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FIGHT 10% WITH NEW LEADERS

The firemen's strike may be over, but millions

The lessons of the way the TUC leaders combined with the Lib-Lab coalition government to isolate and eventually sell out the strike are therefore crucial not only to militant firemen but also to the working class as a whole.

Leadership

The most important point to stress is that it could have been won—though not by more "militancy" from the strikers who showed themselves rock solid from beginning to end of the strike.

What was essential for a victory was a leadership prepared to fight tooth and nail to bring other sections of workers with claims outstand-

ing into joint action alongside the firemen, and to expose

betrayal.

Coalition

But to carry out a fight on these lines means being prepared to challenge the very basis of the Lib-Lab coalition government, which was formed last March precisely in order to force through a Phase 3 of wage control.

FBU General Secretary Terry Parry, a loyal member of the TUC General Council and a defender of all its reactionary policies, was clearly incapable of carrying out this task.

He opposed the strike from the very outset, and from the first day was talking of settling not for cash but for "guarantees" of more money next year.

Most decisive of all was Parry's complicity in the TUC's policy of using the 12-month rule and endless manoeuvres to isolate the firemen.

Conscious

The TUC consciously acted to stop any major section coming into action to break the isolation—the only way of winning the struggle.

The most important section that was prevented from coming out were the miners who had a conference decision for a November 1 review and a claim for £135 per week.

When the right wing voted on the executive to ignore the vote there was no fight to bring out the areas representing the majority of the NUM which are controlled by Scargill and the Communist Party—Yorkshire, Scotland, South Wales and Kent.

Courts

Instead the CP and Scargill took the right wing to court.

In the end the CP accepted the incentive schemes and Scargill offered no action as an alternative to them.

Meanwhile in conference like the Liverpool TUC

drivers to bring out the firemen.

Also instrumental in the betrayal were the 17 TUC General Council members who voted to support the firemen while holding back their own members including tanker driver leader Moss Evans, and power workers negotiator Frank Chapple.

And Parry, by remaining silent on these moves allowed the strategy of isolation to succeed.

Limit enforced

These same forces and techniques will be used further TUC attempts to enforce the 10% pay limit.

Already the danger signs are flashing. Tanker drivers have been limited to a partial overtime ban, and Frank Chapple, negotiator for the power workers, is already talking of only shutting down a few power stations at a time rather than a national stoppage.

They and other workers must see that if this 10% limit is not defeated the permanent wage controls will remain in force.

Regain and defend

They must take action now on claims to regain living standards and protect their wages against inflation through cost-of-living clauses.

All out strike action must be combined with the fight for councils of action in each area designed to mobilise other sections of workers simultaneous action on their own pay demands.

In this way a coach and horses can still be driven through the 10% limit.

Those leaders that reject this perspective on the grounds of defending the Lib-Lab coalition government must be removed.



Police escort FBU Executive member past angry firemen



Tanker drivers lobby TGWU official Jack Ashwell demanding action

Italy: Government crisis poses problems for Stalinists

The resignation of Italian Prime Minister Andreotti on Monday followed a protracted political crisis.

Last week Italy's political leaders went to the brink of declaring an open coalition government between the Christian Democrats and the Italian Communist Party.

But at the last moment they drew back.

With remarkable co-ordination three events all raised obstacles to what the Italian capitalist press was beginning to label a virtual certainty.

First, leading Stalinists of the CP started publicly softening Party Secretary Berlinguer's demand for seats in the Cabinet.

They began to hint that the party need not yet go that far.

Second, US imperialism made a sudden shift in tactics.

After boasting for months about its "non-interference" in the internal affairs of Western Europe, the Carter administration



Berlinguer as soon as it looked as if the CP was about to enter the government, withdrew its ambassador for urgent consultations.

"The United States and Italy",

said the State Department, "share profound democratic values and interests, and we do not believe the Communists share those values and interests."

The statement also said that the Italian Communists were "unwilling to meet the aspirations of their people for effective, just and compassionate government".

After this the third event was not surprising—a majority vote of the Christian Democratic Party MPs against an immediate coalition with the CP.

With a formal coalition now impossible the CP nonetheless is totally unable to hold the working class in control much longer without some apparently significant change in the present "agreement on programme" between the CP and the Christian Democrats.

The latest issue of the CP magazine *Rinascita* is forced to react to the growing pressure in the base of the party against the shameless class collaboration of

the leadership.

In an article in the magazine, Bruno Ferraro, a regional party secretary in Piedmont, writes with an understatement that cannot conceal his problem:

"... there is the risk of a gulf between the leading group and the mass of the party. In the course of recent years, the development of our line has been important. But broad areas of the party have taken it more or less as something for which there was no alternative. These dangerous and false attitudes appear in our sections".

The Christian Democrats, while rejecting open coalition, know they have to give the Stalinist leaders some kind of help so that they can carry out its counter-revolutionary task.

This helping hand has taken the form of the resignation of the Andreotti government.

It is clearly hoped that this will be seen as an "achievement"

Cont'd Page 2, Col 4.

PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL



Black traitors near deal with Smith

PHOTO: Laurence Spacham, IFL



WSL contingent on the London section of the march

The clique of clerics and tin-pot potentates who call themselves the leaders of black Zimbabweans, are getting on rapidly in their effort to sell out every interest of the Zimbabwean people to the racists.

Last week Bishop Muzorewa, Reverend Sithole and Chief Chirau reached agreement with racist premier Ian Smith on the right of the white racists to control 28% of the seats in parliament after "independence". This would give them the constitutional power to block any legislation against white property and privileges.

No agreement

There is still no agreement on how long these powers would last.

Smith wants 15 years; Muzorewa and his fellow traitors have so far gone up to eight.

No doubt they will compromise on somewhere around ten.

The last issue remaining before the complete rotten sell-out is signed is the future structure of the repressive

state apparatus. Smith wants the present racist-controlled army and police to carry on virtually unchanged. Muzorewa basically accepts this but wants the guerrilla armies to be integrated with them.

This formula is no more than a cover for what is agreed between Muzorewa and Smith—that the guerrilla armies must be crushed as an independent force.

It begins to look as if an "internal settlement" on these lines is imminent.

Outflank

Muzorewa and Sithole probably won't sign this racist charter unless they are sure that by doing so, they will be able to outflank the rival external leaders, Nkomo and Mugabe.

That would be impossible—no sordid deal could be made to hold for a moment—if Nkomo and Mugabe were fighting from politically principled positions independent of imperialism.

But of course they are not. They are themselves compromised with the alternative plan of British Foreign Secretary Owen and the US imperialists (and to some extent South Africa).

In spite of their recent apparent hostility to Owen, Nkomo and Mugabe, faced with the possibility that the imperialists will support a Smith-Muzorewa agreement

still look to Britain and the USA to help them into power.

This now almost certainly consists in finding a way to enable Nkomo and Mugabe to do a deal with Smith and Muzorewa and so produce a grand agreement in which everyone would be happy—everyone that is apart from the 6½ million black workers and peasants of Zimbabwe against whose interests any pact will be directed.

Urgency

While it is necessary to fight for labour movement support to the guerrilla armies fighting racism and imperialism, the petty bourgeois leaders of these movements are not capable of consistently defending the independent interests of black workers and peasants.

The imminence of a 'settlement' of the Zimbabwe questions points to the urgency and importance of building an alternative revolutionary leadership.

The Birmingham to London march in solidarity with 40,000 Turkish metal workers who have been on strike for more than seven months ended last Sunday with a lobby of the Turkish Embassy in London.

The march started in Birmingham with 50-60 supporters and ended with nearly 200 in London.

The Stalinists of the Communist Party of Great Britain and the New Communist Party sponsored the march.

The AUEW, some Labour MPs, Trades Councils and various union branches were among the supporters of the march.

One of the great weaknesses of the march was that it had no political content. There were no meetings throughout the march to explain the metal workers strike to the British trade unions. Although the WSL did not

agree with the politics of the Turkish Communist Party dominated march, we participated with sizable contingents in Oxford and London in order to demonstrate our solidarity with the strikers though other political tendencies were conspicuously absent.

Restrictions were put on the WSL delegation selling papers and literature by the march organisers. In London various Socialist Press sellers were threatened that they would be thrown off the march if they did not stop selling papers.

We condemn such practices. Only through a political fight can real international solidarity between Turkish and British workers be established.

Despite the leadership of the metal workers strike we will continue to fight in the British trade unions for support for the Turkish metal workers, whose strike in defence of plant level pay negotiations has now cost the employers an estimated £400 million in lost production.



Muzorewa

Lynch speech - more hot air on united Ireland



Lynch

Judging by the amount of space it occupied in last week's papers, one would think that Jack Lynch - Southern Ireland's Prime Minister—was about to invade the North and give battle to the British army.

Ex-Colditz prisoner and current Tory spokesman on Northern Ireland Airey Neave said that Lynch's recent speech "was sweet music in the ears of the IRA", that it was a blunder and a ghastly error.

Less forthright

Northern Ireland Secretary of State was somewhat less

forthright—the speech he said was "unhelpful" (although he added that "talk of an amnesty for those convicted on carefully gathered evidence can do nothing but give succour to the law breakers").

But Lynch's speech was actually nothing more than a reiteration of the policy which his party—Fianna Fail—has held for some time: a call on the British to declare their intention of someday withdrawing, and a hope that someday Ireland will also be reunited.

Amnesty

Lynch did introduce indirectly one new note—the possibility of an amnesty for IRA prisoners in the South. Since amnesty is currently the foulest word in the Northern Ireland Office's vocabulary and is so anathema to them, any mention of it predictably got their backs up and so produced the outcry from Mason.

What particularly irked British politicians though was not what Lynch said, since

they've heard this same nationalist rhetoric for years from Fianna Fail, but the timing of the speech.

Delicate moment

The Irish Prime Minister delivered his speech on Irish Radio last Sunday week (January 8) seemingly at a delicate moment in the talks Roy Mason was conducting with the Unionists and Catholic bourgeois parties in the North.

These talks, reportedly aimed at securing communal agreement to establish a toothless local authority, were making predictably little progress—the Unionists wanted more or less total control, as the first step towards a restored Stormont; the SDLP wanted a definite proportion of seats in any arrangement in exchange for their support.

Collapse

But since neither party was willing to budge the talks were likely to collapse anyway. But Lynch's speech

provided the perfect opportunity for the Unionists to pull out—how, they asked, could they ever think of discussing with a man who believes in amnesty for IRA men?

Mason and Neave's rage is thus not directed at Lynch's blather, but at the fact that it spoiled their little "round of talks", and scuppered their attempts to give Northern Ireland independent administrative functions.

But even if the talks had gone on they could not have solved, even partially, the Irish question, precisely because there is no bourgeois democratic solution to that question.

Lynch's speech may have caused a flurry in diplomatic circles, but it altered not one whit the situation existing in Ireland today.

ITALY

From Front Page

of the CP leadership.

It also raises the possibility of a new election which CP leaders would tell their rank and file would lead to CP losses.

The Stalinist leaders will most likely try in this way to patch up some new formula for supporting the Christian Democrats in parliament.

But no such solution can be expected to last long.

The CP leaders' treachery cannot any longer be hidden from the Italian working class.

There is no possibility of gaining mass backing for any kind of deal with the party of Italian capitalism.

It is becoming increasingly evident to Italian workers that each "development" of the CP's policy is in reality the same as the previous one.

Each and every one of them imposes more heavy burdens on the workers.

Polish crisis

In a two day 'conference' of the Polish CP last week, First Secretary Edward Gierek revealed the utter bankruptcy of the parasitic caste which constitutes the Polish bureaucracy.

Gierek pathetically admitted 'problems', even 'penury', in housing and food supplies but offered only empty promises to resolve them.

Prices up

More food would be imported—but, added Gierek ominously, prices would have to go up.

It was the refusal of the Polish working class to accept such cuts in its standard of living which led to the overthrow of Gierek's predecessor Gomulka and in 1976 rocked the Gierek bureaucracy itself to its foundation.

Gierek wooed the Catholic leadership and appealed plaintively to "all patriots" to contribute to the "prosperity of our fatherland".

Such an open abandonment of any pretence to base himself on the working class reflects the fact that the interests of the working class and the interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy are mutually hostile.

Parasitic clique

In the last four years Polish workers have shown



Gierek

and will show again, that they are aware of that and are prepared to fight Gierek's parasitic clique.

Some sections of the bureaucracy have no stomach for this fight—something reflected in a recent letter pleading for "more democracy" by fourteen leaders of the CP, including former head of state, Edward Ochab.

A spokesman of the party dismissed this protest by saying that the signatories of the letter were "entitled to their opinions" but were very old and should be allowed to end their lives "with dignity and peace".

"To take no position on their behaviour is a humanitarian attitude". But Gierek knows that Ochab's tame opposition is a reflection—however distorted—of that of the working class, which he cannot deal with so contemptuously.



Indian railway workers at a mass meeting

ALL INDIA RAIL STRIKE

The powerful All-India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF) is now making preparations to launch indefinite strike action in May.

There are 1.8 million workers on the Indian Railways, and one third of these have been employed for many years as so-called 'casual workers', with wages that are well below even the extremely low average wage in the industry.

The action is being taken to gain higher wages, a shorter working day and a whole range of basic conditions and provisions that the government has consistently refused to grant.

General strike

Identical demands were raised by the general strike of railway workers in May 1977, which was ruthlessly suppressed by the Gandhi government.

The police, army and even the navy worked together with hired thugs to attack pickets, beat up and torture militants and their families.

Workers were evicted brutally from their houses, 25,000 strikers were dismissed and 20,000 arrested.

The AIRF is continuing its demand for the re-employment of victimised workers and an amnesty for those strikers still in detention.

A key figure in that earlier dispute was Socialist Party leader, George Fernandes, who now plays a central role in the Janata coalition government as Minister for Industries.

Profitability

For all its confused tactics, the Janata's economic policy has one very clear objective: the maintenance of capitalist profitability.

The Gandhi dictatorship directed a vicious offensive against the living standards of workers and peasants but since the ending of the emergency wages have not even risen to compensate for inflation, and have scarcely begun to reach the levels of 1975 which were those of poverty and starvation.

Nor have the sweeping promises of land reform made any material difference in the lives of the millions of dying landless labourers.

Although the railways strike will be the most signif-

PLANNED

Callaghan in cosy chat with Gandhi



Gandhi

icant action yet taken in opposition to the Janata's policies, many other strikes and major demonstrations have already emerged. In Maharashtra, one million teachers and state government employees have recently voted to continue their strike for higher wages and 'economic justice', despite the passionate pleas of Prime Minister Desai.

In all this turmoil there is no principled political leadership to unite the struggle of workers and peasants. This leaves the field wide open for bourgeois politicians such as Gandhi to make huge gains by using populist methods to exploit the spontaneous hostility and activity of both the proletariat and, particularly, the peasantry.

Opportunism

Having split the Congress Party Gandhi now seems ready to continue in the well-worn paths of opportunism by initiating a campaign of civil disobedience against the Janata.

The first step in this direction was taken last week when she appeared before the



Callaghan

Shah Commission of Inquiry into abuses of power during the emergency.

Frame-up

Gandhi has previously refused to testify, correctly analysing the commission as the instrument of a political frame-up of her administration. When she used her appearance to express this denunciation, Gandhi was promptly charged with what amounts to contempt of court, and now faces the distinct possibility of a prison sentence.

All this notoriety did not prevent Callaghan from having a cosy chat with the ex-dictator on his trip to India.

Staunch supporters of the Emergency administration up to and even beyond the bitter end, the Labour cabinet clearly recognise Gandhi's potential for regaining power.

But these intimacies were not allowed to jeopardise the crucial talks with Desai on ways to rivet the Indian economy more firmly to the British section of international imperialism.

As a further indication of

the vital importance to British capitalism of maintaining good relations with any possible Indian government of the future, Callaghan also met Y.B. Chavan, the dominant force in the other wing of the Congress Party, nominally led by Brahamananda Reddy.

In sharp contrast to this universal goodwill, the pro-Moscow Communist Party of India has finally announced that it was 'wrong' to support the Gandhi dictatorship.

Hasty judgement

This somersault has been achieved with the 'resignation' of a few leading officials and the confession of 'hasty judgement'.

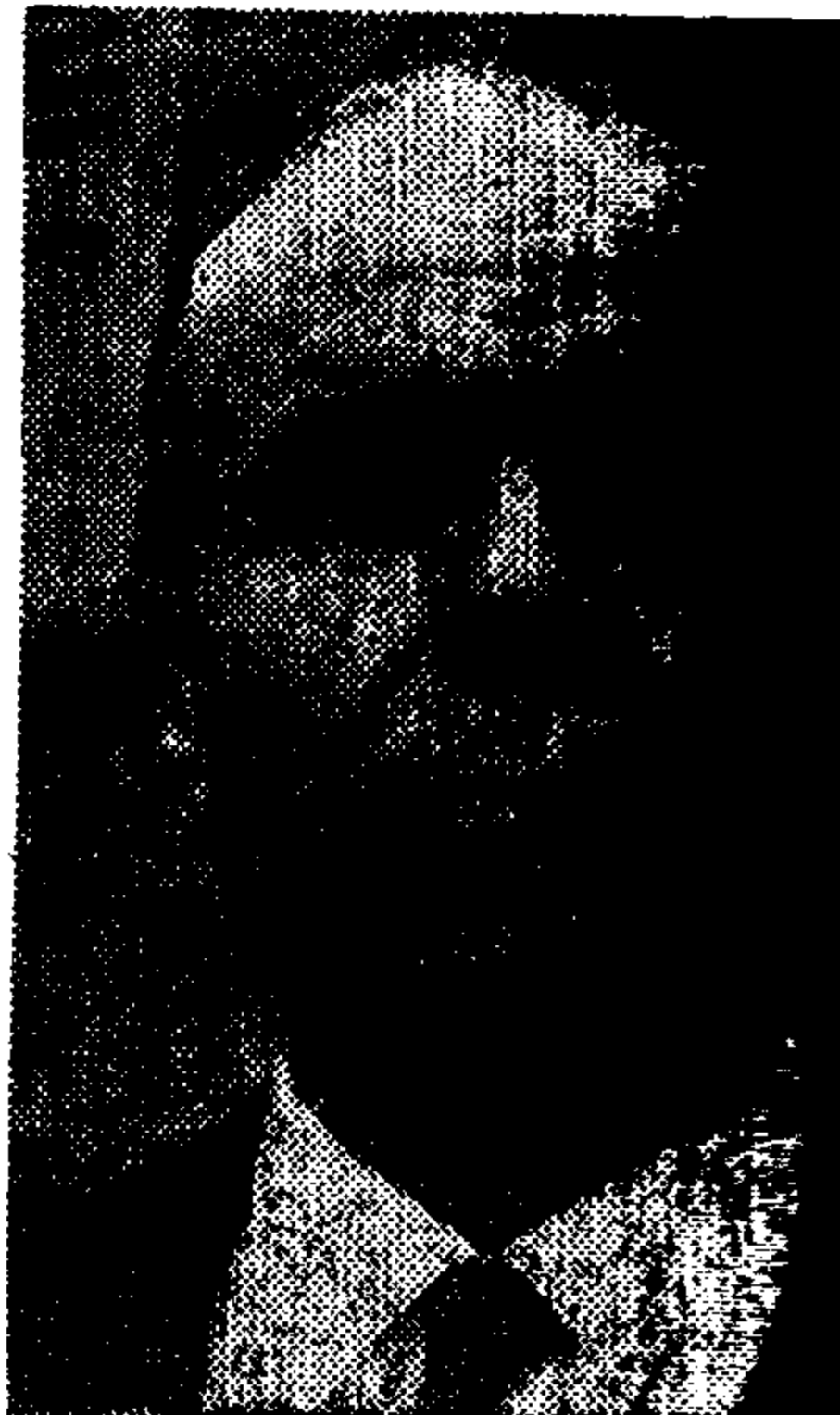
Such a gesture is unlikely to restore the decimated ranks of the CPI and if Gandhi regains mass support over the next year, the party may well reverse its jump and once more hail her as the leader of the progressive bourgeoisie, 'the greatest lady which this country has ever produced'.

TUNISIA: CALL FOR NEW UNIONS

The continuing struggles within Tunisia are developing a more and more openly political character.

The temporary freezing-over of the giant strike wave has not ended the threat to the security of the Bonapartist regime.

Prime Minister Nouira has used this breathing space for urgent consultations with Giscard and Barre in France. But the same period has seen the growing possibility of a split between the UGT (the only legal trade union) and the PSD (Destour Socialist Party) which rules the one-party state.



Habib Bourguiba

Nationalist

Party and union were built together in the period of French colonial rule, and the PSD has remained in power since independence.

Bourguiba's party is a petty bourgeois nationalist formation; its strategy has been to stimulate 'economic development' by keeping the working class firmly in check, while introducing limited state nationalisation and encouraging imperialist investment.

Included in this policy has been the tying of the UGT to the organisation of the PSD with close links at every level, and union officers being automatically members of party committees.

Militancy

The main strength of the union's 1/2 million membership lies in the mining and railway sectors, where the recent militancy has been most forcefully expressed.

But the demands for higher wages and improved conditions have spread to every section, and have inevitably brought forward political demands.

Last January the 'social pact' was jointly negotiated by union, employers and government.

As the basis of the new 5 year plan, this set down a minimum wage for all workers, but centrally fixed and annual review of all wage claims every April.

Opposition

The strikes of the last two months have been in opposition to this government wage control, and the leadership of the UGT has been forced to



Hedi Nouira

take steps back from the advanced stage of collaboration.

and build an independent labour party have met with growing response.

Faced with this alarming situation, the union National Council has issued a statement full of socialist sound and anti-imperialist fury, but signifying only the resignation of General Secretary Habib Achour from the political bureau and Central Committee of the PSD.

Determination

His resignation will be followed by others, but little other activity will be seen in these bureaucrats beside their determination to prevent the full political development of the present struggles.

Achour and his like are still declaring that the UGT has no political aims, that they don't wish to remove Nouira from power, and that they are not opposed to capitalism—so long as it 'contributes to the development of the national economy, and is not parasitic but independent of foreign countries'.

In the age of imperialism there is of course no way that capitalism can fulfil these conditions in a developing economy.

Opportunity

That will not stop these fake leaders from betraying the Tunisian workers and peasants to international imperialism at the first available opportunity.

In the next phase of its struggles, the Tunisian working class must centre its activity on smashing wage control, splitting the UGT from the government party and building an independent labour party based on this fight.

It is only in this process that the revolutionary leadership can be forced to direct the struggles to win the demands of Tunisian workers in the overthrow of imperialism.

IN BRIEF

When, a few weeks ago, military dictator Hugo Banzer announced that there would be 'free' presidential elections in June and that he himself would not be a candidate, it had all the hallmarks of a manoeuvre ultimately designed to keep him in power.

The last week has shown, perhaps, what he had in mind.

In response to a new wave of workers' and students' protests against Banzer's failure to grant an amnesty to political prisoners and exiles, the dictator threatened to call the elections off 'if the people ask us to do so, as they surely will if the conspiring continues'.

What he calls "the conspiring" consists of a series of public hunger strikes by several hundreds of students and workers, a one-day strike in the tin mines called by the mineworkers' federation on January 11 and proposed strikes by factory workers in Cachabamba and La Paz.

BELGIUM

In the first major outbreak of militancy since last spring's strike wave against the Coalition Government's economic policies, petrol workers plan an indefinite strike from January 17 in support of a demand for a cut in the working week from 40 to 36 hours.

MOTABILITY - MORE FRAUD FOR DISABLED

There was a great fanfare in November last year when David Ennals, Minister of Social Services, announced a new scheme for disabled drivers—Motability.

Coupled with the announcement that the mobility allowance was going up from £7 to £10 next November it was described as a new deal for the disabled.

To show what a wonderful scheme it was, a long list of sponsors was announced in which Len Murray rubbed shoulders with Baron Evelyn de Rothschild, and Moss Evans backed up Lord Goodman.

Exalted circles

The idea behind the scheme—which has not yet started apart from showing the exalted circles trade union leaders move in—was that disabled drivers would hand over their £10 a week and the Motability would arrange that they would get an adapted car.

No-one has explained how £10 a week is going to be anywhere near enough to meet the cost of buying and running a car—even with the discounts that Motability will win from manufacturers and the £100 million it has borrowed at rock bottom interest from the clearing banks.

Since the payments are taxable many disabled people will receive far less than £10.

Victims

Once again in a history of deception, lies and evasions that stretches back ten years, the disabled have been made public relations victims.

The Lib-Lab coalition—with its dedication to public spending cuts—is not of course interested in a solution to the problem of disabled people trapped in the home—rather it is interested in solving the problem of the continual attacks that have been made on Government Ministers and DHSS officials.

The attacks have surrounded the three wheeled vehicle which has been given to the disabled—the notorious 'trike'.

The trike evolved from bath chairs supplied to war pensioners by the British Red

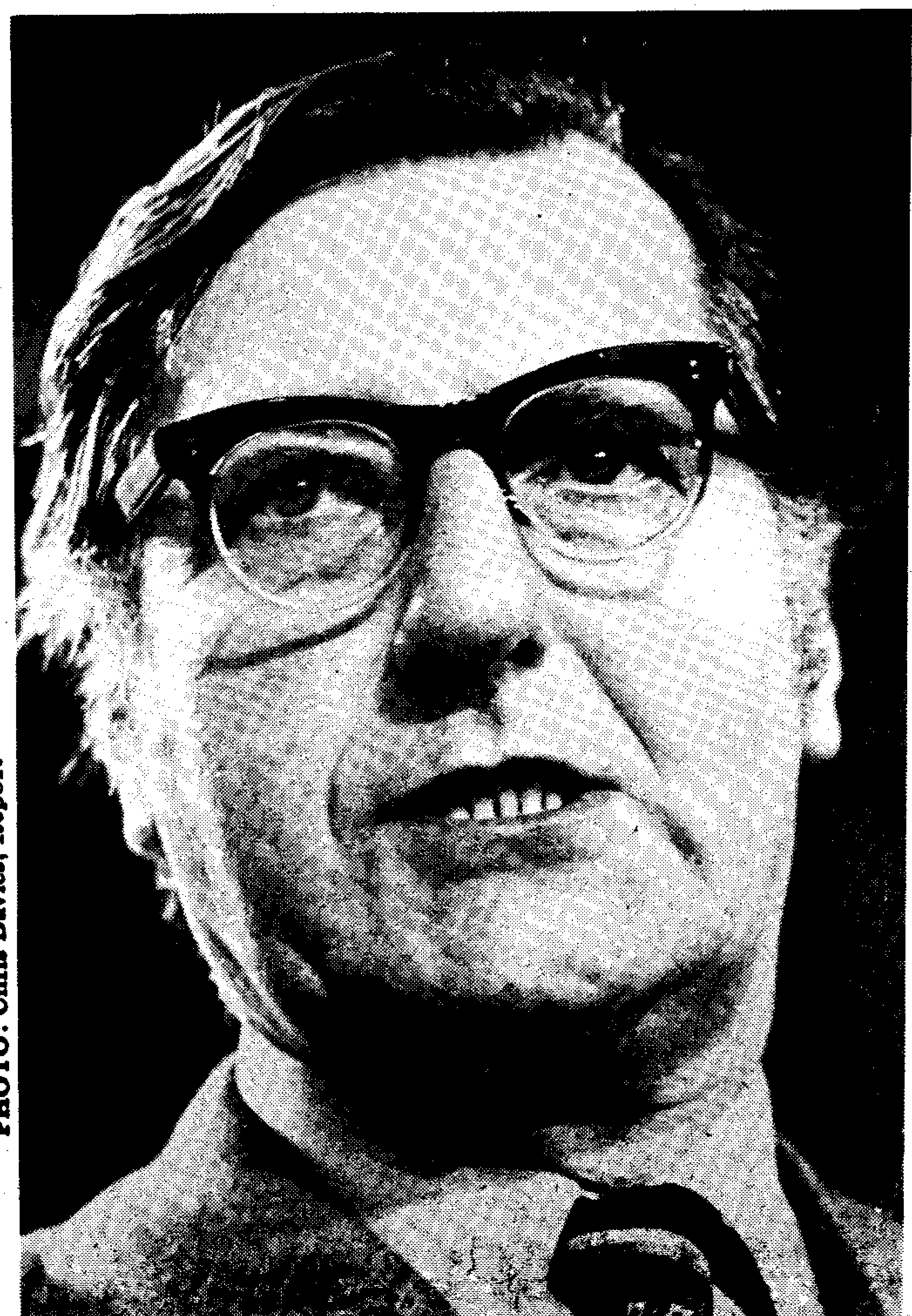


PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Ennals

Cross Society. It was covered in, given an engine and gradually evolved to the point where the latest trikes have a 500cc engine and are capable of speeds of up to 60 mph.

The result is a vehicle with an injury accident record four times worse than adapted cars for the disabled. The trikes are not as safe as cars in winds, they are made of fibre glass and give little protection in a crash, they are noisy, uncomfortable and, because they can carry only the disabled person alone, they increase the isolation of the disabled.

Condemned

All this has been known for a long time. In 1969, *Which* magazine came out with its first report attacking the trikes and since then there have been a whole succession of reports and tests almost all of which have condemned the trike.

A government inquiry—headed by Baroness Sharp recommended they be

replaced with cars. It took the government a year to publish that report, the findings were so unwelcome.

In the early 70s when the crash and death figures were being splashed over the papers, when Graham Hill, the racing driver, was leading a campaign against the trikes, the Tory government and later, Labour, was under extreme pressure.

Suppressed

Ministers were constantly making reassuring noises in Parliament about the trikes' safety record.

In 1973 the Department of Health and Social Security asked the test body MIRA to test the trike. Again the results were suppressed.

At this time opposition to the trikes was coming from all over the country. One of the leaders was himself disabled, Peter MacBryan.

He has been a consistent opponent of the trike—fighting for it to be replaced by an adapted car.

Politically MacBryan is not at all conscious. He has been happy to see allies among Tories and has not turned his campaign towards the trade union movement.

Memorandum

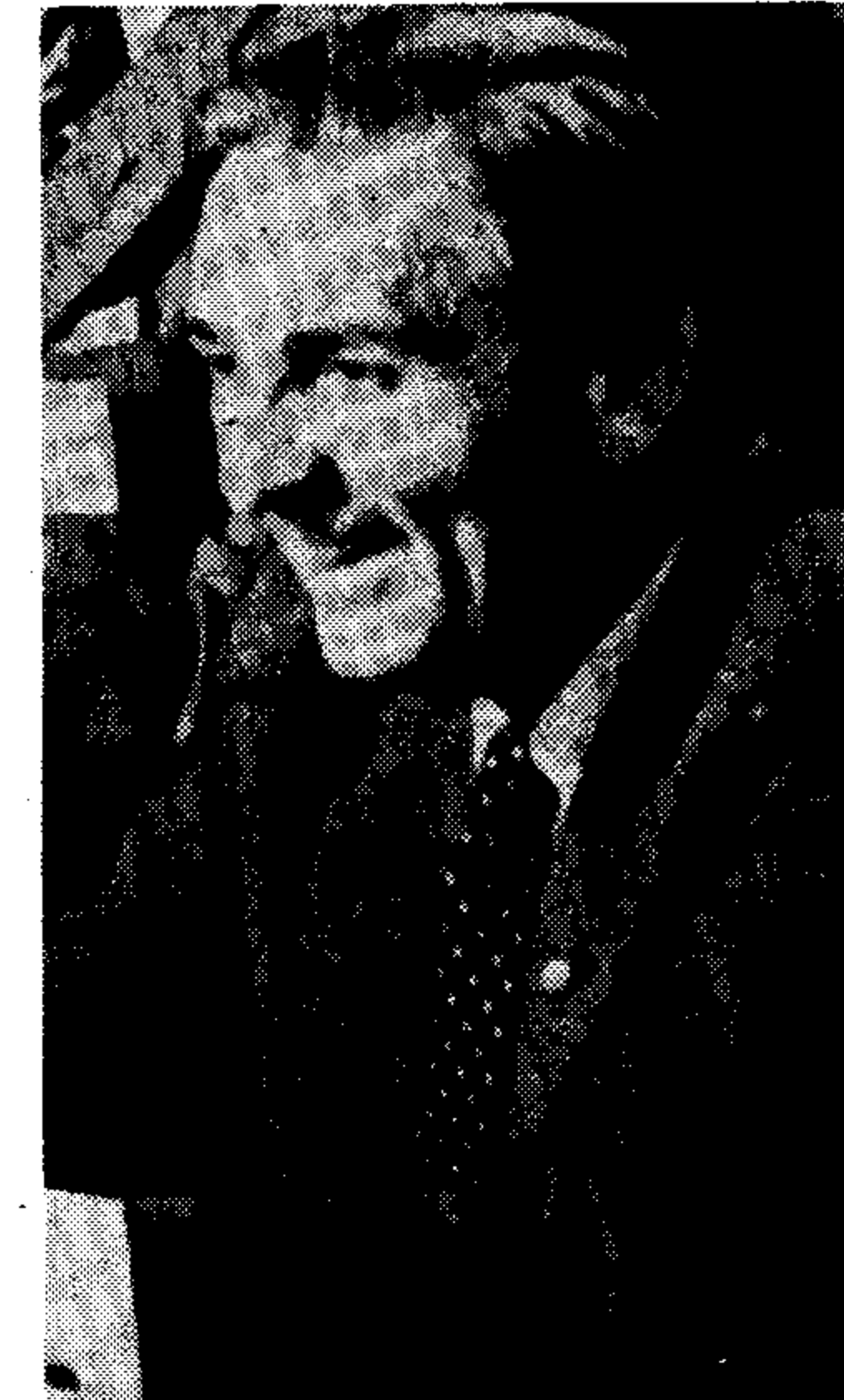
But within his limitations he has fought extremely hard.

In December 1973 he received a phone call which seemed to confirm every suspicion about the answers being given in the House of Commons.

The conversation was brief and to the point. The caller said he had a copy of an internal memorandum sent by Michael Alison, Tory Parliamentary Under Secretary to a Department of Health and Social Security official, confirming that a



Evans



Murray

government cover-up was in progress over the safety of the trike.

A few days later a photo copy arrived. It was on Department notepaper, dated 1 November 1973 and contained the following damning statement:

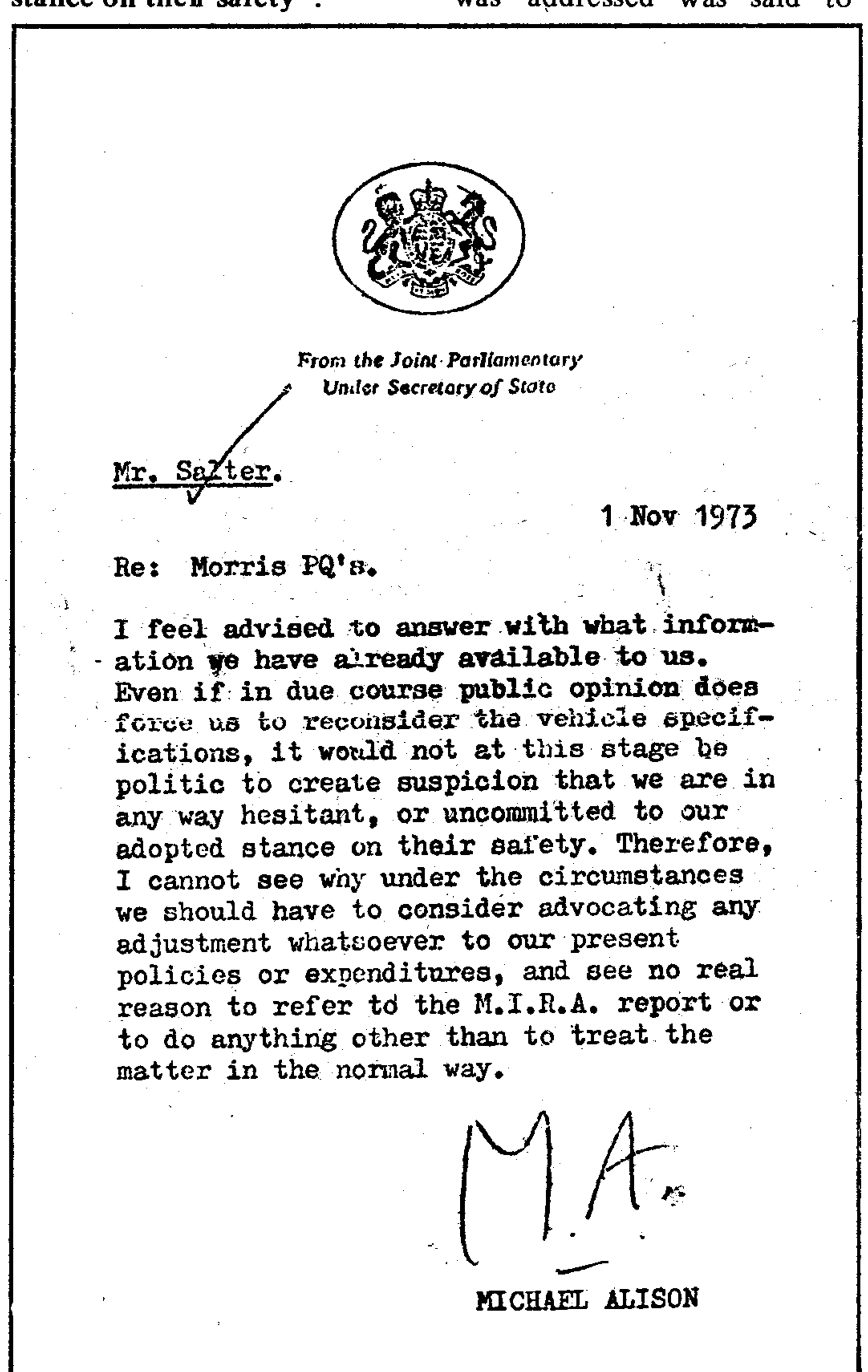
"Even if in due course public opinion does force us to reconsider the vehicle specifications, it would not at this stage be politic to create suspicion that we are in any way hesitant, or uncommitted to our adopted stance on their safety".

that the memo was authentic and that there has been a cover-up.

It would be libellous to suppose anything other than that the memo was a forgery. But it was a very clever one.

It was written on Department paper, apparently duplicated on a machine similar to that used in the DHSS, signed with initials similar to those Alison used at the start of his name (but not, he says, in the fashion that he uses on memos).

The officer to whom it was addressed was said to



From the Joint Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

Mr. Saxter.

1 Nov 1973

Re: Morris PQ's.

I feel advised to answer with what information we have already available to us. Even if in due course public opinion does force us to reconsider the vehicle specifications, it would not at this stage be politic to create suspicion that we are in any way hesitant, or uncommitted to our adopted stance on their safety. Therefore, I cannot see why under the circumstances we should have to consider advocating any adjustment whatsoever to our present policies or expenditures, and see no real reason to refer to the M.I.R.A. report or to do anything other than to treat the matter in the normal way.

M.A.
MICHAEL ALISON

The disputed letter

MacBryan was delighted. He had, he believed, achieved the final piece of evidence he needed to show that the government and the DHSS had been covering up the truth about the disastrous trikes.

The letter was dated five days before Alison answered questions about its safety in the Commons.

In his reply Alison implied that a petrol tank on the trike met government regulations.

In fact the Motor Industry Research Association test—which the leaked memo said should not be mentioned—had caused a fracture in the tank in a 30 mph head on collision.

But Alison denied that he had ever written the memo and when Sir Alan Marre, the Ombudsman came to report on the trikes in August 1975, he said that there was absolutely no reason to suppose that Alison was not telling the truth.

Threatened

MacBryan has subsequently been threatened with legal action for persisting in saying

have left the Department before the memo was sent.

However, the same Ombudsman report found that the statement to which the memo apparently referred, was indeed misleading and that Alison had been given wrong information.

Common language would go further and say that whoever was responsible for producing the information lied.

Overtured

A petrol tank that ruptures in a test cannot be said to have met regulations which say it should be safely affixed.

The Ombudsman also discovered that repeated denials in the Commons that a trike had overturned during the MIRA tests were only half true.

(It had not overturned during the test but it had done so while being backed into a parking place while the tests were going on!)

The Ombudsman was lenient on the DHSS, commenting merely that they were open to the charge of

"lack of frankness" and that the Department had been "slow to act".

Spot checks on disabled drivers when pressure on the Department was at its height was described as unfortunately timed.

Disabled drivers said it was intimidation.

Complicated

The situation—particularly the mildness of Marre's criticism—is further complicated by the fact that the Ombudsman was himself Under Secretary in the DHSS in the period shortly before that he was investigating.

A complete condemnation of DHSS policy on the trike would certainly have reflected to some extent on his own period in the department.

It was probably the nearest the disabled came to success. From that time to this the Tory government and later the Labour and Lib-Lab governments have done their best to retrieve some credibility.

Labour's criticisms vanished almost overnight after the 1974 election victory.

Allowance

The master stroke came in 1976 when David Ennals announced the phasing out of the trike.

Ennals also announced that he was replacing the trike with—nothing. Instead the disabled were to get a disability allowance—first of £5, which has risen now to £7 and next November to £10.

Because this allowance goes to all disabled it was a major gain for those without cars. For those who would have had trikes it is a disaster.

Faced with the choice between a dangerous vehicle and this allowance the disabled pressure groups split and began to turn against themselves.

MacBryan became transformed from a hero into a villain because he was blamed for the decision to phase out the trikes.

Now under cover of a 'Save our Trikes' backlash the trikes are still being issued as replacement vehicles to those who already have them.

The Motability announcement is simply the latest in this series of manoeuvres to put some window dressing on the deal.

Campaign

MacBryan is now at the end of a blind alley insisting that everyone involved be charged with criminal negligence for continuing to supply trikes or for taking part in a cover-up.

There are undoubtedly secrets inside the DHSS that would clear up some of the mysteries of the history of the trikes.

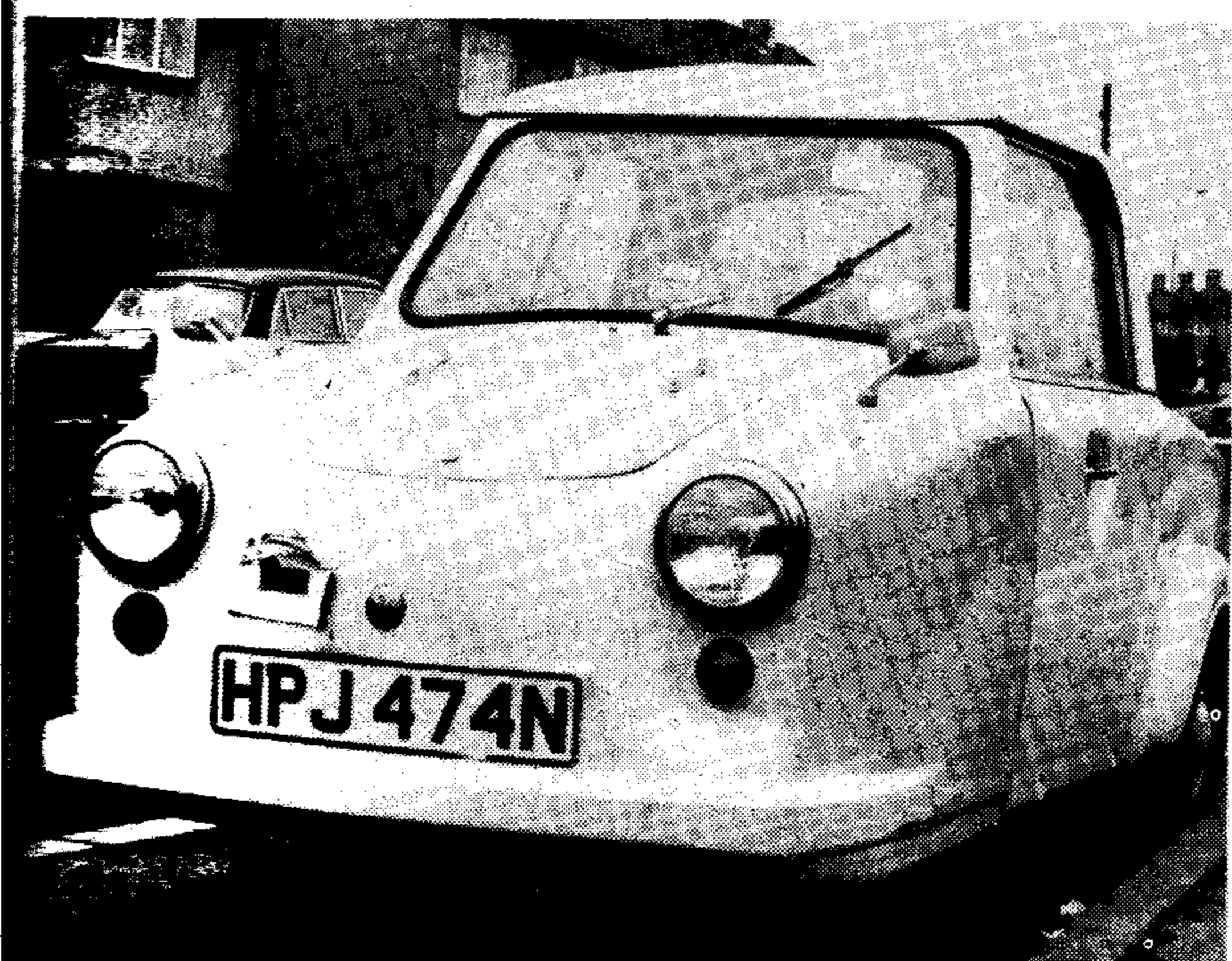
But the only way forward for the disabled is to turn from appeals for prosecutions to a determined campaign inside the trade union movement—particularly in the car factories.

The technology exists for the disabled to have adapted cars in which they will not only be safer, but will also be able to take passengers.

Moral outrage at the latest government moves will produce nothing for the disabled. Ten years of outrage have proved precisely that.

Disassociate

The campaign must begin with a demand that Len Murray and Moss Evans disassociate themselves from a scheme which is being used to give some credibility to a policy which has left thousands of disabled people virtually housebound, and fight for a job-creating programme to provide adapted cars for all disabled people.



The trike—a motorised bath chair

Lefts will swallow Phase Four



The refusal of Labour's "left wing" MPs to fight against the current 10% pay limits arbitrarily imposed by Chancellor Healey and the Lib-Lab coalition government came out clearly during the firemen's strike.

Throughout the nine weeks not a single 'left' MP went beyond vague expressions of 'solidarity' and talk of the firemen as a "special case".

Such opportunist positions deliberately evade the fight against wage control for the whole working class.

And they consciously shrink from calls to action that might lead workers to force the 'lefts' themselves into the front line of a real fight to break the Lib-Lab coalition and oust the Callaghan-Healey leadership.

But the 'lefts' impotence is not restricted to Phase 3.

Already they are preparing to duck out of any struggle against government plans for a Phase Four.

This was shown last Tuesday in question time at

the House of Commons.

One-time darling of the 'left' Michael Foot appropriately stood in for Callaghan.

Endorsed

But instead of meeting a barrage of bitter opposition from enraged left wing MPs opposing any hint of a Phase 4, he found it easy to parry the damp flannels thrown by Eric Heffer and Dennis Skinner.

Heffer pompously "warned" that whatever

figure the Lib-Lab government has in mind it did not have the backing of Labour Party as a whole.

But Heffer knows as well as anyone that the wishes of the Labour Party never enter into the calculations of Callaghan-Healey leadership.

And he knows too that as long as the reactionary coalition deal with the Liberals remains intact, the Lib-Lab leaders will continue to have more say on government policy than any labour movement body.

Heffer himself has tacitly endorsed this position by trooping into the lobbies to vote support for the Lib-Lab coalition for the last ten months, and clearly has no intention of calling any fight to break the Lib-Lab deal.

and other claims may be exaggerated and built on fantasy".

Clearly the picture conveyed is one of a group of babblers who are dismissed as no possible threat to the existing right wing leadership and their Tribune allies.

"The things they [the documents] claim include deliberate planning of work in the Labour Party, which they themselves describe as deep entry in the Party, and the tendency has all members of the National Committee of the LPYS which they state they intend to use as their instrument for further action in the Party".

Were the Militant group based on the slightest shred of a principled programme there is little doubt that their complete control of the Party would bring out the Labour NEC in fits of apoplexy.

Certainly the mere election of a majority of real Trotskyist supporters of the Socialist Labour League into the YS National Committee in 1964 was enough to spark the massive witchhunt.

Yet here the Militant group's operations are catalogued with equanimity. "Live and let live", is the tone of the whole report from Labour bureaucrats confident that Militant will let them live on in the leadership of the Party.

The document points out that

"Because our democratic principles are what they are, we must be concerned if there is any organisation attempting to direct the action of its members within the Labour Party".

In a sense this is true. It clearly is time for a sort out of those who are working for outside interests within the Labour movement in general and the Labour Party in particular.

Advocates and practitioners of the Coalition deal with the Liberals are the most obvious case in point—since they have wilfully abandoned the independence of the Labour Party to the second-string capitalist politicians and swindlers that make up the Liberal leadership.

They discuss policies with the Liberal leaders first—and then turn to impose them on the Labour movement.

These hostile forces must be driven from the ranks of the Labour Party.

And the Militant group, with its wretched programme of pious demands divorced from the slightest fight in practice against the right wing will be exposed in such a fight.

Why Labour accepts 'Militant' talkers

A major stumbling block for any leftward-moving elements opposing the coalitionist leadership of the Labour Party remains the Centrist 'Militant' Newspaper and its supporters.

Under an assumed guise of pseudo-revolutionary rhetoric those wafflers carry out an essential task for the right wing and fake 'left' MPs by seeking to head off any fight for principle.

Militant supporters, aping the editorial line of their weekly paper, have stepped in in several areas to hold back demands for the breaking of the Lib-Lab Coalition, even while continuing to demand socialist policies.

Seeing them like an office cat, which, for all its fleas and evil smells, carries out a useful job in deterring mice, the Labour leadership has been content to tolerate the Militant group, and occasionally offer its leading supporters saucers of milk—as with the appointment of



Posturing as opponents of Toryism in Labour ranks—Militant supporters

Militant supporter Andy Bevan to the £4,000 a year job of Party youth organiser.

This relationship emerges more clearly from the report of the Special Committee to Examine Documents on

Entrism, set up by the National Executive last January.

This report is now available to all Labour Party members in the NEC Report for 1977.

Wilfully ignoring the unmistakable evidence that the Labour Party has been infiltrated and led for years by whole platoons of Tories and crypto-Tories cast in the Reg Prentice mould, the NEC declared from the outset that the report would centre on left-wing elements.

"The NEC considered allegations about entrism, that is Trotskyist influence within the Labour Party". (Our Itals).

But in an apparent volte-face from the huge national witch-hunts that accompanied the wholesale expulsion of the Trotskyist-led Young Socialists in 1964, the Committee also asserts that:

"The threats of discipline and expulsion has never won one political argument and never will".

of 12,000 say, 30,000 jobs which might have to go.

A little matter of closing the Liverpool factory. That kind of thing. He was sure they could be relied on.

They could be. For the next few days, every article about Leyland carried the leaks, unattributed, but linked to rumours of the axe Edwardes was wielding or simply with phrases such as "Everyone knows that Leyland could operate with 30,000 less workers..."

What the truth of Edwardes' inspired leak is, no-one has bothered to ask, or seemingly cares. Whether Edwardes is really ready to move to that stage of the struggle could not concern the industrial correspondent in the least.

All he knows is he has heard his masters' voice and he must rush to help. That is in the best traditions of the freedom of the press. Capitalists must be free to have what they want printed without anyone asking awkward questions.

PRESS GANG His masters voice

The capitalist and the newspaper editor have an uneasy alliance. Although the newspapers depend on big business for existence, through advertising, and although they are themselves part of enormous capitalist enterprises, the search for sensation and combat can often bring populist papers into conflict with the capitalist class they serve.

The papers trail in the wake of the business world, applying guesswork and wholesale flattery and the basic principles of the witch-hunt to serve it.

Industrial correspondents have a special place in this uneasy relationship.

As they stand outside strike meetings being sworn at by the working class, as they wait outside the doors of the big businessmen for a few crumbs of information passed on through public relations experts, they must

come to hate the working class and fear his boss.

It is little wonder that their firmest relationships are forged with the trade union officials, (and the in depth interviews they conduct with the bottles that the bureaucrats hand out).

However, when the pattern is broken the industrial correspondents respond to order.

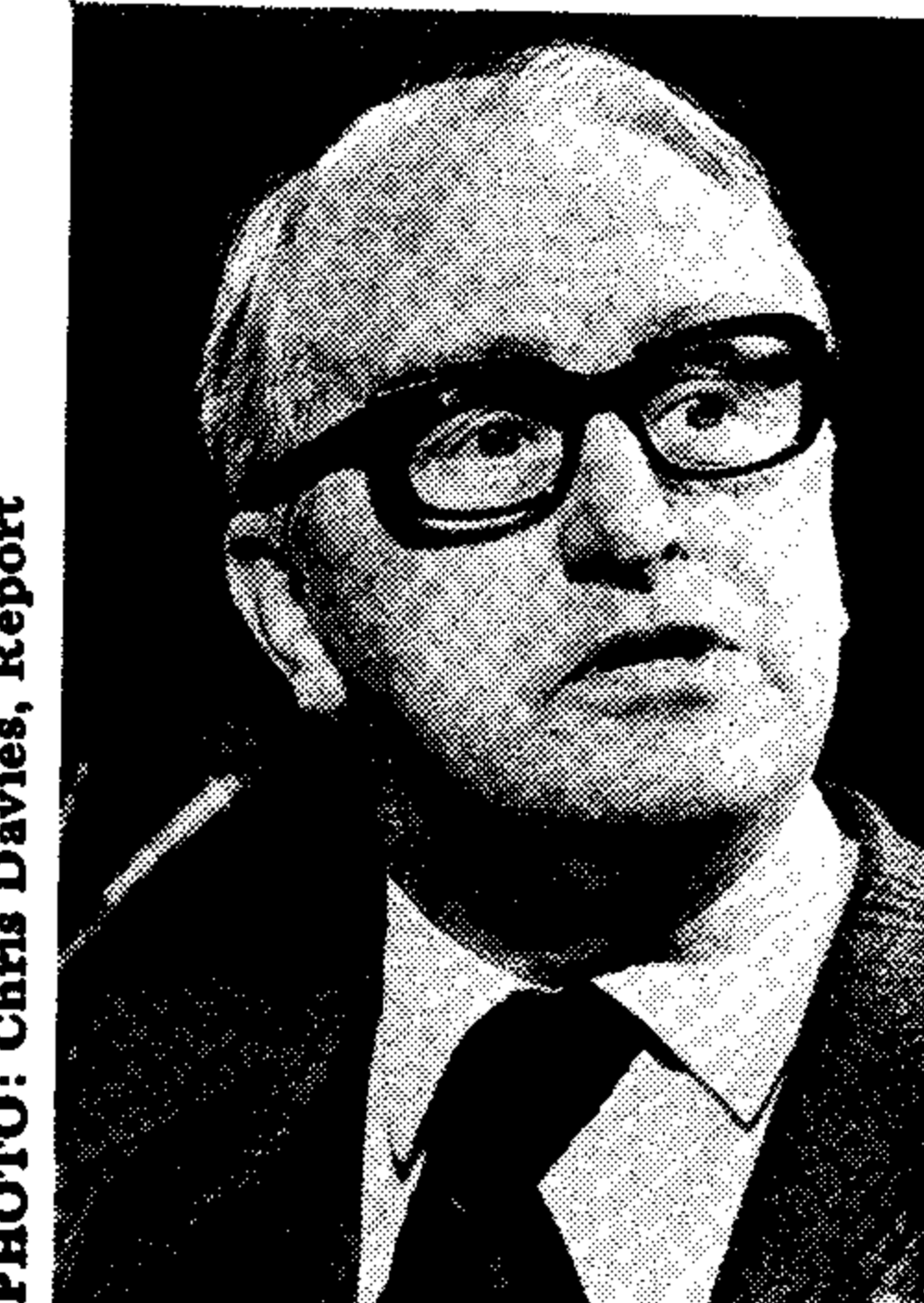
First class

When the capitalist comes out of his lofty tower, when he condescends to speak directly to the reporter, then will that be the happiest day of the reporter's life and a first class service will immediately be laid on.

So it was when Michael Edwardes, the man Socialist Challenge claim to have installed as head of British Leyland, took the more compliant of the hacks aside. They jumped to do his bidding.

He had a problem. There was a story that had to get about. Not directly from him, of course. But a little matter

PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report



Special Committee member John Chalmers—happy to tolerate Militant.

It is in the conclusions of the three-page Report that the Committee's real attitude to the Militant group emerges most clearly:

"There are numerous references in the documents to the aims of the Militant tendency. These claims are not necessarily proven and some of them may be false

PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report



Foot fobbed Heffer off stating that he still holds his original views on policy.

In other words he is in favour of what Callaghan-Healey and TUC can impose on the union movement, opposed to the blunt instrument of a statutory policy.

Dennis Skinner, who Heffer, parades as a wing opponent of the government outside Parliament, acts as a loyal lackey of Lib-Lab coalition in division lobbies, whether Foot agreed "the new sexy, husky of Mrs Thatcher" on controls.

PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report



With contributions questions on this level the one Labour MP who publicly claimed he is w to vote against the Lib-Lab coalition deal, it is surprising that Callaghan-Healey regard the Labour Party as at best a rustamp for their policies and worst a tiresome irrelevant Irrelevance

So while the primary centre on the struggle workers for claims that through the 10% limit, important that Labour members also put leaders on the spot.

Those Labour MPs declare they oppose controls must be instructed by GMCs to take a genuine fight against the limit by campaigning support of any section workers in struggle against by voting against the Lib-Lab coalition government, fighting to break coalition.

Ireland

ROOTS OF TODAY'S CRISIS Part 11

Break needed from nationalism



If proof were needed that the road of petty-bourgeois nationalism is a dead-end, the travels of the wings of the IRA in their 1969 split provides it.

The progress of the changes along the yellow-road of reforming the Northern State has led them further and closer to the nationalists.

From their immersion in the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) supporting a Bill of Rights calling only for "withdrawal of troops to barracks", they have moved to confrontation with the nakedly imperialist Women's Movement.

Militarist

Their concentration on the lowest of economic issues, such as fishing rights and nationalisation of co-operatives, has led them to the Northern streets to

the Provisionals, whose militarist orientation attracted that section of youth who had empirically gone beyond Civil Rights demonstrations and throwing stones.

The crisis in August 1969 was a turning point in the aspirations of the Catholic working class.

Confidence

Before then there had been widespread confidence in the ability of the Civil Rights movement and its middle class leadership to gain reforms from the Stormont government.

The casting aside of this leadership in the process of defending the Bogside against the RUC and B-Specials, as well as the obvious intransigence of the Unionists who ordered the attack, demonstrated the fact that the Northern State could not be reformed, but only overturned.

The tragedy of this situa-

tion was that the self-reliance and rejection of reformism built out of this episode found no leadership apart from the Provisionals.

In the absence of a revolutionary leadership their only progression could be to a higher level of pure militancy and heroism, which the Provisionals' brand of nationalism with its mystical self-sacrifice cashed in on and squandered.

The rise of the Provisionals began in earnest in mid-1970. The "honeymoon period" between the army and the Catholic population was short-lived.

Confrontation

Tension shown in various minor riots escalated in July to all out confrontation.

The election of the Tory government at Westminster in June 1970 produced a more hard line attitude to the Catholic population.

In July the army imposed

a curfew over the Falls Road area of Belfast. During the curfew the army killed four civilians; and in anticipation of further attacks the Catholic ghettos began to arm themselves.

Independent

It was in this context that the Provisional IRA grew in strength and established themselves as an independent force.

The Provisional campaign got under way properly in 1971. The first soldier to be killed in Northern Ireland was shot dead on February 6 of that year—a full 18 months after the army had first been brought in.

The killing of three Scottish soldiers on February 26 sparked off a reaction by the Loyalists. One of their leaders in the Belfast shipyard led 4,000 workers on a demonstration demanding internment.

The Unionist leadership,

under pressure from Westminster for political reform but committed by its party to a policy of "No Surrender", became more and more untenable.

Chichester-Clark, who had succeeded the "moderate" O'Neill as Prime Minister, was himself ousted from the right by Faulkner in March 1971.

Pressure for internment increased and on August 9, 1971 Faulkner ordered its introduction. 342 anti-Unionists were arrested and 226 of these were held.

Barricades

The entire Catholic population was at war with the British army. Barricades went up in Belfast, Newry and Derry.

In Derry they remained up for almost a year, establishing the Bogside and Creggan areas as "Free Derry".

Such was the response of the Catholic working class, that even the Social Democratic and Labour Party, the mouthpiece of the Catholic middle class, had to withdraw from Stormont.

On August 16, 8,000 workers went on strike in Derry against internment. Rent and rates strikes spread all over the six counties.

The reaction against internment greatly strengthened the Provisionals, both in support and in membership.

Their strategy in this period had been, as well as attacking military targets, to make Northern Ireland an economic liability for British imperialism.

Development

This was the thinking behind their bombing of businesses and factories. The sole political demand of this bombing campaign was for the ending of Stormont by the British government.

The paltriness of this demand (Britain granted it and the repression worsened) and the individualist methods the Provisionals used to gain it, prevented the development of an organised mass movement against imperialism, while it bred illusions in the good intentions of the British State.

Such illusions were tragically shattered by the events of Sunday January 30, 1972.

A Civil Rights demonstration of approximately 20,000 people marched from the Creggan towards the centre of Derry.

The march was banned from the city centre and was stopped by troops on the outskirts of the Bogside.

A minor riot occurred but the troops, the 1st Parachute Regiment, responded not with the usual rubber bullets and CS gas but with real bullets.

They killed 13 civilians, including children and old men. It was an open and premeditated attempt by the British government to intimidate the Catholic working class off the streets.

As happened with a similar attempt by the Unionists on October 5 1968, their plan blew up in their faces.

The Catholic community all over Ireland were completely outraged. There was a three-day strike in Derry and a one day strike all over the North.

New recruits

Workers downed tools and demonstrated in Dundalk, Cork, Galway, Limerick and Dublin. The British Embassy in Dublin was burned down by a 30,000 strong crowd.

A march on February 6 in Newry attracted 60,000 people.

Once again the Provisionals gained new recruits and support, not for their political programme—which barely existed—but because they had access to guns and were fighting imperialism in a fashion.

Nevertheless the Provisionals at precisely this point were being given unconditional support by the International Marxist Group.

Red Mole, their paper, (with "Victory to the IRA" on its cover) on 7 February 1972 asserted:

"It is vital to solidarise with the IRA, the only force capable of giving an immediate perspective of struggle against an enemy which is determined to crush the resistance of the Irish people".

This opportunist adaptation to petty-bourgeois nationalism by the IMG (and in Ireland by People's Democracy) came at the very moment when the IRA were demonstrating their lack of political direction.





Whitelaw congratulates troops in 1972

Bloody Sunday had produced such a massive explosion of anti-imperialist feeling not only in Northern Ireland but all over the South that the possibility of a genuine mass movement in the whole of Ireland against imperialism and its Green and Orange allies definitely existed.

The failure of the Provisionals to give a clear political leadership to this movement lies in the fact that they themselves had not qualitatively broken from the pressure politics of the Civil Rights movement.

They had merely upped the stakes—from "One man—One Vote" to the abolition of Stormont.



Heath

The decision of the Tories to concede this was based on the spontaneous outburst of militancy following Bloody Sunday, which had brought home to the Tory government that their interests, North and South, were in jeopardy.

On March 24, 1972 Heath prorogued Stormont, appointing Whitelaw as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

At the beginning of July a series of negotiations between the Provisionals and Whitelaw took place, and a ceasefire was arranged.

On the face of it, mid-1972 was the high point of the Provisionals' campaign. Yet the rejoicing was to prove premature.

The army, who had opposed the ceasefire from the beginning seized the first opportunity they could to break it.

Within nine days hostilities had been resumed because of an incident in the Lenadoon estate in Belfast.

The negotiations with the Provisionals were terminated,

and, by the end of the month, Whitelaw acceded to Loyalist demands and instructed the army to take over the "no-go" areas of Derry and Belfast.

July 1972 also saw the escalation of the campaign of sectarian assassination by Loyalist murder squads.

The reaction among Loyalists against direct rule by Westminster which they saw as a capitulation to the IRA, had produced strikes and Protestant "No go" areas.

The latter half of 1972 was marked by the hardening of this reaction.

The summer of 1972 marked a clear turning point in the Irish struggle.

Faced with the breakdown of the ceasefire and intensified army belligerence, the Provisionals retreated into the ghettos and fight back.

Bankruptcy

Yet this retreat signified as no other event had done, the bankruptcy of the entire Provisional strategy. In the face of the army's offensive, the Provisionals could only respond *militarily* at a time when a clear *political* response on *class* lines was required.

Such a response only led to confusion among the Catholic working class.

The crisis of proletarian leadership is not of course a crisis of a single moment, and failure to capitalise on the gains of 1972 would not in itself be sufficient testimony to the bankruptcy of the Provisionals.

But the sudden changes of July 1972 were themselves the direct result of the Provisionals' failure to advance a programme capable of uniting the working class on a clear anti-imperialist basis.

Special court

After Bloody Sunday the Southern Irish workers demonstrated their support for the liberation struggle in the North.

Yet the Provisionals let this support fritter away to such an extent that by Easter the Southern administration had established a special criminal court to try political cases, a court which was to send hundreds of Provisionals to Southern jails.

And in the North, Provisional failure even to try to win Protestant workers to its side on a common working class anti-imperialist basis left those workers in the hands of reactionary demagogues like Craig and Paisley.

The result—the creation of that anti-Catholic paramilitary outfit, the UDA, and the campaign of sectarian murders—was almost inevitable.

Westminster's strategy during this period was to give the British army a free hand to smash the Catholic resistance (the army enlisting UDA help in this task) while at the same time concocting a "solution" which would appear as all things to all men.

Single chamber

They came up with a White Paper on March 20 1973 which proposed the setting up of a single chamber Assembly and Executive, the latter giving a measure of "power-sharing", allowing the Catholic middle class their "share" in government.

A Council of Ireland was also planned as a sop to the Nationalists in the hope of undermining the Provisionals support in Catholic areas.

The main function of this council was in fact to maintain the Northern and Southern states intact.

The White Paper, the last makeshift solution for Ireland to date, was doomed from the start.

Rejected by both Loyalists and Provisionals it was warmly received only by the SDLP who saw their chance for a piece of the action.

The latter, along with the Official Unionists, led by Faulkner, and the Alliance Party that stood between them, gained a majority of seats when the Assembly elections were held in mid-1973.

Together they established the "power-sharing" Executive.

The details of the proposed Council of Ireland were ironed out at the Sunningdale Conference in December 1973.

Wiped out

On January 4, 1974 the Ulster Unionist Council rejected the Sunningdale package by a majority of 80.

Faulkner resigned as leader of the Unionist Party. In the General Election to Westminster on February 28, Faulkner and his supporters were completely wiped out.

The extreme right wing United Ulster Unionist Council led by Paisley and Craig gained eleven out of twelve seats.

The UUUC conference of April 1974 agreed on the scrapping of the Sunningdale agreement, the bringing down of the power-sharing Execu-

tive and demanded an immediate Stormont election.

Their campaign came to a climax in the Ulster Workers Council strike of May 1974.

The success of this reactionary strike was guaranteed by massive intimidation from the Loyalist para-military organisations. Road blocks were set up all over Belfast.

Highlighted

However these methods would have had little effect if there had not been overwhelming support for the strike in the Protestant working class. (This is shown by the contrasting failure of Paisley's strike call in May 1977).

The UWC strike highlighted the British army's stance on the Northern Ireland conflict.

Ordered by Wilson to remove the UDA barricades and to operate the main power stations the army command refused.

The objective role that the army was playing in the North—that of strengthening reaction and the sectarian divisions—had clearly become also a subjective one.

This experience confirmed more than any other the fact that the complete prerequisite for *any* solution to the problems of Northern Ireland.

After two weeks of the strike, the Faulkner Unionists capitulated and resigned, bringing down the executive.

Prorogued

The UWC called off the strike and the Assembly was prorogued indefinitely.

The support for the strike had encouraged sectarian attacks by Loyalist thugs.

The logic of this was seen during the strike when three car bombs exploded in Dublin and Monaghan, killing 33 people.

The reaction to these bombings in the British press was predictably much more reserved than that to the bombings at the end of 1974 in Birmingham.

The latter bombs which were planted in pubs killed 21 people. Universally attributed by the British press to the Provisional IRA, these bombs were definitely the work of agents provocateurs—probably within the British state.

The Provisionals denied any responsibility for these bombs—something which they had not done even when a number of civilians had been killed in Belfast in 1972.

Same excuse

The Birmingham bombings provided the same excuse for the British government as the Liberty Hall bombs of 1972 had given the Southern Irish government for introducing reactionary "anti-terrorist" legislation. (The bombing at

the Liberty Hall in Dublin had taken place the day before a vote was due in the Dail on anti-IRA measures).

The Birmingham bombs were thus the cynical means by which the British government introduced the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

While the Provisionals were not responsible for the planting of the pub bombs in Birmingham, they must accept responsibility for the fact that the British government was able to use such a provocation against them and other Irish militants in Britain.

It is the clearest indictment of the method of individual terrorism that the bourgeois state can itself use it to discredit its opposition.

Bombings, hijackings, etc. only serve to isolate militants from the mass of the working class and can never succeed in mobilising the masses into a coherent political movement.

Heroism

The Provisionals, despite their individual heroism, seek to substitute themselves for the independent action of the working class and they cannot pose any fundamental challenge to the British State.

Reliance on terrorism by the Provisionals at the expense of developing any political programme directed at solving the class questions in Ireland also assisted in the development of the Women's Peace Movement.

This movement, arising initially as an expression of the war-weariness in the whole population, was immediately adopted and encouraged by imperialism as a means of defeating the Provisionals.

Yet it was the Provisionals' own lack of policy that allowed this pro-imperialist movement to posture as "peace" confronting "violence".

While carrying out hysterical attacks on the Provisionals, this "peace-at-any-price" brigade whitewashed the British army in an attempt to restore their rather tarnished 1969 image of peace-makers.

Confused

However if the confused terrorism of the Provisionals was unwittingly providing meat for these vultures of peace, the reformists of the Officials (and the Communist Party) were out feeding them.

The Officials saw in the Peace Movement some move towards their conception of "working class unity".

But the Peace Movement offers nothing more than 'unity' with British imperialism.

Unity of the Irish working class, a task central to revolutionary development in Ireland, cannot be achieved

by these means.

Nor can it be achieved by ignoring the political tasks and restricting activity to economic questions of wages and housing, as the left reformists of the Militant group attempt to do.

Their recent election campaign in Ballymena was fought on the most minimum of programmes, avoiding even such basic political questions as the presence of an imperialist army on the voters' doorstep.

Perspective

The road to unity of the Irish working class lies neither in accommodation to Green nationalism by supporting it (IMG) nor in accommodation to Orange nationalism by ignoring it (Militant), but in developing a working class perspective which confronts head-on both nationalisms.

Such a task requires the building of a revolutionary party based on an independent working class programme and which forms part of an international revolutionary movement.

Central to such a programme must be the questions of massive unemployment, depressed wages, colonial exploitation and discrimination on religious grounds, which affect and divide workers both North and South of the border, along with demands to mobilise the small farmers against the big ranchers, the banks and the food monopolies.

Occupation

In posing demands to answer such problems, socialists must insist that none can be solved while the imperialist occupation and partition of the island prevents the development of a planned, socialist economy and while British and foreign capital, in alliance with Irish capitalists North and South continue to exploit the underdeveloped economy and massive pool of unemployed as a source of cheap sweated labour.

As Trotsky wrote as long ago as 1916:

"... the independent Irish commercial and industrial bourgeoisie, in so far as it has formed over the past decades, immediately adopted an antagonistic position towards the young Irish proletariat, giving up the national revolutionary struggle and entering the camp of imperialism. The young Irish working class, taking shape in an atmosphere saturated with the heroic recollections of national rebellions, and clashing with the egoistic, narrow minded imperial arrogance of British trade unionism, naturally swing between nationalism and syndicalism, ever ready to unite these two concepts in their revolutionary consciousness. It attracts the young intelligentsia and individual nationalist enthusiasts who, in their turn, supply the movement with a preponderance of the green flag over the red. In this way the 'national revolution' even in Ireland, in practice has become an uprising of workers".

Writings on Britain, Vol. III p.168-9.

The construction of a revolutionary party to prepare the way for such an uprising is the urgent task confronting the Irish working class.

And it is the duty of socialists who take their commitment to proletarian internationalism seriously to assist this task in every way possible, and continually campaign in the British labour movement for action to force the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, and in support of the right of the Irish people to self-determination.

Concluded



IN REVIEW

LESSONS OF PARTY BUILDING

TONY RICHARDSON reviews "The Crisis of the French Section [1935-36]" by Leon Trotsky, published by Pathfinder Press at £2.50 in paperback. 286pp.

In the introduction to this extremely important book the editors say "History does not repeat itself exactly, and it would be futile to search in this book for tailor-made solutions to current problems."

Of course history does not repeat itself "exactly". But in reading the correspondence of Trotsky and the reprinted pamphlet by International Secretariat member Erwin Wolf, the reader continuously has to remind himself that this material was written forty years ago and not yesterday.

The reason for this is simple. It is because many of the forces calling themselves 'Trotskyists' today—including George Breitman and Naomi Allen, the editors of this volume, and their political co-thinkers in the "United" Secretariat of the Fourth International—have thrown aside everything that Trotsky fought for in this political struggle in 1935-6.

To some extent the opportunist errors and disorientation of the leadership of the

French section of the International Communist League (forerunner of the Fourth International) flowed from the complexities of the new situation they confronted.

In France, as internationally, 1935-6 saw the emergence of the Stalinist strategy of the Popular Front—the conscious formation of political blocs with reformist and with *bourgeois* parties in which the political independence of the workers' parties was abandoned.

"Entry tactic"

And it was in France from 1934-5 that Trotskyists first set out to implement an "entry tactic" into the SFIO (the French Socialist Party led by Leon Blum) in a bid to break tendencies towards sectarianism and self isolation within the tiny (100-strong) Trotskyist group through winning leftward moving sections within the reformist party.

Within the SFIO the Trotskyists were to take up their call for United Front action of workers' parties and organisations against fascism, and to fight for the slogan

"bourgeois politicians out of the People's Front".

As the economic and political crisis of French capitalism grew worse and the Trotskyist forces began to win growing support for their policies among the youth and in the adult party congress, the SFIO leaders recognised that the Trotskyists stood as an obstacle to their strategy of class collaboration.

At a national congress of the Young Socialists in July 1935 eight Trotskyists and five leading JS members who had been won to their positions were expelled.

Trotsky began campaigning for the French section to consolidate its gains and move towards re-establishing an independent party as an important step towards the Fourth International.

"Our cohabitation with the reformists could not last forever. They themselves took the initiative for the split. Good; that saves us the trouble of doing it ourselves..."

"The workers who think—and the other ones, through them—must understand from now on that:

— In order to make an



Trotsky in 1932 after his expulsion

alliance with the bourgeois Radicals, they must separate themselves from the Bolshevik-Leninists.

— In order to make docile cannon-fodder of the youth, it is necessary first to drive out the Bolshevik-Leninists.

— In order the better to fool the workers, the Stalinists and the reformists have to get rid of those annoying witnesses, the Bolshevik-Leninists."

(pp43-44)

Trotsky, however, was faced with the problem of shaping a leadership in France from people, many of whom had been drawn to Trotskyism only on the basis that they had left or been expelled from the Stalinist Comintern.

Flexibility

Under these conditions the fight against opportunism was that much more difficult.

The book illustrates

Trotsky's method of approach. He demonstrates surprising flexibility wherever it seems a comrade might be won or held for the movement, but an iron inflexibility when he considers the concept of the party itself was at stake.

On this basis he was in favour of expelling the rank opportunist Molinier and his supporter Pierre Frank when their centrist tendency

OUR POLICIES

Part Two of a three part series

COUNCILS OF ACTION

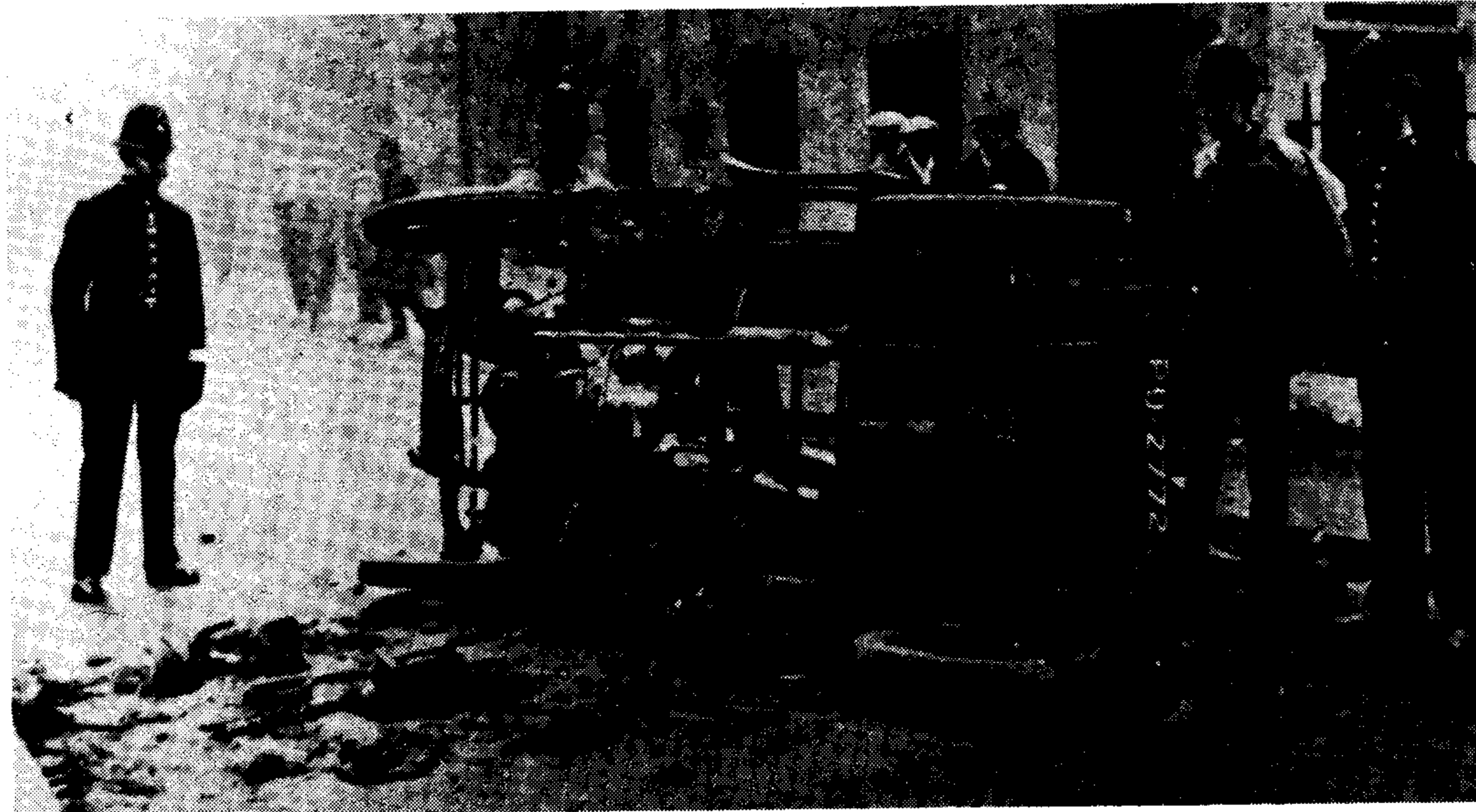
On 31 July 1925—known as 'Red Friday'—the leaders of the 'Triple Alliance' unions were compelled to threaten a combined strike against further threats to reduce the standard of living of the miners.

Local pressure on them included the setting up of a 'Provisional Council of Action' in Liverpool.

The Tory government had to continue its subsidy to the coal industry for a further six months in order to better prepare for concerted action by the working class movement against them.

The months between August 1925 and May 1926 were thus of considerable importance for the miners and the entire working class movement.

The Tory government set up a network of regional and local strike-breaking organisations with the help of the allegedly "independent"



Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies run by local Tories, members of fascist organisations and other such elements.

The trade union leaders on the other hand did nothing to prepare for the forthcoming struggle.

Not only did they not discuss the possibility of a General Strike in May 1926 until it was virtually upon them, but they also refused to do anything to organise union members for such an eventuality.

Thus it was left to the Communist Party to call for

preparations to be made, councils of action to be set up and strike plans laid.

The Stalinist policies of the Communist Party caused them to place a reliance on the 'lefts' within the TUC which was to prove disastrous as the struggle developed.

Syndicalist

The syndicalist attitudes which the CP had only begun to eradicate also prevented them from putting forward policies either for industrial struggle or the development of its political implications

which could put workers in a position to act independently of their cowardly and collaborationist leaders.

The Communist Party did however fight hard in the months before May 1926 for some preparations to be made.

Through the CP-led Minority Movement a 'Special Conference of Action' was organised at which there was discussion on what would need to be done.

The Minority Movement called for the setting up of councils of action which would be capable of 'carrying

developed a paper outside the control of the party.

Democratic centralism was political and organisational principle that Trotsky defended regardless of the possible losses it might bring to the scanty forces of Trotskyism.

This fact alone glaringly contrasts with the Pabloite "United" Secretariat today, which opposing tendencies within the movement are allowed free reign to publish material putting directly opposite positions to those of the majority.

Leading members

This fact is particularly well known to the authors of the book, both leading members of the US Socialist Workers Party (which is prevented by reactionary US laws from affiliating to the USFI).

They know that until a few months ago tendencies in support of the SWP functioned autonomously in countries all over the world, publishing their own papers in conflict with the USFI majority positions.

Indeed Trotsky's positions cannot be understood as

restricted to the national problems inside France. They relate centrally to the kind of international that is needed, and the kind of parties in each country.

The question remaining to be answered is why did the SWP choose to publish this book, which contains an implicit indictment of their own positions?

The answer lies in the factional debate within the USFI itself.

The majority tendency, under the leadership of Ernest Mandel, and counting in its ranks the same Pierre Frank castigated by Trotsky in this volume, holds a position of angling for 'socialist unity'.

It is because of this that their British section, the International Marxist Group, has gone overboard in its desire to ditch the trappings of the Trotskyist programme and link up with circles of degenerate centrists and left reformists through the medium of their paper, *Socialist Challenge*.

The SWP—for unclear reasons of their own—disagree with this orientation. But last year they took the decision to drop their pretence of a

serious fight against Mandel, and to "fuse" their supporting tendency with the majority tendency.

So now the SWP seek a more diplomatic way of raising their differences, and are attempting to use Trotsky's writings for their own opportunist purposes.

The editors therefore tell us:

"The current theory and practice of some sections of the Fourth International [they mean the USFI] suggest that not all of their leaders [!] have absorbed the lessons Trotsky tried to teach in 1935-6 about "broad" newspapers, the revolutionary attitude to centrist groups, etc."

(p.173)

But the SWP themselves refuse to absorb these lessons!

International

For instance they describe the issue at stake as:

"What, in fact is a revolutionary party? Is it a collection of factions or tendencies each of which is free to go its own way whenever it fails to win a majority?"

But in essence Trotsky was arguing on the nature of a revolutionary international. And the SWP has proved that it believes an international is simply a collection of factions and tendencies that can ignore majority votes.

Hermaphrodite

They clearly do not accept Trotsky's dictum that "International discipline prevails in every case over national discipline". (p. 152).

Nor, for fear of disrupting their new found 'unity' with Mandel do they draw out the content of Trotsky's fight on the notion of a "broad" paper.

Trotsky termed the new paper *La Commune*, launched by the opportunists Molinier and Frank "a hermaphrodite paper".

He attacks its refusal to break from the centrist Marceau Pivert, whom Trotsky describes as the "extreme left of the People's Front".

In analysing the opening appeal for *La Commune* Trotsky strikes a note that should echo for every reader of *Socialist Challenge* today:

"But here is where the

most important part begins: "*La Commune* is not going to add itself to the multiplicity of tendencies in the workers' movement." What sovereign scorn for the "multiplicity of existing tendencies! What What does that mean? If all the tendencies are wrong or insufficient, a new one has to be created, the true one, the correct one. If there are true and false tendencies, then the workers must be taught to distinguish among them. The masses must be called on to join the correct tendency to fight the false ones. But no, the initiators of *la Commune* somewhat like Romain Rolland, place themselves "above the battle." Such a procedure is absolutely unworthy of Marxists."

(p.99)

"And here is the high point: "*La Commune* is launched by militants belonging to various tendencies to bring about the rise of a great army of communards." What does this mean, this unknown crew of anonymous, unknown "various tendencies"? What tendencies are involved? Why are they (still unknown) grouped outside and against the other tendencies? The purpose of creating a "great army of communards" is laudable. But it is necessary not to forget that this army, once created (1871), suffered a terrific catastrophe because that magnificent army lacked a programme and a leadership."

(p.100)

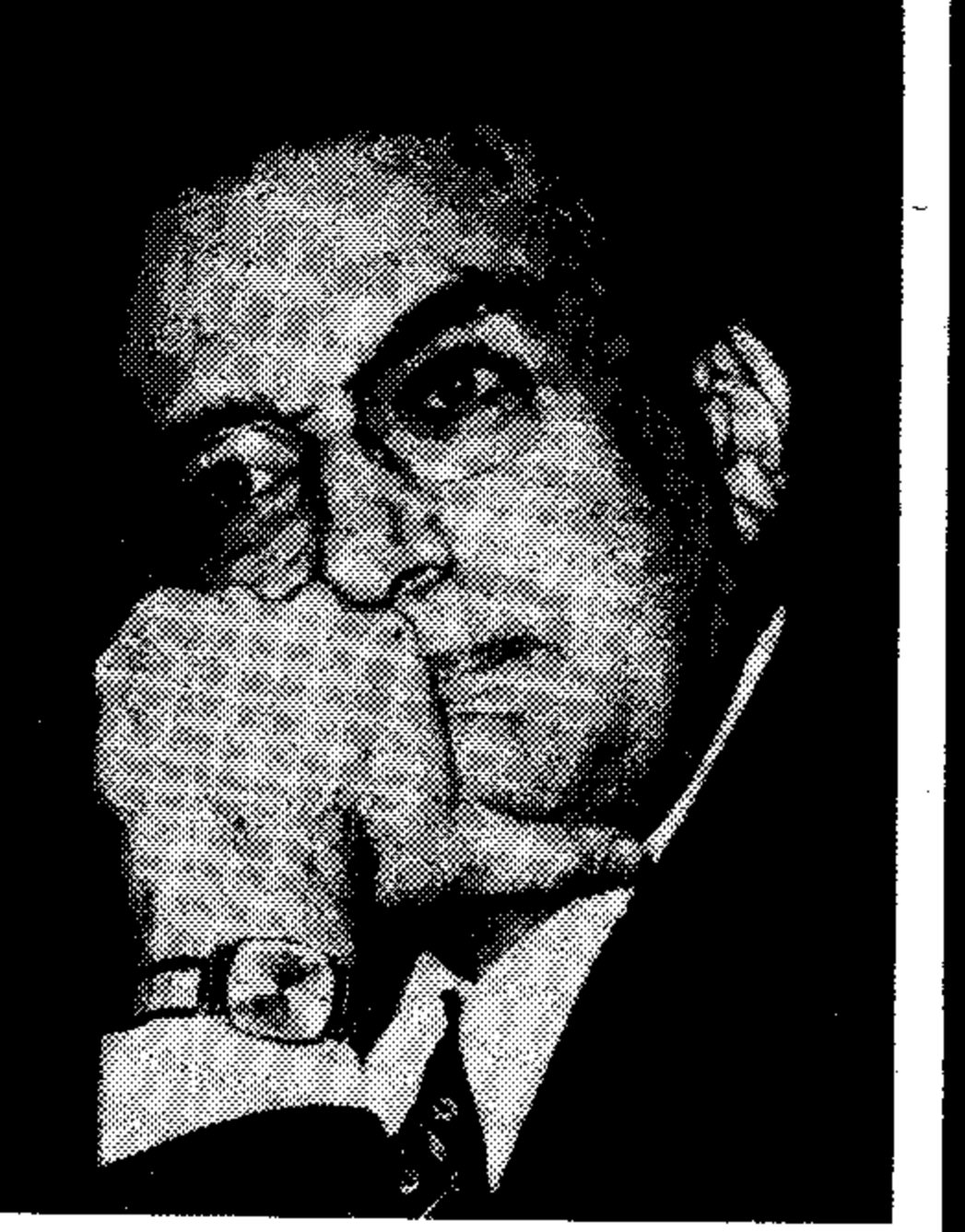
Of course most of the self-proclaimed 'Trotskyists' of the International Marxist Group will no doubt turn a blind eye to the similarity between Molinier-Frank's attempt to bring together "militants belonging to various tendencies" and *Socialist Challenge's* invitation to join a "broad-based class struggle tendency", which "should be non-exclusive in character, grouping together militants holding a wide range of political views".

But to those concerned to preserve the principles of the movement, Trotsky's ringing advanced denunciation of 'socialist unity' must strengthen their fight:

"... the methods of *La Commune* are diametrically opposite to all my conceptions of the organisation of a revolutionary party.

"No domination"—in other words, no programme. "On the basis of parity" means parity in cynicism with regard to principles, a scarcely enviable kind of parity. A "mass paper" is in reality an imitation of *l'Oeuvre*, dressed up in slogans borrowed from the right and the left and aimed at radicalising petty bourgeois who are not even able to understand that the preparation for civil war begins with the elaboration of a programme and that a "mass paper" can be nothing other than one of the instruments of this programme".

(p.116)



Mandel

The Mandelites continue to turn their backs on these crucial lessons. And the SWP, by its new political alliance with this majority leadership, has revealed yet again it offers no alternative line.

Perhaps the most obvious Mandelite attack on Trotsky comes in the appendix by Pierre Frank, who declares:

"I do not believe there is any reason to reply to the argument that was put forward at the time, that with the appearance of *La Commune* we abandoned Trotskyism. Today this accusation raised by Rous and others seems grotesque."

(p.262)

But, though the SWP do not draw this point out, the book makes clear that among the "others" that made this charge was Trotsky himself.

Despite the factional stance of its editors, by showing Trotsky's method of approach to these problems of the Popular Front period, to the questions of political independence and revolutionary discipline, this new book makes a valuable contribution to serious forces fighting for the reconstruction of the Fourth International.



Popular Front leaders Leon Blum (SP) and Maurice Thorez (CP) (left and second left in this picture)

the essential services for the working class in the event of a dispute.

CP members got councils of action set up in Leeds and Coventry and a Joint Council of Action in Bolton before the end of 1925 was pursuing enquiries with a view to definite preparations being made for any national local industrial upheaval". The CP was less successful in its campaign for the setting up of 'workers defence groups'.

New methods

Once the struggle started on 4 May, with large sections of the trade union movement led out to support the miners against the wage cuts now definitely threatened, new methods of work developed very rapidly.

The *St. Pancras Bulletin* of May, one of many thousands of such publications, said that the strike itself had forced them to develop 'scientific organisation':

"What would have taken years in the pre-strike days has been accomplished this week under the direct pressure of the class struggle".

In virtually every town, a council of action was established, in most cases under such titles as 'joint strike committees' or 'emergency disputes committee' in a substantial number of cases as a 'council of

action'.

Local meetings took place to set up such bodies in many cases with trades council executives and branches of unions on strike.

There were other arrangements, however, as at Stockton where the local Labour Party was involved and at Derby where shop stewards committees were affiliated.

The purpose of these bodies—according to the instructions sent out by the TUC—was for Trades Councils and the union



Scab work on London docks

branches of strikers to organise those on strike 'in the most effective manner for the preservation of peace and order'.

Such an instruction was of little help when the main problem facing the councils of action in the first week of the strike concerned the issue of 'permits' to allow union members to carry on essential services.

Although the Government had set up a complex local network in order to break the strike, TUC leaders had prepared nothing.

Their concern was not to work out a system which would make the strike effective but to ensure as Jimmie Thomas of the NUR put it—that power did not go "out of the hands of those who would be able to exercise some control".

Unworkable

Thus Thomas together with Bevin of the TGWU devoted much energy to developing strike organisation based on individual unions.

They set up a National and a London Transport Committee which were supposed to be in complete control of the issue of permits for the movement of goods.

This arrangement was quite unworkable, and led to endless confusion.

The Chatham Strike Committee wrote:

"NUR telegram directs no

permits. TUC directs full permits. What is to be worked to?"

In most cases the local strike committees of transport unions decided to operate under the authority of the councils of action, though in Darlington, for example, the railwaymen remained separate.

Abandoned

At Bristol the competing committees were persuaded to accept one authority by 7 May, but on the same day the National Transport Committee asked the TGWU and NUR locally to 'review' the issue of permits.

By this time the problems had become so acute that most councils of action had abandoned the permits system, concentrating on other aspects of the strike.

Virtually all of them issued strike bulletins despite the ludicrous request of the General Council that they should 'refrain from making public statements of any sort' and should add 'nothing in the way of comment and interpretation' to what the TUC said.

Special reasons

The local councils of action also went beyond TUC instructions by calling out some new groups on strike though there were usually special reasons for this.



Mounted police in action at Elephant and Castle 1926

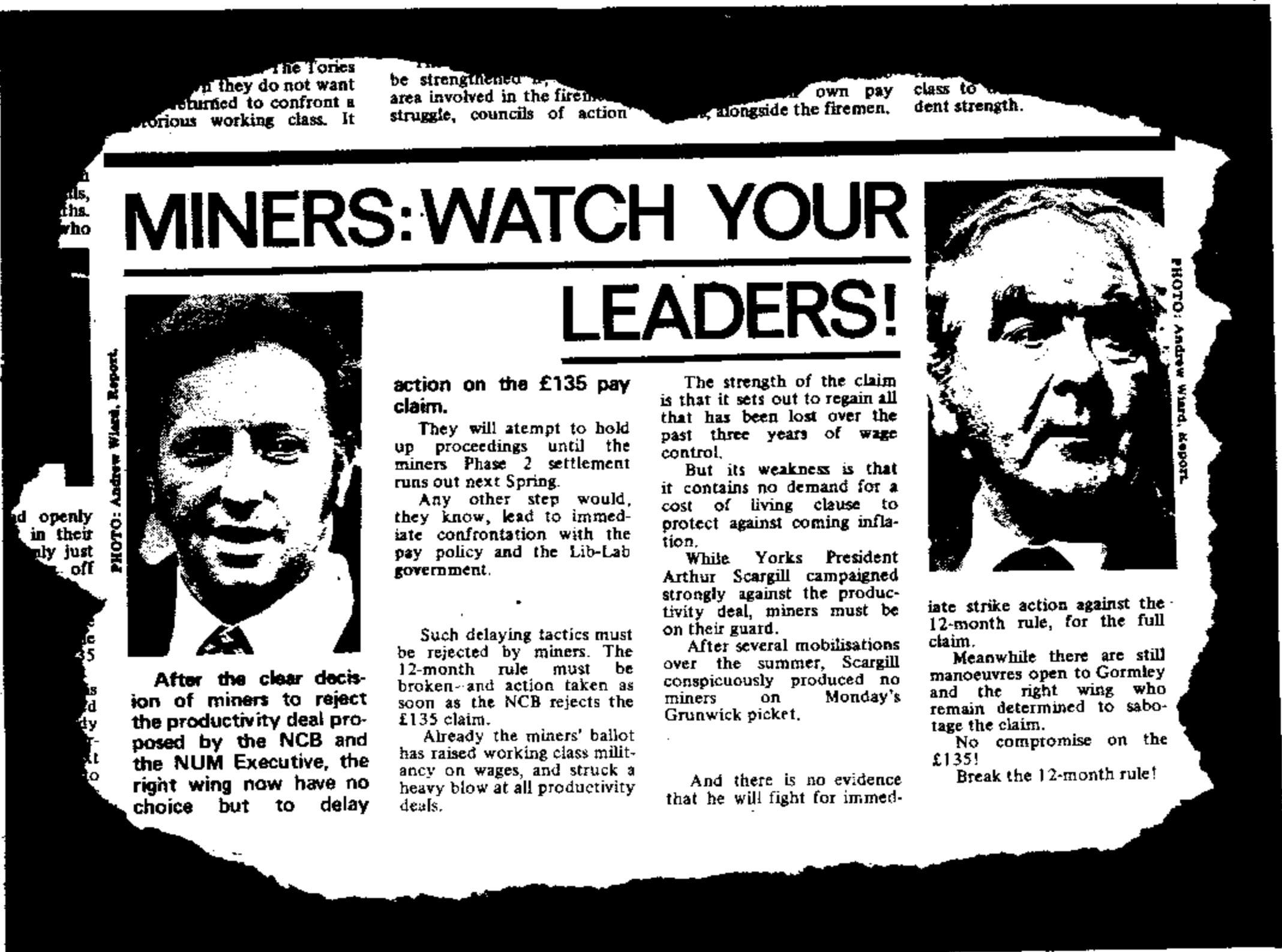
In Leeds, for example, the decision was made to call out some engineers for fear that others who were in factories that were stopped might be isolated and subject to victimisation.

The councils of action were also compelled to act independently after the General Council betrayed the struggle on 12 May by calling off the strike without having secured any guarantees.

They had to keep some workers out in order to prevent the victimisation of others, and indeed there were probably more on strike the day after it was called off than at any previous point.

By John Docherty

NOW YORKSHIRE FALLS TO NUM SELL-OUT



From 'Socialist Press' of November 9, 1977

The 63% vote by Yorkshire miners to reverse their principled opposition to incentive schemes is the outcome of two months of evasion and procrastination by Arthur Scargill and by Stalinist leaders in Scotland, Kent and other areas.

tivity scheme could only be fought by an all-out battle to force action on the miners' £135 pay claim, due to be settled on November 1.

We showed the way in which the right wing and employers saw the incentive plan as an alternative to the conference policy on pay. And we stressed that the rejection of the scheme in the NUM national ballot was a

clear mandate for Scargill and those who were opposed to

Socialist Press has warned throughout that the pro- such deals to demand immediate action on basic wages, in defiance of the 12-month rule and the 10% policy.

This would have mobilised the miners alongside the firemen in a struggle that would have given a lead to the entire working class and destroyed wage controls once and for all.

Backed off

But Scargill and the Stalinists immediately backed off. They failed to call for a ballot on strike action for the pay claim, despite a clear challenge from right winger Len Clarke for them to do so.

Instead Stalinist Mick McGahey put his signature to a call for increased productivity—with no pay increase!

Meanwhile the right wing was stepping up its own campaign for local incentive schemes in complete defiance of both conference policy and the national ballot.

For the right wing local schemes have the additional advantage of weakening and dividing the membership—making a single agreed wage claim more difficult, and enabling right wing areas to threaten to break the unity of the NUM itself.

At its December 8 meeting the Executive flouted every aspect of union democracy when it gave the go-ahead to local productivity deals and upheld the TUC's 12 month rule while going through the motions of lodging the £135 pay claim.

But even in the pay claim itself were calls for changes in the pay structure that could result in proposals to end annual wage bargaining and impose US-style three year contracts.

Yet still Scargill and the Stalinists sat on their hands, refusing to give a lead on wages, and leaving the whole initiative to the right wing.

Instead of laying plans for strike action on the £135 claim in those areas that rejected incentive schemes, and rallying miners to action against the dictatorial actions

of the right wing bureaucrats, Scargill and the Stalinists put the whole affair into the hands of lawyers and the bourgeois courts.

Ludicrous

This abandonment of the independence of the NUM from the state was combined with ludicrous talk of strike action to win pay equal to areas operating incentives schemes—an obviously unachievable demand.

As it turned out, the court hearings proved a classical example of bourgeois "justice" in operation—with the judge openly declaring his bias in favour of "the national interest" and increased productivity in the coalfields.

No action

Scargill and the Stalinists emerged puffing and blowing and denouncing the courts—but still calling no action on wages. A few days later both the Scottish and Kent areas of the NUM had reversed their position and agreed to negotiate incentive schemes.

Scargill's area—the biggest in the union—was left to carry on the resistance under massive opposition.

All over the country miners were being publicised collecting extra money under the new schemes, while in Yorkshire nothing was offered as a perspective other than the dim hope of a future fight for the £135 claim.

Area ballot

Scenting final defeat—though still blaming everyone but himself—Scargill organised an area ballot on an incentive scheme, and backed away from any campaign for rejection.

Yorkshire miners embittered at endless talk divorced from action and divorced from cash in the pay packet, reluctantly swung from 76% against to 63% in favour of incentives.

Major blow

In the meantime the actions of Scargill and the NUM Stalinists, whether consciously or unconsciously managed to assist the TUC in its plan to isolate the firemen's 9-week strike against the 10% limit, and enabled the employers and the right wing to strike a major blow at the strength and unity of the NUM.

This harsh and bitter lesson will be apparent to more and more miners as the NCB drive for speed-up intensifies, and as pay packets remain locked in the vice like grip of wage control.

From it miners must conclude the necessity for a principled, revolutionary leadership in the NUM capable of fighting and exposing both the open right wing and the 'left' and Stalinist misleaders.



PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

A picket opposing the threatened closure of Eltham and Mottingham Hospital in South East London

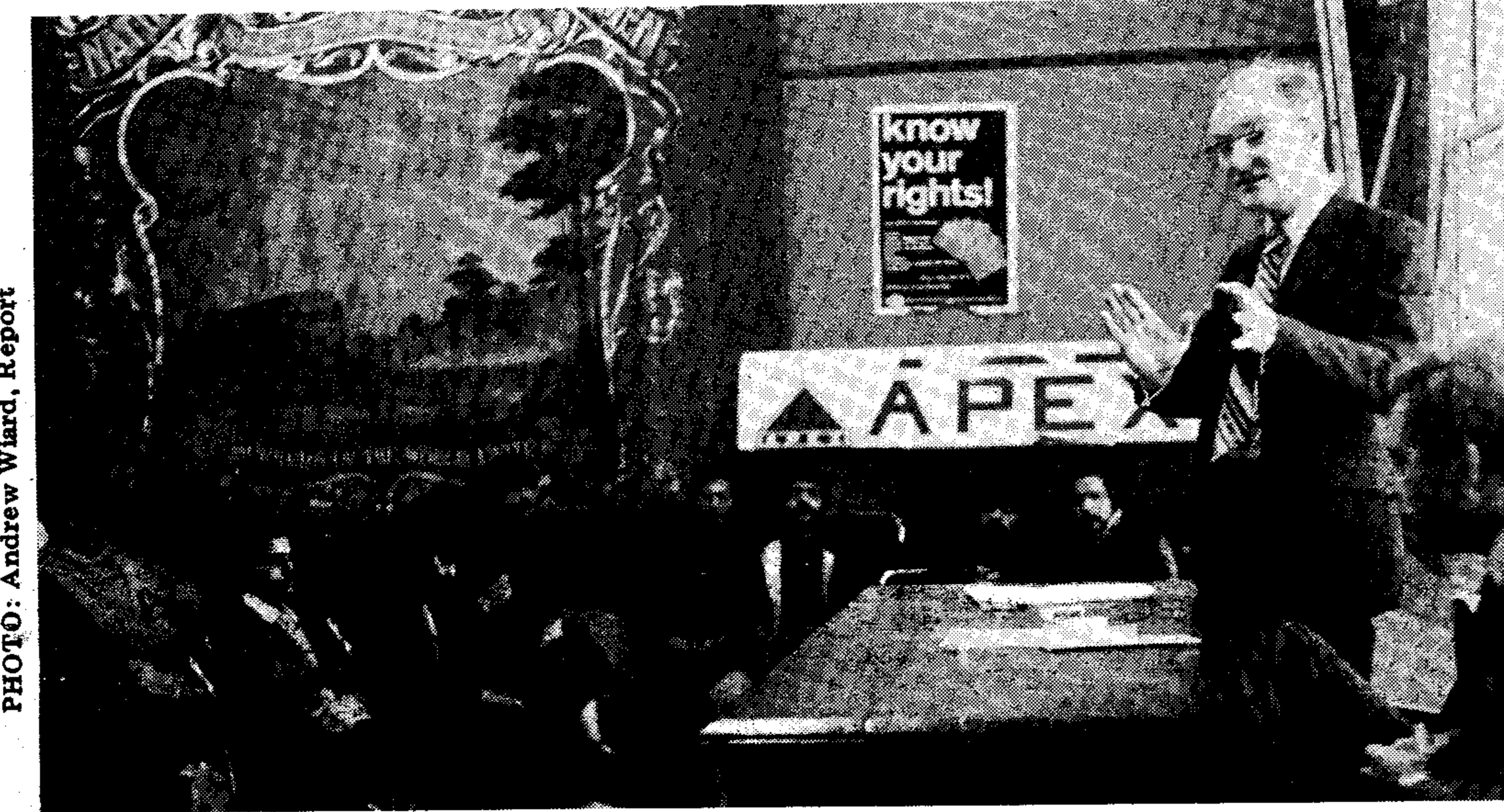


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Grunwick reballot

In a move designed to refurbish their badly tarnished credentials the officials of the government sponsored Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Services (ACAS) have decided to make a fresh attempt to ballot scab workers at the Grunwick film processing plant in North London.

According to reports from strike committee chairman Kamlesh Gandhi, this move has been approved by APEX general secretary, Roy Grantham.



Murray—despite TUC inaction, Grunwick strike still not dead.

(Grantham of course did not say that when the ACAS inquiry eventually comes to grief—as it must do—then he will stop strike pay and put an end to this vexatious stoppage).

The idea now is that ACAS will write to Ward

asking for permission to hold a ballot; if he refuses (as he will) ACAS is going to contact all the blacklegs at their homes and ballot them then.

If union recognition is then achieved—and if Ward still refuses to recognise APEX—then ACAS can haul him before the Central Arbitration Court and—have him fined!

When ACAS first began its proceedings, *Socialist Press* pointed out that this was a legal diversion which could not secure victory for the strikers.

Similarly, the ACAS proceedings now cannot secure full recognition and full reinstatement—in fact, they are designed exclusively to bolster up ACAS's reputation and provide it anew with some specks of credibility.

The Grunwick strike will only be won if and when

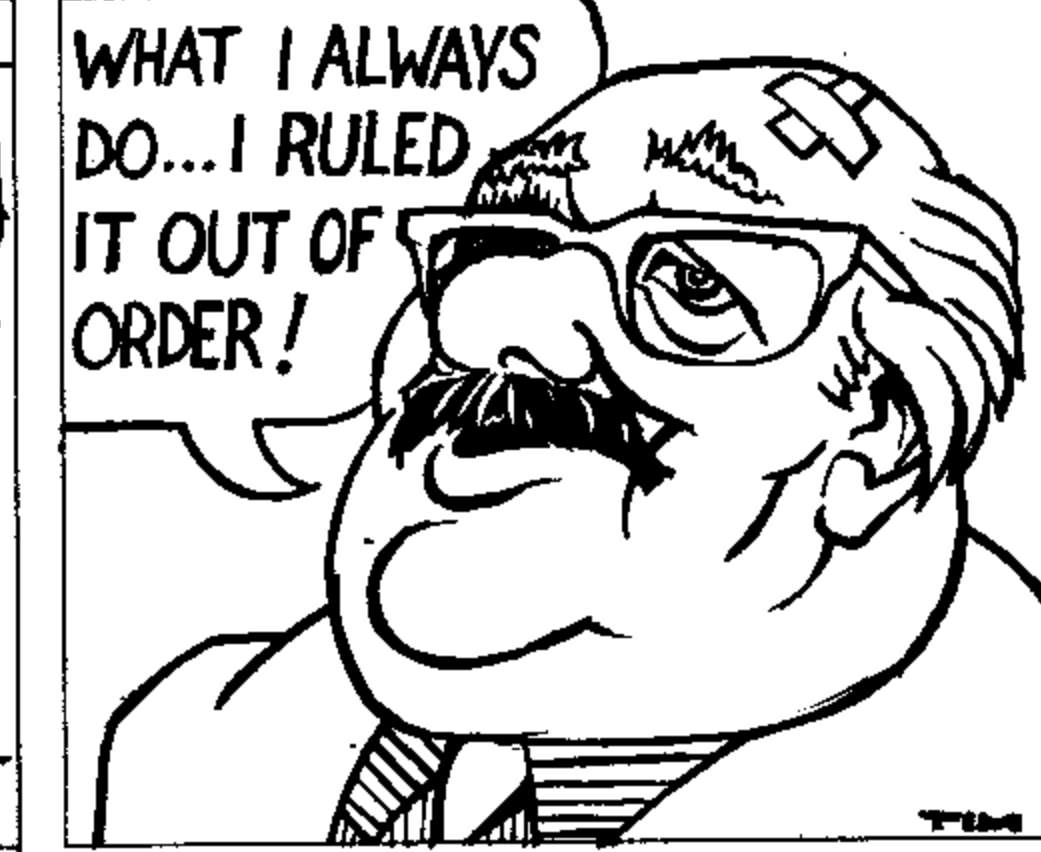
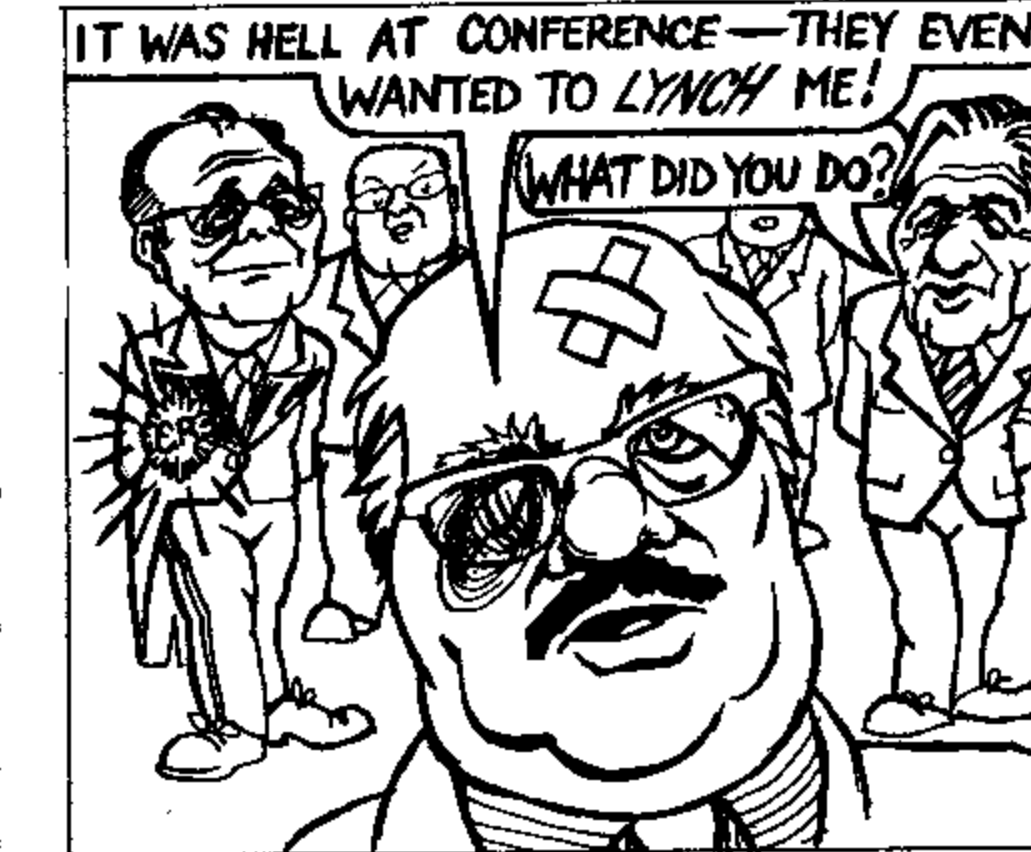
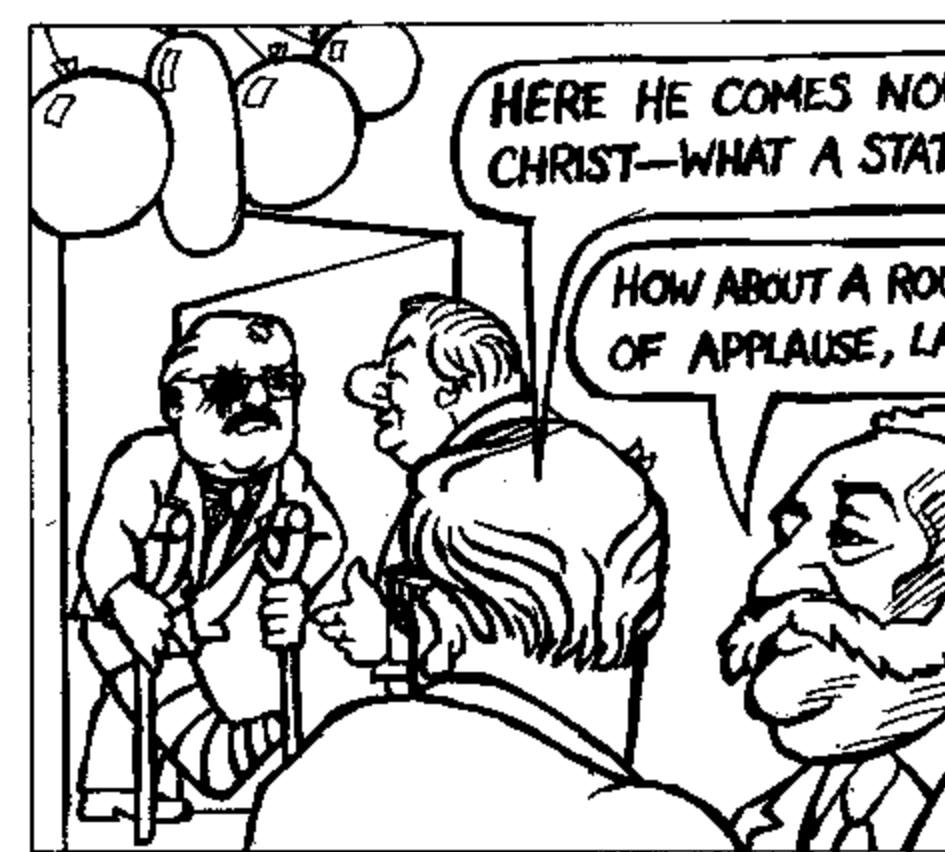
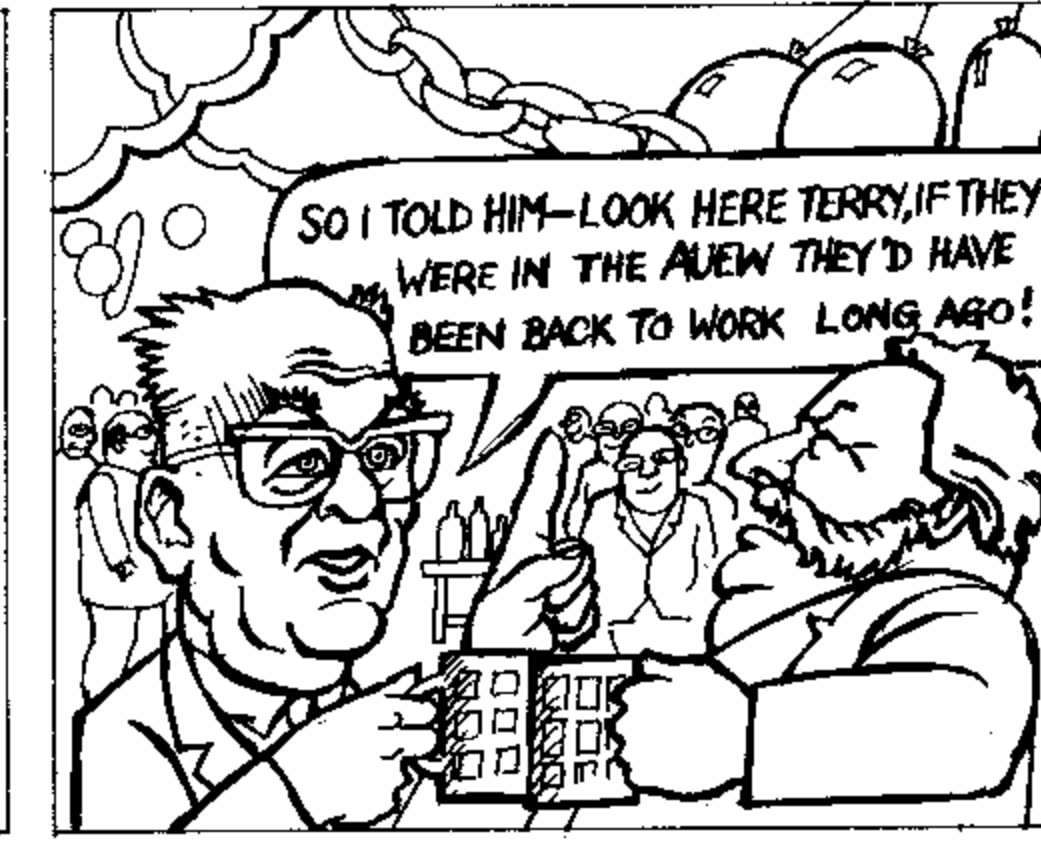
those workers who service Grunwicks decide to cut off supplies—post, gas and electricity, and water.

During the summer the Cricklewood postmen demonstrated their willingness—against the combined onslaught of Tom Jackson, Sir William Ryland and all of Fleet Street—to stand out in support of the Grunwick strikers.

The task now at Grunwick is to recreate the conditions which will allow post, gas and water workers to black supplies.

A systematic campaign centred around a resolution committing key sections to strike action in defence of victimised postal workers and in support of the strikers must be mounted now.

In addition, regular day time picketing of the plant must be resumed, and plans laid for the resumption of mass picketing.



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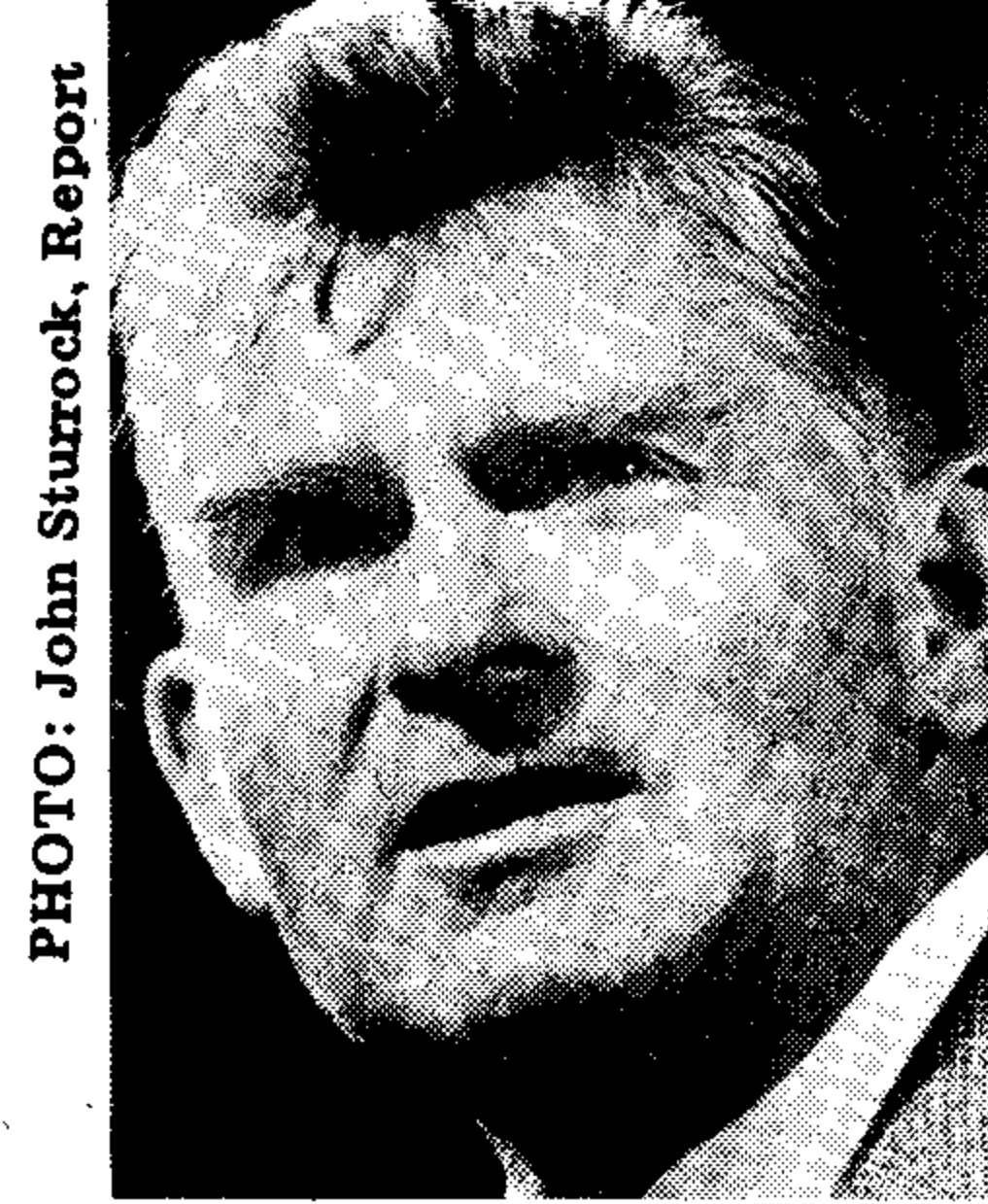
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Steel union boss Sirs



Edwardes



Robinson

LEYLAND, STEEL INDUSTRY

What are the facts?

After weeks of press rumours about plant closures and massive redundancies Leyland's new Managing Director, Michael Edwardes, has revealed a part of his plans.

Speaking to the Cars Council, the top body on so-called worker participation, last Monday he announced that Leyland Cars will be split up into four sections, Austin, Morris, Rover and Jaguar Standard Triumph.

He does not spell out exactly what his 'decentralisation' moves mean in practice but it is clear they do not extend to collective bargaining where he is pressing

forward with the introduction of a rigid centralised wages structure.

One thing Edwardes has made absolutely clear is his contempt for so-called worker participation in management.

Monday's meeting was his first contact with the collaborators on the Cars Council since his appointment yet he had given three press conferences and organised numerous leaks.

"Counter-proposals"

His contempt however does not stop him making the 'participation' structure central to his method of enforcing his policies.

The response of Stalinists and the right wing on 'participation' has been to present

Workers must open bosses' books

"counter proposals" to Edwardes' ambition to cut back Leyland Cars.

Instead of proposing opposition to redundancies and closures by the occupation of the plants and a fight for work sharing on full pay they propose increased productivity as the answer.

How he imagines increased productivity can save jobs and not lose more was revealed by Derek Robinson, leading Stalinist convenor at Longbridge.

He said that the present 850,000 production figures (which incidentally the company can't sell) should be increased to one million with no increase in the workforce.

This means speed-up and "no-strike" guarantees, leading to an inevitable 3 or 4 day week and massive redundancies if the extra cars are not sold.

So yet again the Stalinists are trying to tell the capitalists how to run their businesses.

Asked what would happen if workers wouldn't accept this speed-up, Robinson replied that they would have to accept Edwardes' plans.

Support

Sure enough, one of the leading left-talkers in the combine, John Powers, Senior Steward at Cowley Spares has replied:

"I'm supporting the new chairman [not of the union, but of the capitalist company] because he can either kill us or cure us. If Michael Edwardes can bring back profit, we can negotiate against that. I support him."

All this is taking place when the corporate bargaining plan is being negotiated which contains "no-strike" clauses unchanged and the incentive scheme which contains such clauses as one whereby workers would have to increase their efficiency by 1½% every three months in order to achieve the same bonus as the previous quarter.

But all this is being consciously covered over—not just by the company but also the senior stewards like Robinson and Powers who have not informed the membership in any real way as to what is contained in these negotiations.

Challenge

Why should all this be kept a secret? Why accept Edwardes' figures or as do the Stalinists and the right wing, accept his arguments on the state of the company?

Trade unionists must challenge this conspiracy of silence and demand Leyland's books be opened to elected shop floor committees. All secret negotiations must be ended.



Firemen's violent hostility to the betrayal of their 30% pay claim was demonstrated in the aggressive picket of the recall conference at Bridlington last week.

Police were called in to protect Executive members and were present to "protect" the FBU leadership inside the hall itself.

The conference began with a point of order from Strathclyde objecting to police remaining in attendance while union members were excluded. A challenge failed to win the two-thirds majority needed to overturn the ruling of President Wilf Barber.

In recommending acceptance of the employers' offer Terry Parry had surrendered to both the employers' key objectives;

*A full return to normal working with no action against scabs.

*Agreement that by 1979 firemen's pay would be "in the adult male manual upper quartile" and movements take place annually "to maintain the relationship."

This means that firemen move up the "league table" compared with other workers—but will not provide increases bearing any relation to the cost of living.

If current moves by NUPE and the GMWU bear fruit the firemen could be the first of a series of long-term arrangements in the public services—benefitting nobody but the employers.

But one thing that Parry and his cronies will find it hard to take away is the tremendous political education that firemen have received during their nine week struggle.

From a generally conservative position at the start of the dispute, firemen reached the point of seeing as clearly as any section before them the criminal role of the TUC leaders and the problems that confront even a 100% solid official strike.

The rumblings at the conference of moves to oust the leadership must be transformed into planned action to carry this fight through, and build a conscious alternative.

Cowley recognition fight

British Leyland's refusal to recognise Alan Thornett as a TGWU Deputy Convenor at their Cowley Assembly Plant is to be the subject of a meeting between National Officers and Pat Lowry, British Leyland's Personnel Director.

After being elected in a shop floor ballot at the plant a month ago, Thornett was

confronted by management when he attempted to take up his position on the appointed day, January 3.

He was instructed to return to his job on the transport section or his payment would cease.

In addition he was told that all levels of management and supervision had been instructed not to negotiate with him as a deputy convenor.

Reports in some newspapers that Alan Thornett

had "stood down" from his elected position were fabricated by the press.

A meeting of the TGWU stewards held soon after the elections had decided that the TGWU officials should be forced to intervene if British Leyland carried out their non-recognition threat.

In line with this policy, it was decided to recall the stewards meeting on February 1 if recognition had not by then been achieved.

have sat down to draft proposals for "phasing out" thousands of jobs while workers on the shop floor are deliberately kept in the dark as to the real causes of these gigantic losses.

It is obvious that the losses are not caused by overmanning. The estimated loss for the coming year is the equivalent of paying 520,000 workers a salary of £100,000.

Depression

The crisis in the steel industry is directly related to the chronic depression of the world capitalist system, and the fact that production in British industry is still at the level of the three-day week.

There is not even any respite to be gained by permitting thousands of jobs to be lost in BSC.

There are no other jobs to go to, and the plight of those remaining in the industry will deteriorate still further.

Yet, astonishingly, at the very point that closures and sackings are being discussed, union bureaucrats have agreed to the implementation of a new extension of 'worker participation' in BSC.

Determination

This commits them to using their positions to force home speed up and "voluntary" redundancies on their own members, and is a further indication of these bureaucrats' determination to assist the all-round attack on their members.

The issue here as in British Leyland is for trade unionists to elect committees with the task of examining the books of BSC, and showing who profits from BSC's losses.

Which private suppliers and manufacturers benefit, and which banks cream off fat interest payments?

Work-sharing

And on the basis of this information workers must step up the fight for work-sharing on full pay for the whole BSC workforce and for the nationalisation of these sectors as the beginning of the planned, integrated and nationalised industry that will be possible under socialism.

Meanwhile the collaborators and job cutters that comprise the Labour and trade union leadership must be removed.

Too big

Everyone has been told that BSC losses are astronomical, some £520 million per year, or £1.5 million every day. The figures involved are too big for pocket calculators.

But these Labour MPs, with the acquiescence of the leadership of the steel unions

Monthly Fund

The continuing relentless rise in prices was again brought home to us this month with a further increase in our costs, the first of many, no doubt, in the next twelve months.

This underlines once more the need for a most tenacious fight to raise the finance necessary to maintain and develop the 'Socialist Press'.

This week we received a further £167 giving us a total so far this month of £297.40. This is a good start to the month but we must maintain this pace if we are to raise the full £600.

All donations should be sent to:
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