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## IRELAND

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CP stand?

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# LEYLAND BETRAYAL ISOLATES STEEL STRIKE



Lobbyer's eye view of Grenville Hawley

British Leyland convenors have added their weight to the TUC betrayal of the steel workers and the working class.

At a convenors' conference in Coventry last Friday they refused—by a 4-1 majority—to call BL workers out on strike against Edwardes' 5% pay offer, which comes with 102 pages of strings.

This decision comes at a time when the steel workers have been out on strike for ten weeks and are clearly under increasing pressure.

And it comes despite a clear 2-1 ballot vote by BL shopfloor workers to reject the offer, giving union leaders a clear mandate to call strike action.

The convenors (ironically meeting in the social club of the doomed Canley Assembly Plant) had been strongly lobbied on their way in to the conference by BL workers from Cowley, Coventry and Birmingham, and by over 100 steelworkers, in a joint intervention organised by the Leyland Action Committee.

Coachloads of steel strikers travelled from South Yorkshire and Corby, and were joined by steelworkers from Birmingham, in response to an appeal from representatives of the Action Committee who visited their strike committee.

In Sheffield, Alan Thornett, a deputy convenor at BL's Cowley Assembly Plant, had been given the opportunity to address a 2,000-strong mass meeting of steel workers and make a direct appeal for support on the Friday lobby.

### "Impossibility"

But the response of BL convenors to the lobbyers quickly showed that Edwardes' tactic of declaring lay-offs as soon as he heard the result of the ballot, had been effective.

Many talked of the "impossibility" of calling strike action "with 30,000 people laid off".

Yet simple arithmetic would show them that only 14,000 out of 100,000 have been laid off—and most of them for only two weeks.

But the convenors' minds were already set against action.

Jack Adams, the Communist Party member who has replaced the victimised Derek Robinson as convenor of the Longbridge plant, greeted the lobbyers' placards of "You've got the vote: now call a strike" with the angry words "You've got no chance!"

So determined were the convenors to close their eyes and ears to the steel strike and the chance of common action against a common attack by the Tories, that they refused even to hear a high powered delegation of ISTC full time officials who had travelled down in the hopes of addressing the meeting.

The convenors' decision at the end of the meeting could hardly have been worse.

### No action

They decided to take no action now alongside the steel workers and to leave them to fight alone. But at the same time they decided that:

"We are of the opinion that

at the time of a full return to work we will, at that time, engage the company and prosecute our claim".

This has already been seized upon by TGWU Automotive official Grenville Hawley, who has talked about deferring action on last November's pay review until "late spring or early summer"!

### Recession

Of course with the growing recession in the British and world economy biting home in the car industry, there is no foreseeable period in which Edwardes will not be able to use the threat of closures, redundancies or lay-offs to intimidate BL's convenors.

Yet if there is no fight against the 5% offer with its straightjacket of strings, BL workers face not only a ruinous fall in living standards but also the loss of almost every significant shop floor agreement won since the war.

The steelworkers have now been on strike for 11 weeks against the same two-pronged Tory onslaught.

They now face an additional pressure: Tory propaganda based on the outcome of the recent management ballot, in which 44% of the striking workforce voted in line with BSC's recommendation for a 'yes' vote.

### Tenacity

After 10 weeks without strike pay in an isolated and uphill struggle, the fact that the 'yes' vote in a postal ballot is so low is a resounding statement of the tenacity of the steelworkers.

But the media can be relied upon to exploit doubts and

weaknesses in the ranks of the strikers—using the ballot figures.

Tenacity could be turned into victory if the steelworkers were strengthened by simultaneous strike action from BL workers, and the fight redoubled for an all-out General Strike to bring down the wage-cutting, job-slashing Thatcher government.

This is why the BL convenors' decision to take no action—subsequently endorsed by the Communist Party's paper the *Morning Star*—was a bitter blow against the steel strike and against the whole working class.

It is vital that throughout the BL unions, and in particular in those that have membership in the steel industry, resolutions are passed and lobbies of Regional and District Committees organised demanding that the convenors meet again, reverse this decision and call an all-out strike.

Steel unions, too, must pile on the pressure—through their strike committees—for BL workers to come out on their own claim in common struggle to defeat the Tories.

## SHIPYARDS DIRTY DEAL

BL and BSC workers are not the only state sector industrial workers to suffer at the hands of their union leaders.

76,000 shipyard workers have just had a 12.5%-with-strings pay deal signed and sealed by full time officials completely over their heads.

The deal involves acceptance of 3,000 more redundancies, flexibility of labour and other measures to increase exploita-

tion and attack working conditions.

Only days earlier a GMWU delegate conference had voted to reject an almost identical deal, and it was also thrown out at a 1,100-strong mass meeting at Sunderland Shipbuilders.

But with only marginal alterations the deal was concluded and signed by Boilermakers union leader John Chalmers with the arrogant statement that:

"There is no going back

now, the deal has been signed".

A post-mortem will be held for delegates from all shipbuilding unions on March 24. But Confed President Ken Baker adamantly defends the decision to sign:

"It had to be signed. Any delay and £12.5 million would have been lost from the package".

And, of course, rejection could have brought the shipbuilders out alongside the steelworkers!



# GENERAL STRIKE! TORIES OUT!

- INTERNATIONAL

# Zimbabwe masses face leadership crisis

The petty bourgeois leadership of ZANU(PF) has swept into parliament on the back of the mass determination of the workers and rural poor of Zimbabwe for fundamental change.

But they have spent their time ever since seeking out representatives of all sections of the bourgeoisie in order to broaden their regime into a government of 'national unity'.

For the restless and expectant working class, the crisis of revolutionary leadership confronting them is ever more starkly posed.

Throughout the seventies, the working class and rural poor have borne the brunt of the international capitalist recession and the vicious political repression exacerbated by the intensification of the war.

The already pitiful standard of living of the Zimbabwean masses has come under a sustained and concerted attack from every conceivable angle.

## "Protected"

In the rural areas, with over 70% of Zimbabwe's food requirements being produced by large capitalist farms, the subsistence sector now barely operates at all.

The great mass of the rural poor, constantly harassed and intimidated by the Rhodesian security forces were herded into 'protected villages' dotted around the countryside.

What paltry crops and cattle they might have had access to were largely destroyed in the battle to starve out the guerrillas.

With the steady elimination of what social services and administration that had existed, subjected to reprisals and murder at the hands of the police and army, and facing imminent starvation, many were forced to the cities in a desperate bid to survive.

The declining material conditions of the workers have been equally severe.

Unemployment has risen so drastically in the past five years that the black labour force has shrunk by over a fifth of its former size.

At the height of the war over a hundred workers a day were being made redundant, while four hundred people a day were flooding into Salisbury alone in search of a livelihood that capitalism could not provide.

## Squatter camps

The already acute housing shortage was accentuated by this influx, and large sprawling squatter camps with no amenities whatsoever sprang up on the outskirts of the main industrial centres.

Massive inflation and the effects of sanctions sent the prices of even the most basic commodities rocketing.

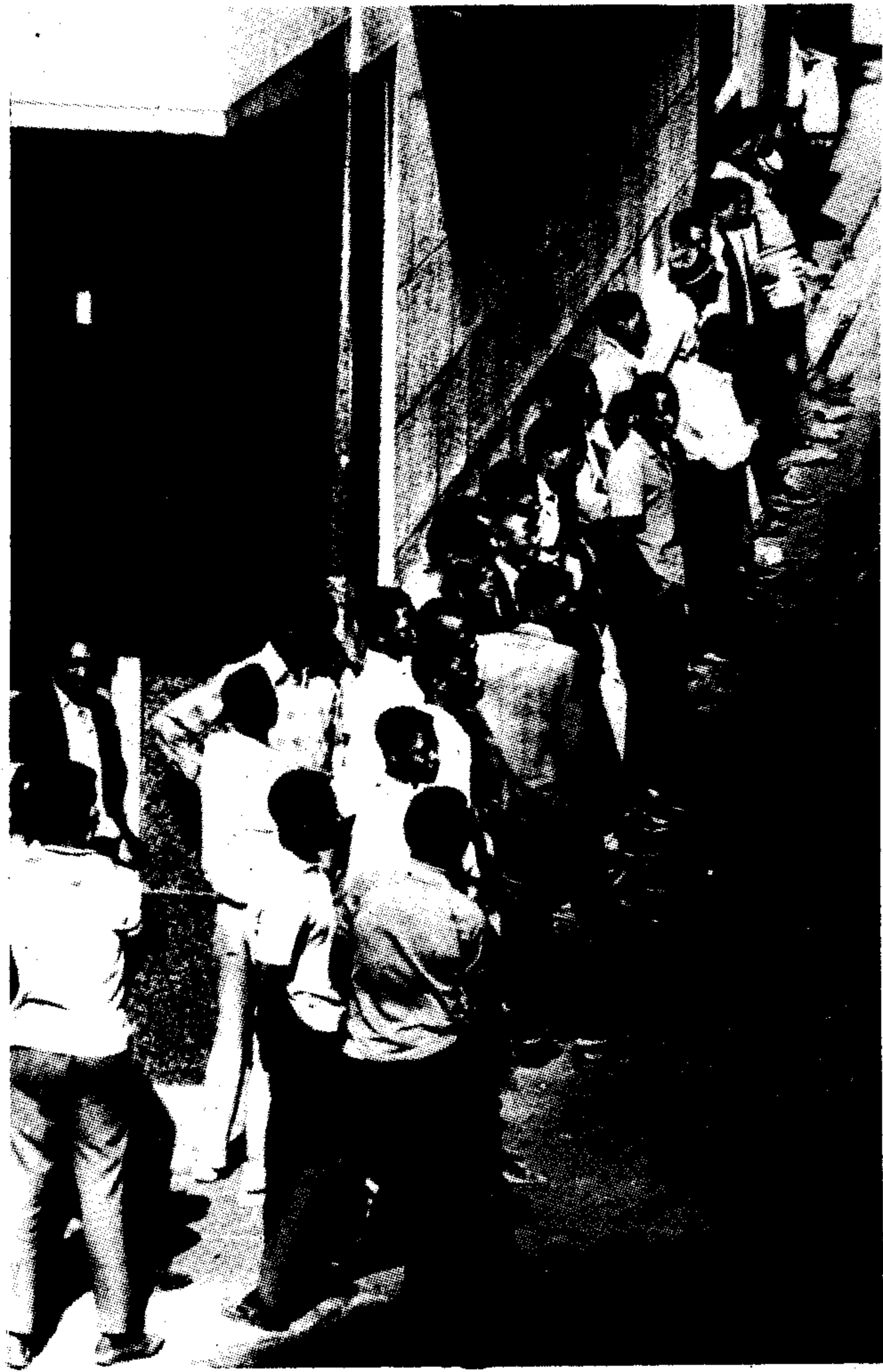
At the same time real wages were reduced to the extent that in the past four years black workers' incomes have fallen by more than 40%.

As in the rural areas the limited health and educational facilities were rapidly eroded.

When the workers voted for Muzorewa in the elections arising from the "internal settlement", they hoped they were voting for jobs, for higher wages, for controls over inflationary prices, for housing, for education for their children and for real participation in the decisions affecting their day-to-day lives.

## Only option

It was the same total commitment of the workers to these demands that led them to throw Muzorewa out so



Unemployed blacks in Salisbury

decisively and give an overwhelming victory to Mugabe in last week's elections.

In placing a cross against the candidates of ZANU(PF), the Zimbabwean masses were not voting for Mugabe per se, but for the only option available which appeared to them capable of meeting their most elementary needs.

But neither Muzorewa or Mugabe, nor anyone presiding over the capitalist state and seeking to preserve it, will be capable of meeting these elementary aspirations.

The maintenance of a system based on profit not need, under conditions of a world recession, and facing a crisis of political control which would be a threat to capitalist stability in the whole of Southern and Central Africa, is contingent upon not only the intensification of the oppression and exploitation of the workers and landless masses, but ultimately on their physical defeat.

The threat of the working class moving into open struggle

alongside the guerrillas in Zimbabwe posed just such a threat to imperialism's political control in the region.

With South Africa's approval and with the collusion of the Front Line states (enforced by their dependence on imperialism) the Thatcher government as imperialism's representative engineered the Lancaster House conference. The objective was to promote the emergence of a capitalist regime with sufficient stability to contain the developing crisis of political control in Zimbabwe.

At the same time Lancaster House gave the opportunity to the petty-bourgeois nationalist leadership of ZANU and ZAPU of regaining the initiative and restoring the political direction of the mass struggle to the corridors of secret diplomacy, and removing it from the grasp of the rank and file and the mass oppressed.

Mugabe's and Nkomo's betrayal of the working class did not begin today with the government of 'national unity', nor even with the signing of the



Not pleased: South African premier Botha

Lancaster House agreement.

From the beginning of the armed struggle, the strategy of guerrilla warfare was aimed at speeding up the process of political reform inside Zimbabwe without ever threatening the fundamental social relations of capitalism itself.

## Nationalisation

The interests of the petty-bourgeois leadership, highlighted in recent months because of the shedding of their former socialist rhetoric, have unwaveringly guided their actions from the outset.

From the point of view of imperialism, the participation of the guerrilla leaders in the election was sufficient to secure their immediate objectives—the organisational disarming and neutralisation of the guerrilla armies and the establishment of the objective conditions to extend the social base of the incoming regime.

The demobilisation and confusion resulting from the participation of ZANU and ZAPU in the elections, has allowed the leadership to be drawn into the administration of the capitalist state with its repressive apparatus remaining substantially intact—even to the extent of retaining General Walls to lead the incorporation of the guerrilla forces into one army under his command.

## Unresolved

While Mugabe balances between the real power of the capitalist state and the assertiveness of the Zimbabwean proletariat, the balance of class forces remains completely unresolved.

The crisis of political control posed by the forward movement of the Zimbabwean working class remains still to be fought out.

The front line of the struggle unfolding in Zimbabwe has now moved from the rural areas—where the principal actors were the liberation armies and the Rhodesian security forces.

The process of organisationally and in some cases physically disarming the guerrillas is to a large extent complete.

Isolated and vulnerable in the assembly camps, under the

control of commanders loyal to the unified army of the capitalist state, the potential threat constituted by the guerrillas has largely been removed.

It is now in the towns and cities where the greatest expectations, needs and demands have built up amongst the workers, forged by decades of an increasingly bitter struggle for survival, that Mugabe and General Walls must out of political necessity seek to firmly establish the repressive capacity of the capitalist state.

At the same time Mugabe will have to posture as the genuine leader of the black masses, and to do so will have to find avenues for symbolically radical action.

## Defence

In this critical phase of the struggle, the immediate task facing Trotskyists, militant workers and guerrillas is the defence of the working class against the manoeuvres of the treacherous alliance of imperialism and the petty bourgeois nationalist leadership of ZANU and ZAPU.

This means arming the workers practically:

\*Cadres with military training to build workers militias in the towns and rural areas under the control of independent organisations of workers; and arming them programmatically by calling for:

\*The nationalisation of all land, factories, mines and banks without compensation.

\*For workers management of industry and large scale agriculture.

\*For a sliding scale of wages determined by elected price committees of workers and housewives;

and by arming them politically by fighting for the creation of:

\*Independent committees of workers, the rural poor and guerrillas.

\*A constituent assembly of democratically elected delegates of workers and peasants, linked to the dissolution of the capitalist state apparatus;

\*A revolutionary party as part of a reconstructed Fourth International.

## No end to hostages impasse

The bewildering negotiations on the fate of the US embassy hostages in Tehran have still reached no firm conclusion.

As orders fail, agreements falter and deadlines pass, the US spies and their colleagues remain in the hands of the occupying Islamic students. The Revolutionary Council has been unable to impose demands that the hostages be handed over to its authority, and the UN's International Commission of Inquiry has been unable to interview any of them as yet.

Of little importance in themselves, these wrangles highlight the problems which Bani-Sadr is struggling to overcome in creating one powerful central state authority.

With the first round of the assembly elections nearly upon him, the president's situation is an ironic parallel of Carter's: he needs to prove the credibility of his authority.

This means reaching a solution that will assert presidential power over 'alternative centres of government' without compromising the 'revolutionary' anti-imperialist credentials of the Islamic Republic.

For all its prominence, the embassy affair is far from Bani-Sadr's only headache.

The regime's proposals on land reform have now reached the stage of definition on paper, and the elections themselves loom on Friday 14th.

A delegation from the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran recently visited the President to demand the lifting of the ban on their organisation so that it could stand candidates.

The continued oppression of the national minorities brought more dramatic developments in the Azerbaijan city of Tabriz.

After the killing of four Turkmeni militants in Gonbad-e Kabus, the Fedayeen organised a demonstration of protest in Tabriz, where there have already been many outbreaks of fighting between left wing forces and the reactionary body of the Islamic militia, the Pasderan.

On this occasion, the 20,000 or so demonstrators were attacked again by the Pasderan in a fresh example of the bloody zeal with which the Islamic bigots pursue their 'revolution' against the oppressed and exploited masses of Iran.

## Giscard's triumph

President Giscard d'Estaing's tour of the Middle East has so far proved a spectacular triumph in the grand tradition established by Charles de Gaulle.

With matchless hypocrisy, Giscard has vaunted the independence of French imperialist foreign policy from the 'superpowers', and raked in the reward of substantial advantages for French capitalism over its other imperialist competitors.

It is a trick which never seems to fail, much to the chagrin of the bourgeoisie in Britain, West Germany or the USA.

This time round, the winning card was played by the French president in his joint communique with the feudal lords of Kuwait calling for the 'self-determination of the Palestinian people'.

Rapid declarations of support from London and Bonn came—amid irritated observations that Giscard had in reality said little more than the current

commonplace of imperialist diplomacy—but they came too late to forestall the manoeuvre.

Giscard was able to tuck into his suave pocket a promise from the sheiks of the United Arab Emirates to supply all France's crude oil needs in recognition of its support for 'Arab rights'.

Giscard's flair and finesse stood out in dazzling contrast against the shoddy background of Carter's diplomatic bungling.

Panic pleas that the US vote at the UN Security Council condemning Israeli settlements on the West Bank was an 'error' caused by a communications mix-up did nothing to ease Zionist anger, and a great deal to expose the opportunism of US diplomacy.

The vote itself—like Giscard's tour—was certainly part of the concerted shift by the imperialists towards a new policy in the Middle East, which is not centred exclusively on the Zionist state but based on firm alliances with both Israel and the Arab states of the region.

Such a policy needs to include some 'solution' to the



Giscard

Palestinian problem if it is to have a hope of success.

But in the short-term, the US imperialists are forging ahead feverishly to strengthen their new fortress in Egypt. Sadat's regime is to be supplied with massive military resources of the most sophisticated type, and developed to replace the Shah's dictatorship as the chief imperialist policeman in the region.

It is not a job with good long-term prospects: the Shah had to vacate the post in a hurry and there is no reason to believe that the workers and peasants in Egypt will find their new relationship with imperialism any more attractive than their sisters and brothers in Iran did before them.



INTERNATIONAL

# VIETNAM STALINISTS FACE WORSENING CRISIS

One result of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan appears to be a reduction in the USSR's economic aid to Vietnam.

According to the *Far Eastern Economic Review* the Moscow Stalinist bureaucracy has told its counterpart in Hanoi that in 1980 it can no longer count on receiving the large quantities of foodgrains (mainly wheat) it has been getting up to now.

If true, this will create an even more serious situation for the Vietnamese CP leaders who are already in dire economic and political trouble.

### Purges

Goods are scarce; inflation, the black market and corruption are rife; low agricultural productivity has been exacerbated by drought; and they have to feed an army of occupation in Kampuchea which (at 200,000) is twice the size of the Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

The political difficulties created by these economic and military ones became apparent in the recent purges of sections of the top leadership of the Vietnamese party, and evidence that hundreds of thousands of party members have been purged or have left the CP in the last few years.

Recent statements on Hanoi

radio and in the party newspaper *Nhan Dan* show that the bureaucracy is extremely jumpy.

### Bearing fruit

Beijing (Peking) radio has been taking advantage of the situation to launch a massive propaganda attack on Hanoi with the aid of the ex-Political Bureau member Hoan who defected to China last year.

Hanoi complains that the campaign is a "psychological war" in which China is spreading lies about shortages of goods, imminent changes in the currency and so on.

The malicious intentions of the Chinese bureaucracy are evidently bearing some fruit—a fact which the top Vietnamese leaders are blaming on their inferiors.

On January 22 *Nhan Dan* complained of a "lack of vivacity and militancy" on the part of "some party organs" in reacting to the rumours.

They were failing to tell the people what is true and what is false.

### Disagreement

But it isn't quite so simple since some "indifferent and irresponsible comrades" had been "revealing State and party secrets in their conversations".



Kampuchean refugees flee from hunger: now a new threat to food supplies

Who'd be a Vietnamese CP member? You've got to tell the people what is true but not, it appears, too much of it!

There is obviously a lot of disagreement about just how much the people deserve to be told.

They are significantly being told very little about the progress of their army of occupation in Kampuchea.

Over a year after the invasion, it still has not subdued the tiny country—despite the presence of one Vietnamese soldier for every 15 or so people in the country!

Some parts of Kampuchea are still controlled by the Khmer Rouge government—now led by Premier Khieu Samphan after the infamous Pol Pot stood down last year.

The Samphan regime has continued its all-out drive to get imperialist aid for its war against Hanoi.

Last week Ieng Sary (Samphan's deputy) told journalists from capitalist papers that he was grateful to the US for helping his regime to keep Kampuchea's UN seat.

"Their interests and ours coincide", he said.

The "communist" Khmer Rouge leaders also declared:

**"Our principal duty is not to make the socialist revolution or to build socialism but to push the Vietnamese forces out of Kampuchea, to defend our nation, our people and our race."**

To do that, these people whose policies were responsible for the deaths of millions of

Kampuchean, now want to treacherously lead their few remaining followers into a military alliance with imperialism and to "unite all Cambodians in a great national, patriotic and democratic front".

As the masses of Indo-Chinese workers and peasants continue to face the terror of war, bloody repression, a deteriorating standard of life, and in many cases starvation, there is certainly unity on one thing between the various Stalinist bureaucrats: whether they be in Moscow, Hanoi, Peking or holed up in the north-east corner of Kampuchea, they are unanimously opposed to carrying out the socialist revolution in Indo-China.

## Polish economy in dire straits

Economic growth in Poland seems to be slowly grinding to a halt. The increase in GNP hovered at around 9.5% in the 1971-1975 period, but since then it has fallen to reach a nadir of -2.8% last year.

Government plans expect the rate to pick up in the 80s but various unofficial publications inside the country gloomily predict zero or negative growth rates.

Whichever source is believed, both mention that serious difficulties face the country in the future.

The most important of these is Poland's agricultural sector. Uniquely amongst Comecon countries, 80% of the farms are in private hands.

Small (on average 20 acres) holdings, predominate; they tend to use primitive farming methods, relying greatly on horses to carry out the heavy work.

Much of the available fodder is eaten by the horses and growth in livestock herds is thus seriously held up.

Food and especially meat shortages are a very common experience for the Polish consumers.

When the bad weather conditions exacerbate the problem as they did in 1975-76 for instance, it is not unusual to have no meat at all in any shops for days and days on end.

The Polish government realises that industrial development is greatly held back by the poor agricultural sector.



Polish leader Gierek

It consequently spends a lot of money on buying out private farmers and gives preferential treatment in terms of credit and grants to socialised farm activity.

But this is a long term policy and not likely to solve many short or even medium term problems.

Meanwhile, food shortages and consumer good shortages continue. Regular and extensive queues for these products are common and living standards are low.

Officially the standard of living has risen by 8.5% between 1971-1980, but this is criticised by unofficial sources which claim that serious falls in real wages have occurred recently.

They advocate that workers should fight for higher wages and better working conditions either through trade unions or in independent groups.

They also inform them how to find out whether real wages are rising or falling and advise on what can be legally done if the management takes disciplinary action against their demands.

Overall, the bureaucratically controlled economy shackled within the Stalinist confines of "socialism in one country" seems to be finding it harder and harder to provide the Polish people with rising standards of living as time continues.

In this conflict of interests lies the key to the struggle for political revolution to overthrow the ruling Stalinist bureaucracy.

# Italy: the same old song

Last week the grand opera of Italian politics looked as if it was about to enter a new act.

The story so far is that, since last June's election the minorit Christian Democratic government (headed by Francisco Cossiga) has survived against the "opposition" of the second largest parliamentary party, the Communist Party, thanks to the abstention of the Socialist Party.

The Socialists are always on the point of changing their minds and going into opposition—because they don't want to lose support to the CP by taking all the blame for the continued existence of the corrupt and reactionary rule of the Christian Democrats.

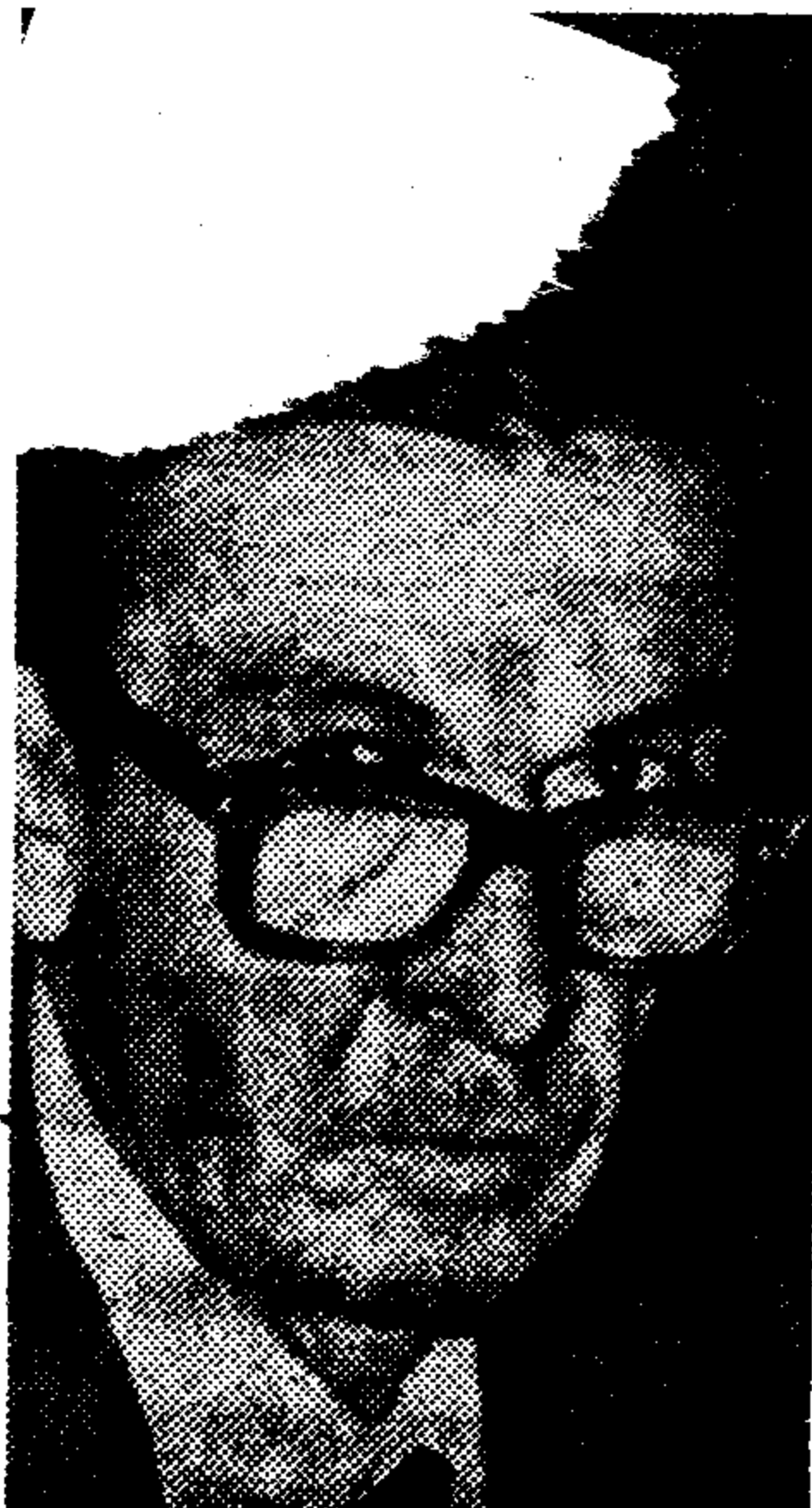
The Socialists, like the Communists, propose a broad national unity coalition—but there is general agreement that they would accept a centre-left coalition between themselves and the Christian Democrats as long as a Socialist is the Prime Minister.

But the Christian Democrats want to hold on to both the government and the Premiership.

Since there is no possible resolution of this plot which can provide the Italian bourgeoisie with a happy ending—the stable government it so desperately needs—Italian politicians have a very difficult life.

As each act of the tragedy unfolds they must appear to be singing music which is different from the previous act.

But the weakness of the Christian Democrats and the



Berlinguer

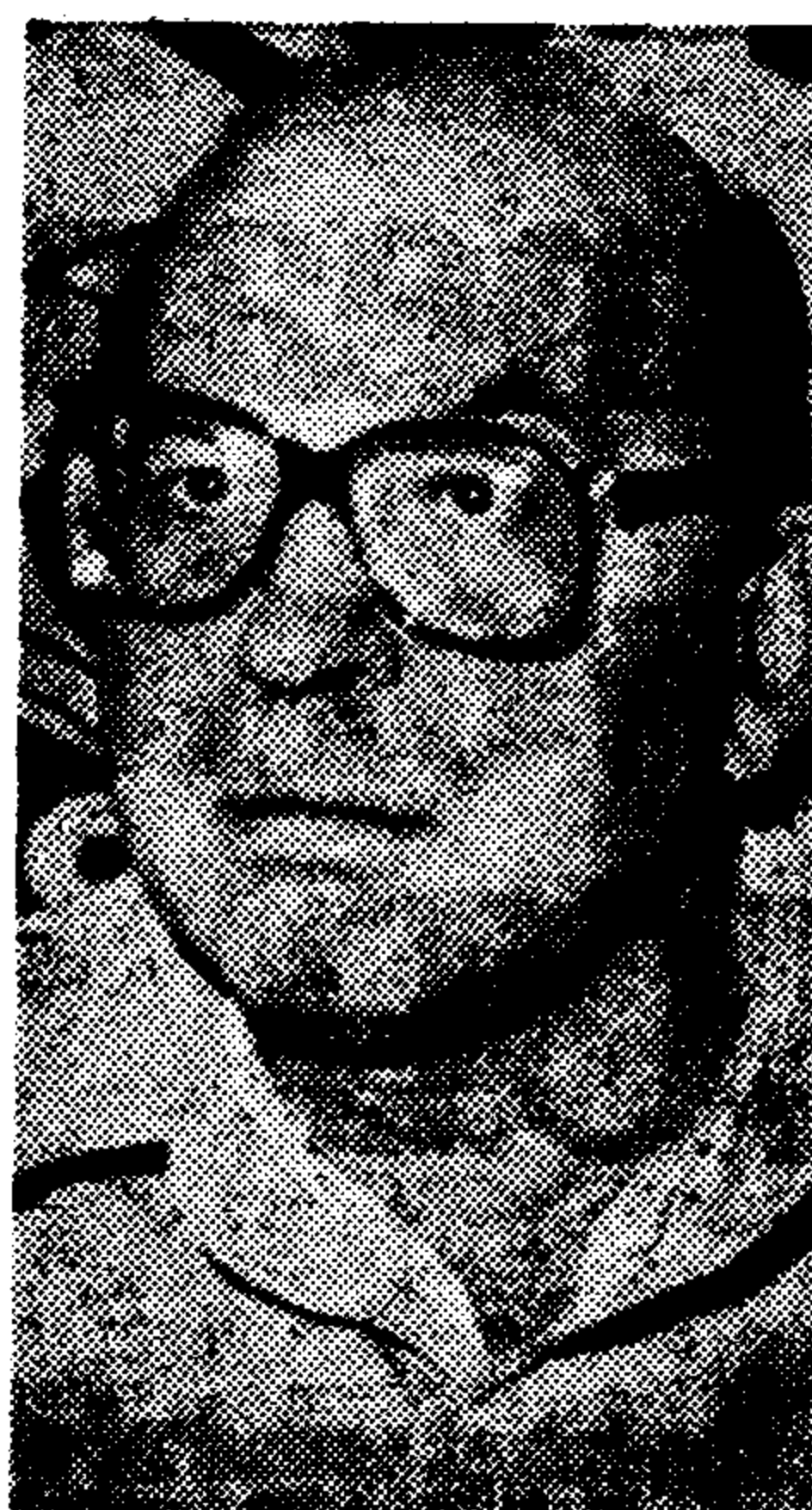
unwillingness of the Socialist and Communist leaders to mobilise the working class mean that all the tunes have to be basically the same.

In the last few weeks several of the singers seemed to be drawing breath ready for a new theme.

The Socialist Party leaders, under severe pressure from their "left" wing and from their working class base, announced it was going to end its parliamentary abstention altogether and go into opposition.

This threat, if carried out, would mean that the government would almost certainly fall through insufficient parliamentary support.

So that looked like a real change of tune. But when the



Craxi

singing began it turned out to be no different: Party Secretary Bettino Craxi said that the change to opposition would not be made until an alternative government had been arranged.

The second apparent change of tune came from the election of a new Secretary General of the Christian Democratic Party.

He is Flaminio Piccoli, leader of what is known as the "centre" faction of the party, though it has recently voted almost entirely with the "right" faction of Amintore Fanfani and Donat Cattin.

What distinguishes "left" and "right" among the Christian Democrats is whether the CP should be kept out of the government on principle because of its ideology (the

"right" position) or on tactical grounds because of its present policies (the "left" position).

The "left" leaders, former Secretary General Zaccagnini and former Premier Andreotti, now appear to be out in the cold.

Rejected by a 58% majority at the party's recent Congress, they may now be damaged further by the fact that supporters of Andreotti were deeply implicated in one of the waves of financial scandals which have broken over the Christian Democrats in the past few days.

The Caltagirone brothers, rich building contractors who got richer through a fraudulent bankruptcy, are alleged to have given billions of lire to assist the Andreotti wing of the party.

One government minister has already been forced to resign.

Twenty-four hours later forty prominent Christian Democrats were arrested for misappropriation of public funds via the national savings banks of which they were officials.

The eyes of the audience now turn to the Communist Party which has stood in awkward silence as the others do the singing.

### Criminals

Now that the Christian Democrats have firmly closed the door in the face of the CP and shown themselves once again to be nothing more than a bunch of criminals, the CP must now decide whether to change its political line from its present insistence on being admitted to a grand "historic compromise" government with the Christian Democrats.

It is this prospect, now definitely ruled out by the Christian Democrats, which the CP has held up before its increasingly impatient followers as a reason not to mobilise resistance to the government's reactionary anti-working class policies.

Previously forced to walk a tightrope, the CP bureaucracy is now obliged to walk on air.

### Applecart

At present, so long as the financial scandals don't upset the present extremely unstable political applecart, all the party leaderships seem to have agreed that noone will do anything decisive before the May municipal and regional elections.

Meanwhile, as in Italian opera, the principal performers will be trying to sing encores of their old arias as long as possible.

It cannot be long, however, before the audience begin to throw something other than flowers.



Zaccagnini

# IRELAND REPRESSION: WHERE DO CP REALLY STAND?

A major feature article revealing details of the intensive military surveillance of the Catholic ghetto areas of Belfast appeared in the *Morning Star* of March 1.

Reporter David Whitfield vividly sketched the picture of army spy posts based in high rise flats, from which every movement of every individual resident in a selected "patch" is monitored and recorded by trained observers through the sights of high velocity armalite rifles.

The immense scale of the surveillance operation is stressed—to the extent that soldiers drafted in receive prior training and briefing using mock-ups of the area they are to watch.

## Civil rights

And at the same time the article shows the inability of even these immensely thorough and painstaking operations to suppress the republican movement, quoting one senior commander as saying:

"another 20 battalions would not stop the killings and terrorism."

But the *Morning Star's* pre-occupation throughout the article is not so much with the national oppression of the Irish people, as with the abuse of civil rights in 'Northern Ireland'.

This is clear from the conclusion of the article, which calls *not* for an end to the spying on and repression of anti-imperialist forces, nor for the withdrawal of British troops, but simply for the troops to be confined to barracks:

"If the Land-Rover and "pig" patrols were to stay in the likes of the Girdwood fort, the people of New Lodge and elsewhere would shut their doors—and get on with building a better life out of the literal ruins of Belfast's ghettos."

Such a statement sums up the utter futility of the "Better Life for All" campaign espoused by the TUC bureaucracy and the Communist Party as a means of evading the fight against British imperialist occupation in Ireland.

The idea that it is possible, through a few superficial reforms (or even the legislation of a "Bill of Rights" through

the British Parliament) to transform the six-county Orange sectarian statelet into a viable unit—in which chronic mass unemployment and economic devastation can be overcome—is a delusion consciously peddled by the Stalinists.

As such it, is completely in line with their counter-revolutionary strategy of a "peaceful" parliamentary road to socialism in Britain.

## Stark reality

It refuses to confront the stark reality of the imperialist exploitation of a divided Ireland, which produces unemployment and grinding poverty both sides of the border, while super-profits are reaped by giant multinationals and imperialist banks.

The British army—whether aggressively harassing Catholic workers on the streets of the six counties, spying on them from the rooftops, or even waiting quietly in their barracks—remains the guarantee for imperialism that such profitable exploitation will continue.

The military repression of the republican movement North and South is seen as the key to stemming the revolutionary mobilisation of Irish workers and small farmers in united struggles that could lead over into the fight for nationalisation of banks and basic industries and the establishment of a workers' republic.

For the Stalinists, however, it is simply the overt evidence of this repression which is unacceptable.

Indeed they themselves are prepared to do their share of witch-hunting and attacking the republican movement.

## Evaded

In January Communist Party members in Oxford joined with extreme right wingers in a bid to whip up hostility to socialists who had supported a Provincial Sinn Fein demonstration. A leaflet written by CP member Tony Gallagher claimed that:

"Many TGWU members have died or been maimed or made homeless or jobless because of Provisional IRA activity in Northern Ireland and England.

Mass executions [!] of TGWU working people have been carried out. The TGWU totally opposes such violence."

Since then embarrassed CP members have evaded questions on the matter. But the cancellation—under threat of disaffiliation from the TUC—of a March 1 labour movement conference on Ireland called by Tameside Trades Council raises once again the question of where the CP stands on Ireland.

## No stand

On March 4, Tameside Trades Council correctly voted 28-3 to defy the instruction from TUC General Secretary Len Murray, and to reconvene the banned conference.

Yet the *Morning Star*—despite its professed concern for democratic rights in the six counties—took no stand against the TUC blackmail, and



reported on Thursday that:

"The TUC is still being defied by Tameside Trades Council over Northern Ireland policy and import controls".

Communist Party members in every trade union branch and labour movement body should be called upon to say openly where they and their Party stand on the witch-hunting of the republican movement and on the attempts by the TUC to suppress discussion on the Irish war of liberation.

And if they are prepared to hound and gag opponents of British imperialist policy in Ireland, why should the Stalinists stop short of similar bureaucratic measures to repress socialist opponents of British capitalism at home?

## Students given no lead

Despite torrential rain, 6,000 students gathered at London's Malet Street last Friday 7 March.

This was in support of the London NUS-called protest march to the Department of Education and Science on London's Southbank, to demand an end to education cuts, and for decent grants.

## Popular frontist

Although the mood of the students was angry and determined, no further policies of opposition to cuts (other than the demonstration itself) were forthcoming from the NUS leadership.

This reflects the "Broad Left" dominance of the Executive; a popular frontist alliance of Stalinists, reformists and liberals for whom a protest demonstration is an end in itself.

For such a militant demonstration to be more of a consequence than "letting off steam" a revolutionary leadership must be built within the NUS to fight for the mobilisation of students, linking in where possible with the labour movement behind demands of:

\*Occupations against education cuts! Defend all jobs and services!

\*Open the books of the local education authorities!

\*For a 36% increase in grants and the linking of grants and public spending to keep pace with the rate of inflation, as determined by elected committees of students, trade unionists and housewives!

## Fascists play Orange card

"Smash the IRA" is the slogan for a National Front march planned in Glasgow for March 15.

Finding it impossible to secure a base for a fascist movement in Scotland on the basis of its routine racism, the NF has set out to exploit the divisions between Glasgow's protestant and Catholic workers.

NF Scottish organiser Raymond Skinner has appealed to "Loyalist patriots" to attend the march.

But while the fascists and their Orange stable-mates organise, the Glasgow labour movement has been reluctant to take a stand in opposition.

## Turned to police

Like the Labour council in Tameside, which refused to mobilise the workers movement against a fascist march that was aimed to break up a planned Trades Council conference on Ireland, Scottish labour bureaucrats have turned first to the

police to ban the NF demonstration.

This reluctance of Scottish labour leaders to stand in a united front with anti-imperialist fighters in struggle against the NF—sworn enemies of trade unionism and socialism—opens up severe dangers both for March 15 and for the future.

It is vital that a counter demonstration is mobilised with the aim of stopping the NF and

## Leicester 'troops out' call

OVER 70 trade unionists and Labour activists attended a successful day school on Ireland on March 8, sponsored by Leicester South CLP and Leicester Trades Council.

After discussions on television coverage of the Irish war and on the "troops out" demand, those present voted

defending the forces opposed to British imperialism in Ireland.

While the Workers Socialist League has profound political differences with the programme, perspective and methods of the republican movement, we call unambiguously for labour movement action to defend republicans and socialists against attack from fascist and right wing forces or from the British capitalist state.

endorse four demands:

\*Trops out now!  
\*Repeat the Prevention of Terrorism Act!

\*Self determination for the Irish people!

\*Political status for Irish POWs!

Reconstruct the Fourth International!

No. 1 Nov. 1979

INTERNATIONAL DISCUSSION BULLETIN 60p

75p including p&p from WSL, BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX.

\*Full grants for all students! End the means test and discretionary grants!  
\*Campaign for a general strike to bring down the Tories, to be replaced by a government answerable to the needs of the working class.  
\*Assist the setting up of councils of action to coordinate and unify the labour movement behind a revolutionary programme.

NOW AVAILABLE  
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INSIDE  
Witch-hunts:  
OXFORD, TAMESIDE

WAR! WHAT WAR?

A labour movement bulletin on IRELAND No 3, March 1980 10p

# PRESS GANG



## From our Foreign Correspondent

Amazing what you can get used to!

There used to be this bloke called Mugabe who was evil as hell.

He was a Marxist and a terrorist—a man who had rejected the ballot box and used bullets against our kith and kin.

He had a friend called Nkomo who was nearly as bad. He shot down airliners—but at least he was said to be flirting with democracy. Maybe he would stop shooting down airliners one day.

There was this other bloke—a Bishop. He looked a bit like Mugabe and Nkomo (he was black, too): but for all that he was a good guy.

Being a Bishop he could see that what was needed was co-operation with the altruistic white ranchers and businessmen who had saved the poor savages from sinking into tyranny.

Being a Bishop and—underneath it all—a white guy, so to speak, he had obviously got the commanding support of the overwhelming majority of his countrymen.

He used to give them wise advice like 'be patient'.

Except for a few terrorists



Thatcher with Muzorewa

they loved him most and he made them feel good because the white bosses called him Prime Minister—at least to his face.

But then the British and the Americans—just to show what a good idea democracy is—decided to let the blacks have a second election.

It was difficult because the unpleasant Marxist Mugabe had obviously been brainwashing whole villages and measures had to be taken against him.

But disaster struck. The poor Bishop—despite a world epidemic of writers' cramp among the anti-Mugabe campaigners—came nowhere.

Mugabe the bad walked it. Of course I could tell there was a touch of the statesman about Mugabe.

Hadn't I always said how little support that puppet Muzorewa had? It was obvious that Mugabe had always commanded mass support.

His pronouncements on the stock exchange, the police force and General Walls confirm the blossoming of a great leader.

Progress had to come. This great nation can go forward in unity thanks to us British.

Wonderful lot these guerrilla chappies. Marxist, schmarxist! I just hope they can deal with the terrorists!

# Chapple issues rallying call

In an article ironically entitled "The canker at the heart of the Labour Party", extreme right wing Electricians union leader Frank Chapple last week used the pages of Sir James Goldsmith's reactionary *Now!* magazine to attack the Party's NEC.

Chapple of course rose to his present position in the EETPU through the witch-hunting of the old Communist Party leadership in the wake of a ballot-rigging scandal.

## Dictatorship

His union is now a model of right wing bureaucratic dictatorship widely envied by fellow TUC bureaucrats and no doubt also by Callaghan himself as he grapples to control the growing militancy of the Labour Party rank and file.

An inkling of the kind of methods utilised in the EETPU can be gained from Chapple's article. On the one hand to make a point against the 'left' he criticises the Party Treasurer Norman Atkinson for raising subscriptions from £1.20 to £3 per year: yet on the other, to further his anti-Marxist witch-hunt he claims that "the Militant conspiracy diverts money from Labour supporters that might otherwise boost Transport House's flagging income."

In reality of course, as super-loyal Labour activists, Militant



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Chapple

supporters have obviously brought considerable layers of workers and youth who might otherwise have turned to revolutionary politics, into the Labour Party.

Chapple goes on to cite the case of expelled Oxford socialist Ted Heslin. He was expelled for selling *Socialist Press*—though the paper is not proscribed under rule.

## Lack of evidence

Subsequent right wing claims that Heslin was a member of the Workers Socialist League have foundered for lack of a scrap of evidence.

But Chapple—who has clearly been given a briefing

on Heslin by Oxford right wingers—brushes aside such a technicality: such evidence "might be found if looked for," he claims.

He goes on to assert—again without a scrap of proof—that "the WSL have now instructed all of their members (...) to join the Labour Party (...). No doubt the extra recruitment which this latest example of entryism will provide, will be cited by Hayward as evidence that the electorate (...) are flocking to Labour's banner."

Underlying such wild assertions and allegations is the real unease felt by Chapple and Labour's right wing: as the Tory offensive gathers pace, thousands of workers in many areas are turning to the Labour Party, expecting and demanding a lead in the fight back.

Such new recruits are certainly not all Marxists: but they want a real alternative to Thatcher's policies, and can be won to the fight for socialism.

Chapple knows full well that this threatens to bring them into immediate conflict with the Callaghan-Healey leadership.

This is why Chapple is now issuing an anxious rallying call to his fellow union bureaucrats.

They must, he argues "stop pretending Trotskyism is no concern of theirs", "fight to wrest control of the party away from unrepresentative extremism", and generally batten down the hatches before the storm of the class struggle sweeps them off the deck.

# SURVEYS CONFIRM SCALE OF

# CRISIS

By John Lister

Two million unemployed: recession for at least two years: inflation in double figures for the foreseeable future: more closures, more redundancies—and higher profits for the banks.

This is the grim prospect for British workers if action is not taken to bring down the Thatcher government and implement a programme of policies to create a planned socialist economy.

It is not simply *Socialist Press* that holds this view. It is now a consensus of several leading forecasting and advisory bodies who are monitoring the downhill progress of the British capitalist system.

These include the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, the London Business School, the international Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the CBI.

## Fall in output

The OECD's latest report predicts that output in Britain will actually fall by 2½% between the second half of 1979 and the second half of 1980—and that even this figure is artificially good because of the increase in production of North Sea Oil.

On the same basis the OECD calculates that unemployment will rise during 1980 from 5¼% to 7%—meaning 2 million on the dole by next winter.

The "good news" is that inflation is expected to average "only" 16½% over the year—small consolation for the millions of workers whose wage

increases on the last pay round are nothing like that amount.

The key to this mounting anarchy of unused factories, unemployed workers and unmet social needs—housing queues, NHS waiting lists, inadequate schools and social services, massive world poverty—lies of course at the very heart of the capitalist system itself.

## Profit

For all the Labourite dreams of an eventual "planned" capitalist system in which production of commodities could be tailored to social need through appropriate government policies, the capitalist mode of production in reality functions solely for the extraction and accumulation of profit.

And with the growing dislocation of the world market, the crisis in the credit system, instability of every major world currency and a profound econ-

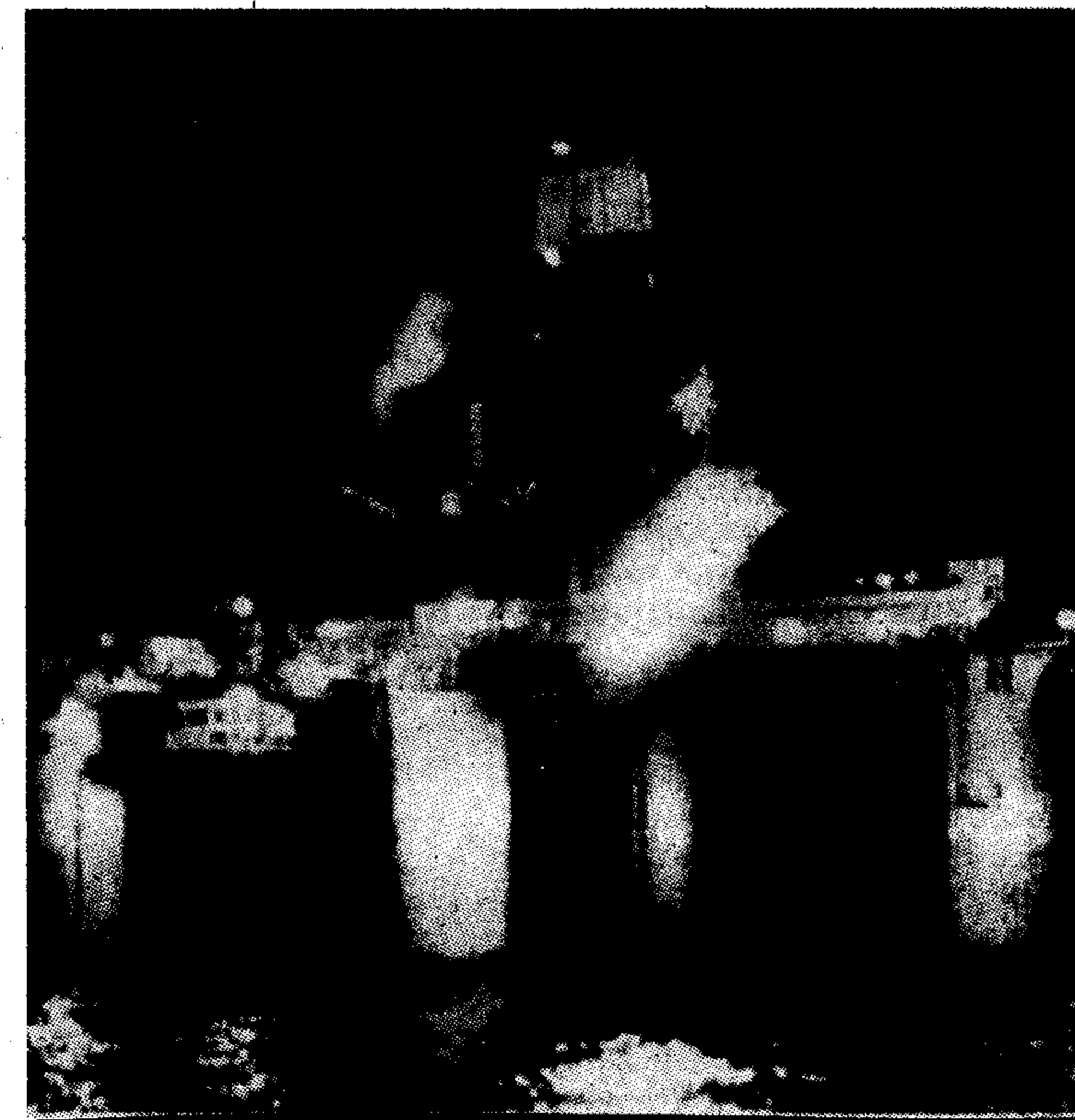
omic crisis wracking the underdeveloped nations, the prospects of achieving adequate profits from expanded or even sustained production dwindle by the day.

The London Business School whose Professor Terry Burns is now a leading monetarist advisor to Tory Chancellor Howe, forecasts that profits in British industry other than North Sea Oil will fall by a staggering 60% in 1980.

The CBI calculates that the pre-tax rate of return on investment in non-North Sea companies last year was a mere 3%—and predicts a drop to 2% in 1980. But if the London Business School is right, that 1980 figure could wind up as 1%!

## Further rod

Are workers therefore to join the Tory/CBI clamour for measures to boost company profits? Are they to join the



The only success—North Sea Oil

growing appeals from increasingly bankrupt sections of industry such as textiles and British Leyland for a government policy of import controls to help improve the business climate for British employers?

Such policies would merely

provide a further rod for the back of the labour movement. The profitability of private industry can only be driven up in the present period by an increase in the rate of exploitation of the working class—through further rationalisation

programmes to cut back the least profitable sections of capitalism, through relentless speed-up on the shop floor and a war on hard-won working conditions.

And while certain sections of the trade union and Labour leadership have readily endorsed the call for import controls, it is already clear that this policy not only creates dangerous nationalist divisions in the international working class, but also provides a further pretext for a line-up between union bureaucrats and the employers, in the so-called "national interests".

In reality, the threat to jobs flows not from "foreign" capitalists as such, but from the inescapable anarchy of the capitalist system as a whole, which on a world scale proves daily its inability to develop and utilise the productive forces, science and technology in the interests of the vast majority of the population.

Sooner than seeking to palm off factory closures and sackings from Britain onto workers in the USA, Germany or Japan through measures to keep imports out of the British markets, workers need to look to policies to confront and overthrow the British capitalist class whose drive for profits is at the root of the Tory onslaught.



Howe

# OUR POLICIES

\*Defend living standards! Fight for pay claims of at least 20%, linked to cost-of-living clauses to keep pace with inflation, as monitored by elected committees of trade unionists and housewives.

\*Defend all jobs! Occupy threatened plants and public service facilities to prevent closure. Fight for supporting strike action. No redundancies: fighting work sharing on full pay under workers' control!

\*Defend all services! For a sliding scale of public service spending to keep

pace with inflation.

\*Full support to the steelworkers! No surrender on pay: no loss of jobs! For a General Strike to bring down the Tory government.

\*Build councils of action in every area, to draw rank and file delegates from all labour movement organisations into the fight to extend mass picketing, control essential supplies, and counter police violence.

\*Open the books of the banks (Lloyds profits up 90% this year) and major industries! Reveal the way mass unemployment, falling living standards

and public service cuts are used to boost the profits of private employers! Show the case for the nationalisation of industry without compensation to make way for a planned socialist economy under workers' management.

\*Kick out the Callaghan-Healey Labour leadership and any other leadership that opposes the necessary socialist policies to defend the interests of the working class in Britain and internationally! For a workers government!

# MAKERS OF MODERN

## 6. Herbert Marcuse

Herbert Marcuse is probably best known today as the intellectual high priest of the American hippies, the white-haired guru who gave theoretical respectability to the pot-and-sex 'liberation' of the late 1960s student movement.

But Marcuse had been an important Marxist theoretician long before the media shot him to fame in his later years.

As a leading member of the so-called Frankfurt School in the Germany of the 1930s—the Marxist philosophers grouped around the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt—Marcuse had made some significant contributions to the School's work on culture and philosophy.

When the Nazis came to power, the Institute transferred itself to New York; and Marcuse was to remain in the USA as a professor of philosophy for the rest of his life.

### Defects

Politically isolated, theoretically elitist and doctrinally revisionist, the Frankfurt School graphically illustrates most of the defects of 'Hegelian Marxism' discussed in previous articles in this series.

Their strong reaction against the mechanical materialism of Stalinism led them straight to a form of Marxism which was at times little more than a thinly disguised version of Hegel's philosophical idealism.

Marcuse's early book, *Reason and Revolution*

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.

(1941), is one of the most subtle accounts of Hegel's philosophy available; but though it criticises Hegel for his later reactionary standpoint, it is remarkably uncritical about the Hegelian philosophy itself.

In this, Marcuse shares the position of the 'Young Hegelians'—the left-wing disciples of Hegel who, as Marx argued, had failed to break decisively with the master's idealism.

Throughout Marcuse's work runs one recurrent theme: the contrast between the *actual* and the *essential*.

### Utopian

The 'actual' means the facts as they present themselves; the 'essential' means the underlying truth of such facts.

Such a distinction is, of course, central to Marxism: dialectical thought is precisely that which refuses

the 'obviousness' of 'the facts' and grasps instead the complex, contradictory processes at work beneath them.

Few modern Marxist philosophers have been as effective as Marcuse in their onslaught against non-dialectical thinking; he sees precisely how bourgeois positivism, in consecrating 'that which exists', tries to fend off the revolutionary impact of *negative, critical* thought.

At the same time, however, the 'essence' which Marcuse opposes to the 'actual' is often utopian and idealist.

Like the early Marx, he speaks of 'Man', and his essential needs and capacities, in an unhistorical way; like the early Marx too, he sometimes conceives of history as no more than the gradual unfolding of this abstraction 'Man', which has stood in for Hegel's 'Idea'.

Marcuse's writings on

culture are perhaps the best illustration of this.

Unlike a long, philistine tradition of revolutionaries, Marcuse takes culture seriously: he recognises, as did Marx and Engels themselves, that culture is not only an important feature of class society, but that it can provide a powerful *opposition* to that society's ideologies.

Traditional culture, Marcuse argues, has played a *compensatory* role: it provided the beauty, harmony and fantasy into which men and women could escape as an alternative to the harshness of real life.

### Subversive

As such, its function is essentially reactionary, and Marcuse calls for new artworks which will be critical and subversive of the existing social order.

But by the time of his last book *The Aesthetic Dimension* (1977), Marcuse has retreated into pure Platonic idealism, arguing that the very *form* of an artwork, regardless of its *content*, expresses an ideal essence, over and above history, to which men and women should aspire.

Art which explicitly engages with political issues is in his view automatically inferior; the genuine artwork is a kind of pure, silent form which 'negates' actual reality without actually criticising it.

If this were all that there were to Marcuse's cultural theory, it would hardly be worth taking issue with it.

### Sensitivity

But Marcuse, almost uniquely among modern Marxist theorists, has a deep sensitivity to the importance of art and culture which allows him to make some trenchant analyses of the cultural barrenness, exhaustion and triviality of monopoly capitalist society.

He sees that in such a society two major new developments have occurred, both of which

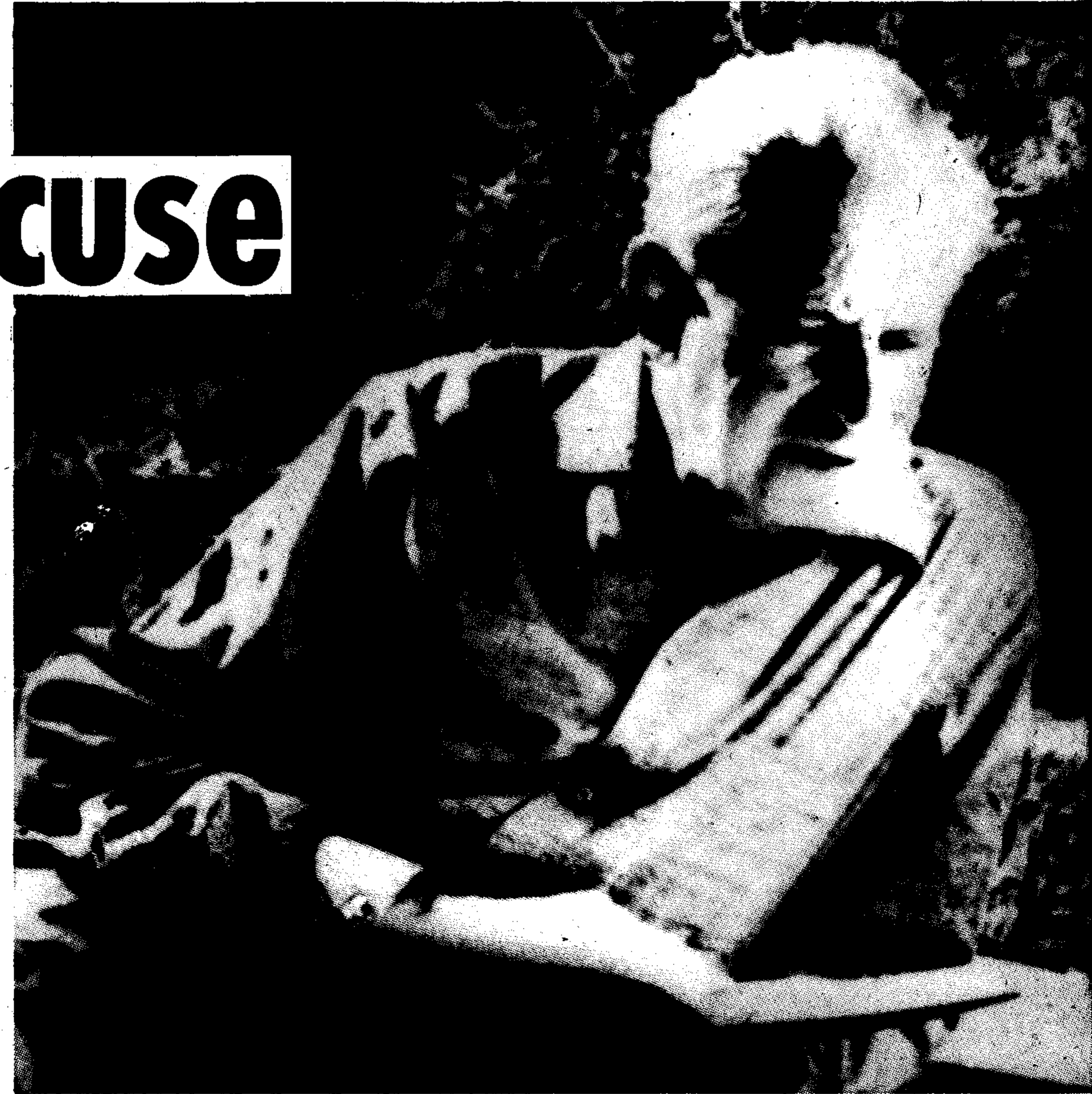
offer a contrast with the liberal capitalism of an earlier period.

On the one hand, the *political* has penetrated more deeply into the *social*. The state, rather than simply securing the general conditions for capitalist reproduction, as it did in an earlier epoch, now actively, massively intervenes in the sphere of social labour and commodity exchange.

impossible to relegate culture to a purely marginal role—as the bourgeoisie themselves have traditionally done.

For not only is culture a huge apparatus of ideological manipulation; it also, in 'consumer society', is inseparable from economic life itself.

Society is converted into a kind of degraded artistic spectacle—into a vast or-



Marcuse



Hegel



Radical French students on the streets in 1968

On the other hand, the *social* has assumed new political functions. Certain social forces such as 'culture' have become, mainly through the mass media, closely bound up with *political* repression.

In such a society, it is

of consumption where glitteringly packaged commodities, like imitative works of art, offer themselves to our aesthetic taste.

The third-rate movement where flashy images flash alluringly by before

# RN MARXISM



Mass anti-Vietnam war demonstration, 1967

passive, fragmented audience, is a suitable symbol of monopoly capitalist consumerism.

Marcuse's concern with culture, then, extends beyond 'high art' to the very feel and quality of social existence under capitalism.

If this has been an issue insufficiently aired by Marxism, so is another topic which Marcuse broaches: sexuality.

A well known European thinker once wrote: 'The motive of human society is in the last resort an economic one'. Not Karl Marx, in fact, but Sigmund Freud, in his *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*.

For Freud, who is a thoroughly materialist thinker, the need to labour involves a repression of the human erotic and aggressive drives, which are channelled by the crucial mechanism of the family into socially acceptable routes.

Such repression is for Freud at the very basis of civilisation: the tragedy of human existence, as Freud sees it, is that men and women can only attain material security at the cost of a massive crippling sacrifice of their instinctual needs.

### Suppression

But Freud does not believe that all societies are equal in this respect. If, he argues, a society is such that the satisfaction of one portion of it depends upon the suppression of another, then:

"It is understandable that the suppressed people should develop an intense hostility toward a culture whose existence they make possible by their work, but in whose wealth they have too small a share... It goes without saying that a civilisation which leaves so large a number of its participants unsatisfied and drives them into revolt neither has nor deserves the prospect of a lasting existence."  
(*The Future of an Illusion*).  
So much for the

common Marxist dismissal of Freud as no more than a decadent petty bourgeois. Leon Trotsky did not share that view (he seems to have been one of the few 'Trotskyists' who didn't), and neither does Herbert Marcuse.

In his suggestive work *Eros and Civilisation* (1955) Marcuse agrees with Freud that all societies demand instinctual repression, but claims that capitalism demands a 'surplus-repression'.



Trotsky

The brutal repression of human instincts under capitalism, with its vicious work disciplines, sexual puritanism and cultural degradation is a 'surplus' over and above the repression necessary for any society to survive; and Marcuse envisages revolutionary socialism as a liberation not only of the productive forces, but of the repressed instincts themselves.

In capitalist society, instinct is either 'sublimated' into 'spiritual' matters, or hemmed into a narrow enclave of permissible sexuality.

But with a socialist transformation, Marcuse claims, such drives would be released from that enclave and generalised over society as a whole. 'Libido' (sexual instinct) would not be restricted to 'genital' sexuality; it would infuse and invigorate all human relationships, so that even work would become 'eroticised'.

It is easy to dismiss this vision as naive, utopian, or as a simple plea for 'permissiveness'. But that is not

what Marcuse means.

There are plenty of signs in Marx's own writings that he envisaged the quality of all human relationships in socialist society, including work as 'aesthetic'—to have something of the concrete, sensuous, enjoyable quality which can now be found only in a few isolated activities such as art.

### Prudish

And since the artistic and erotic instincts are closely intertwined, Marcuse's vision is by no means merely to be sneered at.

Much Marxism has, of course, been notoriously prudish about sexuality, which it has relegated to a merely 'private' activity; it is part of the boldness of Marcuse's vision that he tried to reintegrate sexuality and politics, refusing the bourgeois separation of the two.

*Eros and Civilisation* does, however, raise severe problems. For Freud, the libidinal drives are inherently anti-social: if it were not for social conditioning (what Freud calls the 'reality-principle', as against the 'pleasure-principle'), individuals would merely sink self-indulgently into an orgy of egoism and aggressiveness.

(Such a viewpoint of course offends many earnest 'socialist' believers in the natural goodness and fraternity of mankind, as it offended the Viennese bourgeoisie of Freud's own day to hear their angelic children described as creatures of egoism, repressed lust and destructiveness).

### Gloomy

So Marcuse needs to explain—which he doesn't at all adequately—the mechanisms by which liberated instincts would be socially productive rather than anarchistic.

That there is much of the Romantic anarchist in Marcuse is clear; but this does not merely cancel what

is suggestive in his work, any more than the Hegelian idealist in the early Marx means that he can be written off.

If *Eros and Civilisation* is a utopian work, Marcuse's next and most famous book, *One Dimensional Man* (1964), is exactly the reverse.

In page after gloomy page, we are offered a terrifying vision of late monopoly capitalism—of a society in which all revolution has been safely defused, all revolt safely 'incorporated', all contradictions neatly 'contained'.

Capitalism appears as a monstrous monolith, with an almost endless capacity to absorb and neutralise opposition; we are confronted with a social order which secures the willing complicity of those exploits by ceaselessly manipulating their desires, implanting 'false needs', administering their lives through a vast array of ideological structures.

### Zombies

'Television rules' is really the message: the working class are little more than a bunch of catatonic zombies, lobotomised by advertising and the media.

Philosophy has disowned its critical role and reduced itself to a mere legitimisation of the given order; art has given up the ghost and become hopelessly commercialised.

Science and technology are inherently oppressive: Marcuse mournfully contrasts the deep joy of making love in a field with the squalor of making love in a Cadillac. Logic is no more than a weapon of the ruling class; education no more than brainwashing.

What then remains? Two things, essentially: first, a small elite of men like Herbert Marcuse, who are able to perceive the deep social malaise from which they themselves are miraculously free.

Second, all those potentially 'revolutionary' groups

whom capitalism has been unable to fully integrate, and who are offered to us as the shining vanguard of socialist revolution: students, blacks, the Third World peasantry, the lumpenproletariat.

As for the working class, they will get by as best they can.

Pathetic though it is, this 'vision' calls for three comments. First, there is a definite relation between the later, despairing Marcuse and the early Hegelian-Marxist who believed in the triumphant march of Reason.

### 'Essence'

Hegelian Marxism tends to see the working class philosophically rather than politically, as an 'essence' which will 'negate' capitalism; and while this has the benefit of keeping the revolutionary role of the class firmly to the fore, it means that the empirical nature of the working class—its actual material and ideological development—is fatally ignored.

Marcuse was never one to louse up his argument with the facts (his work on *Soviet Marxism* (1958) is remarkably untainted by such things), and this exacts a heavy political toll.

But this idealism of the class can just as easily tip over into an empiricism of the class. When you do come to take a cool hard look at the surface appearances of the working class, with its inevitably uneven, partially 'incorporated' nature, all you can do is write it off in contrast with the ideal.

Secondly, Marcuse's vision of monopoly capitalist America is closely conditioned by his experience of Nazism.

### 'Manipulative'

The Frankfurt School, having fled from a form of 'totalitarian' capitalism to an apparently liberal one, discovered that this form of capitalism was a good deal

more 'administered' and 'manipulative' than they had expected.

Accordingly, they fatally blurred the distinction between fascism and American capitalism; the system which Marcuse depicts is essentially 'totalitarian', a black, one-sided, undialectical caricature of American capitalism as a whole.

Thirdly, it is important to record that Marcuse's view that American capitalism had 'contained' its contradictions was, of course, rapidly proved grotesquely incorrect.

Much as Lyndon Johnson would no doubt have loved to believe in the 'one-dimensional' nature of American society, the blazing ghettos, battlefields and campuses of the 1960s made such a thought rather difficult to entertain.

Marcuse, to do him justice, took the point: *One Dimensional Man* was followed by *Essays in Liberation* (1969), a central text for the American student 'New Left'.

### Fatal betrayal

Marcuse never revised his fatal betrayal of the Marxist tenet that only an independent working class can provide revolutionary leadership.

But it can be said of him, at least, that whereas most of the other members of the Frankfurt School proved outright traitors to socialist revolution—one of them even ended up running Voice of America—Marcuse continued to support revolution in his own utopian and idealist way.

That, however, is not his primary importance. His importance lies in those areas of Marxist theory which, however ambiguously, he enriched and renewed.

Trotskyism has still to take up the challenge posed by much of that work.

# Central America in turmoil

By Don Flint

Struggles in Central America, the Caribbean and northern South America are continuing to cause the imperialists grave concern.

The State Department grandly announced a week ago that US military advisers had toured barracks in El Salvador to forestall a right-wing coup against the present junta—which has failed either to check the independent actions of the army or to implement its agrarian reform and nationalisation of the banks.

## Military aid

The imperialists are beginning to pump economic and military aid into the weakening 'reformist' junta but it will be of little avail.

The level of political violence in El Salvador has actually worsened since the overthrow of dictator Romero last October. Since then over 500 people have been killed and many more 'disappeared'.

The three major guerrilla groups—National Resistance,



Demonstration by left wingers in San Salvador

(NR), the Popular Liberation Forces (FPL) and the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP)—have now agreed on a strategic and tactical alliance with the Communist Party, but lack the means for an all-out assault on state power.

The army, meanwhile, is pushing for a total pogrom in the manner of its 1932 slaughter of 30,000 peasants.

Pinochet's declaration of 11 September 1973 is broadcast from radio stations controlled by the ruling clique, and the level of class violence has reached such a point that, according to the Panamanian regime, the US government is now discussing with Central American states the possibilities of reversing its policy and backing the right wing of the military as the only way left to

avoid a much feared repetition of Nicaragua.

These fears must have increased with the news that in Guatemala in the last two weeks there have been strikes in over 60 sugar plantations and a stream of worker-peasant demonstrations.

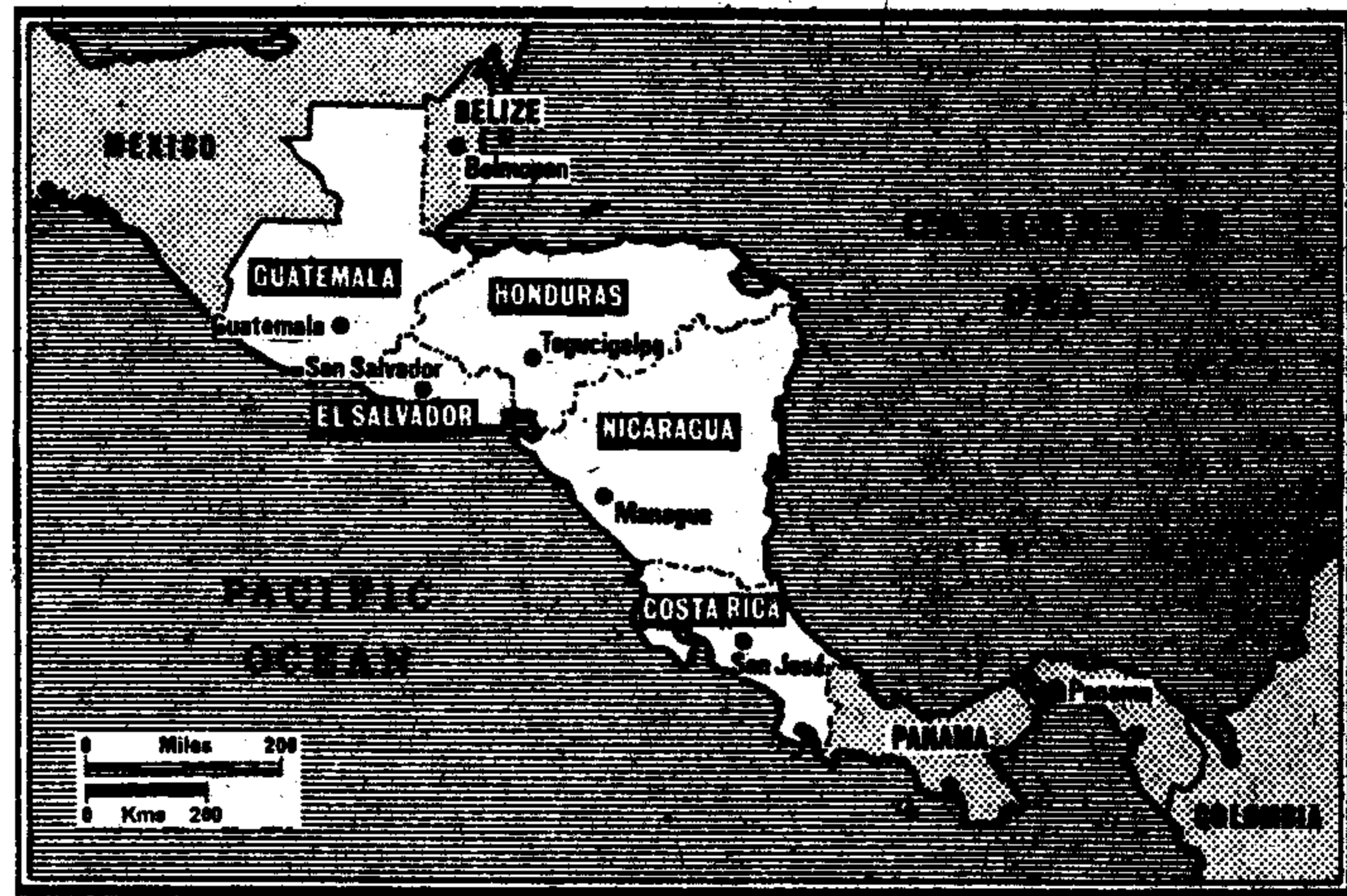
This upheaval is despite increased repression in which twenty people have died and over a hundred been wounded, causing Costa Rica to withdraw its ambassador and further weaken support for the regime.

The dictatorship has also suffered the loss of Col Jose Fernandez, a leading figure in its repressive operations, who was executed by the Guerrilla Army of the Poor.

There has also been a renewed spate of land occupations by cotton workers led by the ORPA (Organisation of the People in Arms) guerrillas.

Honduras has also been hit by this tide of rising militancy.

A week ago the army was forced to occupy the major industrial city of San Pedro Sula following riots in protest at petrol price rises.



And the growing organisational strength of the peasant unions behind the demand for an agrarian reform has resulted in the take-over of over 10,000 hectares of land in one week alone.

Junior officers are reported to be planning to pre-empt this mass movement by overthrowing the weak dictatorship of Gen. Policarpo Paz and setting up a 'reformist' alternative.

Having passed financial aid to Nicaragua through Congress, despite a plethora of embarrassing amendments tabled by right wing Republicans of the Somoza lobby, the Carter administration has been faced with two less acute but no less symptomatic problems.

## Elections

The first was the calling of elections by Michael Manley. This follows his inability to implement the IMF stabilisation plan in Jamaica without unleashing class violence of a type last seen in the 1938 riots and seriously jeopardising the already weak imperialist hold on

the island.

Manley's challenge to the IMF will have to be met, for there are signs that sectors of the opposition Labour Party (JLP), long attached to the CIA, are moving to the left and the level of the economic crisis is so great that any attempt at a coup will only fuel the radicalisation of the masses.

Second was the military coup in Surinam (once Dutch Guyana) where the attempts by the government of Henck Arron to suppress the unionisation of the 800-strong army and jail the ringleaders led to a revolt by NCOs.

The political content of the coup is not yet clear, but the disturbance in this 'secure backwater' has worried the mandarins of Washington—not least because it promises to fuel the destabilisation of the regime of Forbes Burnham in neighbouring Guyana.

There the challenge of the workers, particularly in the bauxite and sugar industries, has been contained only by deployment of troops and increasing repression.

# HUSTON'S MASTERPIECE

The man who among the 40 odd films he has directed can include such masterpieces as *The Maltese Falcon*, *Key Largo*, *The African Queen* and *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* obviously occupies a special place in the history of the cinema.

These were the achievements of John Huston's early years as a Hollywood director from 1941 to 1952.

For the next twenty years, despite an astonishingly full career as director, screen-writer and actor, Huston was unable to match this early achievement.

Epics like *Moby Dick* and *The Bible* proved too big for him, even though they contain some brilliant moments.

Even a very minor film like *The List of Adrian Messenger* contain a few images (like the peeling off of a rubber mask from the face of the main character) which are as memorable as a recurring nightmare.

## Genius

But in the 50s and 60s Huston was no more than a very good Hollywood director; in the 40s he had been one of cinema's great geniuses.

Not many directors have been able to make a comeback but Huston is one.

Late in his career (he is now 74) he has shown that the brilliance he displayed in his early career never left him.

Long after most critics put him on the scrap heap he has started making a series of films which must make him one of the great directors not only of the 40s and 50s but also of the 70s and perhaps, hopefully, the 80s too.

The two best of these

HENRY PHILLIPS reviews John Huston's film "Wise Blood" (now showing in London).

## 'The Blind Don't See And The Lame Don't Walk, And What's Dead Stays That Way'



films are *Fat City* (1975) and *Wise Blood* (now showing in London at the Camden Plaza).

*Wise Blood* is the story (though that's almost too strong a word) of Hazel

Brad Dourif as Hazel Motes, a scrawny young Southerner returned from the army who, haunted by the image of his hell-fire preacher grandfather (wonderfully overacted by Huston himself) cynically

founds the Church of Truth Without Jesus Christ.

The film is based on the novel written in the 1950s by Flannery O'Connor, the Southern writer who died tragically of a generic disease at the height of her writing career.

To judge from *Wise Blood* she had much in common in her humour and unsentimental realism with her much more prolific contemporary, the great novelist William Faulkner.

The form of Hazel Motes' preaching in *Wise Blood* is the same apparently possessed hysteria as the fundamentalist Christians.

## No sin

Only the content is, coincidentally, the opposite. In the Church of Truth without Christ anything goes—there is no sin (to prove it, Motes consorts with a huge engulfing prostitute and nonchalantly murders a rival "prophet").

"I'm a preacher", Hazel boasts "of the Church where the blind don't see and the lame don't walk and the dead stay that way".

And compared with the hell-fire terrors of his grandfather and his rivals that message is almost a comfort.

The narrative of this film is not so important for itself as for the way it introduces a series of vivid, eccentric, fascinating and for the most part repulsive characters: Asa Hawks, the "blind" preacher whose fraud Hazel exposes; his "daughter" who becomes possessed with lust for Hazel; Hoover Shoates, the confidence trickster who forms the rival Church of Christ without Christ; Enoch Emery, the youth who becomes Hazel's disciple but who gets it all wrong by stealing a shrunken "god" from the local museum and whose devotion Hazel treats with

contempt; and Mrs Flood, the landlady who, after Hazel blinds himself, clings to him in pathetic dependence.

## Extraordinary

And through it all goes the extraordinary character of Hazel Motes himself—a fraud who is passionately convinced of the justice of his own fraudulent cause and dedicated to exposing the faults and dishonesty of others.

While Asa Hawks had pretended, for publicity, to blind himself, Hazel does it really, and he commits suicide by tying himself tight with barbed wire and then finally going out into a torrential rainstorm and dying of exposure.

His only faith is in his old and inefficient motor

car. Huston's and O'Connor's world is a grim and deeply pessimistic one.

There is no love, no science, no honesty—only desperate dependence, lust, lies, fraud, delusion and sloth.

Huston managed to make such a bleak dismal world both very humorous and chillingly convincing. And he does it without a trace of sentimentality or cheapness.

This vision of quiet barbarism in super-developed capitalist America does not pretend to offer any hope of change or escape. It shows only an inexorable journey to perdition.

But it is an artistic triumph. Go and see it, it is one of the best films ever made by John Huston. And that means it is one of the best films ever made.

# The Battle for Trotskyism

Second edition of the opposition documents presented inside the WRP by the present leadership of the Workers Socialist League With a new introduction Price £2.50 plus 20p postage and package from Workers Socialist League BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX



# Gift-wrapping Tory

By John Lister

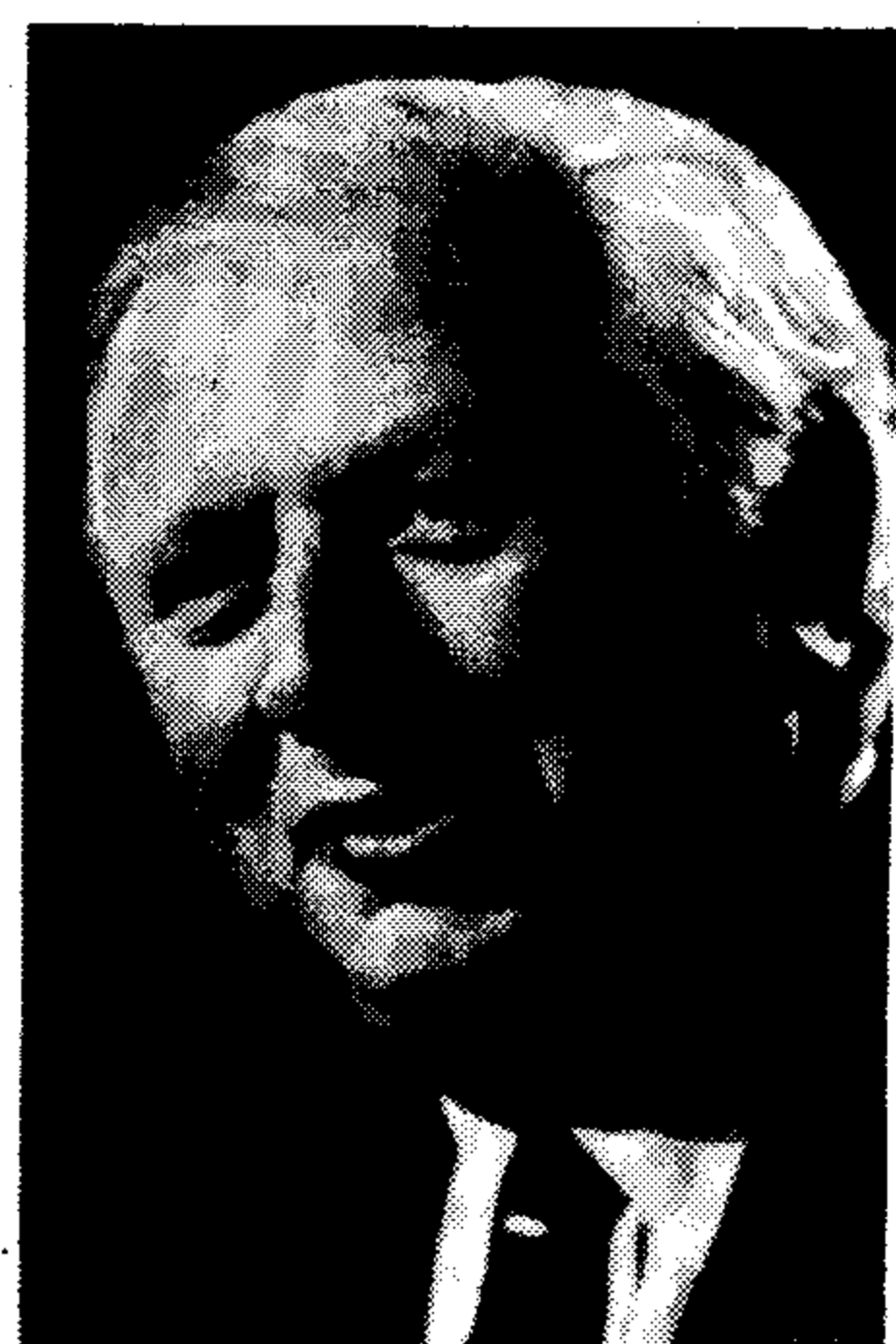
## policies

Spare a thought—if not a dime—for poor old Angus Maude. He's the hard-line Tory with the thankless task of gift-wrapping Thatcher's policies for sale to the public—through manipulation of the press and mass media.

You might have thought this was a fairly straightforward task. But while the Tory press has in general sustained its barrage of pro-Thatcherite propaganda, the material effects of cuts, unemployment and rocketing prices have had rather more impact on workers' thinking. And some harsh facts of life keep awkwardly poking through the carefully erected press facade.

### Carrying the can

Now poor Angus carries the



Prior

can for the growing hostility to this government amongst not only workers but increasingly disaffected sections of the middle class.

Indeed the recent bombardment of Sir Keith Joseph with foodstuffs generously donated by South Wales steelworkers merely reemphasised the problem.

### Sharp words

No doubt there have been sharp words between Sir Keith and Angus since then: but little has been achieved to rectify matters.

A few steps have been taken. Maude has successfully obtained a ruling against Tory ministers appearing on live TV and radio programmes in which they can come face to face with angry members of the public—such as Any Questions.

This way it is hoped that public humiliation can be avoided.

As a substitute, Thatcher staged an elaborately managed morale-boosting visit to the extremely conservative army barracks area of Salisbury—where a crowd of local small business people mingled in front of TV cameras with the families of over-paid army gunmen in an unconvincing display of mass support.

### Anti-communist

And a new Tory poster campaign has been launched by Party chairman Lord Thorneycroft. It combines an anti-communist witch-hunt with an appeal to the "national interest" under the dual purpose slogan



Scientists have finally perfected this new suit to enable Sir Keith Joseph to revisit South Wales.

"Keep Britain out of the red: support the Conservatives."

But such advertising gimmicks run the risk of reviving memories of the Saatchi and Saatchi campaign prior to the last General Election, which capitalised mercilessly on the housing and health queues, unemployment and inflation that had arisen from the (capitalist) policies of the Labour government.

Since every one of these problems has been consciously intensified under Thatcher, the Tories plainly have no wish to remind people of their earlier confidence tricks.

But embarrassments continue to arise. Maude has vainly warned about the impact of colossal increases in profits that

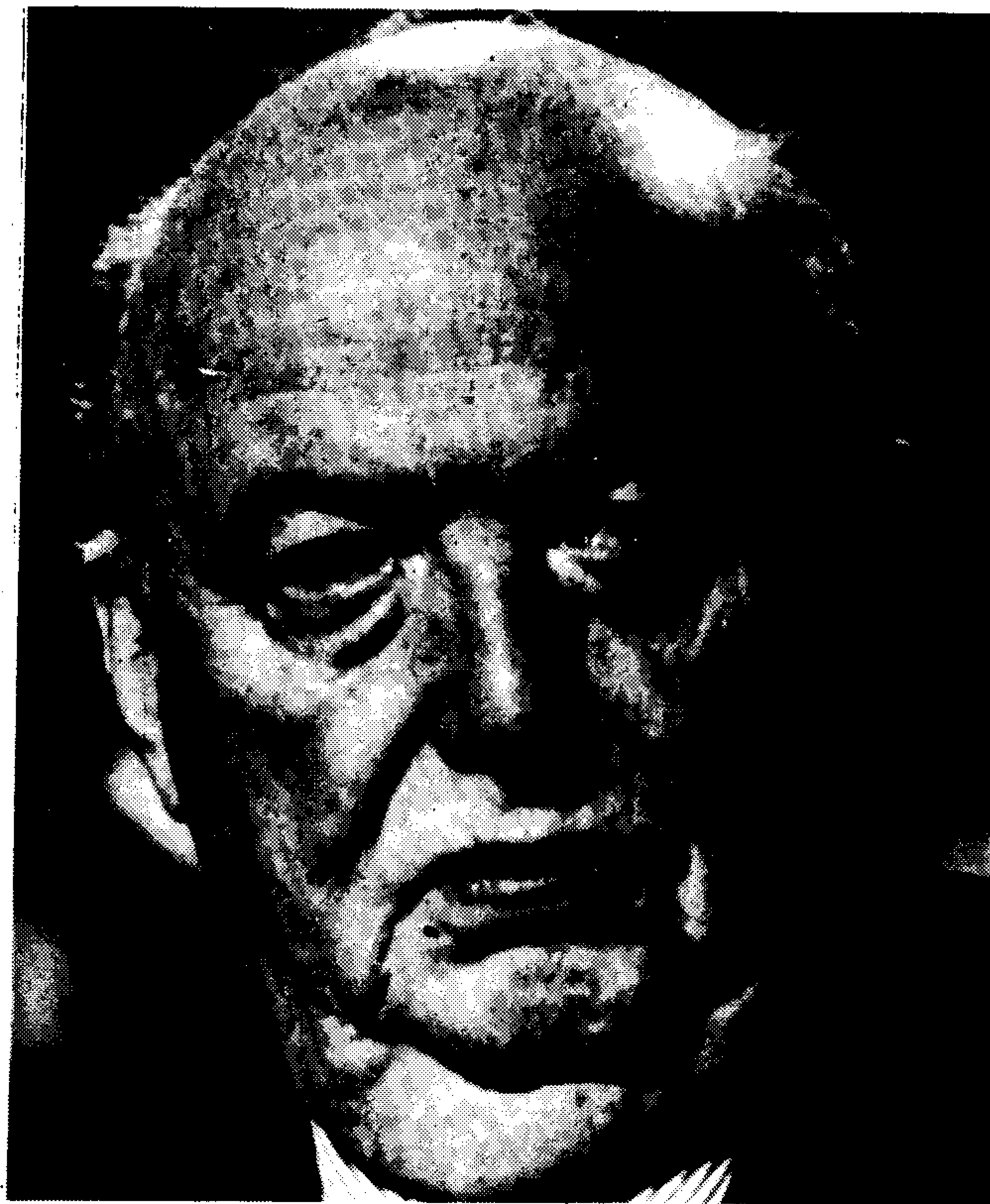
are being recorded by the leading clearing banks—almost entirely the outcome of Tory policies.

Such profits are far from popular among workers and professional staff in industrial firms and public services which face closures and redundancies under the guise of restoring them to "viability".

### Grant halved

But what can hard-line Tories do to minimise or channel such profits? The problem is insoluble.

Economic institutes, too, continue to present their analysis of the gathering economic crisis and the dire impact of Tory policies: one particular



How can you make this appealing to the public? Tory Chairman Lord Thorneycroft

embarrassment, the anti-monetarist National Institute for Economic and Social Research, has had its government grant halved by an irate Tory Chancellor Howe.

But other institutions—some of them foreign—keep coming up with the same figures!

To make matters worse Maude has had to face up to tensions within the Tory ranks themselves—from renegade Tory MP Julian Critchley, who went into the *Observer* to launch an anonymous attack on government policies, to the much vaunted row between Cabinet "hawks" and vultures over the content of Prior's Employment Bill.

Prior, a vulture, was publicly rebuked by Thatcher on a Panorama programme, only to hit back in Parliament with an implicit threat to resign if his

line is overturned. All this has—despite Maude's efforts—found its way into the Tory press—even the Tory Party's 'house organ', the *Daily Telegraph*!

In all this disarray, one bright spot for Angus Maude in his otherwise thankless and doomed task is the fact that while aspects of the Tory leadership crisis percolate into the Tory press, the full fire of the press and mass media can be relied upon to witch-hunt and oppose socialist currents fighting within the labour movement for action to defeat the Thatcher government.

It is only when the victory of such forces in the unions and the Labour Party is assured that workers can afford to laugh at Maude's vain efforts to bale out the leaky Tory showboat with a sieve.

# Big profits from dangerous drugs

The development of contraceptive medicine is one of the great gains of working class women this century, providing for the first time in history a relatively effective means of controlling fertility.

But unlike other gains it remains in the control of the capitalist manufacturers, not that of the workers in drug companies or of women who use contraceptives.

This well-known fact has been demonstrated yet again by the recent decision of the "Committee on Safety in Medicine" to give an 'all clear' for the use of the long term contraceptive injection, Depo Provera.

This drug, produced by Upjohn Ltd is still not approved for use in the USA because of the health risks attached to it.

However, restrictions on its sale in Britain have been lifted, despite its harmful side-effects.

The short-term effects of

D-P are similar to those of the Pill—headaches, nausea, and weight gain.

In addition it is known to cause irregular bleeding, possible loss of sex-drive and even permanent infertility.

But, because D-P is effective for 3 months, it cannot be recalled once injected if worrying side effects appear.

In addition, D-P has been linked to cancer of the cervix, and even Upjohn concede that "patients receiving large doses of D-P continuously and for long periods should be closely observed."

These side-effects are well evidenced, since D-P has for some time been used on 'Third World' women as a cheap form of controlling population increase.

### Only just lifted

Moreover, although the ban has only just been lifted in Britain, D-P has in fact been used on women here for at least two years—most of these were working class or from the ethnic minorities—some of whom were injected without their knowledge or prior consent.

Naturally, Upjohn do not think any of these harmful side-effects are any reason to stop production of D-P.

There is a large market in the NHS to be won, and big profits to be made.

Capitalist drug producers are

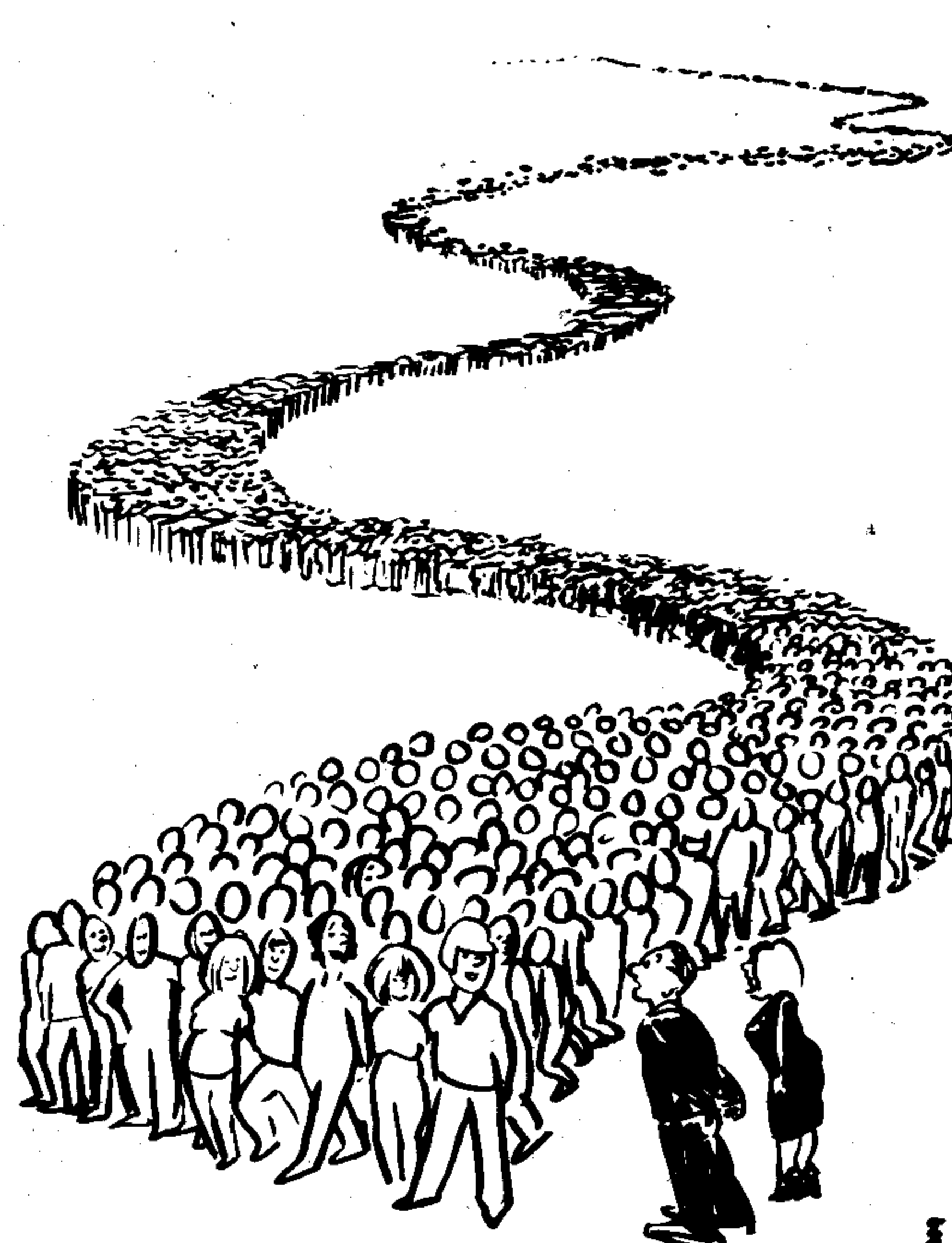
only worried about side-effects insofar as adverse publicity restricts sales.

As long as contraceptives and other medical preparations continue to be produced by capitalist concerns, where the first priority is profit, not the health of their consumers, working people must suffer.

Insufficient time and money are spent on research, and at the same time, the monopoly that drug companies have over the NHS in this country ensures that they can bleed the NHS dry while they make millions.

The case of Depo Provera proves once again the necessity for the opening of the books of the drug companies and their nationalisation under workers' management. Within the NHS committees of elected workers and consumers must be established to run the service in the interests of the long-term health of working men and women.

"Excuse me, is this the housing queue?"  
"No mate, it's a march against the Tories".



## WOMAN WORKER

### woman worker

Defend abortion rights, steel jobs, social services

CALL A GENERAL STRIKE!

Bi-monthly women's paper of the Workers Socialist League. Available price 18p (including postage) from WSL, BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX.



IN NEXT WEEK'S SOCIALIST PRESS: BEHIND CORRIE BILL COLLAPSE

# Coming soon THE GENERAL STRIKE!



## KEYS CALLS FOR ACTION

Bill Keys, leader of the print union SOGAT, has been one of the few union General Secretaries openly to call for *strike action* on the TUC's "day of action" on May 14.

While TUC leader Len Murray sticks to his ludicrous call for "lunch time meetings"

and for "true-born Britishers" to exercise their rights to "take time off" sooner than strike, Keys has declared that:

"This should be a day of strike action. That is my personal view and the advice I shall give to my members".

Tens of thousands of SOGAT and NGA members are already coming to recognise the need for strike action in

response to an insulting £7.70 pay offer from the British Printing Industries Federation.

In this context Keys' unusually militant stance on the issue of May 14 appears to be an effort to divert growing rank and file militancy away from the sharp issue of confrontation with the print employers, and into a generalised one-day token protest.



Steel pickets join lobby of BL convenors at Coventry

# STEEL STRIKE CHALLENGES BUREAUCRATS

The 11-week old steel strike continues to shake up some of the most apparently entrenched and conservative layers of the bureaucracy.

Within a fortnight of the strike beginning, strike committees in Stocksbridge and Scunthorpe had cleared off all but one of the full time District Officials who had obstructed effective picketing.

Throughout the ISTC, new forces have emerged to elbow aside the old timer servers and bring the militant voice of the rank and file into the union's committees including the negotiating committee.



Bill Sirs

### "Cool it"

Calls for general strike action have grown, as the struggle has been isolated by TUC sabotage.

But at each stage the old guard has attempted to restrain the fight. Bill Sirs warned the Stocksbridge Joint Strike Committee to "cool it", after they had taken the initiative on a fund-raising trip by delegates to trade unions in France and Germany—which returned with over £3,000.

Despite Sirs' warnings, successful appeals have since been addressed to engineers on Fleet Street, raising cash that has been used to finance extended picketing at docks in Poole and Boston.

Last Tuesday saw an anguished telephone call from the managing director of the

giant Metal Box combine to the strike committee, appealing for the lifting of pickets.

The response was immediate: on Wednesday the committee sent twice as many pickets!

### Blockade

Meanwhile other steel pickets had chosen a really sensitive spot for their attentions—Transport House. They blockaded the entrance to the TGWU headquarters, where the General Executive Council was in session—but were denied a meeting with Moss Evans.

Eventually their determined obstruction of the removal of office equipment and furniture

to the Labour Party's new head office—combined with a threat to set fire to Transport House and if need be face arrest on its steps—forced Evans to come out, and pressured him into producing a fresh and explicit "historic" instruction for TGWU members not to cross picket lines.

Thursday brought a mass picket on three gates at Boston to stop steel shipments.

### Connivance

Yet laden 30-ton lorries were being allowed out over a 5-ton weight-restricted bridge through a back exit—with the active connivance of local police.

Pickets promptly appealed

to the TGWU District Official to implement the union's national instruction not to cross picket lines and to observe the requests of steel pickets.

A mass meeting of Boston dockers was then called at 10.30 a.m. which led to a vote to unload the scab steel from the ships, but not to load it onto lorries.

Friday saw a turn-out of 130 steelworkers from Scunthorpe, Corby and Birmingham for a Leyland Action Committee lobby of the BL convenors' meeting called to decide action on the pay review.

But that lobby took place in spite of the frantic efforts of Longbridge TGWU convenor Jack Adams, a Communist Party member, who phoned to request Stocksbridge strikers not to participate, telling them there would be no vote at the meeting for immediate strike action.

In the event, Adams drove angrily through the lobbies yelling "You've got no chance!"

Yet as Stocksbridge crane driver Dave Watson, who has been on strike since December 3 over the sacking of ISTC convenor Brian Molyneux pointed out:

"The only way forward for the working class is to strike together and force the Tories out of office."

The last few weeks have shown that if such a united struggle does not take place it will not be for want of trying by the steel strikers, but the result of the conservatism and sabotage of the right wing and Stalinist union bureaucracy.

## JOIN THE WSL!

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

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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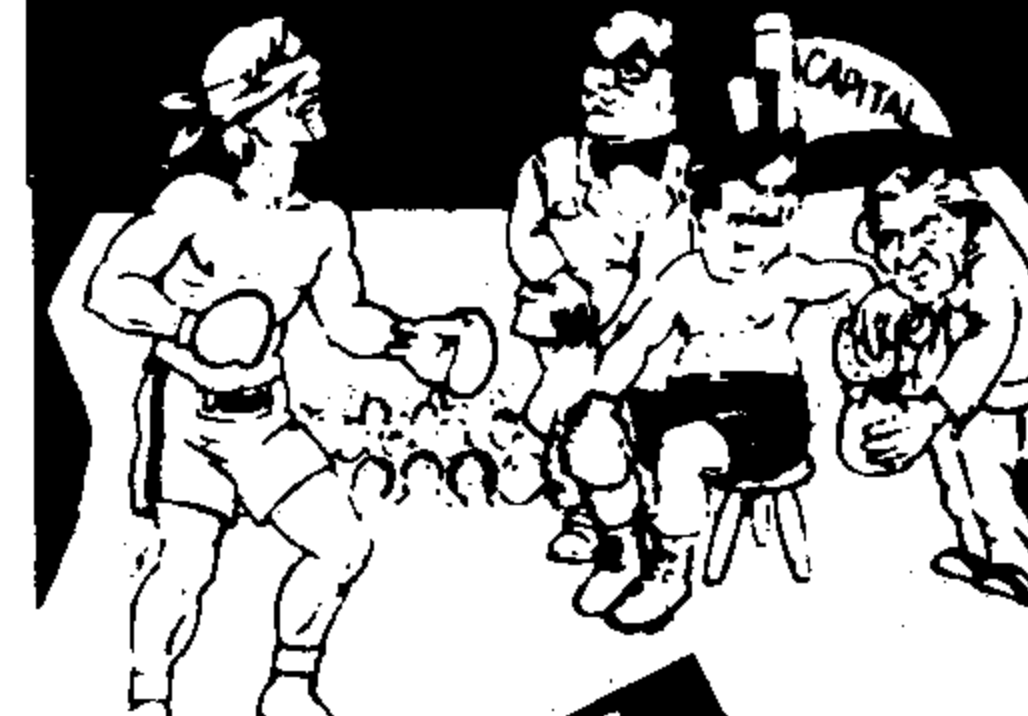
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# Esso strike threat

Maintenance workers at the huge Esso-Fawley oil refinery near Southampton, last week threatened strike action against management plans to axe jobs and reduce safety standards at the complex.

The employer has proposed withdrawing full-time safety cover at night (from an industrial process that operates

24 hours each day, seven days a week), and partially replacing it with an emergency "call-out" system that requires workers to travel from their homes in the event of any disaster at the plant.

### Safety cover

At the centre of the planned cutbacks are 25 members of the EETPU who operate the present safety cover system, in existence

since the refinery started production.

One electrician revealed that major accidents had been averted in the past only because workers were "in situ" in a few minutes while another claimed the refinery could be turned into a potential fireball of 'Flixborough' dimensions.

Meanwhile, union officials are still negotiating with the employer over the exact form of the new, more hazardous work-

ing conditions.

One of the largest in Western Europe, Fawley refines within the region of 458,000 barrels per day of crude oil.

What makes this more dangerous to the working class in the area is that adjacent to the refinery are two large chemical complexes. A major explosion in Fawley would make Flixborough a damp squib in comparison.

# Fighting policies against the cuts

Nearly 100 delegates and observers took part in a one-day conference last Saturday organised by the Oxfordshire Campaign Against Cuts in a bid to unite the struggles against the whole range of public service spending cuts.

The platform of speakers was led by a Sheffield steel striker who stressed the link between the Tory attacks on steel jobs and wages and the attacks on public services.

"If they lick us, they'll go on to attack the whole working class", he argued.

### Redundancies

Other platform speakers included CPSA NEC member Pat Byrne, who examined the impact of Civil Service cuts on the payment of social security and other benefits; Helen Flack, from Leicester NUT, who outlined their struggle against 1,800 redundancies in education; and Dr. Ken Williamson from Oxford MPU/ASTMS who spoke on NHS funding and the local workers' inquiry into geriatric care.

Reports were also taken from campaigns against the cuts in housing, nursery education, higher education, the civil service, and the NHS, as well as on the struggle to defend jobs, wages and conditions in Oxford's British Leyland car plants.

The afternoon saw particularly heated discussion in the workshop on "where will the money come from?". Right wingers strongly—and with some correctness—argued that it was impossible to maintain jobs and services within the present system.

### Defeatist

Their conclusion was not, however, that the system was wrong and should be done away with, but that public services and workers' living standards had to be cut back in line with the requirements of capitalism.

To bring down the Tories would not be "democratic", they argued.

A similar defeatist view was also put forward in the discussion on strike action against the cuts by public sector unions.

### Weak

It was claimed that these unions were so weak and exercised so little authority that a general strike call would be a disaster.

Against this it was pointed out that the steelworkers had responded 100% to their first national strike call for 50 years—after having previously appeared weak in accepting redundancies by the tens of thousand. What is needed to produce firm action is firm leadership.

The conference as a whole went on to pass a succession of resolutions calling for policies in the Labour Party, the trade unions and Community Groups directed towards mass action—in particular occupations and strike action—against closures, run down of services, job loss and other attacks.

It called for the TUC to use the May 14 Day of Action as preparation for a General Strike to bring down the Tory government and for any future Labour government to be committed to a programme of socialist policies.

### Open the books

And a comprehensive resolution—on NHS cuts tabled by the Oxford COHSE branch was also passed. It opposed local and national cuts and closures; called for adequate funding and a restoration of all cuts; and demanded the opening of the books of Health Service supply firms to workers' committees, and for these firms to be nationalised without compensation under workers' management.

# TGWU pledged to back jobs fights

As we go to press, the expected move by bailiffs to implement a possession order and end the 100-day occupation of the Meccano plant on Merseyside still has not yet taken place.

The High Court last week granted the order to Meccano's owners—the giant Airfix combine, which late last year attempted to sack the entire 940 workforce at 40 minutes' notice.

Despite a total refusal of the major unions involved—particularly the GMWU—to make their struggle official or offer even financial support, a hard core of 250 workers have maintained a determined occupation at the plant in a fight which stands out in stark contrast to the previous run of closures on Merseyside.

### Appeal

The news of the High Court order was met by an appeal from the occupation for a mass labour movement picket on the gates of the plant. Over 100 trade unionists—including postal workers, dockers and seamen—turned out on Thursday and Friday in response to their call, and the bailiffs stayed away.

But GMWU official Mike Egan has repeatedly stressed that the occupiers would not resist an attempt to evict them from the factory, and that they have no intention of breaking "the law".

Since the "law"—based on defending the private property rights of the capitalist class—is precisely the means used by firms like Airfix to close plants like Meccano at the expense of the workforce, such a statement is tantamount to renouncing any future struggle to defend jobs!

### Blockaded

Whether or not Egan, after weeks of active involvement in the dispute proceeds to lead the workforce tamely out of the Meccano plant, the example set by the occupation itself has

since been followed by 400 more Merseyside workers—this time in the threatened Massey Ferguson assembly plant at Knowsley.

The gates have been blockaded with digger-loaders, and this firm stand has already brought official support from the TGWU.

Indeed the TGWU has now declared it will give official support to any struggle on Merseyside against sackings—and has also pledged itself to support strike action to prevent redundancies in London or Preston docks.

Such a stand takes place of course only after the closure without the slightest fight of major TGWU organised Merseyside plants—including BL's Triumph plant at Speke and Dunlop's Speke factory, where TGWU national chairman Stan Pemberton personally helped ensure that no occupation took place.

### Supporting action

Nevertheless such a declaration of official support for a fight against closures must be used and taken further in practice by workers everywhere in struggle against the recessionary policies of the Thatcher government.

In particular, as the Meccano struggle has shown, it is vital that the full national strength of the unions is used against giant combines that seek to pick off smaller and less profitable plants in order to step up the rate of exploitation in their main centres of production.

Despite the valiant efforts of the Meccano workforce, GMWU and other union leaders have consistently refused to implement any serious blacking of Airfix goods and services in support of the occupation.

Yet threatened jobs cannot be defended by the unaided efforts of the workers facing the dole: supporting blacking and strike action from the broader trade union movement is vital to hit the employers.

Massey Ferguson workers



Dunlop Action Committee—no action to save jobs

must demand that TGWU, AUEW and other unions involved mount a full-scale campaign of blacking and other solidarity action to back up their occupation.

They must call on the support of the Merseyside workers'

movement to mobilise in mass pickets to defend the occupied plant against bailiffs—and issue the call for the formation of a Council of Action to draw delegates from all labour movement bodies into extending the fight in defence of jobs, living standards and trade union rights.

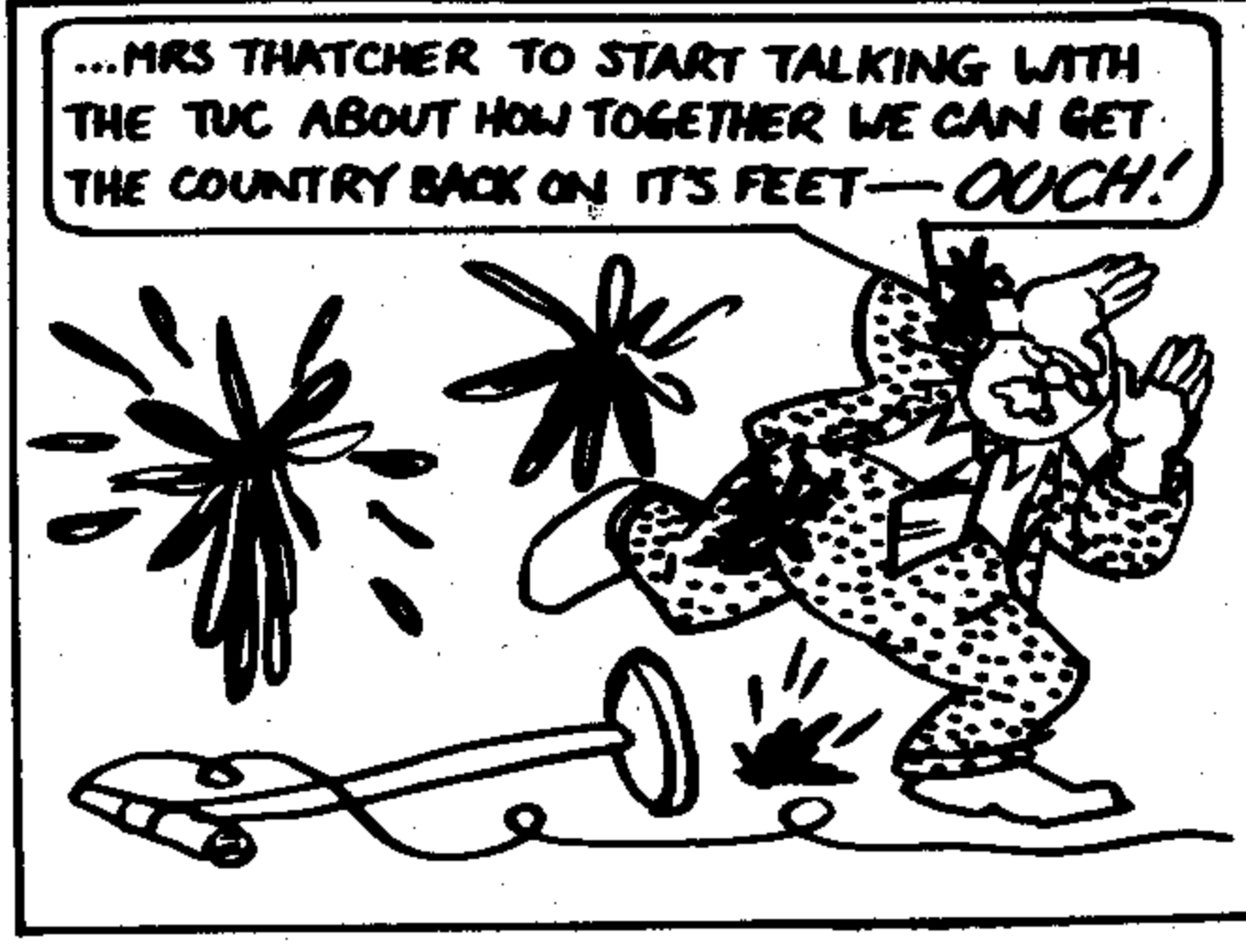
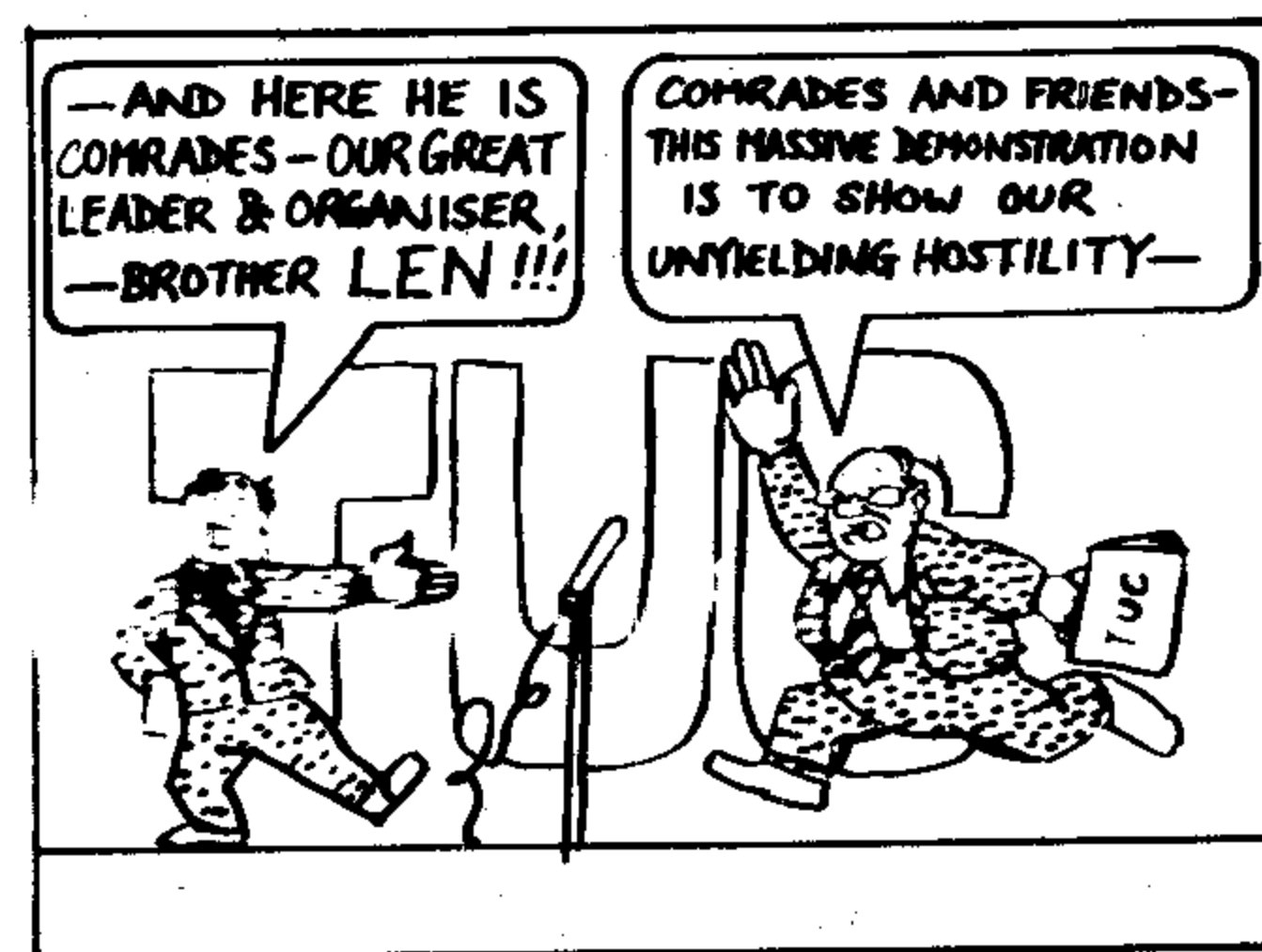
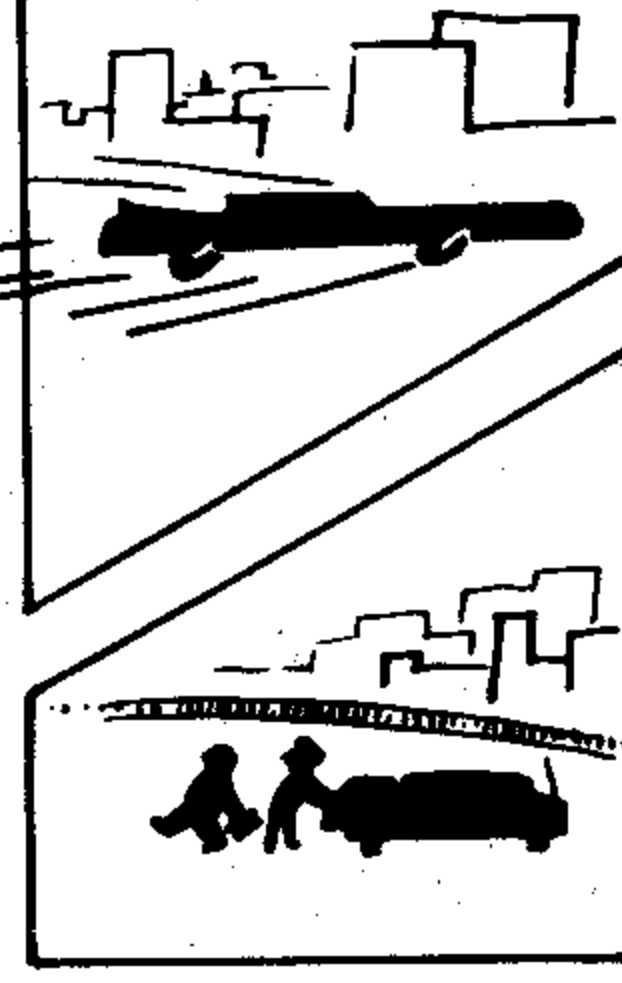
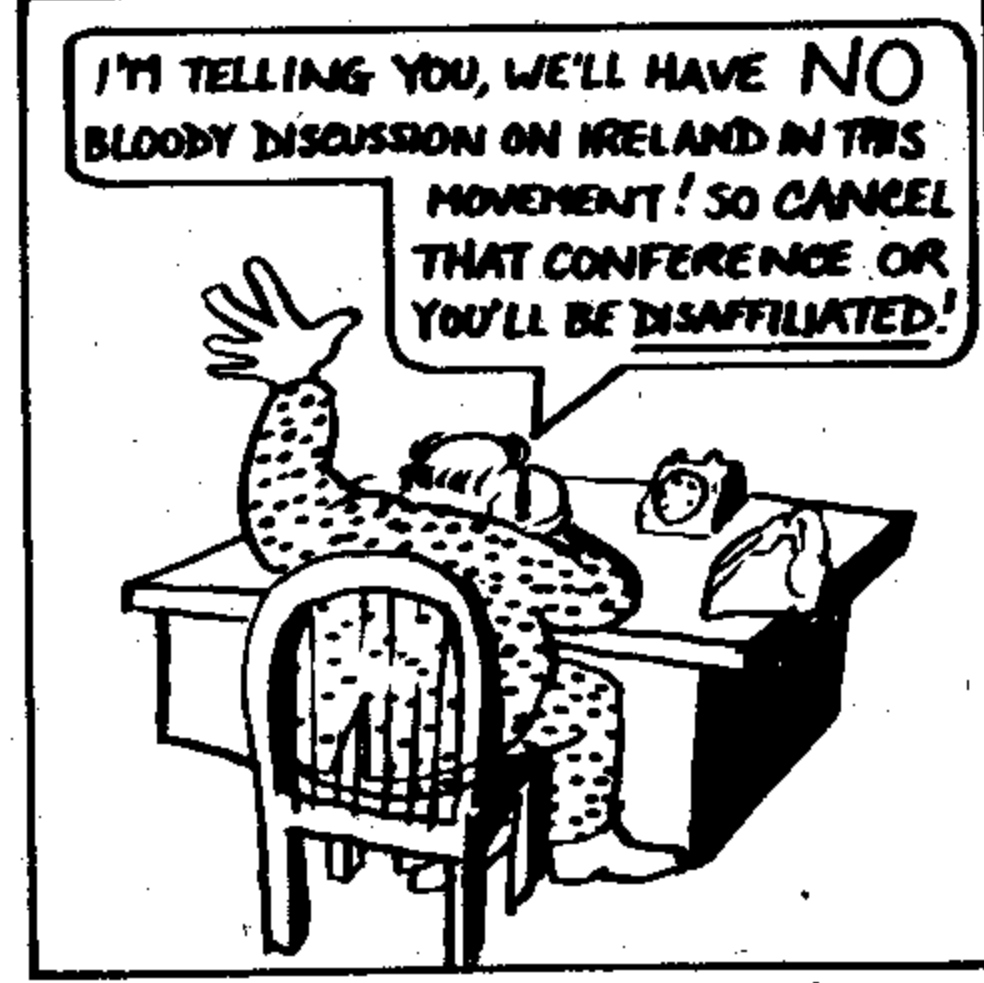
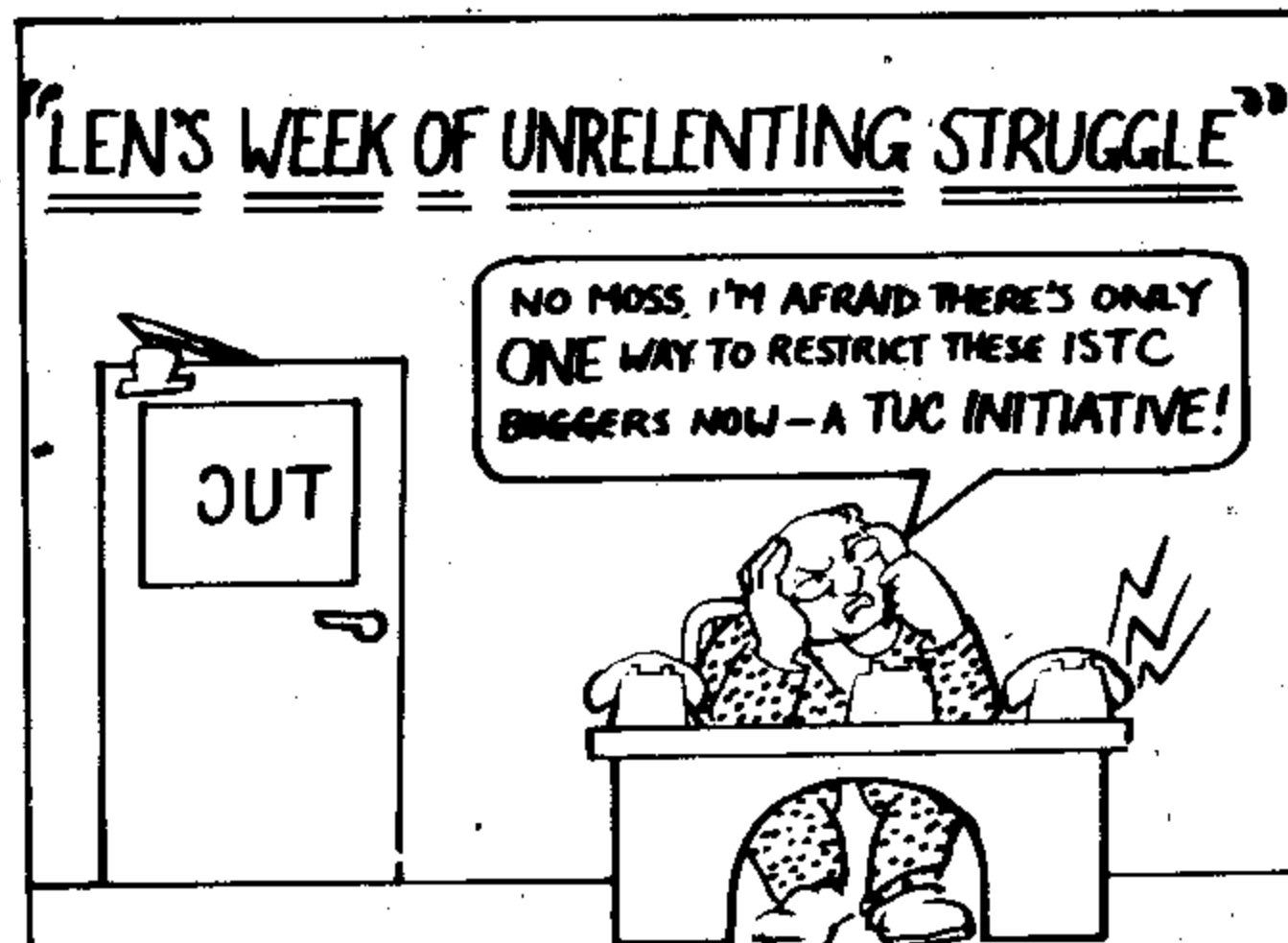
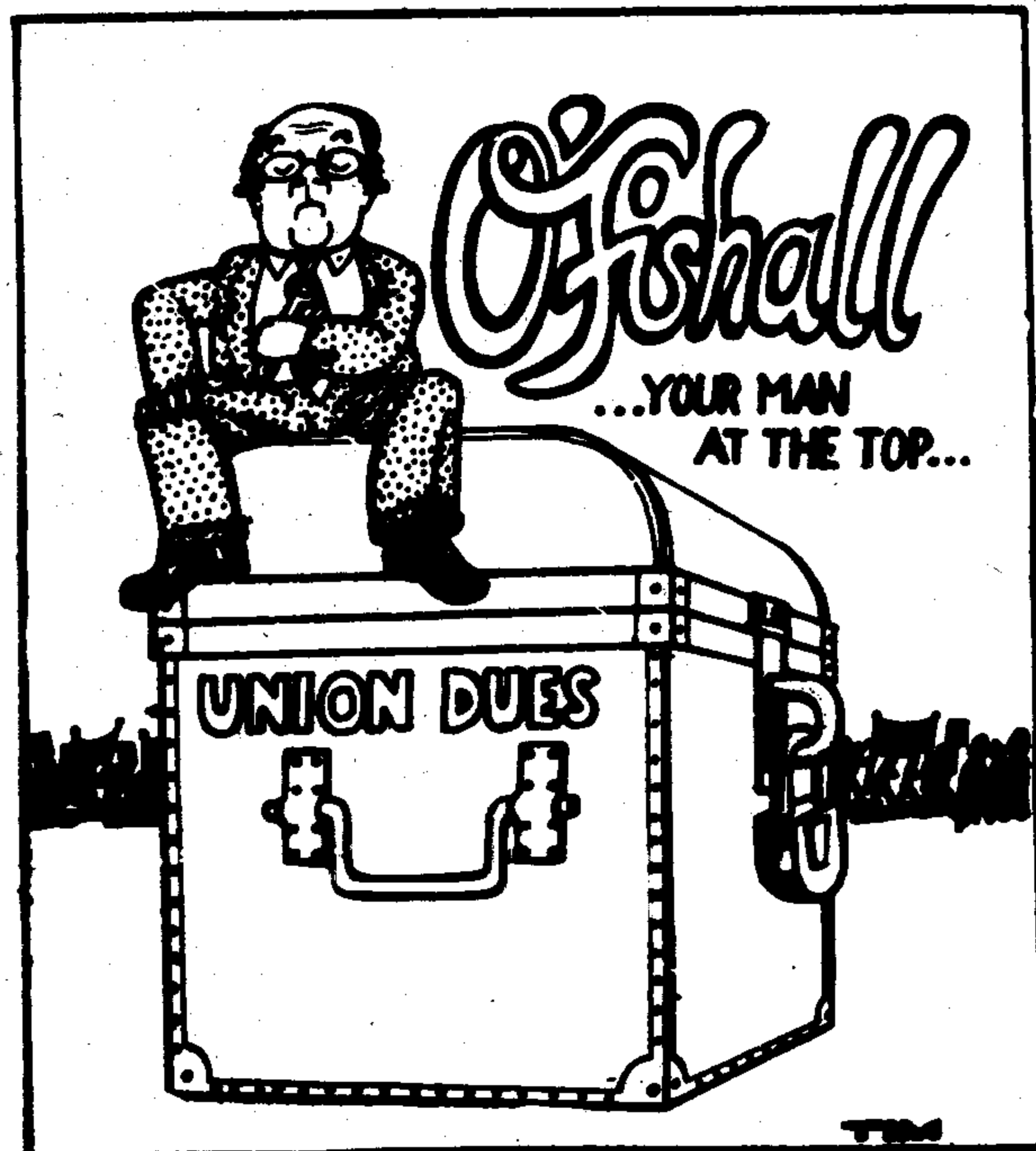
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# SOCIALIST PRESS



Nkomo



Mugabe

## AFTER LANDSLIDE WIN MUGABE BUILDS NEW BOSSES' GOVERNMENT

The overwhelming victory of Robert Mugabe in the Rhodesian elections and the crushing humiliation of chief stooge Muzorewa represents a substantial setback for Anglo-American imperialism and for the South African racist regime.

The complete isolation of Muzorewa from any credible base of support, and the rallying of 90% of the black electorate to the banner of the two guerrilla leaders Mugabe and Nkomo, made even manipulation of the election results completely impractical for the imperialists, who had done everything in their power to witch-hunt and isolate Mugabe.

### Rampage

But as Muzorewa's hired thugs went on a rampage against Mugabe supporters, the imperialists quickly took heart from Mugabe's first steps as

Prime Minister elect.

This "Marxist" proudly announced that General Walls, the butcher of countless ZANLA guerrillas and architect of Smith's counter-insurgency operations, would remain as head of the armed forces, and preside over the "integration" of guerrilla forces into the army.

The police force, he insisted, would remain intact. And he restated to the satisfaction of the stock markets of the world that he had no plans for sweeping nationalisations of industry or land.

At the same time Mugabe began the search for bourgeois politicians and white racists to decorate his planned government of "national unity".

It is by these actions that the imperialists recognise Mugabe's true calibre. As one commentator shrewdly pointed out, Mugabe's idea of socialism "is of the same type as that of Hugh Gaitskell or Roy Jenkins."

Some superficial concessions will of course have to be made by Mugabe if he is to contain



Anti-Mugabe—Soames

the militancy of the black masses who swept him to office. Gradually the key white personnel of the racist state of Rhodesia will be replaced by blacks—dedicated to the preservation of a fundamentally capitalist system.

While this process is underway, the state forces are of

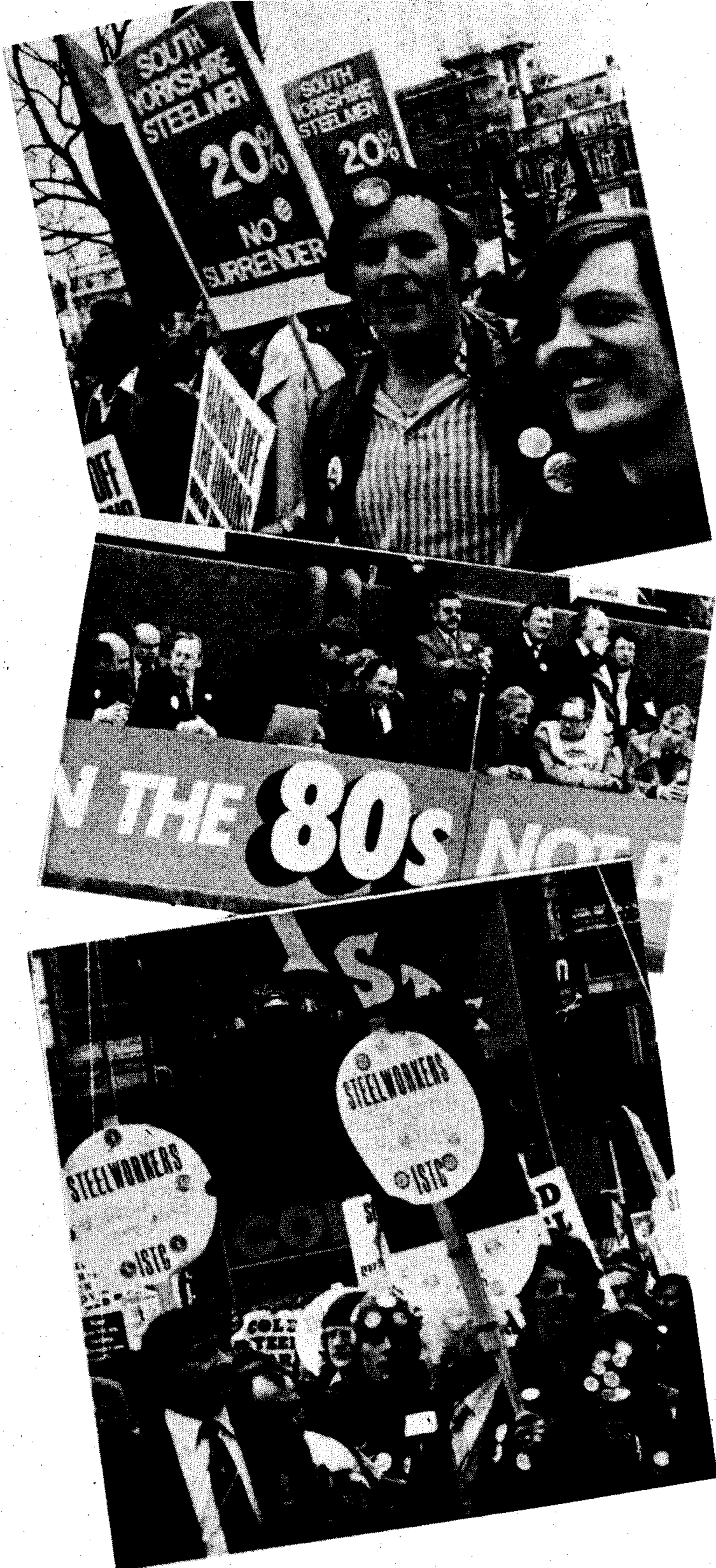
course in disarray: it would be hard for Mugabe to call in General Walls to repress mass movements of black workers and peasants. He needs first to ensure that General Walls' skills at counter-insurgency are passed on to the future black defenders of exploitation in Zimbabwe.

And this instability, together with the colossal support obtained by guerrilla leaders in an election, must profoundly disturb the South African apartheid-capitalist state.

### Demands

In this dynamic situation it is vital that the Zimbabwe masses press forward their independent demands, which have fuelled a major development in the struggles throughout Southern Africa.

Such demands will bring them quickly into conflict with Mugabe and his bosses' government—and pose the need for a genuine Marxist leadership to carry through the fight for a socialist Zimbabwe.



## FUND

At last we have got some movement on the Special Fund. Largely thanks to West London supporters who organised a jumble sale and raised £60!

This is clearly an example to be emulated in other areas so that we can ensure that we raise the first half of our £3,000 fund by Easter as planned.

We have £887.65 in so far, leaving us £612.35 to go.

In the meantime see if you can afford to donate something towards the fund.

Our address is:  
Socialist Press Fund  
BM Box 5277  
London WC1V 6XX

# MARCH 9: TUC PLEA TO TORIES

Mounting working class anger at the policies of the Tory government, and willingness to fight them was shown once again last weekend as over 60,000 trade unionists in England and Scotland joined massive TUC demonstrations.

But the stubborn refusal of the trade union leaders to give expression or leadership to this militancy was typified in the two speeches by Len Murray, who in both Glasgow and London issued pathetic pleas for Thatcher to "sit down" and "discuss" with the TUC.

Murray's main efforts in recent weeks have been devoted to bureaucratic moves to isolate and weaken the 11-week steel strike, and to head off more

generalised action on the related issue of steel jobs.

The two TUC token actions against the Tories—last weekend's demonstration and the May 14 "Day of Action"—are intended to let off the head of anti-Tory steam in the working class, while doing nothing to remove this viciously anti-union government.

### Shaken

Murray, like other TUC leaders, has been profoundly shaken by the impact of the steel strike on the right wing ISTC leadership—which has come under massive pressure at regional and national level, and forced into the forefront of confrontation after years of abject collaboration with management.

The union leaders all recog-

nise that further such developments lie just beneath the surface and are a threat to their bureaucratic power and privileges.

They have therefore redoubled their efforts to hold back mass struggles, while strutting the country making vacuous anti-Tory speeches.

But workers are beginning to see through this facade. The Trafalgar Square rally saw a growing crowd of trade unionists join in heckling Moss Evans ("Stop the lorries!"), public sector and other union leaders, calling for General Strike action against the Tories.

Murray's plea for talks with Thatcher produced a crescendo of heckling that nearly drowned out his speech. And several bureaucrats blundered into attempts to answer the hecklers,

losing the thread of their rehearsed tub-thumping speeches.

Having survived the March 9 experience, the full attention of the TUC leaders will now be turned towards controlling the May 14 "Day of Action".

Murray has vociferously opposed strike action on that day—but it appears that some union leaders, such as Scottish TUC General Secretary Jimmy Milne, and SOGAT General Secretary Bill Keys are prepared to call for a one-day stoppage.

We have made no secret of our view that one-day strikes are inadequate in themselves to stop the Tories: but our members and supporters will be fighting in their unions and workplaces for an all-out strike on May 14 as part of our demand for indefinite General Strike action to bring down this Tory government and create conditions for the working class to deal with the Labour Party and trade union leadership.

