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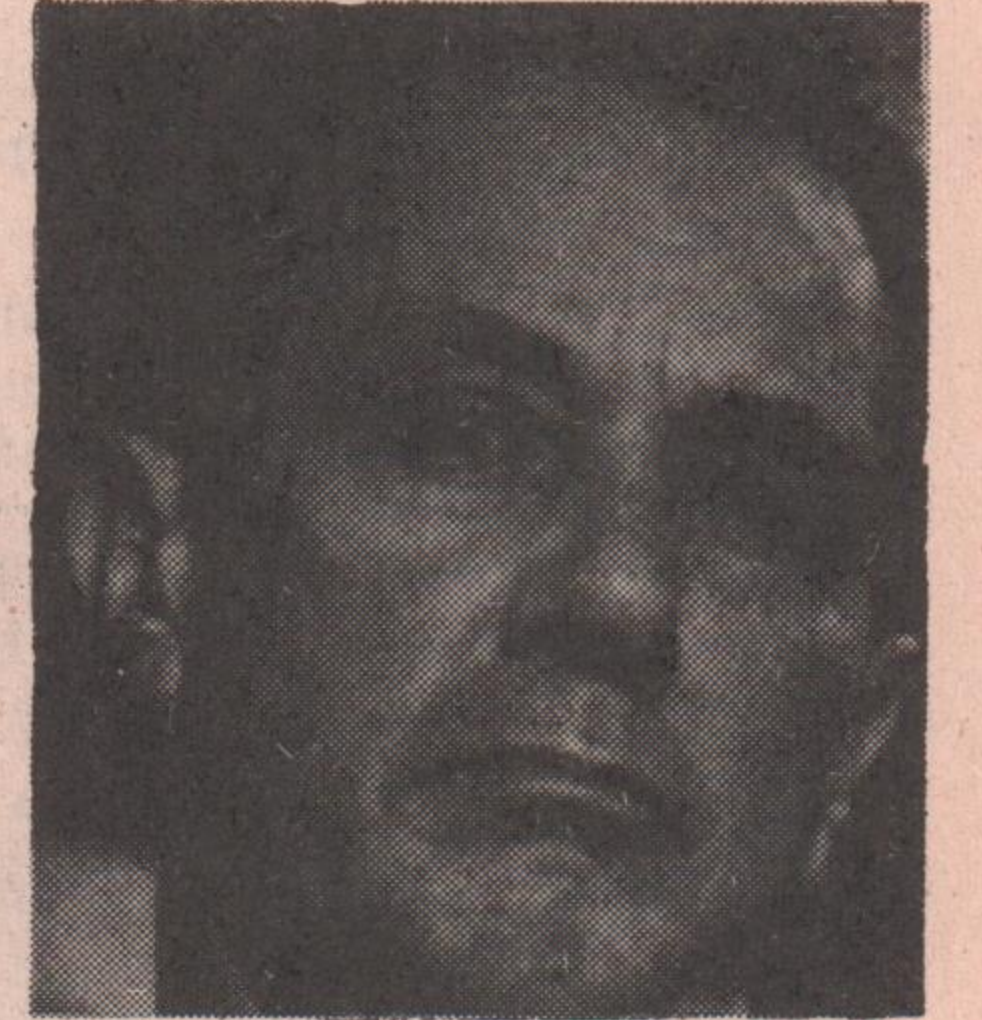


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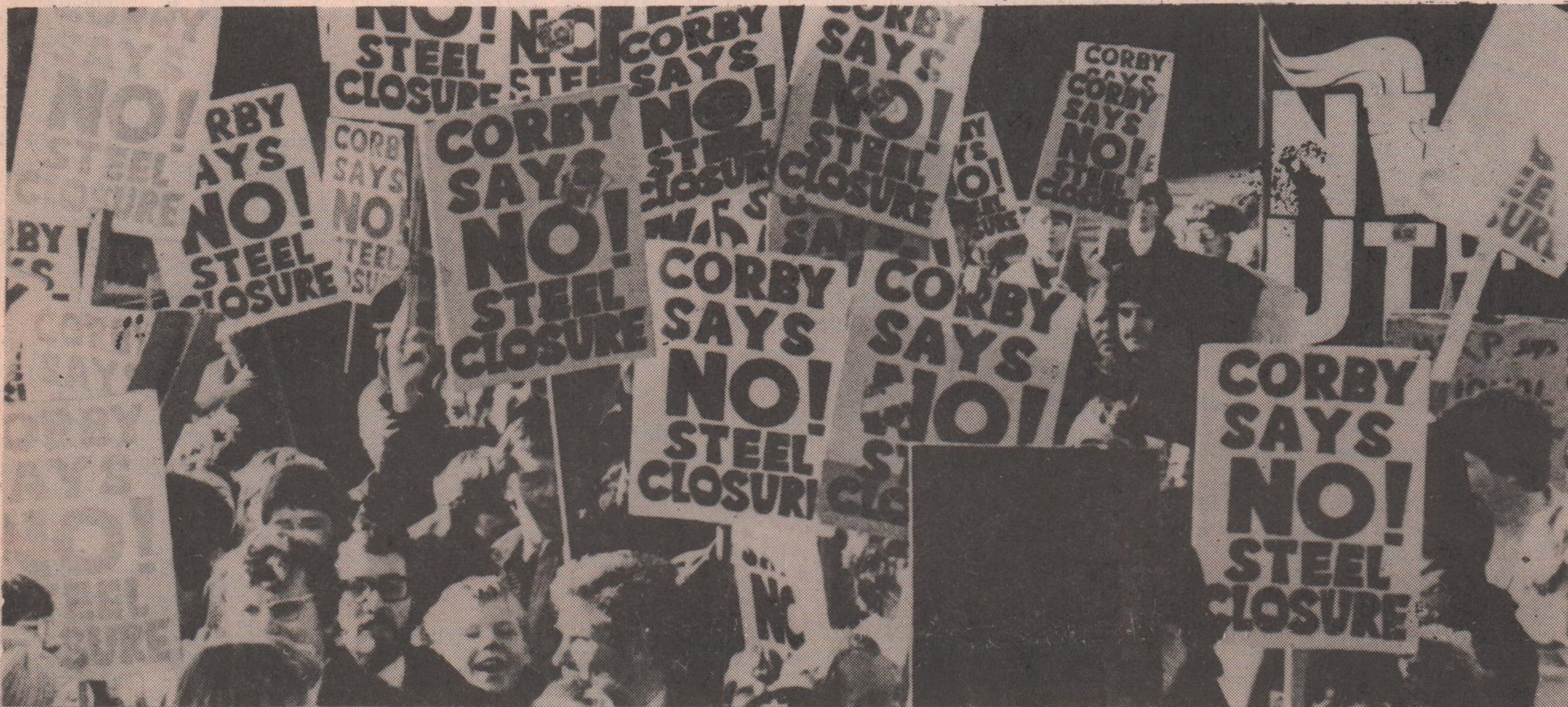
Five years of
the PTA
Page 8

Benn fears mass struggle p.5
USFI splits p.2
Hobbes p.7
Quadrophenia p.9

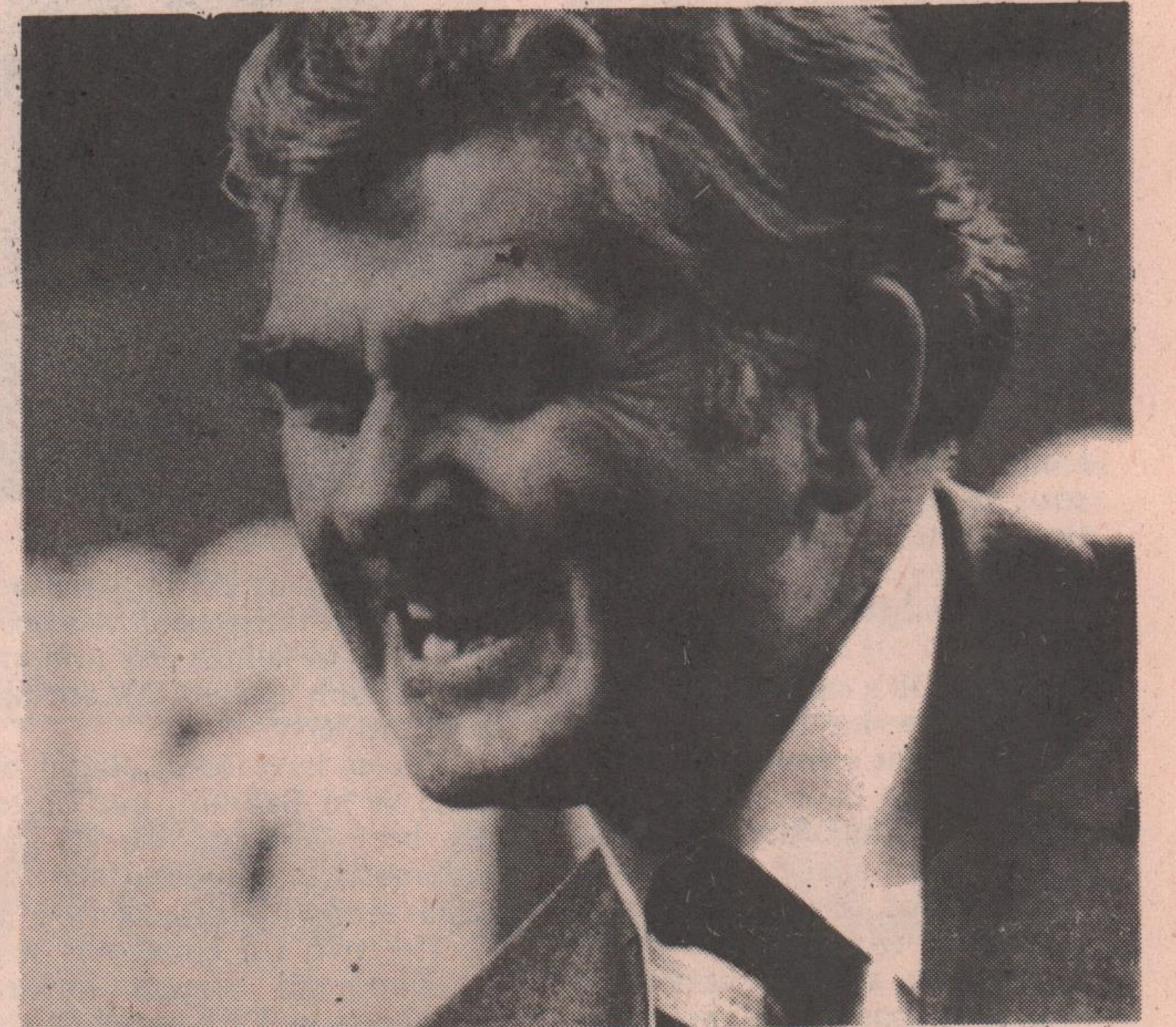
Union leaders reject call for action STOP THE RETREAT!



Industry axeman Joseph



Corby demonstration last month



ISTC leader Bill Sirs

OCCUPY THREATENED PLANTS!

Another week of the Thatcher government has brought another crop of closures, as the capitalist crisis forces on the break-neck pace of rationalisation and speed-up throughout British industry.

Hard on the heels of confirmation that steelmaking is to close at Corby, at a cost of 5,000 jobs, BSC last week revealed plans to sack another 8,000 workers.

6,500 are to join the dole queue at Shotton, where the long-threatened steelworks is to close and another 1,500 at Cleveland.

Scotland

Meanwhile news that the Massey Ferguson combine harvester plant in Kilmarnock is to close brought notified redundancies in Scotland to over 30,000 since April.

And British Leyland management, gloating at their ballot victory over the workforce, forge relentlessly on with their two-pronged plan of closures on the one hand, combined with an all-out attack on working conditions and wages on the other.

But what of the union leaders, who get up in conference after conference to denounce the evils of unemployment? What have they done to fight the closures and defend their members' interests?

The answer is painfully obvious.



Derek Robinson

In not one recent instance has official trade union action been called to resist a factory or plant closure.

Indeed in British Leyland, union leaders have moved from last year's tacit acceptance of the closure of the Triumph plant at Speke, to a position where the Confed has actively fought in favour of the Edwardes plan for the closure or part-closure of 13 more factories.

And the Communist Party-led BL Combine Committee, which last week rejected the outcome of the ballot and pledged to support workers in any factory who take action to oppose closure, overwhelmingly rejected a specific call for an immediate policy of occupation and token strike action in the threatened plants.

Bluster

A similar combination of militant bluster and ungainly retreat has been shown by the leaders of the biggest steel union, the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation.

After months of inaction on the closure of steelmaking at Corby and Shotton, the ISTC a week ago called for a national overtime ban, blacking and selective strikes throughout the industry to prevent the Corby closure.

Yet even this partial action was too much for the other union bureaucrats who sit on the TUC steel committee. They refused to endorse the ISTC call, and referred it back to their executive committees.

Sirs, who had earlier

declared that the 100,000 strong ISTC would go it alone in the action if necessary, immediately began to retreat, saying simply that the union "may" go ahead alone—in another two weeks.

And as news came in of the closure deadline for the Shotton plant, Sirs was quoted again—arguing *not* for action to save the threatened jobs, but for improved redundancy

payments! Meanwhile the whole focus of the ISTC campaign is directed away from what must be the crucial bedrock of any national struggle against closures: the occupation of the Corby, Shotton and Cleveland plants by the workforce.

No perspective

Why is it that every variety of trade union leader from 'left' to right wing now finds it impossible to put forward a serious perspective for the struggle against closures and unemployment?

It is because the Tories' desperate moves to force through the rationalisation of British industry can be seriously

challenged only by those who reject the notion of making firms "viable" in capitalist terms.

In the present period of chronic recession and crisis, a "viable" rate of profit can be obtained only by a ruthless destruction of the least profitable sections of capital and an intensification of exploitation of the working class.

Blocking expansion

Capitalism, as an anarchic system of production for private profit, not social need, now stands as a *block* to the further expansion of the productive forces—which is the only way in which jobs and living standards can be protected and improved.

Every concession made by the working class to the demands of the employers in this period merely increases unemployment and poverty, and worsens working conditions.

In resisting all redundancies, and demanding that present reduced demand in industry be met not by sackings but by a policy of work-sharing on full pay, workers must recognise the necessity to combat capitalist arguments about profitability.

The books of capitalist industry—in the private and state sectors alike—should be opened for inspection by elected trade union committees, to reveal the interconnection between "loss making" sectors and the profits reaped by

suppliers, contractors, retailers and bankers.

Such figures will prove that jobs and wages will remain under continuous attack so long as workers remain victims of the capitalist system of exploitation.

They will prove the need for the nationalisation of major industry, without compensation and under workers' management.

Trade union and Labour leaders who refuse to face up to this reality, or who consciously conceal it from their members, now daily prove themselves completely unable to defend the interests of the working class.

In fighting for occupation and for supporting strike and blacking action to prevent closures, workers must recognise the need to combat such leaders.

Councils of Action

Councils of action must be formed in each area to link up with the local labour movement and provide the means of combining struggles against closure with the fight against the cuts, anti-union laws and other attacks of the Tory government.

Mass action must be built to *bring down* the Thatcher government and to press forward the fight for the removal of the Callaghan-Healey gang and the formation of a government responsive to the needs of the working class.

For this task a revolutionary leadership is crucial.

STOP THE CUTS! ALL OUT NOVEMBER 28

KHOMEINI FIGHTS TO KEEP CONTROL

Crisis is gripping the regime of Ayatollah Khomeini from all sides.

The drive towards the dictatorship of the 'Islamic Republic' is now shuddering with convulsions, and every day brings the political situation in Iran closer to an explosion that will burst beyond the control of the religious leaders.

Khomeini's authority now depends on the success of desperate manoeuvres, and the crisis of proletarian leadership.

The pressure of the national movement in Kurdistan has already forced Khomeini into retreat on a major plank of his programme—the integrity of the Iranian state as inherited from the Shah.

But even while the emissaries of the 'Revolutionary Council' enter into negotiations on autonomy with the bourgeois nationalist leaders of the Kurdish Democratic Party, the KDP finds itself unable to control the development of the struggle against national oppression.

Ignored

The KDP's truce with Khomeini's army has been ignored by significant groups of Kurdish fighters, who have continued to advance with military successes.

The most dramatic indication of this breakdown of authority from both central government and the nationalist leadership came with the assassination last week of General Sharifi.

Sharifi—commander of police in Kurdistan—was killed in his own helicopter by a Kurdish militant.

But it is not only in talking with the 'children of the devil' that Khomeini has been forced to make violent turns in policy.

The massive crisis of the Iranian regime has crystallised round the occupation of the US Embassy in Tehran.

This action has demonstrated once again the extreme



vulnerability of US imperialism. Carter's administration has been powerless to launch any military intervention against this outrage to its property.

Forces have been placed on alert, as in Bahrain, but Carter has been forced to rely on diplomatic methods. Here too he has met with little success.

The two US emissaries sent to Khomeini remain kicking their heels in Turkey, while the Ayatollah refuses to deal with them.

No results

Although Khomeini did agree to meet with the Papal nuncio, this exchange between the powers of religious reaction has produced no results.

Carter's desperate plight was fully exposed when he was forced to turn for help to the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

But Arafat and the PLO

seem to have made little headway with Khomeini, even though they have successfully exploited the situation to advance their diplomatic career to international respectability in the camp of imperialism.

Within the US itself, Iranian students have demonstrated with demands for the extradition of the Shah, and this development has provoked a reactionary response in some sectors.

One Iranian student, harassed by chauvinist youth, retaliated by shooting at them and killing one.

At the same time there are reports of groups of dockers blacking exports to Iran.

Amid this chauvinistic outcry, Carter has been unable to act with anything more substantial than the petty vindictive attack on Iranian students who have supposedly stayed in the US in defiance of bourgeois law.

Khomeini with PLO leader Arafat

This will undoubtedly provide the excuse for widespread police harassment of the Iranian community.

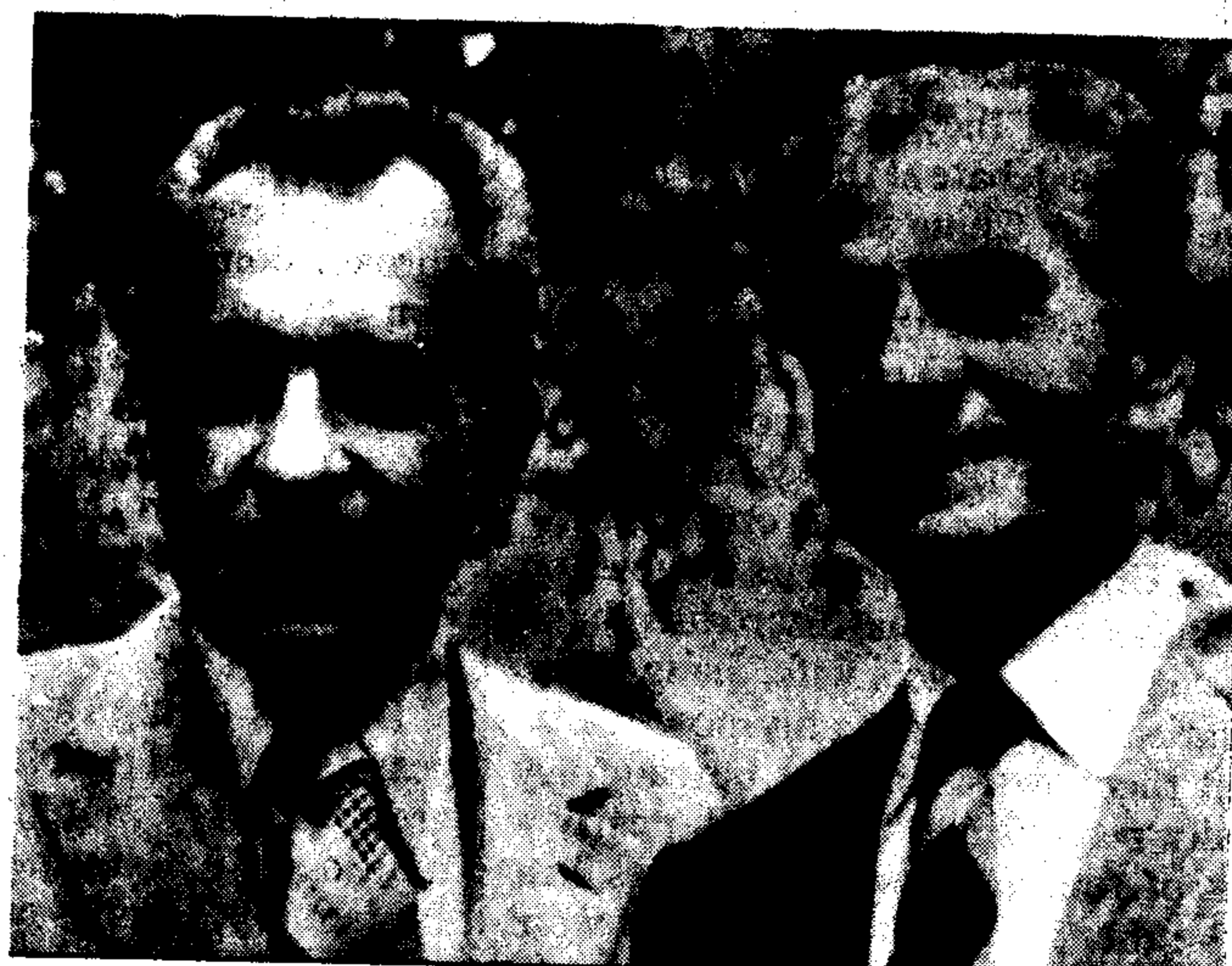
But all this does precisely nothing to relieve Carter's humiliation while it succeeds in hardening the anti-imperialist movement in Iran.

The seizure of the Embassy was carried through by supporters of Khomeini, although it remains unclear how far the 'Revolutionary Council' itself was involved in the planning.

Their action was based on two contradictory political positions, forced together in an unstable unity of conflicting forces.

Extradition

The students and youth rallied round calls of support for Khomeini and Islam, while they attacked the role of US imperialism in Iran and demanded the extradition of the Shah.



An obvious target—the Shah with US sponsor Nixon

The embassy occupation has become the focus of political activity in Iran, and has served a vital function to Khomeini in uniting major political factions.

Hundreds of thousands of Iranians have participated in the demonstrations outside the buildings, and this movement has been carefully drawn into an organised campaign. Sunday saw particular demonstrations by construction workers, airforce cadets and schoolgirls—three groups whose support to Khomeini has remained solid amid the rapid growth of disillusionment with the 'Islamic Republic' and its 'revolutionary' pretensions.

Such mobilisations have gone alongside an orchestrated barrage against US imperialism through the media, and these attacks show no signs of faltering. Khomeini himself plainly authorised this development and is determined to remain at its head.

The Ayatollah has thrown himself forward as the anti-imperialist cheerleader. A series of attacks on the US as the 'satanic super-power' culminated over the weekend with the call for the impeachment of President Carter as an enemy to humanity.

This new situation has finally broken the last flimsy shreds of authority of Bazargan's cabinet. Bazargan's recent meeting in Algiers with Brzezinski, Carter's aide provoked violent responses in Iran when it became clear that he had not demanded the extradition of the Shah.

Attacks mounted on his cabinet, which was daily accused of wishing to restore the regime of the Shah without the Shah in person, and of acting in the interests of or even as the direct agent of US imperialism.

This pressure forced Bazargan to acknowledge defeat, and to offer once again

the resignation of his cabinet. Khomeini's final acceptance of the resignation (which has often been rejected in the past) reflected his awareness that in the new crisis in Iran Bazargan's cabinet and other trappings of the orthodox bourgeois state had become a complete irrelevance.

The central authority in Iran now rests solely with Khomeini, the 9-man 'Revolutionary Council' and the aides which surround them. Around this nucleus of religious bigotry there lies the Assembly of Experts, still debating the constitution of the 'Islamic Republic' and ready to step forward if necessary as a surrogate parliament.

Reaching down from these institutions is the network of local Islamic militia (the Pasderan), tribunals and committees of mullahs, which still wield considerable power.

Alongside this hierarchy stands the shaky apparatus knocked together from the remnants of the Shah's machine of repression—the armed forces, police, and military governors.

Khomeini cannot count on the absolute loyalty of either structure.



At the same time, mass hopes of freedom and equality with the downfall of the Shah have been shattered as Khomeini has made no moves to end exploitation and oppression.

Continuing unemployment, inflation, poverty and starvation have produced a crisis of confidence in the religious leaders.

In these conditions, socialist opposition to the reactionary Islamic bigots can clearly make major advances.

It is in the battle to head off this dangerous development and to break down any moves by the working class to assert its political independence as a class, that Khomeini has been forced to resort to the tactics pioneered by Nasser and tried by every radical nationalist leader in the Middle East since then.

Khomeini seeks to divert political attention away from the total crisis of his regime, by focussing on the popular target of US imperialism.

The Khomeini press is now urging the masses to "act spontaneously whenever the government does not behave in the interests of the country and the Islamic revolution."

But as one of the Ayatollah's chief advisors admitted, "it is not possible to govern a country with permanent popular spontaneism."

Already organised oil workers in Khuzestan are demanding a government embargo on supplies of crude to the US, and the impetus of this movement is ready at any moment to break beyond the confines imposed by the religious leaders.

Playing with fire in an arsenal piled high with explosives is a dangerous game. Khomeini has played it before and won.

But this time it is his seat of power in Qom and not the Peacock Throne which will be blown sky high at the point of explosion.

USFI split offers chance of real discussion

The biggest single group calling itself Trotskyist, the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, has split on the eve of its XIth World Congress.

Throughout the USFI's sections, those members adhering to the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency have in the last few weeks been bureaucratically expelled by the USFI majority caucus—which comprises supporters of the American SWP and the former International Majority Tendency.

Expulsions

In France some 400 members, organised in 60 branches, have reportedly split away from the LCR: a similar number appear to have been expelled in Spain. Expulsions are also reported in Portugal, Greece, Belgium and Denmark.

In Britain, where the LTT was a major force within the IMG, mass expulsions seem to have been averted by an eleventh-hour climbdown by British LTT leader John Strawson—a capitulation echoed by other British LTT

supporters.

Meanwhile, as the USFI destroyed for all time its pretensions of allowing full internal democratic rights to minority tendencies, the major opposition grouping, the Bolshevik Faction (comprising the bulk of the USFI forces in Latin America and some supporters in Europe) confirmed its decision to boycott the USFI Congress from which the majority had already threatened to exclude its supporters.

The BF denounced the USFI leaders' refusal to allow a postponement of the Congress to enable a discussion to take place on the implications of the Nicaraguan revolution, in which the majority leadership has adopted a position of craven political support for the popular front Sandinista regime.

This has involved official USFI support for the moves by the Sandinistas to crush left wing opposition, including the deportation from Nicaragua of the BF-organised 'Simon Bolivar Brigade'.

Boycott

The BF also pointed to the expulsions from the USFI as

unmistakeable evidence that the majority would not permit a democratic congress—and decided to boycott the proceedings, effectively splitting from the USFI.

This split—however it has tactically arisen—creates entirely new and favourable conditions in which to advance the struggle for the reconstruction of the Fourth International.

Not since 1953 has there been such a ferment of activity and confusion within the world Trotskyist movement, or such an opportunity to clarify the political problems that have dogged the movement for the last 30 years.

The immediate move of the BF and the LTT has been to take steps, in conjunction with the Communist Organisation for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International (led by the French OCI) to convene a "democratic conference open to all forces claiming to be Trotskyist".

This, they say, is in order to "struggle against the dispersal of the forces and organisations that identify themselves with the Fourth International."

A joint parity commission has been established, and a

tentative date of February set for this conference.

The parity commission declaration points out that:

"The danger of a break-up of the forces of the FI is much greater than it was when Pabloism developed in 1951, since the attack on our principled positions [by the USFI majority] is much more brutal than it was in those years."

There is indeed a danger that without a prompt initiative many ex-USFI forces could become demoralised and an opportunity to win them to Trotskyism could be lost.

Parallel danger

But the parity commission fails to address itself to a parallel danger: that in seeking as they put it to "reconstruct and recombine the International and its organisations in one reunified Fourth International" the BF, OCRFI and LTT could find themselves rushing into the formation of yet another opportunist bloc along the lines of the USFI "Reunification" in 1963.

The three prime movers in the conference are themselves divided on a number of political questions—and the extent of agreement on others can only be established through a thorough and objective discussion on an explicit programmatic statement and on the historical lessons of

the post-war crisis in the Trotskyist movement.

However the conference is convened with no preconditions on those participating: it is not called on a platform of at once forming a new international organisation—but rather to see what level of agreement exists.

Possibility

And in offering the possibility of a serious re-examination of the central problems facing the Trotskyist movement, the conference will without doubt offer the possibility of taking a major step forward to the fight for the principled reconstruction of the FI.

As such, the Workers Socialist League—while maintaining its political disagreements with the BF, LTT and the OCRFI—welcomes the initiative for the conference.

We declare ourselves ready to participate and fight within it for our programmatic and historical positions.

Our National Committee has not yet had the opportunity to study the declarations of the parity commission. A full statement on those declarations and our attitude to the building of this conference will appear in *Socialist Press* in the next few weeks.

Indonesia butcher to visit Thatcher

The scheduled visit to Britain this month of Indonesia's Butcher President Suharto comes against a background of an increasing political and economic crisis within Indonesia, the world's fifth most populous country.

Suharto's regime was established in 1965 by a military coup which was followed by the

largest massacre of CP members and supporters ever to occur.

The policy of the Peking-backed Indonesian Communist Party had been a classic restatement of the basic errors of Stalinism: seeking an alliance of the working class and peasants with the army and the Indonesian capitalist class.

Unprepared

This policy left the communist organisations completely

unprepared for the coup and the ensuing bloodbath, in which one million communists are thought to have died.

Within a few months the largest non-governing Stalinist party in the world, with three million members and twenty million in its affiliated organisations, was totally destroyed.

Since then Indonesia has remained a country where the independent organisation of the working class is virtually non-

existent.

Although the regime has shown itself to be incapable of solving any of the pressing problems of the Indonesian masses, the power of the army on the one hand, and of the Islamic church on the other have combined to prevent widespread revolt.

Resistance has occurred, such as the guerrilla struggles by peasants in south-west Java, and the student riots in Jakarta in 1974; but Suharto has ruthlessly deported whole sections of the population to the wild outer islands.

He has also been waging a genocidal war against the people of East Timor, which he wishes to incorporate into Indonesia.

The war has produced a famine every bit as bad as that now much publicised in Kampuchea, but no so much known because Suharto is a trusted friend of Western imperialism.

The Indonesian economy has received massive "aid" from the US and Japan, mostly in the form of loans and aid tied to purchases of goods from the donor country.

Foreign owned

The net result has been to create a modern economic sector which is almost wholly owned by foreign imperialist interests—the remaining share being held mainly by Suharto's own family.

It has also brought Indonesia close to the position where its whole GNP goes to repay interest charges on loans, and dividends to foreign capitalists.

Although the US owns most of the oil and mining sector, Japan has recently become the more significant financial and military supporter of the regime.

The main public opposition to Suharto is from the Islamic extremists who want an Islamic republic.

Their support is particularly strong outside the mainland island, Java.

Churches

Many Javanese who are opposed both to Suharto and Islam have grouped themselves since the coup around the Buddhist and Christian churches because these are virtually the only legal organisations.

There is also resistance from students and intellectuals to the extreme suppression of democratic rights.

And sections of the army and capitalist class have on occasion been sufficiently outraged by the corruption and arbitrary economic decisions of Suharto to break the censorship laws and threaten to withdraw support from Suharto.

Meanwhile since last year's 33% currency devaluation, inflation has risen to 25% and workers have initiated a series of struggles to defend their living standards.

Unfortunately the CP has learnt nothing from the events of 1965 and is still proposing a "democratic alliance" of all those opposed to Suharto—whatever their class interests.

In the coming struggles against the Suharto dictatorship



Suharto

it will be very important to appreciate and relate to the political significance of apparently "religious" conflicts.

But this does not mean in any way compromising on the need for the independent mobilisation of the workers and peasants around a party fighting for a programme for the defence of their interests.

PHOTO: Mark Rasher, IFL



Amnesty International picket of Indonesian Embassy



Figueiredo and friend

Mass strikes unmask Brazil's reforms

The supposed "relaxation" of the 15-year old Brazilian military dictatorship, apparently signalled by the return from exile of the aged Communist Party leader Prestes and the opportunist Lionel Brizola, head of the Labour Party, over the last few weeks, has been revealed as nothing more than a charade.

The regime of General Figueiredo did not hesitate to move against the second major strike called by the Sao Paulo metalworkers this year.

Assassinated

Following the mass stoppage at the end of October at least 700 trade unionists have been arrested and Santo Dias da Silva a leader of the Christian Democratic National Workers League, was assassinated on a picket line by the police.

The strike had been on the point of collapse with only 40% response. This was clearly due to the enormous demands made of the workers in the last two

major stoppages, late in 1978 and this summer, which had been sold out by the bureaucratic leadership headed by Joaquim dos Santos Andrade, president of the union.

United

But the brutal actions of the police drew a remarkably united and impressive response from the workers.

Over 30,000 marched in a demonstration through the centre of Sao Paulo bringing all activity to a halt.

The police were forced to step back, and pickets were strengthened.

The death of da Silva has caused an outcry from the church hierarchy, which is now supporting the strikers' demands for an 85% wage increase as "just", and contesting the regime's accusation of "encouraging subversion".

But this, although it reflects the broad popular opposition to the government's new 'stabilisation plan', will scarcely alter matters.

The metal workers are in the vanguard of the Brazilian proletariat and have put considerable

pressure on the dictatorship—but they are headed by a bunch of opportunist lackeys who have successfully avoided any major confrontation with the dictatorship and manoeuvred away from political demands and organisation.

The struggle to construct a labour party and bring down the dictatorship requires the fight for the removal of these figures and the total rejection of the numerous attempts by the bourgeoisie to gain control over the workers' movement through the resuscitation of the pre-1964 leadership or some spurious alliance with sectors of the opposition MDB party.

STILL AVAILABLE
'Communists' Against Revolution
Two essays on post-war Stalinism by Adam Westoby and Tim Wohlforth
Price £2 including postage from WSL 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5

Bolivian coup worsens crisis

The Bolivian political system is in total crisis and threatens to disintegrate following the mass resistance to the right wing coup by Colonel Natusch.

The daily demonstrations and week-long general strike forced Natusch into blanket repression with a state of siege, censorship, a series of arrests and the shooting of at least a hundred opponents of the dictatorial regime which he attempted to establish on 1 November.

The resistance prompted ex-President Guevara and Commander-in-Chief Padilla to hold out against the Natusch sector of the army—and this has led to near-total repudiation of the coup by the bourgeois political parties as well as substantial sectors of the military.

An attempted counter-coup on November 3, the wavering allegiance of the airforce and the opposition of the country's police force (which is virtually under arrest in its barracks following the execution of its Commander last Tuesday) have forced Natusch into negotiations and the lifting of martial law.

Avoid split

Natusch's position is extremely weak, for although he has the support of ex-dictator Banzer's ADN party and a substantial proportion of the upper echelons of the military, this is primarily because these sectors see the maintenance of the regime as the only way to avoid a total

split in the army similar to that which occurred in 1952.

Then the split enabled the nationalist MNR to take power following the mass insurrection and the total defeat of the military.

The fear of a repetition of these events is also shared by the bourgeois opposition; but they correctly hold the view that any compromise solution that includes Natusch's continuation in power will simply result in civil war.

However, in the labyrinthine negotiations that have taken place over the last week Natusch has been holding out for his inclusion in some form of government.

Union delegate

The compromise thought most likely was a three-person junta comprising a member of the army, a representative of Congress and a delegate from the trade union federation, the COB but this was rejected by Juan Lechin, secretary general of the COB, and now the bourgeoisie has shied away from this too.

Lechin has been wavering in his position and has only been held back from the most opportunist manoeuvres by the resolute action of the miners who have brought the mines to a halt, defended their radio stations, and continued to call for the overthrow of the dictatorship.

Released

The general strike has now been lifted in response to Natusch's freeing of political prisoners, but the country clearly remains on

the brink of armed conflict. The stalemate cannot continue for very much longer.

Guevara, sensing this, came out from hiding and disguised in a wig and tennis gear, scuttled into the reopened Congress to reaffirm the legitimacy of his 'parallel government' and urge opposition to the Natusch regime—before escaping from the military intelligence by way of a kitchen door.

Colourful episodes such as this serve to illustrate the total chaos that reigns within the bourgeoisie and its incapacity to find a solution to the crisis.

Although the bulk of the bourgeois parties have been able to retain their democratic credentials, it is patently obvious that any return to bourgeois democratic forms of rule will not avoid the escalation of the class struggle in Bolivia.

The Natusch coup is only the first, thoroughly conceived, attempt to stem the advances of the proletariat.

Power

The issue is not the legitimacy of Guevara's Congress or whatever politician may provide an acceptable compromise. The issue is which class holds power. The task of revolutionaries is to cut through the confusion caused by the coup and fight for a workers' government.

As the capitalist class divides amongst itself and sections of the repressive state apparatus turn upon each other the conditions for such a fight become increasingly favourable.

CBI's 'rank and file' prepared for action

By John Lister

The Tory conference showed that the political party of the employers is embarked firmly and with determination on the road of confrontation with the working class.

Last week's conference of the Confederation of British Industry showed the new mood of determination among top employers themselves.

In each case the preparedness of the capitalists to attack is in glaring contrast to the abject confusion, compromise and collaboration of Labour and trade union leaders at all levels.

Driven to wall

This is not to say of course, that the CBI does not face internal divisions at a time when the Tories' policy of recession and enforced rationalisation and closures is driving more and more ailing firms to the wall.

Indeed there were echoes of the TUC Congress as, on the issue of the closed shop, the CBI showed the familiar spectacle of

a "moderate" platform failing to control a "militant" rank and file.

CBI leaders failed by 387 votes to 321 in their attempt to argue down a motion calling for the closed shop to be made illegal—and then used the narrow majority as an excuse to hold back on a fight for the new policy!

The platform was also overturned as the conference—in a display that would no doubt have delighted the nationalists of Labour's Tribune Group and the Communist Party—voted in favour of selective import controls.

But a move by disgruntled firms, on a motion from the National Farmers' Union, to oppose Thatcher's policy of keeping interest rates and the value of the pound high, crumbled in the face of opposition from companies that clearly fancy their chances of picking up increased profits from the ruin and collapse of their weaker competitors.

The high value of sterling, of course, adversely affects British exports by artificially increasing

prices. And high interest rates make it difficult for weaker firms to carry out investment plans in a period of slack markets and world recession.

Last Chance Saloon

But, in line with Tory and CBI policy, the conference overwhelmingly endorsed this "Last Chance Saloon" policy as the impetus to force through speed-up on the shop floor and the closure of the least profitable plants.

"Don't let us turn industry into a kipper—two-faced and no guts" pleaded one speaker.

And indeed while steel and other union leaders were busily demonstrating their lack of guts and total inability to lead struggles in defence of their members' interests, CBI leaders were arrogantly spelling out their determination to wage renewed attacks on their workforce—and to fight for the introduction of legally-enforceable pay agreements.

Of course with the recent climbdown on working hours by the tough-talking Engineering



Prior spelling out Tory anti-union proposals

Employers Federation still sticking in their throats, the militancy of the employers in resisting wage demands was also moderated by a certain note of fatalism:

"For three years we've given ourselves [!] wages rises twice and sometimes three times those received by our competitors... and with a 17% pay rise and 3% profitability we'll be doing the same again..." moaned one top ICI manager.

But others were more aggressive:

"If you do not learn to stand up to your unions you'll lose your employees hundreds of jobs," proclaimed one speaker who apparently remains in ignorance of the way union leaders' collaboration is actually assisting the loss of jobs by the thousand.

Indeed the services already rendered to the employers by trade union bureaucrats were generally underrated.

Declaring that an "enlightened and effective trade union leadership" prepared to "lead from the front" and exert

"control" while displaying CBI "wisdom", "judgement" and "tenacity" would be worth £40,000 a year to the employers CBI President Sir John Greenborough snubbed potential TUC applicants by adding that:

"I'm not making any nominations".

And in the closing speech, CBI director general Sir John Methven issued a rallying cry to employers to:

"Get out from behind your desks; stop pussy-footing around".

With the bosses on the offensive it is high time that similar marching orders were given to the armies of trade union officials whose political bankruptcy is a contributory cause of rising unemployment alongside the bankruptcy of the capitalist system.

While the employers search for their £40,000 a year "trade unionist", workers must begin the task of removing the existing privileged and collaborationist bureaucracy, and building a revolutionary leadership to defend their interests.



Can we hope that these Tories are shortly to join a mass rush over Dover Cliffs?

Smelling a rat

The widespread belief amongst workers that the Tory leaders are rats was challenged last week by the British army.

The Queens Own Highlanders, currently stationed at Crossmaglen in South Armagh, awarded Margaret Thatcher the "Order of the Lemming", for her devil-may-care visit to Crossmaglen in a heavily armed army helicopter in the wake of the IRA's successful Warrenpoint ambush.

Lemmings are, like rats, small, unpleasant rodents. But they have one relieving quality; in a periodic fit of frenzy, they commit mass suicide by rushing

off a cliff into the sea.

The Lemming Club is open to those reactionary VIPs who boost army morale, visiting the British occupying army beleaguered in the "bandit" country of South Armagh.

But Thatcher has not made any effort to boast of her award—which was not announced to the journalists who covered her visit.

Perhaps she is reluctant to boost the hopes of working class men, women and children that, at some not-too-distant point of time, she will lead the rest of the Tory Party and the parasitic employers they represent in a mass suicide that would be universally applauded.

United front of mediaeval bigots!

For a supposed socialist there could scarcely be a more naked statement of conservatism and ideological bankruptcy than engaging in a last-ditch campaign for the continued use of a 1662 Church of England prayer book.

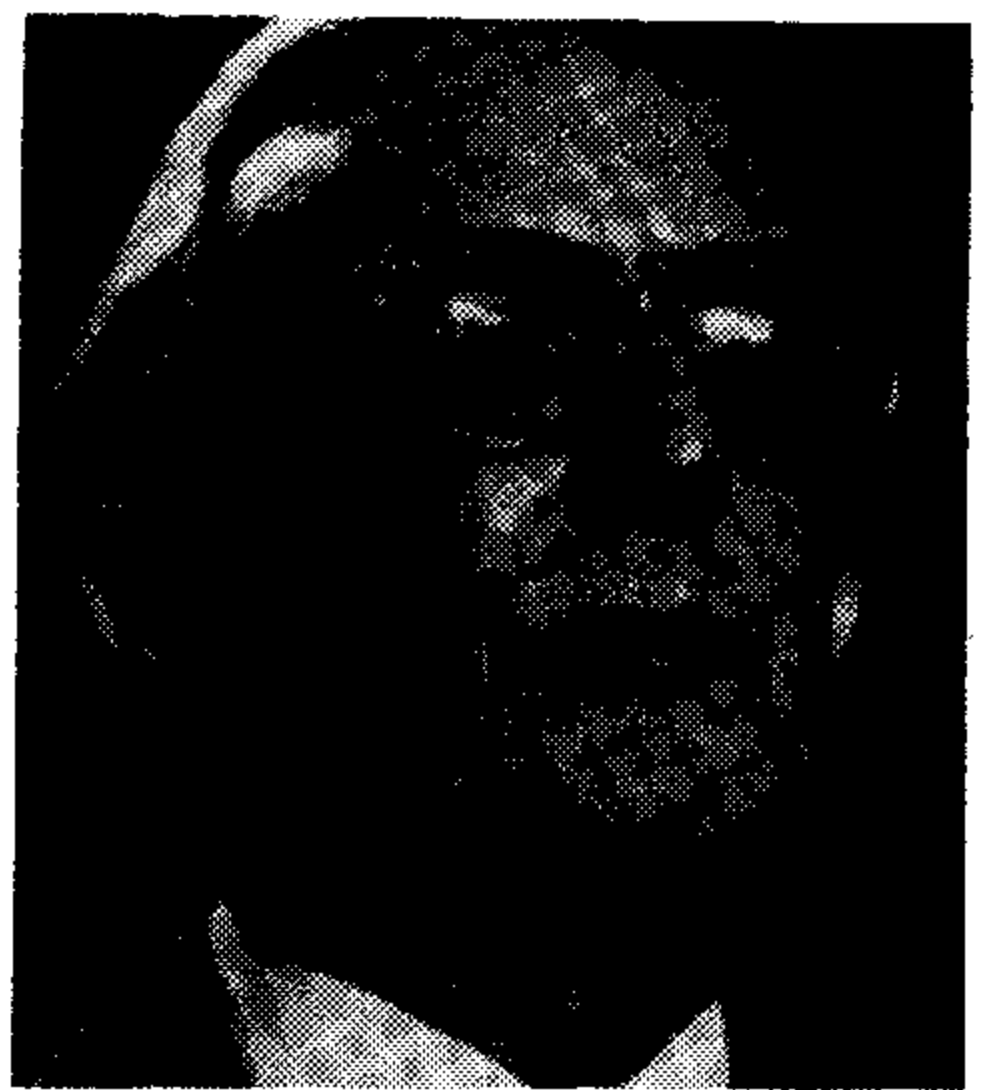
But for Michael Foot, the extreme right wing voice of the Tribune Group, adding his signature to a campaign list incorporating William Whitelaw, Lord Carrington, the heads of all three armed forces and a bevy of High Court judges was simply the latest step in his hell-for-leather rush to join the right-wing "establishment".

Foot is merely following the time-worn trail left by Labour traitors over the decades.

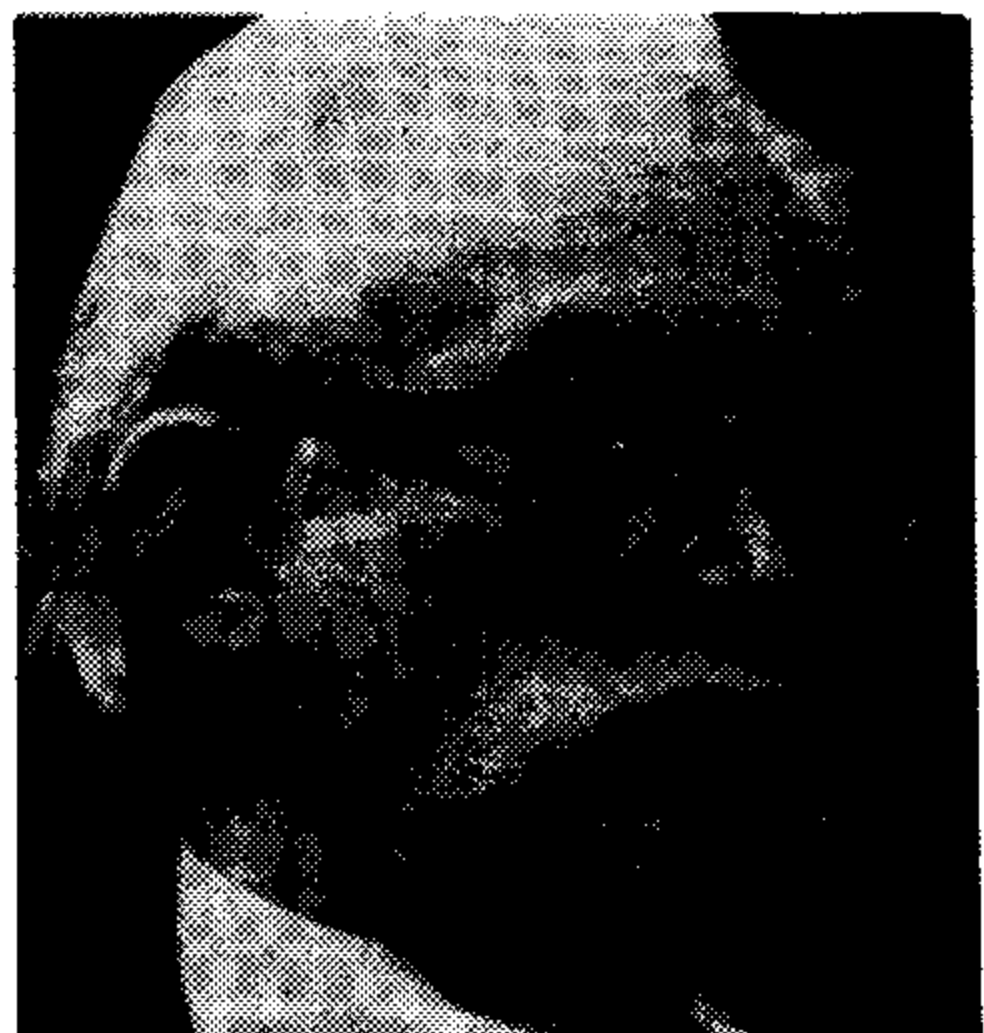
Trotsky

And while no doubt few workers now cherish the slightest illusion in the once fire-breathing Foot as a "revolutionary" leader, it is worth pointing to the way Trotsky in 1926 analysed this type of religious reformist.

Writing in *Pravda*, he pointed



Carrington



Foot

out the distinction between the religious ideas that linger amongst sections of workers and

those consciously defended by their bureaucratic leaders:

"It is completely indisputable that the revolution will find a good share of the Welsh miners still in the grip of religious prejudices.

"It cannot be doubted that despite this the miners will do their job. From some prejudices they will free themselves in the heat of the struggle, while from others only after victory.

"But we categorically deny that the Welsh miners and the British proletariat in general can be shown the correct path by people who have not separated themselves from infantile nonsense, do not understand the structure of human society, do not grasp its dynamics, do not understand the role of religion in it and to one degree or another are ready to subordinate their actions to the precepts of ecclesiastical morality which unites oppressors with oppressed.

"Such leaders are unreliable. From them the working class can expect capitulation or direct treachery—justified by the Sermon on the Mount—at the most crucial hour."

Writings on Britain, vol. 2, pp.167-8.

Tories oppose parts of Corrie Bill

Under considerable pressure from the medical profession the Tory government has moved in to oppose certain aspects of John Corrie's anti-abortion Bill, now in its Committee stage in Parliament.

Health Minister Gerard Vaughan has spoken out strongly against Corrie's attempt to cut the upper time limit for abortions from 28 to 20 weeks—and proposed that the new limit should be 24 weeks.

And he has recommended that there be no change in the criteria for abortion—through which Corrie's Bill set out drastically to restrict abortions.

Significantly Vaughan has also accepted the medical evidence that more women die in childbirth at full term than from abortions.

And he has also stressed the fact that a number of foetal abnormalities can only be detected after 18 weeks' pregnancy—and that therefore Corrie's reduced time-limit could result in major problems for the women concerned.

But while this constitutes a considerable shift by the government—which, led by Thatcher, initially gave tacit support to the Corrie Bill—there are still many restrictive proposals which remain intact and stand as a threat to abortion rights.

There must be no slackening in the struggle for the defeat of the Corrie Bill.

Central issue

It is vital, if the struggle is to be advanced, that the fight against Corrie is tied in concretely with the massive militancy on the cuts, and that union leaders are forced to raise the defence of abortion rights as a central issue in struggles to defend NHS facilities.

Health workers and all trade unionists must demand that February 5 be adopted by the TUC for a one-day strike as its much-promised "Day of Action" against the cuts, and that this incorporate a massive lobby of Parliament against the Corrie Bill.

At the same time preparations must be made to defend women's rights in the event of the Bill becoming law.



Vaughan

NHS unions, and doctors—who have almost universally condemned the Corrie Bill—must be called upon to adopt a policy of safeguarding existing abortion facilities, and disregarding the barbaric restrictions of the Corrie Bill whether or not it is passed in Parliament.

They must declare themselves ready to take all-out strike action in defence of anyone penalised by the state for carrying out an abortion—or to defend existing charitable abortion institutions threatened with legal attack.

No new jobs

New industries are not emerging to take the place of those now in decline as a result of falling rates of profit, admitted Employment Secretary James Prior last week.

In what promises to be "a pretty fierce world recession" the prospect is one of rising unemployment, he went on.

So far all the Tories' talk of tax-cuts and hand-outs to private employers stimulating the creation of new jobs, the stark reality of the current world crisis of capitalism

emerges clearly.

The system of production not for social need but for private profit is incapable of expanding the existing forces of production. Instead it is forced to turn on many of the existing productive forces and destroy them, in a cannibalistic attempt to preserve the profits of the rest.

Only a planned, socialist economy offers a way out of this impasse.

And to achieve that, the Tory government must be brought down, and a new, principled, revolutionary leadership built in the labour movement.

Benn fears mass action on jobs

The fears of Labour left-wingers that anti-Tory militancy might overflow the channels of peaceful parliamentary protest were clearly reflected in last week's much-quoted speech from Tony Benn.

In what posed as a radical challenge to the role of the brutal police Special Patrol Group, Benn in fact conveyed a stark warning to the Tories that their policies were going far beyond the limits within which they could count on the assistance of Labour and trade union leaders.

Asset-stripping

He was speaking on Sir Keith Joseph's misnamed "Industry Bill", which is designed further to strip away the industrial base of British capitalism, threatens a further upward lurch in unemployment.

This, warned Benn, could: "Kill off once and for all the consensus politics of the post-war years".

Under these conditions, Benn as much as anyone else plainly fears that youth, in particular, will take matters into

their own hands:

"If industrial policy follows this course, the next instrument of the Cabinet will be the Special Patrol Group as the problems created by deindustrialisation are presented to the people in terms of law and order".

Underlining the class collaborationist nature of Labour's National Enterprise Board, Benn advised Joseph that:

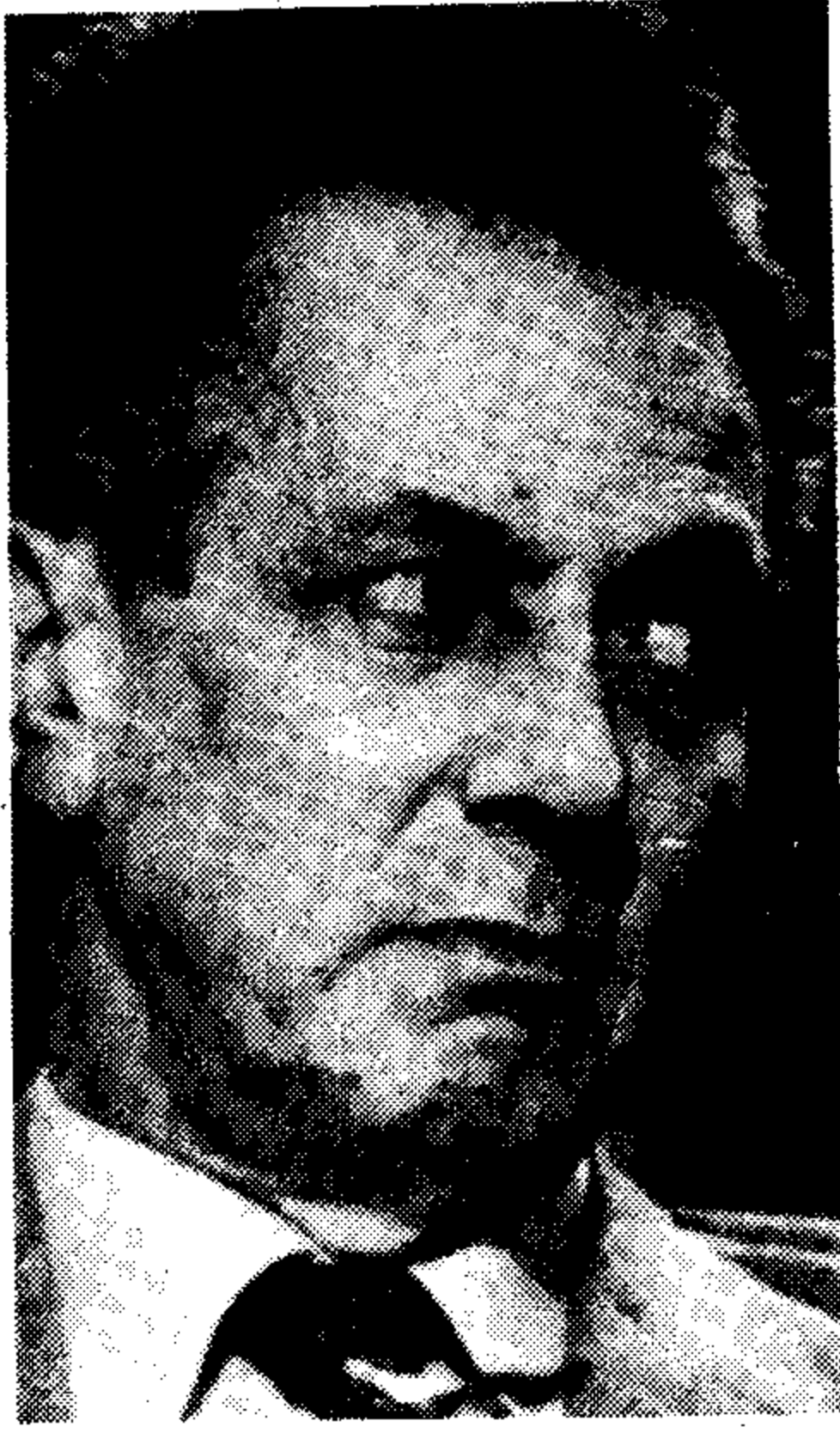
"The SPG will not be a substitute for the NEB".

Youth, he pointed out, had interpreted Whitelaw's talk at the Tory conference of new detention centres to provide a "short, sharp shock" as a means of frightening them off.

This was true in Corby—where police helicopters had circled over demonstrators and police had turned out with riot shields—and also on Merseyside where there has been mass and prolonged unemployment.

Preserving a silence on its own servile role in job-slashing wage-cutting Labour governments headed by Wilson and Callaghan, Benn cynically declared that:

"There is no future for this country until a government is elected which makes full employment its prime objective."



Joseph

Just how he intends to fight for such an objective against a right-wing Labour leadership tied to the coat-tails of the IMF and the CBI is of course not explained.

But Benn's speech, in calling for 100% public ownership of British oil and (like the CBI) for import controls, implicitly revealed that he still does not advocate a planned socialist economy as the way forward, and remains opposed to the nationalisation of major industries and the banks without compensation under workers' management.

His warnings to the Tory government should be interpreted in this light.

As the Tories ignore his advice and proceed vigorously

with their attacks, Benn and his Tribune Group colleagues, know they are expected to huff and to puff—but intend to do nothing else.

The hollow character of such verbal protests can best be exposed to Labour Party activists and militant workers by raising demands throughout the labour movement that Benn, along with all those Labour MPs who claim to oppose Callaghan's policies put their words into practice and launch an all-out campaign for the removal of the present right wing leadership, and for an alternative programme of genuine socialist policies to defend the interests of the international working class.



Benn

Maynard's invitation

Joan Maynard has echoed the invitation by Tony Benn for "all socialists" to join the Labour Party.

Speaking at a Labour Club meeting held in the occupied administration block of Leicester Polytechnic, Maynard declared herself opposed to all bans and proscriptions—even opposing the recent expulsion from the Labour Party of crypto-Tory members of the Social Democratic Alliance.

Expulsion

She was then questioned as to her position on the expulsion in Oxford of Socialist Press

supporter Ted Heslin, a long-standing Labour Party member and a delegate from the 5/833 ACTSS Branch (whose open letter to Tony Benn was published in last week's Socialist Press).

Maynard at once pledged to support his appeal when it comes before the Labour Party National Executive.

Socialist Press readers are urged to seek similar commitments from other NEC left wingers, and to campaign throughout the Labour Party for the right of socialists to argue freely for their policies within its ranks, and to campaign for the ousting of the right wing Callaghan-Healey leadership.



Maynard

PHOTO: Peter Harrap, Report

Students hit back at racist fee rises

A mass demonstration was staged by Manchester and Salford students on Wednesday 31 October against the vicious increases in fees for overseas students and the continued unfair differentials between them and home students.

And last week Manchester University, Salford University and Manchester Polytechnic students' unions occupied administrative buildings in twenty-four hour 'sit-in' demonstrations.

Tory orators

The decision for the Salford occupation was taken by the Students Union at a well attended General Meeting on Tuesday 6 November despite impassioned outbursts by one of the Federation of Conservative Students' liveliest orators.

He called on members to resist this "ludicrous proposal" by the Fees Action Committee. A minority committee proposal, put forward by 'left reformist' Shaun O'Hara, the full time External Affairs Officer, called for an occupation "at some future unspecified date" in order to gain a "surprise" advantage over the college authorities!

It was defeated. Prolonged negotiations had taken place between the Fees Action Committee and the Salford University Vice-Chancellor since the beginning of term.

Fee strike

The Vice-Chancellor had persistently refused to take negotiations seriously and remained unmoved even after a

proposal for a fees strike had been unanimously carried at a Students' Union General Meeting.

The students correctly responded by calling for immediate occupation of the University's administrative building—a call which was passed by the necessary two-thirds majority of members present.

The chairman declared the meeting over and amid cheers from left wingers including a strong IMG caucus, instructed members to occupy at once.

The Conservative dominated Salford University Students Union has rarely been renowned for such militant action.

However, it is a foregone conclusion that any victory celebrations will prove to have been premature.

The occupation has funda-

mental inadequacies and will be of very limited value, largely because it was called for a twenty-four hour period only—amounting to merely a token demonstration.

The call should have been for permanent occupation until demands are met.

Nor was the occupation linked to an academic strike by students—and thus the occupation was weakened by less conscious students deserting to attend lectures and tutorials.

And the organising committee failed to enter into immediate negotiations with trade unions representing administrative staff and university teachers to press for supporting strike action.

But many of the Salford students who took part in the occupations will now have savoured their first real struggle against the ruling class.

The leadership must be developed that will build on this invaluable experience and map out the next step in a united struggle in which students and workers join to fight Tory cuts and racial discrimination.



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Students—driven into action by Tory attacks

PRESS GANG



When a BBC Panorama team, which had allowed its cameras to focus on an IRA member came under attack from the Tory government there was an immediate response from the leaders of "freedom in the press".

Calls for the heads of the BBC Panorama team on a platter arose with one mighty shout.

First reports were, of course, a trifle exaggerated. The BBC had hired 100 Provos with machine guns and bazookas to hold the village for several hours.

Hooded men were supposed to have strolled the streets chatting amicably with local residents.

(What? Chatting amicably? What happened to the contempt and hatred they are held in by all decent men and women?)

Of the national British papers only the Guardian did not lead with the story.

Few headlines came more subdued than the Sun ('Blunderama—BBC's astonishing deal with the Provos').

The rest rose up the Fleet Street scale of shock-horror until they reached the supposed "troops out" advocates at the Mirror, which outgunned all its rivals with the simple banner headline 'Treason!'

But by the late editions Fleet Street was already aware that the 100 Provos had dwindled to ten, and the several hours of 'occupation' had been adjusted to 11 minutes!

The calls for more censorship that arose from all sides

brought not a single blush:

"Fury swept through the Commons . . . astonishing irresponsibility . . . treachery . . ."

Convincing detail was introduced to add that touch of authenticity.

The Daily Star reported:

"Two M60 machine guns, RPG7 rocket propelled grenade launchers and many Armalite rifles were brought into the village of 400 people for display in front of the cameras".

Yet somehow news of this grand military tattoo, which took place on October 17, only 'leaked' out from this integral part of the British Empire on 8 November—more than three weeks later!

The Sun reported one villager as explaining this slight hiccup in the swift process of the dissemination of news by saying:

"It concided with the annual excursion of the residents' association."

To be fair to the honest news hounds who let the battle of Carrickmore slip through their fingers, it is one of the local difficulties faced by British troops that 'occupations' of Irish villages by Irish men and women are a little difficult to detect.

They tend to blend in better with the background than, say, a friendly morale-boosting visit from a Paras regiment.

It is also true that much of Fleet Street was somewhat busy at the time tracking down the non-existent bomb plot against Princess Margaret in America.

But give credit where credit is due.

Once the truth was out—

that parts of Ireland had for years been occupied by Irish men and women—the press was swiftly into battle.

The Daily Mail wanted no corners to be cut in an inquiry "as searching and thorough as possible."

The Sun said:

"Within the Corporation there are clearly men either devoid of judgement, or else with a deliberate purpose to make mischief in Ireland.[] They must be uncovered and booted out."

The Telegraph, that bastion of press freedom, said:

"Had the programme appeared, it would have confirmed the impression already widespread in Northern Ireland that many people on this side of the Irish Sea look on Ulster's tragedy with the eyes of detached spectators who feel that they are not involved either morally or politically in its outcome . . ."

"A member of this newspaper who was guilty of anything resembling the conduct attributed to this Panorama team would be dismissed."

"If there are journalists in the media who positively want to be martyred in what is falsely described as the cause of 'editorial freedom' their wish should be promptly satisfied."

The BBC has joined in the attack by declaring that its "guidelines" were flouted, and launching its own inquiry.

With such stout defenders of bourgeois democratic freedoms around what need does this government have for its new suppression of information bill?

McShane's classless view of 'press freedom'

Denis McShane locates himself in the radical left of the early '70s.

He was one of the NUJ militants who prided themselves on putting action before dogma; and who had a mystical concept of 'real trade unionism' which they struggled to achieve.

Like many of his co-thinkers McShane is now firmly on the rungs of Labour Party/TUC ladder to success.

Press freedom

A left reputation combined with an increasing awareness of the needs of the labour bureaucracy's machine has ideally equipped him to become one of the most regular speakers and writers on 'press freedom' at TUC meetings.

His past relies on support for picket lines. His future is already mapped out in the Tribune group of Labour MPs.

His book *Using the Media*, is fast becoming a trade union bureaucrat's bible and it admirably demonstrates the familiar parabola of his career.

It exemplifies the dead end road of reformism, festooned as it is with anti-capitalist banners, while it heads firmly and unyieldingly away from conflict with the capitalist class.

The book is subtitled 'How to deal with the press, television and radio' and it parades before trade union officials the prospect of an unending round of radio phone-ins, television interviews and cosy heart to hearts with progressive journalists on the virtues and reasonableness of the latest wage claim.

Locked into capitalism

It begins with a nod in the direction of the class nature of the press.

"It needs to be said from the outset that even if every single technique mentioned in the book is deployed to maximum effect it cannot guarantee favourable or even fair treatment.

"The British media is firmly locked into (or in the BBC's case, linked to) British capitalism. In the first place there are all the implications of formal ownership."

He goes on to describe some of the press coverage of the 1978/9 pay strikes, including the *Evening Standard's* identification of an IRA bomb at Canvey Island with secondary picketing.

For this he scolds the "usually sensible" *Evening Standard*.

Capitalism apart, the world McShane inhabits is one where questions of sensibleness and reasonableness are paramount.

Sacrifice

It is one where trade union officials must make any sacrifice, no matter how great, to ensure that they do



PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

Ford strikers—their nine week struggle had more impact than any press release

not portray themselves as 'stereotypes of shop stewards' who give themselves away by 'surly uncooperative responses'.

"Dealing with the media can mean doing unnatural things. Although suspicion is justified and a watchful attitude always necessary, it is essential to try to make personal and friendly contact with journalists.

"A trade union official will have to give a home phone number to journalists—something which may be kept a close secret from colleagues and members [!]—and yet it is that home phone number which may make all the difference between a favourable and unfavourable story being published."

(Better make sure however that the friendly journalist does not leak the number to members. There is nothing more off putting for a union official preparing for a major TV interview than being rung up at home by a gaggle of undisciplined members belly-aching about some strike or other).

Ford claim

The media, we learn, can be extremely helpful during negotiations in putting pressure on the management.

Of the TGWU pamphlet on the Ford claim

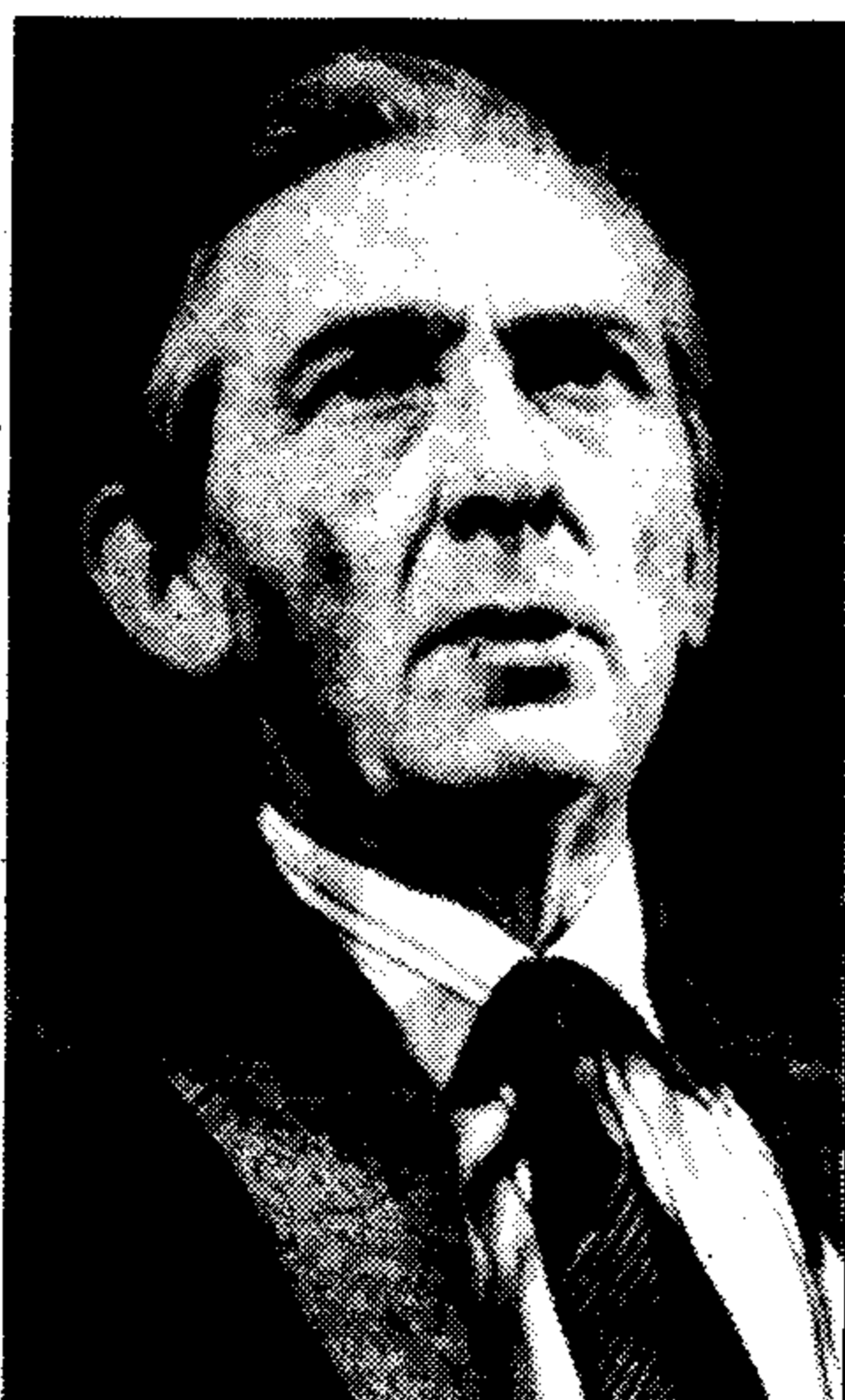


PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

Murray

McShane says:

"Labour correspondents wrote about how impressive it was and its publication gave the union a commanding position at the start of negotiations".

There is no mention here of one other factor which might have been helpful to Ford workers—namely a nine week official strike or the press coverage that received.

Of the many tables published the one of most interest is on the reading pattern of trade union officials which runs as follows:

"Guardian 65%; Mirror 45%; Morning Star 35%; Times 30%; Sun 25%; Telegraph 20%; Financial Times 15%; Express 10%; Mail 10%."

McShane acknowledges

the *Morning Star's* significance in terms of "communicating with influential activists in the trade union movement".

He is unable to explain the political reasons why the *Morning Star* should be regular reading for one in three of all union officials.

McShane's own easy accommodation to the Stalinist and left-talking bureaucracy—who would give 100% backing of his division of the world into 'progressive' and 'reactionary' tendencies—is also evident from the frequency with which the name of Jack Dromey—darling of the *Morning Star*—appears in the book.

A press release from Dromey calling for support on the Garner's picket line

is used—to praise the format in which the release is sent out.

It would not occur to McShane to examine the blocking role that Dromey actually played in the Garners dispute.

Nor, prudently, does he consider the tiny handful of pickets actually mobilised by Dromey in the Garners fight—for all his deft handling of press releases. In fact more were mobilised by WSL members through word of mouth and the campaign conducted in *Socialist Press!*

Of the Grunwick dispute McShane acknowledges that press coverage was "distorted in favour of the management and police" but urges that this should not result in any reaction.

"The strikers and pickets were bitterly angry, and justifiably so, at some of the disgracefully unfair reporting of the Grunwick mass picket, but Dromey and the strike committee wisely swallowed their anger long enough to go on holding the daily press conference.

"Even if the newspapers did not print their comments fully, at least the journalists would not have the excuse that no-one was willing to talk to them about the strikers' point of view."

This he compares favourably with the power workers in 1977.

"The unofficial strike committee would not be interviewed and tried to remain anonymous.

"It is certainly true that news coverage was bound to be hostile because of the disruption caused, and because the action was unofficial.

"But by not talking and trying to remain anonymous... the workers missed a chance to put over their case..."

"Holding a daily news conference would not have won the media over to the side of workers, but ITN and BBC TV news and all the press would show interviews explaining the grievance, instead of relying on employers, politicians and other bureaucrats, all of whom wanted to see the strike defeated."

The power workers' strong class position is unfavourably compared with the ability of witch-hunting right winger Frank Chapple to use the media.

McShane would not recognise a class division if it landed on his head.

It was not Chapple's ability to use the media

Tory bid to gag re

With only extremely low-key opposition (spear-headed by the *Guardian* newspaper and backed up by Liberal and Labour peers) the Tory government is pressing ahead with its reactionary Protection of Official Information Bill.

Designed to replace the widely discredited and virtually unused Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act, the new Tory Bill is far from a liberalising reform.

Despite bland assurances from Tory Lord Chancellor Lord Hailsham, that "nothing which is legal now will be rendered illegal by this Bill", the new legislation opens up the prospect of investigative journalists, civil servants and unwitting members of the public being prosecuted on the say-so of a government minister.

Ministerial decision

It would make it an offence to reveal information which a Minister—after the disclosure—certified as likely to cause

injury to defence or international relations.

And publication of any information relating to the security services and intelligence would automatically become an offence—raising the prospect of a journalist possibly being jailed for up to two years for disclosing the time the head of MI5 takes his coffee break.

Publicly available

This would be an offence even if the information in question was already publicly available in this country or abroad.

And there would be no means of appeal against the Minister's pronouncement that the disclosure of a piece of information was likely to cause damage.

In addition, in a specific attempt to plug the loophole through which journalists Crispin Aubrey and Duncan Campbell and ex-soldier John Berry had escaped in last year's mammoth "secrets" trial, the Tory measure would make it illegal to accumulate and collate small pieces of information in

order to piece together an overall picture of government activity.

The new law would, in short, gag the British press and of course the workers' movement at a time when the Tories must be secretly preparing for a wave



Whitelaw

of intensified class confrontation.

It would become illegal for a militant to complain that his phone was being tapped; public discussion of the role and activities of the Special Branch and other political police would be suppressed; the *Guardian* would be prosecuted for its revelation of the jury-vetting scandal and similar issues; civil servants who publicised details of government preparations or damaging figures to expose the effects of cuts and other attacks would face jail sentences; and all of the implicit threats of the discredited Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act would be made explicit in a revamped law clearly passed ready to be used.

Publishers

As the defence lawyer at the ABC trial, Lord Hutchinson, pointed out in the House of Lords (where the Bill received its second reading last week) the new law "suspends a sword above journalists' heads".

Even newspaper publishers have emerged as unanimously

HOBBS

He stripped bare the mechanism of religion and state

1979 marks 300 years since the death of Thomas Hobbes, the most perceptive philosopher of the English bourgeois revolution. Yet it is an anniversary that is passing with the minimum of acknowledgement.

Hobbes would have understood that. The uncomfortable truths he laid bare concerning the nature of power in bourgeois society were generally ignored or reviled in his lifetime, and have seldom since then been valued at their true worth.

Value

The concept of value lay at the heart of Hobbes's philosophy.

Marx showed his appreciation of that when in Volume 1 of *Capital* he approvingly quoted from Hobbes's *Leviathan*:

"The value of worth of a man is, of all other things, his price - that is to say, so much as would be given for the use of his power".

This grasp of the concept of labour power illustrates how firmly rooted in the emergent bourgeois social relations was the thought of Hobbes.

He rejected the outmoded feudal concepts of man's value as being determined by his place in a divinely ordained social hierarchy.

A man's value is decided by his economic status in a freely competitive society.

The central problem for Hobbes, however, was how in such a society were the competing economic interests to be reconciled so as to establish a stable social order?

Anarchy

If they failed to achieve reconciliation then the prospect was anarchy, chaos and death.

It is this fear of death that Hobbes sees as driving men to establish a common political authority which will hold in check the tendencies to disruption and anarchy.

Hobbes was writing in the midst of the bourgeois revolution of the seventeenth century.

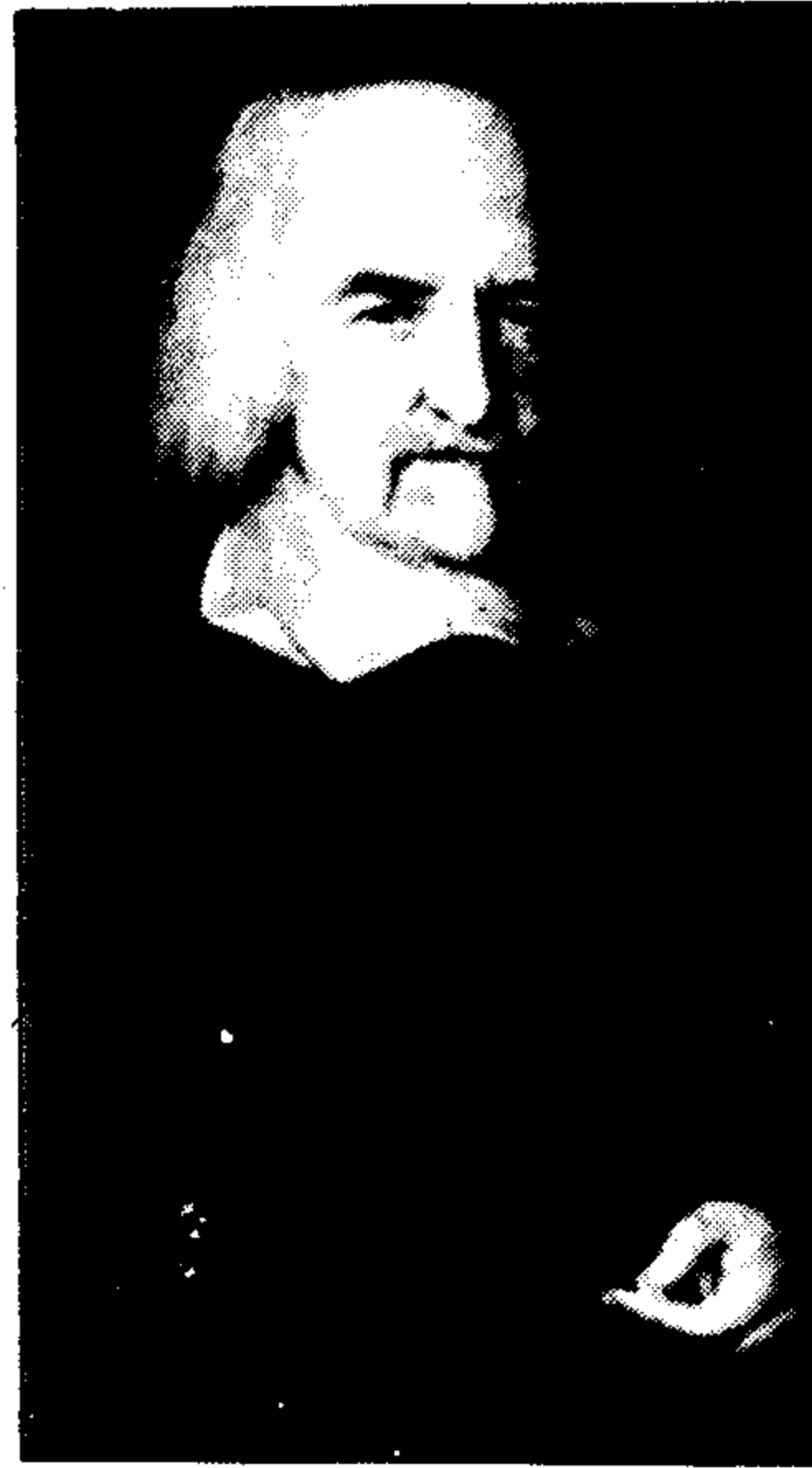
He was acutely aware of the necessity of creating a political power capable of achieving, in the short term, a stable social order as against the demands of the radicals, and, in the long term, a social equilibrium that would hold in balance the dynamic forces released by the bourgeois revolution.

To achieve a stable society men choose to agree to erect a common political authority whose rule they accept out of self-interest "the erection of some common Power, by the fear whereof, they may be compelled . . . to keep the Peace amongst themselves".

Man's obligation to obey the state is based upon rational self-interest, not upon a recognition of a divinely ordained natural law.

The varied interests in society find common cause in the recognition of a supreme power which reconciles the private and public interests.

This rigorous definition of the roots of political obligation has appalled generations of bourgeois political philosophers who have found the philosophy of John Locke more congenial. Locke, writing in the later seventeenth century, also conjectures that political power is



Hobbes



Locke

based on a social contract, but it is an agreement from which either of the parties can withdraw, not a surrender of the wills of the subjects to supreme authority such as described by Hobbes.

Yet if Hobbes's vision is bleak, his logic is rigorous and his imagination more fertile than that of Locke.

Hobbes makes the present-day bourgeois political philosopher uncomfortable because he pierces to some of the central elements in the nature of the capitalist state; above all, that there must be in capitalist society a sovereign power whose authority is ultimately indisputable.

For Marxists, whatever the form of bourgeois rule, whether monarchy or republic, democracy or fascism, the capitalist state in its many guises remains the supreme arbiter.

The relatively freely competitive society of which Hobbes wrote has long given way to the era of imperialism, of a world capitalist economy dominated by multinational corporations and competing nation states battling for survival.

More than ever, is the existence of a sovereign indivisible authority essential for the maintenance of the capitalist system.

No amounts of effort at reducing government intervention in the economy and allowing the "forces of the market" to proceed unfettered can detract from the central fact that the capitalist state, far from surrendering its powers, is today summoning its strength for a major trial of strength with the organised working class.

The advance of the modern proletariat could not have been conceived by Hobbes.

Yet he was well aware of the need to condition the lower orders to a state of obedience.

For this, he reasoned, the instrument of religion was vital. Hobbes was, along with Bacon, the founder of modern mechanical materialism.

He set about establishing a scientific understanding of the workings of society.

For him society was composed of human atoms each proceeding on its own individual course yet all held in check and reconciled by a supreme sovereign authority.

It was, as Marx explained,

in *The Holy Family*, an attempt to reduce human passions to the mechanical laws of nature.

This thorough going materialism of Hobbes forms part of that continuum of mechanical materialism which stretches through Holbach and Helvetius in eighteenth century France to Feuerbach in the nineteenth century, to be consciously negated and subsumed in the dialectical materialism of Marx.

Engels

As Engels wrote, "if Englishmen do not exactly relish the compliment he [Marx] paid their ancestors, the more's the pity". (*Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*).

This addition to the development of human understanding had for Hobbes a very practical political conclusion.

For Hobbes, religion is part of "policy"; it is an essential instrument to inculcate obedience among all classes in society; it is the cement of social cohesion.

Certainly Hobbes did not conceive of the extent of class differentiation that the development of capitalism would create, but he was acutely conscious of the dangers of subversion and of the role religion could play in either fomenting or stifling unrest.

Repay study

However scholastic he may appear at first reading, Hobbes repays study by Marxists.

He grasped, however inadequately, the new forces released by the bourgeois revolution; he spelled out the essential nature of the bourgeois state as an organ of repression.

Of course he could not go beyond that to reveal, as did Marx, the state as the "central committee of the bourgeoisie", but he sharply delineated the elements of political power in a manner that is much to the discomfiture of the apologists for the ruling class.

Nor do they find any more appealing his materialism and his explanation of the political purposes of religion.

His theory of the sovereignty of the state, his materialism and his rationality all distinguish him as a profoundly revolutionary thinker whose contribution to our understanding of the nature of society still demands our attention.



McShane puts union bureaucrats through their paces on the TUC "Using the Media" course

which allowed his message to get through, but the confidence with which the ruling class regard the Chapples of the trade union movement.

McShane does not truly regard the problem of press witch-hunts as being rooted in class ownership.

He sees it as a problem of winning over journalists to the side of 'progressive' politics.

Yet McShane makes clear that what they are to be won to is not defence of the independent interests of the working class but the bureaucratic interests of the labour officials.

"Every month the TUC's General Council meets. The news value of the meetings varies. Sometimes the General Council will take a decision on a matter of great public interest; sometimes the meeting ends without any but routine, humdrum matters having been discussed.

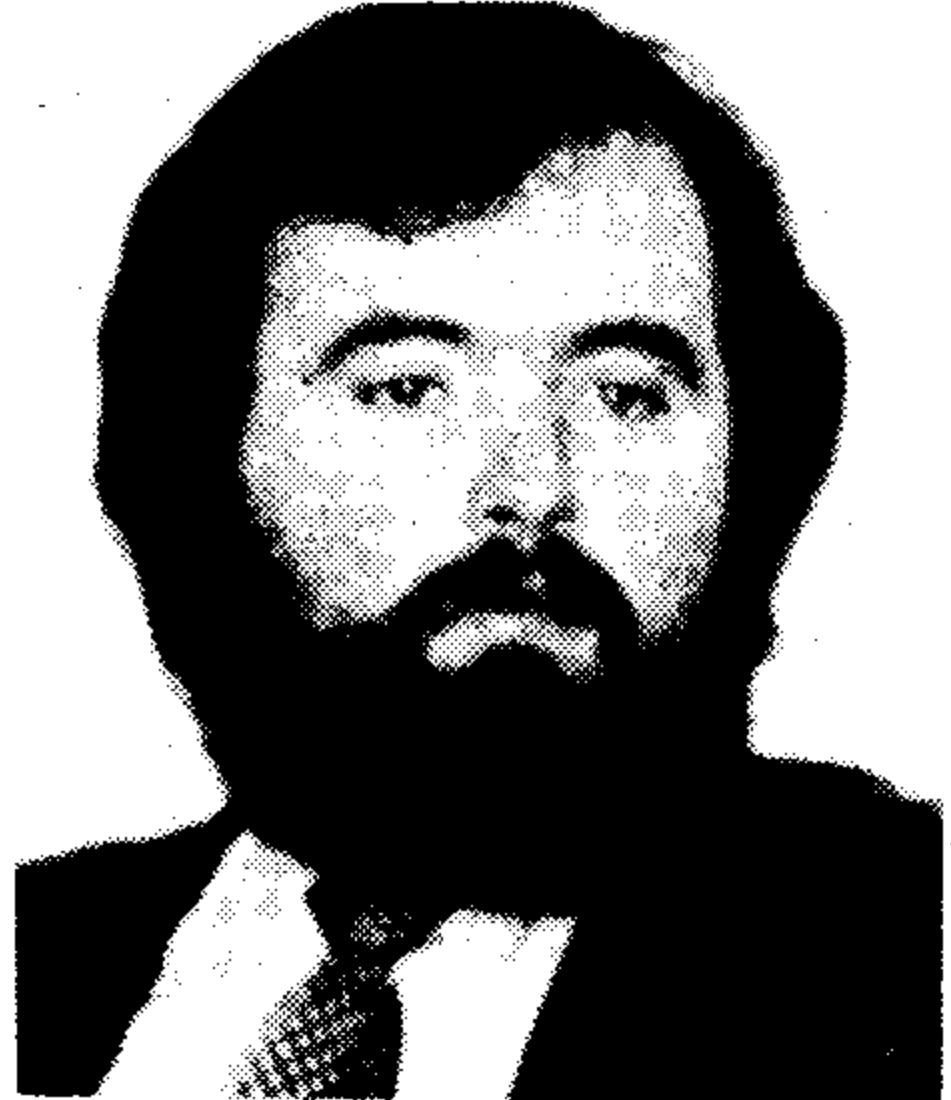
"Yet the TUC holds a press conference for industrial reporters after each meeting—no matter what the news value—and the TUC General Secretary comes along and chats with reporters.

"For both the journalists and the TUC it does not really matter if the General Council meeting provides news or not. The news conference maintains contact at a personal level between Len Murray and the TUC press officer and the journalists.

It also gives the journalists a chance to question Murray in person about some point which is not

formally connected with the General Council's business. "The whole exercise, whether or not there is a page lead for the next day, helps to oil the connection that the TUC has built with the corps of national industrial reporters."

It is to this task of oiling that 'connection' that the book should be dedicated.



Dromey

The question of day to day dealing with the press for workers in struggle is a tactical one.

But unless such tactics are based on a strategic understanding of the class nature of the capitalist press all struggles will inevitably become diverted from taking action to win, into playing the game of trying to influence 'public opinion' and to win favourable articles in the press.

The question is not whether from time to time an article that is not actually hostile will appear, because an individual journalist is favourably disposed. (That indeed can and does happen).

It is what happens when the interests of capital are under attack.

The witch-hunt then is not a product of 'bad journalism' as McShane appears to believe, but of the essential role that the press plays in attacking workers in struggle.

It is more important for workers to understand that a "bad press" is probably a sign that they are doing something right, than to indulge in bureaucratic manoeuvres to try to square the circle.

Workers whose leaders are praised for their statesmanlike qualities in a dispute can be sure that they are being led to disaster.

Chasing after public opinion is a euphemism for subjugating the class interests of workers to the reactionary interests of the petty bourgeoisie.

The task of those who truly speak in the interests of the working class is not to provide an occasional antidote to the daily dose of poison but to mobilise and forge a party capable of leading to the seizing of control of the press as part of the struggle for socialism.



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Chapple

porters

opposed to the new Tory Bill. Lord Gibson, chairman of the parent company of the *Financial Times*, declared that it was better to retain "an unworkable blunderbus which is seldom invoked" than to implement the new Bill.

Yet the National Union of Journalists and the Civil Service unions, which have most at risk from the legislation, have as yet mounted no concerted campaign against the Bill, which could be law next Spring.

This is plainly urgent if there is to be any struggle for the defence of democratic rights against this latest Tory attack.



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Supporters of Aubrey, Berry and Campbell

NEXT WEEK

A review of the book "Beneath the City Streets"

PTA—FIVE YEARS OLD

THIS MONTH

A Special Feature by
MARTIN FOLAN

This month marks the fifth anniversary of the introduction of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. This Act represents one of the most serious attacks on hard won democratic rights this century.

Under it, hundreds of Irish workers, socialists and republicans have been intimidated and harassed by the capitalist state.

It is important, therefore, for the working class to have an understanding of what the Prevention of Terrorism Act is, and how it serves the interests of the ruling class and imperialism.

Like any piece of legislation, the capitalist state produces to protect its interests, the Prevention of Terrorism Act was a result of particular material conditions of the class struggle.

Year of crisis

1974 was a year of crisis for the capitalist class in Britain.

February had seen the fall of the Tory government under Heath, brought down by the miners.

This was followed by the return of a Labour administration led by Wilson, which was forced to scrap some of the more obvious anti-working class legislation of the Tories, but which nevertheless was pledged to work in the interests of British capitalism.

This was no less so in relation to Ireland.

Ireland had seen a mass working class movement take to the streets in 1968 against the imperialist backed Orange police state of 'Northern Ireland'.

This was but the latest in a series of heroic struggles against imperialist rule by Irish workers.

But by 1974 it had for the British ruling class become the most serious.

After five years of British army occupation the Republican resistance forces had still not been crushed, despite murder squads, concentration camps and torture.

Unholy alliance

It was against this background that the Catholic middle class represented by the 'Social Democratic and Labour Party' made an unholy alliance with the Protestant ruling class known as the Sunningdale Agreement.

Under this shabby deal, which was backed by British imperialism and its puppets in the South, the Catholic middle class were to be fobbed off with a few seats in a revamped Stormont, while the Catholic working class were to continue to bear the brunt of imperialist rule.

After the collapse of the Heath government, the new Wilson administration continued to pursue this policy.

In May 1974, the 'Power Sharing Executive' as it was called, met for the first time at Stormont. It was also to be the last.

In the previous fifty years the Protestant rulers of the six county statelet had used discrimination in jobs and housing to favour Protestant workers against Catholics to maintain their class rule.

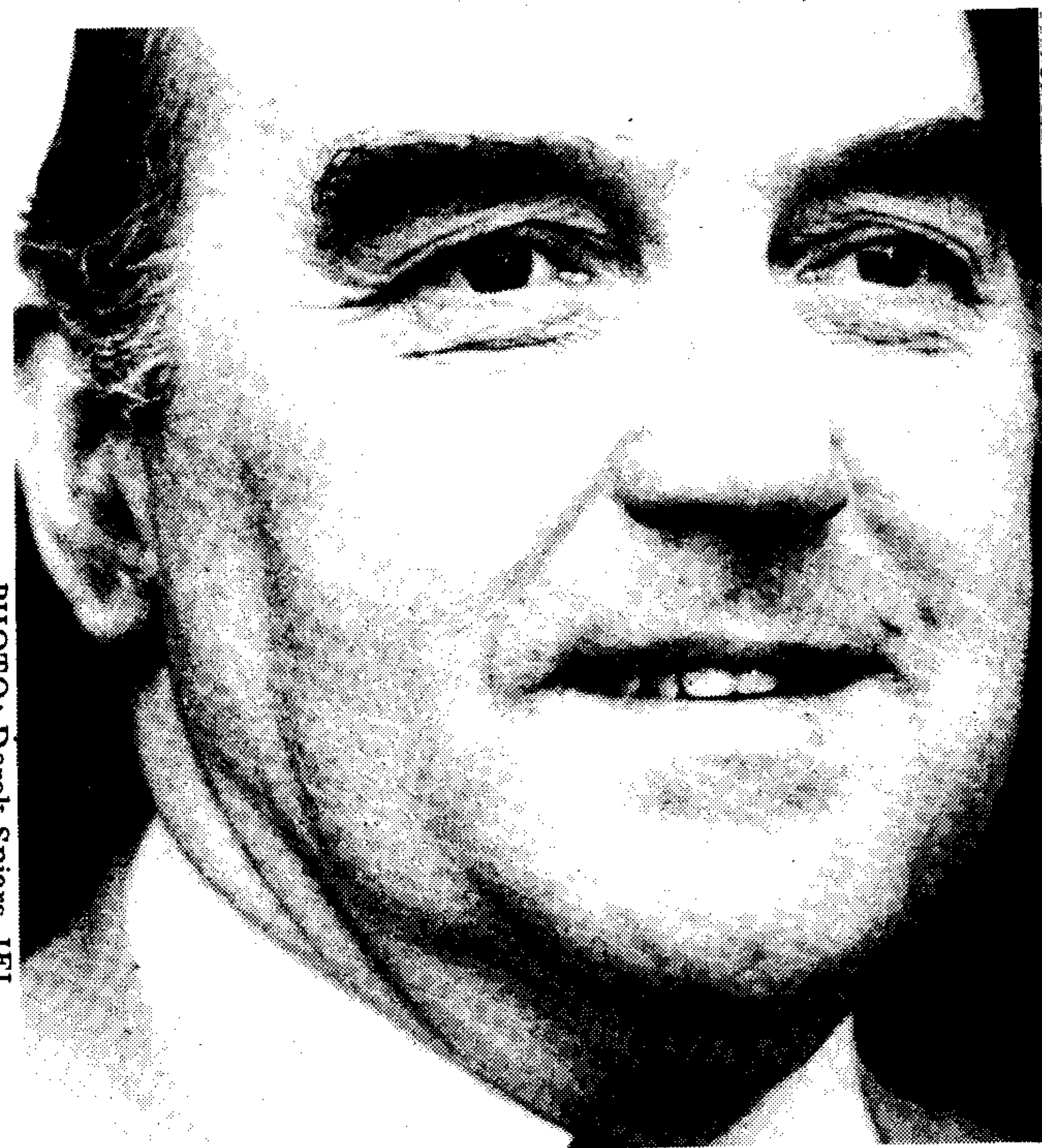
Mythology

And whenever the Catholics had shown signs of rebellion against the state the Protestant ruling class had used the mythology of 'privilege' and a 'Protestant state for a Protestant people' to turn Protestant workers against their Catholic brothers and sisters.

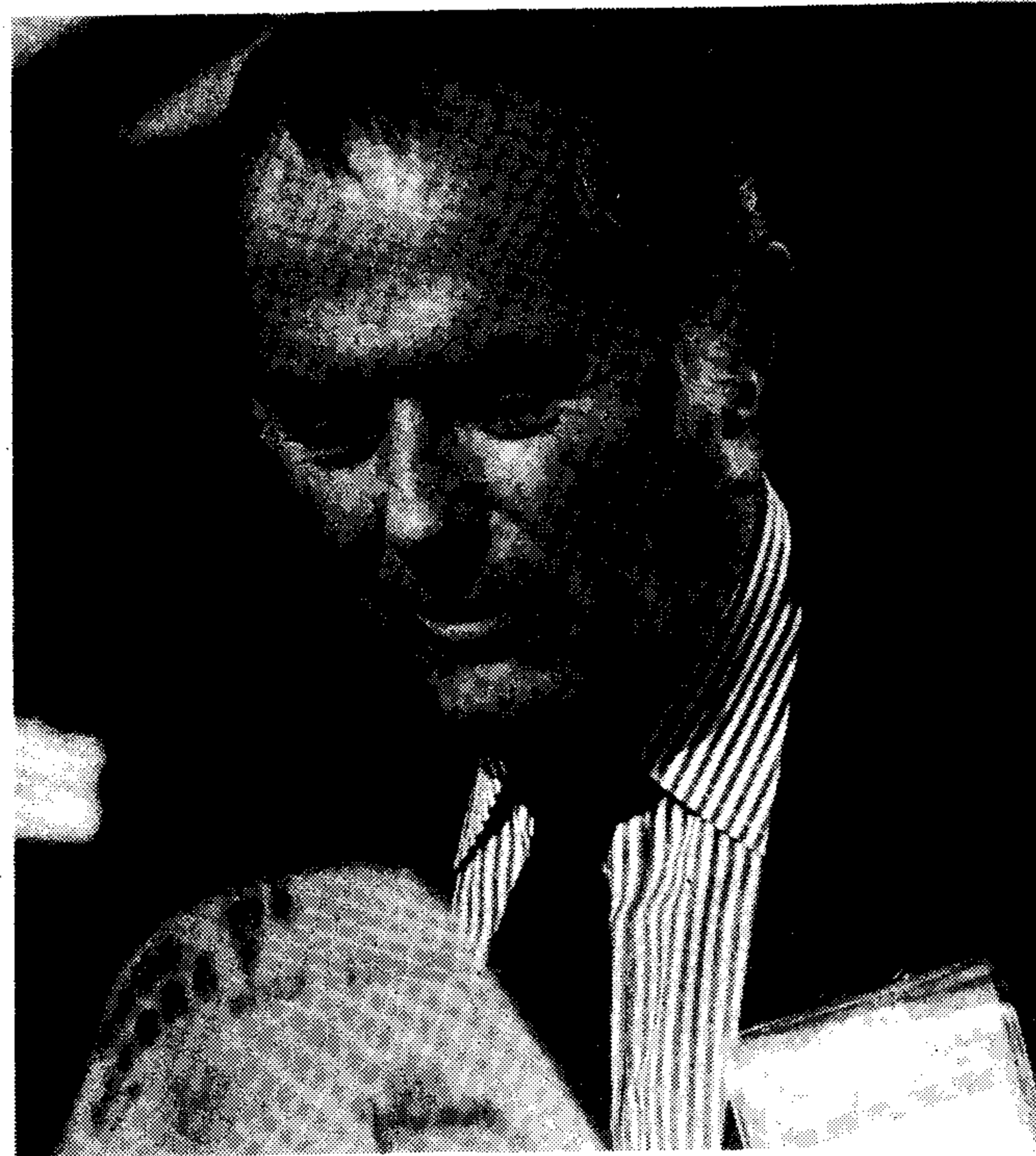
Now, it appeared to the Protestant working class, things were different.

Their 'leaders', it seemed, were prepared to sit down with 'Fenians' and 'papists', the 'enemies of the state'.

What the Protestant ruling



Mason



Atkins



Paisley



British soldier

class, led by Faulkner, were actually doing of course, was to protect their class interests in relation to British imperialism.

But fifty years of sectarianism had done the trick.

Under threat

The Protestant working class now sought to protect their 'privileges—which in a time of growing economic crisis, seemed to be especially under threat.

In these circumstances there was no leadership except of the most reactionary nature.

It was these reactionary forces, led in particular by Ian Paisley that now took the initiative against the Executive.

All over the province thousands of loyalist workers were on strike in protest against the Faulkner led Executive.

British imperialism in the six counties was now faced with a total shut down in engineering, shipbuilding and electricity industries most dominated by Protestant workers.

The right wing Ulster Defence Association set up road blocks everywhere and there was open intimidation of Catholic workers.

The British army, a traditional supporter of right

wing unionism openly collaborated with the UDA.

The British government decided not to alienate the Protestant workers any further.

The Executive collapsed, exposing the futility of imperialist inspired 'political initiatives' in Ireland.

In this political vacuum imperialism had only one solution—continued military repression of the nationalist population in the six counties.

Following these events, the Provisional IRA launched a disastrously wrongheaded campaign of bombings on the British mainland.

There had been bombs planted the previous year; but this time the campaign was more widespread.

Increased repression

The main outcome of such a campaign was, of course, to alienate British workers and to lead to calls by the press and Tory MPs for increased repression and harassment of Irish people in Britain.

Finally on Thursday November 21st two bombs exploded in the Mulberry Bush and the Tavern in the Town public houses in the centre of Birmingham—killing 21 people

and injuring hundreds more.

Though the IRA denied responsibility, the press and the media immediately launched a campaign of anti-Irish hysteria in which the anger and frustration of British workers at the bombings was directed at Irish workers.

Frame up

Subsequently six Irishmen were convicted of the 21 murders in a stage-managed frame-up trial and given sentences of up to 30 years in prison.

The convictions came in spite of the fact that statements the defendants had made in police custody had been extracted through beatings and in spite of glaring inconsistencies in the statements and prosecution evidence.

The bombings gave the excuse the government needed.

On November 29th the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) was passed through Parliament in 12 hours—with not one vote against.

The Act was certainly not a hurriedly drafted document.

It had been in preparation for some time before the bombings. But now was the

political climate for it to be passed.

The Act is divided into three parts.

Part One deals with 'Proscribed Organisations'. Part Two, exclusion orders and the third part 'general and miscellaneous provisions'.

Under the first section the Home Secretary can ban any organisation considered to be concerned in 'terrorism' or connected with Irish affairs.

In effect this has meant raids on republican organisations in Ireland and suppression of republican propaganda.

The second part is in many ways more infamous.

Under it, the Home Secretary can exclude from Britain anybody he deems to have been involved in 'terrorism'.

This, in effect, is deportation from one part of the state to another—something not seen in Britain since the Poor Law.

In this way, hundreds of people, mainly Irish have been deported to Ireland North and South—though few have actually been charged with any 'crime'.

Indeed in 1976 a whole Coventry Irish family was served with an exclusion order—with little or no protest from the

labour movement.

This part of the Act is clearly designed to intimidate Irish people.

The third part of the Act, which deals with 'general and miscellaneous' has specifically strengthened the powers of the police.

It allows for a police constable to arrest a person he reasonably suspects to be "in the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism".

Few charged

Under this section hundreds of people have been picked up and held for questioning about 'terrorism'—though very few have been charged with any offence.

Indeed while held in custody the majority of people have been asked details about their private lives, their friends and their political affiliations rather than specific acts of 'terrorism'.

This is obviously a cheap and convenient way for the police to build up political files on militants within the labour and republican movement.

It can be seen, therefore, that the PTA is not so much designed to prevent 'terrorism' as to stifle any flow of information about Ireland and to prevent discussion about Britain's role in Ireland within the labour movement.

So far well over 3,000 people have been held under the PTA though only a handful have actually been charged with any terrorist offence and still fewer convicted.

Once a year

When it was introduced the PTA was to be renewed every six months.

That period has now increased to twelve months.

Though a number of 'left' Labour MPs have voted against its periodic renewal it still remains on the statute books.

The capitalist state seems determined that it shall remain more or less permanent.

It is important that those 'lefts' who have correctly taken a stance against the PTA be forced to put their talk into practice and make sure that this attack on the working class is smashed.

One way in which their words can be tested out is by demanding they fight for the removal of the right-wing pro-imperialist Callaghan-Healey-Mason leadership of the Labour Party, and spell out a principled internationalist policy.

The question of the PTA and Ireland in general must be raised in every Labour Party and trade union branch.

There must also be a call for the immediate removal of troops from Ireland, political status for Republican prisoners of war as a step towards their release and self-determination for the Irish people as a whole.

DEMONSTRATION
Ten years of the Irish War, five years of the PTA
24 November 1979
2 p.m. Kennington Park (Oval Tube)
March to Brixton Prison

QUADROPHENIA

By Guest Reviewer PAUL TICKELL

The Who album **QUADROPHENIA** appeared in 1973. Although in part a loving nostalgic trip back to the days of the mods and their confrontations with rockers in 1963-4 at south-east coast seaside resorts, the album also shows considerable disenchantment with the trappings of youth subculture—casual sex, drugs and rock music

The trouble with this disenchantment is its thoroughly reactionary perspective.

Self pity

Because the mod-life-style doesn't provide an adequate release from the drudgery of work and the emotional-sexual traumas of adolescence, the album's hero Jimmy rejects his mod pals and sinks into self-pitying withdrawal, where he finds a perverse consolation in abstract notions about love and the self as some essential core divorced from any historical reality (eg. the song 'The Real Me').

This change in Jimmy, from being a mod to being a far more escapist proto-hippy, results in his suicide: dropping-out is a form of death-wish.

Such mystical claptrap is partly explained by the Who's own previous career. After their celebration of youthful rebellion in the early '60s (eg 'My Generation'), they moved with the psychedelic times and sought something a little more spiritual—and profitable.

This turned out to be the self-consciously arty rock-opera **TOMMY** (1969) and the wholesome religious values which were packaged with it.



Guitarist Pete Townshend had, in fact, become obsessed with Eastern mysticism and the teachings of Meher Baba.

TOMMY reflected Townshend's new-found 'philosophy', and it was no surprise in 1975 when crackpot Ken Russell directed the film.

The **QUADROPHENIA** album was no more than a gloss on the **TOMMY** one, but its autobiographical setting in the mod milieu with which the early 'Who' were vaguely associated, meant that the film project

needed a director like Frank Roddam who had proved himself adept at TV realism.

Whatever his credentials, the **QUADROPHENIA** film is only intermittently realistic and remains imbued with the album's dubious values.

Condoned

Jimmy's disaffection with his life is seen in terms of madness, but a madness which the film condones as a sort of pessimistic, suicidal liberation from things earthly—parents, job and mod.

Being very much the ex-mod Jimmy suffers from something a little more contemporary than schizophrenia: i.e. *quadrophenia*.

As a plot this would have had some saving grace if the pressures which push Jimmy out into the quadrophenic cold had been sketched in more fully.

But they aren't. Even on the level of surface detail the film has many period inaccuracies.

The type of NF graffiti seen in the film just wasn't around in the early '60s; nor was the '70s design of Manchester United football scarf; nor even Brighton marina!

Symptomatic

These would be minor quibbles if they weren't symptomatic of the greater social inaccuracies in the film.

I don't necessarily expect to see the skull-cracking adventures of the SPG in the popular cinema, but the police in **QUADROPHENIA** are a joke.

They appear not to mind as flash mohair-suited mods fight back while being arrested.

These riot scenes are straight out of 'Dixon of Dock Green'.

The sequence in the court—which is meant to be funny—can't even claim that

status, as youths being done for assault give the magistrates as much lip as they like.

The picture of working-class life in the film is equally lacking in surface authenticity.

The working-class seems to comprise two camps: the slow mums and dads who are sunk into apathy in front of the TV screen, and the fast sons and daughters who are speeded up on amphetamines, very early Tamla Motown and scooters.

When Jimmy turns his back on all this we're meant to feel some sort of sympathy. But because what he turns his back on is such a caricature anyway, bathos is the dominant mood.

Increasing the bathos to the point of ridiculousness is Phil Daniels, the actor playing Jimmy: he has a repertoire of expressions which stretch all the way from a grin (he's so happy!) to a grimace (so sad!).

Caricature

Who gives a toss when, in a final walter of self-pity, he tops himself—to the sound of the Who at their most pompous and inflated ('Love, Reign O'er Me')? Can this be the same band who've occasionally produced such powerful, direct rock?

The film's tendency toward caricature means that it doesn't say much about the mod era itself.

QUADROPHENIA is mainly interested in youth subculture as a generational phenomenon, ie parents v children.

Although an important aspect of subcultures is their conflict with the nuclear family, working class youth do come up against other capitalist institutions like the law and the workplace.

I've already mentioned **QUADROPHENIA**'S enfeebled view of the role of the police and the courts, but it must be admitted that the

work scenes of Jimmy as a messenger boy, have more of a basis in the reality which faces many young working-class people: that they're in a dead-end job—probably for the rest of their lives.

However, the film can't take its analysis of this area very far, when it has a hero who opts out so completely—off a cliff!

Domesticity

Still, that's maybe a better solution than that of the hero in **SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER** who, tiring of the 'bad girls' of the disco, opts for petit-bourgeois domesticity and the love of a 'good woman'.

It goes without saying that **QUADROPHENIA** has no understanding of subcultures in relation to the leisure industry.

When a subculture first emerges, whether ted, mod or punk, it challenges the capitalist institutions I've already mentioned.

Of course, this challenge comes of an anti-authoritarian individualistic stance, a pose without political direction.

But it's a challenge nevertheless and, however superficial and fleeting, does bring the press and media out in a lather of moral panic.

Bourgeois ideologues though soon compose themselves, and one reason for this is the rapidity at which subcultures are incorporated and made to fit the acceptable face of mass culture.

Commodity

The fetishising of certain styles of clothing and music which is initially the sport of a rebellious, narcissistic minority, is made safe by being transformed into a mass commodity: rebellion can be fun, fashionable and for everyone.

The national press and

music papers have praised **QUADROPHENIA** for its realism; but, leaving aside the bigger question of the validity of cinematic realism itself, how can a film tell the real(ist) story of mod if it doesn't have a grasp of the process of incorporation to which all subcultures are doomed?

This is not to mention **QUADROPHENIA**'S lack of realism when it comes to detailing the wider social context: mildly angry films like *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* and *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* say much more about post-war working class life.

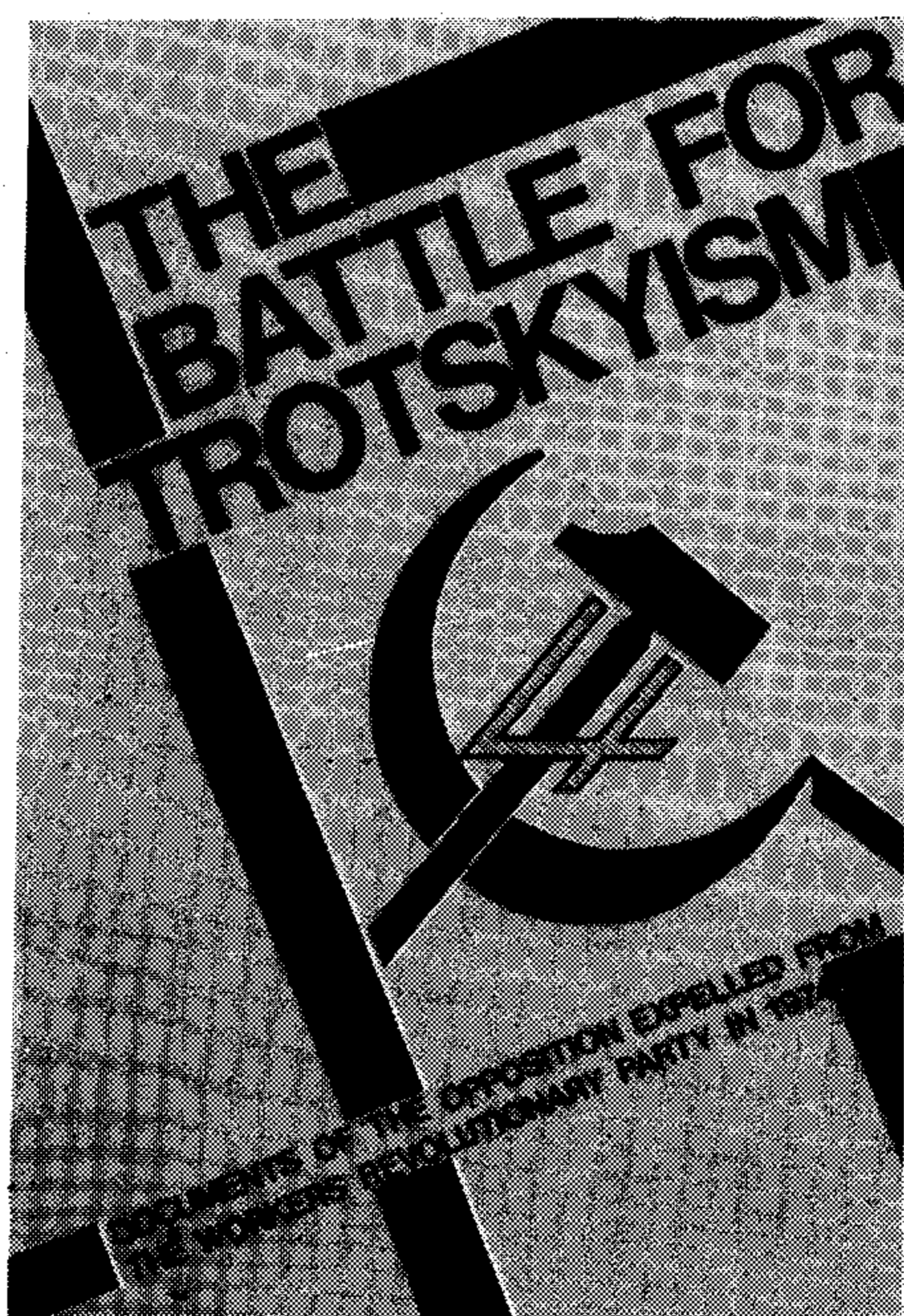
In fact, at times **QUADROPHENIA**'S escapist caricatures put it closer to a *Carry On* film than to these earlier attempts at British realism.

One thing which the reviewers have been right about is that **QUADROPHENIA** will be a financial success and a shot in the arm for that ailing body the British film industry.

Whether it will provide a similar shot for the current mod revival remains to be seen.

But who cares about that? Subcultures repeat themselves: the first time as rebellion-without-a-cause, the second time as farce. Anyone for **CARRY ON SPEEDING**?

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INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Hospital workers fight victimisation

Engineers and electricians at London's Charing Cross Hospital are currently manning the picket lines after two engineers, one of them a shop steward were dismissed on 23 October.

The men were sacked for refusing to do the work of unskilled people. They were implementing the policy of their union which was made necessary by the way the management have cut back on the staff.

For the last 18 months vacancies for trade assistants have been left unfilled and skilled men have had to cover for their jobs.

The sackings represent the conscious move on the part of the district management to weaken the fight against the government's policies by getting rid of key militants.

This case follows on the heels of other victimisations of NUPE stewards in the West London Hospital nearby.

In a newsletter issued by the workshop committee the fight to get the men reinstated is clearly placed within the context of the general fight against attacks on the health service.

The response of the capitalist press has been to mount a witch-hunt on the strikers similar to that seen against hospital workers last winter.

Shortage of oil

The employers and their friends in Fleet Street are trying to stir up a campaign against the action by claiming that lives are endangered because of a shortage of oil to the hospital.

The strikers themselves are adamant that there is no danger to the patients

and essential supplies are being allowed through and oil levels are regularly monitored by themselves and stewards representing tanker drivers from Esso.

This strike is an important part of the battle against this round of cuts in London and maximum support must be mobilised in and out of the hospital to get reinstatement and continue the fight to defend the NHS.

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Bitter fight at sweet factory

Following in the tradition of recognition disputes among poorly paid workers comes a dispute at the Chix sweet factory in Slough.

After nearly 90% of the workforce, which is mainly Asian women, had joined the GMWU, they sought recognition from the employer Denis Rose.

His response echoed that of George Ward of Grunwick and Margolis of Garners when he refused to recognise the union.

After three months in membership, the workers issued an ultimatum—recognise or face industrial action.

Rose stood firm, and the strike is now in its fifth week. The factory is being kept

open mainly by the use of scab labour from agencies, who are being paid well over £2 per hour (before the strike workers got only 95p).

The strikers are maintaining a strong picket in the face of harassment from the police which has already resulted in seven arrests.

Mass pickets

Support on the picket has come from Fords, other GMWU branches and also local workers.

The strikers have a policy of calling a mass picket in order to publicise and build up support for their strike.

Some blacking has been implemented and it will be crucial to the outcome of the

strike that this blacking is 100% airtight.

The main ingredient in the product is sugar and the main supplier is Tate and Lyle, also organised into the GMWU.

Despite the fact that the factory was blacked a lorry load of sugar was delivered.

The officials claim that this was accidental and that they are looking into it.

But it is essential that no more gets through.

The strikers are also anxious to know who supplies starch to the factory, as well as some sweets that are sent there to be wrapped.

No strike pay

One scandalous aspect of the strike is that despite the fact that it is official the strikers are receiving no strike pay as, according to rule they have not been members for long enough.

A fight must be taken up in the union to get the strike adequately funded and avoid any danger of it being lost for lack of money.

In the meantime donations should be sent to the address below.

Struggles like this give the lie to the argument that immigrant workers are prepared to undercut the wages and conditions of native workers. It is essential that sufficient support is mobilised to ensure that it is won.

Information from, and messages of support and donations to:

M. Anwar, 271 Goodman Park, Slough.



Grunwick pickets

JOIN OUR FIGHT AGAINST TORIES!

Returned to office after five years of Labour betrayals, the Tory government has immediately begun wielding a sharpened axe on jobs, conditions and social services. Trade Union rights face imminent legal attack. Prices are already beginning to rocket upwards.

Plum sectors of state industry will be handed to the Tories profiteering big business backers, and the pay rises to police and armed forces mark only the prelude to increased state violence against pickets and anti-fascists, and an intensified army crack-down in the occupied North of Ireland.

The Callaghan-Healey leadership has made it clear that it will oppose any perspective other than settling down and meekly accepting five years of Tory devastation.

And, though they have once more dusted off their near-forgotten "socialist" speeches, Labour's "left-wing" MPs have continued to duck away from any fight to remove Callaghan.

TUC leaders, too, have set out to establish a basis for collaboration with Thatcher and the Tory cabinet, paralleling their anti-working class alliance with Wilson and then Callaghan.

But the working class has experienced and overcome such betrayals before—to topple Heath's union-bashing government in 1974, and smash through Callaghan's reactionary Phase 4 of wage controls in a series of monumental pay battles last winter.

These experiences are not dead. They point to the way that jobs, social services and hard-won union rights can be defended against renewed Tory attacks.

But a principled, revolutionary leadership is needed if the Labour traitors, the TUC collaborators and their hangers-on in the Communist Party are to be exposed and pushed aside, and the mass struggles mobilised that can defeat and remove the Tory government.

Such a leadership must fight day in and day out for a programme of *transitional demands* which, starting from today's conditions and today's consciousness within the working class, lead workers to grasp the necessity for socialist revolution.

And in taking up democratic demands—such as an end to racial and sexual discrimination, it must show the crucial role that must be played by the working class as the only consistently revolutionary class capable of leading the struggle for the emancipation of mankind.

And it must fight on an *international* basis—mobilising solidarity for anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggles—whether in Ireland, in Southern Africa or elsewhere throughout the world, and drawing strength and political lessons from revolutionary upheavals such as that which ousted the hated Shah in Iran.

This means fighting for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International.

This method of approach, rejecting any descent to simple trade union militancy, or concessions to any wing of the labour bureaucracy, is the method fought for by the Workers Socialist League.

The next period will see major class struggles in Britain. A principled, Marxist leadership is essential. Our movement though strong in programme remains small in numbers.

JOIN US and take forward the struggle for socialism!

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Boddy

Farmworkers 'no' to offer

Farm workers' leaders last week made spluttering threats of selective strike action on their pay claim—and were no doubt alarmed to be met by roars of approval.

The farmworkers' union has tabled a claim of £100 for a 35 hour week. After years of union inactivity rates are £48.50 for 40 hours.

General Secretary Jack Boddy, clearly worried that the union might find itself embroiled in a struggle warned employers that their first offer had been "so ludicrously small that we could in no way even consider a compromise."

He is plainly hoping to squeeze a rather less ludicrously small offer by threatening the ludicrously inadequate action of one-day strikes every week.

But even such partial action, if called, is likely to be eagerly taken up by angry farmworkers, 6,500 of whom last year were dependent on Family Income Supplement to provide them with a living wage.

An army of 200 police surrounded a closed down South Wales factory last week in order to force a passage for scabs to drive out dismantled plant and equipment.

The 60 pickets who had turned out to oppose the removal of equipment from the Lin Pac factory in Rosedale were prevented from even approaching the scab drivers.

The plant was closed in the wake of the Confed two-day strikes on the engineering pay claim, at a cost of 260 jobs.

Murray opposes 'hysteria' on cuts

Some 2,000 workers marched through Newcastle last weekend in a demonstration against the cuts organised by the regional TUC.

Though there were shouts of 'Tories Out' on the march there was little evidence of any willingness to fight for such a policy among platform speakers at the concluding rally—among whom the star performer was TUC General Secretary Len Murray.

Speaking to a rigorously stewarded gathering, Murray's main emphasis was on avoiding a "hysterical" reaction to the Tory cuts.

As a bureaucrat who reacted

in eager defence of the spending cuts and wage controls carried out by the Labour government, Murray long ago perfected the technique of calmly watching workers' jobs and living standards being stripped away.

"Emotional spasms are no substitute for clear thinking", he went on, rapidly losing support from a meeting that had at first given him an enthusiastic welcome, in the illusory hope that he would offer a perspective for a fight.

In the nearest thing to an actual defence of the Tory cuts, Murray went on to announce that:

"We must find a way of reaching agreement on how we get the right balance in the use of resources between our [!] productive industries and the public services and how we get agreement on priorities in public spending."

The demonstration had of course been a forthright statement that workers in Newcastle as elsewhere in the country, are in no doubt that the public services are a top priority—far above preserving the profitability of the private sector.

Murray went on to talk of "real problems of industrial relations and trade union structure", pleading with the Tories that the TUC would prefer to police trade union members itself rather than face "new legal entanglements".

Were "leaders" like Murray really in firm control of the trade unions, there is little doubt that the Tories would not need to bother with their anti-union laws.

The task in fighting the cuts, closures and other Tory attacks is to drive out Murray and his ilk and construct an alternative, socialist, leadership.

BL Combine rejects ballot: but hedges on struggle

The British Leyland Shop Stewards Combine Committee has re-affirmed its opposition to the Edwardes plan despite the majority which Edwardes received in the recent Company run ballot.

Meeting last Friday, the Committee passed a resolution rejecting the ballot as the outcome of "the wording of the question, company threats, and the abdication of responsibility by the Confed." The resolution went on to pledge support for any of the 13 affected plants if they decide to resist the closures.

In addition the resolution called for a continuation of the previously established policy of

blacking work from any of the threatened plants.

The conference of some 200 convenors from both Leyland Cars and Leyland Vehicles plants was opened by the Committee chairman, CP member Derek Robinson.

He said that already the blacking policy had been effectively carried out at Longbridge, and at Cowley—where trim work from Castle Bromwich brought into the plant had been blacked and sent back.

But a move to call for a policy of direct action to

prevent the plant closure received only 3 votes.

This amendment, moved by Bill Mullins from Rover Solihull and Alan Thornett from the Cowley Assembly Plant called for occupation committees to be set up in the threatened plants and for those plants to stage an initial one day token strike to demonstrate to other BL workers that they are prepared to oppose the closures.

The amendment was opposed by the convenors from the threatened plants.

Indeed Eddie McGarry, convenor of the Canley plant, one of the biggest to be closed, reported that he had been busy not fighting the closure but negotiating redundancy payments, terms of which he had found "unacceptable".

Crucial question

The conference ducked the crucial question of the November 1st annual wage review.

Management have offered 5% for workers on grades 2-5 and 10% to skilled workers in Grade 1.

In return for this insulting offer, Edwardes requires that almost every protective agreement in BL be scrapped. The "strings" fill an 85-page document. Among the most brazen are demands for:

* The 80% layoff pay (7 days per quarter for those laid

off as a result of disputes within BL) to be ENDED;

* Complete mobility and flexibility between jobs;

* A common work study agreement, scrapping any form of mutuality on studies, and giving industrial engineers unlimited access to the tracks with stopwatches.

The combine committee recognised that this was a massive generalised attack on BL workers.

"Biggest apple"

Jack Adams, T&G convenor at Longbridge described it as "the biggest apple that Edwardes is looking for".

Like the Edwardes closure plan, these proposals have implications far beyond BL.

It would be a blue print for other industries, designed to massively speed up those workers left after initial closures and redundancies have been carried out.

Despite all these implications, no action was taken from the committee.

Convenors were informed that the LCJNC had avoided outright rejection of the Company proposals to prevent "The Edwardes propaganda machine going into action."

Instead, they were told, workers would be receiving the full proposals in newspaper form in the next few days, alongside a leaflet from the trade union side.

Determined

After that the LCJNC would reconvene for further negotiations.

The problem is that Edwardes is determined. With the ballot result under his belt he will not back down easily.

While he has achieved a corporate bargaining structure, the trade unions are still not similarly organised.

The Combine Committee remains weak after the ravages of 3 years of workers "Participation".

Despite the weakness of their leadership, BL workers are bitterly hostile to the 5% offer.

But faced with a determined employer and no central leadership, each plant is looking to the other for a lead.

There must be a lead from the Combine Committee.

Only all-out strike action is going to beat Edwardes—and he must be beaten if BL workers are not going to be driven back 30 years and subjected to super-exploitation by the bosses.

Concession to courts brings defeat

The strike at the Vauxhall Ellesmere Port plant has ended after eight weeks, although the strike by 250 setters continues in pursuit of a grading claim.

Separate mass meetings of AUEW and TGWU members both voted to reject the stewards recommendation to continue the strike.

Following the pattern of the Talbot strike the officials of both unions have played the decisive part in knifing the strike, which never fully recovered after the convenors

abandoned the picketing of the Harwich transit depot where £15 million worth of cars were bottled up.

That was the lynch-pin of the whole strike and the leadership buckled under the pressure of the courts at the crucial moment.

Subsequent picketing of the dealers' showrooms did not compensate for this climbdown in the eyes of the members and was not sufficient to maintain the vote at the mass meetings.

From the start the strike had to contend with the conscious sabotage of the national

officials.

At the height of the battle with the police at the Harwich depot, when the support of the national union was needed most urgently to mobilise the labour movement, Grenville Hawley, the secretary of the vehicle-building and automotive trade group of the TGWU sent a strict instruction to the convenor ordering him to withdraw the picket altogether.

An occupation of the TGWU headquarters at Transport House, together with a vigorous campaign to mobilise the local labour movement through the Trades Councils in the manner of the miners at Saltley was the only way to fight the joint assault by the police, courts and officials.

Instead, the convenors chose to call for a 'public inquiry' presumably consisting of a sprinkling of MPs, clergymen and do-gooders, alongside top trade union bureaucrats, to examine the behaviour of the police.

The existing leaders of the Vauxhall strike were incapable of such a determined campaign because they are reformists who have shown in the past that they will shy away from 'political' actions against the Tories and pass the buck to the national officials or blame the members for their own cowardice.

The lesson to be drawn from this experience is that only a resolutely determined and principled leadership, a revolutionary leadership, can carry through the independent interests of the working class.

Such a leadership must be willing to openly challenge anti-union actions by the courts and police.

NUJ appeals Denning ruling

The House of Lords last week reserved judgement on the appeal by the National Union of Journalists against a court ruling by Lord Denning that effectively declares secondary blacking illegal.

The case arose during last winter's strike by provincial journalists. To make their action more effective the NUJ called out its members at the Press Association, which traditionally supplies strikebreaking copy to provincial papers, enabling them

to continue production without NUJ journalists.

Scabbed

When half the NUJ members at PA scabbed on the strike the union called on its Fleet Street members to black PA copy.

The Daily Express immediately sought, and obtained from Denning an injunction against this blacking—a decision upheld in the Court of Appeal.

If upheld again by the Lords it will stand as a major precedent for further anti-union litigation.



Robinson



McGarry

O'FISHALL

WE REGRET the temporary absence of O'Fishall from this issue of Socialist Press.

He was last seen by one of our readers waiting expectantly at the head of a queue outside the CBI headquarters at Tothill St., London.

The entire queue—wearing "Last Chance Saloon" badges—could be heard quietly muttering "£40,000, eh?"

We anticipate, however, that he will be back with us next week.

Meantime, don't miss your copy of the O'Fishall 1980 calendar—12 cartoons for only £1 plus 20p p&p.

STILL AVAILABLE
WSL MANIFESTO
A basic statement of the policies of the Workers Socialist League. Price 15p including postage from WSL, 31 Dartmouth Park Hill, London NWS 1HR

SOCIALIST PRESS ★

Ireland press gag tightened

20,000 march against cuts: all out on Nov 28!

Despite the fact that there had been no official call for strike action last Wednesday a massive 20,000 workers turned out to support the November 7 Lambeth lobby of parliament against the cuts.

Delegations included council and health workers from all over London, miners from Kent and Yorkshire, and a strong contingent of school students under the banner of the NUSS.

And though platform speakers in the concluding rally at Central Halls called for the unions to confront Thatcher, chairman Jack Dromey reiterated his belief that the Tories are in power for the next five years.

Lambeth council leader Ted Knight called for 40 Labour councils in major cities to follow Lambeth in refusing to implement the cuts and defy the Tories.



Head of last Wednesday's Lambeth demonstration

PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL

Stung on the one hand by the rising tide of opposition to the British military occupation of Northern Ireland, and on the other by the miserable failure of Humphrey Atkins' recent half-baked political 'initiative', the Tories have embarked on a new clamp-down on media coverage of the Irish war.

Using the pretext of a clip of Panorama film showing the Provisional IRA on the streets of Carrickmore, Thatcher, backed as usual by the Tory press, has instructed the BBC to suppress the film and to further tighten the gag on reports from Ireland.

The case has now been referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Indeed, PTA laws and standing BBC instructions, originated under the Heath government and tightened further under Wilson and Callaghan, already make it virtually impossible to present a serious examination of the politics of those fighting imperialism in the six counties of Ireland—while endless British propaganda is retailed without criticism.

Cringing support

But the fact that this latest case, and an earlier interview with an INLA spokesman, have arisen indicates that not even all the BBC's hand-picked hacks are prepared endlessly to buckle down under state censorship.

Yet those that defy the state propaganda machine will not be able to count on support from Labour leaders.

Callaghan last week joined Thatcher in condemning the Panorama film—continuing Labour's cringing support for imperialist repression in Ireland.

To defend even basic democratic rights today in Britain or in Ireland demands the building of a new leadership in the labour movement.

FUND

A great week for the fund this week. We've had in £222.30, bringing the total so far to £342.50.

If we can keep up this pace we stand an excellent chance of raising the full £750 this month for the first time since we raised our target in September.

All donations are welcome and should be sent to: Socialist Press Monthly Fund, 31 Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

A contingent of at least 4,000 workers is expected to travel from South Yorkshire alone to attend the November 28 lobby of Parliament against the cuts.

This is just one of the many indications that the demonstration of hostility to the Tories on that day will be massive.

Many organisations have added their support.

Moss Evans has pledged the support of the TGWU, calling on all of the unions 9,000 branches to support—with particular emphasis to those in trade groups in state-owned industries.

The right wing AUEW Executive has also declared its backing, as has the NALGO Executive—which is calling on branches to support.

Special train

And with the NUM National Executive also supporting the lobby, the Welsh NUM has organised a special train to London.

Labour councils in Manchester and Sheffield have agreed that employees who wish to lobby on November 28 can have leave of absence; and Birmingham City Council has said there will be no sanctions against those who do so.

In Liverpool a 5,000-strong demonstration against the cuts last Wednesday was backed by one-day strikes by GMWU and construction workers.

NALGO members stopped work at 11.30 am in order to lobby the council urging endorsement of a sub-committee proposal to give council workers November 28 off with pay to back the lobby. The plan was narrowly defeated.

Work-ins

Elsewhere the level of struggle against the cuts is mounting. Last Wednesday saw 700 people from all over Derbyshire lobbying the county council in Matlock.

And, clearly under pressure to show some signs of action, NUPE leader Alan Fisher has now echoed the decision of the COHSE National Executive supporting work-ins in threatened hospitals.

But, conspicuously, Fisher was even more cautious than COHSE leader Spanwick in spelling out NUPE's restrictions on implementing this policy, and posed work-in action as an *opposite* to strike action against the cuts.

Non-cooperation

Meanwhile NUPE has instructed officials to develop a policy of non-cooperation on cuts which involve loss of jobs, loss of earnings or increased workload.

Assistant General Secretary Bernard Dix, spelling out this call, did not rule out strikes in certain circumstances.

But though militancy is clear clearly on the increase, it is clear that no amount of token action will defeat the Tories' offensive.

One-day action and the maximum turn-out on November 28 must be used as a part of the fight within all the public sector unions for the policies of:

* Occupations and supporting strike action to stop closure.

* Open the books of the public services! Reveal the profiteering by private suppliers bankers and contractors.

* Fight for the nationalisation of these firms, without compensation, under workers' management.

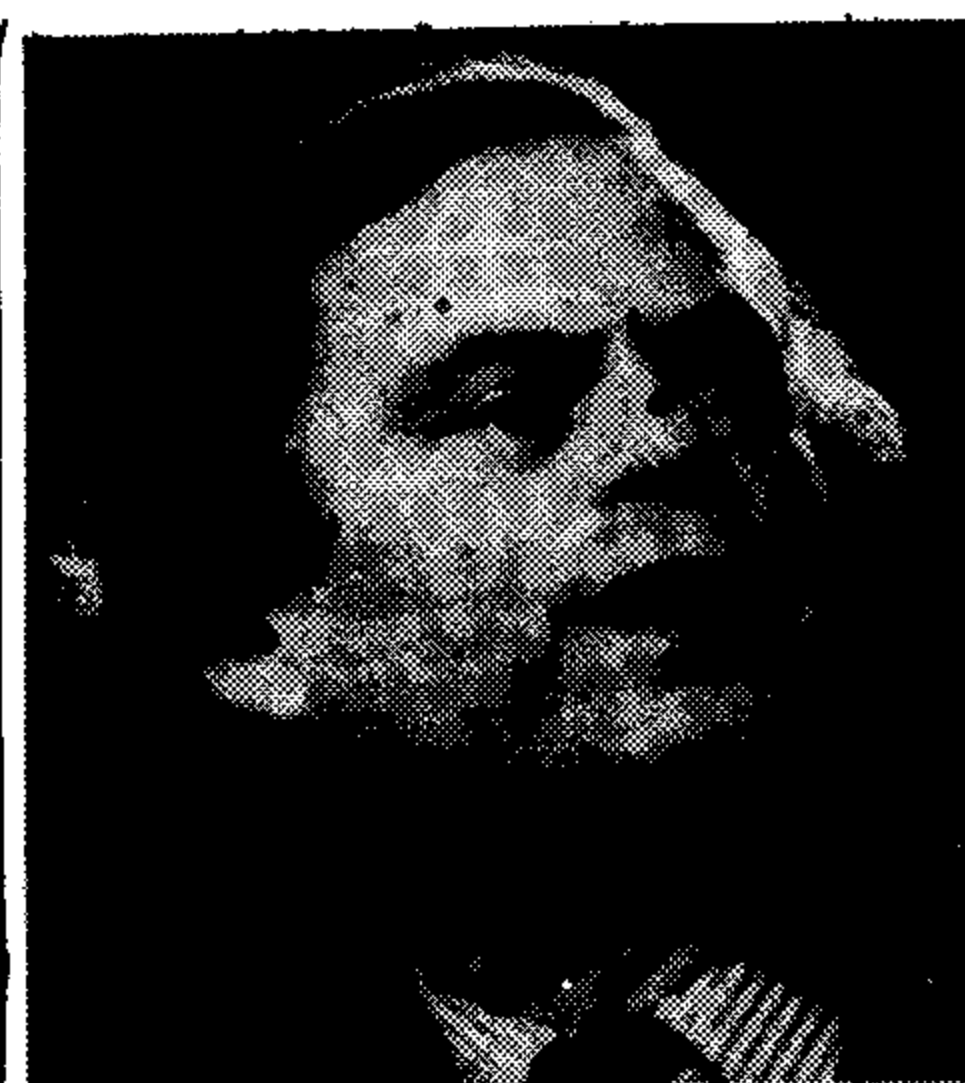
* Restore all cuts! For a sliding scale of public service spending to protect against rising costs, as assessed by elected trade union committees!

* Full support for any section in action against the cuts. For national, indefinite strike action to defeat the Tory government and its offensive.

* Link up in action with unions in the private sector! Build local councils of action drawing delegates from all workers' organisations! Prepare to bring down the Tories!

* Demand those 'lefts' who speak out on the cuts campaign for these fighting demands as the only way to defeat the Tory attacks.

No to Tory racist law!



Raison

As Tory Minister Raison puts the finishing touches to new, racist anti-immigration laws, further proof of the barbarism of existing legislation was provided last weekend by moves to deport a 7-year-old Asian girl.

Community relations workers were desperately trying to stop Ayesha Khatun, an adopted child living in Oxford, being put on a plane for Bangladesh—where there is no-one to meet or look after her.

For the Tories, however they may squirm and retreat on particular cases and the recent attempted deportation of nine-year-old Akram Dogar, such suffering is simply an embarrassing side effect of their moves to further cut the minute trickle of black immigrants into Britain.

A major national demonstration on November 25 has been called against the Tories' racist legislation, and is widely backed by immigrant and labour movement bodies.

Socialist Press readers are urged to support.

National Demonstration
Sunday 25 November
Assemble 12 noon
Speakers Corner, Hyde Park
Stop the Tory Immigration
Proposals and British
Nationality Act!
Repeal the 1971 Immigration
Act!

No troops to Zimbabwe!

Though an estimated 2,000 people marched through London on Sunday calling for 'Victory to the Patriotic Front', it can be assumed after weeks of confusion at the Lancaster House talks that not many actually realised what the slogan meant.

Indeed the only outstanding question that appears to divide the Patriotic Front leaders and the Smith-Muzorewa government is how long a British-supervised "transitional period" should last.

Sell-out

The Patriotic Front are asking for six months. The British say there is "no question of that"—but are prepared to increase their 2-month proposal to three or even four months.

In other words the sell-out of the Zimbabwe liberation struggle appears to be all but complete—with the Patriotic Front leaders having exploited

the valiant guerrilla struggles of their members in the bush as a cynical bargaining counter in debates on the technicalities of continued bourgeois rule in Zimbabwe.

The whole sordid affair—in which the petty bourgeois Patriotic Front leaders have been as anxious as the imperialists to prevent the war of liberation flowing over into the socialist revolution in Zimbabwe—is now apparently to be topped off by the sending of a British police force to supervise the "transition" from one pro-capitalist regime to another.

Those in Britain and Africa who want to advance the struggles of the black masses of Zimbabwe must devote their energies in the coming months to the struggle for a revolutionary leadership capable of defending the independent interests of the workers and peasants of Zimbabwe against the treacherous policies of the Patriotic Front.

Workers Socialist League Anniversary Rally

SATURDAY
DECEMBER 8
2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

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