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Labour
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DOCKERS: STRIKE CALL DEFEATS JOB THREAT

The tenacious stand by 24,000 dockers in defence of their right to a job has important lessons for every section of workers.

In bringing a humiliating defeat to the dock employers, the threat of national strike action to defend 180 jobs in Liverpool docks also struck a heavy blow at the Tory government.

Firm stand

It is the first time since Thatcher came to office that workers willing to fight redundancies and closures have been able to force their union leaders into taking a firm stand.

And it shows that in the face of the united strength of a key section of the working class even the seemingly invincible Tory steamroller can be halted.

Indeed one factor that seems to have made the government strongarm the employers into a climbdown is the fact that a dock strike would pose an immediate frontal challenge to Prior's new anti-union laws—one which they are not sure they would win.

The question that must now be asked by workers wherever redundancies are threatened is why their union officials are not



fighting for similar action?

The dockers went into battle to defend a six-year old agreement which guarantees that dockers made redundant by any one employer should immediately be reallocated to other dock firms.

In other words even while trade on the docks has declined, the workforce (albeit savagely

pruned by a programme of voluntary redundancy in 1974) has been able to defend its jobs—effectively sharing out the available work without loss of pay.

Such a policy of work-sharing on full pay at the expense of the employers is also the way to combat redundancies and closures in every industry,

as employers continue to cut back production.

And the dockers' strategy—calling all-out national strike action—is also applicable to every other section of workers fighting redundancy.

Admittedly few sections of workers have the historical solidarity and economic muscle of the dockers: but at a time of

Tory-fuelled recession, every closure, every sacking is a threat to the working class as a whole.

In fighting for occupations of threatened plants, and strike action to halt redundancies, workers must demand active support from fellow workers both on a local level—through the fight to build councils of action, drawing in delegates from all labour movement bodies—and on a national level, through the demand for official supporting strikes and blacking action throughout major combines, or in supply and distributing industries.

Central to this broader fight is the need to open the books of the employers to elected trade union committees to expose the links and deals between major companies, the long term threat to jobs and the profits made by the banks from "loss making" firms.

In this way, for instance, the struggle to halt the closure of Dunlop's plant on Merseyside should have been extended into the fight for strikes and blacking action throughout Dunlop and into the motor industry.

But instead of any such action union leaders have been the first to accept the employers' tales of woe and

pleas of bankruptcy; and they have mounted no challenge whatever to the never-ending stream of sackings and closures.

Even while the dockers were successfully forcing TGWU national officials into calling an all-out strike to defend 180 Liverpool jobs, BL car workers in the Cowley Body Plant faced with 1,500 sackings were unable even to persuade TGWU convenors to call a stewards' meeting to discuss it!

Evans and the TGWU bureaucracy will now attempt to use the docks example as proof that they are really ready to fight: workers must exploit this situation by demanding similar action wherever closures and redundancies are threatened.

At the same time dockers must oppose TGWU attempts to cook up a new voluntary redundancy deal with the dock employers designed to get these redundancies by the back door.

Example

But the success of the dockers in forcing their leaders into action last week must again be taken as an example by all workers: demand action now to defend all jobs, action to resist all closures and action to bring down the Tories!

St BENEDICTS: UNION CHIEFS PERMIT NHS MASSACRE!

Alan Fisher, chairman of the TUC and leader of the 700,000-strong National Union of Public Employees, made an appearance on the picket line at St. Benedicts hospital last week.

But he did not come to announce any call for action by his union's thousands of NHS members in solidarity with the courageous work-in that has held off the St. Benedicts closure for ten months.

Instead he made a brief face-saving appearance, uttered a few platitudes about the need to defend geriatric hospitals, and disappeared again—leaving the beleaguered workforce to battle it out with scabs and police on the gates as they fought to prevent management effectively kidnapping elderly St Benedicts patients and dumping them in other local hospitals.

Now that the patients have

been removed, NUPE leaders are cynically talking of a campaign to "reopen" the hospital.

Nothing could more clearly sum up the reason why Thatcher's vicious government has been so easily able to carry through the axing of tens of thousands of jobs in the public services.

Ready to fight

Fisher-like COHSE leader Spanswick—knows that hospital workers are ready to fight the cuts: dozens of arrests, attempts to block the gates, and broken bones meted out to pickets at St. Benedicts confirms this beyond any doubt.

The union leaders know that the only way to stop the Tory cuts is concerted national strike action in the public sector—with emergency cover provided under workers' control.

Only last week they were able to see again the impact of

even partially mobilising the membership, when a mass meeting of school dinner staff in West Glamorgan voted unanimously to lobby a Labour council meeting, thus helping to force councillors to reject a plan to scrap all school meals provision.

But while dockers successfully forced TGWU leaders into a stand on their jobs, Fisher, Spanswick and other NHS bureaucrats stood firmly opposed to national or even local strike action to defend St. Benedicts. They have not even moved to secure the blacking of the fleet of private scab ambulances—Junesco—that carried off the luckless St Benedicts patients.

Even the correct, if rather belated, walkout by 400 health workers at St. Georges Hospital in solidarity with the St Benedicts pickets has failed to shift these union leaders.

They would sooner witness the destruction of whole areas of the NHS than mount any

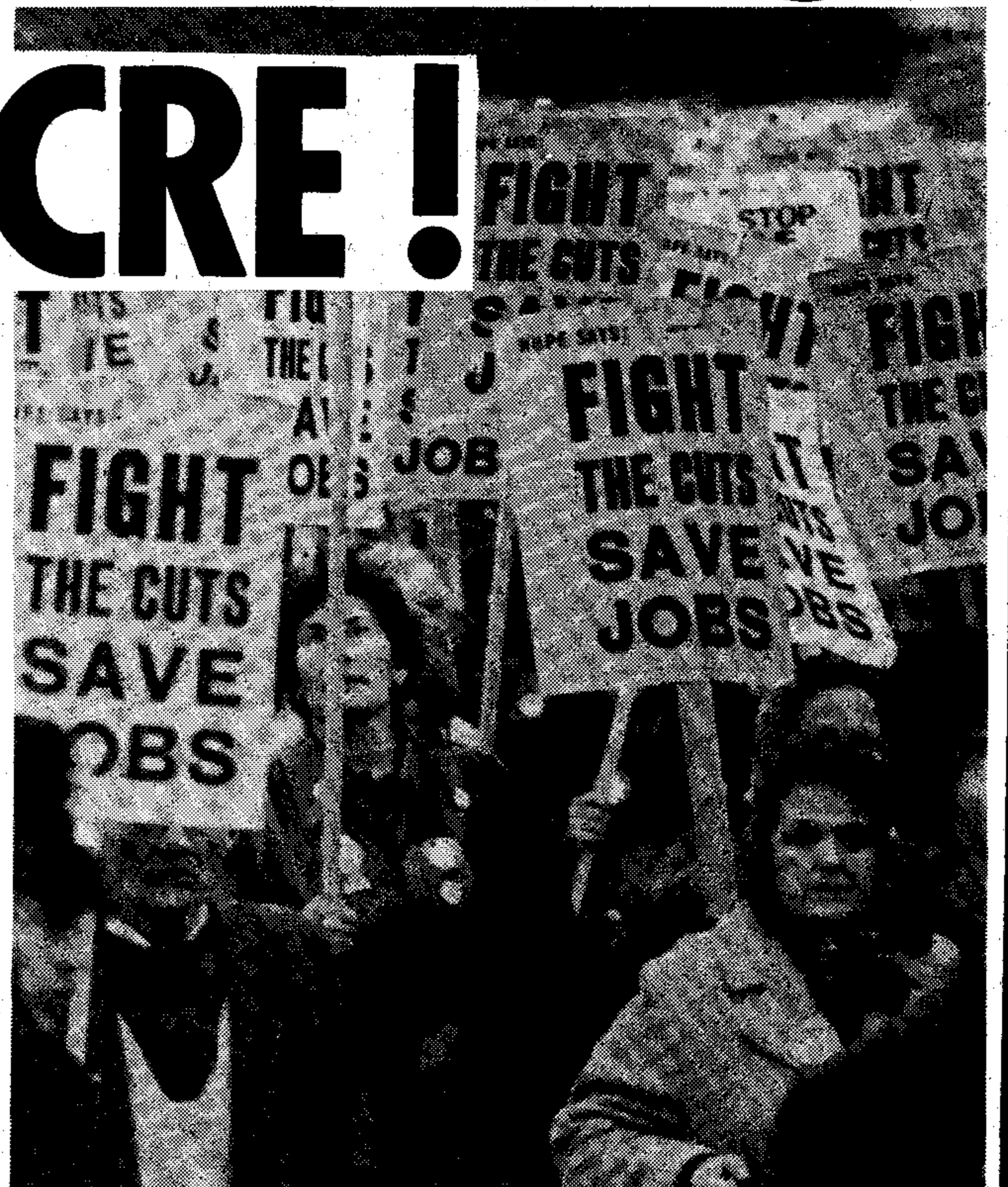
challenge to Thatcher.

But the St. Benedicts struggle has not been in vain: the workers there have decisively punctured the hoary old lie peddled time and again as an excuse by cowardly bureaucrats—the claim that "the members won't fight".

For those thousands of members who will and who seek a way forward, the building of a new principled leadership is essential.

The November 15 conference called by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement will focus on exactly this question in the struggle for action to defeat the Tories. We urge public sector workers—whether as branch delegates or as individuals—to attend this important conference.

Details of CDLM
Conference, p.11





Capitalists rally behind new Turkish junta

The only indication so far of disquiet among the ranks of European capitalism at the imposition of military dictatorship in Turkey has been from Belgium.

They have staged a protest pull-out from the NATO exercises now being carried out in the western areas of Turkey as part of imperialism's rehearsals for war against the Soviet Union.

A USA-led campaign of discreet approval for the new Turkish junta's rule, presenting it as 'peaceful' and the 'democratic' credentials of the Generals has ensured a sympathetic response from the hypocritical "freedom-loving" governments of the West.

With few exceptions their stakes on the regime's success are the huge loans made over the years in a vain attempt to bale out Turkey's ravaged economy.

Creditors

The country's international creditors are looking for proof that General Kenan Evren and his National Security Council are ready and able to get to grips with the problem.

But Evren and his fellow Generals will not find things easy, as their first week in power has begun to show.

Despite emphasising at every opportunity his determination

to retain and strengthen Turkey's alliances with imperialism (lest there be any fears that he was a dictator in the mould of left-nationalist Gaddafi in Libya), Evren's initial steps to consolidate military rule have not all gone smoothly.

Deadlock

His early assumption of the Presidency put an end to many months of deadlock in the now closed-down National Assembly.

More than a hundred votes had taken place in efforts to fill that vacant position, all proving abortive.

Yet already the junta has itself twice failed to agree on a civilian candidate for Prime Minister, which now makes it likely that Evren will take on that office as well.

After more than a year of virtual civil war before the coup it is not surprising that the divisions which have wracked all aspects of society during that period should permeate even into the clique which has now taken control.

At the root of these clashes have been the activities of the fascist Nationalist Action Party, specialising in provocations and ruthless armed attacks on their opponents.

The decision of NAP fuhrer Alparslam Turkes to give himself up, having initially avoided being arrested with the other Parliamentary leaders, was a shrewd move aimed at boosting his 'law and order' image among

the despairing petty-bourgeoisie who form the social basis of his mass following.

His long and deep relationship with the army establishment means he is well aware of the favourable conditions the latest measures have given him.

His closest collaborators among the top brass, notably General Neudet Uruq, commander of the First Army are as unconvinced as he is that the future of capitalism in Turkey can safely be left in the hands of those who style themselves latter-day Attaturks.

That does not mean that the junta's present policies are not ruthlessly repressive.

Heavy clashes have already been reported between the army and Kurdish nationals in the eastern district of Siverek—with many Kurds dead.

Death sentence

In the southern city of Adana a left-winger accused of being involved in the gunning down of an army captain last week has been sentenced to death, even though the military court accepted that he had not fired the shot. A second man was jailed for 11 years.

The exact number of arrests under the new dictatorship is unclear, but it is certain to be not far short of 10,000, perhaps a good deal higher.

So far the reaction of the working class to the Generals' abolition of the right to strike has only been seen in the effect it has had on the 50,000 workers in engineering and other industries who were forced back to work.

Any confidence that gives the new government that they will be able to impose their policies without resistance is premature and misplaced.

Despite the capitalist propaganda about the necessary nature of the coup, demonstrations and opposition are building up outside Turkey.

Following on the London demonstration reported last week there has been a protest demonstration of 5,000 in Athens and opposition to the Turkey coup was one of the slogans of the anti-NATO demonstration in West Germany.

In Britain a unanimous vote of the national conference of the 1½ million strong AUEW condemned the coup.

Gene warfare?

The United States Army is to enter the genetic engineering field.

An advertisement in the classified section of the prestigious scientific journal 'Nature' recently called for scientists to submit proposals to 'clone' the gene for a human enzyme 'acetylcholinesterase'.

This is the enzyme inactivated by the nerve gas used in chemical warfare.

Exposure to such gases leads to convulsions and death of victims.

By cloning the gene for the enzyme in a bacterium using genetic engineering techniques the US Army will have access to large quantities of pure acetylcholinesterase.

The enzyme itself is not suitable for use as a weapon. However, it may be a potent antidote to nerve gas poisoning and it certainly will be of use in testing other antidotes and in testing new nerve gas weapons.



The new Turkish National Security Council

Race justice in US murder trial

The article below is one of a number of important features on the extreme right in US politics published in *Searchlight* (the anti-fascist magazine). Readers are urged to subscribe to *Searchlight*. Subscriptions (£5 for 12 issues) are available from A.F.&R Publications, 21 Great Western Buildings, 6, Livery St., Birmingham 3.

Once again a Federal undercover agent has been exposed as being involved in a violent Ku Klux Klan attack; during preliminary hearings at the trial of six Klan and Nazi Party members charged with the murder of five left-wingers at a demonstration in Greensboro last November, it was revealed that Bernard Butkovich, an agent of the Treasury Departments Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms was actually involved in planning the attack.

For some reason Butkovich is not listed to appear as a prosecution witness, and defence lawyers for the Klansmen have announced that they intend to call him as part of an 'entrapment' defence.

Butkovich had been involved in infiltrating a Nazi group, some of whose members participated in the murders.

Now other Nazis are claiming that Butkovich had offered to train members in bomb making, and had proposed taking guns to the Greensboro rally.

'Revenge attack'

Although he was not present at the shooting, he later visited one of the arrested Nazis and offered to burn his house down arguing that it would be seen as a revenge attack by the Communist Workers' Party whose members had been murdered at the rally.

Police in Greensboro have also admitted, not only that they knew of Butkovich's role before the shooting, but that they had their own agent inside the Klan at the time.

They still maintain however, that they had no advance knowledge of the racists' intentions when they drove in convoy towards the CWP rally on November 3.

The likelihood of convictions and stiff sentences for the Klansmen and Nazis has receded dramatically since the trial opened. Despite evidence on film showing them unload weapons from a car and open fire, the selection of the jury, and now the unveiling of a pretext for acquittal makes it look distinctly possible that

they will escape.

The selection of the jury has already drawn much comment. Jurors were questioned by a defence lawyer, and any who showed "prejudice" against Nazism or the KKK have been excused.

Thus men have been excused because they fought in the Second World War. One who was selected was Octavio Mandulay, an expatriate Cuban businessman, a member of the far-right emigre group 'Twentieth of May', who considers the Klan and the Nazis to be 'strongly patriotic'. He was approved not only by the defence but by the judge, and incredibly, by the prosecuting district attorney.

Other "approved" jurors—all of them white—include one who agreed with a defence suggestion that it was less of a crime to kill a communist than anyone else, another who wondered "why the charge is

first degree murder" when "communists are the enemy", the wife of a deputy sheriff, and a Vietnam veteran truck driver.

Defence lawyers have also made a point of asking black potential jurors to confirm aloud their addresses—while Klansmen in the court make it clear that they are committing the addresses to memory.

The prosecution's attitude is best summed up by the questions which the DA directs at potential jurors. They are asked whether "the fact that the alleged victims were communists who held views which are un-American and repugnant to us all" or "the fact that the alleged victims tried to form labour unions and to overthrow the government" would affect their verdict.

The stage is set for one of the most disgraceful whitewashes in the history of American racism.

Polish unions divide

Last Wednesday in Gdansk 250 delegates, representing 3 million workers, came together to discuss the development of new unions.

They discussed the way that factory managers were harassing workers, threatening them with the loss of social security benefits, to keep them in the old unions.

Lech Walesa, who was in the chair, reported that he had been offered control of the central board of the official trade unions. He correctly turned it down.

Although the conference agreed to coordinate activity, Walesa opposed setting up a single national union. He argued that this would be too much like the 'official' unions.

Bitterly opposed

We are convinced that this argument is wrong. One of the strengths of the Polish bureaucracy is the way that it is able to isolate sections of the working class, through its control of the media. A national union structure would counter such moves.

Similarly, Walesa's insistence that the new unions support the Catholic Church is also dangerously wrong.

The Church hierarchy is fully behind the bureaucracy which has now allowed a Mass to be broadcast on TV and radio for the first time.

And the Catholic Church stands bitterly opposed to the revolutionary theory of Marxism which is vital in the struggle for the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Eight of the official unions representing 4.7 million workers

have now left the official Trades Union Council. They now call themselves independent trade unions.

Suspicious

Members of the new unions rightly look upon this as suspicious, since the 'break-away' unions still have the same leadership. They regard the breakaway more as a manoeuvre designed to hold on to their membership.

If sections of the leadership of the 'official' unions had genuinely been won over to the movement against bureaucracy then they would be fighting to disband the old Stalinist-controlled unions and join the movement to form genuine independent trade unions.



Walesa

Makers of
Modern
Marxism
By Terry Eagleton

STILL AVAILABLE

This Socialist Press pamphlet contains articles by Terry Eagleton on marxist theoreticians from the time of the Comintern to the present day—Lukacs, Korsch, Gramsci, Benjamin, Marcuse, Sartre and Althusser. Price 65p including P&P from WSL, BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX



INTERNATIONAL

El Salvador: FOR A WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' GOVERNMENT!

Final part of a series by Don Flint

The formation of a popular front alliance of opposition forces embracing workers' parties, "liberal" capitalist and left wing petty bourgeois groups in El Salvador has, in recent months, taken a further step forward.

There has been an agreement of the Unified Revolutionary Leadership (DRU) that in future the DRU and the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) are "the only two revolutionary powers".

The leaders of the FDR/DRU have agreed that the more radical Co-ordinadora Revolucionaria de Masas (CRM) (an alliance of left wing and Stalinist forces) will cease all its public activities outside El Salvador.

The CRM's goods and funds will now pass into the hands of the FDR which, the agreement states, is "authentically nationalist".

Censure

Indeed the entire document appears written as a censure of the excessive militancy of the CRM, stating for instance that "There must be an end to irresponsibility".

The merger of these forces into a new, more comprehensive cross-class alliance and the fight to contain the activities of its left wing is not in itself a decisive political victory for the liberal bourgeoisie.

Indeed the left wing groupings still control the DRU and constitute by far the most powerful force on the FDR.

But the moves to discipline the most militant formations indicates a major swing towards enforcing the strategy of a "policy of alliances" between the organisations of the working class, the petty bourgeois forces, and the "liberal" bourgeoisie that proclaims itself opposed to the ruling junta.

In this sense the new alignment represents a swifter political development than that which took place among the FSLN forces in Nicaragua—where the political convergence and moves to suppress the left wing were only consolidated in the aftermath of the defeat of Somoza.

Political problems

The popular front leaders in El Salvador are hoping to create conditions to suppress those political forces that might have embarked on a struggle against popular frontism, and to eliminate even the organisational possibility of waging such a struggle within the framework of the CRM.

In this way, the political problems in the development of the anti-imperialist struggle in El Salvador demonstrate with utmost clarity that the experience of Nicaragua, far from being an aberration, was part of the general pattern of struggle internationally.

The fact is that petty bourgeois nationalist leaderships, no matter how radical their rhetoric, must inevitably fail to attain either genuine national independence or full democratic rights for the oppressed masses.

Though they can win the allegiance of often broad layers of the proletariat in the anti-imperialist struggle, such leaderships lack the programme and strategy to achieve their self-



Young militants in El Salvador: Trotskyists must win the best forces to a Marxist programme

proclaimed aims, and wind up still locked in the embrace of imperialism.

Fearing the independent political mobilisation of the proletariat, eternally seeking alliances with supposed "progressive" sections of the bourgeoisie, and unable to mobilise the full strength of the peasantry for lack of a comprehensive programme, the petty bourgeois leaderships time and again resist and obstruct the necessary struggle for the complete overthrow of the capitalist system as a whole, which alone can open the road to completing the democratic and socialist tasks of the revolution.

Trotskyists counterpose to the petty bourgeois call for a cross-class "popular democratic" government the demand for a workers' and peasants' government, with no bourgeois parties or ministers.

As the Transitional Programme pointed out in 1938:

"When the party of the proletariat refuses to step beyond bourgeois-democratic limits, its alliance with the peasantry is simply turned into a support for capital, as was the case with the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries in 1917, with the Chinese Communist Party in 1925-27, and is now the case with the 'People's Front' in Spain, France and other countries".

To these examples could of course be added the tragic lessons of the Chilean "Popular Unity" government in which the "Marxist" Allende and his supporters tied the Chilean workers movement to an alliance with "progressive" capitalists and generals.

The Workers Socialist League, as part of the Trotskyist International Liaison Committee, puts forward today a programme based on these political lessons.

Petty bourgeoisie

In El Salvador, as in Nicaragua and every country where mass movements against imperialism have fallen under the leadership of the petty bourgeoisie we raise clearly the demand for a workers' and peasants' government. As Trotsky points out:

"Of all parties and organisations which base themselves on the workers and peasants and speak in their name we demand that they break politically from the bourgeoisie and enter upon the road of struggle for a workers' and farmers' (peasants') government.

On this road we promise them full support against capitalist reaction. At the same time we indefatigably develop agitation around those transitional demands which should in our opinion form the programme of the 'workers' and farmers' government".

(Emphasis added) In El Salvador it is necessary not to exclude or to ignore the political mobilisation of the radicalised petty bourgeoisie, but to accelerate their radicalisation by asserting the leading role of the working class.

Without this lead, these sectors will rapidly draw back from the revolutionary struggle and become the allies of the bourgeoisie in repressing the demands of the working class. The forces of Trotskyism in El Salvador are, beyond any

doubt, very weak—not least as a result of the extraordinary organisational chaos and political liquidation of the 'United' Secretariat of the Fourth International following the split over the Simon Bolivar Brigade affair in Nicaragua last September.

Moreover the task of party building would in any event be fraught with tremendous difficulties in the present conditions of repression and civil war.

Nevertheless there exist large forces amongst the rank and file of the left wing organisations, in the trade unions and in the guerrilla groups that already see themselves as Marxists engaged in the struggle against imperialism.

The best of these forces can and must be won to Trotskyism and the programme of permanent revolution.

In driving a wedge between the healthy, militant forces of the oppressed on the one hand, and the 'liberal' bourgeoisie and their petty bourgeois allies on the other, a programme of transitional demands must be developed which centres on the independent role and class interests of the proletariat.

This must include the central demand for the formation of armed workers' militias, based on the factories and working class neighbourhoods, to defend trade union organisation and revolutionary militants against state and right wing violence.

In this way any tendency of

workers to rely for their protection on petty bourgeois guerrilla groups can be combatted, and new blows struck at the regime.

At the same time the economic demands of both the working class and the poor peasantry must be given a clear-cut socialist answer.

Open the books

In particular it is important to raise the demand for the opening of the books of industry, of the banks, of the large agricultural suppliers and transport concerns, to show how both the workers and the poor peasants are exploited to boost the profits not only of imperialist finance capitalists but also of "democratic" capitalists in El Salvador itself (who oppose the present regime because they see it as simply an obstacle to further extension of their own profit-taking).

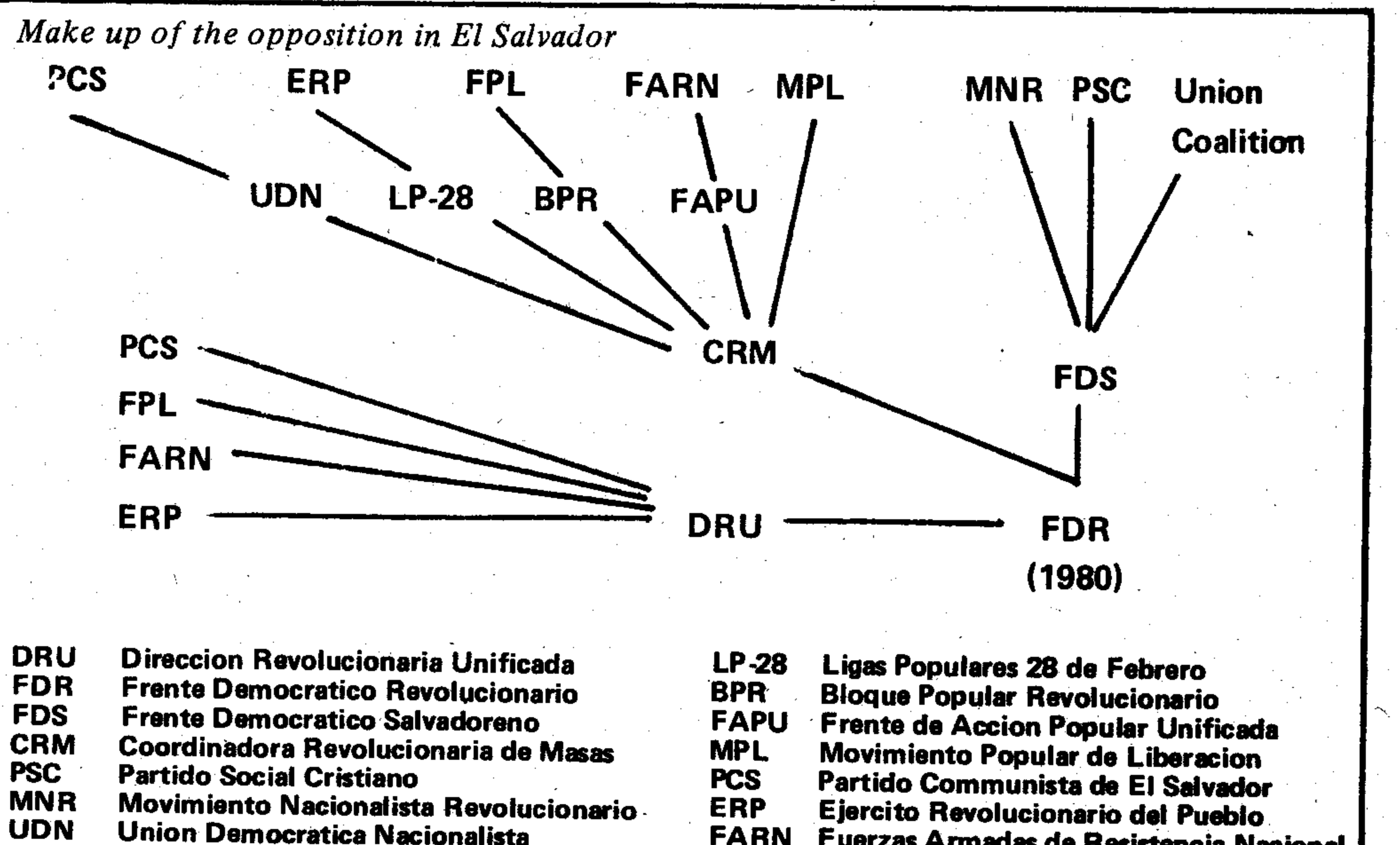
Thus the demand for the opening of the books can assist to drive the wedge between the exploited and the exploiters in the cross-class FDR and DRU alliances—laying the basis for agitational work designed to mobilise a worker-led alliance of workers and poor peasants in the revolutionary expropriation of capitalism in El Salvador.

The demand must be raised alongside demands on wages, and demands for a programme of public works to create jobs for the mass of unemployed.

Revolutionary party

And Trotskyists must insist in El Salvador as in every other struggle that such revolutionary demands can be fought out successfully only under the leadership of an independent proletarian revolutionary party that has absorbed the lessons of betrayals under reformist, Stalinist and nationalist leaderships in the last sixty years and firmly grasped the necessity to carry through the struggle to the establishment of socialism.

It is with this in view that the Workers Socialist League and the TILC regard solidarity with the workers and peasants of El Salvador as posing Trotskyists throughout the world with the task of reconstructing the confused, crisis-ridden and divided Fourth International in order to lay the basis for the building of Trotskyist parties in every country.



TORIES STEP UP ONSLAUGHT MORE CUTS



Tory fanatics applaud Thatcher's policies at last year's conference

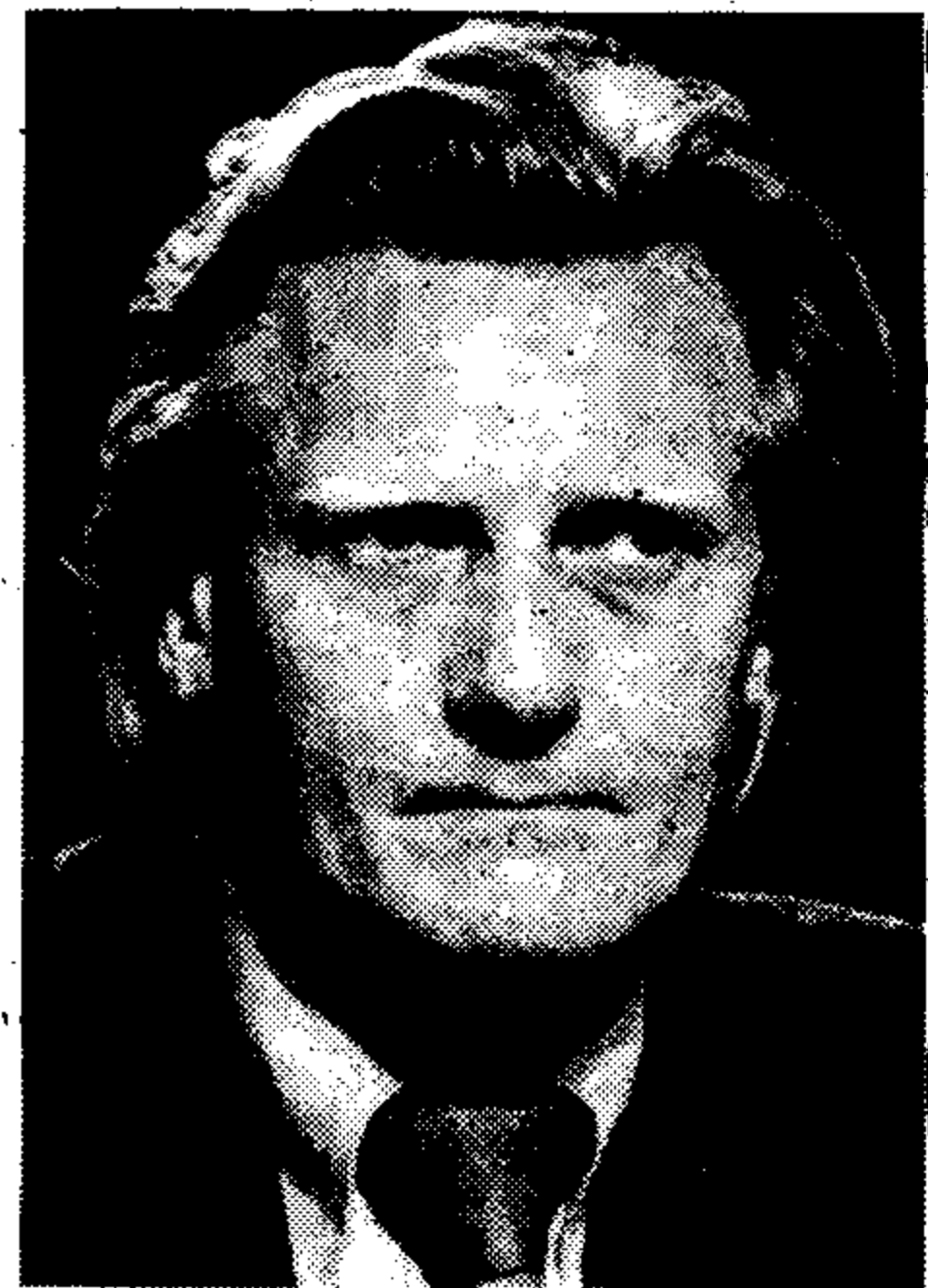
"A manpower fall of 1.8%, although an all-time record, is simply not enough".

With these arrogant words, millionaire Tory Environment Secretary Michael Heseltine last week unveiled a new, savage £200 million package of cuts in local government spending.

In the last 12 months 35,000 local authority jobs have been slashed: but Heseltine wants still more workers on the dole.

Education, social services and council house building have been devastated by the cuts—but Heseltine wants still more cutbacks.

So he has announced new penalties against 14 "high-spending" councils, plus a unilateral £200 million cut in payments to councils in England and Wales for 1980-81—to be shared out between all local authorities.



Heseltine
Three Labour councils—Hackney, Islington and Lambeth—are to share a further £3 million cut in government aid for community projects. But, scandalously, Heseltine

has been able to single out seven Labour councils—Southwark, Haringey, Swansea, Newham, Manchester, Doncaster and Merthyr Tydfil—as model exponents of Tory spending cuts, and relieve them from special penalties.

In other words, Labour councillors in these areas have gone further than most in implementing Thatcher's savage anti-working class policies.

Pressure

Meanwhile Heseltine has made it clear that his decision on these cuts has been shaped by pressure from private employers—and in particular by the giant building firms and suppliers.

Private employers have begun complaining that Heseltine's draconian £700 million cuts programme had not

been fully implemented—leaving private firms carrying the main burden of Tory policy.

And construction firms had pressed Heseltine to cut basic council spending and not to carry through the alternative line of attack—a moratorium on council building programmes.

Half of the building industry's workload—and therefore probably more than half its massive profits—are dependent upon public expenditure.

Heseltine has thus ensured that the builders and bankers—who will now be able to lend additional sums to local authorities strapped for cash—continue to cream off profits, while the old, the young, the sick and the unemployed face increased

miserly.

That is the acme of Tory politics.

While some Tory leaders are bleating at Heseltine's "injustice" in cutting payments to all councils, none can be expected to mount any serious fight on the issue.

But workers must demand that union leaders and Labour councillors coordinate an all-out struggle including strikes and occupations to defeat the cuts, reject any policy of raising rates and rents and confront Heseltine and the bosses' government that seeks only to impoverish workers to line their own pockets.

**Is your
firm
on the
list?**

As Thatcher's government sags in the opinion polls and their glossy Saatchi and Saatchi election facade is stripped away to reveal the brutal face of capitalism, it is worth looking at just where the Tory Party gets its support from.

The Labour Party Research Department has just produced a valuable Information Paper listing the companies giving donations to the Tory Party and its various front organisations. It makes interesting reading.

Donations to the Party increased by £1 million (104%) in 1979-80 compared to 1978-79, with an extra 135 firms chipping in to back Thatcher. The total received (all of it the fruits of exploiting workers on the shopfloor of industry) was at least £2,762,813.

The document highlights a few of the firms that have hit hard times at the hands of government policy despite generous donations to the Tories.

Fodens gave £1,000 last year—and are now in the hands of the receiver. Bowater gave £10,000—but have been refused any government aid to save their giant newsprint plant at Ellesmere Port.

Cadbury Schweppes (£15,000), Lucas (£20,000) and GKN (£25,250) have all recorded reduced profits and been forced to make drastic cutbacks as a result of Tory economic policies.

And even Daily Express owners Trafalgar House (£40,000) have been forced to cut back production.

But others have done better: prominent on the list is the Adwest Group (£10,000) whose anti-union offensive at their engineering plant in Reading has now been strengthened by Prior's Employment Act.

Brewers and bakers have prospered as a result of Howe's abolition of price controls.

And the bankers of course have made a killing as a result of sky-high interest rates, the soaring level of indebtedness in industry, the strong pound and the abolition of exchange controls.

But with Tory policies now making the CBI's pips squeak it must be an open question how many of the manufacturing firms on this year's list are going to be around to consider further donations next year.

Is your firm on the list? It is available (20p) from the Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT.



Thatcher

CLOSURES

Thousands more workers were informed last week of their employers' plans to make them shoulder the cost of the economic crisis.

Figures revealed that manufacturing output has now sunk below 1975 levels and that investment in manufacturing industry dropped by 5% in the first half of this year compared to the second half of last year.

Redundancies

And the meaning of these statistics was shown in the steady stream of redundancies and closures that were announced by firms including British Leyland, GKN, United Glass, Tootal and Reed.

Among the more dramatic examples was Reed's announcement that they plan to close the largest wallpaper factory in Europe—the Shard Kydd plant in Dorset—at a cost of 400 jobs. The work will be transferred to other plants.

GKN, bemoaning the high interest rates policy pursued by the Tory government, announced reduced profits and a further 2,000 planned redundancies, bringing their 1980 total of sackings to 10,000.

Tootal joined the massacre of textile jobs by announcing 750 redundancies in a rationalisation move—and more textile jobs were axed in Northern Ireland.

And Whitefriars Glass put up the shutters after 300 years in the cut glass business, throwing 100 workers on the dole, and demonstrating once again that the laws of capitalist profitability show scant respect for history or tradition.

Commitment

Crosville buses in Cheshire revealed that the wholesale redundancies in the area meant that workers were no longer using their buses to get to work—and that they themselves are therefore to make 450 more workers redundant!

These sackings follow on a massive 17,000 redundancies in the previous week, and come at a time when the Tories openly declare their commitment to

slashing jobs in the public sector.

Yet still there is yet to be an officially-led campaign, to defend jobs and prevent factory closures.

Only by occupying threatened plants, fighting for supporting strike action, opening the books of the employer to show the threat to wider layers embodied in every bosses' attack, and a fight for mass action to defeat the Tories can the non-stop tide of sackings be halted.

Union leaders would sooner lodge personal appeals with Tory ministers, mount feeble protest petitions, or negotiate redundancy pay than engage in any such fight to defeat Thatcher.

MORE MISERY

Tory attacks on the poor, the unemployed and pensioners are bitterly attacked in the final report of the Supplementary Benefits Commission last week.

The Commission slammed into Tory moves to cut the real value of short-term benefits by 5% and to penalise the families of strikers by cutting social security payments. And it gave a warning that the policy of mass unemployment can drive workers to desperate and violent resistance.

"An economy which fails to provide jobs for so large a proportion of its workforce cannot be tolerated indefinitely..."

"In view of the unemployment forecasts it would be dangerously optimistic to assume that the recent riot in Bristol could not be repeated elsewhere".

Contrary to Tory myth, the report insists, only 3% of unemployed workers receive more in benefit than they did in work—largely because of low wages.

Fraud and abuse are tiny

problems compared with the massive failure of workers to take up benefits to which they are entitled—with resulting hardship.

Payments to strikers' families amounted to a grand total of only £3.3 million out of a £2,500 million a year supplementary benefit budget.

80% of all strikes last less than the two weeks necessary to be eligible for benefits.

Plight

The report draws attention to the plight of single people involved in strikes or lock-outs under the new Tory regulations.

They would be ineligible for any kind of benefit. The commission says that the Tories must eventually change this policy—but warns that there is a real danger that somebody will starve to death first.

And it ridicules the Tory idea of inadequate social security payments acting as an "incentive to work", under conditions where there are insufficient jobs available, and

where 59% of supplementary benefit claimants are single parents, for whom "work incentives are in most cases cruelly irrelevant".

(Supplementary Benefits Commission Annual Report 1979, HMSO £6.70).



Patrick Jenkin

Letter Open up debate!

Dear Editor,

Much as I agreed with your general analysis of the "Beyond the Fragments" conference held recently, I think you dismissed the participants too lightly.

I, like many people, do not belong to any left group because of the history of intense sectarianism.

I've just left the Labour Party and have become a regular reader of *Socialist Press* (amongst others).

Despite some political differences, I am open to the politics of the WSL, who like the IMG seem to have turned away from the pedantic diatribe of groups like the sectarian "Spartacist League", whose rantings are divisive in the class!

It is because of groups like the SL/B that many militants remain isolated from the "organised" left.

Socialist Challenge opens its columns for serious debate; will *Socialist Press* follow suit?

I hope so because I believe the WSL (along with the IMG and others) have a great contribution to creating the elusive formulae for the united party that will lead the class struggle!

I was not able to attend the "Fragments" conference but from what I hear, the organisations of the left cannot ignore what happened, and how these people (and others, myself included) can be brought out of the wilderness and organised into a unified revolutionary organisation!

However this must include a critical self assessment by the left of its practises and dogmas, including perhaps a re-think of how "democratic centralism" is put into practice.

Only this way can the catastrophe of Stalinism be avoided!

Yours fraternally,
HJF Peckham

*The columns of *Socialist Press* are certainly open for debate and for readers' contributions. Letters should preferably be no more than 400 words in length.

4-page Conference Special

Labour, TUC leaders run from fight to oust Thatcher

By John Lister

Next week's Labour Party conference will hear all manner of rhetoric on all kinds of questions: but what it will *not* hear from its leadership is any call for mass working class action to bring down this reactionary Tory government.

Motion after motion calls for protest campaigns designed to persuade Thatcher to change course: countless more spell out a list of more or less adequate proposals for action by a future Labour government.

But *none* brings together the need for the trade union and labour movement to mobilise its massive potential strength in the fight for a general strike to force Thatcher out of office.

Completely dominated by the concept of bringing about reforms through Parliamentary means, the Labour Party and its leadership time and again divert workers away from the necessity for independent mass action as the only way to stop the Tory offensive in its tracks.

While Callaghan has explicitly spoken out *against* action to bring down the Tories, Benn



Callaghan at the TUC

and the left wing focus their energies not on spelling out a clear opposition to this line but simply on the issue of constitutional reforms within the Labour Party itself.

Yet the fact is that the reforms will only advance the class struggle if they are linked to a fight for a genuine socialist perspective.

This means above all an

abandonment of the reactionary demand for *import controls* that have been consistently called for by the 'left', but more recently adopted as policy by the right wing Callaghan leadership.

Not only is the policy itself an economic nonsense in the midst of a world-wide capitalist recession, where such protectionist measures would trigger off retaliation and a possible all-out trade war—but it is also a complete and utter diversion from the necessary fight to take action against *British* employers who are actually spearheading the attack on jobs.

To call for measures to protect British capitalists and multinational firms in Britain against the impact of "foreign" competitors is to create the illusion that there is some kind of common interest between the working class and their employers.

But the right wing defenders of the import control policy make no secret of the fact that it *runs alongside* the drive for speed-up and rationalisation in British industry to make it "competitive" by capitalist standards on a world scale.

And even the 'left' advocates

of this nationalist strategy make it clear that they see the protection of British firms as part and parcel of a programme of increased NEB-backed investment that would not only bolster up capitalist enterprise but also—by the introduction of new technology and rationalisation—serve to slash back still more jobs.

Import controls are therefore by no means an answer to unemployment: rather they are a short term populist attempt to foist the blame for unemployment not onto British capitalism but onto "foreign" firms and workers.

Union leaders—such as those in the textile unions—who plead that they are really concerned to stop the "exploitation" of low-paid textile workers in neo-colonial countries willfully hid the fact that all workers are exploited under capitalism, and that textile workers in Britain are themselves paid rock-bottom wages thanks to years of union betrayals.

In rejecting this policy, and rejecting the turn to the NEB advocated by the 'lefts', Labour activists must look towards

demands that can mobilise independent action by the working class to defend jobs, halt the cuts in public services, bring down the Tories and prepare the ground for mass action to expropriate the major industries, banks and financial institutions without compensation under workers' management.

Occupation

Such demands include the *occupation* of factories and facilities threatened with closure and the fight for supporting strike and blacking action; the opening of the books of capitalist industry to elected trade union committees; and the building of councils of action to generalise strike action and coordinate the fight to bring down the Tories.

While *Socialist Press* has consistently supported the struggle for democratic reforms within the Labour Party, it is in test of the fight for tangible policies to confront the Tory offensive that those who pose as an alternative to the Callaghan right wing must stand or fall.

Britain out of NATO: NATO out of the Labour Party!

By Ernie Stubbins

By the time this article appears 'Operation Crusader' will be in full swing. 'Crusader' will be the biggest military mobilisation of British troops since the 1956 attack on Suez, and will cost £8.5 million.

It is designed to test the Army's ability to back up its force already in Germany and to defend the UK mainland in the event of 'emergency'. 63,000 NATO troops will be involved.

There can be no doubt that 'Crusader' represents an important show of force towards the East European countries, and can only be understood as a direct attempt to intimidate them.

In addition to showing its

teeth on mainland Europe, 'Crusader' will be making less spectacular but equally significant steps towards the preparation for war in Britain.

An important phase of the whole operation is designed to test the army's ability to deal with 'subversion' in Britain. Key installations will be guarded by troops, and there will be units occupied with seeking out saboteurs and 'enemy paratroopers'.

Spectacular

'Crusader' is of course only the latest and most spectacular demonstration of NATO's functions, but in many ways it is the clearest yet.

NATO is the most important

of a set of post war treaties among the capitalist countries designed to encircle and contain the Soviet Union and the socialist system of nationalised property relations that operate there.

The other links in the chain of encirclement—SEATO, CENTO and ANZUS (remember them?) have largely collapsed as a result of two factors. Firstly the declining influence of the United States and secondly the growing dependence of US strategy on long and medium range nuclear weaponry.

NATO remains essential however to the present strategy of US imperialism for political as well as military reasons.

It is not just a question of bases, important though these are—as the decision by France

to cease to permit NATO bases on its soil showed.

More important is the use made by the USA of NATO to ensure its continued political dominance over European affairs. In point of fact there is very little military independence for the USA's NATO partners.

According to the defence estimates, the overwhelming proportion of Britain's military expenditure is committed to NATO.

The army of occupation in the north of Ireland is not directly controlled by NATO, but apart from this the only units of the British forces not committed to NATO are in Belize, Brunei and Hong Kong.

This dependence goes beyond the mere control of troops and extends to levels of expenditure. The decision to purchase a replacement for Polaris and to make other increases in military expenditure are almost entirely dictated by the pressure of Britain's 'partners' in NATO, in fact by the USA.

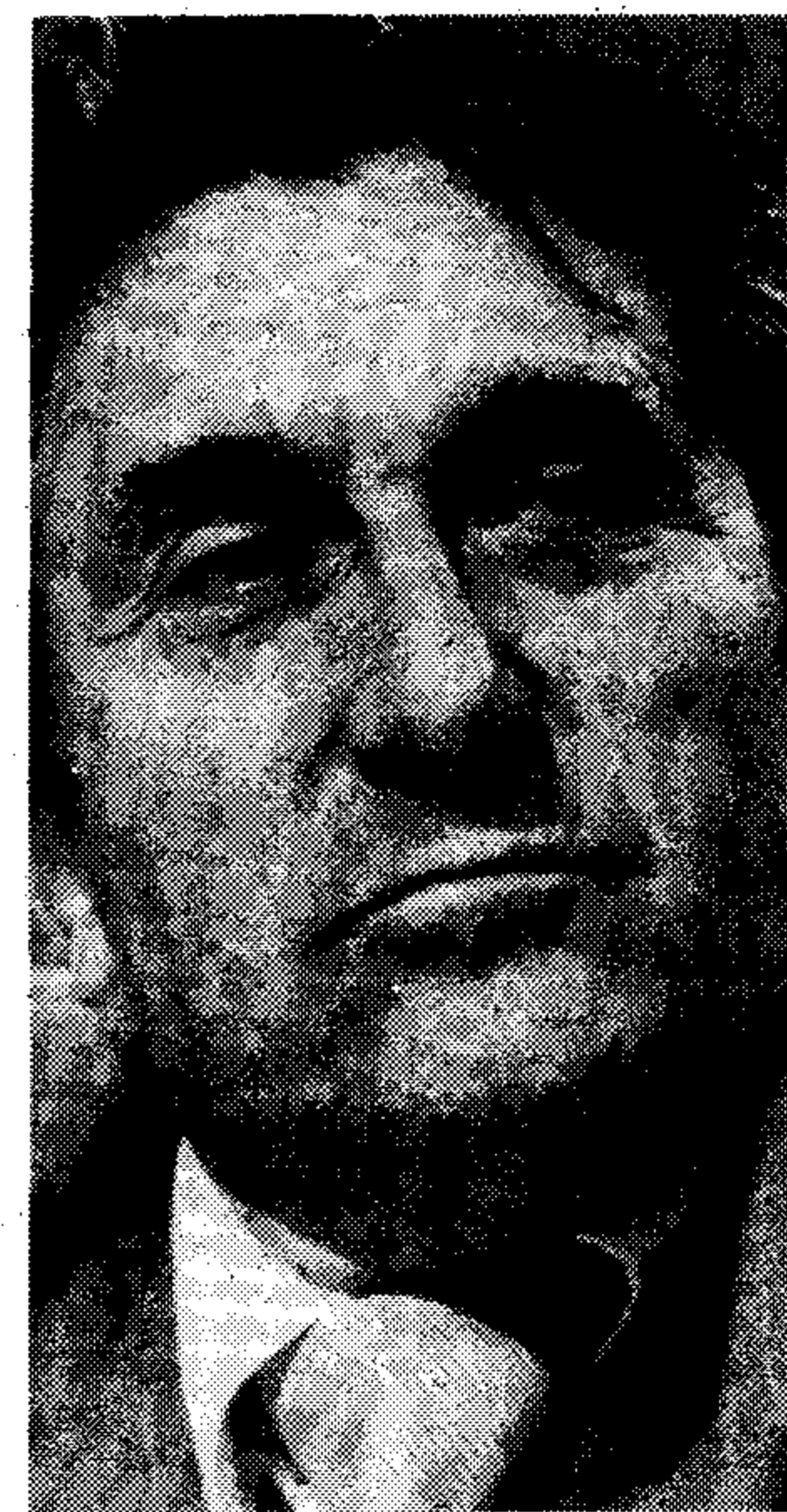
It is clear that the function of NATO as a military machine is to lock the junior capitalist countries into the military consequences of US foreign policy.

This finds its highest expression in the deployment of cruise missiles, the location of which will not be known to the British government at any time, even when the US is preparing to launch them against Eastern Europe.

The same will be true of the other countries that allow cruise missiles.

But NATO's political aspects require more direct intervention than simply being able to ignore governments. Recently we have been learning something of the use of NATO as an agent of subversion by the US.

Members of the Labour Party right wing are known to



Chapple

be actively working with NATO-backed organisations to promote anti-Soviet and pro-imperialist views within Britain and elsewhere.

David Owen for example sanctioned a project by the European Atlantic Movement involving six schools in England in absorbing NATO propaganda and ideology about 'the threat to Western democracy' from 'authoritarian regimes'.

This project proceeded without the knowledge of the Inner London Education Authority, NUT officials, the TUC Education Committee or even of Shirley Williams, the then Education Secretary.

Sinister

More sinister yet is the virtual running of the right wing Labour and Trade Union Press Service (LTUPS) by NATO money.

An annual grant from NATO of £5,000 is the main income of this nasty little right wing propaganda circle and its bulletins.

The LTUPS is run by the Labour Committee for Trans-



Duffy

atlantic Understanding, a semi-official NATO promotion body comprising almost every leading Labour right winger, including Michael (Lord) Stewart, Roy Mason, Terry Duffy, Frank Chapple, David Owen, Bill Sirs and Sid Weighell.

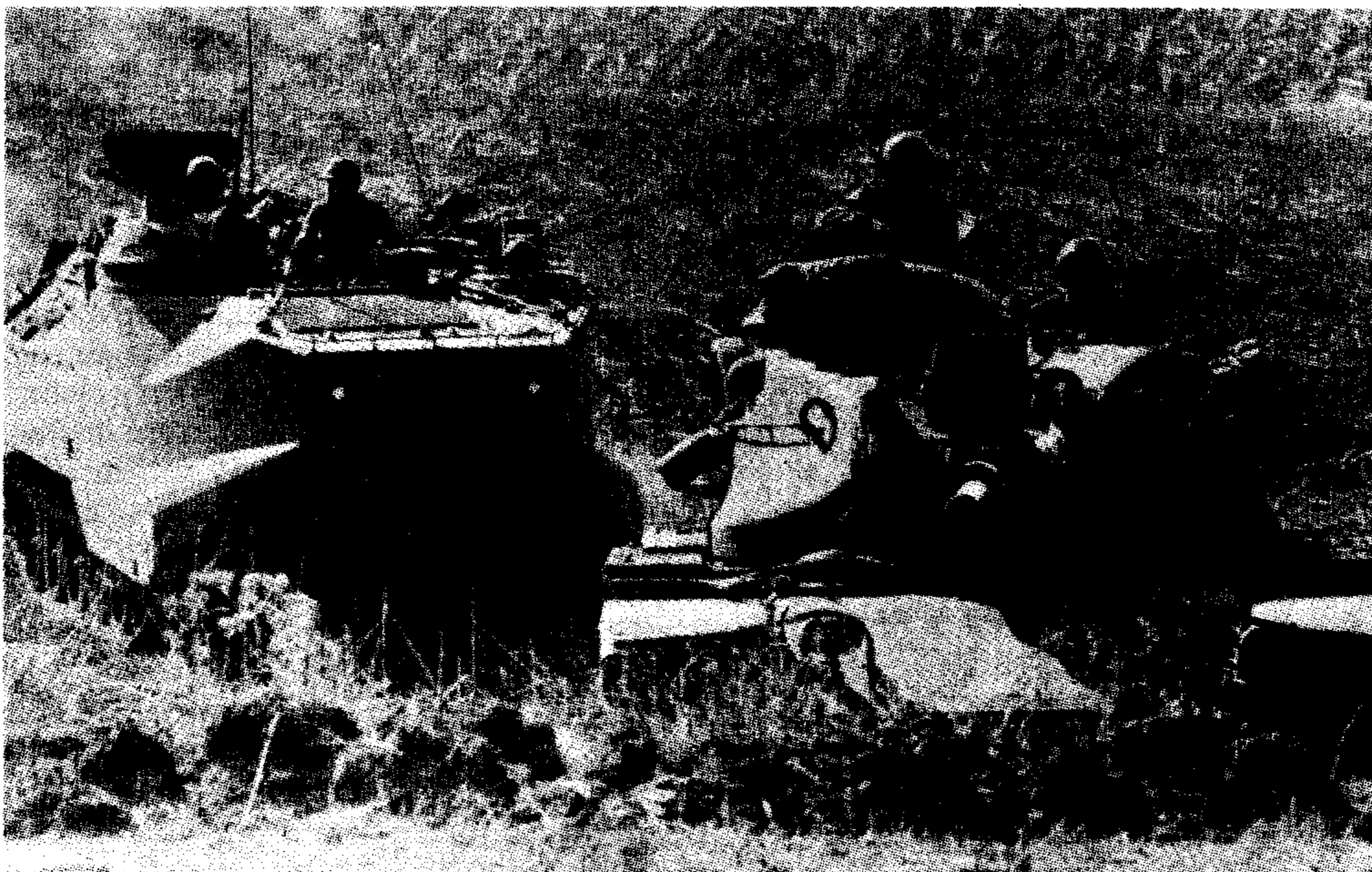
The LTUPS in reality represents part of NATO's intervention into the Labour Party.

Its links with the Social Democratic Alliance and with Truismid have been well documented by State Research Journal (Feb-March 1980).

The conclusion to be drawn from this squalid picture is that the leading figures of the Labour right wing are not honest political opponents representing large sections of the rank and file membership.

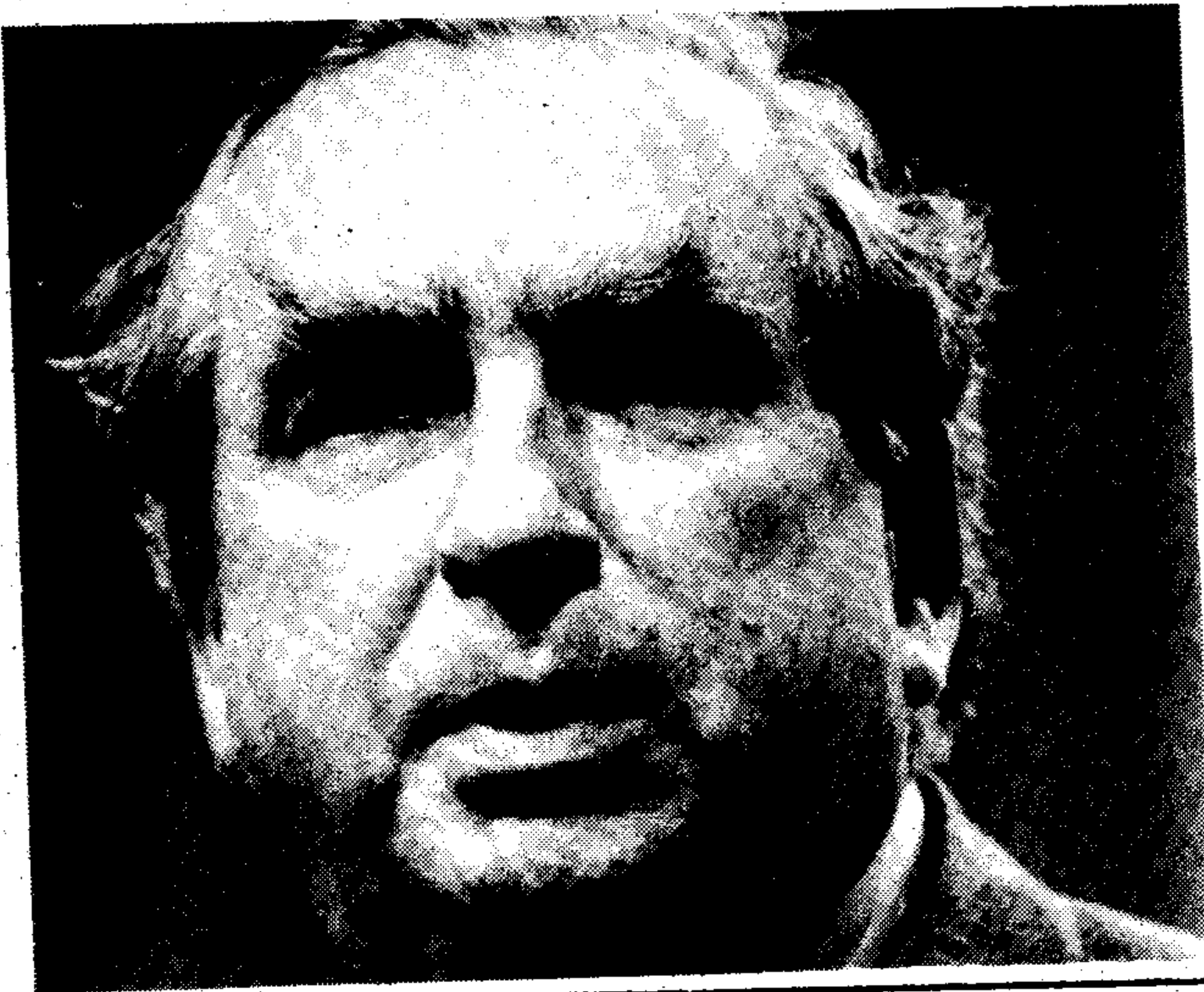
They are conscious *agents* of American imperialism, dedicated to derailing the socialist impulses of the rank and file of the Labour Party.

Our responsibility is not only to drive them out of the Party but also to break off all the political links with NATO that allow them to flourish.



NATO troops on manoeuvres in Turkey

LABOUR'S LONG CATA



The last Labour government first came to office in March 1974, after Heath's hated Tory government had been driven out of office by the miners while attempting to impose a third phase of statutory wage controls.

Workers correctly saw the Heath government—with its anti-union laws, social service cuts, soaring prices and rents and mounting dole queues, as the main enemy.

But five years of Wilson/Callaghan in office soon proved that the reelection of a Labour government is not in itself a means of defending the working class. The essential question is the exposure of the reformist leaders in the eyes of the workers' movement and the construction of an alternative revolutionary leadership.

Below we catalogue just some of the major turning points in which the pro-capitalist role of the Wilson-Callaghan governments was starkly revealed

March 5 1974 Wilson government elected, pledged to carry out "a major shift in the balance of wealth and power in favour of working people and their families".

But his cabinet includes Roy Jenkins, Reg Prentice, Shirley Williams, Callaghan and Healey, along with the garnish of supposed 'lefts' Benn and Foot. Foot welcomed by Tory press as a "most imaginative choice" as Employment Secretary.

Tribunite Stan Orme given key job in repressing Irish working class.

March 6 Wilson's cabinet welcomed by millionaire merchant banker Rupert Hambro:

"I do not think we will find ourselves thrown into the terrible horrors of nationalisation or pulling out of the Common Market."

The *Financial Times* pointed out:

"Labour is faced with the unpleasant task of trying to induce a sharp reduction in real incomes over the next 12 to 18 months in order to make resources available for the balance of payments."

March 12 Wilson's Queen's Speech drops all Labour's nationalisation pledges, and decides to keep Tories' Pay Board functioning along with Heath's Phase 3 pay limits. Tories and Liberals express approval.

Speech evades specific proposals to repeal Tory Industrial Relations Act and Housing Finance Act. 'Shrewsbury 6'—Building workers' pickets jailed by Tories on frame-up charges—left to rot in prison.

March 26 Healey's first Budget confirms Tories' massive £1,200 million public spending cuts; borrows \$2,500 million from international bankers. £500 million allocated to food subsidies—propping up profits while giving illusion of lower prices.

Budget also raises electricity charges, rail fares, cost of telephone, stamps, confectionery, petrol, alcohol

and cigarettes. No tax on wealthy. Income tax up.

March 28 AUEW fined £47,000 under the Industrial Relations Act—bringing total fines against AUEW to £208,000. Fine includes £217.50 to recompense Con Mech management for financing Spanish holiday for three scabs and their families!

Still no moves by Labour government to repeal the Act.

Labour NEC asks government to squash £7,000 surcharge on Clay Cross councillors who defied Tory Housing Finance Act—to no avail.

April 1974 Labour government agrees to sell warships to Pinochet dictatorship in Chile.

April 9 Threat by Industrial Relations Court to seize entire assets of AUEW in retaliation for its refusal to pay £47,000 fine. Foot still makes no move to repeal the Act.

April 23 Foot, speaking only 6 days before AUEW assets due to be seized, tells union's National Committee to go to the Tory Court!

May 8 Anonymous donor pays AUEW fine and costs as national engineering strike call receives overwhelming response. Strike called off. But NIRC scheduled to hear claim for £3 million damages against TGWU on July 15. Foot belatedly and inadequately moves to repeal I.R. Act and replace it with new laws.

End of May Nurses take up industrial action against continuation of Tory Phase 3 pay laws—attacked by Alan Fisher as "irresponsible, amateur adventurers". Eventually their action secures "special case" rise in late July.

June 1974 Irish republican Michael Gaughan allowed to die in British jail on hunger strike sooner than transfer him to jail in the six counties.

June 12 TUC leaders declare support for voluntary wage restraint to follow the end of Heath's Phase 3—the "social contract".

October 1974 Labour reelected.

November 1974 Former Labour minister Stonehouse vanishes in a cloud of criminal fraud and scandal, to reemerge an open Tory.

November 12, 1974 Healey's second budget: "aimed at improving profitability and liquidity in the company's sector and shifting resources from consumption into investment and exports."

Total financial benefits to companies estimated at £1.5 billion in 1975.

November 1974 "Prevention of Terrorism" Act rushed through parliament in the wake of Birmingham pub bombings. This 'emergency' measure has been renewed each year. 3,500 mainly Irish people held, dozens banned or deported, under it.

November 1974 Chrysler announce redundancies for 7,700 white collar staff.

January 1975 Imperial typewriters announce closure—3,000 jobs to go.

February 1975 Industry Bill to set up National Enterprise Board—centred on class collaboration and 'participation'—with jail penalties for trade unionists who reveal 'confidential' details to their members.

March 1975 Troops sent to scab on Glasgow dustmen's strike.

TUC formally abandons Shrewsbury 2. Ryder Report on British Leyland.

April 1975 Budget outlines a further £1,000 million cuts 1975-76, and £3,000 million more for 1976-77.

Taxes up; VAT up; alcohol, cigarettes and road tax all up in price. Subsidies on food, housing and to nationalised industries all cut.

April 1975 Special Labour Party conference votes 2-1 to campaign for a 'no' vote in the Common Market referendum. Wilson ignores



The huge November 17 1976 march opposing Healey's spending cuts

it and throws Party machine into 'yes' campaign alongside Tories and Liberals.

Anti-market 'left' minister Eric Heffer sacked by Wilson. BSC management demand 20,000 redundancies: but shelve the scheme after union leaders sign deal pledging speed-up and worsening of working conditions.

Unemployment reaches 950,000.

June 1975 Railwaymen's strike threat produces 30% pay settlement.

Healey openly threatens to use "Tory policies" if a new, tighter 'social contract' not accepted.

July 1975 Unemployment climbs over 1 million.

Jack Jones railroads fraudulent scheme for "flat rate", "voluntary" pay limits through TGWU conference. Within hours, Healey has declared state control of wages—top increase to be £6. He says:

"We must accept a 10% cut in the standard of living and public expenditure. The alternative [!] is to crawl to the IMF and accept the terms they impose upon

us."

July 1975 160 Labour MPs and 14 ministers sign a motion defending Prentice against moves to oust him as MP for Newham N.E.

August 1975 Closure plans in steel industry, textiles and engineering to slash over 4,000 jobs.

September 1975 Clay Cross councillors sued for £63,000 for defying Tory Housing Finance Act—government refuses demands to lift the fines.

October 1975 Government accepts Parliamentary Select Committee recommendation to restrict abortion rights.

November 1975 Chrysler crisis No. 1: government turns down offer of Chrysler boss John Riccardo to pay £35 million to get rid of the British operation; instead Industry Secretary Varley pays out £162 million to persuade Chrysler to stay on—with the loss of 8,000 jobs.

Healey offers "letter of intent" to IMF in exchange for £1,000 million loan.

December 1975 Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts come into force—little impact in improving women's relative rates of pay or furthering struggle for equal rights in employment.

January 1976 Unemployment tops 1½ million.

February 1976 Talks begin on Phase 2 of wage control. "Prevention of Terrorism" Act stepped up. Frank Stagg dies on hunger strike demanding transfer to prison in the six counties.

March 1976 37 Tribunite 'lefts' abstain in a vote endorsing Healey's planned £3,000 million package of cuts, producing a temporary defeat. But the same 37 then troop loyally into the lobbies to support a vote of confidence in the government's "economic policies"

—and the cuts proceed.

Wilson resigns—and not one of the 37 abstainers is willing to run for the leadership, leaving Wilson's henchmen Foot and Benn to pose as "left wing" challengers.

Political status stripped from Irish prisoners of war by "tough guy" torture chief Roy Mason.

July 1976 New budget on eve of Phase 2 makes £1,000 million more cuts.

August 1976 Phase 2—4½%.

September 1976 TUC threatens to expel Seamen's Union and Jones threatens organised TGWU strike-breaking if NUS proceeds with threatened strike against Phase 2. NUS leadership, despite mass working class support, climbs down.

October 1976 Labour Party conference votes to endorse public spending cuts and wage controls.

November 1976 Courtaulds plan to axe seven factories, cutting 4,000 jobs.

By-election defeats in Labour strongholds Walsall and Workington.

November 17, 1976 Massive 80,000-strong demonstration against Healey's public spending cuts—restricted to one-off single issue protest by union bureaucrats. In not one instance have union officials taken the initiative in calling for strikes or occupations to stop the cuts. Result: thousands of jobs and important services lost.

December 1976 Strikes break out against 4½% pay limit in Midlands engineering plants Rubery Owen and Salisbury Transmissions—first signs of a big wave of resistance on pay.

January 1977 Court rules that UPW has no right to black mail to South Africa. Start of new legal offensive against unions, at first spearheaded by NAFF and tacitly endorsed by government.



January 22, 1979: biggest stoppage on wages since 1926

ALOGUE OF BETRAYAL



Police clear route for scab vans on Nottingham Evening Post picket line. Now the courts have acted to ban solidarity blacking.

PHOTO: Andrew Wiard, Report

February 1977 Former CIA agent Phillip Agee and journalist Mark Hosenball deported without trial or charge by Home Secretary Rees on prompting of CIA. Aubrey, Berry and Campbell arrested and charged under the Official Secrets Act.

June 1977 Mason announces intensified repression in occupied Ireland—SAS murder squads enlarged.

July 1977 TGWU conference, reflecting mood in working class, throws out Jones' plan for Phase 3—an "orderly return" to free collective bargaining.

August 1977 Queen visits the occupied six counties, congratulating torture chiefs and military rulers.

September 1977 Total ban on marches in Tameside prevents anti-fascist mobilisation—to be followed by similar moves elsewhere.

Owen's reactionary Anglo-American plan for preserving capitalist stability in Rhodesia announced.

October 1977 Hounslow Hospital work-in ransacked by management vandals. Health union leaders do nothing.

October 1977 Labour Party conference another non event. No challenge whatever to the Lib-Lab coalition. The *Daily Telegraph* pointed out that: "the left does not want to chance its arm by endangering the new-found unity in the party in the run-up to the election."

November 1977 Merlyn Rees's SPG thugs go on rampage against Grunwick mass picket—250 victims need medical treatment: 113 arrested.

November 1977 Firemen's strike: Callaghan calls in army scabs for eight weeks. TUC—'left' and right alike—holds back struggles to allow firemen to fight alone. Then openly accepts 10% limit.

January 1978 Amid revelations of big business plots to finance a coalition between the Liberals and Labour, the Liberal Party votes to renew the coalition deal, confident that it excludes socialist policies.

February 1978 Thatcher launches her offensive on immigration aimed at whipping up racist votes from middle class and backward workers: Callaghan offers her joint talks on the "problem".

Labour NEC reveals its "left-wing" plan for unemployment—to cut it to 750,000 by 1981!

March 1978 Labour's General Secretary Ron Hayward boasts that Labour is the party of 'law and order'.

All demonstrations are banned in London for two months to restrict anti-fascists.

March 1978 Labour 'lefts' join with Tories in racist proposals from the Commons Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration.

May 1978 2,000 police break up May Day demonstration called by Leeds Trades Council.

The *Leveller Peace News* and *The Journalist* fined for naming 'Colonel B'.

May 31 1978 Liberals decide to break coalition deal after the end of Phase 3.

July 1978 Police pay to go up by 40% as a reward for strike breaking activities—but Phase 4 revealed as 5%.

August 1978 Metropolitan police chief McNee calls for swinging new police powers—favourably greeted by Home Secretary Rees.

August 1978 Government tax increases on North Sea oil monopolies—supported by Tories!

August 1978 Chrysler crisis No. 2: having soaked up £162 million of government cash, the British operation is flogged off to Peugeot—endangering more jobs and remaining securely in private hands.

September 1978 Bingham Report, though a whitewash

makes it clear that Wilson and subsequent government ministers knew of manoeuvres by British firms which ensured sanctions-busting oil supplies to racist Smith regime in Rhodesia. No action by Labour 'lefts'.

September 1978 Callaghan pulls back from expected October election.

September 1978 Owen steps up public support for Shah of Iran after thousands of demonstrators shot down by troops.

September 1978 Ford strike leads massive wave of offensive struggles against Phase 4 pay limits: to be followed by bakers, journalists, lorry drivers, public sector and civil servants.

October 1978 Labour Party Conference throws out 5% pay limit—but no opponent fights for removal of Callaghan-Healey leadership. Reselection of MPs blocked by Scanlon flouting AUEW mandate.

Tribunite 'left' Heffer sums up for NEC motion, advocating greater support for 'law and order'.

November 1978 Queen's speech debate sees Callaghan attacking trade unionism. Lib-Lab coalition now replaced by squalid deal with Ulster Unionists—promising additional MPs to Westminster from the "province", and Scottish and Welsh Nationalists, with plan for devolution referendum.

November 1978 Trade Secretary Edmund Dell resigns—to return to his merchant banking job!

November 1978 Thorpe hearing partially lifts the lid on the nature of the Liberal leadership—Callaghan's chosen coalition partners—and their links with the Labour leaders.

December 1978 Callaghan defeated in Parliament in bid to enforce sanctions on firms which pay in excess of

5% limit.

In new precedent, court rules "secondary blacking" of Press Association by NUJ to be illegal.

January 1979 Strength of lorry drivers' strike action whips Tory press into a frenzy of anti-union propaganda, Callaghan joins in—declaring his willingness to cross picket lines. He is followed in this 'stand' by most of his cabinet cronies.

Court rules against "selective picketing" of United Biscuits by transport drivers. Another firm seeks damages from "secondary" pickets.

January 19th Picket killed by scab lorry driver in Scotland.

January 22nd 80,000 public sector workers join a huge demonstration through London to back their £60/35hour week claim. Though "selective action" they are confined to by their leaders breaks through the 5% limit, it leaves them, with a 9% settlement, worse off than a year ago.

February 1979 Barbaric "virginity tests" revealed to be carried out by immigration officials at Heathrow on Asian women.

February 1979 Court rules to deport Astrid Proll—alleged terrorist—to West Germany where she faces brutal imprisonment and likely death at hands of prison authorities that have already murdered members of Baader-Meinhof gang.

February 1979 Mason publishes four-page broadsheet to "answer" IRA campaign on conditions inflicted on republican prisoners of war in Long Kesh concentration camp. Two SAS thugs to be charged with murder of 16 year old John Boyle last year.

February 1979 The *Concordat* appears. This is a TUC-Government agreement to implement Tory policies against union rights and to

impose permanent wage controls: it is signed by TUC leaders with no mandate whatever from their members.

February 23 1979 Civil Servants stage Day of Action. Callaghan, Owen and Foot are among the ministers who ostentatiously cross picket lines.

February 1979 'Shankill butchers' jailed: one turns out to be a member of Ulster Defence Regiment.

March 1979 Devolution referendum brings massive defeat in Wales and bare majority in Scotland—heralds new crisis in Labour's deal with nationalists.

March 1979 Furore grows over RUC's systematic torture of republican "suspects" in Castlereagh interrogation centre. Publication of Bennett Report followed by Mason's claim that it "clears" the RUC!

March 1979 Devoid of any pretence of socialist policies or reforms, Callaghan launches electioneering attack on costs of Common Market agricultural policy.

March 28 1979 Collapse of squalid deals with nationalists and Ulster Unionists brings government to brink of defeat in Parliamentary vote of confidence: tipped over the brink by SDLP hack Gerry Fitt and Independent MP Frank McGuire who abstain over Callaghan's refusal to sack butcher Mason.

March 31 1979 International Day of Action on abortion rights. Healey's cuts have limited right to abortion on the NHS. Tories would cut back further still.

April 1979 Building on precedents of rulings against UPW, NUJ and TGWU, court fines NGA for blacking advertisers who continue to use scab Nottingham *Evening Post* as part of struggle for union recognition.



Foot

February 1977 Wave of unofficial strikes against Phase 2 reaches BL plants including Longbridge and flows into BL toolroom strike. Threat to sack all 3,000 strikers, endorsed by Scanlon, leads to spontaneous moves towards national strike by AUEW skilled men. Scanlon howled down by toolmakers.

March 1977 Callaghan forms coalition alliance with Liberals to get through Parliamentary vote of confidence and proceed with Phase 2 and Phase 3 of wage control.

April 1977 Major unofficial strikes against Phase 2 at Heathrow Airport and Port Talbot steelworks. Healey unveils Phase 3—a 10% increase in earnings, meaning only 5% on the basic rate.

Summer 1977 Escalating police violence against Grunwick mass pickets.

Central illusions behind Benn's arguments for socialism

Geoffrey Weston reviews 'Arguments for Socialism' by Tony Wedgewood-Benn, published by Penguin Books

A recent public opinion poll in the *Sunday Times* found that of all the possible leaders of the Labour Party, Tony Benn was the least popular with the voters, even Labour voters.

No result would more clearly show the limits of public opinion polls. For the future of British capitalism, the political evolution of Tony Benn and those who support him is of the greatest importance.

Benn's supporters include the vast majority of the left within the working class. If a challenge to capitalist rule is to develop in Britain, it is this layer which will have to develop the programme and organisation necessary to lead the class to victory.

For this reason it is vital that revolutionaries both understand and thoroughly answer Benn's ideas, reflecting as they do both the strength and weakness of this advanced layer of workers.

Benn's latest book *Arguments for Socialism* must be used by revolutionaries as the beginning of a struggle to win his followers from left reformist to revolutionary politics.

It is important to realise that Benn's ideas were not static.

Under the impact of the economic crisis and his experience in government there is no doubt that he has continued to move to the left.

In 1964 he was the foremost advocate of Wilson's view that British capitalism could be regenerated by a "technological revolution".

Now—after eleven years of class collaborationist Labour governments have shown the bankruptcy of such a policy—he puts forward a call for a transformation of society so that labour exploits capital and not the other way round.

It is not easy to say how far this change in Benn's argument has been an unprincipled adaptation to militant workers and how much a genuine development through experience.

We can merely point out how far he still has to travel if his socialism is to go beyond rhetoric.

One of the greatest strengths of the British labour movement has been its commitment to gaining a greater democracy for all sections of society, and within its own sphere a greater control over the factories, over its local communities, over its education and health services, and over its own organisations.

It is a struggle which has time and again been frustrated and distorted by the integration of layers of working class leaders into the state. But it is a great tradition nevertheless and one which Marxists must respect.

Gradual process

But the weakness of the labour movement has been that it has in the main viewed the extension of democratic control as a gradual process of transforming the existing institutions of society rather than destroying and replacing them.

That is why so many working class leaders end up serving the interests of capitalist governments or industrialists in order to "preserve their influence" over capitalist institutions.

Tony Benn is no exception to this. Indeed he sees the struggles of the working class for democracy as a continuation of the struggle of the Levellers and the radical bourgeois thinkers of the 18th Century.

This is not incorrect in itself. Marx himself noted the debt

socialism



Benn on the platform of the "Debate of the Decade"

which the working class movement had to the democratic traditions of the early bourgeoisie.

But nevertheless Marxists see the working class not in terms of its past but of its future. We see the working class as the embodiment within capitalism of the future socialist democracy.

By virtue of its position in society the working class develops some of the democratic forms which will be the foundation of socialism; for instance the creation of shop stewards who are elected from among their own group of workers and can be recalled by them.

But the working class also comes to the struggle for socialism with many ideas which must be discarded.

If the working class as an exploited and oppressed class was not dominated by bourgeois ideas, capitalism would long ago have fallen.

Tony Benn's stress on the continuity of working class and bourgeois struggles for democracy leads him to deny the need for a dictatorship of the

working class over the bourgeoisie to achieve socialism.

He even tries to claim that Marx shared his viewpoint on this. He quotes the Czech reformist Svitals who stated in 1968 that:

"Marx strove for a wider humanism than that of the bourgeois democracies that he knew, and for wider civil rights, not for the setting up of the dictatorship of one class and one political party".

But this is not Marxism. As Engels wrote:

"Of late the Social Democratic philistine has once more been filled with wholesome terror at the words "Dictatorship of the Proletariat". Well and good gentlemen, do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the Paris Commune. That was the dictatorship of the proletariat".

Engels described the organisation of the Commune thus:

"From the very outset the Commune was compelled to recognise that the working class, once come to power, could not go on managing with the old state machine; that in order not to lose again its only just con-

quered supremacy this working class must on the one hand do away with all the old repressive machinery previously used against itself, and on the other hand safeguard itself against its own deputies and officials by declaring them all without exception subject to recall at any moment.

Against the transformation of the state into masters of society, an inevitable transformation in all previous states, the Commune made use of two infallible means. In the first place it filled all posts, administrative, judicial and educational, by election on the basis of universal suffrage of all concerned, subject to the right of recall at any time by the same electors. And in the second place all officials high or low, were paid only the wages received by other workers.

Instead of deciding every three or six years which member of the ruling class was to misrepresent the people in Parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people constituted in the communes as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for the workmen and managers of his business".

Against this description of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Benn's proposals for democracy and open government stand only as the palest of pale shadows.

He calls for the annual election of the cabinet by MPs, the right of parliamentary select committees to interrogate officials, an end to the secrecy of cabinet papers.

But all of these proposals remain locked within the present system of bourgeois democracy—the very machinery set up by the capitalist class to defend their rule against the working class.

The argument we have to win with Benn's supporters is that only the dictatorship of the proletariat can bring real democracy into the lives of workers and other non-exploiting

sections of society.

This argument requires an understanding of Benn's alternative to the dictatorship of the proletariat: it is a theory of stages.

First, Benn tells us, we have to elect a Labour government. Then this government will bring in laws requiring large firms to draw up planning agreements and creating nationalised sections of industry with the same duty to reach long term planning agreements with their workers.

This—says Benn—will be the stage of 'equal partnership' of labour and capital. But in this partnership the workers will take a greater and greater control—until they reach the position of hiring capital as they choose.

This utopian scheme ignores certain unpleasant realities. The first is the proven power of capitalism to control Labour governments.

As long as Labour leaders remain committed to achieving social reforms through regenerating industry under capitalism, they will be unable to implement socialist policies. Benn should be the last to forget this.

He knows full well that when the IMF told Wilson to drop Benn's mild industrial policies for nationalisation and planning agreements or face financial collapse, Wilson did not appeal to the working class for support, but sacked Benn double quick (and none of Benn's cabinet colleagues defended him either).

World slump

He knows that when the IMF demanded spending cuts in health and education as a price for new loans, Wilson and Healey obliged. Indeed he now claims that this was the moment he became a (silent, Cabinet position-holding) socialist.

So why does he now ignore the reactionary politics of the right wing leadership?

The second reality is the economic conditions of the present period. In the middle of a world slump of massive pro-

portions and unforeseeable end, the power of labour to bargain economically with capital is not great.

Benn says he agrees that the working class must be mobilised outside Parliament to achieve any advances. But the question is around what programme.

On this question there are fundamental ambiguities in Benn's approach. On the one hand he appears to accept that the defence of jobs by occupations is correct; but on the other he says it is wrong to resist the introduction of new technology!

His ideas remain a confused mixture of old "technological revolution" illusions of regenerating capitalism mingled with "Institute for Workers Control" ideas about self-management within capitalism on the basis of workers' needs.

No middle way

But Benn has to make up his mind. In the present period, defending the living standards, jobs and conditions of workers is the same thing as holding back the necessary restructuring and modernisation of capital.

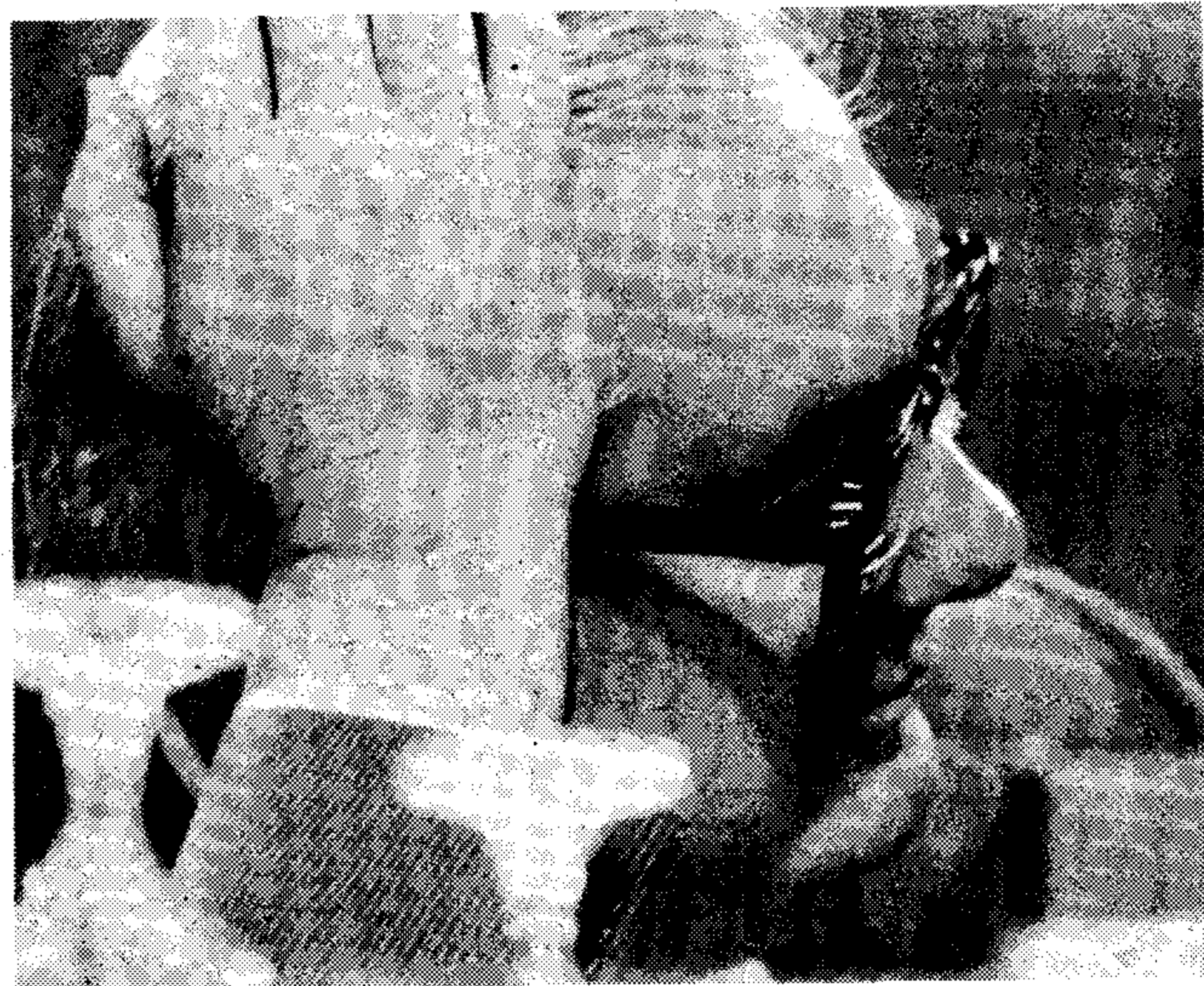
There is no middle way when overall production is stagnating or falling.

Marxists are clear: they stand fully for the defence of working class interests—even if in the short term this makes worse the total crisis of capitalism.

We say that a Labour government in this period could only defend the interests of workers by declaring war on the interests of capitalism.

In this situation only the mobilisation of the working class could sustain it. We say that the Labour Party is incapable of carrying through such a mobilisation: it has neither the programme or the leadership. What is Benn's answer to this situation?

Concluded
next week



Callaghan: Benn avoids any fight for his removal

CUT PRICE NOSTALGIA!

Socialist Press doesn't often review records but we could hardly miss the Rock Against Racism Greatest Hits album released earlier this month.

"It's not a compilation on vinyl, it's the theme tunes of a movement" says Andy Xerox in highly dubious sleeve notes.

This is an accurate statement of what the album is and as such it could have caused a nuclear explosion in the tippy-turvy rock scene if it had been released two years ago when the Rock Against Racism movement was at its zenith.

Minor ripple

Today, however, its release only caused a minor ripple with predictable reviews in the capitalist music press and a *Guardian* critic ticking it off as "the best British(!) compilation album of the month" (How many compilation albums does the recession-torn record industry release a month anyhow?)

The album is one big dose of nostalgia—which isn't such a bad thing (though it's not what it used to be, Ed).

The 'long hot summer' of growing unemployment and racist violence of 1977 and the

Andrew MacDonald reviews the album Rock Against Racism's Greatest Hits released this month.

massive Anti Nazi League Carnivals and the Lib-Lab pact came rushing into my head as I put it on the stereo for the first time.

It just shows what can happen in two years, both politically and musically.

Punk music and Anglicised reggae was nearly everything then. If you left school you still stood a chance of getting a job; and if you went on strike you were at least spared the provisions of Prior's Employment Act if not the hostility of the police.

In Autumn 1980 Heavy Metal music is running wild again while ska is on just about its last knees and could possibly survive the winter. (The new music cults always seem to start—or rather are re-started in the spring or summer).

But the album catches superbly the end of 1978 where punk music had heroically ended its most fruitful year and the English-born-and-bred reggae groups with their distinct differences from their Jamaican

influences were meeting huge success.

The freak exception on this LP is a track by the Carol Grimes Band which is neither punk nor reggae but a Joan Armatrading/Pattie Smith type of thing.

Watershed

Actually RAR's first album (and hopefully not their last) comes at a peculiar watershed for the movement.

It has been able to carry its mass support into a Rock Against Thatcher movement, which seemed the natural development.

And a crisis of perspective has loomed up, resulting in the temporary disappearance of RAR's extremely odd magazine *Temporary Hoardings* (well at least it's living up to its name!).

According to the *New Musical Express*, four of RAR's ten-strong central committee have resigned.

Nevertheless for £3.99 you could be the proud owner of the



PHOTO: Mark Rusher, IFL

Rock concert at the end of the Anti Nazi League's first Carnival, 1968

14-track album. And with the Clash, Elvis Costello and the Attractions, Xray Specs, Tom Robinson Band, Stiff Little Fingers, and the Gang of Four amongst others from the punk contributors and Matumbi, Steel Pulse and Aswad contributing reggae tracks you could hardly go wrong.

On one side there are epoch-making classics by Xray Specs, Tom Robinson and The Members mixed in with not too hot tracks by Elvis Costello, The Piranhas and the Mekons.

It doesn't do anybody any

harm to hear the liberating words of Poly Styrene:

"Some people think little girls should be seen and not heard, but I think OH BONDAGE, UP YOURS! 1,2, 3,4..."

Once you've heard that you never forget it! And Tom Robinson has got some excellent things to say about "the winter of '79".

On the other side comes the heavyweight stuff from the Clash and Stiff Little Fingers, along with a non-starter called "Why Theory?" by the Gang of

Four. (What do you expect anyway from that clique of capitalist roaders and running dogs of yankee imperialism?)

I once said to a friend that you can tell a lot about someone's personality by the records they buy.

He replied "yes I can tell a lot about yours—you're on dead low wages".

So if you're skint and selective like me, RAR's greatest hits is a must for your record collection!

New Communist Party slams "Gdansk wreckers"

By John Lister and Dave Ashton

"Communists slam Gdansk wreckers".

So ran the headline of *New Worker*, paper of Britain's New Communist Party.

As the most brazen mouth-piece of the Kremlin leaders and the Stalinist bureaucracies of the deformed workers states, *New Worker* did not trouble to hide its bitter hostility to the independent struggles of the Polish masses.

While the *Morning Star* more tactfully tail-ended the shifting positions of the Polish Stalinist leaders, *New Worker* plunged right in, denouncing:

"Irresponsible individuals, anarchic and anti-socialist groups".

The readiness of hundreds of thousands of Polish workers to fight the dictatorial rule of the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy was branded as "efforts by the Polish right".

And *New Worker*—perhaps incautiously—threw its weight unambiguously behind the now ousted Edward Gierek.

"This no-holds barred explanation of current events in the region is the one given by the man in the best position to know—Edward Gierek".

Even as the strike movement grew to the verge of a General Strike, *New Worker* was assuring its readers that:

"Gierek's outline of a solution is one sure to appeal to tens of thousands of ordinary Polish workers".

Lickspittles

Unfortunately for Gierek, his outline—despite the endorsement of *New Worker*—did not go down so well with ordinary Polish workers as it did with the Stalinist lickspittles who lead the NCP!

Subsequent developments have made a nonsense of the claim by *New Worker* that:

"The Polish United Workers' Party has the programme and policies to sort out present



Brezhnev greets Gierek



A tottering Brezhnev gets a helping hand from West German leader Schmidt

problems".

But more interestingly the NCP finds itself caught in an impossible contradiction when it attempts to conclude that:

"The wreckers trying to whip up the difficulties only have plans to aid the boss-class world-wide".

The problem the Stalinists face in such a formulation is that of course the major imperialist powers actually rushed to the assistance of Gierek and the Polish bureaucracy.

The US and West Germany hurried through new loans to prop up the sagging, mismanaged Polish economy, sooner than risk a further escalation of revolutionary struggle in Europe and the possible loss of their already heavy investments and financial commitments in Poland.

New Worker of course succeeds in dredging up a quote from right wing West German politician Franz-Joseph Strauss condemning the new loans—but the fact is that the loans were made by the imperialists—to

prop up a tottering Stalinist bureaucracy.

And of course the NCP, despite its ostensible posture of standing to the "left" of the Communist Party of Great Britain, is completely committed to supporting such loans as an integral part of the Stalinist strategy of 'peaceful coexistence' with imperialism.

It makes little sense for the NCP to condemn imperialist manoeuvres in Poland. The biggest single material influence exercised by the imperialists in Poland takes the form of the massive debts to the imperialist banks run up by the Gierek bureaucracy as a result of its inability to develop the potential of the Polish economy while opposing revolutionary struggles elsewhere in Europe.

The debts and the economic crisis in Poland are the bitter fruits of three decades of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism.

There is no doubt that the working class in Poland and the deformed workers' states has

made some gains.

They do not suffer the scourge of unemployment, and workers in the advanced capitalist countries should also bear in mind the economic backwardness of the East European states prior to the nationalisation of property and the establishment of deformed workers' states in the post-war period.

Privilege

But the fact remains that 30 years after the expropriation of capitalist property in these countries and 63 years after the working class smashed the power of capitalism in the Soviet Union, the ruling Stalinist bureaucrats have still not created anything approaching a socialist abundance of wealth for working people.

Instead they have defended their own power and privilege by consistently seeking deals with imperialism to carve up the world into peacefully coexisting "spheres of influence", and

opposing the independent revolutionary struggles.

In the post-war settlements of Yalta, Teheran and Potsdam, Stalin cynically handed over Greece and Indo-China to the imperialists, and Stalinist parties sold out massive post war revolutionary opportunities in France and Italy.

The economic isolation that has so warped the nationalised economies of the deformed workers' states is thus no accident: it is the outcome of Stalinist policy as a privileged bureaucracy struggles to preserve its power.

And, as events in East Germany 1953, Hungary 1956 and Poland 1970 have shown the Stalinist leaders will use whatever force they consider necessary to preserve their position and repress workers' struggles.

The NCP explicitly supports each of these military interventions—and would certainly have supported a similar crackdown in Poland 1980 if the Gierek bureaucracy or the Kremlin had

resorted to such measures.

But as the working class in Britain comes increasingly into conflict with its own bureaucratic leaders—who refuse to mobilise mass action to defend workers against the Tories—the basis is created for a far wider-reaching understanding of the phenomenon of bureaucracy as a whole.

It is in these conditions that the NCP's frantic headlines amount to little more than a Canute-like attempt to stem the forward movement of the working class at a time when even the Polish Stalinists have grasped the need for flexible tactics to defend their power and privilege.

Such Stalinist formations must be confronted by the Trotskyist programme for revolutionary defence of the deformed workers' states against imperialism; and for political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies and establish the power of the proletariat organised through independent workers' councils.



FBU FIGHTS TORY CUTS IN FIRE BRIGADES

Mass meetings of firemen will this week add their voice to the official union protest at Tory plans to slash spending on the fire service—thus putting the lives of firemen and the public at far greater risk.

The Tories have produced a Green Paper which, while claiming that it does not seek primarily to continue savings, proposes a series of major cut-backs in the service, to the tune of a £34 million cut in its annual budget and the withdrawal of 220 appliances.

An FBU booklet *Fire Safety - A Public Issue* spells out the scope of the planned Tory attack, which will be spurred on by Heseltine's latest £200m cuts in local government spending.

Inferior

It points out that the existing safety standards established in 1958 were themselves inferior to the measures that had been in force for the preceding 20 years.

Now the Tories plan to adopt standards that are drastically inferior to those of 1958.

They propose to ease the enforcement of Fire Certificate legislation by Fire Authorities, arguing that the fact that there are "only" 1.6 deaths per thousand and from fire shows that the problem is "insignificant".

Instead they suggest that employers or occupiers should be prosecuted if after the event of a fire they have been shown to be in breach of fire legislation.

On the fire-fighting service itself, the Tories admit that:

"Because the costs of the fire service are so heavily concentrated on the provision of manpower, the only changes which could have any significant effect on the total costs would be changes in the level of whole-time manpower".

This is spelled out in more detail:

"... if the initial attendance times were to be relaxed from two pumps to one, there would be a considerable scope for savings. Even if the average number of pumps per British station were reduced from slightly over two to 1.5 this would result in a saving of over 200 manned appliances or over £34 million per year".

The Tories go on to propose to send less fire appliances to each fire; to cut the numbers of firemen on night duty—despite the fact that most serious fires and 50% of all fires in occupied buildings happen at night; to increase the average time taken for a fire appliance to arrive; to slow the pace at which follow-up equipment arrives; to increase the proportion of part-time firemen, to cut the numbers of firemen on each appliance; and to cut back still further on the provision of back-up equipment such as hydraulic platforms, turntable ladders and crash rescue units.

The cuts proposed would involve the loss of up to 4,000 jobs—and untold added dangers to life and limb of firemen and the general public.

The Tory plan is published after a year of record fire damages in which the value of property destroyed jumped from £331.6 million to £497.9 million.

This increase cannot be separated from the cuts already made: 47 appliances and 676 fire fighting jobs have been axed in the last 18 months by local authorities, and in London alone the GLC is seeking to

slash a further 42 appliances and crews.

The FBU leadership has declared that any attempt to make firemen redundant will be met by national strike action.

It is up to firemen and their fellow trade unionists to ensure that other forms of cuts in the fire service are combatted by equally determined action, and that the FBU proposals for an improved and extended fire service implemented.



FBU pickets during the last pay strike

Organising the unemployed

One of the largest meetings seen on Teesside for many years saw the launching of the Middlesbrough section of the Unemployed Workers Union.

The union has the backing of the Middlesbrough Trades Council. There is also to be a section set up in Stockton as well as in other parts of the county of Cleveland.

It is hoped that the Unemployed Workers Union will be able to affiliate to one of the large trade unions in an attempt to fully organise and integrate the unemployed with people still in work.

It is also hoped that it will fight all cuts and threatened redundancies.

At the meeting WSL supporters pointed out the need to fight for unionisation especially of youth in bodies like the National Union of School Students (NUSS), and that no trust should be placed in union leaders who had sold out thousands of jobs recently.

Political fight

They also called for a full-scale political fight to bring down the Tories and stressed that it was important to fight

for the Labour Party to affiliate to the Unemployed Union.

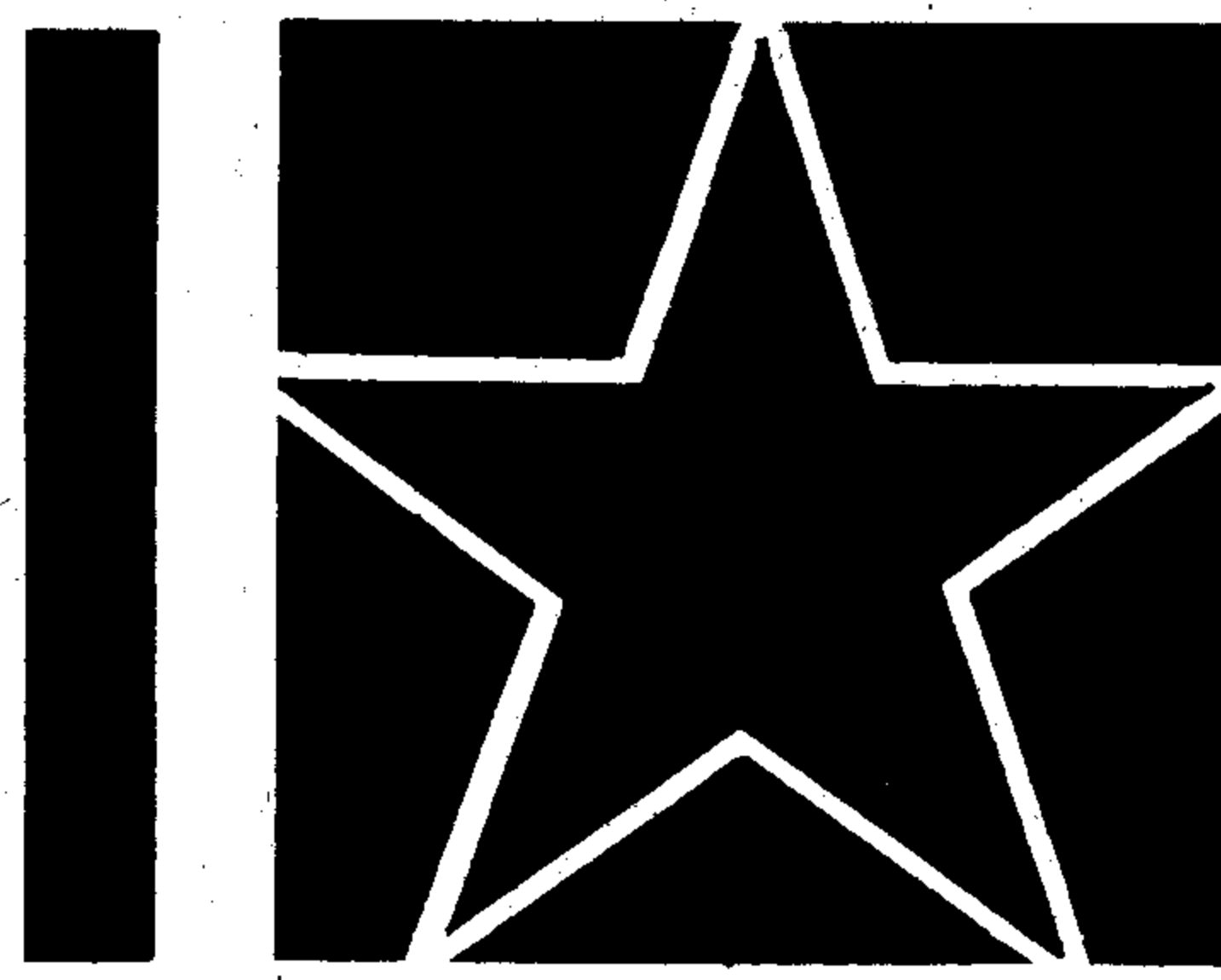
The next meeting will be on September 30 at the Middlesbrough Labour Club, Linthorpe Road, at 7.30 p.m.

There is also to be a Jobs Rally on Saturday 8 November. For further details see future issues of *Socialist Press*.

National rally on jobs

James Prior's constituency of Lowestoft is to be the target of a National Day of Protest Against Unemployment, to be organised on October 25 by the local Trades Council with sponsorship from South Wales NUM.

The Trades Council is asking for maximum delegations to participate in a march and rally, followed by an afternoon conference at the South Pier Pavilion. There is to be a rock



JOIN THE WSL!

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

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

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

In a period where the contradictions of the anarchic capitalist system force the wholesale closure and destruction of the productive forces of society, only a socialist planned

economy on a world scale offers a way forward.

To achieve such a perspective a leadership is needed which, in today's struggles fights to advance workers beyond trade union militancy, protest politics and illusions that capitalism can be abolished through parliament.

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

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

degenerated workers' states.

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

Please send me more details of the Workers Socialist League.

Name

Address

Send to WSL: BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX.

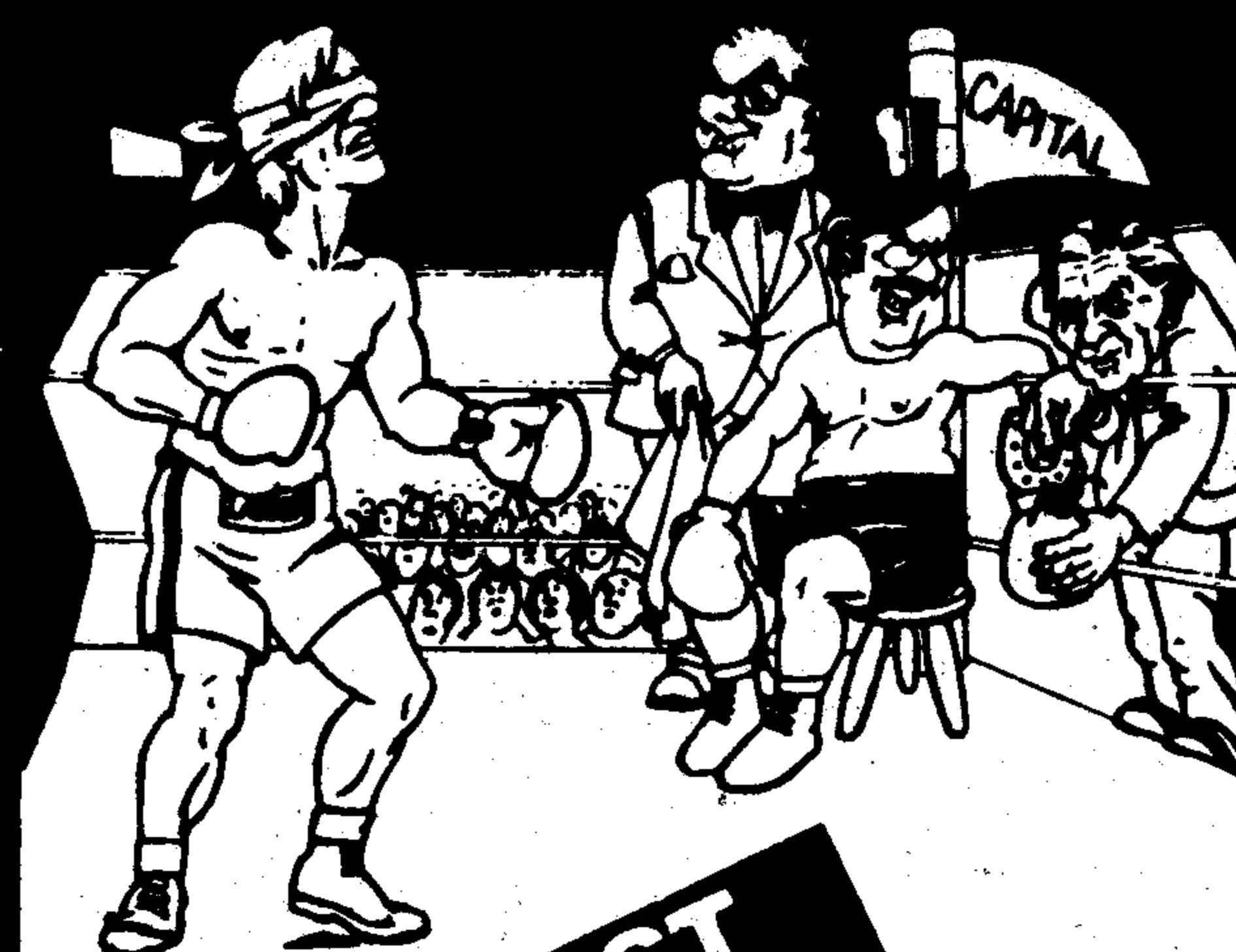
MERSEYSIDE FACTORY CLOSURES
Fisher Bendix Leyland Dunlop Meccano

Why campaigns were lost & how they can be won

A WSL Pamphlet

JUST OUT
A new pamphlet produced by the North West Area of the Workers Socialist League exposing the betrayals of the trade union leadership in the fight against factory closures and the policies needed to defend jobs.
Price 27p including postage from WSL, BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX

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Solidarity action halts London papers in NUJ battle

Weekly papers in the London area have been severely hit—and in many cases stopped—by the strike of journalists over a London allowance.

The strike started after two mass meetings of members in London had rejected a £2-£4 a week offer from the Newspaper Society. Out of 450-500 members on the weekly papers and Slough Evening Mail less than 20 are scabbing.

Within three days of the strike starting the employers—led by Westminster Press hatchet man Frank Barlow—had made a slight increase in the offer and promised to index link their offer. But the £4 a week

offer still brings the total London weighting payment to £440 a year, less than half the £1,000 claim.

Large white spaces

In one week more papers have been stopped in London than in the whole of the seven week provincial journalists' strike in 1978/9. Largely this has been because NGA members have been refusing to set anything other than advertisements and an editor's comment column. Thus papers which have appeared have had large white spaces.

But this response by the NGA—the outcome of several weeks negotiations between

officials of the two unions—is clearly the opposite of what the NUJ fought for during the NGA dispute—members to refuse to cross picket lines where a scab publication was being produced.

Now even this present inadequate level of NGA support is—as we go to press—threatened with withdrawal. The NGA council meeting on Wednesday was due to discuss a proposal to set all editorial copy 'normally' supplied—in other words all scab copy.

NGA deputy general secretary Tony Dubbins is thought to be in contact with the Newspaper Society—who have been adjusting their tactics according to NGA response.

While Barlow, during negotiations, expressed himself

to be satisfied with the NGA support, he has clearly suspended NGA members on Westminster Press who followed the line.

He has also taken the unprecedented step of cancelling trainee journalists places at college as revenge for their participation in the strike. (Previous established practice is that college places have not been cancelled, although sometimes the union has had to underwrite the cost of the course).

Tough battle

NUJ members—who have just completed the process of drawing up a claim for £20 a

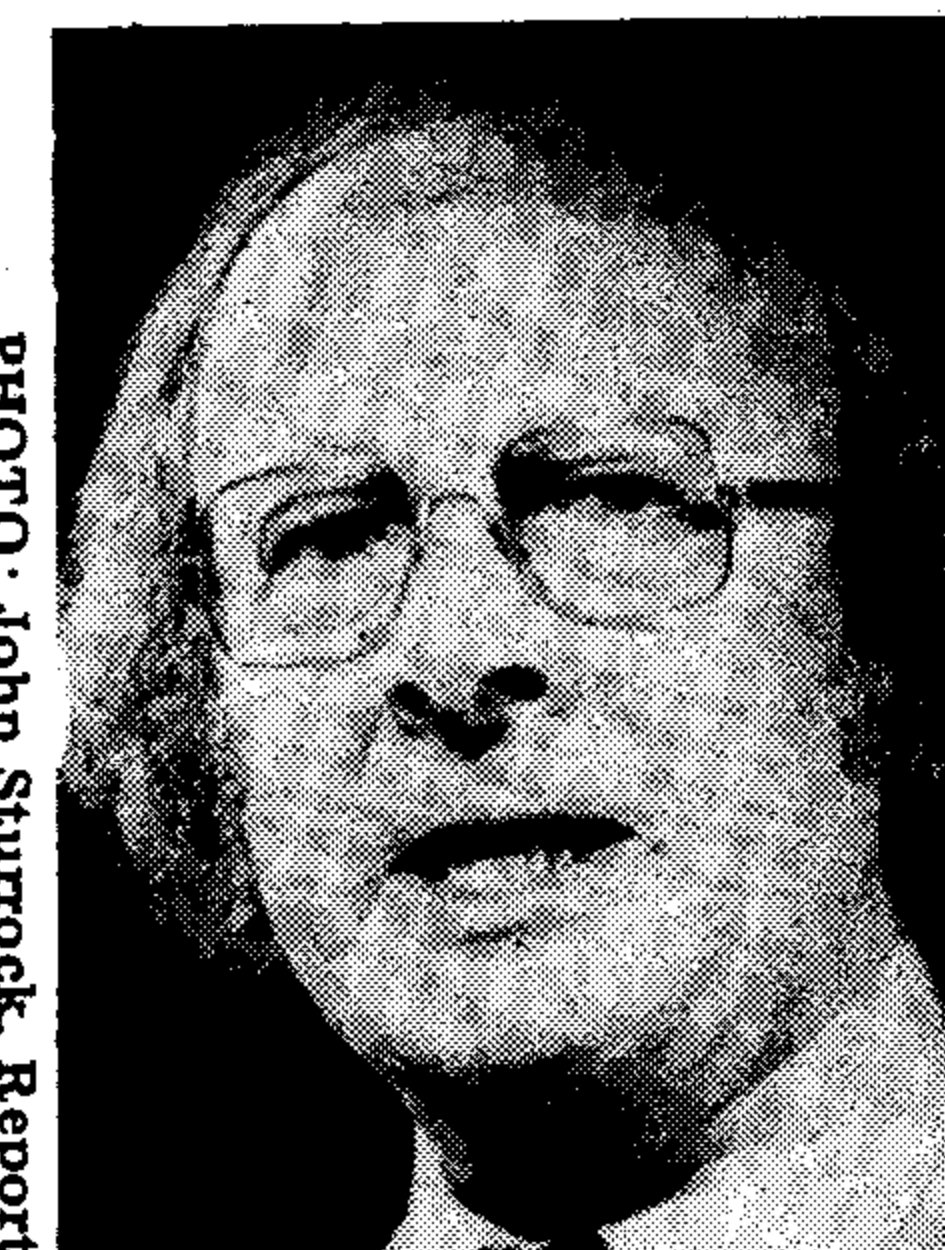


PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

NGA leader Wade

week and a 3 1/2 hour week with vastly improved maternity pay for the national claim—now have the prospect of a tough battle. They must repudiate all agreements not to ask NGA members to observe the pickets and fight for the real solidarity action which alone can win the claim.

Oil rig bosses draw up list of victims

The management of Ayrshire Marine Constructors at Hunterston, where 900 workers have been in dispute for three weeks over inadequate safety measures, are now stating that they will reopen the site only on condition that 40 workers of their choosing will not be reemployed.

These 40 obviously include the leading shop stewards.

Setback

In their determined campaign the workers received a setback last Friday when the government's Health and Safety Executive declared that the employers are clear in relation to conditions on the site.

The strikers however remain committed to the struggle, convinced of the justice of their case. They are seeking support throughout the labour and trade union movement.

All messages, financial and moral support should be sent to the Shop Stewards Committee, (Hunterston Distpue) c/o TUC Club, Ardrossan Rd., Irvine, Ayrshire.

PRESS GANG

This Gdansk stuff is catching. It is one thing to go 'supporting' a strike in the workers' states in the hope that it is in a pro-capital direction. But look where it is leading now.

Can this really be the voice of the Daily Mail?

"An agreement of this significance cannot be unilaterally torn up by the port employers of Merseyside merely because it is no longer in their interests.

For years, politicians and press have lambasted those unions who have cynically bilked on solemn pay deals.

Now the boot is on the other foot and it would be thoroughly dishonest to pretend that it was a soft and inoffensive little carpet slipper.

The Liverpool port employers went looking for 'bovver'.

In these circumstances, the strike ultimatum by Britain's dockers is defensive, not offensive. However potentially

damaging to the nation, it is a legitimate brandishing of the strike weapon.

As the Daily Mail commented more than a week ago, it is for the employers in this dispute to back down."

Well yes it can. And not just the Mail. The Telegraph too has distanced itself from the employers. Why?

When the Tory press urges its government to attack the working class, it also wants it to win.

To attack, at this stage, one of the best organised and most powerful sections of the class head on, on an issue which has united the opposition, is no part of its plan.

The employers have displayed not the crushing brutality of a Churchill, but the incompetence of a Lord Cardigan—and even the Daily Mail does not really believe that the charge of the Light Brigade was a victory.

Even in the class war discretion is the better part of valour.

Recession hits more BL jobs

Every day brings further announcements of redundancies in British Leyland.

In Rover, Solihull there will be 120 redundancies straight after the two week shutdown, followed by a further 500 after Christmas.

In Swindon, Pressed Steel Fisher management has announced a further 300 redundancies bringing the workforce down to 3,300—and even this is assuming that other workers will move into the press shop to take up jobs created by work on

the Mini Metro.

In the Cowley Assembly Plant, where there has been a continuous programme of voluntary redundancies, the company has announced that a further 388 must go.

In the Cowley Body Plant further details of the proposed 1460 redundancies are emerging.

290 of these are staff—of whom 40 have volunteered, creating a strong possibility of compulsory redundancy.

1172 manual workers are scheduled to go by the end of the year. The numbers volunteering (some of whom have already left), are nothing like this figure.

So again it is clear that the company will have to enforce redundancies.

But the TGWU leadership of the plant has not even called a stewards meeting to discuss what to do.

These sackings are only a partial picture. All of these plants are also laid off for an additional week, followed by three and four day a week working, after the present week's holiday.

The Rover plant and the Cowley plants are now working at a mere 20% of capacity.

There is a similar situation



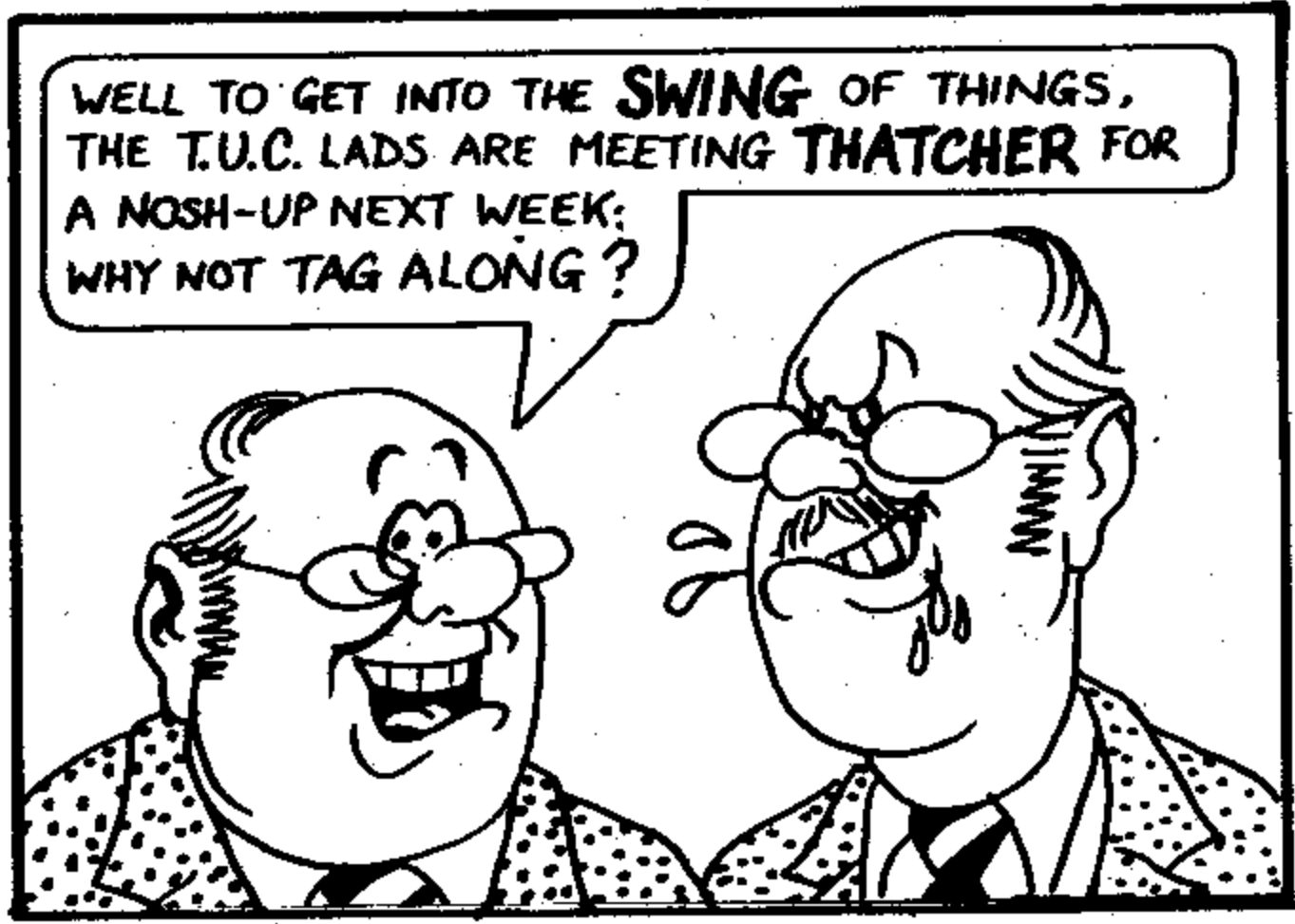
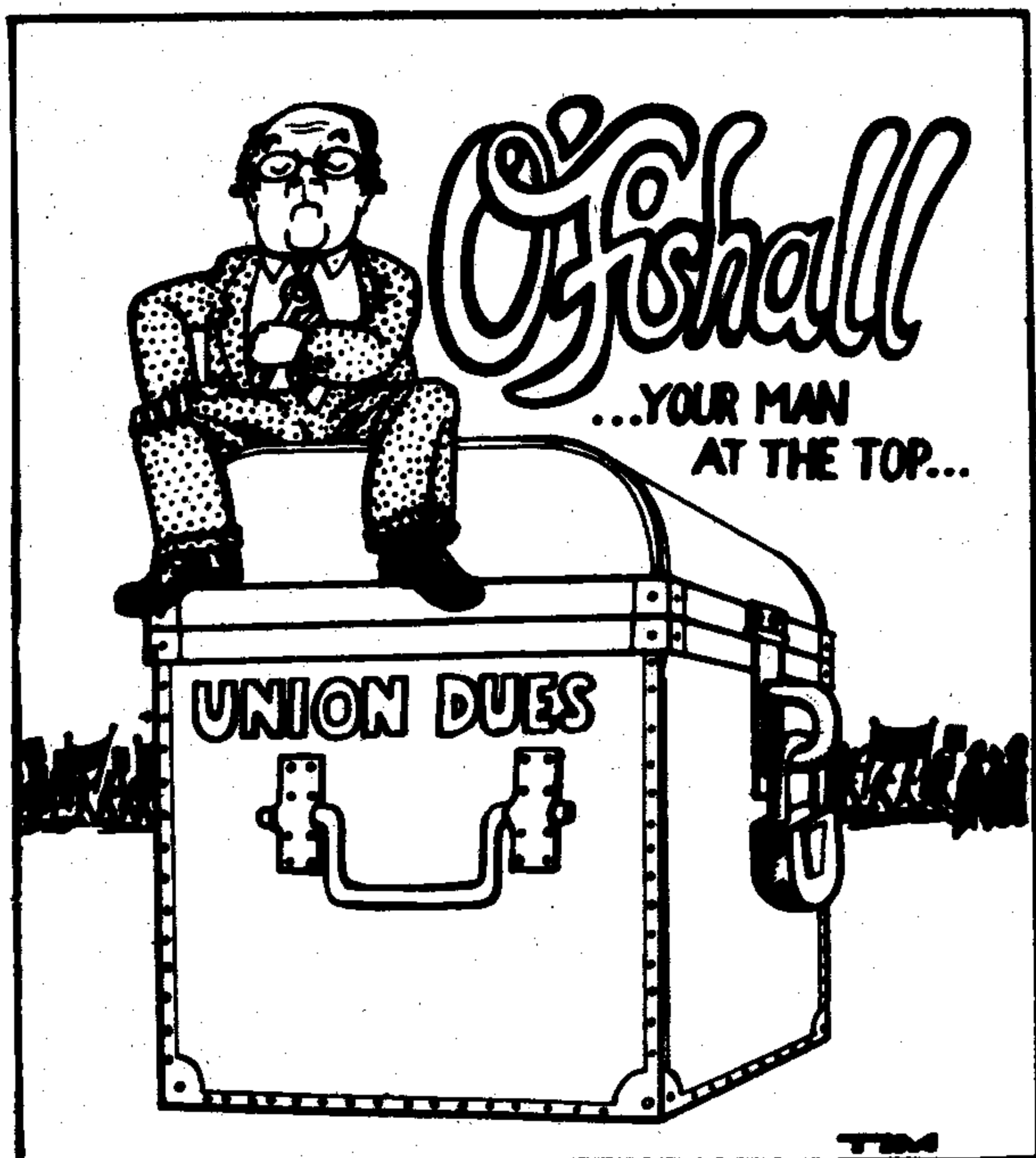
Cowley Body Plant convenor Roche—no stewards' meeting

Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement CONFERENCE

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SOCIALIST PRESS



FUND

Some people seem to think that we've got the same kind of big business backing as the Tories (see our article on page 4) by the lack of finance arriving in our office each week.

So far this month we have received only £445.30 towards our target of £850 so there's a massive job ahead of us in the last week of the month. If you haven't sent anything in yet, how about rushing a donation to:
Socialist Press Fund, BM Box 5277 London WC1V 6XX

LABOUR CONFERENCE: FIGHT MUST GO ON!

"There's many a manoeuvre betwixt cup and lip". This old TUC proverb appears even more true of this year's Labour Party conference than many of its predecessors.

As top union bureaucrats haggle and horsetrade with Labour leaders over slap-up meals in the next few days, a pattern of voting will emerge which will determine just how many, if any, of the democratic reforms fought for by socialists will be adopted at the Blackpool conference next week.

One thing is certain: the result in no way depends on the charade of "debate" that will be publicly televised—nor on any consultation with rank and file trade unionists, whose block votes will be bandied about by national officials.

Rather it depends on an assessment by senior trade union leaders of the implications of blocking once again the long needed and popularly supported moves to introduce mandatory reselection of Labour MPs; to take the election of the Party leader out of the vice-like grip of the right wing PLP; and to allow the NEC as representative of the Party membership, to decide on the election manifesto.

There are signs that, in the wake of the TGWU decision to back the principle of establishing an "electoral college" to choose the Party leader, the GMWU bureaucracy under David Bassett could follow suit—and tip the scales in favour of this measure, which had been expected to be defeated.

This appears to be linked to a bizarre "Keep Callaghan in to Keep Healey out" move which began at the time of the Party's Special Conference last May, and has gathered pace with the expectation that Callaghan may retire this autumn if he successfully defeats the Party reforms.

Union leaders (who for some reason regard Callaghan as

preferable to his right-hand gang-mate Dennis Healey) fear that a rapid change of leadership could place Healey in office.

But while they make their tactical decisions on these questions, the vast proportion of delegates—whether from the relatively impotent constituency parties or from union delegations rigidly bound by mandates from above—find themselves once again excluded from the real making of decisions and policies.

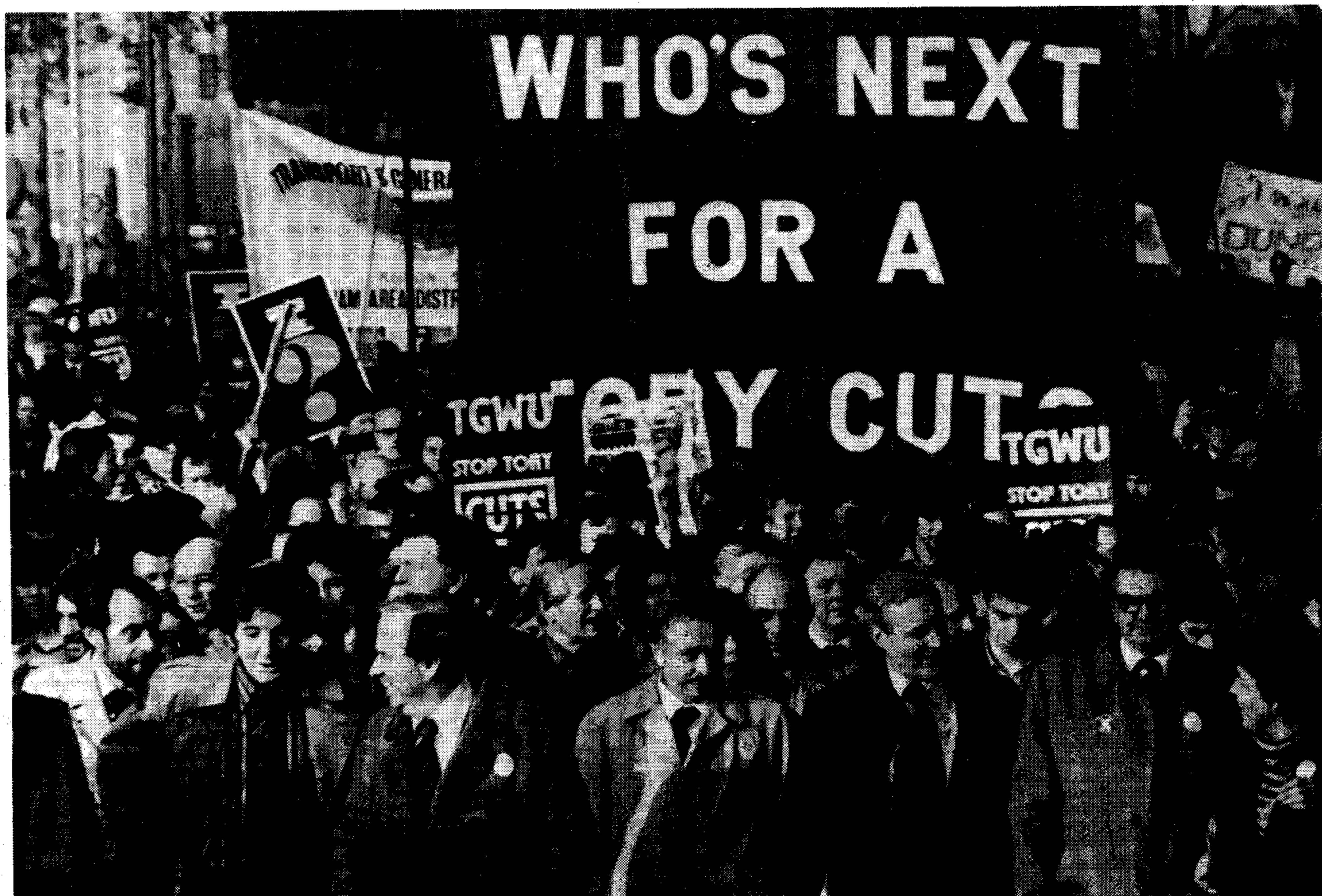
Indeed this year's conference agenda offers no real evidence either of a strengthened socialist challenge to the right wing or of any organised campaign for action to bring down the Tories.

And while the Callaghan gang could be embarrassed if some motions—particularly those on Ireland, unilateral disarmament and some calling for the disbanding of the SPG—were carried, few resolutions are equipped with enough teeth (in the form of a commitment to tangible action) to draw any blood.

It is on their ability to step up the political offensive on policy and perspective in the wake of this year's constitutional decisions that the fighting capacity of the 'left' as an opposition to the Callaghan leadership will really be tested out in the eyes of the membership.

Many of the key questions involved in such a fight will be dealt with by guest speaker Ted Heslin—still expelled from Oxford CLP for his support of *Socialist Press* at a special fringe meeting organised by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement on Monday September 29. Another platform speaker at that meeting will be Sandra Plummer, conference delegate from St. Pancras South CLP.

We urge Labour conference delegates to take part in this important discussion on the programme and perspectives on which to fight the right wing.



The question facing Labour activists is whose prepared to fight the Tories?

Adwest strikers occupy Transport House

As we go to press Adwest strikers and supporters have occupied Transport House in London in a determined effort to force TGWU General Secretary Moss Evans to meet them.

The occupation followed the latest mass picket outside the Adwest factory in Reading in support of strikers who were dismissed after taking action in defence of a victimised worker. Two pickets were arrested by police.

Protest

Immediately the mass picket finished several car loads of strikers and their supporters drove to Transport House to protest at the failure of the union to make the strike—now in its fifth month—official.

TGWU officials claimed that Evans was ill and National Organiser Ron Todd who was earlier in the day involved in negotiations on the Ford workers' pay claim was

informed of the decision to occupy the union headquarters and later met the strikers.

Although TGWU officials announced that Evans would be able to meet the strikers the following day the occupation nevertheless continued, with plans for a demonstration in their support on the following morning in Smith Square.

Deaf ears

Previous efforts by the strikers to bring to the attention of the national leadership their dispute and the failure of local bureaucrats to make it official have fallen on deaf ears.

This is because the whole of the TGWU bureaucracy from Moss Evans down are determined not to back a strike which has been in the forefront of the fight against Prior's Employment Act, and which would therefore require from the bureaucracy a determined fight against this anti-union legislation rather than the hot air and rhetoric that they have



Evans

settled for instead.

A previous intervention by the national leadership of the TGWU failed to persuade local officials to back the strike. This

time Evans must be forced to instruct the Regional Committee to give official backing to the strikers.

Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE
FRINGE MEETING

"The fight for a new leadership in the labour movement"

Monday 29 September at 7.30 p.m.
Hotel Victoria, 35 Station Road, Blackpool

Speakers include:

Sandra Plummer, conference delegate from St. Pancras South (speaking in personal capacity)

Ted Heslin, Socialist Press supporter still barred from membership by Oxford CLP