

# SOCIALIST PRESS



Weekly paper of the Workers Socialist League \* No. 188 \* 27 February 1980 \* 20p

Affiliated to the Trotskyist International Liaison Committee

## ALL OUT MARCH 9

Stop the cuts! Bring down the Tories

ASSEMBLE 11.00 p.m.  
SPEAKERS CORNER  
HYDE PARK  
MARCH AT 12.30 p.m. to  
TRAFALGAR SQUARE  
FOR RALLY

### Turkish generals grow impatient

The Turkish army has renewed and strengthened its threats of a military coup.

As troops and tanks rolled in to crush the factory occupation and partial rising in Izmir, the army chief-of-staff warned prime minister Demirel that his government must act harder and faster to defeat the working class.

General Evren declared: "At present, we are striving to restrain our impatience and to await the resolution of the problem within the framework of the parliamentary regime."

This broad hint came after Evren had already announced that Turkey was "paying the price for years of tolerance and mistakes" and that the armed forces:

"could put an end to our enemies inside the country within a month, but we prefer not to provoke a bloodbath amongst the population".



Demirel

Demirel's reactionary government has now extended martial law to virtually the whole of Turkey, including Izmir along with all the other major cities already under the control of the army.

While the army is given a free hand to smash the organised working class (dubbed as 'terrorists' and 'anarchists'), Demirel has found the imperialists shaken by events in Iran and Afghanistan at last apparently willing to reschedule the Turkish debt to the IMF and to provide massive new loans.

The Social Democrats of West Germany have been the key agents of imperialism in these deals, and their action has been implicitly endorsed by Ecevit, leader of the bourgeois RPP.

But Ecevit's own party is now being scrutinised by Demirel's government to reveal its links with the Second—so-called—'Socialist' International, to which the German Social Democrats (and the British Labour Party) also belong!

The logical purpose of this investigation would be to proscribe the RPP—the largest party in Turkey—since such international affiliations are banned by Turkish law.

But increasingly it looks as if Demirel will be unable to put this or any of his other plans into action before the generals carry out their threats and seize power.

# Danger of steelworkers isolation TUC BLOCKS GENERAL STRIKE

The nine-week old steel strike suffered a heavy blow last week, as South Wales miners voted by 5-1 not to strike against threatened closures.

The decision marks a defeat for those seeking a means of extending and strengthening the steel strike, which now faces a growing danger of isolation and demoralisation.

Yet it would be wrong to heap the blame for this setback on the rank and file of the Welsh NUM.

Behind the miners' retreat lay weeks of deliberate sabotage of the jobs struggle by TUC leaders determined at all costs to avoid a showdown with the Thatcher government.

Warnings last month from NUR leader Sid Weighell and

ISTC leader Bill Sirs that a General Strike was possible, stemmed not from their willingness to lead such an action, but from their fears that control of the struggle was slipping from their bureaucratic grip.

The warnings were heeded—not by the Tories but by the TUC. The machinery of the TUC ground relentlessly into action—not of course to support the steel workers, who remain the victims of massive, organised scabbing, but to suppress moves that could win the strike and defeat the Tories.

The most obvious target was the Welsh TUC, which had called for an indefinite general strike against steel closures, beginning on January 21.

The backbone of this action was the Welsh NUM, whose members had voted 9-1 to endorse such action.

### Brushed aside

Len Murray at once put the boot in. Appeals for support from the main TUC were brushed aside, and every available pressure was brought to bear to force the Welsh TUC to postpone the action to March 10.

In its place a one-day token stoppage was called for January 27—a gauge of the militancy was given by the staggering 250,000 workers who responded with strike action on that day.

Welsh NUM leaders correctly protested at this retreat: but they went along with the new



PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

proposals, in the name of 'unity'.

As it became increasingly clear that the March 10 deadline itself would be dropped, however, and plans for a delegate conference on February 27 were postponed by the Welsh TUC, the NUM, after a month of stressing the need for united action, convened a delegate conference to consider going it alone in the fight to defend jobs.

The delegate conference voted unanimously to call all-out strike action from February 25—stating that the action would be called off only when the TUC undertook to play a more positive role in fighting the steel and coal closure!

Yet miners in South Wales were painfully aware that, while Scargill and McGahey have marched squads of flying pickets around, theirs is the only area of the NUM even seriously to have considered strike action against closures.

### Marginal impact

For Wales to come out while every other section of miners continues producing coal would have only a marginal impact on production—especially when the

Corby strikers  
speak out . . . p.4

been once more left to fight on alone.

Indeed this TUC sabotage has not been restricted to Wales and the NUM.

GMWU leader Basnett has played his role—bureaucratically overruling a strike vote by thousands of water workers; and in British Leyland the Joint Negotiating Committee, despite a mandate for action, continues to stall and prevaricate on calling an all-out strike against the company's insulting 5%-with-strings pay offer.

### More talks

TGWU leader Moss Evans is already preparing the ground for a further delay with his appeals to Sir Michael Edwardes for "more talks", which everyone knows will produce no concessions.

The result is that now, after nine weeks of mounting determination and bitterness, the steel strike stands in considerable danger.

The limited victory on the Hadfields picket line brought about with the help of Yorks NUM pickets is no substitute for all out action by miners alongside the steel unions in the struggle to defend jobs, and living standards.

And with the supporting strikes in the private sector visibly weakening it is vital that the fight to extend and strengthen the struggle is taken forward.

### Union rights

At stake is far more than the wages issue alone; and even more than the thousands of jobs threatened in steel and related industries: a Tory victory over the steelworkers would strengthen the hand of this vicious government to intensify its attacks on the whole working class—carving up trade union rights, stepping up closure plans and ramming home even more savage public spending cuts.

TUC leaders, happy just to collaborate with the Tories and the employers as they did with the right wing Callaghan government, have proven by their actions that they would sooner allow such a setback than mobilise the strength and militancy of the working class to bring down the Thatcher government.

Such a course must be resisted. Within BL, within the NUM, within the transport unions, within other sectors facing pay struggles and throughout the public sector in the struggle against the cuts, the demand must be raised for all-out strike action alongside the steelworkers.

### Bring down Thatcher

Resolutions must demand the TUC call a General Strike to bring down this bosses' government and create conditions to drive out Labour's right wing traitors who helped them into office.

To prepare for such a General Strike, councils of action, drawing rank and file delegates from every section of the labour movement, must be built to organise mass picketing, blacking and workers control of essential supplies.

And a principled, revolutionary leadership must be built to wage the struggle for socialist policies that offer the only solution to the crisis now facing the working class.

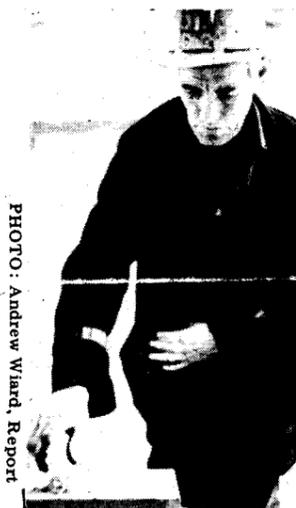


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

NCB has always claimed that the South Wales pits are loss makers.

Faced with no prospect of support from the Welsh TUC, active sabotage from the British TUC and opposition from Gormley and the NUM leadership to their strike, the Welsh miners voted against action—and, as Murray and Co. intended, the steelworkers have

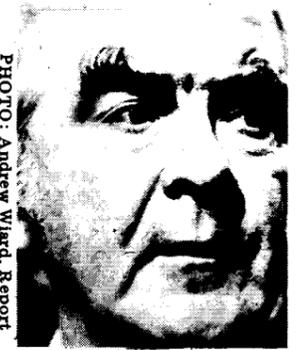


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Gormley

# TORIES FUEL CARTER'S COLD WAR OFFENSIVE

"The oasis of detente has not dried up, but political tourism to the spot has fallen off seriously."

Not a fertile image for Marxists to cultivate, but it was with this suitably commercial metaphor that West German Chancellor Schmidt summed up his assessment of the relationship between the imperialist powers and the ruling Stalinist bureaucracies in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

## Solidarity

Schmidt made his speech as Cyrus Vance was touring Europe to ensure maximum solidarity from the imperialists of the Common Market states behind the new aggressive stance of US imperialism towards the Kremlin bureaucracy.

And it revealed the concern felt, (particularly among the capitalists of France and West Germany) at the rapid tempo of 'cold war' escalation which Carter is trying to secure from his dependant allies.

Schmidt himself has equivocated on the US campaign to boycott the Moscow Olympics which the French government has refused pointblank to support.

And both governments have expressed their misgivings on economic boycotts of the Soviet Union.

These differences are of course tactical, but the difference in emphasis is based partly

Financial Times



"... and now the vote on the French case against an Olympic boycott—first, style and presentation ..."

on the particular importance which trade with the Soviet Union and its allies holds for the capitalist economies of France and West Germany (now and more importantly in their visions of the future road to recovery from crisis).

It also partly reflects a reluctance to succumb to pressure from US imperialism which would even further its economic dominance over the regimes.

Behind these factors lies the

absence in both states of a major reactionary, chauvinist, anti-Soviet movement of the type successfully whipped up in the US by the imperialists and their agents in the labour bureaucracy.

Both Schmidt and Vance were of course at great pains to present a united imperialist face by stressing the total agreement existing between their governments.

But it was in these delicate conditions that the British Tories proposed their diplomatic initiative into the Common Market.

## Vanguard

The Thatcher government has of course been in the vanguard of the political attacks on the Soviet Union, eagerly combining this anti-Soviet campaign with witch-hunting propaganda against militants and socialists within the labour movement in Britain.

Just like Australian prime minister Malcolm Fraser, who has announced a massive increase in military spending, or the government of 'neutral' Norway, with its un concealed lurch towards NATO, the Tories have not spared their efforts to rival Carter's new-found belligerence.

It was from this standpoint that they argued their apparently 'soft' resolution to the conference of EEC foreign ministers last week.

Playing with UN Resolutions



Soviet forces in Kabul (Insert, Carrington)

and reasserting the demand for Soviet troops to withdraw from Afghanistan, the resolution expressed a belief that the present crisis could be resolved by an international agreement to respect the 'neutrality' of Afghanistan and place it above the competition of world powers.

This formula was successfully designed to win a unanimous vote of the foreign ministers, and will now be taken up internationally.

But it is not of course designed as an olive branch to the Soviet bureaucracy; on the contrary, Carrington's proposal seeks to broaden the base of

attacks on the Soviet Union.

Couched in moderate terms to attract liberals, social democrats and 'non-aligned' forces, the resolution is put forward in the full expectation that the Soviet bureaucracy will reject it completely.

## Withdrawal

For the Kremlin Stalinists to concede such a status to Afghanistan—involving the withdrawal of Soviet forces, the dissolution of Karmal's government and new elections for a government chosen by the Afghan people—would be to accept a substantial defeat at

the hands of imperialism, and one that they will not be prepared to accept at this stage.

Carter has supported Carrington's proposal with diplomatic tact, careful not to jeopardise its future as a gambit among the 'non-aligned' states.

Its success will depend crucially on the attitude of Indira Gandhi. After several false starts, the Indian government has finally decided on a course of condemning the Soviet invasion while still maintaining close economic and military ties with the Kremlin Stalinists—and also attacking the US imperialists for exploiting the situation by the increase of military support to Pakistan.

The Soviet leaders will no doubt respond that they have proved themselves the best defenders of the sovereign independence of Afghanistan by answering the call for assistance from Amin's regime, and repeat that they will withdraw troops when the 'tribal rebellion' is ended, along with US, Pakistani, Egyptian, Zionist and Chinese support to the rebels.

## Welcomed

This was the line taken by Brezhnev last Friday in a speech significantly welcomed by Chancellor Schmidt, although it seems not to offer the slightest change from previous Kremlin statements.

The 'neutrality' proposal is simply a ploy of the imperialists and one chosen because of their inability to intervene with direct military force in Afghanistan, and their consequent need to isolate the Soviet bureaucracy diplomatically.

'Neutrality' would offer no road forward to the workers and peasants of Afghanistan—it would simply guarantee their continued exploitation and oppression.

# Bani-Sadr warns opponents

The 50 spies and other assorted agents of US imperialism are not the only ones to be hostages of the American embassy occupation in Tehran.

While the 'international commission of enquiry' cools its heels in the plush diplomatic lounge of Geneva airport, both Iranian and US leaders are still bound up in the coils of this crisis.

The commission itself was stuck in limbo at the last minute when the UN bureaucrats, US imperialists and Iranian leaders 'suddenly' realised that they were not talking about the same proposals—specifically on the fate of the hostages.

While UN general secretary Waldheim and the Carter administration apparently believed that the hostages would be released with the opening of the enquiry, the Iranian regime has presented a variety of shifting positions.

The Khomeini/Bani-Sadr government has been chained far more tightly by the occupation than the Carter administration.

Carter has found himself restricted in the manoeuvres of negotiations largely because of earlier belligerent statements. But the Iranian regime has to contend with far more complex problems.

Bani-Sadr's determination to end the occupation has always had to encounter the obstacle of the 'Islamic students, loyal to the anti-imperialist line of Islam'.

But his rivals in the most reactionary sections of the Islamic clergy have also seized



Bani-Sadr

on the issue, in a bid to discredit the new president.

It is these conflicts, and the incessant jockeying for place among the Iranian leaders, which account for the discrepancies between the statements of Khomeini, Bani-Sadr and foreign minister Gotzbadeh. Despite minor setbacks, it is still Bani-Sadr who firmly holds the upper hand.

## Reinforced

Khomeini reinforced the president's authority by conferring on him the post of Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces—a position Khomeini had previously retained for himself.

And before the doctors succeeded in isolating him from visitors, the Ayatollah made a further contribution (it seems quite likely to be his last before his death) towards stabilising the government's power.

For it was almost certainly Khomeini who secured a pledge from the 'Islamic students' that the fate of the hostages would be settled by the parliament, once it had been elected.

This formula should provide the basis for an agreement between all the major political forces vying for their particular scenario to be adopted by the government of the 'Islamic Republic'.

Bani-Sadr himself has continued the solid organisation of his campaign for the assembly elections, now to be held on March 14.

The forces backing his positions have been grouped together in the 'Unity Congress' or 'Islamic Revolution Congress' and are expected to win a heavy majority of seats.

## Defuse

But before those elections come, the president has still to defuse the mass mobilisations within the armed forces—calling for elected councils as against the officer hierarchy which the government seeks to impose.

The occupation of Tehran University mosque by air force technicians, junior officers and cadets has prompted Bani-Sadr to make his position clear on forms of direct action used by any elements in conflict with the government's strategy.

"Those who want to exert pressure by strikes or occupations in support of their demands will run up against opposition from me and from the nation."

Over the coming months, Bani-Sadr will not run short of targets for his opposition.

# ZIMBABWE

From back page

will be brazenly rigged: ballot boxes are to be flown to Britain for counting, where a suitable result will no doubt be arranged.

Should outrage at such manipulation threaten a renewed outbreak of fighting, the 'security' forces will have their job of repression made easier by the agreement by Nkomo and Mugabe to instruct their forces to remain in the assembly points until after the election.

This will expose them to the danger of aerial massacre if they stay put, or force them to fight their way through massed 'security' forces if they attempt to leave.

And there remains the threat of direct South African intervention should matters get completely out of hand.

But the imperialist moves are far from universally accepted. So brazen is the electoral fraud that 30 Commonwealth High Commissioners last week felt obliged to

complain at Soames' discrimination against Mugabe.

The Zambian government's official newspaper has declared the entire exercise a "charade", and that "we know the elections will be rigged". And the Nigerian government has stated its support for a resumption of the war if Mugabe is excluded from the government.

Meanwhile, as the likelihood of renewed violence in the next period increases day by day, Soames and the Tory leaders must ponder the best means of either withdrawing the £300 strong "monitoring force" before it gets caught up in the battle, or reinforcing it to play a role in what could be a prolonged and unwinnable war.

Whatever their decision, the black masses of Zimbabwe face a period of struggle in which only a revolutionary Marxist leadership can chart a course independent of imperialism and Stalinism on the one hand, and Mugabe's 'left-talking treachery' on the other.

# TILC International Summer School

Eight days of classes and discussion on basic questions of Marxism and the fight to reconstruct the Fourth International.

Sunday July 20—Sunday July 27

The Summer School will be attended by delegations from the organisations affiliated to the Trotskyist International Liaison Committee, and is open to WSL members and supporters.

More details available from:

WSL, BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX

# US oil workers at head of pay fight

Reprinted from *Labor News*, paper of the US Socialist League (DC). Copies of *Labor News* available (25p including p&p) from WSL, BM Box 5277, London WC1V 6XX.

Nearly four million workers will face contract battles this year and a key test of the outcome will be in the national strike of 60,000 Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers.

The oil workers who struck every major oil company on January 8 are facing a united front of the bosses.

Even with the billion dollar profits, the oil companies refuse to offer more than 5% in new money and a fully paid health and welfare plan.

Presently, many of the 60,000 workers pay \$48 to \$84 a month from their check to cover their medical plans.

## Hawaii

The effects of the strike has been felt most sharply by Hawaii where oil is not being delivered throughout the island.

The strategy of the companies is to bleed the union members through a long strike and run the plants with scabs and supervisors.

They are supported by Carter and the federal government along with many union officials who are attempting to impose wage "guide lines".

The federal government has also issued injunctions halting mass picketing.

Although the Teamsters leadership have sanctioned the strike, oil is still being transported by Teamster members.

In addition, American and foreign maritime unions continue to ship oil to the United States.

A key struggle must be to demand that the International Transport Federation that represents transport unions throughout the world must halt all shipment of oil to the US.

'Well, they told us they'd do more drilling after prices went up'

©1979 Herblock in The Washington Post



American oil workers should take a lesson from the British steel strike, where European and other international unions are halting the movement of all steel to England in a powerful effort to defeat the British Steel Corporation and the Tory-Thatcher government. The same

support should be built for the OCAW strike.

In an important act of support, the Inland Boatmen's Union, representing tug boat operators is refusing to unload oil barges at the 365,000 gallon-a-day Chevron refinery in Richmond, California.

A flotilla of OCAW boat pickets are now successfully stopping the unloading of oil barges and this action must be taken nationally.

The entire labour movement must solidarize with OCAW strikers in mass picket line support and financial contributions.

The 60,000 OCAW strikers face many months without strike payments and the labour movement in every region must contribute to the strike fund.

The AFL-CIO, Teamsters, ILWU and UAW must also build mass support rallies and picket lines to win the strike.

## Mass picketing

These oil refineries should be shut down by mass picketing of thousands of workers. Those unions, such as the CWA, Construction, Hotel and Restaurant, and Steel workers whose contracts expire this year should be on the front line of mass picketing to back the oil strike because their contracts will certainly be affected by the success of the OCAW battle.

The strategy of OCAW president Goss was to go along with Carter's previous wage guidelines. This has further eaten away at the wages of OCAW members.

A key contract demand must be for a full cost of living clause semi-annually based on the real rate of inflation for working people, yet this is not one of the concrete demands of Goss and the bargaining committee.

The government itself has already admitted that inflation rose last year at the rate of 13.3% nationally yet even that is understated by the government Consumer Price Index.

The Centre for Economic Alternatives, a Washington economist group, calls the CPI an

understatement since the most important purchases for workers such as food, energy, housing and medical care, have increased much faster than the CPI general rate.

Their "Index of Necessities" in the first 11 months of 1979 increased by 17.2% compared to the 13.1% of the CPI.

The trade union movement itself must determine the real rate of inflation since the government's is grossly understated and this should also be a part of the OCAW demands and the entire labour movement as well.

## Political attack

The loss of real income by OCAW workers and the American working people in every area is a political as well as economic attack on labour, yet the trade unions continue to support the Democrats and Republicans who are controlled by these same oil companies and union busters.



Carter: mounting political attack on American workers

# Meany: the bosses' favourite union chief

Reprinted from *Labor News*

The death of AFL-CIO leader George Meany has brought forth an outpouring of thanks for work well done, not only from the trade union bureaucracy but from the capitalist press as well.

This gratitude is well deserved for Meany and his cohorts put the interests of the corporations first and the working class second.

The January 14 issue of the *Wall Street Journal* compliments Meany for his acceptance of "the basic outline of our socio-economic system" and his work to make "the organisation (AFL-CIO) vigorously anti-Communist."

Throughout George Meany's dictatorship of the AFL-CIO, (he ran unopposed throughout his entire reign) he was absolutely opposed to the political independence of the American working class and the formation of a workers party.

Again the *Journal* gives thanks for this when it notes that Meany was against "the labour movement seeking to form a permanent alliance with

a political party, put its own people into office, or pursue radically expanded notions about state ownership of services and production."

Instead Meany has supported one capitalist politician after another, even when these same political hacks openly launched attacks on the trade union movement.

Every Democrat and Republican that Meany and the AFL-CIO leadership have supported since the formation of the organisation has in one way or another sought to strip the labour movement of its power and its rights.

It is no accident that today the labour movement is in the worst crisis that it has ever been in and the reactionary policies of Meany and his supporters have very much to do with its weaknesses.

The most valuable international role that Meany played according to the *Journal* was keeping the AFL-CIO out of the World Federation of Trade Unions and being a "force behind the liberal internationalism of labour's support for Mr. Truman and the Marshall Plan."

His open support for American imperialism lasted

until his final days. Even on his deathbed he congratulated Carter for the recent reactionary campaign against Iran.

This of course followed his support for the Korean War and the American invasion of Vietnam with 500,000 troops.

One particularly onerous role of Meany was his relationship with the CIA in its international operations.

Not surprisingly, the *New York Times* in its obituary of Meany left out this important aspect of his collaboration with the CIA through the American Institute for Free Labor Development.

It was up to Peter Grace, chairman of Grace and Co., and also chairman of the board of the AIFLD, to rectify this glaring omission.

## Founder

On January 11 in a letter to the *Times*, he writes that as a matter of fact George Meany was "founder and president of the AIFLD, which he conceived on a visit to South America in 1962.

"The institute is supported by organized labour, by the business community and by the

government."

Over 100 million dollars was funnelled to the AIFLD by the CIA to conduct covert operations against the working class of Latin America and to protect American corporations which Grace represents.

W.R. Grace and Co. has extensive investments in Latin America along with the Caribbean countries. Included in this list is Chile.

It was here that the AIFLD, with a budget in 1966 of \$645,600, was involved in CIA operations to disrupt the labour movement and encourage a right wing military coup against the Allende government.

Meany was intimately involved in this coup since he was in charge of the AIFLD.

Yet he and his brethren in the AFL-CIO, including his appointed successor Kirkland, continually rant and rave about the need for "free unions".

Their "free unions" are the same bureaucratically controlled unions that continue to support capitalism in the US and collaborate with the CIA in subverting the democratic rights of the working class internationally.

For this Meany has earned the hatred of the working class throughout the world.



Meany: boasted that he never walked a picket line in his life

Socialist Press reporter Danny MacIntosh talked to the Corby strike committee about police violence and the prospects for the strike—now nine weeks old.

It was a wet and grey Corby morning. Rain clouds had settled over the vast and silent British Steel works, obscuring the higher chimney stacks, but you could still make out 'Save Our Steel' emblazoned across the top of the gasometer.

On the gates of the works, braziers warmed just a handful of token pickets: mainly AUEW.

To have any more would be wasteful: the works is closed and the Corby pickets have become flying pickets; travelling as far north as Scotland and as far south as Sheerness.

As I walk into the Corby strike committee room the lights are burning and they have a window open to let the cigarette smoke out.

### Warm

A long rectangular table dominates the room.

It's covered with memos, bulletins, rotas, telephones, tea-cups and ashtrays.

The atmosphere is warm and welcoming and the occupants friendly. I'm given a seat and, before I can sit down, a cup of tea appears.

The mood of the committee is confident. "The lads don't call Keith Joseph 'the mad monk' anymore", says Mick Skelton, the strike co-ordinator. "Since his trip to Port Talbot they call him 'His Insanity'."

As Skelton is speaking, a flying picket who has just come in, creeps up behind and pretends to mug him.

They both end up on the floor with Mick Skelton shouting "Help me somebody, he's after my wage packet!"

Everybody laughs. None of them have received any wages in eight weeks.

Prompted by the incident, I ask about violence on the picket lines and the role of the police.

### Grim

The atmosphere changes instantly to grim and the humour disappears.

"We don't expect the police to do anything but support this government. After all, they're the highest paid scabs in the country.

"But you can't help getting bitter and angry about it when you're on the receiving end of a copper's knee or boot".

This is a young picket speaking. He looks like he hasn't had much sleep recently.

"Everybody in this room has been kneed in the balls by the law," he says, "but some of us weren't so lucky.

"You've got to try and stay on your feet because if you go down you get the boot in the head and the back as well as the balls.

"But what makes us really angry is when they do a snatch.

"When we were at Hadfields they suddenly rushed and snatched one of our lot.

"They threw him in a wagon and drove off. When we saw him again he was a real mess.

"He told us that they had driven six or seven miles outside Sheffield into the country, done him over, thrown him out and driven off—leaving him to find his own way back!"

"Then again, when we went to Leyland Castle Bromwich, we were outnumbered two to one by the law.

### Swines

"We counted 200—with more standing by—against 89 of us.

"They were swines that day. They really enjoyed it.

"One of our lot got snatched and dragged into a Leyland security post inside the factory gates where they did him over and then arrested him for resisting arrest.

"The poor bastard couldn't even stand up—let alone resist arrest.

# 'There is no place for moderation in this strike'

"That day they were doing everything to try and provoke us.

"Some drivers who we managed to speak to agreed to turn round and leave but were told by the police to drive in."

"Of course some of them just drove in and then straight out again but some didn't. Since when have the police been dictators of union policy?"

"That union has enough dictators of its own", interrupts Joe Bremner, a formidable red faced Scot.

# S

There is agreement to this remark right around the table, and the resentment against the lack of action by the TGWU is clear.

Joe Bremner is a cell leader: it's his job to lead a certain Corby task force (or cell) into action and keep it organised.

"I'm looking forward to meeting that f..... t..... David Buckle," he scowls, and glares at me.

I feel very relieved I'm not David Buckle and ask who he is and why he's a wanted man.

It turns out Buckle is the Oxford District Secretary of the TGWU who is responsible for

BRS.

"Most of those drivers wouldn't have crossed the line at Castle Bromwich unless they'd been instructed to," says Bremner.

"And it was Buckle who instructed them. He didn't even leave it up to the individual drivers! We want all movement of steel to stop. That's how we'll beat them and the TGWU must realise this."

The strike co-ordinator chimes in: "We're fed up with lip service from other unions, particularly the TGWU.

"It amazes me the way they hold back on movement of steel when they know damn well that if we lose through that it'll be their fault, and if we lose, they lose and everybody loses, except the Tories.

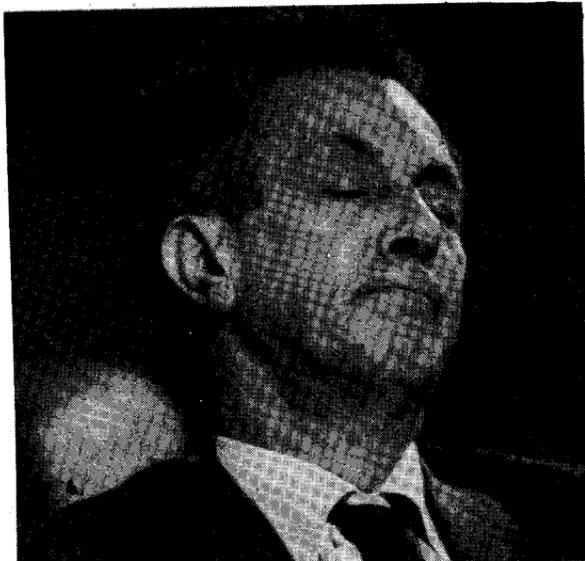
"We've got a revolution going on in this country: right now it's a Tory revolution; they're trying to get us back to 1850 where they think we belong so they can start building the empire again.

"I genuinely believe this government is insane: they're trying to completely run down our heavy industry and turn us into a finishing centre or a tourist centre. So it's a Tory revolution.

"But the more they turn the screws, more workers get more militant and active.

"When this strike started, it was the executive that ran it. Now, after eight weeks, it's all changed.

"Now it's the workers who are running it through the strike committees. The executive must obey the demands of the workers or face a vote of confidence.



"His Insanity" Keith Joseph



Bill Sirs with Welsh TUC leaders: what chance has he got against crooks?



Police wade in on Lanark pickets

"The workers will not accept any attempted sell-out. They're too militant and too organised.

"They know that this is the big one. They know that they are leading the working class in the most important strike of the century.

"Bill Sirs is trying to play it straight. But what chance has he got against crooks? We have to fight fire with fire. There is no place for moderation in this strike: it's a place for extremism.

"It was the workers who closed Hadfields and it will be the workers who close Sheerness.

"These strike committees are like workers' councils where decisions are taken.

"If we put our name to a no confidence vote it would be a genuine reflection of the views and estimations of the workers.

"We haven't done that yet: and as long as the executive does what it is instructed to do, then I don't suppose we'll have to.

"But we must have help from other unions. It's okay, for Scargill to march up with his army. We're grateful for their support. But they should have pickets on their own gates!

"Scargill should get the miners to stop using steel in the mines. Leyland too; they're getting steel from Holland, it's still coming in.

"And, anyway, Leyland should be on strike right now. What are they waiting for? Christmas?

"We'll win this strike: because we can't afford to lose it."

Everybody around Mick Skelton agrees with vigour.

As I was getting ready to go, a young picket said:

"It's funny, I didn't think it would be a Tory government that brought about the revolution."

## Leicester NUT vote to occupy

The consequences of retreat for those trade unionists who tried to duck any fight on the cuts were spelt out last week.

Schools where they voted not to strike on February 27 have become top targets for immediate loss of ancillary and lab staff as County Hall officials move in to carry out the announced 1500 sackings.

Instead of across the board redundancies, the cuts announced are in specific schools with poor union records and large staffs.

In one case, Burrell college, virtually all non-teaching staff are earmarked for the chop.

This clearly demonstrates the lunatic complacency of NUT's policy of relying on school by school ballots to decide local action.

But more particularly, with NALGO and NUPE leaders openly talking of negotiating the redundancies, it shows exactly what these reformist bureaucrats really have to offer their members.

What is needed now is a sharp political edge to the cuts fight in Leicester.

The aim must be to compel all public sector unions to stop negotiating and publicly declare their determination to fight all

redundancies by strike action.

An important step towards this, and towards providing a focus for the future development of the struggle was made at mid-Leicester NUT where they voted unanimously to support any members who occupied their workplaces in opposition to closures.

With several teachers' centres due for shut-down at Easter, and redundancy notices scheduled for issue on March 13, this can provide a sharp counter balance to the retreats of NUPE and NALGO, and a lead to groups like nursery nurses and lab technicians who want to defend their jobs.

### Supporting strikes

Other union branches must now join in to support occupation, and campaign for supporting strikes.

At the same time, the spontaneous growth of parents' action groups across the city—all determined to halt the cuts in their own area—opens immediately the prospect of a labour movement inquiry into council finance and spending.

By allying parents, teachers and students, such an inquiry would create the ideal grounds for a campaign to compel councils to overspend and cancel debt charges to the already bulging banks.

# PRESS GANG



There are things to be said no doubt about the press coverage of the Robinson witch-hunt—but to place too much emphasis on the role of the press in the Longbridge vote would be to obscure rather than illuminate the lessons involved.

The truth is that propaganda campaigns can be devastating when they fill a vacuum but cannot succeed against workers who have a clear political grasp of the tasks and dangers that confront them.

The sacking of Robinson and the failure of the unions at Longbridge to defend him is not a tribute to the press but a condemnation of the leadership given to the workers—including the leadership of the CP and Robinson himself.

But there can be no class conscious worker who does not mourn the result.

It would be inhuman to see Robinson shaking the hands of his supporters and leaving the meeting with as brave a face as he could manage without being moved.

Robinson is a victim of CP policy—but he is also a victim of the class war.

From our enemies we can

expect no mercy: no suspension of hostilities. They danced on Robinson's grave with the fervour of primeval savages.

The pages of Fleet Street's vultures was enough to turn the strongest stomach.

"On Your Bike Robbo . . . Out You Go . . . Rout of the Rabble Rousers . . ."; the parade of exultant headlines was matched by the death cell reporting.

### Cajoled

The reporters gathered round him as he left, recording his last words. The photographers cajoled him into a better position.

The funeral was on the state and it was going to be as public a display as they could afford.

But the organisers of this Roman holiday are impressionists. They cannot understand the shock waves of the class struggle.

In defeat they see no salvation—in victory nothing but the winners' laurel. They have therefore drawn the wrong conclusions from the events of the week.

At Sheerness the press hailed another victory. The scabs in the factory had been smuggled into work half way through the night.

Deliveries to and from the factory were cancelled. The mass picket brought a recognition by the steel firm that neither the massed ranks of the police nor the best efforts of the witch-hunters could ensure a supply line to the factory.

The result of the voting in Wales was likewise hailed as a shop floor revolt against militancy. It was nothing of the kind.

The voting was a repudiation of partial struggles. The Welsh miners were not prepared to go to the barricades while the British TUC and the miners of Yorkshire, Kent and Scotland were called on to take no action.

The identikit editorials which have hailed a new dawn of management-worker cooperation are wrong.

### Dung spreading

In the fruits of TUC treachery they see a vindication of their own dung spreading.

But the class struggle, which erupts and subsides according to its own laws and not to the dictates of Fleet Street will prove them wrong.

After the celebrations a bitter hangover can be confidently predicted.

# Tub-thumping in Manchester . . .

4,000 trade unionists, pensioners and students in militant mood marched through Manchester last Monday chanting "Maggie, Maggie, Maggie.—OUT! OUT! OUT!" and "What do we want? Tories OUT!"

Banners represented engineering industry unions, local factories and building sites, along with steel workers and miners.

But at the ensuing rally at the Free Trade Hall the marchers were offered no way forward towards their objective of removing the Tories.

The rally started with the news that Arthur Scargill sent his apologies, and that Derek Robinson hadn't arrived, but was supposedly on his way.

Brian Molyneux, the victimised ISTC steward from South Yorkshire announced that Keith Jones, the South Yorks and Humberstone strike co-ordinator had obeyed a telegram from Bill Sirs instructing him not to attend the demo!

### Hard time

The first speaker was Cllr. Ken Franklin, deputy council leader, who outlined how they were "fighting" the cuts—a speech filled out with general anti-Tory rhetoric.

But he had a hard time from the audience, the chairman having to intervene frequently to get him a hearing.

Hecklers reminded him about the cutback in teachers: this wasn't the same, he



Benn

claimed. It was voluntary redundancy, with high payments and early retirement benefits hitherto unseen anywhere!

Brian Molyneux from the South Yorks Strike Committee followed, outlining the steel workers' case, and calling for support in picketing the private Manchester Steel plants.

He mentioned that only the South Wales miners had come out in favour of a General Strike, possibly as a result of repeated shouts from different parts of the hall for a General Strike or "Get rid of Sirs and you'll win it".

Tribunite MP and former Ireland Minister Stan Orme followed with a predictable speech telling the audience that the Tories were terrible, and ruining everything.

He, too, had a hard time from the audience, being reminded of Labour "cuts" and the question of Ireland.

The star of this show; however, was Tony Benn.

Although he too was heckled at first and given some stick for the policies of the last Labour government, he treated the audience to what was possibly his "leftest" speech ever.

He tore into the bankers, speculator: media owners and IMF; he slammed the new cold-war atmosphere and military spending; he took the part of Derek Robinson; and he declared it wasn't enough to just get rid of the Tories and return Labour, socialist policies were needed.

Industry had to be taken out of the hands of the capitalist class, he insisted.

Despite issuing a further call for the nationalist policy of import controls to protect British industry, he even went on about Labour being internationalistic, and condemned imperialism and the past imperial role of Britain, talking of the need for solidarity with the "Third World".

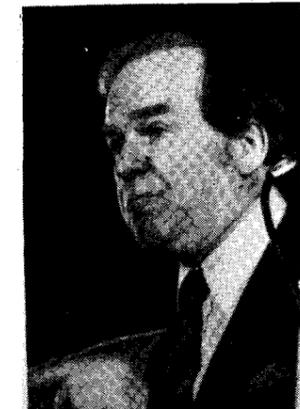
Benn called for not just a Labour government, but for one based on socialist policies. Yet just how all this was to be achieved was unsaid.

Indeed the only speaker to call explicitly for the Tory government to be brought down was the Manchester students' representative, who spoke graphically on the impact of Tory policies on youth, students and women.

Yet as John Tocher, local Confed. secretary, pointed out, the day's activity and the militancy in the rally showed that the support exists for taking on this government.

Benn and his fellow 'lefts', after years of betrayal in governments with Wilson and Callaghan now parade as advocates of socialism, but refuse to campaign for united class action—a General Strike—to bring down the Thatcher government and create conditions to confront and defeat the right wing leaders of the Labour and trade union movement.

They know of course that such a struggle would force the 'lefts' themselves either to put their demagogic words into action, or to stand exposed as nothing more than empty windbags in front of a militant mass movement of workers.



Orme

# . . . grovelling in Bedwelty



Kinnock

Neil Kinnock has for some time been pinpointed by *Socialist Press* as one of Labour's key 'men on the make'.

Only two weeks ago, however, he was in the doghouse with the Party's 'left' for steadfastly refusing to pledge a Labour government to reverse Tory education cuts.

Keen not to lose such valuable supporters, he has sprung

to action with a radical-sounding speech in his Bedwelty constituency which offers all things to all men.

Out came the usual flowing anti-Tory phrases, and routine 'warnings' to Thatcher and Joseph.

Out came the usual disavowal of any revolutionary aspirations: "I am not talking about revolution or anything resembling such melodramatic action."

But Kinnock went one step further — and listed his preferences of the ways in which he feels Thatcher could be stopped.

### Tory revolt

The first — his favourite — was through "Tories in revolt". The second "public opinion in full voice". The third was mass action by steel workers, miners and others.

The first option, according

to Kinnock, would be "short, painless, and productive"! The second would be "long, disruptive and bitter". And the third, unthinkable, option would, he feared, be "infinite, destructive, and would bring only the peace of the battlefield."

Such speeches — balancing carefully between verbal militancy and vigorous opposition to mass action in practice — are the stuff that class traitors are made of.

# Crackdown on women PoWs

As careerist SDLP politicians debate with Tory Butcher Atkins the most likely way of securing themselves a well-paid niche in a "devolved" Paisley-led government, the barbaric repression of republican prisoners has been stepped up.

January saw a spate of incidents in which several of the 360 'blanket' prisoners demanding a restoration of political status in the notorious Long Kesh concentration camp were subjected to a vicious campaign of beatings, humiliating "searches", and wanton vandalism to their cells and bedding at the hands of prison screws.

But towards the end of the month this British offensive appears to have been carried over to a campaign of violence and ill-treatment of women republicans in Armagh jail.

Thirty three women are currently 'on protest' in Armagh jail, refusing to accept the "criminal status" reimposed upon them by the Labour government which withdrew the special category status from republican prisoners of war in 1976.

Women prisoners already confined to their cells for 21 hours each day have been beaten, refused use of the toilet, and subjected to increasingly foul and unhygienic conditions in a renewed attempt by male and female prison officers to break their fighting spirit.

According to *Republican News*, February 7 saw a squad of 40 male screws attack prisoners on B1 wing, and wreck cells.

This rampage was followed up by individual maltreatment of prisoners, all of whom are refusing to do prison work as part of their protest.

Unlike their male comrades, republican women prisoners are

(like all women in British jails) allowed to wear their own, rather than prison clothing.

### Defiance

But their defiance of the repressive measures meted out by their jailers has brought still further harassment and intimidation, and the women are now reported to be confined in filthy and urine-soaked cells.

Despite their specialised ill-treatment, the Tory government and their reactionary Labour henchmen still insist that such prisoners are not political prisoners, but common criminals.

No such illusions are peddled by Lord Lowry, Lord Chief Justice in the occupied six counties. He has called upon judges in the no-jury Diplock frame-up courts to step up the length of sentences handed out to republicans declaring that:

"It almost certainly is a fact



that the general run of sentences will have to become more severe, because there is no doubt the object of sentencing is a deterrent and punishment for something that is a danger to society".

Indeed the Irish liberation struggle is a "danger to society" — not only to the reactionary Orange six-county statelet, but also to the stability of imperialist exploitation and capitalist rule in the whole of Ireland, and to the security of capitalist rule in Britain itself.

The successful defeat of British imperialist repression in

Ireland would be a major step forward against the vicious Tory exploiters at home.

In solidarity with the republican prisoners; in joint struggle with Irish workers north and south; and in the interests of the struggle for socialism in Britain, trade unionists and socialists in Britain must step up the struggle to force the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland; the restoration of political status for Irish PoWs preparatory to an amnesty; and for the right of the Irish people to determine their own political future.

# MACHINE TOOL CRISIS: IMPORTS NOT TO BLAME

Since 1970 over 23,000 jobs have been lost in the machine tool industry and the present crisis promises to further this decline. A possible 900 more redundancies were announced recently for Herberts in Coventry.

In this climate any attempt to uncover the reasons for the run down will be of interest, and the report discussed here is one such attempt.

It commands particular attention by way of its origin, method of construction and the well researched nature of the material presented.

## Delegates

The Coventry Machine Tool Workers Committee (CMTWC) is made up of delegates from the JSSCs, both manual and white collar, at all the main machine tool factories in Coventry.

Research was carried out by the Coventry Workshop, an independent organisation which researches for shop stewards, trade union bodies, tenants, etc.

The Workshop has also produced a number of other reports including— "Chrysler's Crisis: The Workers Answer"; "Disappearing Jobs in Telecommunications"; "British Leyland in Britain and South Africa"; and "A Workers Enquiry into the Motor Industry".

The Machine Tool investigation was constructed in sections, with each part being discussed with the MTWC through a series of teach-ins.

## Undermine

Findings which undermine the reactionary demand for import controls will be of particular use to socialists when arguing within the trade union movement.

Section I is headed "Are imports the cause of the crisis?"

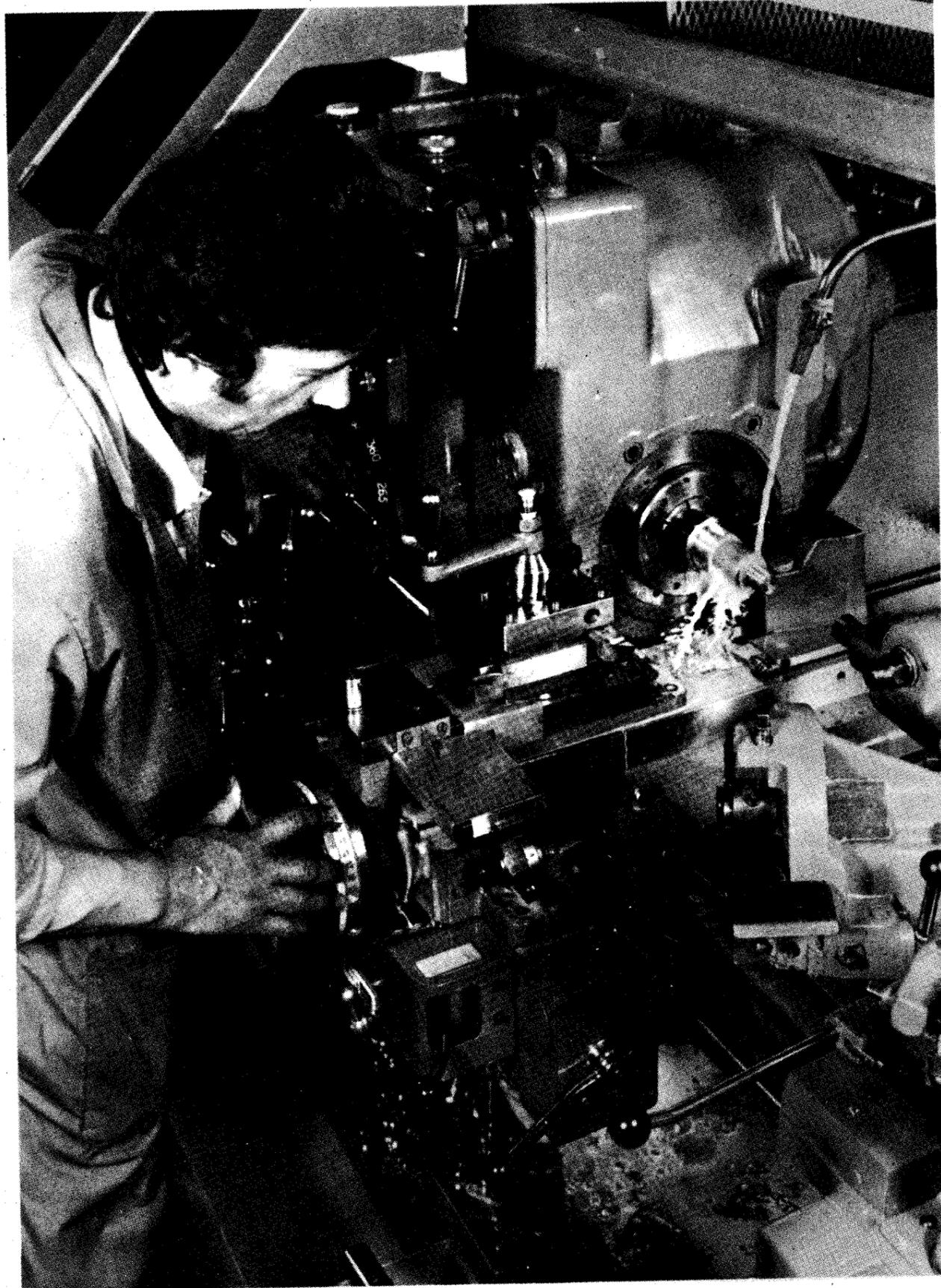
The graph (see fig. 1) shows that the rapid acceleration of imports did not begin until two years after the steep fall in jobs; the root of decline cannot be located in imports.

Jobs began to fall in 1970 and the report defines the reason for this drop as a conscious drive for short term profits and maximum dividend payments by the employers in the sixties.

During the mid-sixties large conglomerates moved in to buy up smaller family concerns.

## Compensation

Tube Investments spent £19 million between 1966-70 (much of which was compensation money from nationalisation of its steel interests).



TI moved from no investments in machine tools in 1966 to becoming the second largest group in the industry by 1970.

Stavely Industries increased their control between 1964-66 from 4 to 18 firms.

By 1970, seven firms were responsible for 50% of the industry's output. Firms began to rationalise as a means of achieving higher profits in the shortest space of time possible.

Between 1965-70

Herberts gained £8.7 million in profit but distributed £9.2 million in dividends to shareholders during the same period.

## Investment

A NEDO comparison of investment per employee in mechanical engineering showed that investment was 50% higher in West Germany than in the UK.

Figures for research and development show a similar trend, with little increase

between 1968-75. The report makes it clear that this was no lack of foresight, but a deliberate strategy.

Manufacturing firms looking for a way to reestablish their declining rate of profit in the early '70s began to demand labour-saving machinery.

It is suggested that this may have been responsible for a surge of orders from about 1972.

Sophisticated Numerical Control Machine Tools

(NCMTs) formed an important part of this demand. There had been an increase in the installation of NCMTs since 1960 of about 9% per annum as against an average drop of 5% per annum in overall new installation of new machine tools.

It is precisely these high productivity machines that have been imported in increasing numbers since 1971—(see fig. 9).

Lack of research and development coupled with the policy of short-term

Date	Numerically Controlled	
	£m	%
1971	2.8	5.9
1972	2.4	5.1
1973	4.4	6.7
1974	10.2	11.5
1975	16.3	14.7
1976	23.6	17.5
1977	14.4	11.2

Source: Machine Tool Trade Association  
Note: (1) until 1974, information

## Destination

Advanced capitalist countries

Developing countries

Communist countries

Total

NC as % of all MT exports

Source: MTTA (unpublished)

(A.) Advanced capitalist countries

(B.) Communist countries

(C.) Developing countries

Total

Source: MTTA (unpublished)

profit maximisation in the sixties has led to losses in domestic markets.

A fall in orders in the early '70s led to a policy of "slimming for profit" which resulted in further sacking and plant closures.

By 1977 output was only just over half the 1970 figures. Product ranges were reduced and research and development cut from £4.8 million in 1968 to £1.9 million in 1972.

## Run down

The large firms were responsible for the major job losses, e.g. Tube Investments ran down capital employed from £19.2 million in 1969 to £11.4 million in 1972 and closed down the last of the four Churchill factories in Halifax which it had taken over in the mid-sixties.

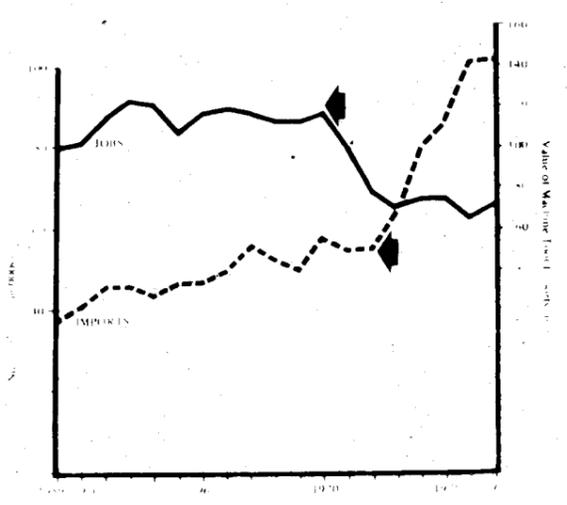
On top of the policy of high dividend payments the report identifies a deliberate retreat by the employers from the advanced competitive markets of the leading capitalist countries.

As mentioned above the largest absolute rise in imports of any specific machine tool has been Numerical Control machines, (NCs) rising from 5.9% of all imports in 1971

ME!

**BARRY TURNER** reviews the booklet *Crisis in Engineering: Machine Tool Workers Fight for Jobs*, published by the Coventry Workshop/Institute for Workers Control.

**Figure 1**  
Job Loss in the Machine Tool Industry and the Rise in Machine Tool Imports, 1959-1977



Note: The arrows indicate that the rapid acceleration of imports began two years after the steep fall in jobs.  
Sources: Department of Employment Gazette: Annual Census of Employment for 1959-1976 data and quarterly estimates for 1977. MTTA: unpublished data (1959-1967 imports data). The British Machine Tool Industry & Trade, Basic Facts, 1978 (1968-1977 imports data).

**Figure 8**  
Total Imports of Machine Tools, B1 Type, 1971-1977

Machining Centres		Unit Construction		Physico-Chemical		Automatic <sup>1</sup>		Not elsewhere specified		Total Imports
£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
0.6	1.2	1.4	2.9	0.8	1.6	£41.4m		88.4%		46.9
0.5	1.0	2.5	5.2	0.8	1.7	£41.6m		86.9%		47.8
1.2	1.8	1.5	2.3	1.1	1.7	£57.3m		87.5%		65.5
2.1	2.4	5.8	6.5	1.6	1.8	15.9	17.8	53.5	60.1	89.0
4.0	3.6	5.7	5.2	1.5	1.4	22.7	20.4	60.9	54.8	111.1
5.1	3.8	4.2	3.2	2.0	1.5	25.5	19.0	74.3	55.2	134.7
5.7	4.4	4.6	3.6	1.1	0.9	13.5	10.6	89.0	69.3	128.4

Assoc. (Unpublished Analysis).  
Data was not available on the value of imports of automatic machine tools.

**Figure 10**  
Exports of NC Machine Tools, 1971-77

	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
£m	7.6	3.0	3.6	7.6	12.9	14.0	5.4
%	85.9	80.5	69.8	71.0	66.5	46.8	60.2
£m	0.6	0.2	0.3	1.8	4.2	10.5	1.3
%	7.1	4.2	6.6	16.5	21.5	35.1	13.5
£m	0.6	0.6	1.2	1.3	2.3	5.4	2.3
%	7.1	15.2	23.6	12.5	12.0	18.1	25.3
£m	8.8	3.7	5.1	10.7	19.3	30.0	8.9
%	10.3	4.7	6.1	11.2	12.4	18.1	5.5

**Figure 11**  
Non-NC Machine Tool Exports by destination, 1971-1977

	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
£m	52.5	47.8	51.1	58.6	83.2	78.6	89.6
%	68.5	64.5	64.8	69.4	61.1	58.0	58.1 ↓
£m	11.9	14.8	14.8	8.7	20.7	18.4	20.5
%	15.5	19.9	18.8	10.3	15.2	13.6	13.3 ↓
£m	12.2	11.6	13.0	17.2	32.3	38.5	44.2
%	16.0	15.7	16.4	20.3	23.7	28.4	28.7 ↓
£m	76.6	74.2	78.9	84.5	136.2	135.6	154.3
%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

to 11.24% in 1977 (a rise in value from £2.8 million to £14.4 million).  
UK production of NCs fell sharply in the slump of 1972 and although production more than doubled in value from 1972-6 the manufacturers increasingly failed to keep pace with rising demand (see fig 8).  
On the export side between 1972-76, NC exports almost halved as a percentage of the value sold to advanced countries—dropping from 80% to 46% (fig 10).  
Bias seems to have been placed on exporting to the developing countries and the deformed workers states.  
This trend is also repeated, with emphasis on the developing countries when we look at the percentage of total exports of non NC machine tools.  
These figures show a drop from 64% to 58% for the advanced capitalist countries, and a rise from 15% to 28% for the developing countries.  
The reason for this concentration is that the developing countries will take the traditional designs. However these markets are smaller and likely to be short lived.  
The developing countries

are increasing demand for "local content" of goods exported to them and their aim is to achieve complete manufacture in their own country as soon as possible.  
In the advanced countries the report claims that the increased demand is for advanced technology machinery and the competition is already fierce.  
Capital required to compete in these markets is immense, and it is therefore suggested that employers have two choices for the future.  
Firstly they can continue to preside over the decline and eventual death of the machine tool industry.  
The second option is intense re-organisation and the replacing of workers by machines to cut costs and increase the level of productivity.  
The research is clear in its statement that, whatever the choice, workers will bear the brunt.  
In Japan, (arguably in capitalist terms the most efficient machine tool industry) the labour force has been cut by 36% in the last six years.  
The picture is, therefore, one of conglomerates moving into an industry, making a fast profit and then collapsing whole firms

with the resultant rising unemployment.  
The response of union bureaucrats and the Communist Party is to ask the workforce to fight for a policy of import controls—which would lead inevitably to the redundancy of workers abroad.  
**Socialist objection**  
The report fails to raise this basic socialist objection to import controls, despite providing much detailed information which points away from imports as the root cause of the crisis.  
Part of the attraction of import controls for the union leaders is that the demand for action is shifted onto the government thus relieving the bureaucrats of the necessity to lead a fight against the employer at the point of production or in threatened plants.  
In keeping with their class collaborationist methods they line up with the capitalists to lobby the House of Commons rather than conflict with the bosses or lead a principled struggle throughout the machine tool industry for nationalisation, without compensation, under workers' management.  
An informative section

on the effects of automation in the industry concludes by pointing out that technological change is not in itself a bad thing, but that within present society the reasons for which, and the ways in which it is introduced frequently are.  
Traditional machine tools and forms of engineering may now be becoming redundant but that is no reason for consigning the workers to the scrap heap.  
Socialists must point out that advanced technology has been made available by the efforts of workers and financed out of their exploitation—they, therefore, have a right to shape the direction and control the pace of technological change.  
Automation must be introduced in ways to increase useful production, improve conditions, shorten hours and safeguard jobs.  
The skills of machine tool workers and the machines they work with need not be tied to the traditional range of products. They could equally well be harnessed to the manufacture of a whole range of alternative socially useful products.

To achieve this end, a union inquiry is required which would produce an overall plan for alternative production.  
State intervention is covered in a short but useful chapter which does much to support the view, long held by the Workers Socialist League that bodies such as the NEB simply channel vast amounts of workers' money into the pockets of private employers.  
Huge sums are pumped

in, with no reduction in job loss and no challenge to private ownership.  
In reality governments, and the Labour government in particular, simply finance vicious attacks on jobs and conditions in the name of capitalist "viability".  
Herberts, despite large grants, has cut 3,000 jobs and closed its apprenticeship school.  
The report points out that profits can be only maintained at the expense of jobs. There is, therefore, no common interest between employer and workforce and any participation-type set-up with management is, as always, extremely dangerous.  
This danger is reflected again in the demand for import controls which implies a workers' alliance with UK employers against the jobs of workers abroad.

The concluding section of the report concerns a strategy for fighting back and is without doubt the weakest part of the whole document.  
Correct organisational calls for a national shop stewards' combine committee, a shop stewards' paper and a research group to assist the committee are proposed, along with hesitant recognition of the need to build links with combine committees in other industries, and "even with groups of workers in the machine tool industry in Europe".  
The strategy plan fails, however, to present a coherent programme to defend jobs and living standards leading forward to the nationalisation of the industry.  
Redundancy should be

fought by a policy of work sharing on full pay under the control of elected union committees and not, as suggested, by calling for a 100% lay-off pay or relying on Government employment subsidies.  
Nowhere is there any mention of a tactic to fight closure, despite the fact that the pamphlet is full of examples of shut-downs over the last twenty years.

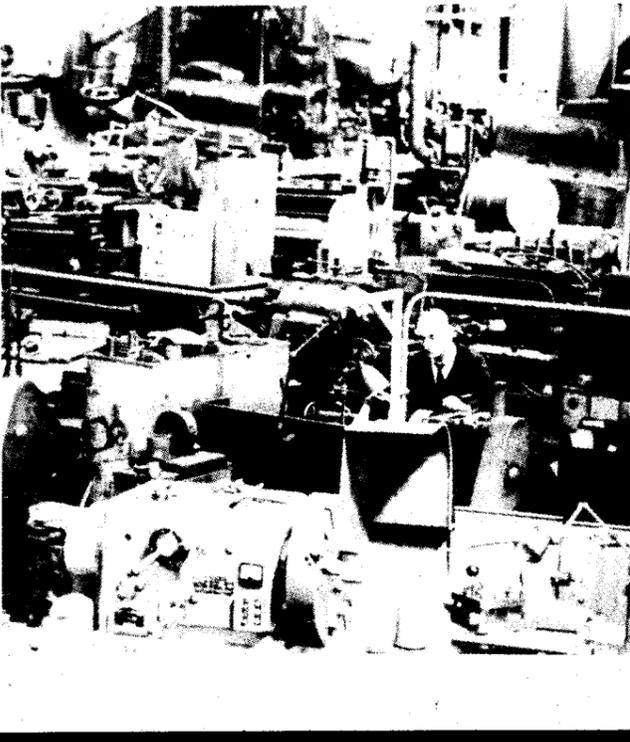
**Occupation**  
A policy of occupation and supporting strike action must be fought for. All trace of the reactionary, nationalistic demand for import controls must be removed.  
The suggestion that "public firms should be required to justify publicly any purchase they intend to make of imported tools" is a pure diversion from the necessary fight for workers control and social ownership of the industry and a union plan for useful production.

The necessity for all up-to-date information is met through the demand to open the books of the employers to union committees. This demand is completely avoided.  
Instead, stewards are encouraged to use the dubious provisions of the Employment Protection Act to tease out whatever tit-bits of information the bosses deem it fit to release.  
The "long-term aim" of bringing the whole industry into social ownership and then to plan its future in the interests of the workers and the wider community is stated.

**Long term**  
However there appears to be little connection, in struggle, between this "long term aim" and the present fights against closure and redundancies.  
Nationalisation seems to result from long discussions between trade union leaders and the government leading to a fully formulated and agreed master plan, rather than flowing out of the struggle to prevent factory shut-downs.  
Failure to appreciate the need for a programme of transitional demands to protect standards and draw the struggle forward underlays the confusion of the CMTWC strategy.

The result will be the relegation of the long overdue defence of jobs by nationalisation without compensation, under workers' management to the "never-never land" of tub-thumping, conference speeches by trade union bureaucrats and Stalinist convenors.

**Conference**  
The CMTWC has circulated the report to all major factories throughout the UK and hopes to call a conference to discuss a strategy for the fight back in the industry.  
It is hoped that the conference will be convened sometime in the spring and may be organised in conjunction with the Coventry Workshop and the Institute for Workers Control.  
Socialist Press supporters in the engineering industry should read the report and urge support for the conference in the branches and districts.  
Further organisation details plus copies of the report (cost £1.50) can be obtained from: Coventry Workshop, 40 Binley Road, Coventry.



# FASCIST DISARRAY

The series of splits which have recently shaken the National Front and now erupted into open factional warfare need to be taken very seriously by socialists.

Not only do they give us a clear picture of the state of British fascism, but also, by refraction, they offer an image of the very real political crisis which confronts the bourgeoisie.

In the winter of 1973/4, as the Tories staggered under the blows of a determined and undefeated working class, the NF was able to win around itself a considerable layer of disenchanted right wing Tories.

In towns like Leicester, leading local Tory party workers shifted to the NF and the base was built for a sustained NF electoral campaign.

## Total collapse

The total collapse of this NF electoral strategy in the 1979 elections, where their candidates lost votes as well as their deposits, inevitably caused major problems for the self-appointed vanguard of the master race.

All the old arguments of electoralism against street violence, populism versus open fascism, 'democratic' party versus dictatorial group and, of course, about the identity of the future British 'Fuehrer', re-emerged at the NF's police-guarded Yarmouth conference.

The crisis was, however, far greater than that which broke out at the time of the earlier Kingsley-Read split.

This time, a decisive factor in the Front's failure had been the relentless campaigning of anti-fascists throughout the country and their willingness to

## Class action needed to drive them from the streets

By Colin Morrow



Tory conference: the Tories stole racist vote from NF

fight in town after town to keep fascism off the streets.

Memories of clashes in Southall and West Bromwich hung over the Yarmouth NF Conference like a black pall.

At the same time, the willingness of Thatcher's Tories to openly embrace racism as an electoral gambit and to garnish this with more than a touch of open anti-communist witch-hunting offered the right a more respectable forum for their politics. The NF were boxed in. Politically threadbare, and

physically powerless they were in a blind alley.

The hardcore thugs were drifting into the British Movement in search of a means of expressing their frustration, whilst the organisation staggered from defeat to defeat on the streets and in the ballot boxes.

In a very real sense 1979 was the year the police stood between the NF and extinction.

In this situation the major battle which emerged in the NF was over credibility, and in particular the credibility of the

leadership.

Both the NF Constitutional Movement led by the Fountaine/Kavanagh faction and Anthony Reed-Herbert's new British People's Party have focussed on the fact that the history of the NF is damaged by Webster and Tyndall's own careers.

In the open letter sent by himself and the NF West Midlands organiser, Stan Goodwin, to members, Reed-Herbert states:

"We criticise the leadership

of the National Front for its past, the Nazi image it has in people's minds, the image of violence that the media has been allowed to build up thanks to many of the tactics adopted by the leadership and the homosexual connotations which have caused distress to many members".

Clearly there are no political disagreements here.

In fact Reed-Herbert and Fountaine have gone out of their way to assert the continuity of their nationalism:

"Let us make clear immediately that our nationalist policies are in no way in issue here," they state in the open letter.

What disturbs the mini-fuehrers is their inability to break out of the narrow ghetto of hole-in-the-corner racism to a genuine base amongst the petty bourgeois and the most backward, racist elements of the working class.

As Reed-Herbert puts it, the question is "whether the National Front as a political movement is capable of taking these policies forward to power and implementation".

Thus, the internal intrigue—which saw Reed-Herbert defending the NF in the Excalibur House inquiry at the very time he was preparing the BPP split—centres fundamentally on how to impose fascism on the British working class.

The new BPP has clearly found a resonance amongst NF members.

In Leicester, Birmingham, Northampton, Loughborough and Nottingham they have taken a majority of NF members.

As their NF Northampton spokesman, Marilyn James put it:

"More than half the Northampton Branch has left the party".

And the new focus, according to this demoralised petty bourgeois, is to be "stamping out Communism in Britain".

Reed-Herbert may well claim that he is seeking "a party of clean, creditable political figures with no Nazi taint," but behind this lies a well trodden path of open support for Tyndall and Webster's line.

In 1975 he backed them on the NF Directorate against Kingsley-Read, having wavered at first under the temptation of being a councillor.

He has also been the tame NF house attorney for years, defending Relf, Webster, et al against the various charges against them.

But with such clear disorientation and demoralisation in the fascist ranks, there is now an opportunity for anti-fascists decisively to intervene.

The NF rump must now be firmly driven off the streets, and an offensive begun to ensure the BPP is stillborn.

The breeding ground of fascism is the material conditions and problems which confront and frustrate the working class, denied any perspective from the leaders of the labour movement. It is not adequate to write off the NF as the Anti Nazi League has done.

## Class action

Fascism does not destroy itself, it has to be physically defeated by class action.

This means stepping up the moves in union branches to bar fascists from membership, and driving them out of the unions.

At the same time labour movement defence squads must be built wherever the fascists retain a presence to drive them off the streets—whatever they call themselves.

And in the workers' movement the struggle must be stepped up for a programme of action through which workers can fight to resolve the problems they face—falling living standards, mass unemployment, housing queues and slashed public services.

United class action against the employers and Thatcher's bosses government is the most effective answer to fascist and racist agitation: those labour leaders that obstruct such action must be confronted and removed.

# Much ado about nothing

TERRY EAGLETON reviews *Culture and Crisis in Britain in the 30s*, ed. Jon Clark and others; Lawrence and Wishart, £7.50

The British Stalinists' long struggle for respectability has taken a number of curious forms over the last decade or so.

First it was religion. Back in the mid-1960s, small groups of CPers and Christians, often from the same public schools, met in smoke-filled rooms to ponder the parallels between socialism and the Second Coming, redemption and revolution.

This dialogue, for some unaccountable reason, proved less than politically fruitful; and the early 1970s saw the Stalinists in hot pursuit of the rather more alluring bandwagon of women's liberation.

Their gentlemanly open-mindedness on this topic was enough to hi-jack a few leading feminists into the party; and encouraged by this success, they launched into even more ambitious terrain.

The 'Communist University of London' was established, an annual jamboree of Marxist theory abuzz with seminars on everything from pop culture to the Popular Front Rosa to radio Luxembourg.

## Wander

No tiresome political commitment was demanded; you could just wander meditatively from lecture hall to lecture hall, filling your notebook as you went with scraps of Gramsci and fragments of counter-culture.

The two intellectual stars of the show, 'Marxist' sociologists Barry Hindess and Paul Hirst, returned each year to dismantle yet another central doctrine of historical materialism.

One year they would disprove the existence of modes of production, the next year



Culmination of the Popular Front: the 1939 Stalin-Hitler Pact

they were back to demonstrate that only vulgar Marxists believed that ideology had anything to do with class interests.

Meanwhile, things were hotting up on the 'cultural' front.

The British Stalinists had spotted that 'culture' was an area thronged with a number of glamorous new theories and free-floating left students, which like religion and feminism might repay moving in on.

A literary journal, *Red Letters*, was accordingly launched by a group of younger party members enamoured of the French theorist Louis Althusser.

This was doubtless a little disturbing for the party leadership, who had just pushed forward one of their well-tried hacks, John Lewis, to counter Althusser's positions.

Just as the British CP had been growing respectable, reasonable and pro-religious, along

had come Althusser with his high-flown French abstractions and ferocious "anti-humanism" to upset the applecart.

It was clearly advisable, however, to give the young people a little rope: theoretically and politically bankrupt as they were, the Stalinist leaders badly needed an intellectual boost and a cultural show-piece, and if it had to be the alien French jargon of *Red Letters*, then so be it.

Perhaps the young people would leave the party if they weren't granted an intellectual playground, or perhaps in time they would ditch Althusser for Teilhard de Chardin.\*

The 'cultural' Stalinists had an important card up their sleeve. Had there not been, in the 1930s, a mighty outbreak of

\*A mystical Christian writer of whom several leading Stalinists are greatly enamoured.

Communist cultural activity, all the way from the literary criticism of Christopher Caudwell to the Workers Theatre Movement?

No, there hadn't actually, but you could always pretend there had—pretend that the extremely partial, politically distorted, theoretically thin offerings of the 'cultural' British CP in the 1930s constituted a rich and fertile heritage.

This is precisely what the book under review sets out to do.

An Introduction by veteran Stalinist James Klugmann, himself author of an almost illiterate history of the CPGB riddled with distortions and omissions, sets the tone: the Popular Front, he tells us, showed that:

"genuine, progressive national feelings and patriotism were the other side of the medal of popular and proletarian internationalism."

And so Klugmann, along with his fellow Stalinists of the 30s, managed to bring himself to sing 'God Save the King' along with 'The Red Flag', a cultural feat which "repossessed for the Marxist revolutionary of today his or her cultural heritage of the past".

It is, indeed, an impressive dialectical synthesis of opposites: while the Stalinists were fervently practising 'proletarian internationalism' by collaborating with anti-proletarian governments, slaughtering Trotskyists in Spain, and concluding a non-aggression pact with fascism, they managed at the same time to stir up a little orgy of public-school chauvinism as a kind of cultural bonus.

Not that the CP was entirely without achievements: Klugmann tells us proudly that 'at one stage 60% of CP students got Firsts at Cambridge'.

The book then proceeds to

retrieve from the obscurity of history a number of resounding cultural non-achievements.

We are whipped through the literary criticism of such inferior 'thinkers' as Ralph Fox, author of the crudely populist *The Novel and the People*, treated to a celebration of the dimly third-rate theoretical journal *Left Review*, asked to admire the exceedingly thin poetic offerings of the Romantic young John Cornford, and informed by a counter-revolutionary that Walter Greenwood's *Love on the Dole* is counter-revolutionary.

There are, surprisingly, one or two excellent essays in this book, wedged uncomfortably between disgusting apologies for class betrayal.

Iain Wright's fine dissection of the most important literary critical movement in Britain in the century—F.R. Leavis's journal *Scrutiny*—should have found itself a more congenial home; and Peter Widdowson, unlike most of the contributors, is actually a sensitive literary critic with some valuable insights into the fiction of the 1930s.

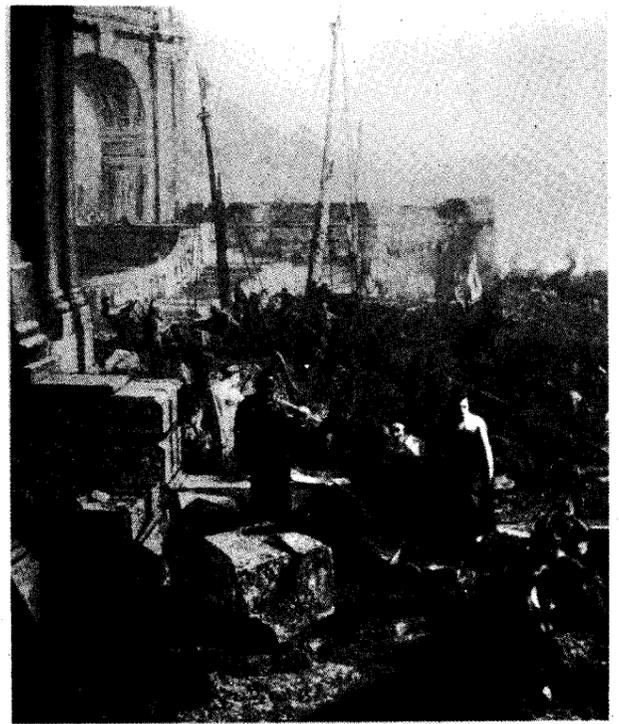
There is also an informative essay on the Workers Theatre Movement, centred on the London Unity theatre, which for all its political delusions still offers some important lessons to revolutionaries today concerned with political theatre.

Culture—the lived experience of a class in song and symbol, memoir and myth, book and ballad—is too vital a component of the class struggle to be abandoned to the betrayers of the working class.

But perhaps we don't need to worry; perhaps next year the Stalinists will have moved on to the rich revolutionary potential of do-it-yourself roof installation.



Claude: *The Embarkation of the Queen of Sheba*



Detail from *Dido Building Carthage*

HENRY PHILLIPS reviews two important London art exhibitions: *Post Impressionism* (Royal Academy: admission £2) and *Second Sight* (National Gallery: admission free, showing February 14-April 13).

# How to see pictures – and how not to!

The two most advertised exhibitions of paintings in London at the present time could hardly be more different experiences.

One—*Post Impressionism*, at the Royal Academy—is a vast collection of mostly European art from the last two decades of the 19th and the first of the 20th centuries.

Some 500 paintings fill 14 galleries. The other exhibition—*Second Sight* at the National Gallery—is of a mere two paintings, painted two centuries apart in 1648 and 1815.

## Confusing

Infinitely more modest in its scale and approach to the presentation of paintings, this National Gallery exhibition is infinitely more satisfactory than the vast and confusing melee at the Academy.

The first problem with *Post Impressionism* is overcrowding. The pictures are overcrowded on the walls so that, even if you manage to get a look at them through the crowds of

visitors, it is hard to look at any individual painting without the intrusion of the images of its neighbours.

Luckily among the exceptions—but only because it is so large—is the impressive painting of armed peasants called the Fourth Estate by the Italian painter, Pellizza.

(This was the painting used so effectively in the credits of Bertolucci's film "1900").

The very scale of this picture forcibly raises the question as to what it is doing in the same exhibition as landscapes by Cezanne, pondscapes by Monet or even pictures of Tahitian girls by Gauguin.

There seems no coherent answer to the question.

As the exhibition's catalogue begins by saying, the Post Impressionist painters (unlike the Impressionists) did not

define themselves as such—but were given the label by others.

As a result the exhibition's organisers seem to have felt free to include anything painted over a thirty year period from 1880-1910.

Some painters are there because they acknowledged a debt to the impressionists, even called themselves neo-impressionists. Others are there "because" they reacted against the impressionists.

## Incoherence

Yet others seem to be there without any particular reasons at all.

This incoherence which lies at the heart of *Post Impressionism* means that it is not so much an exhibition as simply a congested collection of paintings which are very difficult to see.

Yet many of these paintings are famous and many of them very fine and/or important in the history of painting.

How regrettable then that you are liable to emerge from this exhibition poorer by £2 (bankrupt if you buy the catalogue), aesthetically confused and reeling—less under the impact of visual beauty and excitement than under its main sensual impact, the smell of a thousand brands of deodorant and cosmetics.

The sense of uplift and enlightenment produced by *Second Sight* is a marvellous contrast.

## Side by side

It is the first of a new series of exhibitions at the National Gallery which select and juxtapose two paintings from the collection by placing them in a prominent place side by side and add a slide show with recorded commentary which analyses and comments on the paintings.

The first two paintings chosen for this treatment are *The Embarkation of the Queen of Sheba* by the 17th century French landscape painter Claude Lorraine (normally referred to as Claude) and *Dido Building Carthage* by the 19th century British painter Turner.

The choice is particularly

appropriate, since the two paintings normally hang beside each other anyway as a result of a stipulation of Turner's will.

By asking for his painting to hang beside Claude's (one of the very first collection of paintings which formed the National Gallery in 1824), Turner clearly recognised his debt to the French painter.

And the similarities between the two paintings are extremely obvious both visually and in its subject matter.

Both depict legendary Queens of the ancient world involved in an event that brings them to a harbour bordered by large and ornate public buildings.

In both cases the paintings are dominated in the centre by the brilliance of the sun.

Turner many times acknowledged his technical debt to Claude in the capturing of sunlight in paint.

## Essence

Yet despite the striking similarities at first sight, the essence of the pictures—as the excellent and provocative commentary and booklet by Michael Wilson point out—could hardly be more different.

Claude's is painted with self-conscious harmony, its structure meticulously balanced, its lines of perspective leading to a single vanishing point in the middle of the horizon.

The light is clear and radiant, the atmosphere ordered and dignified.

Turner has decisively changed all these features of the original. There is no balance, the perspective is disorderly, differences of scale are exaggerated.

The sun burns rather than illuminates. The atmosphere is chaotic—not ordered and idealised as in Claude's painting but, as Wilson says, more the disorderly scenes which Turner would have witnessed on the Thames near his own home.

And Turner's painting is full of menace and forboding.

The children in the foreground pushing a toy boat into the harbour foreshadows Aeneas' later desertion of his lover Dido.

But more generally the



Turner



Claude

atmosphere of the painting foreshadows the later degeneration of the ancient Carthaginian Empire—which for Turner was a symbol for his own gloomy expectations about the degeneration of Britain.

The circumstances in which the two pictures were painted point up these differences: Claude's was a commission for a wealthy aristocrat while Turner's was an intensely personal statement which he

kept hanging in his own home until his death.

Though *Second Sight* concentrates on these two paintings it refers to others by both painters which can all be seen in a neighbouring room.

*Second Sight* is recommended as a visually and intellectually satisfying way to spend an hour. It has the added virtue of not being overcrowded and of being free of charge!

# The Battle for Trotskyism

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

## THE TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMME IN TODAY'S CLASS STRUGGLE

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## FIGHTING THE CUTS IN SANDWELL

The Sandwell Committee Against the Cuts has established a significant base among workers in the area.

The basis of the committee is the alliance formed over the last three years by the Sandwell Direct Works Department shop stewards, and the Sandwell Tenants Liaison Committee.

It has now attracted delegations from the three local Trades Councils, the NUT, NUPE, and some local Labour councillors, and has been able to exert some influence on the Labour council.

The council meeting before last had to be abandoned because of the number of anti-cuts protestors.

And although the last meeting went ahead, (ringed by police) the Labour group leadership was afraid to press ahead

with the annual budget because of the danger of splits over cuts in services and rate and rent rises.

But the Labour group has now been whipped into line and it seems certain that the next Council meeting will vote for £3½ million cuts and approximately £3 per week extra rents and rates for each household.

### Mass lobby

The cuts committee will organise a mass lobby of this meeting—but no-one expects the Labour group to retreat.

This makes it essential that the Cuts Committee finally resolves the long-standing debate over rate and rent increases.

The NUT and some councillors have argued against cuts but in favour of rate and

rent rises. The tenants have argued for no rises.

It is clear that the only basis for a united struggle by tenants and council workers against the whole policy of cutting public spending and attacking workers living standards is the no rate and rent rise position.

Around this policy a combination of rate and rent strikes, and strikes and occupations against closures and cuts can be developed and directed against those councillors and trade union bureaucrats who are full of "no cuts" talk, but won't lift a finger to prevent them.

## Crossing painters charged

Two anti-cuts protestors have been arrested in Brighton and charged for painting a zebra crossing, as part of a struggle against the axeing of a "lollipop" children's crossing attendant.

Local supporters of the "Moulsecomb Mothers Campaign" addressed the following appeal to *Socialist Press* seeking help in their struggle, which is clearly typical of hundreds of similar limited battles against the cuts springing up throughout the country.

"Why can't we keep our lollipop lady?"

Why do we want to keep her?—Well we care about our kids; we don't want them killed as they cross the road to school. We don't think government cuts should put kids' lives in danger.

We have been forced into fighting for our lollipop patrol. At the Council meeting in Lewes on 12 November, they told us that they had lost our

petition with 800 names on it. They also managed to lose two letters from the Mayor, Denis Hobden, supporting us.

East Sussex County Council is quite happy to spend over £500 on burning off the zebra crossings that have appeared. Yet they don't want to spend £14.70 a week on a lollipop lady's wages.

We aren't fighting alone the Trades Council supported us and voted to spend their week of action against the government cuts with us at the crossing. Several councillors support us, as well as the Mayor, and the Gazette gives us good write-ups.

The more people that show their support the better. The more that help, the quicker we can get our lollipop ladies back again."

More information from, and donations to help pay the fines to: Moulsecomb Mothers Campaign, 98 Waldergrave Rd., Brighton, East Sussex BN1 6GG.

arrested.

Another picket was arrested in Corby the following day—and all three have been charged with conspiracy to carry out criminal damage.

They are alleged to have damaged lorries at Telford, Shropshire—using implements found in the Borough Labour Party offices.

The scene seems set for a repeat of the Shrewsbury conspiracy trials of 1972.

The raids raise important

questions about the source of police information.

Either the raids are a complete frame-up, or the police must have heavily infiltrated the picketing organisation.

As well as establishing a defence fund it is essential that the labour movement in Birmingham should establish an inquiry into the police action so that the necessary steps can be taken to defend the security of working class organisations against police intimidation.

## Chix: call a conference!

Reader's  
letter

Dear Comrade Editor,  
I read with great interest your article on the recognition dispute in Slough.

Although your reporter managed to get quite a lot of

information into it I think there are one or two things that could be added.

In particular an important development around the strike has been the use of flying pickets.

These have been despatched from Chix to warehouses that are doing business with the firm.

Lorries have been turned away from businesses in Maidenhead and Slough and some firms have agreed that they will stop trading with Chix for the duration.

Obviously by hitting the business of the suppliers and warehouses pressure is put on them to isolate Chix employer Rose and leave him more vulnerable to the strike.

The dispute has attracted support from many different quarters, including, as your article states, from the strikers' families as well as local trade unionists from Slough, Fords at Langley and local authorities in West London.

### Policies

This support could be broadened even further by a campaign for a delegate conference to be called which could thrash out policies to win the strike and co-ordinate action to put them into practice.

Such a conference would provide an opportunity to discuss policies like 24-hour picketing (which seems to me to be impractical) and how to extend the blacking and use of flying pickets.

The response of GMWU official McMullan to your interviewer would indicate that he is not likely to support such an initiative.

Although there are problems with blacking the water supply to Chix (which comes from a private supplier) they are not the problems which he spells out.

Despite this, many people in the GMWU and other unions would respond to the call for a conference and some discussion must take place as to how this could be convened.

Too many unionisation disputes like the Chix struggle have been lost: Grunwicks, Garners, Sandersons to name but three.

At a time when all trade union rights are under attack from the Tories it is imperative that we fight for that most basic of rights—union membership.

Yours fraternally,

Gerry Hawkins

PS. Bro. Anwar may well wear smart shoes but this does not prevent him playing a very active role in the strike. He was sacked from his job in High Duty (just down the road from Chix) because of his anti-fascist stand and we suspect mainly because of his union activities as branch secretary of the GMWU branch covering both factories.

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

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

## JOIN THE WSL!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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# Ealing cuts conference

An encouraging initiative in the fight against the cuts in West London was the 23 February conference of the Ealing Liaison Committee Against the Cuts.

The aim of the Liaison Committee is to build and co-ordinate opposition to all cuts in public expenditure and loss of employment in the public sector.

The conference drew 38 delegates from 12 trade union branches, delegates from two shop stewards committees, 33 delegates from nine political organisations and 16 delegates from seven other local community organisations.

Calls from the floor were for the sort of action needed to smash the Tory offensive.

John Butta, speaking on behalf of Ealing NUT said that the Tory-controlled Ealing Council's proposals for cuts in 1980-81 were the worst in the country—8% across the board, a total of £3.4 million in cash terms.

Butta said that Ealing had ended contracts of 50 supply teachers in an underhand bid to cut the wage bill.

Ealing NUT would fight this by a policy of no cover for the vacant posts.

Opposition from the teachers to the cuts had been overwhelming with a vote from all the schools in the borough in favour of action.

He added that the NUT would need the help of NUPE, NALGO and the GMWU in fighting proposals to either cut school meals altogether or charge inflated prices.

He said that public sector unions have to get together to fight the cuts.

Bro. Urridge of the GMWU echoed this necessity and said that the axeing of school meals would mean the loss of 150 jobs locally.

Sue Easton said that teachers should realise the importance of school students being organised and that the National Union of School Students would be implementing strike action.

## Maternity beds

Delegates learnt of the proposals to close Perivate Hospital which would mean the loss of all maternity beds in the Health District.

A resolution calling for, among other things, support to occupations of threatened

facilities, the full public disclosure of all information relating to local authority spending plans and accounts and for the inflation proofing of all future expenditure on public services was passed unanimously.

## Affiliate

The Liaison Committee marked a major step forward in the fight to bring together those forces who are willing to fight the cuts as a means of coordinating and developing the necessary action.

Local militants should ensure that their trade union branches affiliate to this body and should campaign in their branches for the sort of national strike against the Tories' plans that can bring their downfall.

# Wright revived

Bob Wright, the hitherto dormant Broad Left Assistant General Secretary of the AUEW has re-emerged from self-assumed obscurity to contend for the union's presidency against Terry Duffy.

This exercise in cynicism seems to have come to light only because two AUEW research assistants were sacked last week for "gross misconduct" after assisting Wright to compile material critical of Duffy and the right wing executive.

For Wright to pose as an alternative to Duffy could well require extensive historical research, since on none of the major issues facing the AUEW in the last year—the BL crisis; the Confed pay struggle; or the Robinson victimisation—has Wright been even visible, let alone a vocal critic of the right wing.

Despite his previous record of association with the CP-led Broad Left, Wright distinguished himself by failing to appear even once on a platform in defence of Derek Robinson—at a time when right wing AUEW leaders were consciously boycotting the fight.

The fact that the Broad Left is forced to resurrect him as a rival candidate to Duffy speaks volumes on the crisis of leadership within the AUEW.

# Stewards demand: Open the books!

The shop stewards committee at the BL Assembly Plant in Cowley has re-established its "open the books committee"—first formed in 1976.

The move follows the introduction of lay-offs at the plant under conditions where management has refused to reveal any information on stock

levels or the trading position of the Company.

## Unsold

Alleged stock level figures of over 100,000 unsold cars, which are carried daily in the press are challenged by shop stewards, who suspect that BL may be exaggerating its undoubted financial and sales crisis in order to force through its 5% pay offer which is con-

ditional on 102 pages of strings.

The job of the committee will be to prepare a report on the financial and trading position of the company and to investigate exactly what stocks are held.

The report could play an important role in pressing the leadership of the BL JNC to call strike action in support of the £24 per week claim submitted by the unions last October.

# Robinson from back page



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

West District Committee to call out the members in Longbridge.

But instead of calling an immediate strike the CP and Broad Left controlled committee put off the strike decision.

This gave the company two weeks to use the press and exploit the Executive's report.

When the District Committee met last Monday they passed the call put to them by the CP-controlled Works Committee at Longbridge to put the strike call to a mass meeting of both unions on the Wednesday.

This finished the job. The company made full use of their 48 hours breathing space. The only chance of a strike would have been if the DC had instructed the members out at once and put a picket on the gates.

By their actions the right wing and CP have weakened union organisation throughout Leyland and struck a blow at workers everywhere.

Yet there is still a 3-2 vote throughout Leyland for strike action over the 5% pay offer and 92-page 'strings' document.

Even within Longbridge there are reports that the feeling is still there on pay, despite the Robinson vote.

This must be transformed into all-out strike action next Friday after the NJNC's two week ultimatum runs out.

On the same day as the Robinson mass meeting, Cowley Body Plant TGWU steward Tony Richardson was appealing against a written warning which is stage 2 in the company's disciplinary procedure.

BL management calmly announced that in his case not only had they jumped the first stage, but if he breaches any more works rules they will jump all the suspension levels of procedure and he would be dismissed.

This is clearly a serious move made by a management strengthened by the Robinson success, the refusal to call any strikes by the bureaucracy and the fact that they have just laid off Richardson's section for a month.

Richardson's "crime"? Stopping a line that had been going too fast six days running.

There must now be a campaign in BL to defend shop stewards from such victimisation.

# GMWU rebutted

Times are hard for the right wing leaders of Britain's third largest union—the GMWU. Their efforts at curbing the militancy of their members have suffered three rebuffs in as many weeks.

Pay offers to water workers and gas workers have been thrown out by delegate conferences despite endorsement by GMWU official negotiators.

And last Friday delegates representing the union's 16,000 shipbuilding workers threw out a wretched 11% with-strings pay offer recommended by leaders of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions—which includes the GMWU.

The self-funding is contingent upon a further 3,000 redundancies, on top of last year's 6,000 lost jobs; and requires also improved productivity and working practices" at yard level.

GMWU delegates seem more

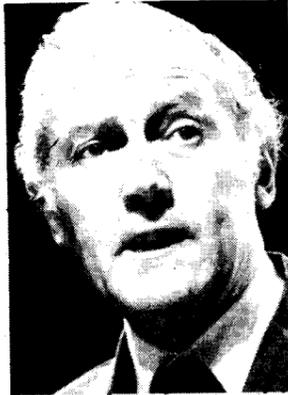


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

concerned at reducing the size of differentials in pay in the industry than in cutting the extensive strings to the offer.

But their show of independence must serve as a further embarrassment to the Basnett leadership, and a warning that their scope for betrayal is nowhere near as wide as they would wish.

# Problems at Meccano

The Meccano occupation is now 80 days old. From the start, however, the issue has been rigorously restricted to one of notice and redundancy pay.

Basnett has used GMWU District Official and former convenor of Meccano, Mike Egan, to carry out the wishes of the National Executive throughout the dispute.

The role of the GMWU bureaucracy has been to point the occupation in the direction of looking for private buyers and to confine the whole occupation to the capitalist property market.

When one firm offered to negotiate a takeover on condition that the union would

withdraw and make the factory non-union, the reply was not couched in the appropriate Anglo-Saxon four letter words but instead a grovelling catalogue of whining reassurances of union collaboration with the Airfix management were forthcoming.

The willingness of Egan to co-operate with a new management was graphically demonstrated by the reaction given to a recent prospective buyer.

After meeting the company representative at the airport, Egan took him on a tour of inspection of the factory. His reaction afterwards was as follows:

"I was very impressed by what Mr. Gough had to say. He seems to have grasped the situa-

tion very quickly. He is by far the most impressive potential buyer we have had so far. He seems very keen on workers' participation.

"During his visit he stressed that some of the machinery at Edge Lane was a little out of date but that something could be done about it."

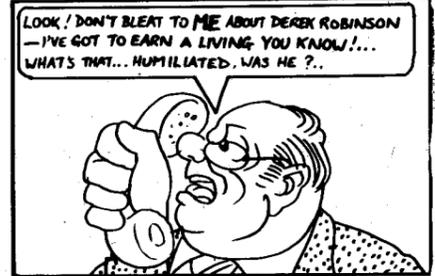
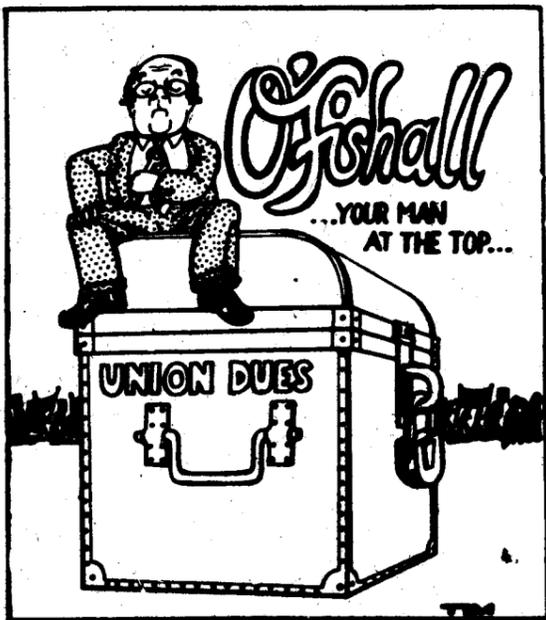
There must be no vacating of the factory on Thursday 28 February, the date of the ending of the 90 day redundancy notices.

The occupation must be maintained until the jobs of all workers are guaranteed. The fact that redundancy pay has now been paid out with the connivance of the union bureaucrats will not help this.

It was a conscious move on

the part of Egan to end the occupation; starve the membership of strike pay for months on end; refuse to organise the blacking of the Airfix combine; restrict action to futile token occupations of company headquarters; refuse to lobby and occupy the national GMWU Executive and the National headquarters; refuse to organise a local levy of the GMWU membership on Merseyside; refuse to mobilise the local GMWU membership for local demonstrations.

The strategy has been to offer no serious way forward, wait for demoralisation to set in and then turn round and blame the membership for drawing the logical conclusion of this do-nothing policy and accepting redundancy money.



# SOCIALIST PRESS ★

**Lobby to kill off Corrie**

This coming Friday might be the decisive day in the life of John Corrie's anti-abortion Bill.

The Bill, though widely backed by Tory MPs and by reactionary Labourites who wish to intensify the oppression of women and children, is not officially backed by the government.

This means that, unless some last minute change takes place, therefore, the time available to debate Corrie's proposals and the battery of amendments to them should run out on Friday.

Hopefully this will sink not only his plans to outlaw up to two-thirds of presently legal abortions through measures against charities and private clinics, but also the new "compromise" restriction of the upper time limit for abortions to 24 weeks of pregnancy—passed two weeks ago.

Such an outcome would reflect the views of a clear majority of adults, and of 80% of women, who believe that abortion should be a matter decided only between the woman concerned and her doctor.

But pressure still needs to be brought to bear on MPs to ensure Corrie's law is defeated.

The National Abortion Campaign has called for a lobby of Parliament on Friday 29 February. We urge readers to attend.

# ROBINSON BETRAYAL BOOSTS BL ATTACK

The capitalist press is gloating over the spectacle of Derek Robinson being voted down at a mass meeting of the Longbridge workforce.

Michael Edwardes correctly said that this would strengthen managers everywhere.

But the press is wrong to present the strength of the employers as resting on the membership as opposed to the apparatus of the unions.

It is no accident that union officials (and particularly Robinson and the *Morning Star*) see things similarly, when they say the members will "regret what they have done".

The reality is very different. The mass meeting was only the final, humiliating act in the drama directed by both the employers and the leadership of

the AUEW with the help of Robinson's own "comrades" in the Communist Party.

Everybody could see the employers' moves. Horrocks, Edwardes' deputy, was on TV the night before, threatening closure.

Management had been given three months for a propaganda campaign inside the plant while the gutter press did the job outside.

But we must also look at the general situation in BL. There are two major complexes, Long-

bridge and Cowley.

When Robinson was first sacked, strikes took place immediately only in Longbridge, Castle Bromwich and Canley.

## Not involved

Cowley was not involved because Robinson and fellow Stalinist Jack Adams (TGWU convenor at Longbridge) told convenors not to try to get a strike where they might lose.

The Assembly Plant senior



Robinson: CP paved way for betrayal

stewards judged that they wouldn't get a mass meeting vote. Why was this?

Because there has been an ongoing witch-hunt in the plant—supported by the Communist Party ever since 1974.

This witchhunt helped the right winger Reg Parsons to take over as convenor for a number of years—during which he and other right wingers, along with the CP members he used as his deputies decimated the union organisation.

The left is now back in the major positions in the plant, and the union branches but it is still having to reconstruct the union organisation.

Prior to 1974 Cowley would have been the first plant out in support of Robinson. But ever since Robinson has been victimised, CP members along with the right wing have continued

the witch-hunting of Bob Fryer and Alan Thornett.

Such betrayals helped ensure that when Duffy ordered the workforce at Longbridge back to work in order to carry out the "inquiry" he was successful because the strike was isolated.

The job on Robinson was done at that moment. But in the following months the Communist Party helped to finish the job.

## Jamboree

The first moves were made at the special conference in January to discuss the Robinson case. The rally was dominated by the CP.

It became a jamboree that sowed confusion about the role.

Cont'd page 11

# Growing outcry at Rhodesia election fraud

"You're not believing all this rubbish about me being a Marxist, are you?" Robert Mugabe asked a gathering of Rhodesian businessmen last week.

The answer to the question is not recorded: but it is plain that the Rhodesian capitalists, along with the imperialist leaders and the South African racist regime are determined to go to any lengths—including a

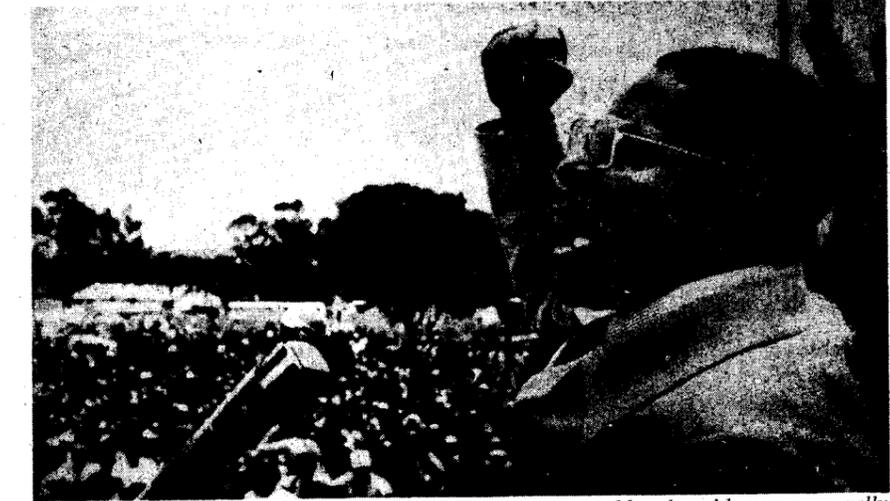
resumption of the civil war—in order to prevent Mugabe winning the fraudulent "elections" next week.

Mugabe has time and again revealed that he stands completely opposed to mass struggles by the working class and poor peasants of Zimbabwe to expropriate major industry, banks, and major landholdings.

In an interview in *Newsweek* magazine, he responded to the question "Do you plan widespread nationalisation?" with the categorical one-line response: "No nationalisation has been planned."

But at the same time the imperialists and their allies recognise that a victory for Mugabe and the defeat of his right wing opponent would spur on the black masses of Zimbabwe, whose demands for immediate action to resolve their material problems would bring massive pressure to bear on the unstable petty bourgeois ZANU(PF) leadership.

With imperialist investments and huge natural resources at stake; and with the crucial importance of maintaining political stability in Zimbabwe



Mugabe addresses mass rally

to protect the South African apartheid/capitalist state, the imperialists are unwilling to take any chances whatever.

This is why, from the very moment Mugabe and Nkomo endorsed the reactionary Lancaster House agreement, the "election" and the "ceasefire" have been a transparent fraud.

While Mugabe and Nkomo struggled to persuade their sceptical guerrilla supporters to rally at British-supervised assembly points—thus making

them sitting targets for Rhodesian jets and land forces—Smith and Muzorewa's "security forces" have been deployed in even greater strength: reservists have been called up; and Muzorewa's vicious "auxiliaries" paid by the state, have ranged the country at will, beating up and intimidating political opponents.

As a vicious international propaganda campaign has got underway accusing Mugabe supporters of using violence and intimidation, Mugabe himself and his candidates have suffered a series of assassination attempts.

Meanwhile senior officers of the Rhodesian Selous Scouts have been caught red handed planting bombs designed to discredit Mugabe.

At every turn the desperate moves of Governor Soames to prevent a Mugabe victory have been exposed.

In one of the supposed "red" areas where Mugabe sup-

porters were allegedly preventing other parties holding meetings, a *Guardian* reporter discovered that four parties had held without trouble a total of 36 meetings!

Elsewhere the evidence points to savage intimidation of Mugabe supporters by white farmers and capitalists. They have thrown their weight in the main behind Muzorewa, whose election funds are plainly also boosted by South African finance.

Nkomo has attracted the backing of the Soviet bureaucracy—seeking to bring about a capitalist coalition government that will hold back revolutionary struggles in Southern Africa—and, for similar motives, the British monopoly Lonrho.

Yet the British and South African governments are not satisfied with such moves to shape the outcome of next week's poll. The election itself

Cont'd p.2, col. 4

## CASH NEEDED!

With only a few days to go to the end of the month we are still well short of our target of £750. With only £527.80 received, we are left with very little time indeed to find the remaining £222.20.

At the same time we are still well short of the first £1,000 in our £3,000 Special Fund. Our aim is to reach the half way mark by Easter. At present we have only £733.65 towards this total.

Clearly, then, we are calling for a big response from our readers and supporters to ensure that these funds, which are essential for the maintenance of our paper and the development of our work both nationally and internationally, are raised.

So why not see if you can send us a donation. Our address is:

Socialist Press Fund  
BM Box 5277  
London WC1V 6XX