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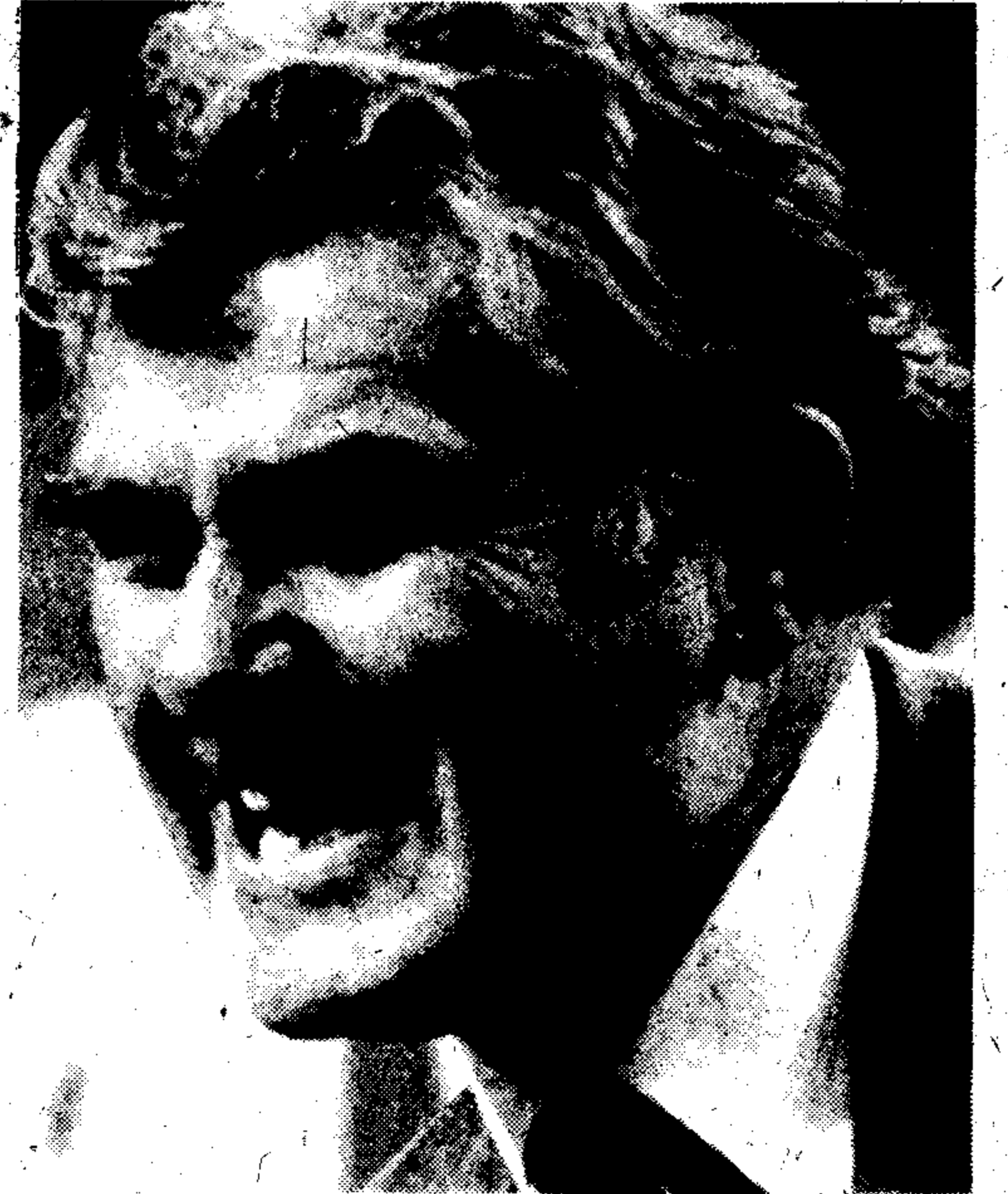


TURKEY
ON THE
SPOT
REPORT
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Weekly paper of the Workers Socialist League. * No. 187 * 20 February 1980 * 20p



Pickets block the road outside Hadfields



Sirs—losing control?

"Sirs losing control of steel strike," headlined a panic-stricken *Sunday Telegraph* this weekend—pointing to the growing strength of ISTC strike committees as the seven week-long strike hardens further.

As Sirs' remaining grip on the strike visibly weakens, so the capitalists' hopes of securing a miserable sell-out settlement have faded.

Instead they have been forced to look on as mass pickets—drawing on important NUM support mobilised by Arthur Scargill—successfully shut down the Hadfields steel plant in Sheffield, and laid plans to repeat the procedure at Manchester Steel and Sheerness.

With engineering firms now beginning to feel the pinch of restricted supplies of steel, this tightening of the dispute and the moves in many areas to secure lorry drivers' support for picket lines will have an increased effect.

Meanwhile a delegate meeting from the BSC craft unions voted 2-1 to throw out the miserable pay deal recommended by their negotiators, and thus to remain out alongside their brothers and sisters in the NUB and the ISTC.

Beyond wages

Nor have the Tories failed to note the menacing signs that the struggle has now escalated beyond the wages issue, to take in the even more explosive question of the defence of 52,000 jobs threatened by BSC management's closure plan.

Already in Port Talbot an all-union strike committee has declared that even if the pay claim is settled they will remain on strike until they establish job security. Llanwern strikers seem likely to take a similar stand: and the chances are that they will be backed up by strike action from the 30,000 strong South Wales NUM.

Welsh miners' President Emyln Williams has also announced that—regardless of the efforts of the British and Welsh TUC to restrict action to protest levels—he will fight to spread such a strike to other areas of the NUM, whose national policy is to fight pit closures.

STEEL STRIKE STRENGTHENS— BRING OUT BL!



Joseph

Meanwhile steelworkers' shouts of "Thatcher Out!", now gaining in volume alongside "20%—no strings!", have found more physical expression in the humiliation of Industry Secretary Sir Keith Joseph, pelted and hounded out of South Wales by hundreds of angry strikers last week.

But while the steelworkers seem to be escaping from the grip of Bill Sirs and the steel union bureaucrats, other union leaders are doing everything in their power to isolate the strike and to reassert their control over their own members.

Last week saw a brazen move by GMWU General Secretary David Basnett to sabotage a strike call by delegates representing over 20,000 water workers.

The delegates had thrown out a 19.2% management pay offer recommended by GMWU officials, and called for an all-out strike, beginning February 25, to secure their demand of pay parity with gas workers.

Knifed

But Basnett last Friday intervened to knife this correct policy by preventing the delegates' proposal going to the GMWU Executive until after renewed talks with the employers.

Basnett's treachery could at least parade under cover of the fact that management are almost certain to increase their offer this coming Thursday.

But no such excuse could be seriously put forward by negotiators for 85,000 British Leyland carworkers, in the wake of the 6-4 ballot vote to reject management's derisory 5%-with-strings offer.

Edwardes and a barrage of media propaganda had stressed that to reject the offer meant to vote for a strike.

Despite this a clear majority still voted to throw out the 5% and the 92 pages of strings: yet sooner than call the necessary all-out action alongside the steelworkers, union leaders trailed along for further futile talks with Edwardes, and offered the company another two weeks to come up with an improved offer for the pay review—due for settlement last November!

There is plainly no chance of any such improved offer being made by BL. But every day that slips by allows the Tory press and the employers to work on bolstering up the fears, frustrations and demoralisation of BL workers—who have been betrayed time and again in recent years by their own negotiators.

Yet with inflation now headed rapidly towards 20%; and with management still firmly on the offensive at BL—where Combine Committee Chairman Derek Robinson remains victimised—only the most determined, united stand can defend jobs and living standards against this Tory government.

Now that the LCJNC has delayed action for two weeks, resolutions from shop stewards' committees, mass meetings and

from steelworkers' strike committees—should pour in to the negotiators demanding that all-out action be called from Monday March 3.

The dynamic of the steel strike is still towards more generalised action to defend jobs in both BSC and related industries: BL workers, who face a parallel Tory-backed attack must strike now and play their part in this fight, which must be developed into an all-out *General Strike*, with the demand for the removal of the Tory government.

In every area strikers must fight for the building of *councils of action* to draw delegates from every section of the labour movement into spreading the fight to bring down the Tories, and to remove those right wing Labour traitors that paved their path to office.

The struggle must be taken up throughout the workers movement for a principled leadership prepared to carry through socialist policies in the interests of the working class.

The slackening grip of Bill Sirs on the steel strike is its best hope of success: the task now is to develop a conscious alternative to Sirs and his fellow bureaucrats throughout the Labour and trade union movement.

Turkey coup danger grows

Izmir, the third largest city in Turkey, was put under martial law this weekend as Prime Minister Demirel instructed army commanders to launch an all-out offensive against left wing organisations.

This latest crackdown took shape following a factory occupation in protest at the victimisation of 790 left-wing trade union members, as the new management attempted to establish recognition of the fascist trade union confederation MISK.

10,000 troops, with tanks and armoured cars, stormed the occupied factory on Thursday—but even after the occupiers were evicted resistance continued leading to running gun battles between workers and a 2,500-strong police task force.

As bourgeois opposition leader Ecevit denounced Demirel's actions—comparing him to Uganda's Amin—army chief General Keran Evren angrily demanded increased powers and punishments to "overcome anarchy".

Such increased repression will continue to be directed exclusively at the left—leaving fascist bands free to maintain their campaign of violent provocations.

But workers' refusal to submit to such intimidation brings increasingly close the danger of a fascist-backed military coup as a last-ditch bid to crush the Turkish labour movement.

This poses more sharply than ever the need for a workers' united front to resist such an attack.

GENERAL STRIKE! TORIES OUT!

FSLN bans left wing paper

In banning the newspaper *El Pueblo* on January 25 the Sandinist government has taken one of its most dramatic moves yet against the left in Nicaragua.

El Pueblo is the paper of the Frente Obrero (FO—Workers Front), an organisation which split to the left from the Sandinists in the early 1970s and now leads the armed Anti-Somoza Peoples Militias.

We do not have enough information to make a rounded political assessment of the FO, but the bureaucratic Sandinist moves against it seem to be very directed against any independent action of the masses in pursuit of their interests.



Women textile workers march in support of the FSLN.

Severe sacrifice

The Sandinist regime accuses the FO of organising strikes of industrial workers and seizures of private land by landless peasants.

The regime recently promulgated its new economic reconstruction programme which demands years of severe sacrifice and austerity from the workers and peasants.

The main aim of the plan is to restore a profitable private sector of the economy.

Publication of the plan was delayed to take account of objections to the original from the main local capitalist organisation the Higher Council of Private Business (Cosep).

The plan recognises capitalists as "vital" to the economy, envisages little extension of state control beyond the already nationalised former property of ex-dictator Somoza, plus the banks, insurance companies and a few small US and Canadian owned mining companies.

It does foresee giving subsidies and tax concessions to the 40 most important private firms in the hope they will step up production (now probably still 20% below what it was before the civil war) and reduce the catastrophic and threatening level of unemployment, now estimated at 45% of the labour force. No wage increases are foreseen. In fact the normal Christmas bonus of a month's wages was withheld by the government.

The FO, through *El Pueblo* (The People), has called for "the active sabotage of the economic plan in order to bring power back to the hands of the people", accusing the government of "selling out the proletariat to the local bourgeoisie".

The policy of the Sandinistas seems to be to go all out to get half-promised aid from the USA and the World Bank, to nurse the local capitalists back to profitability and so to put a

firm brake on any attempt by workers and peasants to seize factories and land or to exercise workers control and management of the economy.

But given the vast gap between the expectations aroused in the masses by last year's revolution and the miserable conditions they now have to live in, the regime is certain of growing opposition from the masses.

Twin strategy

To deal with this contradiction the Sandinists are employing a twin strategy of building up bureaucratically dominated mass organisations, such as the Sandinist Trade Union Federation (CST) on the one hand, and repression on the other.

The banning of *El Pueblo* joins the expulsion of the Simon Bolivar Brigade last August as an example of the counter-revolutionary nature of the Sandinista government.

CRISIS FOR POLISH STALINISTS



Gierek (left) with Brezhnev and E. German leader Honecker

The Eighth Congress of the Polish United Workers (Communist) Party last week found its leadership in complete disarray, not knowing which way to turn either in domestic or in international policy.

All the problems can be

traced to one cause—the growing failure of Poland's planned socialist economy to meet the needs of the masses of workers and peasants in the country.

During the Congress it was embarrassingly revealed that last year the rate of economic growth was minus 2%, and that dreadful performance was obtained only at the cost of getting even deeper into debt (now to the tune of £8 billion) to the capitalist international banks.

That failure, combined with an increasingly evident loss of political control by the bureaucracy, means that the Polish ruling team stands closer to the precipice than any of the other ruling Stalinist cliques in eastern Europe.

This frightening position obviously resulted in some attacks of vertigo on the part of the leaders during the Congress.

The worst affected was the Prime Minister, Jaroszewicz, who until half way through the week unexplainedly stayed away from the Congress altogether, while other bureaucrats took advantage of his absence to launch a whole series of criticisms of his administration behind his back.

Responsibility

On Wednesday he reportedly resigned and this gesture threw into the balance also the fate of other senior government ministers, including Planning Minister Wrzaszczyk.

Nobody has yet suggested (publicly, that is) that the real strong man of Polish Stalinism, Party Secretary Edward Gierek, might share some responsibility for the economic disasters.

Gierek's three hour report dominated the gloom-laden Congress. And its content, as well as repressive actions before the Congress, gave very clear evidence of the political plight of the bureaucracy.

The most striking feature of the speech is that it did not explicitly support the actions of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, nor did it utter a word against the policy of the imperialist countries. It did no more than regret the cold war.

This extreme reticence is no doubt a reaction to two things: to hostility towards the Soviet Union from the Polish masses and to the Polish bureaucracy's desperate need to carry on borrowing from capitalist banks in order to avoid the level of austerity measures which might spark the political revolution

as it began to do in the uprising of 1976.

Every week informed estimates of Poland's borrowing need for the coming year seem to go up. At present they are estimated at a further £7 billion for 1980.

Failure to be able to borrow that amount would mean that Poland would have to request a rescheduling (postponement of repayment) of its debts to the capitalist banks.

That would allow imperialism to apply a stranglehold on Polish economic policy. So it is not surprising that Gierek went out of his way to conciliate the imperialists and avoid taking the side of the Soviet Union in the new Cold War.

At the same time however Gierek showed that he could not afford to be so flexible in his internal policies by arresting 12 dissidents of the KOR civil rights group immediately before the Congress.

But this repressive gesture now looks very like trying to hold back an incoming tide, since Poland is now awash with more or less open opposition currents of intellectuals, the Catholic church and most threateningly of all the working class.

All of these opposition organisations are making things increasingly uncomfortable at home for the Polish bureaucracy. But what makes it fear for its life is the memory of the spontaneous eruption of working class fury in 1976.

The crisis of the Polish regime comes hard on the heels of crises with many similar features in two other Stalinist ruled states—Cuba and Vietnam.

Other Stalinist rulers must be fearfully asking themselves 'Who is next?'

Whether because they feared what might happen if they left home, or because they did not want to watch the discomfiture of the Polish leaders, very few of them turned up in Warsaw.

There were no Party Secretaries at the ringside to watch the debacle. Most of the observers were pensioned off Politburo members including General Giap who was recently chopped as Defence Minister in Vietnam (though he is rumoured to be about to be promoted again in a new reshuffle at the top in Hanoi).

After this disaster of the Eighth Congress the Stalinist leaders of Poland will not be in a hurry to summon the Ninth!

Francoists fear army coup

The ghost of Franco still walks. Last week the man Franco made into one of his most talented political lieutenants—the present Premier Adolfo Suarez—removed from his command of the Brunete armoured division stationed near Madrid a man who Franco had appointed as an officer forty years before—General Luis Torres Rojas.

Torres was sent to be military governor of distant La Coruna in the far North-west. (Franco had been similarly sent to the Canaries early in 1936 by the Popular Front government. But today it is the "liberal, democratic" government of Francoists which fears a coup from the hardliners in the army and police.

Torres was reportedly plotting a coup. He had demanded that King Juan Carlos (Franco's choice to succeed him as head of state) dismiss Suarez. And he recently paraded his tanks, unauthorised, through Madrid to show that he meant business.

Torres' attempted coup is certainly not the first to have gone off half-cock in the four years since Franco's death and Spain's move towards a Francoist version of bourgeois democracy.

The most publicised was "Operation Galaxy" at the end of 1978.

But that and several other

publicised coup plans by maverick, adventurist generals are something of a smokescreen for a complete general staff whose "responsible" leaders are certainly ready to seize political control if the political situation gets any further out of control.

It was almost certainly under their insistence that Adolfo Suarez declared virtual martial law in Euskadi (the Basque Country) only four weeks ago.

Since then the killing of police and military officers by the Basque separatist movement ETA have continued.

At the same time terrorism against the left by fascist groups has been stepped up. Seven left wing Basque nationalists have been murdered this year.

In this atmosphere of mounting right wing terror and threats the political question in Spain today is 'When will Torres come back from La Coruna?' Franco was five months coming back from the Canaries.

The lesson of 1936 must be seized by the Spanish working class.

*For the creation of an armed workers' self-defence militia against fascist and state attack!

*Dissolution of the repressive forces of the state!

*General strike against military coup!

*Form committees of workers and other exploited and oppressed groups!

*Self determination for Euskadi, Catalonia and other nationalities!

*For a workers' government!

No rest for Bani-Sadr

"The revolution will continue, but with the essential aim of guaranteeing the development of the country".

President Bani-Sadr certainly has every intention of pursuing his political course to consolidate the counter-revolutionary triumph of petty bourgeois nationalism within the Iranian revolution.

Full backing

His struggle to end the US embassy occupation is now proceeding with the full backing of Ayatollah Khomeini—the very 'Imam' in whom the 'Islamic students' placed their faith.

Khomeini has agreed that the release of the hostages no longer depends on the return of the Shah and his fortune to Iran and so opened the way for final diplomatic haggling over the terms of reference of the 'international inquiry' and the terms of the 'apology' to be conceded by Carter's administration.

But the volatile political conditions within Iran leave Bani-Sadr no time to rest in complacency.

As floods sweep across south-western Khuzestan, violence has flared once again in the north-east.

Demonstration

After a demonstration by armed militants of the Fedayeen in Gonbad-e-Kabus, several days of fighting broke out when the army and the Pasderan attacked both the Fedayeen and armed Turkmeni fighters for national

rights.

This latest demonstration of the force of the national question in Iran was followed by an explosion within the armed forces themselves.

Turbulent

For a week, 2,000 junior officers and technicians from the airforce and army have been occupying the Tehran University mosque, demanding democratic elected councils within the armed forces, in opposition to the government's moves to re-impose the rigid officer structure of the 'professional' army.

It is against this turbulent background that Bani-Sadr is working to establish his authority and bureaucratic power. This project is involving a major shift of policy in the treatment of elements complicit with the Shah's dictatorship or collaborating with imperialism.

Many under arrest have been released, and there has been a dramatic turn from severity to leniency in sentencing.

Needless to say, this shift has not helped the still-imprisoned Trotskyist militants of the HKS.

Sickening display

The stalwarts of the Islamic clergy have fiercely denounced these moves by the Procurator-General Ghodoussi.

And in a sickening display of religious zeal, the Stalinists of the Tudeh Party have adroitly thrown their cries behind the 'anti-imperialist' bigots:

"What kind of Islam does Mr. Ghodoussi practice? The Islam of the exploiters or the Islam of the dispossessed?"



INTERNATIONAL

MASSIVE CRACKDOWN BY TURKISH BOSSES

The right wing Turkish government has launched a massive new attack on the living standards of the workers and poor peasants of Turkey in the form of a new "economic package".

The Turkish lira has been devalued by 50% against the dollar—and this vicious move has been accompanied by a 50% price increase on every basic commodity.

And a series of other moves have also been implemented by the Demirel government in response to commands from the IMF. In exchange the Turkish government is to obtain a \$228 million loan.

New "package"

Among the measures in the new "package" is legislation to reduce the power of the Turkish National Enterprise Board and to denationalise the mines, the oil industry and sections of the agricultural industry. This will open up some of the most profitable sectors of Turkish industry to exploitation by foreign and native capitalists.

These new measures will increase poverty and starvation and will reduce the living standards of the working class below subsistence level.

The government's official "minimum wage" is 3,200 Turkish Lira per week. But average wages are actually 5-6,000 Turkish Lira per month.

From this, workers face prices of the following order:

PRICES IN TURKEY

Rented accommodation (2 rms, per month)	2-3000 TL
Bread (loaf)	.8TL
Meat (beef or lamb) (per kilo)	300TL
Cheese (per kilo)	250TL
Cigarettes (20)	25TL
Eggs (dozen)	120TL
Potatoes (per kilo)	35TL
Onions (per kilo)	35TL
Beer (pint)	50TL

The latest increases seem set therefore to drive thousands of working class families into complete destitution.

Prime Minister Demirel defended the measures as necessary however, in order to stop the bankruptcy of capitalism in Turkey. "Any country would do the same", he insisted, if they, like Turkey faced 8% inflation per month.

Demirel argued that inflation would have reached 120% in 1980 if these steps had not been taken, and pointed to the \$17 billion international debts:

"If anyone has any different answers to this problem they are at liberty to say so."

He went on to say that it would be "a great success" for the government to hold inflation in the 1980s to 50% per year as now planned.

"Fundamental change"

But Bulent Ecevit, leader of the main bourgeois opposition party, the RPP, spoke out strongly against the new package.

"This is not simply a set of economic measures but a fundamental change in the economy", he declared.

Complaining about the reduction of the power of the state in the Turkish economy, Ecevit stated his view that the administration of the economy had now been handed over to big capital and foreign financial

As news came in of the major clashes in Turkey last week, we received the following article on the unfolding political and economic crisis from Jack Johnson, our correspondent in Istanbul.



Repression aimed mainly at Turkish left

continuation of his strategy of subordinating the independent strength and class demands of the workers movement behind his bourgeois party, the RPP, which speaks in populist terms in order to bolster the interests of sections of Turkish capitalism.

Demirel's recessionary plans will of course put many of Ecevit's bourgeois backers out of business—and reinforce the hold of larger and foreign capitalists over the economy.

Hollow

Yet Ecevit's denunciations of Demirel and his government's threats to democracy ring remarkably hollow.

He himself has admitted that only a few months ago he

institutions:

"... the streets, schools and state apparatus have been handed over to the Grey Wolves [fascists] but now the economy is handed over to some other wolves!"

"Cards on table"

In a follow-up speech Ecevit went on to warn that Demirel:

"wants to introduce an extended version of an economic model which was developed in Latin America. This cannot be introduced in any country without abolishing democracy. It cannot be done without abolishing workers' democratic rights. Now the cards are on the table: the danger is in front of everyone's eyes."

But Ecevit's answer offered workers no way forward. He called on workers organisations "to beware of the danger and take their stand with the democratic constitutional regime, otherwise it will be too late".

Ecevit's diagnosis of the situation is certainly partially correct. There is an immediate danger of a fascist-military take-over in Turkey.

Demagogy

However Ecevit's call to workers to defend democracy is mere empty demagogy. It is a

called on Demirel to form an RPP-Justice Party coalition to adopt a common approach to the problems of the Turkish economy.

He also agreed with Demirel on the passing of a series of anti-working class, anti-democratic legislation.

It was Ecevit's own previous administration that introduced martial law into the major cities and introduced a battery of repressive legislation.

Ecevit himself carried through successive devaluations and rounds of price increases.

In other words Ecevit played a key role in preparing the present situation he is now complaining about, by attacking and disarming the working class.

Now he calls on workers to "defend democracy"! Such hypocrisy must be rejected out of hand.

Popular Frontist

Of the trade union leaders only the right wing confederation TURK-IS has so far spoken on the situation, and renewed its reactionary call for an RPP-Justice Party coalition.

But within the next few days the other workers' organisations will take their positions. No "miraculous" about-turn should be expected from these organisations, whose leaders have for years clung to a Popular Frontist alliance with Ecevit and the RPP.

Even after the recent ultimatum from army leaders and a new wave of repression against the workers movement they still cling to the illusion of defending democracy through democratic means.

Since the formation of Demirel's government, repression and fascist terror have reached a new peak: the first 73 days of Demirel's administration has seen 497 killed and 779 wounded in fighting.

Closed down

The teachers' association TOB-DER has been closed down, and its leaders are still in prison. The leaders of the metal workers union are also still in prison: they were arrested for singing the 'Internationale' at the end of their union congress.

A huge witch-hunt is continuing throughout the country against militants in the unions.

11,000 workers in the government-owned TARIS agricultural products firm are

on strike following a police/army raid on their factory. TARIS workers resisted the police, and an armed struggle broke out, ending in 400 arrests.

Meanwhile the government is pursuing a policy of sending fascist workers into this factory to root out and crush the workers' organisations.

Savagery

The killing of a trade union leader by fascists and government attacks have also brought about another strike, this time by 20,000 workers at the state cigarette and alcohol firm TEKEL.

The savagery of the police raid on the TARIS factory led to protests from students at Egon University—in which there were armed clashes between police and students. And hundreds of students in Istanbul were arrested while protesting against police activity.

500 workers from one cotton factory in Istanbul were arrested and held for days in a school after they refused to join the fascist trade union confederation MISK. At the same time 40,000 government employed road and construction workers have been forced by the state to join MISK.

And thousands of teachers who took action in protest over last year's fascist massacre at Karamanmaras are being victimised.

Fascists protected

Repression can be seen everywhere—even in the streets of Istanbul, which is patrolled by armed soldiers stopping and searching individuals and cars; houses are raided—and raids on whole districts are becoming common.

Yet the fascists are always protected in these moves by the state. There has been no move to repress them in the areas they control—though left-wing controlled areas suffer the full brunt of state repression, and constant attacks by armed fascist gangs.

There is no sign that the potentially powerful Turkish workers' movement has given up the struggle for its rights. The metal workers union, its leaders still in jail, has declared that its wage negotiations have broken down, and that it is almost definite there will be a national



Ecevit

strike very soon.

And there are hundreds of small strikes and struggles going on. There will be more in the coming months as the working class show their refusal to accept the attacks from the government, the fascists and the military.

But the question of questions is under what leadership and with what perspective will these struggles be waged?

Unless there is a break from the wretched collaborationist policies of the union leaders and Ecevit's pleas to "defend democracy", there is a danger that the working class will be delivered up by its leaders to a fascist catastrophe.

There must be no confidence placed in Ecevit or the Turkish bourgeoisie to defend democracy. Rather workers must take up the independent fight in defence of their jobs, living standards and basic class organisations.

Defence squads

Armed workers defence squads are the only way to defeat the violence of the fascists.

And there must be a political break from Ecevit. Demand the workers parties and organisations form a united front, to organise a General Strike to defeat the Demirel government and carry through the fight for a workers and peasants government in Turkey!



Turkish troops in action

Reconstruct the Fourth International!

No. 1 Nov. 1979

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'PEACE PEOPLE' AT WAR!

By Keith White

The ruling class media has been thrown into confusion over the last week by a major crisis which has developed within the movement known as the "Peace People".

Unable to make any significant inroads into the growing mass base of the Provisional Republican movement, and with their continual stories of the growth in anti-IRA feeling by 'ordinary people' beginning to look increasingly lame, the imperialists suddenly had a piece of luck in August 1976.

A car driven by a Provisional IRA volunteer went out of control after the driver was shot and killed by the army. It mounted the pavement with horrific consequences. Mrs Ann Maguire was badly injured and three of her children killed.

The shock of this tragic incident led Mairead Corrigan

(the children's aunt) and Betty Williams to found a movement ostensibly to campaign for an end to violence.

Massive publicity was heaped on the movement and the two founders were subsequently awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Accusations

Particularly since this award the movement has been in some difficulties.

There have been accusations that the founders misused the £80,000 which went with the prize, and rumours for some time that all was not well with the campaign so enthusiastically and typically encouraged by the imperialist butchers.

In the last week the internal dissension has burst into the open with a clear split in the movement.

It is still not clear what the real reasons for the split

actually are.

The occasion of the split was a meeting of the Executive which voted to remove the chairman Peter McLachlan. He then walked out and has threatened to launch another movement.

He seems to have some support from Betty Williams, who left the Executive meeting when the arguments started.

The movement's treasurer, James Galway, has resigned his post but chosen to stay with the organisation.

'Real life'

In a week of charge and counter-charge McLachlan—a former unionist politician who became chairman 1½ years ago—has claimed that at the root of the trouble are the policies of the man he originally replaced—Ciaran McKeown. McKeown has derided this

and refuses to be drawn as to his version of the split.

What is clear is that a significant factor in the crisis of the Peace People is a little thing known as 'real life'.

Pacifism—which seeks to impose a completely idealist solution onto the real world—must cope with the situation as it is—not as it would like the world to be.

In the Irish war of liberation there are two sides—imperialism and the Irish people led at present in their struggle against oppression by the Republican movement.

There are daily hundreds of situations to be commented on.

One of these, a central burning issue, is the campaign for the restoration of political status to the republican prisoners on the blanket in H Block.

Some sections of the Peace People—including McKeown—have felt it necessary to make



some criticism of the Emergency Legislation and the government's failure to find a compromise solution to end the H Block campaign. This has aroused intense anger in other sections of the movement, who indignantly see any such concession to impartiality as giving aid and comfort to the anti-imperialist

forces. No doubt further details of the split will emerge in the coming period.

We can only hope that the present problems facing the Peace People's Movement will deepen and result in the demise of what has been a useful tool and ally of imperialism.

PICKET FLEET ST

BREAK THE WALL OF SILENCE ON THE H BLOCKS!

Wednesday 27 February

Blanket Protest, Fleet Street, 6.00 p.m.

Assemble outside the Law Courts. Letters will be handed in to the editors of major newspapers

Organised by Troops Out Movement

Tories retreat on Oxford nursery closures

In a double-edged statement in the House of Commons last week Education Secretary Mark Carlisle offered some good news and some bad news to those fighting to defend and extend nursery education.

The bad news was that a new clause removing the statutory duty of local authorities to provide nursery education is to be pushed through with full government support.

According to Carlisle this simply "clarifies" the existing 1944 Education Act: in reality it strips away an embarrassing legal barrier to education authorities who wish to abolish nursery education.

But, clearly under pressure from nursery campaigners, Carlisle went on to announce a new "safeguard" against nursery closures to be written into the new Bill.

ment, withdrawn its threat to close down all Oxfordshire's nurseries, and leading reactionary Hugh Farrant has said he will resign from the council next year.

The tenacious struggle waged against the closure of all 1,500 places in Oxfordshire has made the Tory council a national byword for nursery closures—a label which the government as a whole is apparently keen to escape.

Assurances

Parents and trade unionists in the Save Our Nurseries Campaign which has stood at the forefront of this fight, are cautiously welcoming the announcement.

But they are asking for assurances that both nursery schools and nursery classes are actually saved, and that all jobs in the



Oxford nursery campaigners: their fight posed national embarrassment for Tories

service will now be made permanent.

The campaign also refuses to see Oxfordshire's £400,000-plus cuts being made in any other

sector—teachers jobs, capitation, school meals or transport.

The Campaign intends to launch a trade union enquiry into the needs and provision for

the Under Fives and their parents and to use this to further the fight for an expansion of nurseries throughout the county.

Leicester day of action

The campaign for a mass strike throughout the public sector in Leicester on February 27 has continued to make progress against the plans of the local trade union officials.

A series of joint union meetings involving NUT, NALGO and NUPE, far from strengthening the stranglehold of the bureaucracy, left them under siege on the platform as members demanded further action.

School ancillary staffs attacked NALGO in particular for deliberately separating their members in education from the rest of the union membership.

However, the decision of TGWU and GMWU to support the strike opens up the prospect of generalised school closures, and already rank and file members are talking of picketing schools where staff refuse to strike.

Parents, too, are organising throughout the city in support of the fight against the cuts.

Many junior schools have set up action campaigns, and there is a growing demand that a demonstration be organised on the 27th to provide a focus for the action.

United offensive

With the prospect of students at the local Polytechnic joining the strike, and also school students organised in NUSS, the crucial need now is for co-ordination of the different groups and campaigns against the cuts into a single united offensive, both against the Tories and the cuts, and against those local officials who want to head off the struggles into lame, isolated protests while they simply negotiate redundancy pay.

Mass action must be built around the Trades Council's nine point programme and co-

ordinated through the newly formed delegate anti-cuts committee, with the immediate emphasis on forcing the local bureaucrats to call a demonstration through the town on the 27th.

That must be followed by a mass picket of county councilors at County Hall and, to prevent any dissipation of the forces mobilised, immediate announcement of the dates for the next strikes.

At the same time, members of NUPE and NALGO must demand that their local officials come out clearly against all redundancies and stop negotiating with the Tory County Council.

Necessary fight

Shop stewards in particular must begin to organise the membership for the necessary fight to remove the current treacherous right wing leadership, directing the understand-

able anger of rank and file union members towards the union bureaucracy.

Crucial to this is the fight for an official instruction that NALGO and NUPE members will not cross picket lines formed by other unions in the Joint Public Sector Action Group, namely NUT, TGWU and GMWU.

Only on the basis of such inter-union solidarity, and the fight to link the struggle against the cuts to all other sections in struggle can we prepare the way for the defeat of the Tory government.

'Fighting the Cuts' (Socialist Press supplement) available 15p (incl. p&p) from WSL BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX

Prior axes 'job creation'

"I think we have done rather well", declared Employment Secretary James Prior, describing the Tories' record on unemployment.

He was speaking in a discussion of government plans to slash back the "job creation" subsidies introduced by the last Labour government, throwing additional thousands of workers onto already swollen dole queues.

Indeed the special employment subsidy to small firms of less than 200 employees—paying them £20 per week for up to 26 weeks for every extra full time job created—will be scrapped altogether.

And £140 million will be lopped off the Labour government's projected budget for the cosmetic job creation exercise, which artificially keeps hundreds of thousands of workers from signing on and boosting the unemployment figures.

Even under the Tories' pruned scheme up to 200,000 workers are expected to be kept—in most cases very temporarily—off the registers at an expenditure of some £360 million.

As Thatcher's full-blooded recessionary policies coupled to the impact of the world capitalist slump begin to drive unemployment figures consistently upwards it is plain that this aspect of government spending is likely to remain a permanent feature.



Carlisle

This would provide for authorities to be required to give advance publicity and notice of planned closures, to allow objections and appeals.

Immediately after the announcement, the ruling Tory group in Oxfordshire County Council has, apparently under pressure from central govern-



Prior

Right wing regain position in Labour inquiry

By John Lister

There are clear signs that Labour's right wing are beginning to regain the upper hand in the early stages of the inquiry into the Party's administration.

As the momentum of the media witch-hunt against Trotskyists and socialists in the Party's ranks begins to slacken, the left wingers who were recently forced into unaccustomed resistance to Callaghan and Healey have begun to give ground in a number of directions.

The inquiry has set up three subsidiary panels—designed to enable the right wing to draw in hardened anti-communists and hacks from the Parliamentary Labour Party and the Party officialdom.

Right wingers

Two of the three rotating chairmen of the inquiry—David Basnett and Michael Foot—are seasoned right wingers; and Callaghan's efforts between now and his retirement are directed exclusively at consolidating his reactionary alliance with the union leaders on the inquiry panel in the hopes of dealing a lethal parting shot at socialists in the Party.

This method of working is best designed to allow Callaghan to break down the nominal left wing majority on the inquiry team itself, and push ahead with the various right wing proposals to draw the teeth of the rank and file and reassert the control of the bureaucracy.

APEX, for instance, has already submitted a document calling for a witch-hunt against Militant supporters and proposing changes in the composition of the NEC designed to gerrymander an inbuilt right wing majority.

New section

The laughably misnamed "Campaign for Labour Victory" is also about to table proposals including the replacement of GMCs by meetings of the whole membership when major decisions are taken, and the abolition of the (left-wing) women's section of the NEC.

Both APEX and the CLV propose a new section of the NEC to include MPs elected by the right wing PLP.

Meanwhile the NEC's Organisation Committee has voted to recommend the reinstatement

of Oxford member Ted Heslin, expelled a year ago for supporting the policies of *Socialist Press*.

This was not surprising, since an earlier proposal from this same committee that the NEC uphold Heslin's expulsion was voted down last month by 15-8 on the NEC.

But at the same time the Organisation Committee voted to set up its own inquiry into "entrism" in the Labour Party—both by socialists and—to appear impartial—by "bankers industrialists and the CIA".

It was agreed that veteran witch-hunter Lord Underhill be invited by this inquiry to publish his stale and tawdry collection of documents purporting to be written by Militant supporters—but that, since there remain doubts on the authenticity of the documents, they would go out in Underhill's name alone.

As workers in struggle against the Tories increasingly look to Labour for a political alternative, the Party's right wing leaders will redouble their efforts to stamp out the slightest hint of socialism in the rank and file.

This means that the Party's 'left' wing, themselves confused as to the way forward, now face the most serious political challenge for many years.

If they do not now spearhead a struggle against the witch-hunters they face the danger of exposure in the eyes of a leftward moving rank and file, who can increasingly recognise the inability of reformist

PHOTO: Laurie Spahman, IFL



Basnett

politics to resolve their problems, and look for a principled, revolutionary leadership.

Callaghan's unheard plea

The decomposing corpse of last winter's ill-fated TUC-Labour Concordat was wheeled out of its crypt last week by Labour leader James Callaghan.

In a speech that was apparently immediately consigned to the dustbin of history by its intended audience he urged steel pickets to follow the written guidance given by the TUC last winter in agreement with his government.

There was no sign that workers were responding in their thousands to this call—any more than lorry drivers and public sector workers did last year.

But will Labour's 'left' ever



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Callaghan

respond with the much needed campaign to oust the Callaghan-Healey leadership?

PRESS GANG



When Julius Caesar was assassinated, the job of rescuing his reputation was given (in the Shakespeare version of events) to Mark Antony—cunning, ruthless, and ambitious.

His "Friends, Romans, Countrymen" speech skillfully transformed the anti-Caesar Roman masses into would-be avengers.

Keith Joseph, on the other hand, appears to lack Mark Antony's talents—and should consider changing his script-writer.

According to the *Daily Mail* account of his visit to Wales "He sought out the workers of South Wales to have reasonable converse with them".

Their reaction was not to praise Joseph but to bury him—in eggs, tomatoes and other foodstuffs.

But Joseph's ungainly retreat from Wales was treated by the press as yet another example of the sub-humanity of the workers involved.

The *Daily Telegraph* in a

defence of 'poor Sir Keith' was not even anxious to accord them even that much, saying he was pelted:

"by a relatively small crowd purporting to consist of dispossessed steel workers".

"Bullets?"

After outlining a short history of British politicians receiving similar treatment the paper said:

"The uneasy feeling remains that even such modest violence has today a more sinister meaning than it used to... Is it quite morbid to fear that nowadays those who start with eggs and tomatoes may quickly graduate to bullets?"

The *Daily Mail* was more sanguine.

"There are worse dangers in political life than being shouted down by angry Welshmen or having to dodge a few squelshy missiles. The greatest threat to this Tory Government right now is that it will suffer from a loss of nerve."

But Sir Keith's difficulties were small beer to the reaction to the mass picket at Hadfields.

After several days of mounting pickets—which were taunted by the press because they failed—Hadfields was eventually shut by two thousand pickets who defeated the strike breaking efforts of 700 police.

The *Daily Mail* in its southern editions was happily silenced—not by the pickets but by a pay strike of EETPU members.

The *Daily Express* stepped into the breach. "Anarchy has won" was the label on its front page pictures of the picket.

But the events turned the press, not so much on the steel workers as on Prior. The Tory press is uniformly in support of the Cabinet 'hawks'.

Indeed it is doubtful whether their most extreme proposals go far enough for the gutter press.

Across the top of the *Express* front page was a message: "This is why you need to act, Pussyfoot Prior".

Next time someone is sent to face the steelworkers in Wales or Yorkshire, Prior not Joseph will get the popular vote of the Tory press.

Tory medicine killing patient!

As evidence builds up to support the view that the British economy is already stagnant and teetering on the verge of a Tory-fuelled inflation, the inflation and balance of payments figures last week must have made even some arch-Thatcherites wonder where their policies are leading British capitalism.

Inflation roared ahead to 18.4%—before many additional increases in rents, rates, fuel prices, public sector charges and other commodity prices make themselves felt.

Material costs

It is now certain that the 20% inflation rate will be reached before the summer—at which point of course the anniversary of the colossal round of price increases unleashed by the Tories in their first budget will begin to distort the comparative year-on-year figures.

Another ill omen for the Tories however is the soaring cost of fuel and raw materials now hitting manufacturing industry—bringing the largest January increases since 1977.

Material costs—led of course by fuel and oil—rose by a staggering 27.3% in the 12 months to January 1980. And

with high interest rates taking their toll, companies face growing pressure on their profit margins.

Meanwhile the downturn in British industry is also reflected in the trade figures, in which the colossal revenues for North Sea Oil have proved insufficient to prevent an estimated £296 million trade deficit for the month of January.

And while imports of manufactured goods fell last month, this seems to be less the result of competition from British firms than the outcome of a slump in demand for goods from both home and abroad.

The estimated trading deficit for 1979 is now put at a massive £2.5 billion, with a further £2 billion deficit predicted for 1980.

As the icy winds of the world recession begin to make themselves felt, sections of Tories must be looking in uncertainty at Thatcher's relentless policy of stripping aside the protection swathed around British capitalism by the Wilson-Callaghan government.

The now largely naked creature seems in imminent danger of death from exposure.

For workers, the solution involves swift mass action to put it out of its misery, and to carry through measures of socialist expropriation and the establishment of a planned, nationalised economy.

Benn renews call for import controls

The Thatcher government in a curious about-turn has now emerged as a leading defender of protectionist measures—to curb imports of cheap US-made man-made fibres.

The Tories last week got agreement from the European Commission to impose quotas on sales of US polyester filament yarn and nylon carpet yarn.

Quotas on a third category—tufted and nylon carpets—were ruled out by the Commission.

This move towards trade war arises from the fact that US manufacturers are able to utilise subsidised petro-chemical raw materials—and are wiping out profits in whole areas of the European fibre industry, which is expected to lose £500 million this year.

But at the same time US employers are demanding protectionist measures to keep cheaper European steel out of the American market.

In Britain the CBI at its 1979 conference swung in support of a policy of import controls, flying at that point in the face of the Tory government. But now the growing tensions of the crisis are driving capitalists in every country to seek ways of defending their profits against their competitors.

Import controls

It is therefore particularly ironic that last week should also have seen Labour 'lefts' including Tony Benn, Norman Atkinson, Leslie Huckfield and Stuart Holland table an early day motion in Parliament calling on the Tories to impose import controls to prevent further

penetration of the British car market.

The answer to the crisis now facing the British car industry does not lie in joining hands with "our" employers and managers in a fight to keep out "foreign" cars.

Classic example

Such a policy does nothing to defend jobs or working conditions in British plants—where BL is the classic example of class collaboration leading to closures.

Instead, by seeking to export unemployment to Europe, Japan or elsewhere, it simply divides the international working class along national lines and assists the tub thumping "patriotic" campaigning of the Tory government.

The only way forward is through an independent policy, whereby the working class

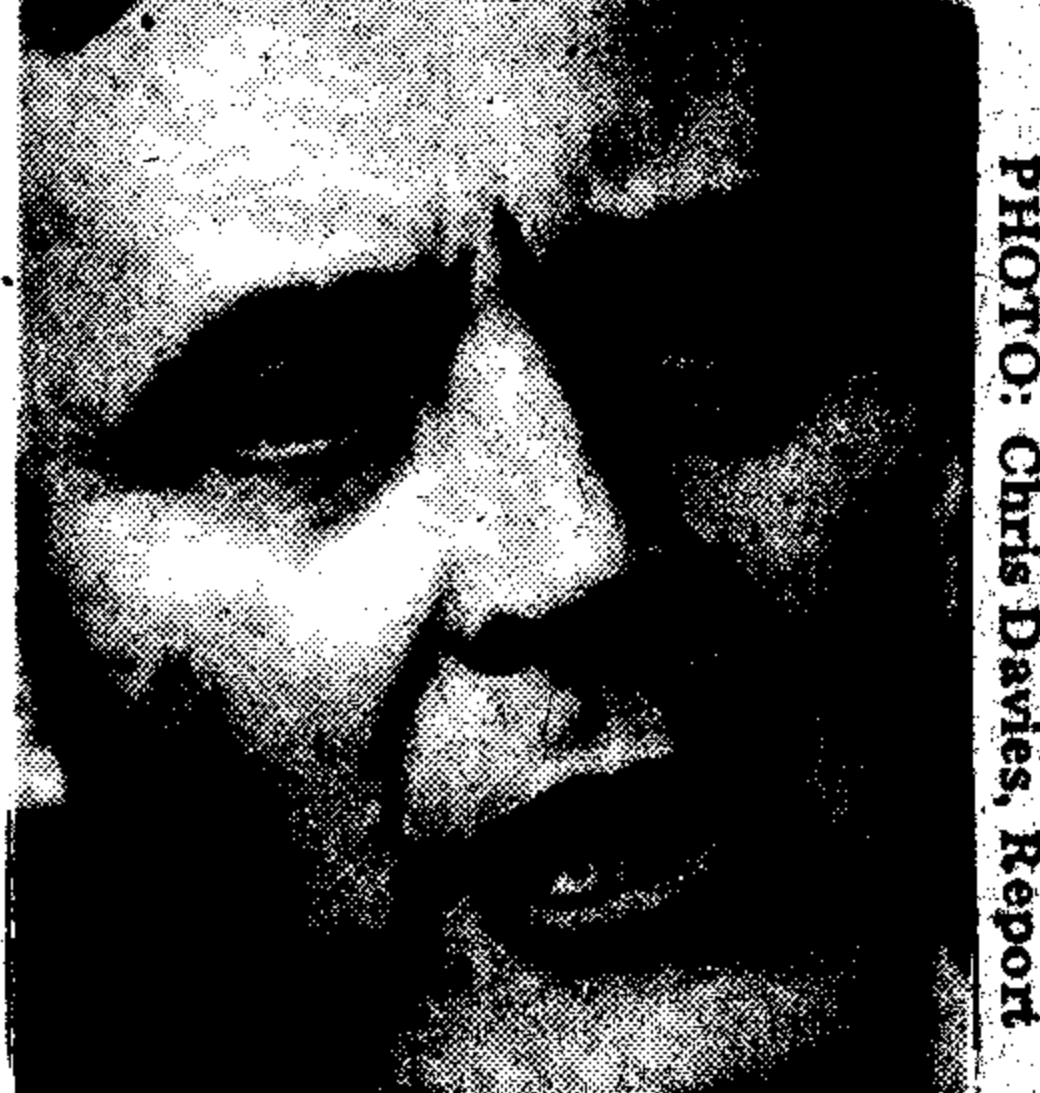


PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Benn

refuses to carry the cost of the crisis, and fights through strike action and occupations—to defend all jobs, to divide the work available without loss of pay, and to create conditions for the nationalisation of major industry and the banks without compensation under workers management.

MAKERS OF MODE

4. Georg Lukacs

Georg Lukacs, hailed by many as one of the greatest Marxist theorists of the twentieth century, was born in Budapest in 1885, and in his early life came under the influence of German idealist philosophy.

Two early works, *The Soul and its Forms* (1911) and *The Theory of the Novel* (1914-15), reflect this idealism.

In the first, Lukacs sees a tragic contradiction between 'authentic' human values and a sordid actual world. In the second, he views the very form of the novel as a fruitless search to rediscover that unity of authentic value and real life which, he claims, disappeared with the Greek epic.

Plunged into despair by the first imperialist world war, haunted by irrationalist philosophies, Lukacs discovered a spiritual turning-point in the Bolshevik revolution.

Proletariat

Here, at last, 'authentic' value had transformed real history, in the shape of the revolutionary proletariat. One year later, Lukacs joined the Hungarian Communist Party, and became deputy commissar for education and culture in the ill-fated Hungarian soviet republic of Bela Kun. He escaped to Vienna when the republic was crushed, and began writing what was to become his major theoretical work, *History and Class Consciousness* (1923).

That work must be placed in its political and intellectual context. Lukacs had moved from Romantic idealist to Marxist; but in some ways he had simply translated the one into the other.

The proletariat embodied universal, authentic value, and as such was to hold itself aloof from compromise with sordid bourgeois reality.

"Spontaneity"

The political results of this idealism were ultra-leftism, syndicalism and a somewhat Luxemburgist faith in working class 'spontaneity'—positions for which Lukacs earned a justified rebuke in Lenin's *Left-wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder*.

In *History and Class Consciousness*, the proletariat becomes essentially a 'Marxist' version of Hegel's Absolute Spirit.

For Hegel, the riddle of history is solved when this Spirit, which 'alienates' itself in objective reality, comes to recognise that such reality is in fact its own creation.

Lukacs rewrites this scheme in terms of the

From the 1920s to the present day, major contributions to Marxist theory have been made by thinkers indifferent or implacably opposed to the revolutionary heritage of Trotskyism.

From George Lukacs to Louis Althusser, Antonio Gramsci to Jean-Paul Sartre, Karl Korsch to Herbert Marcuse, a powerful body of 'Western Marxist' theory has been developed, which has yet to receive full critical assessment by Trotskyists themselves.

How are the Stalinist or revisionist politics of these writers to be weighed against their theoretical contributions to Marxist theory?

In this series, Terry Eagleton examines the work of the theorists named above, as an introduction to a full evaluation of their work.



Lukacs

working class. The working class is the 'universal subject' of history, but does not know it.

Because of its alienation, it cannot recognise itself as the subject of history, and has become instead the ultimate object—a pure commodity.

But once the working class realises its enslaved situation as a pure object, it will in the same moment be able to liberate itself from this condition.

There are many curious aspects to this viewpoint. For one thing, to speak of social classes as 'subjects' at all is to transplant idealism into historical materialism.

Class struggle

The proletariat is not some kind of 'collective individual' creating history; what creates history is not a 'class-subject' but the class struggle.

Moreover, the working class is not central to history in the first place because of its consciousness; this too is an idealist error.

Its world-historic significance comes from its objective place within the capitalist mode of production. If this is forgotten, then it is easy to slide, like Lukacs, into political voluntarism: the belief that all that is finally necessary is that the working class asserts its collective consciousness and seizes state power.

Ignored

The objective material problems involved in that process are merely ignored. It is not surprising that there is much in *History and Class Consciousness* about 'consciousness' and the 'universal subject', but little about the concrete material institutions—the state, the ideological apparatuses—which for a Marxist go to make up actual class society.

One result of Lukacs's idealism is his refusal to acknowledge the scientific status of Marxism.

Reacting against the mechanical materialism of

much Second International 'orthodoxy', he regards Marxism as little more than the 'expression' of revolutionary working class consciousness. Its value lies not in its objective, cognitive power; it lies simply in its ability to further the historical interests of the proletariat.

Relative

Its truth is thus relative to those interests; and Lukacs is able to escape from the worst consequences of such relativism only by a breathtaking bit of mental gymnastics. Marxism may be relative to the standpoint of the working class; but the working class is the 'universal' subject; a universal subjectivity is therefore objective.

Lukacs's hostility to Marxism as science goes hand-in-hand with his Romantic, irrationalist suspicion of science itself.

His critique of capitalism is focused much less on the facts of exploitation than on what he calls 'reification'—the fact that, because of the 'fetishism of commodities', social life under capitalism is fragmented into mechanistic processes, of which scientific analysis is one.

Rationality itself becomes a form of bourgeois false consciousness, breaking up the 'wholeness' of truly human life into artificial compartments.



Bela Kun

Against this Lukacs offers the 'totalising' movement of truly dialectical consciousness, which will grasp the interrelations of society as a whole.

It is true, of course, that dialectical thought goes beyond the reified categories of bourgeois society.

Purely objective

Indeed much of what Lukacs has to say of the 'fetishism of commodities', which in capitalism prevents men and women from grasping the real, underlying relations of the society, is of considerable value.

So is Lukacs's attempt to

restore the active nature of consciousness, as against those species of vulgar Marxism for which dialectics is a purely objective process excluding the human subject.

But all this in early Lukacs is inseparable from a nostalgic idealism which at times sees the true enemy, not as capitalism, but as 'rational', technological society itself.

In this sense, Lukacs stands in a long tradition of German Romantic-conservative thinkers who turn distastefully from the 'specialisation' and 'mechanisation' of modern society to some more 'organic' society of the past.



Hungarian Red Army men fight counter-revolutionary troops, 1919

RN MARXISM



Mass mobilisation of Hungarian workers, 1919, to defend proletarian dictatorship

It is just that, for Lukacs, that organic society is now placed in the future and called socialism.

History and Class Consciousness was roundly condemned by the Comintern and Lukacs made the first of his many submissions to authority.

More correct

In 1924 he published a brief study of Lenin, which advanced a much more correct version of the relations between party and class than that to be found in *History and Class Consciousness*, and so helped to preserve his official standing within the international Communist movement.

But trouble still loomed ahead. An essay of 1926, *Moses Hess and the Dialectic*, giving perverse praise to the later reactionary Hegel's submission to the status quo signalled Lukacs's desertion of his early ultra-leftism, and his new craven capitulation to Stalinism.

But just as Lukacs was abandoning his ultra-leftism to please Stalinism, Stalinism was in the process of swinging to the suicidal ultra-leftism of the so-called Third Period.

Caught on hop

Lukacs was caught badly on the hop.

In 1928, as General Secretary of the Hungarian Communist Party, he drafted the celebrated 'Blum' theses (after his party pseudonym), which argued for the need to create a Hungarian social democratic republic, and so fell foul of the Third Period's condemnation of social democracy as 'social fascism'.

Lukacs once again recanted—totally hypocritically, as he was later to reveal.

Faced with this set-back, Lukacs retreated from political theory into the literary and cultural writings for which he is today perhaps best known. These essays are included in such works as *The Historical Novel*, *Studies in European Realism* and *Writer and Critic*, written mainly in Moscow where Lukacs had taken refuge from the rise of Nazism.

Classic contribution

There is no doubt that this work, for all its faults, represents a classic contribution to the Marxist theory of literature.

Disdaining any mechanical reduction of literature to ideology, Lukacs finds in the very forms of the novel itself its deepest historical significance.

The major tradition of realist fiction, he argues, is produced by the bourgeoisie at a still progressive stage of its history.

At this point, bourgeois writers are still able to 'totalise' their societies, to grasp historical processes in all their complex interdependence, and to embody this in characters and events which are at once sharply individualised and socially 'typical'.

Totality

The great realist novel is thus a complex, rounded totality, which penetrates mere surface appearances to flesh out the most historically significant trends underlying them.

With the demise of the bourgeoisie as a progressive force, this realism begins to shatter and collapse.

From 1848 onwards, realism declines either into 'naturalism'—the mere static, surface recording of detail—or into various forms of subjectivism, as with the twentieth-century novel.

Perceptive

Characters and society become drained of meaning, history becomes pointless or cyclical, metaphysical despair grips the novelist's vision, objective reality becomes blurred and distorted into fantasy.

Much of what Lukacs has to say of realism and its decline is sharply perceptive. But it also springs from the worst form of Stalinist cultural dogmatism.

For Lukacs, realism is not just one art-form among many, appropriate to a certain historical epoch, but *the* art-form, from which all deviations are to be denounced as 'bourgeois decadence'.

Almost the whole of modern experimental art—art which tried crucially to produce new forms of perception—is contemptuously written off. And this includes *revolutionary* experimental art.

Watchdog

While writers like Bertolt Brecht were making a mass impact on German proletarian audiences by their exploitation of new artistic techniques, Lukacs's role in the 1930s was to act as the Stalinist watchdog over culture, denouncing all art which failed faithfully to copy the *bourgeois* realist tradition.

This dogmatic insistence on bourgeois forms of culture reflected the political realities of the Popular Front period; but once the class collaborationism of Stalinism was in full swing, Lukacs came back into favour.



Stalin (right) in 1940

For just as the Popular Front betrayals rested on a collaboration between Stalinism and the international bourgeoisie, so Lukacs's literary theory insisted on an essential harmony between bourgeois and 'socialist' art.

Lukacs had no great love for the Stalinist doctrine of 'socialist realism' in art; but he defended it, perfunctorily, as a 'higher' version of his only true love, bourgeois realism.

Reported

In 1945, Lukacs returned to Hungary, as professor of aesthetics in Budapest. When the Hungarian workers' uprising broke out in 1956 he became—somewhat half-heartedly—minister of culture in Nagy's government.

The events of 1918 repeated themselves with a vengeance: when the workers' uprising was smashed by Stalinism, Lukacs was deported by the Russians to Rumania for a year, and was later allowed to return to Hungary.

He spent the rest of his life at work on the problems of aesthetics, and died in 1971.

For all the apparent contradiction between Lukacs's early, ultra-leftist idealism and his later Stalinism, his career in fact reveals a hidden unity.

Rationality

What unites the two phases is that Lukacs was never able to break free from the grip of bourgeois culture. He adopted Marxism because it seemed to him the logical culmination of the great bourgeois traditions of humanism and rationality—a rationality all the more urgently needed as history moved towards the barbaric irrationality of fascism.

His early Marxism is thus a kind of 'materialist' reworking of the bourgeois idealism of Hegel.

But once he had committed himself to Stalinism, this belief that Marxism is in continuity with the best of bourgeois humanism, rather than also a decisive break with it, stubbornly remained.

This can be seen by looking at when exactly Lukacs is in favour with the Stalinists, and when he is out of favour. He is in favour whenever the Comintern lurches to the right, collaborating with the bourgeoisie; he is out of favour whenever it lurches to the 'left'.

Thus he is out of favour during the Third Period; back in favour during the Popular Front; out in the

cold once more during the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact; back in favour during the rest of the world war; denounced at the height of the Cold War; rehabilitated during the ludicrously termed 'de-Stalinisation' period, an era of 'peaceful coexistence'.

As Michael Lowy has pointed out in a recent useful book on Lukacs, it was not so much that Lukacs zig-zagged; it was more that he stood still and Stalinism zig-zagged around him.

To dismiss Lukacs as 'just another Stalinist' is clearly inadequate.

That he was indeed a Stalinist is clear; that he also produced work of enduring theoretical richness and value is also true.

Grave blow

One example of this contradiction can, in conclusion, be given. Lukacs's defence of the rounded, 'totalised' realist novel represented a grave blow against the pioneering work of revolutionary artists like Brecht.

For Brecht saw, brilliantly, that if revolutionary art deals with contradictions in history, then it must also display these contradictions in its very forms. And no neatly 'rounded', unified work of art is able to do that.

Instead, Brecht boldly broke up the reassuring 'harmony' of bourgeois art, tore it apart at the seams and so opened it up to the critical scrutiny of his audiences.

On the other hand, Lukacs's defence of bourgeois realism was also a rear-guard attempt to combat the most brutal philistinism of Stalinist art.

Implicit criticism

By striving to keep alive that rich bourgeois tradition he implicitly criticised the crude, dreary efforts which passed under the name of 'culture' in the darkest epoch of Stalinism.

But *implicit* criticism is the right word. If Lukacs privately, individually dissociated himself from some of the barbaric excesses of Stalinist culture, he remained, in most of his public political life, cravenly conformed to that counter-revolutionary movement.

It is a sign of that conformity that the only comments ever made by this immensely cultivated intellectual on Trotskyism were of a cheap, sneering crudity which would disgrace a political illiterate.

NALGO members spotlight snoopers

The current edition of NALGO News, magazine of the GLC NALGO Branch, takes up the fight to expose and combat police surveillance of labour movement demonstrations.

NALGO members obtained the photographs displayed on this page which show TV cameras and listening apparatus in use during a march by ILEA teachers protesting against education cuts.

We reprint below the full text of the NALGO News article, with thanks to the magazine for the supply of the photographs.

"GLC NALGO News has received photographs of plain clothes police spies on the roof of County Hall Island Block in the act of filming and tape recording the recent demonstration by the Inner London Teachers Association against the reductions in the ILEA budget.

We regard it as a serious infringement of the basic rights of trade unionists that they can no longer take part in legal and peaceful demonstrations without the fact being filmed and recorded, and presumably entered onto police records somewhere.

Delegations

Over recent months the GLC Branch of NALGO has sent delegations to a variety of marches, rallies and

demonstrations in support of causes which the branch supports.

These have included the anti-cuts march, the abortion rights march, the march against renewal of special powers in Ireland. Each of these marches has been filmed and recorded by the police. Each of these marches was legal and peaceful.

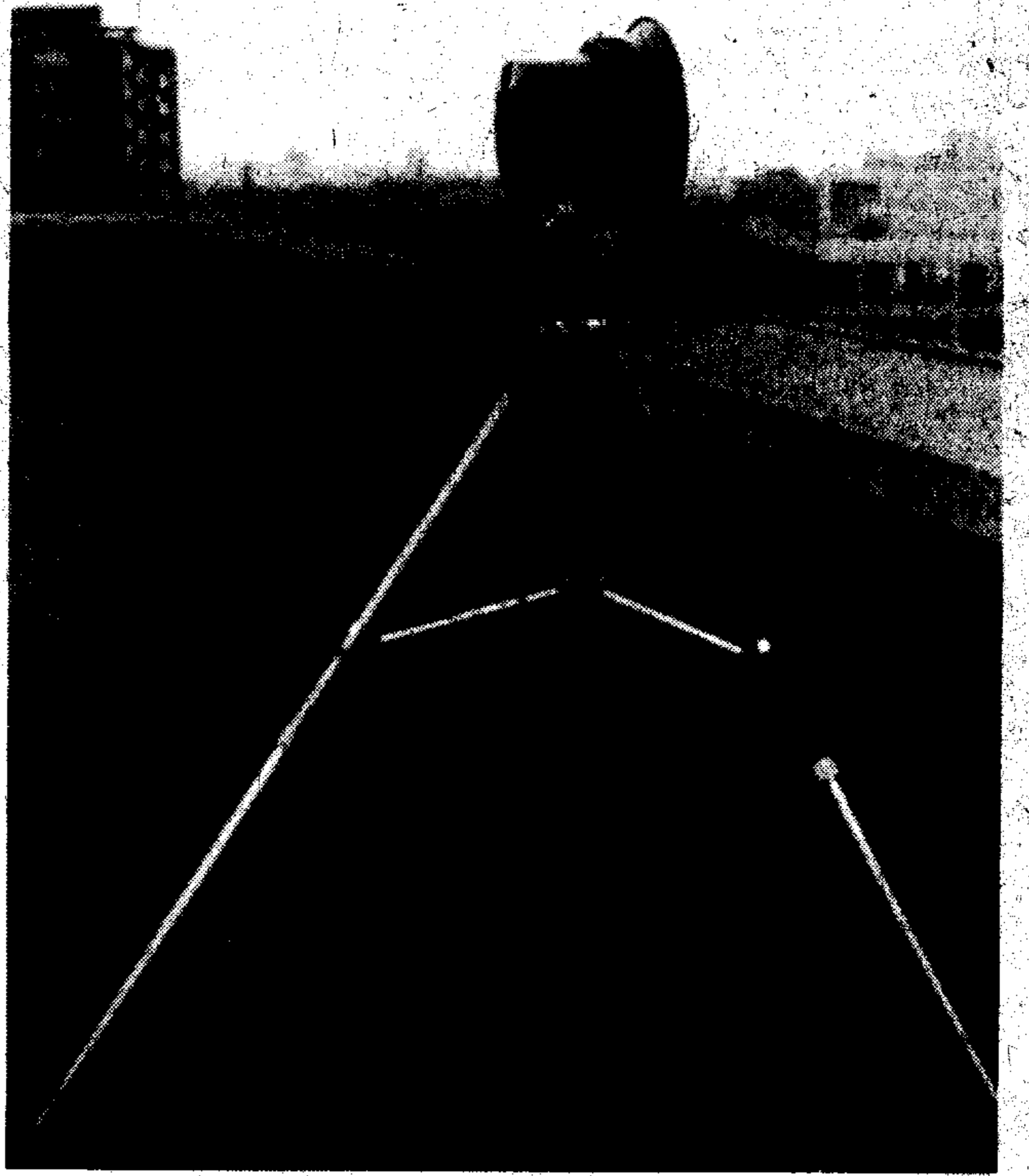
We believe that this practice has grown dramatically over the last year. We believe that its purpose is to allow the political sections of the police (in particular the Special Branch) and other security services to monitor and build up files on the activities of trade unionists, in order to be able at some later stage to disrupt any major trade union campaigns against

Government policy.

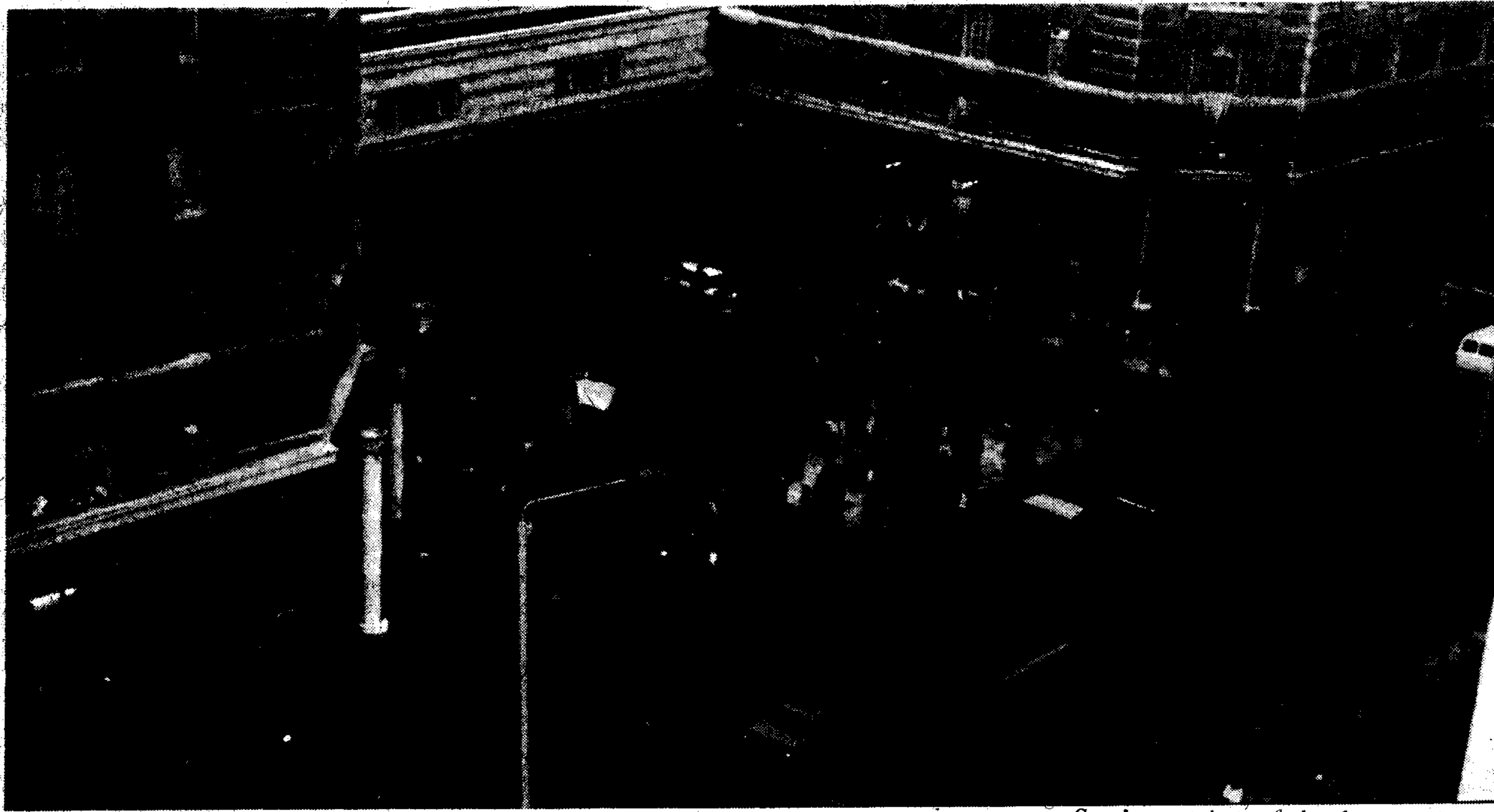
We demand an end to this practice generally, but we are particularly concerned about the use of our workplace for spying on our brothers and sisters in other trade unions.

Spying

We want to know who authorised the use of the Island Block for spying. We want to know if any trade union members are required as part of their jobs to cooperate in this spying. We also want to know which political party first allowed this practice, and if the left councillors who were inside County Hall at the time, voting against the ILEA cuts, knew that their supporters outside were being filmed in this way."



Police claimed that they were "monitoring traffic": was this giant microphone to record car horns?



Spy's eye view of the demonstration

Did Labour's leaders author

"Have we got the Security Services we deserve?"

This unpromising question opens up a Labour Party campaign launched last week with the publication of a "consultation paper" that offers a startling blend of naivety and dishonesty.

The Labour Party of course, is a reformist party dedicated to seeking the gradual transformation from capitalism to what they imagine to be "socialism" through peaceful, Parliamentary changes.

It therefore fails completely to understand the nature of the political secret police whose "abuses" they appear to wish to restrain.

Conscious

The "Security Services" are of course one of the most conscious wings of the state machinery whereby the minority capitalist class maintains its exploitation and control of the majority working class.

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report



Merlyn Rees

While in times of relative political stability the real content of such class rule can be conveniently masked behind flimsy drapes of Parliamentary democracy, bourgeois "justice" and democratic rights, the onset of political or economic crisis inevitably exposes the ever-ready presence in the background of the key defenders of bourgeois rule: armed bodies of men.



Whitelaw

The police force and the armed forces, the Special Branch and other intelligence services are in no way "neutral" or "impartial" elements in relation to the labour movement: as upholders of the capitalist system and the capitalist class their task is precisely to confine and contain the activities of the working class, and to observe, harass and disrupt conscious forces within the working class

that attempt to mobilise anti-capitalist struggles.

But the Labour document fails completely to grasp even these first principles of the working of the capitalist state.

The document complains that government security and intelligence services:

"... can also exert influence on behalf of economic, industrial and political interests of particular classes or groups".

The fact is that the state machine—far from being some neutral force suspended in space—can only reflect the interests of the class that holds state power.

Thus in the capitalist countries the "security services" invariably focus their energies on attacking the labour movement: in revolutionary Russia, however, in the wake of the 1917 October revolution, the Cheka under Dzerzinsky undertook the task of spying upon and repressing those pro-Tsarist and pro-capitalist elements that continued to agitate for a return to the old regime of exploitation and repression.

The degeneration of the leadership of the Bolshevik party under the massive material pressures brought about by the isolation of the Russian revolution brought about a consequent degeneration in the Soviet security services: as the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy consolidated its grip on the state machinery, so the secret police was directed not only against pro-capitalist, but also against Marxist forces—in particular supporters of Leon Trotsky and the Left Opposition.

"Right to function"

At no point ever in history has there been a state machine created that was in any real sense "neutral" in relation to the ruling class: nor is it feasible so long as class divisions exist, that such an impartial machine could ever exist.

But the Labour document actually begins by conceding that the British secret police have a right to function—and function secretly!

"The Security Services do have legitimate functions. We do not aim to destroy those legitimate capabilities. Or to expose their operation functions".

Consistent socialists, on the other hand, must recognise in the capitalist state machinery an enemy to whom no rights must be conceded, and which can never be brought under control through Parliamentary means or "the democratic process".

The Labour document goes on to point out that the Special Branch holds an estimated 1.3 million personal files on individuals. And it asks the ludicrous question: "To what extent should individuals have access to their own personal files?"

Disbanded

The answer that the Special Branch, along with its computers, files, bugs, tapping equipment, long-focus cameras and networks of informants and provocateurs, should be disbanded is plainly ruled out in advance: instead Labour seeks merely to offer the pretence of

Chix: is this as far as the GMWU will go?

Mary-Ann Todd joined the mass picket in support of the unionisation struggle at Chix sweet factory in Slough—and spoke to union leaders.

Last October Mrs. Brar, a worker at the Chix sweet factory brought in GMWU membership forms. Over a hundred fellow workers joined the union to organise against poor work conditions and appalling wages.

The women, who were mainly Asian and couldn't speak English, were particularly exploited.

They were paid 95p an hour, the men were paid £1.26.

The management refused to recognise the union despite appeals from officials and so the GMWU members (90% of the workforce) in the factory took the decision for strike action.

So far the strike has been on for 18 weeks. Strikers receive £10.50 from the GMWU and therefore are in dire need of what contributions they can get to supplement this from other unions.

"Welcome"

The strike committee however, consists of District GMWU Official Gerry McMullan, Mohammed Yasin (shop steward and worker at Chix) and Anwar, a shop steward, but not previously a worker at Chix.

Gerry McMullen was at pains to point out that there should be seven on the strike committee and that the women (the majority of strikers) were welcome on it.

But they cannot speak any English, however, and haven't turned up at committee meetings.

Mohammed Yasin said that the women strikers had family support for their picketing activities.

He said it was difficult to establish just how many scabs were working. When they arrived the hired van had its curtains drawn.

Further proof

The van picks every scab up from her house, often with a child, who is then looked after in a factory canteen.

This is of course yet further proof that employers will only agree to workplace nurseries when they need a woman workforce and it works to their advantage.

A fair degree of blacking has

PHOTO: Charlie Augusto, IFL



Asian women at Chix: key to picketing but not on strike committee

been organised by the GMWU. The Job Centre has agreed not to advertise Chix job vacancies.

Strikers have worked out the source of supplies—in particular sugar and glucose.

Workers in the British Sugar Corporation have blacked Chix, as have BSC's lorry drivers.

Another vital ingredient is glucose, brought in by tankers from Tunnel refinery. The position of the TGWU tanker drivers is that they won't cross a picket line—but when the picket line is not there then they will deliver.

Glucose has been spotted by chance being delivered at midnight to Chix.

Obviously the GMWU through the SE Region TUC must put the strongest pressure on the TGWU to instruct drivers to black Chix completely. A 24 hour picket may also be necessary.

The GMWU must also take steps to impose effective blacking at source—Tunnel refinery itself is mainly organised by the GMWU.

It is necessary to cut off one

by one all the available sources of supplies and utilities of suppliers.

Gerry McMullen, addressing the mass picket last Wednesday declared that:

"We've been out here 18 weeks fighting. The GMWU are determined to take this strike as far as it will go to represent the interests of exploited minorities and women workers."

Tony O'Brien, speaking from the GMWU National Executive said:

"We will inspire our members to identify with this struggle. If it is lost it will inflict a blow on the whole of the trade union movement."

Discrepancy

Introducing a speaker from the Meccano occupation, O'Brien said that:

"Their struggle is our struggle, and we must unite in the fight against all attacks on the working class whether it is on jobs, pay or union rights."

There was, however, a definite discrepancy between

what the officials were declaring over the loudspeaker mounted on an extremely plush new cream Cortina and what they were prepared to commit themselves to in an interview.

Gerry McMullen was asked by *Socialist Press* what steps the union was taking to ensure the Chix struggle didn't meet the same fate as Grunwick and Garners.

He answered that they were in a stronger position than Grunwick: they had 90% out on strike as opposed to 30% at Grunwick.

At Grunwick the workers were sacked; at Chix they remained still employed.

On the other hand, he said, at Grunwick post was the only key supply going in and out, while at Chix there were several sources of raw materials and storage.

It was then pointed out that the key supply was water and electricity supplied to Chix through GMWU members in the Electricity and Water Boards.

Surely if Gerry McMullen was serious about the intention

of the GMWU to take the strike "as far as it could go" then they would instruct their members to cut off supplies—utilising the real strengths of the trade union movement.

Injunctions

"No", came the reply, "that's out of the question after the experience at Grunwicks. The trouble is it causes injunctions from the courts, and you see there's a legal obligation to provide water and electricity."

It became clear that there wasn't much hope for the Chix strikers if the proposed Employment Bill goes through (changing the law on secondary picketing) if this remains the GMWU line.

Anyway Bro. McMullan went on, even if we got the members to turn the water supply off—the water board would just sack them and bring in contractors to turn the supply back on.

Wouldn't you then organise defensive strike action in the GMWU Water and Electricity sections.

No, replied Bro. McMullan we wouldn't get the members to do it—we've got to be realistic, there's no need for extreme measures.

We haven't approached the utilities and I don't think we will—the waterworkers have got enough problems on their plate at the moment.

Anyway, concluded Bro. McMullan, we're using ACAS and the community relations commission.

"We try them all the time but so far the employer isn't responding!"

Several arrests

By now, at the back of the factory the police were doubling their numbers in anticipation of the arrival of the van full of scabs.

There had already been several arrests, including Mrs. Brar and the District Official.

The District Official was acquitted; Mrs. Brar was fined £10 for shouting "abusive language" and insulting behaviour towards a police officer—a verdict that was quite surprising since she speaks no English!

While a handful of pickets waited for the van at the back of the factory the mass picket was stationed at the front entrance.

Bro. Anwar was asked whether the mass pickets shouldn't be moved around the back to stop the scabs.

"No", replied Anwar, (carefully avoiding a puddle with his immaculately polished Italian-styled shoes).

"We'll keep the mass picket around the front of the building: we've got to stay where all the press and TV cameras are!"

Further mass pickets will take place every Wednesday. A national mass picket is planned in a month's time.

More information from, and messages and donations to: M. Anwar, 271, Goodman Park, Slough.

WOMAN WORKER 5
A paper of the Workers Socialist League
Available, price 18p (incl. postage) from WSL,
BM Box 5277, London
WC1V 6XX

By John Lister

Racist Sparts slam Afghan people

The ultra-left sectarians of the International Spartacist Tendency have always combined their adventurist ultimatums to the working class with gross opportunist deviations.

But they have taken a sharp downhill plunge with the publication of a lead article in the latest issue of their American fortnightly paper *Workers Vanguard*.

The article sets out to uphold the Spartacists' Pabloite line on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan—which attributes a progressive role to the Kremlin Stalinist bureaucracy under the opportunist slogan "Hail the Red Army!"

Avoiding any attempt to politically analyse the latest switch of strategy by US imperialism in its fight to contain the liberation struggles and revolutionary aspirations of the world's working class, the Spartacists profoundly proclaim that:

"The people running this country are insane".

And in what no doubt passes for a Marxist analysis in Spartacist circles, *Workers Vanguard* goes on to announce that:

"New York entrepreneur Crazy Eddie would be better in the White House than Jimmy Carter."

But from this initial premise the tone actually degenerates, to the level of outright racialism. The Stalinist leaders were entirely right to violate the national rights of the Afghans, argues *Workers Vanguard*, because of the backwardness of the country and its predominantly peasant and nomadic population.

The lead article in this "Trotskyist paper" actually includes the following passage:

"Somebody had to clean up Afghanistan and try to drag it toward the 17th century. Discounting his liberal hauteur, Alexander Cockburn, writing in the *Village Voice* (21 January) caught the flavour of the place:

"We all have to go one day, but pray God let it not be over Afghanistan. An unspeakable country filled with unspeakable people, sheepshaggers and smugglers, who have furnished in their leisure hours some of the worst arts and crafts ever to penetrate the occidental world.

"I yield to none in my sympathy to those prostrate beneath the Russian jackboot, but if ever a country deserved rape it's Afghanistan. Nothing but mountains filled with barbarous ethnics with views as mediaeval as their muskets, and unspeakably cruel, too."

Such a position is, of course, an affront to any internationalist or socialist. It is not however out of character for the Spartacists, and bears all the hallmarks of having been written or inspired by IST leader James Robertson, who not long ago included a string of similarly sweeping and reactionary assertions on various nations and peoples in a barely coherent world report which singled out Albania as "a nation of goat fuckers".

Pronouncements like this are no accident. Nor are they simply the drunken or ill-considered outpourings of a deeply degenerate cult.

Rather, as statements more reactionary than those that could be expected from any but outright fascist elements in the working class, they reflect the way in which all the worst arrogance and national chauvinism of US imperialism are nurtured in the petty bourgeois ranks and leadership of the Spartacists—a sect wholly divorced from the American labour movement.

ise a file on you?

concern for "democracy" while the apparatus that threatens workers' rights remains intact.

Indeed the document goes on to endorse Lord Denning's definition of a "subversive" as a person who "would contemplate the overthrow of a government by unlawful means". "That," declares the Labour Party, "is a fairly clear definition."

"Unlawful"

But we have recently seen that Denning regards all kinds of things—from solidarity blacking to solidarity strikes—as "unlawful". Can it be imagined that the capitalist class would ever regard a General Strike, for instance, as "unlawful"?

If this formula remains unchallenged, then plainly the Labour leaders will continue, as they did when in government, to lend their full support to the harassment, surveillance and disruption not only of the revolutionary left but also of wider layers of trade union and Labour militants.

In fact the document hypocritically refers to the fact that:

"Between August 1961 and January 1962 15 Labour MPs were investigated by MIS at George Brown's request."

Yet it does not say that



Thatcher

George Brown was then a leading right wing member of the Labour Party! And why doesn't the document look at the record of Wilson and Callaghan governments in their dealings with the secret police?

And why does the panel that drew up the document omit former Home Secretary Merlyn Rees, who could presumably testify at first hand as to how many left wingers' telephones he authorised to be tapped, and tell the working class just what steps—if any—he took to curb the activities of the Special Branch against the labour movement?

Collaboration

The fact is that this latest campaign is a completely dishonest cover-up for a continuous record of squalid anti-working class activity by successive Labour governments in collaboration with the most reactionary elements of the capitalist state machine—the



Private steel closure

Last Tuesday 850 workers at Osborne Hadfields, the casting factory in Sheffield were told that the factory was to close.

On May 9 the first redundan-

cies are to begin, and by July 25 total closedown.

They have been told that the reason behind this is the recession in demand for castings, with sales down by 50% in the last two years.

In the last 18 months Osborne Hadfields, the largest foundry owned by the Weir group, has lost £2 million.

A few months ago a smaller foundry owned by the Weir group in Cumbria closed with no resistance from the workforce, putting 150 workers on the dole.

There are three other foundries owned by the Weir group. The main one is Cottons in Leeds; the others are Toplins in Sunderland which employs about 400, and Holbrook Precision Castings near Sheffield. All these are still making profits.

This is now being used to

divide the workforce so that work can be transferred to other plants. Management have told workers in places like Cottons that it is in their interest that Osborne Hadfields closes because it will create more work for the other factories in the group.

But in reality the crisis of capitalism is forcing firms to the wall. The only way forward is for Osborne Hadfield workers to occupy against closure, and call on workers in Cottons and Weir's biggest factory, Pump and Valves at Carthcarte, Glasgow to support their struggle by immediate blacking of all transferred work.

Groups like the Weir group who make their profits from the nationalised steel industry should be nationalised without compensation as part of a planned steel industry.

Badges no answer!

York and District Trade Union Council held a public meeting on cuts in public expenditure last week as part of their campaign aimed at combatting the draconian cuts proposed by North Yorkshire County Council.

Trades Council Secretary Joanna de Grook announced that the cuts in the 1979-80 budget "saved" £1.7 million and this would be increased to a staggering total of £4.6 million in 1980-81!

Local speakers from Child Poverty Action Group, Shelter and a local head teacher outlined the kind of effects these cuts were already having—the rise in the cost of school meals and the projected costs for school transport would mean that an agricultural worker with three children would spend one third of his weekly income on sending his children to school and paying for their school

meals!

It has been proposed that school meals should no longer be subject to nutritional controls, and in York swimming lessons for school children have already been axed as a 'saving'—although of course nothing is saved as the baths stand empty for large parts of the day and still have to be heated and maintained.

Latin

In general education, a horrifying list of the present shortages of resources was listed. One teacher said that it looked as though science and technology teaching would be replaced by Latin as the money ran out for science equipment and materials!

The real tragedy, however, was the total lack of any strategy for fighting these measures from Alan Fisher and Alex Lyon MP.

Between them, these two made it crystal clear that there

is no way that social democracy will halt the tide of the crisis of capitalism of which the cuts are the effect, not the cause.

Lyon seemed to believe that if enough people wrote to their MPs, schools would not be closed—and that if we were all prepared to pay higher taxes, the government could invest more in industry, we'll have economic growth and Bingo! no more cuts!

He fell into the trap of talking about the Tory cuts of the last half of last year—these cuts of course were all planned by the Labour government—a fact which seemed to have slipped Mr Lyon's mind.

Alan Fisher's lengthy contribution was notable for its omissions—any mention of the words 'strike' and 'occupation' in challenging the Tory government.

He too seemed to think that if we hand out enough leaflets, go on enough marches, wear enough badges, sign enough petitions and write enough letters the government will see the error of its ways and restore all the public services it is in the process of cutting in pursuit of its monetarist policies!

Not even the current occupation of St Georges Hospital in London, threatened with closure and in which Fisher's own NUPE members are taking a leading part got a mention.

Fisher obviously fears that such policies might catch on and then he'd have to do a bit more than utter platitudes about the need for socialism, laced with crude sexist jokes about NUPE's 'large women membership'.

The enthusiasm and the size of the collection for the cuts campaign at the meeting showed that there is a real willingness from people to take action in defence of their standard of living—if the only lead they have is the kind offered by Messrs. Lyon and Fisher they may as well spend the money down at the pub.

Fight on Manvers closure

Manvers GMWU members last week decided to oppose the closure of Manvers Main coking plant which the NCB intends to shut down.

Labour MP for Dearne Valley Eddie Wainwright has said he will support the fight to save the 600 jobs at the plant.

The meeting, held in a local club, was attended by about half the workforce.

They voted unanimously to fight the closure—which would also affect other local workers who depend on coal gas from the plant for their own jobs.

Back fight

Local Trades Councils have said they will back the fight.

The need to keep the plant open should be taken into the Yorkshire NUM.

If the NCB (who are carrying out government policy) are allowed to win this it will put them in a better position to close other parts of the coal industry.

Support should be called for from Scargill and particularly the South Yorkshire pits who showed their strength in the rescuemen's strike in 1978—only to be pushed back to work by Scargill.

to advance workers beyond trade union militancy, protest politics and illusions that capitalism can be abolished through parliament.

The Workers Socialist League is a Trotskyist movement fighting day in and day out to build such a principled leadership in the working class in Britain.

Internationally, we are affiliated to the newly-formed Trotskyist International Liaison Committee, which fights for the reconstruction of the Fourth International and the building of revolutionary parties in every country to lead the struggle against imperialism and against the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracies in the deformed and degenerated workers' states.

We invite all readers of Socialist Press to seek more details of the WSL and its work, and to join us in the struggle for socialism.

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With workers by the thousand taking to the streets to oppose Tory policies there is plainly no lack of militancy in the organised working class.

Yet the existing trade union bureaucrats and Labour leaders—whether right or 'left'—have no perspective to offer those workers prepared to fight in defence of jobs, living standards, social services and democratic rights.

These can only be defended through policies which start from the independent interests of the working class, which, as an international class, has nothing to gain and everything to lose from attempts to restore the profitability of their "own" employing class.

In a period where the contradictions of the anarchic capitalist system force the wholesale closure and destruction of the productive forces of society, only a socialist planned economy on a world scale offers a way forward.

To achieve such a perspective a leadership is needed which, in today's struggles fights

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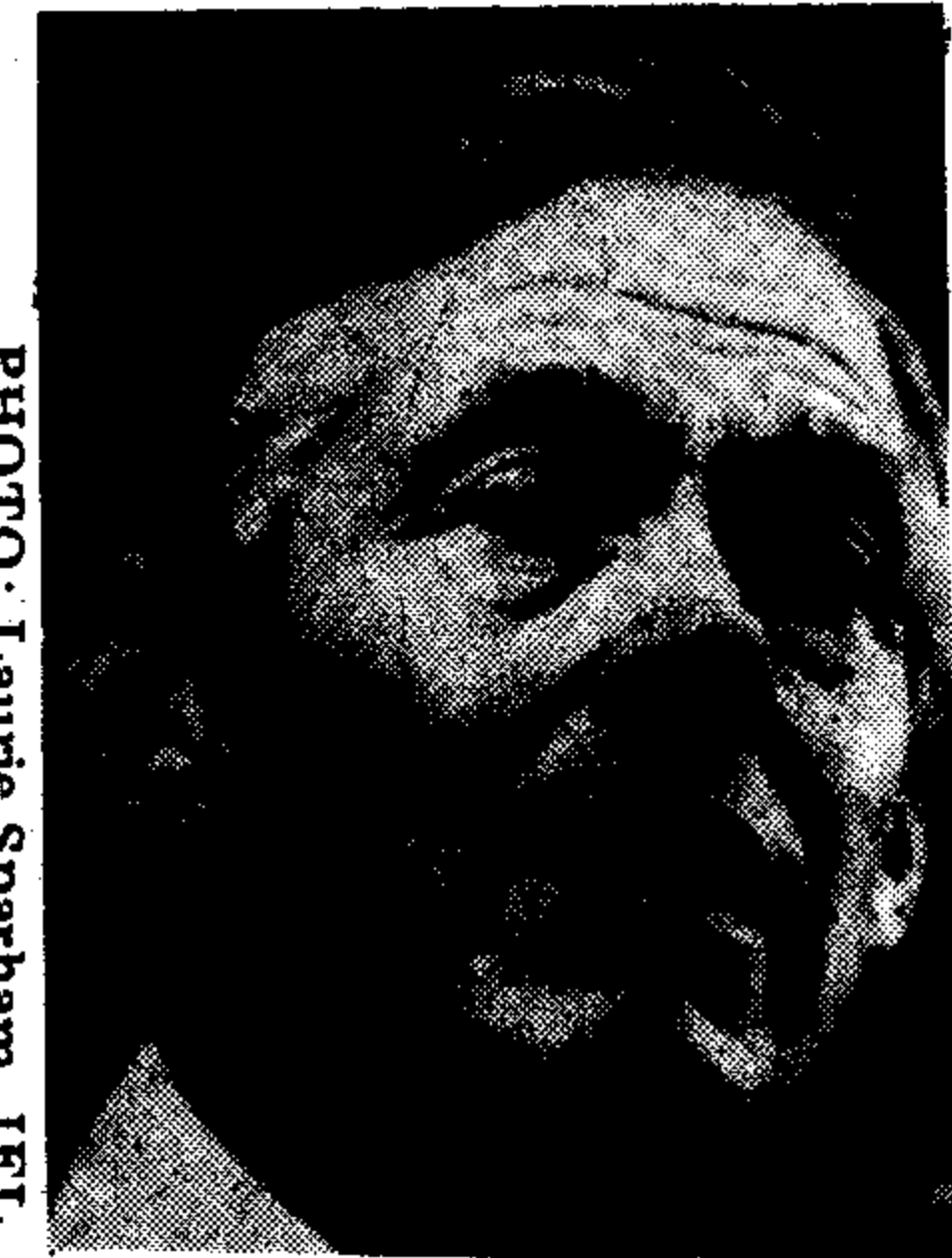


PHOTO: Laurie Spachman, IFTL

Fisher

BAC pay strike

Workers at British Aerospace, Southampton, are out on strike in support of their 20% pay claim.

After building a series of 1/2-day lightning strikes culminating in last Wednesday's walkout, over 300 members of the white collar union APEX unanimously rejected a management offer of 13% and voted instead for indefinite strike action.

On Thursday 14 February 80 pickets were manning the gates at the Hamble factory in an attempt to persuade workers

on the 7 a.m. day shift not to cross. They met with instant success when lorry driver members of the TGWU refused to drive through.

The strikers confidently expect their action to completely disrupt production in the next few days. This fact has not escaped APEX officials, who have not only withheld official backing in lieu of yet another secret ballot, but have arranged a meeting with management next Wednesday to review the situation.

Shipyard sell-out

Shipyard workers face a combination of bad news and more bad news in their abysmal pay review agreed last week by Confed negotiators.

Bad news is the fact that the deal offers only 11.5%, plus a £150 lump sum—at a time when inflation is certain to top 20% later this year.

But worse news still is that the £50 million pay deal is entirely self-funding—meaning that the increases are to be paid

for in the jobs and working conditions of fellow shipyard workers.

3,000 more jobs are to be axed on top of the 6,000 redundancies already announced.

And an October payment is dependent upon "improved productivity and working practices" on a yard-by-yard basis.

Union bureaucrats have already signed up their members for increased flexibility.

This sell-out—opposed by the white collar engineers union TASS—must be fought on the shop floor if jobs and conditions are to be defended.

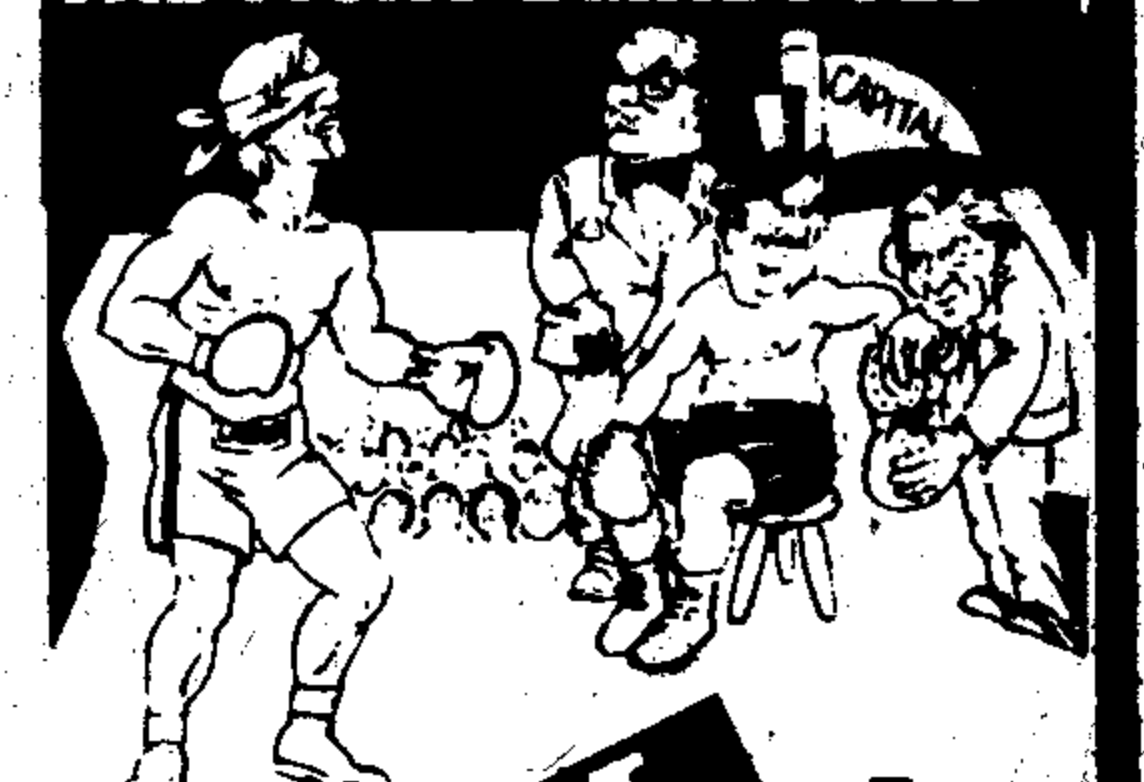
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Why the lay-offs? OPEN BL's BOOKS!

British Leyland last week announced lay-offs and programme cuts in some of their plants.

In Oxford, the main area affected, Princess and Marina and MG tracks are to be laid off for one month beginning February 25, and the Maxi for two weeks from 25 February with two more weeks at a later date.

This will total almost 8,000 workers laid off.

When the Maxi and Princess workers return they face programme cuts from 18½ per hour down to 6 and 15 an hour down to 12 respectively.

Both models will then be produced on the same track running at 18 per hour.

In addition, some 2,500 workers are to be laid off at Rover and 1500 engine shop workers at Longbridge. Both models at Canley, the TR7 and the Dolomite are to be laid off.

Full pay

This will probably total around 15-20,000 workers. They will receive full pay for the first week and after that the national guaranteed week payment, which is £73 for a grade 3 production worker.

This decision appears to have been dictated, at least in its timing, by the rejection of the 5% pay offer by a substantial majority of 41,422 against 28,623 in a postal ballot.

(The 129 spoilt papers were a fitting testimony to the bankruptcy of Roy Fraser's call for 6,000 BL craftsmen to spoil their ballot papers and call for craft negotiations).

There is no doubt that the acute crisis which BL has faced for a number of years has worsened sharply in recent months.

The world-wide market for cars is shrinking. Almost every manufacturer faces problems. In BL this is compounded by its small size, its lack of investment over the last ten years and its ageing model range.

But BL has deliberately exaggerated the crisis in order to create the atmosphere to deter workers from walking out when the ballot result was known.

Stampede

Edwardes also hopes to stampede union leaders—who see the viability of BL as their responsibility—into accepting the pay package.

Thus the media initially splashed figures of 50-60,000 lay-offs—"for months rather than weeks"—though the lay-offs were never likely to be more than a fraction of this.

Edwardes has now claimed that this was simply "paper talk" but he significantly made no attempt to refute them at the time the claims were made.

No facts

The major feature of the lay-off announcements in the plants was the complete absence of any factual information to back up BL's claims that lay-offs were necessary because of "falling sales".

Plant directors refused to give any information on stocks.

The press claimed 100,000 cars in stock. But no breakdown was given as to the nature of



Still victimised—Robinson

this stock or where it was held.

It is clear that BL's 2,000 distributors are heavily stocked. But in Cowley, where the bulk of the lay-offs are planned, there is little evidence of factory held unsold stock—usually the sign of serious overproduction.

BL are either hiding the information or hiding the unsold cars.

The planned build programme cuts on the Maxi and Princess after the lay-off are a similar conundrum. No figures have been given to substantiate even in management terms the necessity for major cutbacks of this order.

There are four reasons other than sales figures why the lay-offs suit management at this time.

*The ballot result: The lay-

off announcement was rushed into print the minute Edwardes saw the ballot figures.

Even local plant directors had no idea what was going on for 48 hours afterwards.

*The Robinson victimisation: BL knew that the issue still hung in the balance and that the shop stewards campaign in Longbridge in support of Robinson was having some effect.

Imminent collapse

Although the lay-offs hardly affect Longbridge they hope that the spectre of the imminent collapse of BL will have an impact.

In addition a strike this week would disqualify lay-off pay for many of those about to be laid off on full pay—something the officials are acutely aware of.

*The steel strike must affect production in BL soon—and if there is to be a shutdown Edwardes may as well stage it at a tactically advantageous time.

*Management need to close the tracks at some stage soon in order to carry out engineering and lay-out changes, connected with the facelift Marina (due for launch in July).

They also have to clear the track currently occupied by the Maxi in order to retool for the Honda Bounty, production of which they now hope to bring forward to next year.

In addition Castle Bromwich convenors have now cleared the transfer of the Rover body to the Cowley Body Plant—following their complete acceptance of the closure of the Castle Bromwich Body Plant.

This work will be integrated onto the Maxi/Princess build line during the lay-offs.

This does not of course mean that BL does not have a sales crisis.

What it does mean is that

whilst all these factors are involved there is insufficient information to hand to make a definite assessment as to the dominant factors.

What it does show is how urgent is the call for the opening of the books of BL and for all information to be made available to workers and the trade unions.

Whatever the real motives of the company, the media have had their effect at least on the leadership—the Leyland Cars Joint Negotiating Committee.

They met management last Friday—3½ months after the November 1 annual wage review date.

And once again they avoided even after the ballot, calling immediate strike action in support of the claim.

They gave the management a further two weeks to make a new offer.

After the two weeks have elapsed the trade union side of the JNC will meet to decide what action to take against the company.

Now the JNC has taken this decision, the whole combine must be mobilised to ensure that a strike decision is taken when this two week period expires.

The JNC already has authority from the convenors to act.

Stewards committees and mass meetings of members must demand that the hesitation stops and strike action commences immediately after the two week period.

As we go to press, we learn that the West Birmingham AUEW District Committee has finally decided to call a strike in defence of Derek Robinson—but only after putting it to a mass meeting at Longbridge.

Deliberate delays by the AUEW EC and the District Committee have already given the management and the media two weeks to whip up an anti-strike mood in the workforce.

Yet the AUEW enquiry placed a clear responsibility upon the DC to act in Robinson's defence by immediately issuing an unequivocal instruction for strike action. In shirking this responsibility and offering the company still more scope for anti-union propaganda they have now further endangered trade unionism in BL.

Camden council caves in

The facade of resistance to Tory cuts erected by Camden's 'left' Labour council has dramatically crumbled.

The Labour Group meeting last Monday saw a retreat on every front. The £75 per week NUPE wage claim was rejected, and in a reversal of policy, the Group voted to increase council rents.

It had been rumoured that the council would offer a pay deal that would absorb most or all of this year's national settlement into the existing "Camden supplement" (£17.50 on top of last year's national settlement) won in struggle last winter.

But under pressure from a 100-strong NUPE lobby, councillors decided to award the 13% national settlement in addition to the "Camden supplement".

They made it clear however that the whole of the Clegg "comparability" award will be deducted from the supplement this April!

The climbdown over rents was a spectacular about-turn: the mere rumour that the council might be surcharged by the District Auditor if it failed to put up rents was enough to press through a £1 rise.

By the next full council meeting therefore Camden Labourites will have struck a blow at council workers' living standards, raised rents for the first time in three years and implemented a 35% rate increase. So much for the 'fight' against the Tory cuts!

ACAS fraud ends strike

Workers at F.H. Biddles, Nuneaton, ended their pay strike last Friday after an intervention from ACAS.

The previous week a TGWU official had persuaded the strikers to accept the offer of arbitration which had come, he claimed, "after ACAS saw reports of the strike in the newspapers". Only seven voted to reject the offer of arbitration.

The seven were proved correct last Thursday when the resulting negotiations with management led to a deal which represented little advance on the original offer.

In response to a 25% claim, management offered a 15.5% increase on basic rates plus a productivity deal guaranteed for three months (in practice because of the strike this will be only just over two months).

The deal depends on maintaining levels of production above the rate necessary for last year's bonus payments—something which some workers doubt is possible to achieve.

There was a great deal of opposition to the deal which only went through by 60 votes to 39.

Ambulance pay vote

Ambulance drivers throughout the country are now voting on whether to accept a derisory 13% pay deal.

At this stage it is difficult to predict which way the voting will go, but whatever the outcome, there is a growing feeling of bitterness amongst ambulance workers at the bureaucratic way in which the package has been presented to them by their own union negotiators.

Following the enormous wave of low pay strikes last winter, with ambulance drivers in the forefront of the action, public sector union leaders effectively blocked the formulation of a wage claim for this year at the respective annual conferences.

Because of their militancy

and industrial strength last winter, ambulance drivers received a relatively high award from the Clegg commission—around 23% in two stages.

But the whole value of the settlement has been lost against inflation. Ambulance drivers, along with all other public sector groups, are back where they were in 1978—low paid.

The offer itself is a complete fraud.

Evenly split

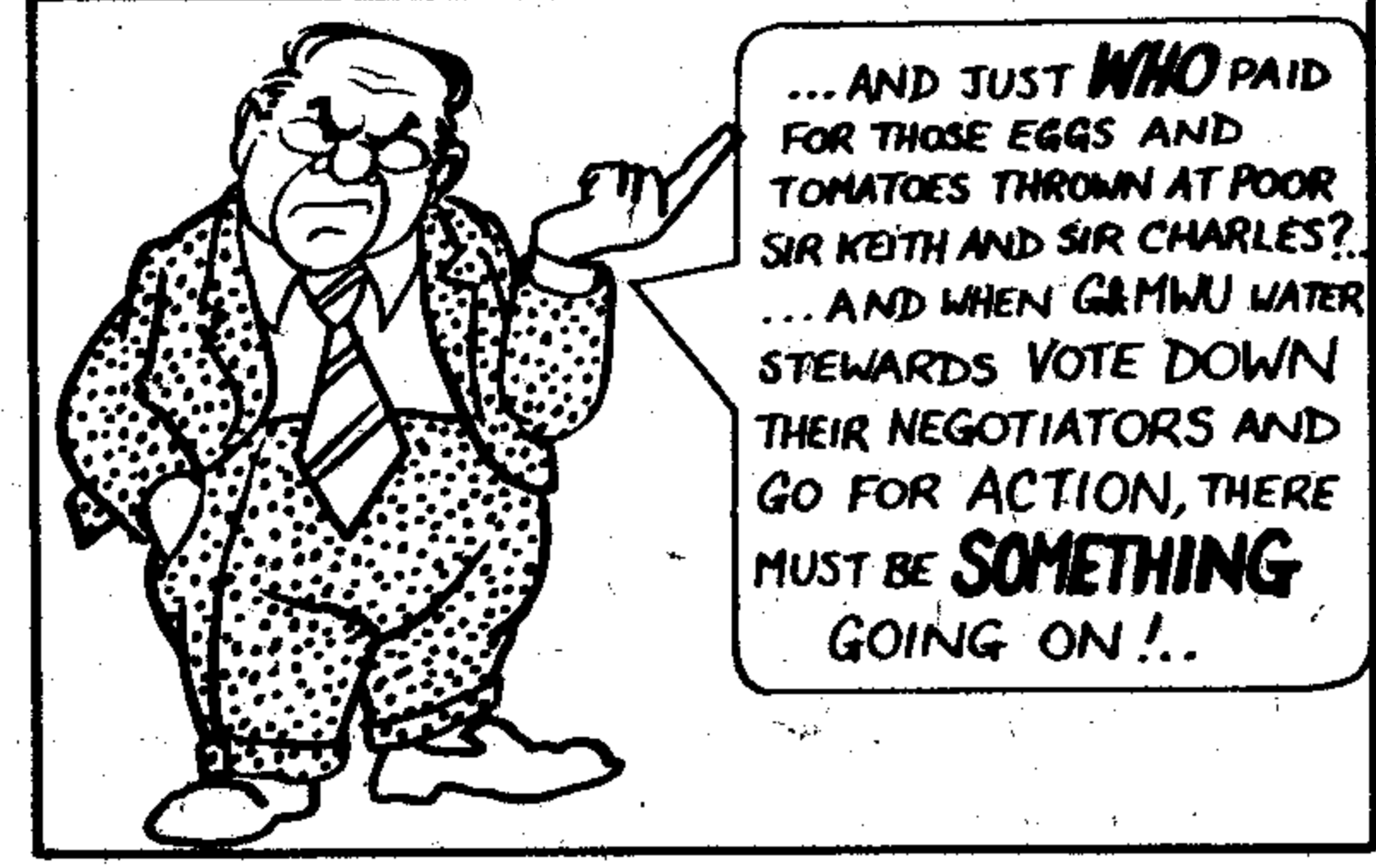
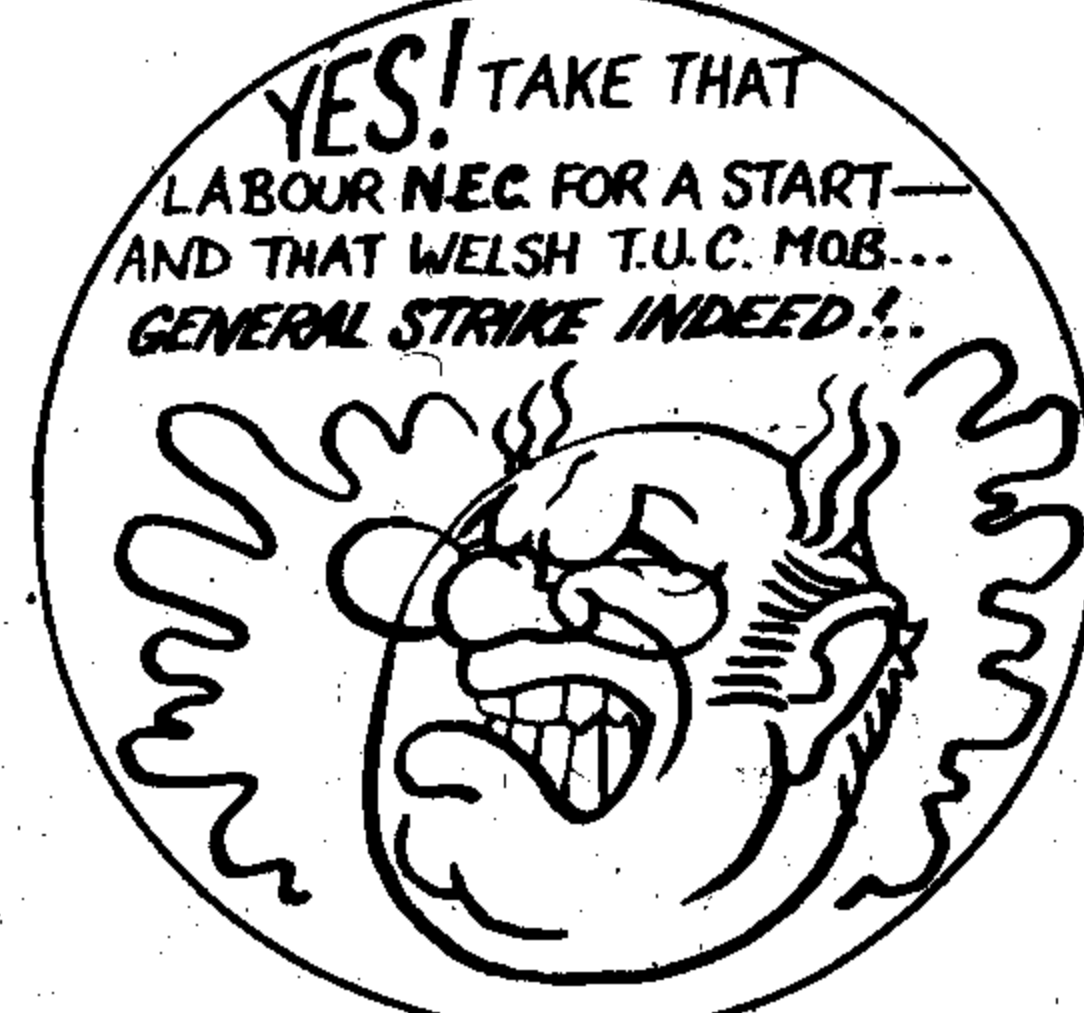
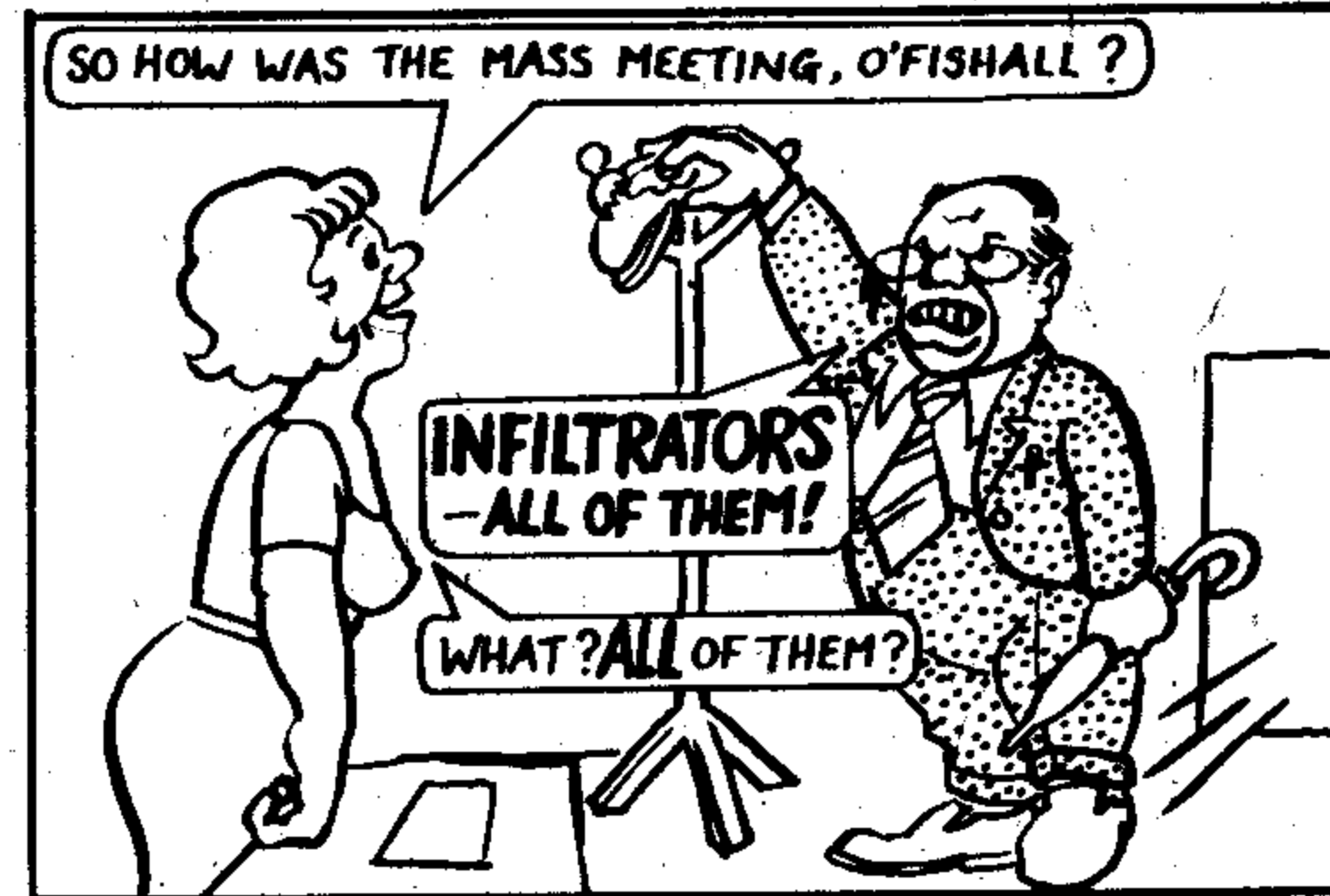
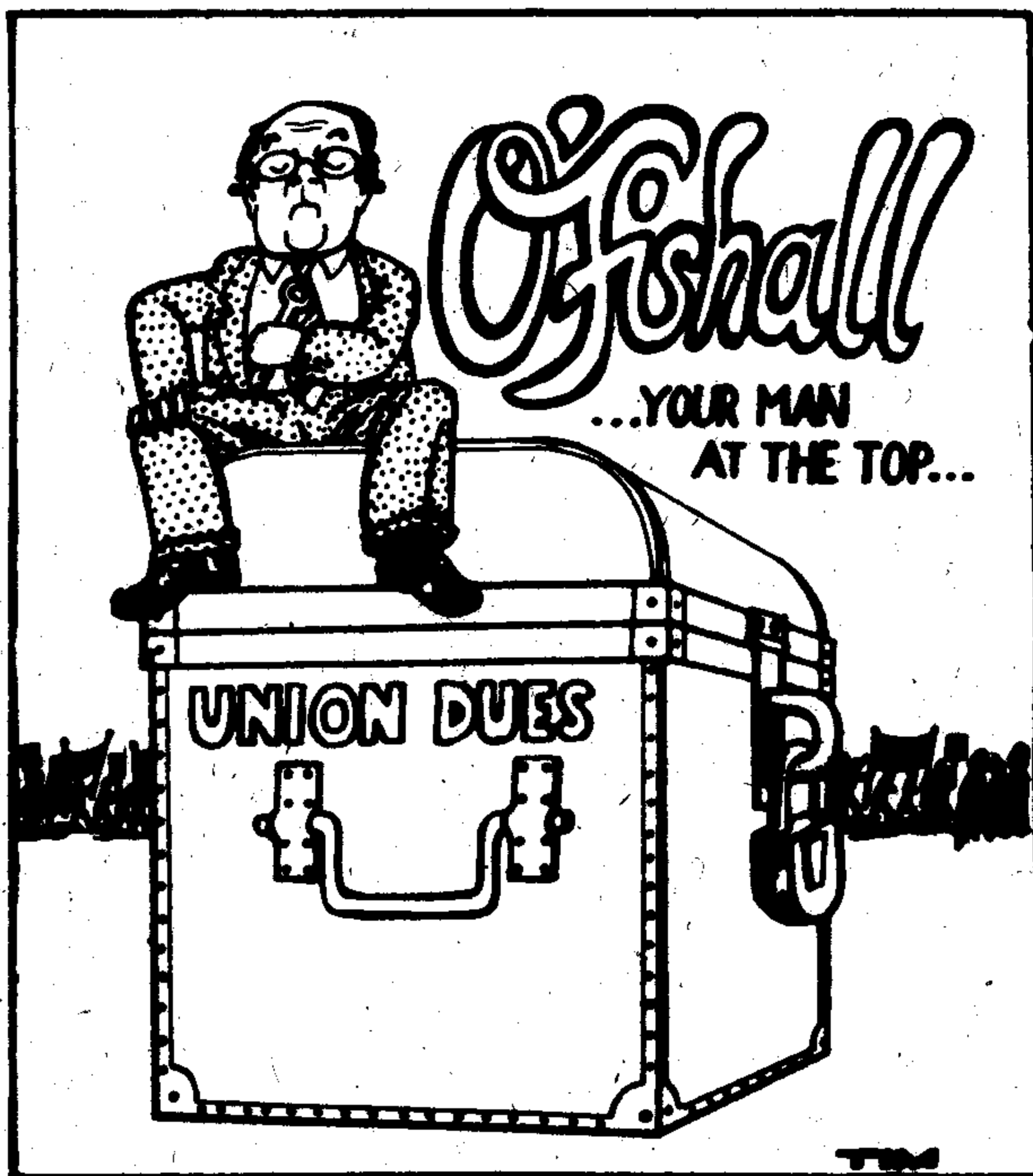
The 13% is based not on the whole of the comparability award, but only on the first half. In London, £2.30 is deducted from the current basic for the 13% calculation.

These two deductions mean that the 13% is actually nearer 10%.

To add insult to injury, the package contains an increase in annual leave entitlement, but to pay for this ambulance workers forfeit 66p a week long service supplement—which means they actually suffer a net loss in earnings to pay for the proposed holiday increase!

Not satisfied with negotiating such a poor deal in isolation from the membership, the bureaucrats are doing their best to ensure it is accepted by instructing branches to decide by secret ballot on a simple accept or reject basis.

The results so far seem to be fairly evenly split, at least in the London area. But Camden Ambulance NUPE Branch, one of the largest stations in the country, have overwhelmingly rejected the offer, with only six votes in favour of accepting.



SOCIALIST PRESS



Mugabe at mass rally on his return to Zimbabwe

CORRIE DOWN

But not yet out!

Opponents of John Corrie's anti-abortion bill, battling against the odds, appear to have struck a further blow at Tory plans to attack existing abortion rights.

Though the Commons voted by a large majority last Friday to reduce the upper time limit for abortions from 28 weeks to 24, this fell far short of Corrie's initial proposal of 20 weeks and his "compromise" offer of 22 weeks.

Only a tiny percentage of abortions take place between 24 and 28 weeks. And even Corrie pointed out that there would now have to be exceptional cases allowed above the upper limit.

In any event it now appears that the strength of feeling mobilised against the Bill—which, if carried, would cut the number of legal abortions by up to two-thirds and lead to a massive increase in backstreet

abortions and unwanted pregnancies—has created conditions for its defeat.

The Bill is opposed by a clear majority of all adults, and by 80% of women of child-bearing age.

Its opponents have moved extensive amendments and correctly insisted on a full debate on every aspect of the Bill: this has plainly not only swung certain MPs against Corrie but also raised the prospect of the Bill's Third Reading being talked out through lack of time—in which case the new 24 week limit, too, would fall, and the existing 1967 Act would remain in force.

It is vital that the labour movement maintains the pressure—through resolutions, pickets and lobbies—to ensure that this vicious piece of legislation is totally destroyed, and that the fight is taken up by trade union and Labour leaders for an end to all legal restrictions and NHS cuts which prevent the provision of free abortion on demand.

Anti-union

Bill tightened

The apparent "victory" of so-called "moderate" Employment Secretary James Prior over the Cabinet advocates of all-out confrontation with the unions has resulted in new proposals for legal attacks on union rights.

Prior will announce this week new "reforms" which will reduce legal immunities for secondary picketing—opening up pickets to the danger of civil action for damages.

This far from moderate



Cabinet "hawk" Howe

move is itself dictated through sheer expediency.

Under the present sharpening conditions of class struggle, leading Tories know full well that any hasty attempt to make the unions officially liable for damages claims from employers could result in a spate of court actions in which union bureaucrats would be forced to act to defend their funds from attack.

But as these same bureaucrats—of whom ISTC leader Bill Sirs is a prime example—battle to retain control over their rank and file, they could well prove ready and willing to abandon individual militants to the tender mercies of British class "justice".

The logic of this is clear enough to Prior. But his Tory opponents are driven on by material forces. From the dire economic plight of British capitalism they deduce the need for desperate measures—measures that would deliberately provoke an all-out confrontation with the organised strength of the working class, in the hopes of inflicting a major, decisive defeat on the unions, opening the way to an all-out war on jobs, wages and conditions.

Weighing their options, the Cabinet majority came out last week opposed to such a gamble: but as long as the Tories remain in office trade union rights will be under attack—from both "hawks" and "doves" alike.

Security forces caught red handed!

ZIMBABWE ELECTION FRAUD!

Socialist Press has argued that next week's elections in Zimbabwe are nothing more than a trap.

ZANU(PF) leader Mugabe and ZAPU's Joshua Nkomo have led their followers into this trap, which threatens to shut not on these traitors but on the people they have betrayed.

In the last week the imperialist offensive against Mugabe's ZANU(PF) has been deepened.

Governor Soames has declared his readiness to disenfranchise whole areas of Mugabe supporters if he seems likely to win the election; one of the

leading candidates Enos Knala has already been prevented from holding office even if he wins the election; ZANU(PF) meetings in the Chindzi area have been banned; there have been several attempts on Mugabe's life; and leading supporters of his have been killed.

The campaign against ZANU(PF) rests on the claim by imperialist Governor Soames that this organisation has been responsible for the overwhelming majority of ceasefire violations which have occurred since the election began.

The capitalist press has been

full of allegations of "intimidation" by ZANU(PF) of supporters of other parties and claims that the guerrillas who have stayed in the bush are there on the orders of Mugabe himself.

It was particularly embarrassing for the authorities, therefore, when it was announced that two bombers who were killed when their car exploded last week were in fact members of the security forces, and the bomb which killed them—marked with pro-Mugabe slogans—was their own!

They were killed in front of a Methodist mission and two hours later bombs went off in other parts of the same city—at a Presbyterian Church and at a Chapel in a mainly white suburb.

Local representatives of ZAPU claim that the explosions are connected and that the security forces were clearly intending to pin the blame on nationalist forces in order to discredit them.

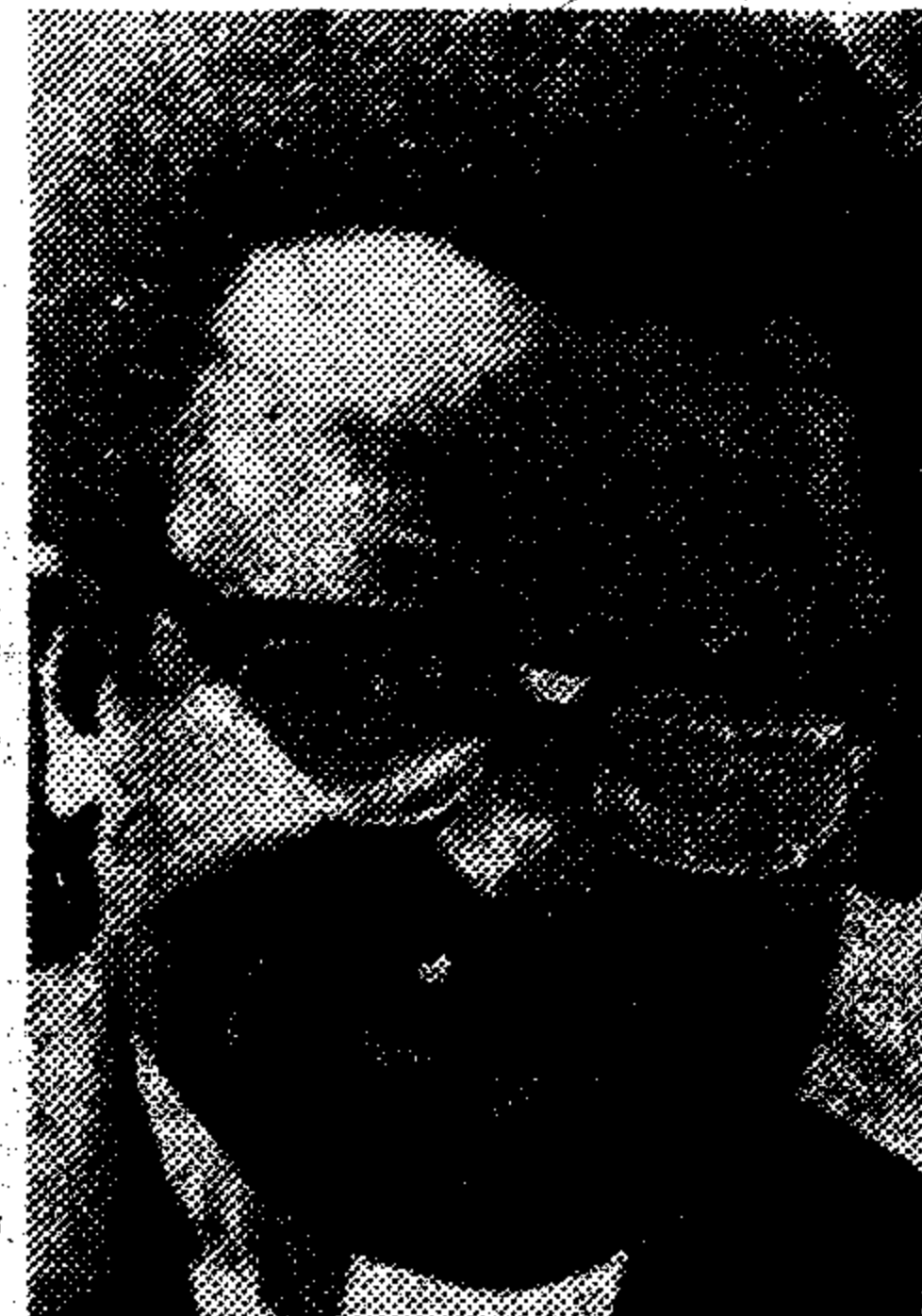
"Violations"

This would also explain many other alleged "ceasefire violations" attributed by the imperialists and the press to Mugabe's ZANU(PF) forces.

Reports of large numbers of guerrillas, particularly those of ZANU(PF), remaining outside



Rhodesian soldier



Muzorewa

the assembly camps and refusing to come back are not surprising.

There is major disquiet in the ranks of ZANU(PF) over the ceasefire decision.

It is the weakness of Mugabe in the face of this opposition which makes him a less than useful option for imperialism as a potential President of Zimbabwe.

More to offer

Nkomo is much more able to control his own members, and as such has more to offer—hence the increasing number of statements in his support.

But this is not to say that Mugabe poses a threat to imperialism.

Indeed his involvement in the ceasefire and election preparations have played a major role in disorienting and politically disarming his supporters.

They are now suffering the consequences—repression.

The elections increasingly become more obviously what Socialist Press said from the beginning—a dangerous fraud.

'We'll be there!'

—McGahey

Some 4,000 steelworkers joined other trade unionists on a vigorous demonstration through Motherwell last Saturday, to a rally in the Civic Centre addressed by Bill Sirs and Mick McGahey.

Delegations included ISTC strikers from Yorkshire and a contingent of Welsh miners, and there were enthusiastic chants of "20%!" and "Thatcher Out!"

But there was no call from Communist Party member McGahey for action to bring down the Tory government—which was scarcely mentioned in his tub-thumping speech.

Promising pickets to aid the steelworkers' fight he drew a warm response when he pledged:

"Make the request: we'll be there!"

Bill Sirs focussed more on the role of the Tories, angrily declaring that the ISTC had been picked out as a "soft touch"—tactfully not explaining how the Tories had come to make such an assessment.

Yet he did refer to the sacrifice of 167,000 jobs in the industry over the last ten years.

"We have given up enough jobs", he added.

The Tories are trying to grind the trade union movement into the dust," he warned. The steelworkers are now in the forefront of the struggle against the Tory government.

It is the fact that workers have taken on this struggle despite the years of grovelling and collaboration put in by Sirs and his fellow ISTC officials that now so alarms the bureaucracy in the steel unions and the wider labour movement.

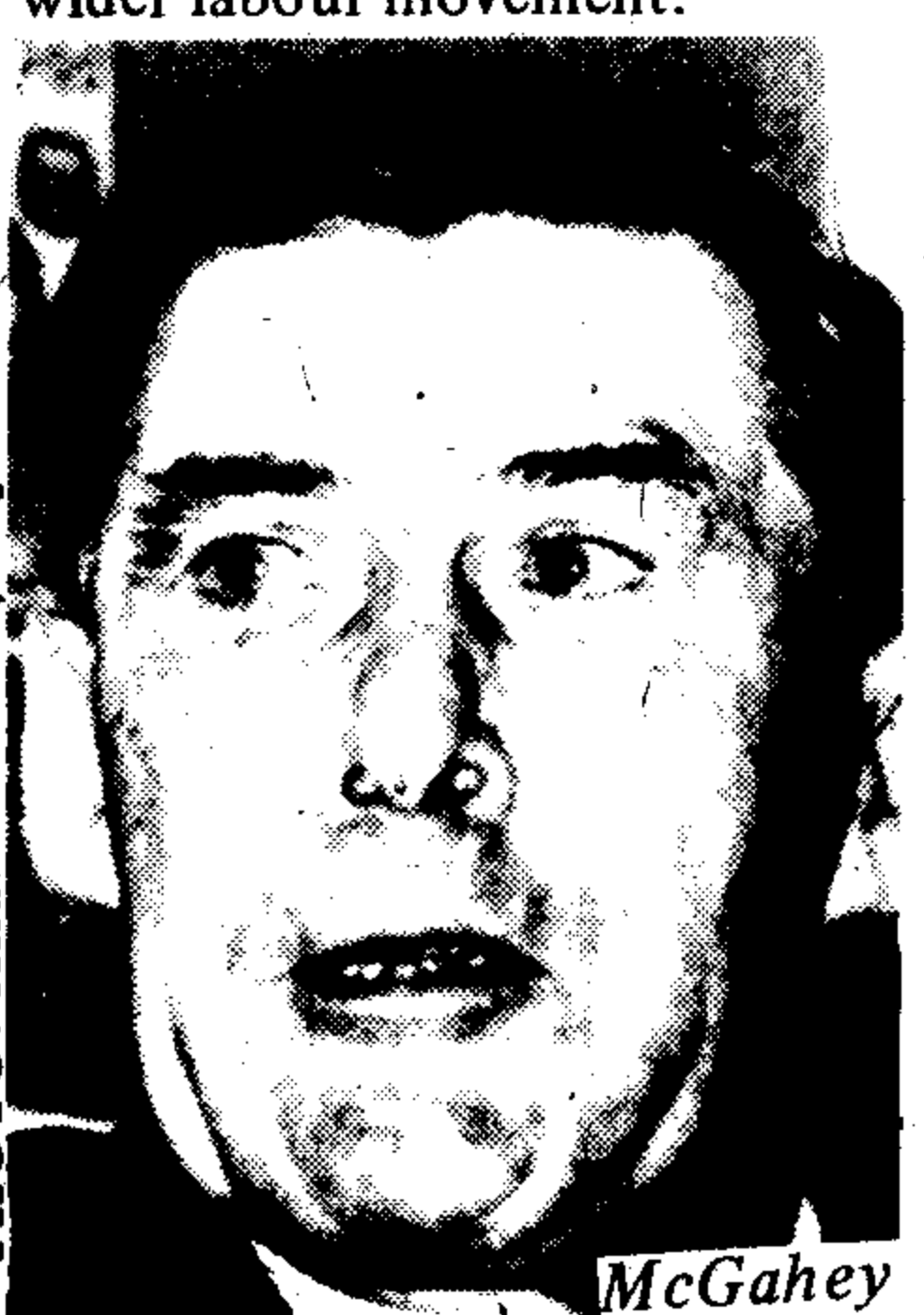


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

McGahey

FUND

£296.40 is the sum we have to raise in the next nine days if we are to raise the Socialist Press February Monthly Fund total of £750. It's a large sum to raise and requires a determined response by readers and supporters of the paper if we are to make that target on time.

At the same time, the £3,000 Special Fund has slowed to a trickle, with the total at present standing at £716.15. We want to raise half of this fund by Easter which is only six or seven weeks away now.

So again, a big response is called for to raise the almost £800 which remains outstanding on the first half of that fund.

All donations for either fund should be sent to:
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