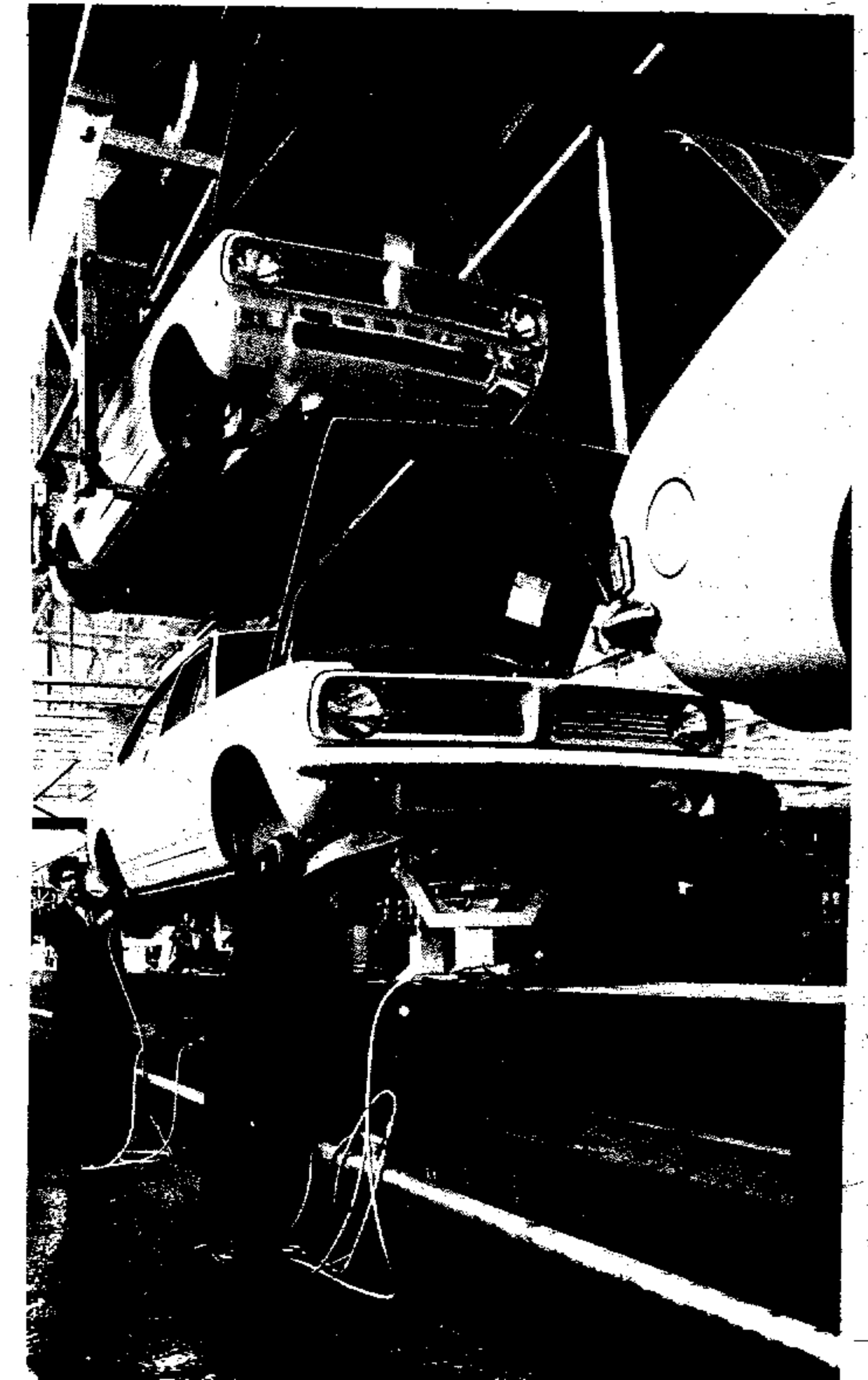
Strike action

This had been made worse by Parsons' attempt to ban Thornett from a stewards' meeting which had resulted in strike action from Thornett's section and a mass attendance of members at stewards' meetings.

Buckle was obviously forced to the conclusion that to win the convenor's elections, by hook and by crook, was not enough—they had to control the stewards and the branches on the plant.

The support for their opponents was growing. The 5/293 Branch Report, a magazine which had begun publication in May had been carrying the Branch campaign for a £100 per week wage plus a cost of living clause to protect the wage packet against inflation.

Their approach to the problem began to emerge at the October meeting of the Oxford District Committee.



Roche as Chairman provoked the meeting by dictatorial use of the chair. As soon as protests were made they accused the protestors of disruption and closed down the meeting.

Soon after when the procedures for the convenors' elections were published it emerged that all those running the election were nominees of Buckle and that no scrutineers were to be allowed from the branches.

Then, arising from the closure of the previous meeting, the District Committee set up a disciplinary hearing in which a six man subcommittee of right wingers would be given authority to charge who they liked with what they liked, to sit in judgement and then recommend sentences to the Regional Committee.

Charges

All the main left candidates in the election then received lists of charges. In almost every case, including Fryer and Thornett, charges were involved which carried expulsion and barring from office as possible sentences.

The charges were to be taken in the two days following the elections and according to the *Daily Telegraph* the

final decision would be taken the following week by "Senior Regional Officials".

By January 1, 1978 when the new terms of office commenced the job would be done and the opposition destroyed.

But the plan misfired. The 5/293 and 5/55 branches had moved quickly on the scrutiny of the ballot and a visit to the Regional Office established the right of the branches to scrutinise.

24-hour guard

The branch scrutineers did a thorough job. The ballot boxes were placed under a 24 hour guard from Monday morning when the ballot started until Wednesday morning when the count took place.

The result was a victory for Fryer over Parsons by 1195 against 995. Almost 800 votes were cast for Thornett, giving him 4th position out of the 28 candidates for the seven full time deputy convenor positions. Corti was also elected.

The wheel had turned full circle. Fryer and Thornett were re-elected by popular vote—the very method introduced to remove them in 1974.

By Reg Hobbs

42 months in Cowley

March 1974	Widespread strikes in South Works over mutuality clause and speed-up.	June 1976	After complaint by majority of Automotive Committee delegates, Region forced to recognise travesty but withdraw the right of the Oxford Committee to send any delegate to Automotive Conference.
April 5 1974	Strikers receive sack threat from Company.	July 1976	Oxford Automotive Committee disbanded because right wing had lost their majority on it.
April 8 1974	Strikers vote to go back against advice of convenors.	August 1976	Recognition removed from 4 stewards by British Leyland during struggle to defend a victimised worker. Mass meeting votes support but strike sold out after two weeks. Decision for a Regional Inquiry.
April 9 1974	Plant shut down by strike in Transport dept—Thornett's section.	December 1976	Regional Inquiry into the four victimised stewards.
April 10 1974	BL Management withdraws recognition from Thornett resulting in 3 week strike by the Transport drivers.	April 1977	Inquiry findings published—4 stewards found guilty of bringing the union into disrepute. Stewards cards removed. Oxford DC given authority to "re-organise" the TGWU in the Assembly Plant.
May 6 1974	Inquiry findings published—Thornett cleared on all points—Fryer found guilty of bringing union into disrepute. No charges ever laid against him. Fresh elections ordered by shop floor ballot and a new branch in the Assembly Plant.	May 1977	First edition of 293 Branch Report circulated.
June 4 1974	Parsons elected in "resulting ballot."	May 1977	DC accepts Buckles proposals for 'reorganisation'—a new branch to be formed, the 837, and a TGWU stewards committee created with a constitution written by him.
June 1974	5/293 Branch set up. Majority of members persuaded to go into it. Thornett and other militants join 5/293 Branch.	June 1977	Mass meetings fail to endorse Buckles proposals but Buckle goes ahead. Massive campaign to recruit into new branch.
June 1974—December 1974	Parsons in control, Company make major advances against many levels and protective agreement—particularly mutuality.	July 1977	Second edition of Branch Report circulated.
December 1974	Thornett voted delegate to Biennial Delegate Conference for 5/293.	July 1977	Thornett and O'Sullivan attend BDC on the Isle of Man—5/293 motion calls for sliding scale of wages, third of conference vote for it.
July 1975	Thornett goes to Biennial Delegate Conference as delegate for 5/293.	July 1977	TGWU stewards committee formed with straight-jacket constitution while Thornett and O'Sullivan are in the I.O.M.
July 1975	Oxford Trades Council disaffiliated from TUC as right wing attempt to consolidate their position in the town.	August 1977	5/293 begins campaign for £100 plus sliding scale.
August 1975	Full meeting of Leyland Cars convenors accept 'participation' in principle.	September 1977	Third edition of Branch Report circulated.
September 1975	Joint Shop Stewards Committee open the books committee formed.	September 1977	First meeting of 837 Branch.
November 1975	Participation accepted in Assembly Plant by crucial intervention of the Stalinists.	October 1977	Fourth edition of Branch Report.
November 1975	Tom White, (WRP), goes onto 'participation'.	October 1977	Leyland Cars hold ballot on Corporate Bargaining—workers accept in dubious ballot.
November 1975	Tom White included on Parsons published slate for deputy convenors.	November 1977	Massive problems of implementation remaining.
December 1975	Parsons re-elected convenor with much reduced majority.	November 1977	Fifth edition of Branch Report published.
December 1975	Tim O'Sullivan elected chairman of the 5/55 Branch	Nov 22 1977	Special meeting of Oxford District Committee sets up Kangaroo Court.
January 1976	5/293 and 5/55 branches challenge "impossible votes" in National Committee, Regional Committee and GEC elections.	Dec 1 1977	Main candidates in election receive list of charges against them.
January 1976	Despite massive evidence pointing to ballot rigging an inquiry into allegations is refused by Region.	Dec 5 1977	Fryer elected convenor, White, Thornett, and Corti elected deputy convenors.
February 1976	Region orders fresh election for National Committee, Regional Committee and GEC due to "technical infringement of the rules".	Dec 8 & 9 1977	Disciplinary hearings held at Transport House. Fryer and Thornett refuse to attend because the hearings outside of rule.
April 1976	Buckle appointed official for Assembly Plant by Jack Jones.	Dec 19 1977	Thornett re-elected chairman of 5/293.
May 1976	Thornett elected chairman of Joint Shop Stewards Committee.	Dec 30 1977	Roche voted off General Executive Council in ballot greatly influenced by the struggle for democracy two years ago.
May 1976	Right wing manipulate vote at the Oxford District Automotive Committee—Parsons declared elected to Automotive National Conference when majority voted for Thornett.		

The inquiry findings now stand in limbo at Regional Office and no one knows what Mathers will decide to do.

The TGWU stewards met soon after the election and declared they would resist to the full any attempt to interfere with the results of the election.

The only people who spoke in defence of the inquiry were the Stalinists who opposed the motion on the grounds that it "could interfere with the outcome of a constitutional inquiry".

The next issue to be confronted by the new leadership will be the public declaration by British Leyland that they will not recognise Alan Thornett.

This will come up on January 3 when Thornett is due to take office.

Vindication

The election results are a vindication of the policies pursued by those fighting for alternative leadership in the plant over the past 3½ years - the fight against closure, to open the books, for work sharing on full pay, for catching up claims to regain wages lost over the last four years and for cost of living clauses to protect against inflation.

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Scandal of the UPW men fined for trade unionism

Tom Jackson and the UPW leadership have shown their real attitude to the Grunwick struggle and to their own members' democratic rights.

On December 22 the UPW disciplinary committee fined leading London postmen a total of £1,400 for their part in the blacking of Grunwick mail.

One officer, John Taylor, was fined an astonishing £500, and another, Derek Walsh £300. These savage penalties are far bigger than any meted out by reactionary JPs to Grunwick pickets.

Unanimous

The sole 'crime' these men had committed was to implement a unanimous decision of the UPW's London District Council—which called for the blacking of Grunwick mail.

This scandalous action by the UPW leadership just about completes the picture of TUC betrayal on Grunwick. The only section of workers that blacked electricity post and water to Grunwick and demanding the TUC call officially for such blacking.



Jackson

This is a parallel to the suspension of APEX strike committee members for picketing the TUC.

The London postmen's action was typical of the response by rank and file trade unionists to the Grunwick fight. John Taylor said:

The principle of fighting for union recognition and the credibility of the movement

CP buries NUM wage claim

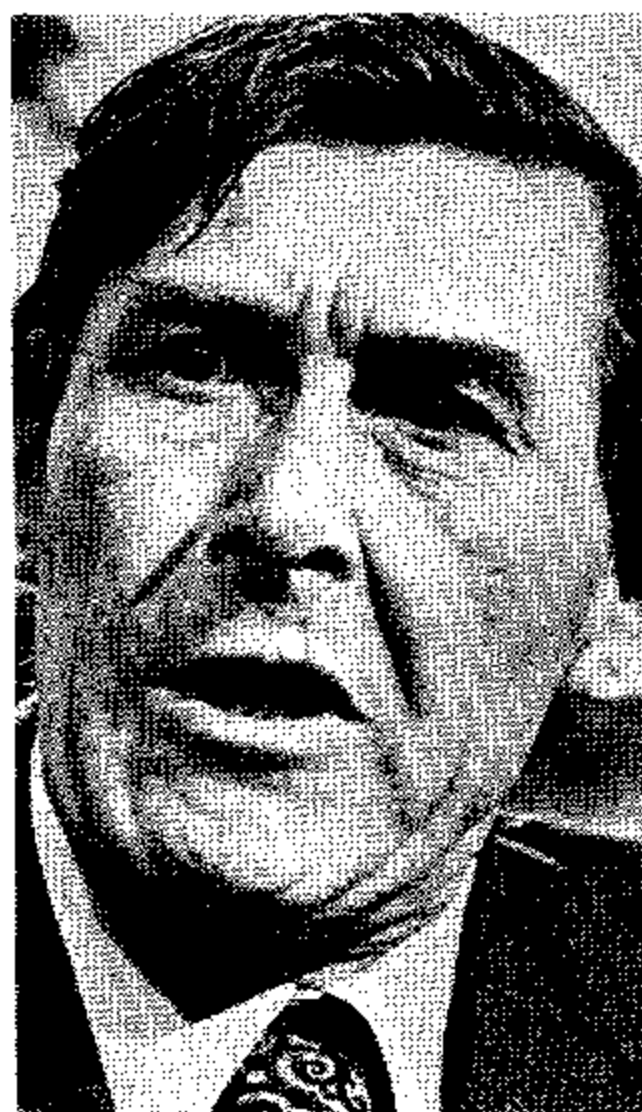


PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

McGahey

As the final tatters of left wing "opposition" to pit incentive schemes were torn to shreds in the High Court before Christmas, it was left to Stalinist leaders in Scotland and in Kent to utter the last rites over the £135 pay claim by agreeing to talks on area incentive schemes.

The Court action—a desperate and reactionary move headed by Yorks leader Arthur Scargill, who had refused to call for action on the basic pay claim—proved only the futility of seeking workers' democracy through

bourgeois courts.

Mr Justice Watkins pulled no punches. He pronounced that in his view the national executive was not bound either by the NUM conference or by a national ballot.

The rule telling the EC not to act contrary to conference "does not apply".

In his outline of the case he referred both to the 'national interest' and to the 'balance of convenience' involved in halting a scheme already underway in some areas.

And he enthusiastically quoted the increase in production in South Derbyshire since their incentive scheme began!

Whether or not a majority of NUM members were opposed to incentives, the judge declared, the majority seemed to include men like cokemen and the power group already on bonuses.

It is hard to imagine a more brazen declaration that the courts are wholly and irretrievably the instrument of the employers and their agents and opposed to the independent workers' movement.

The long struggle at the Metropole Hotel in London has ended in defeat and dismissal for the seven workers still on strike. These workers were betrayed by their union officials who were able to increasingly isolate the strikers.

In a future issue of *Socialist Press* we will be publishing a history of the struggle and the lessons that have to be learned.

is far more important than union rules'.

The UPW fines show that the union bureaucracy cannot be relied on to win the struggle. The Grunwick strike committee must ignore the threats of action against them by the APEX bureaucrats and prepare a mass lobby of the TUC.

At the centre of the campaign must be a fight to press trade union bodies, officials, shop stewards and members to sign a declaration that they will act in support of any section of workers that black electricity post and water to Grunwick and demanding the TUC call officially for such blacking.

Within every union, and particularly the UPW, resolutions must be passed demanding the lifting of the fines on the London postmen and for disciplinary action against those who carried out this shameful attack.

NUJ talks

New talks with local management have started at Darlington as NUJ members try to gain concessions from Westminster Press management for a return to work.

The NUJ members have now been left completely isolated in their 30 week strike for a closed shop.

London office journalists who supported the strike for seven months—were driven back to work before Christmas after it became clear that escalation before Christmas was not on the cards.

When London office members returned to work Westminster Press with the customary viciousness imposed a series of humiliating demands.

These included the lifting of blacking by all papers in the group, a condition signed by NUJ General Secretary Ken Ashton, without the knowledge, let alone agreement of the membership.

Offices at Swindon, Oxford and Uxbridge were then presented with the document by their management and told that if they did not lift their blacking London office members would lose pension, rights, holiday pay for 1977 and continuity of employment.

The only way forward for the Darlington chapel is to make a clear call for escalation and be prepared to tackle head on the bureaucracies that have left them so isolated.

This will require a fundamental change in approach by the Darlington leadership itself to become prepared to confront opposition instead of capitulating to it.

NEW CRISIS IN TURKEY AS DEMIREL FALLS



The December 21 lobby

The National Front coalition government in Turkey fell last Saturday.

Prime Minister Demirel resigned after his government failed by 228-218 to win a vote of confidence from the National Assembly.

Bulent Ecevit, the leader of the Republican Party has now been charged by Presi-

dent Koruturk with forming a new government.

The basis of Demirel's defeat was the resignation of 12 deputies from his Justice Party. Eleven of these voted against the NF coalition and one refused to vote, calling for a coalition between Ecevit's RPP and the Justice Party.

The resignations reflected Demirel's inability to introduce the measures demanded by the IMF as a precondition of a \$1 billion loan.

Divided

The NF coalition was divided on the IMF call to abandon its planned investment in heavy industry, and to scale down projected economic growth from 9% to 4%.

But the main force behind Demirel's failure was growing hostility of workers to the NF's right wing policies and to increasing fascist violence.

This was expressed in the recent municipal elections in which the Justice Party lost heavily.

But despite the line put by Ecevit's supporters in the Communist Party and the trade union bureaucracy it is clear that an RPP government will be anything but a government for the working class. It will be as anti-working class as the NF coalition.

Ecevit's first task is to fulfil the conditions of the IMF loan. This means enforcing the devaluation of the Turkish lira, price increases and wage controls.

Ousted

Of course this does not make the RPP the same as the fascists. They have different methods of attacking the working class.

Ecevit relies heavily on the trade union bureaucracy. An emergency conference of the 'left' union confederation DISK ended last week with victory for RPP supporters.

Stalinist supporters including Turkler the former

DISK leader were ousted from their posts, while the RPP took a majority on the Executive and on the General Council.

The leader of the reactionary confederation Turk-is—who criticised the old leadership of DISK—promptly declared he had no differences with the new leadership.

Not enough

But even this support for Ecevit will not be enough to win the confidence of the big bourgeoisie. They see that the old democratic forms of rule are inadequate for vicious attacks on the working class.

Within Demirel's Justice Party a majority are now in favour of unification with the fascist party, whose provocations have brought 117 deaths and over 1,000 injuries in the last five months.

With the class struggle already being described by both fascists and RPP spokesmen as at the level of civil war, the next period is crucial.

Ecevit's coming attacks on the working class, coupled with the crisis of working class leadership could push new forces into the fascist ranks.

Full freedom

Revolutionaries must expose Ecevit's claim to represent "democracy" by fighting for full freedom for working class organisations.

They must mobilise around the demand for the repeal of repressive legislation for the abolition of the employers' right to impose lock-outs, and for the right of workers to engage in solidarity strikes and general strikes.

Armed workers militia must be formed to disarm the fascist thugs, and a united front of workers' organisations built in the fight against fascism, and in defence of jobs and wages.

Immediate measures must be taken against the monopolists, capitalists and big landowners. Only workers control of the economy can answer the economic crisis.

2000 denounce TUC scabs

TUC General Council members arriving for the crucial firemen's vote before Christmas were visibly shaken by the scene that met them outside Congress House.

About 2,000 firemen and few hundred supporters gathered from all over the country to express their hostility to the TUC refusal to support their strike.

General Council members were booed, threatened and abused as they entered the building white faced.

In contrast, any bureaucrat who gave a hint of support was cheered and slapped on the back—even when their record of betrayal amongst their own members was proven.

Hit by egg

Hundreds of police were drafted in to protect the bureaucrats, although they failed to clear an exit after the meeting as the firemen drove Tom Jackson, UPW General Secretary back into the building.

Len Murray was hit by an

egg on the way in.

The following day the press tried to claim that the lobby was part composed of 'extremists' dressed as firemen, and even that firemen were almost outnumbered by non-firemen!

Ludicrous

The ludicrous nature of this claim was evident to anyone present, not least in the conservative nature of the slogans adopted by the firemen. ("Que sera, sera, We're stuffing the TUC" being one of the most advanced).

A WRP speaker, using the All Trade Union Alliance megaphone, had barely mouthed a demand for a General Strike in support of the firemen, when he was drowned in a chorus of anti-communist abuse.

Official speakers were controlled by none other than Jack Dromey, Secretary of the Southern Region of the TUC, who vetted their credentials before permitting a succession of dreary hacks to offer purely verbal "solidarity".

The only speaker greeted

scabs

with any enthusiasm was from the Rolls Royce strike committee at Willesden, out on a 10%-busting pay claim.

But TGWU 5/293 representative Alan Thornett, just elected as deputy senior steward at Cowley Assembly Plant was refused permission to speak.

It seems Dromey was there at the invitation of the London Region of the FBU in his role as Secretary of the Southern Region of the TUC.

Useful

And, as the Express revealed, FBU bureaucrats had found Dromey useful in "keeping out the extremists".

He was in fact being used as a fingerman by the FBU leadership against anyone who might present some political direction.

The lobby was powerful enough to unsettle some of the TUC bureaucrats and produce the close 20-17 vote against the firemen.

It reflected the strength of

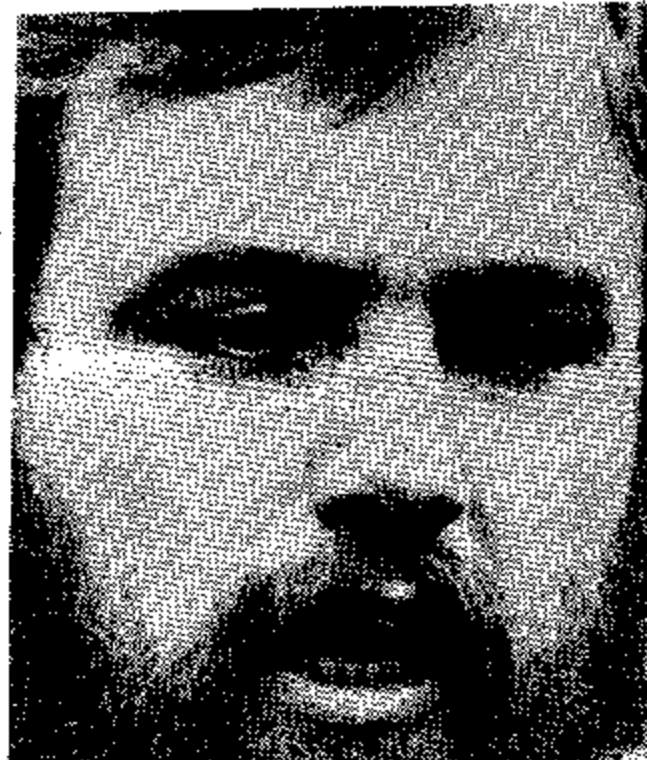


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report.

'Fingerman' Dromey

the FBU rank and file and their readiness to confront treacherous leadership.

But the lobby also revealed the other side of the dispute—the lack of political leadership.

To solve the contradiction between their militancy and the political conservatism of many firemen, a new leadership must be built within the FBU capable of exposing those who openly or covertly act as enemies of their struggle.

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