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PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Robinson—tub thumping, no call to occupy

SPEKE: LEADERS AVOID CALL TO OCCUPY



Everything necessary for a fight to defend all 3,000 jobs at Leyland's threatened Triumph plant at Speke was present at Saturday's mass meeting—except one vital ingredient—a clear call from the platform for occupation.

After weeks in which

union officials had spread confusion and uncertainty with talk about the size of redundancy payments, workers had come to the meeting determined to reject Leyland's attempt to buy them off.

No jobs

They already knew that with the colossal levels of unemployment on Merseyside there is no prospect of obtaining alternative work once Speke is closed.

Sensing the mood, no-one from the platform argued in favour of selling the jobs for improved cash payments.

But neither did they call clearly and firmly for the only policies that can save jobs at Speke: occupation of the plant, linked to the fight to open Leyland's books and extend the struggle to workers who face the Edwardes axe throughout the whole combine.

Tub thumping

Instead workers heard a tub thumping 'left' speech from Derek Robinson, chairman of the Leyland combine stewards committee.

A Communist Party member, Robinson is a leading member of the reactionary participation set-up, and a foremost supporter of the Edwardes plan for rationalisation which has proposed the closure of Speke.

Only a few weeks ago a participation report fingered Speke as one of the lowest productivity plants in the combine—handing a precious weapon to management.

But at Saturday's meeting Robinson declared that: "Not a nut, not a bolt will be allowed to leave the TR7 plant".

Even then, he consciously refrained from putting forward a call for occupation.

Subordinate

Instead he proposed a series of protest actions that, while they must be supported must be subordinate to the fight within the plant itself.

A mass demonstration in Liverpool on May Day, and

a one day strike and lobby of Parliament on May 9 can give added weight to the struggle—but are not sufficient to stop Leyland management, which has taken the weakness of the combine committee as the green light for a wholesale attack on jobs and conditions.

The central issue is not to argue like Derek Robinson that Leyland's decision is "idiotic" from a commercial standpoint.

Workers must act now to elect trade union committees in Speke and every Leyland plant to force management to open their books and reveal their long-term plans on Manning levels and redundancies.

None immune

Such an investigation would reveal that no section will be immune from attack, and expose the huge profits being made by the privately owned component firms out of workers in the supposedly "nationalised" British Leyland, and spearhead the fight for a policy of work sharing on full pay.

At the same time it would show the necessity for the expropriation of the whole of the private sector of the motor industry under workers management if jobs are to be saved.

Forefront

If this kind of lead had been given at the Speke mass meeting, the 3,000 threatened workers could have set themselves firmly at the forefront of a national struggle against redundancies and given a lead to workers in other doomed plants throughout the Merseyside area that face the same problems.

The call could immediately have gone out to the Merseyside labour movement for the establishment of a Council of Action to co-ordinate and expand factory occupations and fight the inevitable efforts of union officials to head off struggles with "voluntary redundancy" schemes.

By substituting the decisive 'left' talk of Robinson and a vaguely formulated resolution for this kind of initiative, the leadership Speke has failed to build the obvious readiness of membership to fight.

The decision that was taken to defend the principle of the right to work—oppose compulsory redundancies can still be based on a fight for occupation.

But it would be highly dangerous to delay a further meeting to adopt this policy until May 13.

The strength of Saturday's mass meeting must be developed before union officials, the capitalist press or confusion take their toll.

The stewards must immediately convene a further meeting to spell out this perspective.

Seize property

Only when the fight for jobs is centred on seizure of the property of the employer through occupation does the struggle pass beyond empty protest and begin to hit the central issue of defence of the independence and interests of the working class.

This independence can only be guaranteed through the fight throughout the combine for the construction of a principled leadership that will fight to break the participation set up, reject the Edwardes plan and fight Leyland's insidious use of shopfloor ballots to bypass the stewards' movement.

This means also fighting to break the anti-social Lib-Lab coalition and wage fight throughout the Labour and trade union movement for socialist policies as the only defence of jobs and wages.

Owen flogs imperialism's wares

Imperialism's two most energetic political travelling salesmen, Andrew Young and David Owen are on another door to door sales drive through Southern Africa, this time accompanied by US imperialism's second in command, Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance.

It doesn't look as if any of the potential customers are very keen to buy a second-hand neo-colonial constitution from these men.

Silent

In Dar-es Salaam the leaders of the "front line states" kept fairly silent, secretly hoping the imperialists would manage to sew up some kind of agreement which would lead to a lifting of economic sanctions against Rhodesia and so bring an easing of their pressing economic problems (especially those of Zambia and Mozam-

bique).

The Patriotic Front led by Nkomo and Mugabe said they reject the Anglo-American plan but nonetheless agreed to participate in a new conference with Smith and his lackeys Muzorewa and Sithole.

They also agreed to the presence of imperialist (United Nations) troops in Zimbabwe.

Mumbled

So, although Mugabe in his press conference mumbled a few semi-coherent words about "Marxism", it appears that the Patriotic Front leaders do not rule out some compromise with Smith, Owen and Vance.

The imperialist sales team next went to South Africa where they did little more than shout through the gap in the door.

Racist leaders Vorster and Botha were original authors of the Owen-Young plan for a grand compromise.

More recently, however, they have lined up behind

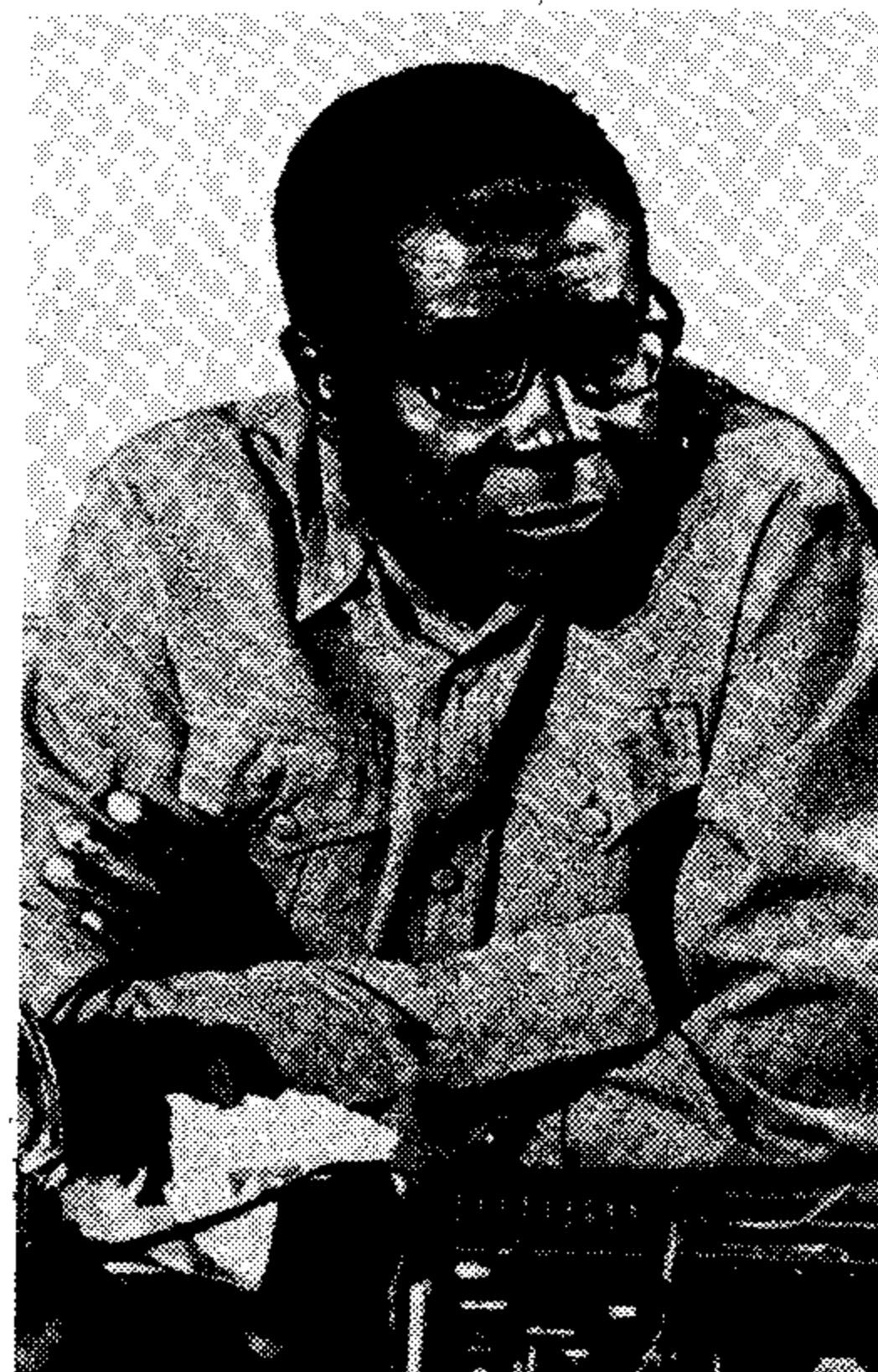


PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL

Mugabe

Smith's "internal settlement" which they also see as a model to be followed in Namibia.

Muzorewa and Sithole, now in a coalition government with the racists, have uttered hostile words about the Anglo-American plan, but neither they nor Smith have ruled it out completely, especially if some compromise on their part would lead to the disarming of the liberation armies.

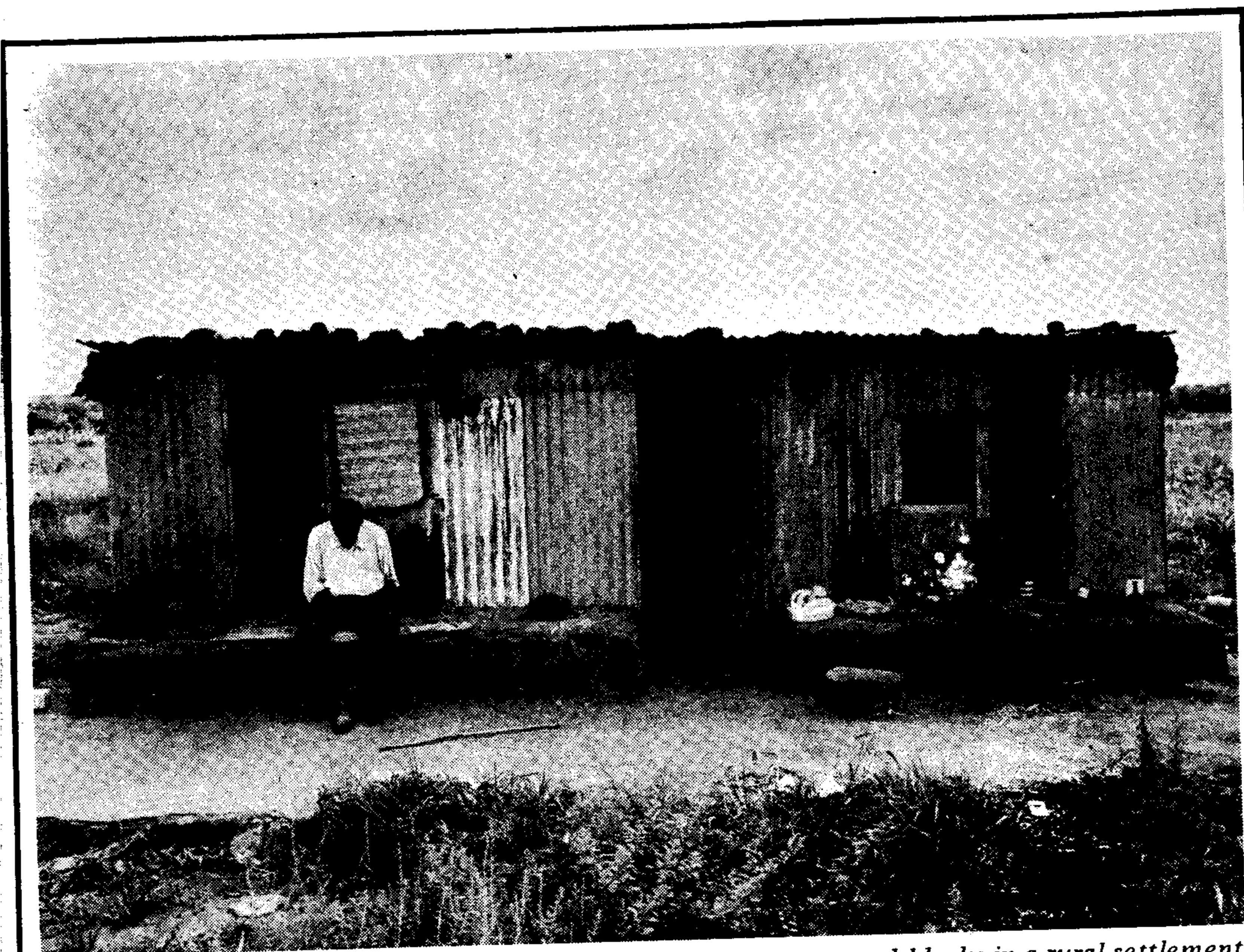
So while everyone overtly rejects the imperialists' plans it looks as if there is still room for some horse-trading which would betray the interests of the Zimbabwean masses.

Socialists must fight in the British labour movement against Owen's neo-colonial plans; for labour movement material support to the liberation armies; against all compromises with the racists; and for full self-determination to the Zimbabwean people.



INTERNATIONAL

Moro abandoned to his fate as Italian Popular Front cracks down



Dispossessed blacks in a rural settlement

Transkei dictator in new fraud

Since last week the Transkei, South Africa's first "independent" Bantustan, has not had diplomatic relations with any other state in the world.

That is because its Prime Minister, Paramount Chief Matanzima, in a petulant outburst, broke off diplomatic relations with the racist South African state which spawned his regime and is still the only country to recognise it.

The Bantustan—pocket sized states for blacks only—were set up by the apartheid state in order to siphon off some of the explosive social tensions of South Africa.

Economic crisis

As the economic crisis in South Africa deepens, greater and greater pressure is put on the Bantustans to fulfil their role.

For instance, in tens of thousands, squatters and unemployed workers are dumped by the racists into the Bantustans of which they are "citizens".

But there is no hope whatever that the poverty-stricken Bantustans can contribute anything to solving the pressing material problems of jobs, housing, land and wages.

So these areas are plunged into an even deeper crisis.

The bourgeois press talks of the Transkei as a scenic land of 1.7 million people. This

means 1.7 million starving peasants, thousands of whom are forced to sell their labour power working in subhuman conditions in white South Africa.

Contorted

In response to the demands of the masses Matanzima twists and contorts himself in order to divert their wrath from him to someone else—at present the South African government against which he has made puerile threats of a military attack.

All this posing has no relevance whatever to the Xhosa masses in the Transkei.

The ties which oppress them are not diplomatic but those of bondage and exploitation to the South African state and South African capitalism.

Matanzima is no enemy of this. He is its direct agent.

In the "free" Transkei his dictatorship has adopted every detail of South Africa's repressive laws and added a few more besides.

Matanzima is a multi-millionaire who owns a good part of the limited industry in the Transkei.

As a tribal Paramount chief he owns nearly all the land.

He is not the only oppressor and exploiter in the Transkei. Second in command of the government, Minister of "Justice" and the second biggest owner of land and industry is none other than Matanzima's brother George.

This family firm, however, cannot expand fast enough to employ the hundreds of thousands of Xhosa workers seeking jobs.

Matanzima would like to attract some international capital to help or even aid from the independent black African countries and the Organisation of African Unity.

Dispel

This is impossible as long as he remains an international pariah as the most prominent black collaborator of apartheid.

That is the image he aims to dispel through his present antics.

He may even want to be cut off by South Africa (which provides half the expenses of his sham state) in order to get international recognition.

Though he does not deserve to fool anyone there is a real danger that certain petty bourgeois

leaders of African states or even of the Southern African liberation movements will opportunistically create illusions in Matanzima's "opposition" to apartheid as they have with others like Chief Buthelezi, whose thin skin of opposition to racism covers the ample flesh of collaboration.

These false prophets of "black liberation" must be ruthlessly exposed.

Reject

The only way for the masses of the Transkei to break the stranglehold of apartheid is to reject their oppressive leaders and develop an ever closer unity with the whole South African working class in the common struggle for the overthrow of the capitalist apartheid state in South Africa.

That struggle will sweep aside all enemies like Matanzima, no matter how much they posture as leaders of the "struggle for liberation".

Somalia flirts with Peking

It has not yet been revealed whether those officers who failed to overthrow military ruler Siad Barre in a coup attempt last week were aiming to shift the direction of Somalia's international alliances.

The first country in Africa to sign a friendship treaty with the Soviet Union, Somalia broke with Moscow last year when the Kremlin gave its full support to Ethiopia in the Ogaden war.

A frantic search for imperialist allies was fruitless and Barre was forced a month ago into an ignominious withdrawal from Ethiopian territory.

There has been speculation

on left

The President of Italy's ruling Christian Democratic Party, Aldo Moro, has now been given up for dead.

At the end of last week his Red Brigade kidnapers issued a communique which read:

"The interrogation of Aldo Moro is over. He is obviously guilty and has been sentenced to death".

Already the Christian Democrats, with the eager support of the Communist Party (their partner in Italy's undeclared coalition government) have used the Moro kidnapping as a pretext to intensify repressive laws and step up state repression of the left.

As Italy's Tories and Stalinists ask themselves the question "Who next?", and as the total failure of Italy's secret police to come up with even a lead on Moro's whereabouts after a month of search becomes plain, the pressures for more police state measures are growing.

The kidnapping has brought to a head sharp differences on this and many

the Communist Party.

In particular, large sections

of the CP's base look aghast as they see their leaders clamouring for the strengthening of the capitalist state and calling Moro's assassinated bodyguards "comrades".

It is an appropriate reaction, however, because, through its support for the Tory government, the CP has itself become the political bodyguard of the capitalist state in Italy.

Priority

The fight against state repression of the working class and the left is a priority for socialists in Italy.

While rejecting the objectively provocative methods of left-wing terrorists, and while being vigilant against the real possibility that right wing provocateurs will appear in "socialist" disguise, socialists must not concede that the bourgeois state has any right to defend itself through repression.

The increasing number of working class and left wing forces under attack (including the Red Brigades) must be defended.

Dissolution

In total opposition to the CP leaders, socialists must demand not the strengthening of the state apparatus but its

building of armed workers defence squads under the

control of independent working class organisations, and for a programme of socialist demands to mobilise the power of the Italian workers movement in the struggle to overthrow bankrupt and repressive institutions of Italian capitalism.



Moro



CD leader Zaccagnini

OUTLOOK BLEAK FOR BHUTTO

The fallen dictators of Pakistan and India now find themselves with very different prospects before them.

For Zulfikar Ali Bhutto the future seems to hold out the noose as the only way of escaping from his prison, while Indira Gandhi can now see power coming once more into her bloodstained hands.

The military regime of General Zia-ul Haq which ousted Bhutto last July, has now tried and sentenced him for ordering the murder of one of his political opponents.

Conscious of the massive unrest such a move would provoke, Zia first banned all

political activity in the month before the trial was due to open.

But huge and violent demonstrations have erupted subsequently in support of the former Prime Minister.

Bhutto was brought to power on the crest of mass mobilisations of peasants demanding land reform, and workers demanding jobs, higher wages and labour rights.

Once ensconced, his grandiose pre-election pledges were tossed aside.

The full force of the bourgeois state was used to smash up factory occupations and prevent land seizures. Bhutto stood clearly revealed as a firm defender of capitalist interests.

He was forced to ease his attacks by the organised opposition of workers.

Yet the crisis of working class leadership in Pakistan, and the dominance of Popular Front policies, inevitably resulted in the diversion of this movement by the cynical populists of the right wing National Alliance.

Armed forces

Confronted with this growing mass hostility, Bhutto himself was driven to call in the armed forces as a base of support for his increasingly dictatorial regime.

Once established on the brink of power, the generals recognised that capitalism

could no longer be defended through the agency of bourgeois politicians. They moved to oust Bhutto, and imposed military rule.

Since then, General Zia's regime has ruthlessly suppressed all democratic rights. The rigged trial of Bhutto is only one small but symbolically significant act in this general repression.

Bhutto's crimes against the workers and peasants of Pakistan are legion, but they cannot be avenged by the military servants of the bourgeois state.

Workers must break from those alien class forces which seek to exploit them, and fight for their own independent interests against Zia, Bhutto and all their determined enemies.



Janata leader Desai



Matanzima

GHANA'S REFERENDUM FIASCO

The plan of the military dictatorship led by General Acheampong to give itself a more democratic image can have fooled nobody.

Ghanaians were asked on April 30 to vote 'Yes' or 'No' to the General's proposal (revealed to him, he says, by God in a dream) for "Union Government".

Union Government is supposed to mean a government in which, along with the army and the police, all the people also participate through representatives elected as individuals.

In this government of "national consensus" there are to be no political parties since these are, according to Acheampong "alien to Ghana's political traditions" and are "the cause of political instability".

1972 coup

In the months before Acheampong's referendum on this mixture of traditional despotism and the corporate state, it was legal to oppose the plan and campaign for a 'No' vote.

Acheampong seized power in a coup in 1972 when he overthrew Ghana's last elected government of Tofi Buzia, the old rival of Kwame Nkrumah.

Nkrumah, who had headed the fight for national independence which came in 1957 (Ghana was the first



black African country to get independence), was himself overthrown in 1966 by an army and police coup.

Three organisations, led by petty bourgeois supporters (at least for the moment) of parliamentary democracy with more than one party, were set up to oppose the Union Government plan.

Former dictator

One of them was led by a former military dictator belatedly converted to "democracy" and a former minister of Nkrumah.

All of them suffered from state repression. They were prevented from issuing publicity and their meetings were broken up by thugs.

The government, meanwhile, freely issued huge quantities of propaganda.

Lost vote

It monopolised the front pages of all the newspapers, which it rigidly controls.

Unfortunately for Acheampong's regime, however, it had foolishly assumed that all this would be enough to win.

They did not, therefore, make sufficient plans for a smooth and secret rigging of the ballot.

So in the end when the regime clearly lost the vote, they were forced into the most clumsy and obvious ballot rigging.

Judge Isaac Abban who

had been put in charge of the count had been allowed to insist in advance on an open and public count.

When it became obvious that this was impossible if the regime was to win, troops were sent to intimidate Abban who obligingly disappeared while the army carried out the "count" in secret.

"Majority"

Even then they only just managed it.

Union Government got a "majority" in six provinces out of nine and the overall national figure was only 53% 'yes'.

That traumatic encounter with "democracy" was quite



Acheampong

as much as the regime could cope with.

Although it intends to go on with its scheme to produce a new constitution from a wholly appointed "Constituent Assembly", it has summarily banned all the organisations which opposed Union Government.

Whether Acheampong will survive to see his new constitution in force seems doubtful.

His clumsy and open violations of even the rules he devised himself are widely known and will, therefore, completely fail to provide him with the legitimation he was seeking.

His customary repression of working class organisations and of all political parties is almost certain, therefore, to be redoubled as he desperately tries to hang on to power in the face of obvious mass hostility.

DANISH WORKERS FIGHT LEADERS

As the international crisis drives the Danish economy into the doldrums, Stalinist and reformist union leaders are playing their customary role of stifling working class militancy.

In the Metalworkers Union efforts are continuing to crack down on militants in the wake of a strike by Ford garage mechanics last year.

About 40 workers struck demanding an increase in excess of government pay policy and rejected an attempted sell-out by officials.

The men's Stalinist led union branch was ordered to hold an extraordinary general meeting to expel the strikers from the union.

120 stewards immediately met to condemn this call, and at the general meeting a crowd of 1,000 workers threw out the expulsion threat, and called for the union to put its efforts into breaking the pay policy and return to localised bargaining. Full support was given to the strikers.

The employers then declared that they would not re-employ all the strikers, and the fight turned into one for reinstatement of the remaining 25.

The fight was eventually defeated. Now the Metalworkers Union leaders are trying to put the boot in on their membership by introducing rule changes to enable them to expel members over the head of the branch, and appoint officials instead of elections.

Expelled

Another struggle involving union expulsions is still taking place among striking restaurant staff in the Kalundborg-Aarhus ferry.

The strikers' stewards were expelled from the union, but reinstated after backing from the local membership, and voted into the leadership of the local branch.

The ousted leaders attempted to take off the membership files and block the new leaders from entering the union offices. But rank and file opposition to them forced the national officials to intervene on the side of the strikers.

While union bureaucrats do their best to harass these workers, the police too are playing their part and beating up pickets on the docks and on the ferry itself.

Another blow against the labour bureaucracy was struck when the leadership of the biggest branch of the Women Workers' Union in Copenhagen was removed for nepotism and misuse of union funds (for personal pay increases, etc).

Meanwhile 20 skilled scaffolders who have shut down their firm since before Christmas remain on strike, after 86 fellow scaffolders won a complete victory over employers last week.

At the height of the strike the scaffolders organised patrols that dismantled any scaffolding erected by scabs—and some went as far as attacking scabs and throwing scaffold poles into the docks.

These sharp expressions of the class struggle in Denmark highlight the continuing crisis of working class leadership that can only be resolved through the construction of a Trotskyist party.

India: Gandhi regains some old sparkle

In her steady climb back towards power, Indira Gandhi has paused to spare a thought for her less fortunate fellow dictator of former days, and generously suggested that he should not be hanged.

Gandhi has legal problems of her own. The Shah Commission of Inquiry into the Emergency period is due to publish its report very soon, and this is bound to be severely critical of her conduct.

But it is equally certain that the ruling Janata coalition will be unable to act on these findings as it had originally intended.

The leaders of the government are trying desperately to put on a show of unity as internal frictions and external pressures are ripping the coalition apart.

Demonstrations

On the one hand, the election of opposition administrations in many states has threatened the ability of the central government to execute its policies—particularly its ramshackle economic plans.

But these decorous antagonisms stand in violent contrast with the crashing wave of demonstrations and riots that has broken across major towns and cities throughout India in recent weeks.

Some 200 people have been killed and many more

seriously injured in these incidents. Picket lines have been viciously attacked by police, colleges closed down, demonstrators arrested in hundreds, and martial law imposed in certain areas.

While these eruptions have their underlying cause in the accumulating political frustration experienced by Indian workers and peasants, the immediate catalysts have varied.

Fabricated

Some cases have been spontaneous confrontations between sections of the Indian masses, and the forces of the state.

Some show distinct signs of having been fabricated by agents provocateurs (such as the fighting in the Punjab), while others bear the hallmark of action inspired and paid for by both the Janata and the Congress Party (Indira).

Gandhi is clearly trying to ferment a situation such as she claimed existed when the Emergency was declared—one of a sustained campaign of subversion against the elected government and the state.

This, of course, enables her to then attack the Janata for its weakness and inefficiency.

Rhetoric

When highlighted against the abysmal record of the present government, the populist rhetoric of this highly accomplished opportunist has regained all its old attraction.



Bhutto—Gandhi spares him a thought in the midst of her own legal problems

The Congress (I) followed up its sweeping gains from February's elections with a spectacular result in a recent by-election held at Karnal, in Haryana.

This was an area particularly hit by the forced sterilisation campaign brutally waged under the Emergency.

Regarded as victory

Last March the Janata gained a majority of 270,000 over the still united Congress: this April they held the seat by only 18,000 votes over the Congress (I).

The depth of the Janata's crisis can be gauged by the fact that this was generally regarded as a victory for the coalition which showed that the tide was perhaps returning in their favour.

Gandhi's Congress (I) has now been recognised as the official opposition in both

Houses of Parliament. But the apparently inevitable return to power of Nehru's daughter is actually far from assured.

Far from united

The Indian bourgeoisie is far from united in a belief that Gandhi would be able to carry through the colossal attacks and repression on the workers and peasants that they objectively require.

Many eyes are no doubt turning to neighbouring Pakistan and Bangladesh to feed thoughts of a possible military takeover.

One thing is crystal clear: any belief that a Gandhi or a Bhutto is a lesser evil than naked dictatorship can lead only to a massive defeat for the masses of south Asia.

Programme

These demagogues have nothing to offer workers and peasants but broken promises

renewed repression and sharpening attacks.

Their baneful influence can be destroyed only by a resolute and consistent fight for the revolutionary socialist programme which can unite workers and peasants in the struggle to end their oppression by the overthrow of capitalism.

In brief

ERITREA

The Eritrean Popular Liberation Front has announced that Ethiopian forces are now using Russian Mig fighters to drop napalm and fragmentation bombs around the besieged towns of Asmara and Massawa.

The Soviet and Cuban bureaucracies have consistently maintained that the Eritrean struggles should be resolved by negotiation, and not, as in the Ogaden, by war.

These reports indicate yet again the desperate shifts to which the Stalinists have been driven by their support for the repressive military dictatorship in Ethiopia.

In next week's Socialist Press we hope to publish a translation of a declaration on the intervention of Cuban troops by the Eritrean Popular Liberation Front.

No handouts in Lib-Lab budget

Any worker who expects that Dennis Healey's "give-away" Budget will put more money in the pay packet is in for a nasty surprise.

Despite the much advertised tax cuts, the combined effects of the Budget and two other measures of Healey's policy mean that for thousands of workers take-home pay will stay the same or even go down.

The Budget's raising of the lower tax limit and the introduction of a new lower rate of tax means that some low paid workers should be relieved of paying tax altogether and all taxpayers should pay an average of £2 a week less.

But at the same time national insurance contributions have been raised under the new system which begins this month, and child tax allowances have been ended, to be replaced by new child benefits payable in two-parent families to the mother.

As a result, a male married worker with two children making average earnings, will find his pay packet will contain an extra 7½p, though his wife can collect another £2.

For a low-paid worker on £35 a week take home pay will actually go down by 66p a week.

The abolition of child allowance will mean that workers at this level of income will now be paying income tax whereas before the budget they would not have done so!

Whereas for average and low paid workers the overall proportion of earnings taken by the state in tax will be less after the Budget than it was immediately before, it will still be a good deal more than it was after last year's budget and nearly twice as much as it was in March 1974.

Tax gone up

For a worker on half the national average earnings the overall tax rate has gone up from

6.6% in March 1974 to 12.5% now.

For a worker on average earnings it has gone up in the same period from 16.5% to 26.1%.

Lollipops

As the capitalists' friend *The Economist* pointed out:

"Together with the small businessmen, the small investor goes away with many of the lollipops from this Budget".

And that of course is in line with the politics of the Budget.

It is a coalition budget designed to cement Labour's alliance with the Liberal Party who demanded sops for small capitalists and incentives to collaborationist profit-sharing schemes, on which Healey also dutifully obliged.

The tax reductions, which for many will prove to be illusory, are nonetheless designed by Healey as

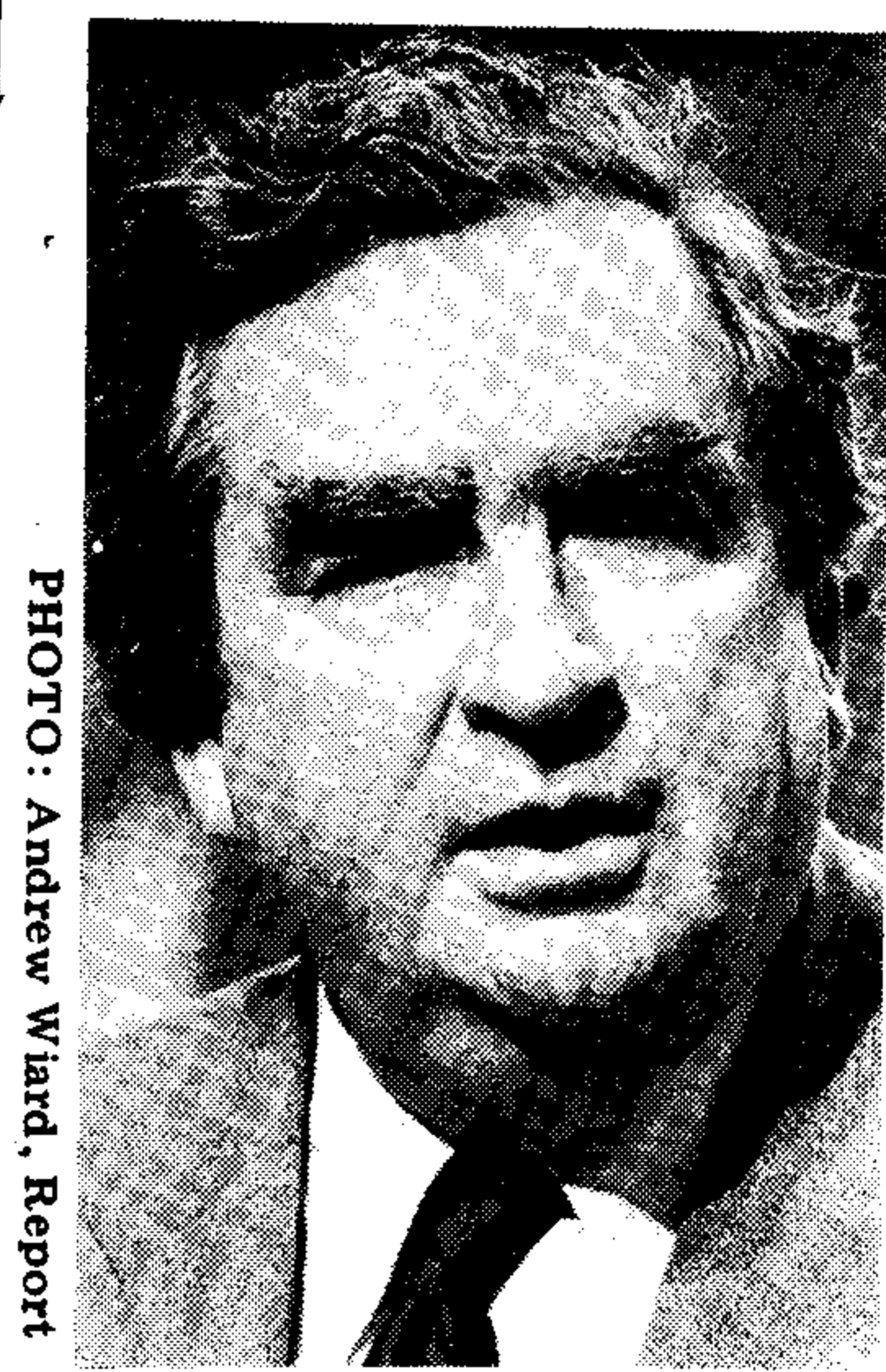


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Healey

some sugar to sweeten the pill of a further stage of wage control.

Despite Healey's recent reticence on this subject it emerged during the Budget debate that all the economic predictions made by Healey depend on the growth of earnings in the next year being 7%.

And that implies that Healey is aiming to restrict increases in basic rates to about 4% in a Phase 4 of wage controls.

Break coalition

The "giveaway" budget is thus no more than a Lib-Lab giveaway to small business from the pockets of the workers.

Labour Party members and trade unionists must demand Labour MPs vote against these measures, and fight to break the reactionary Lib-Lab coalition that spawned them.

Can the ANL destroy the NF?

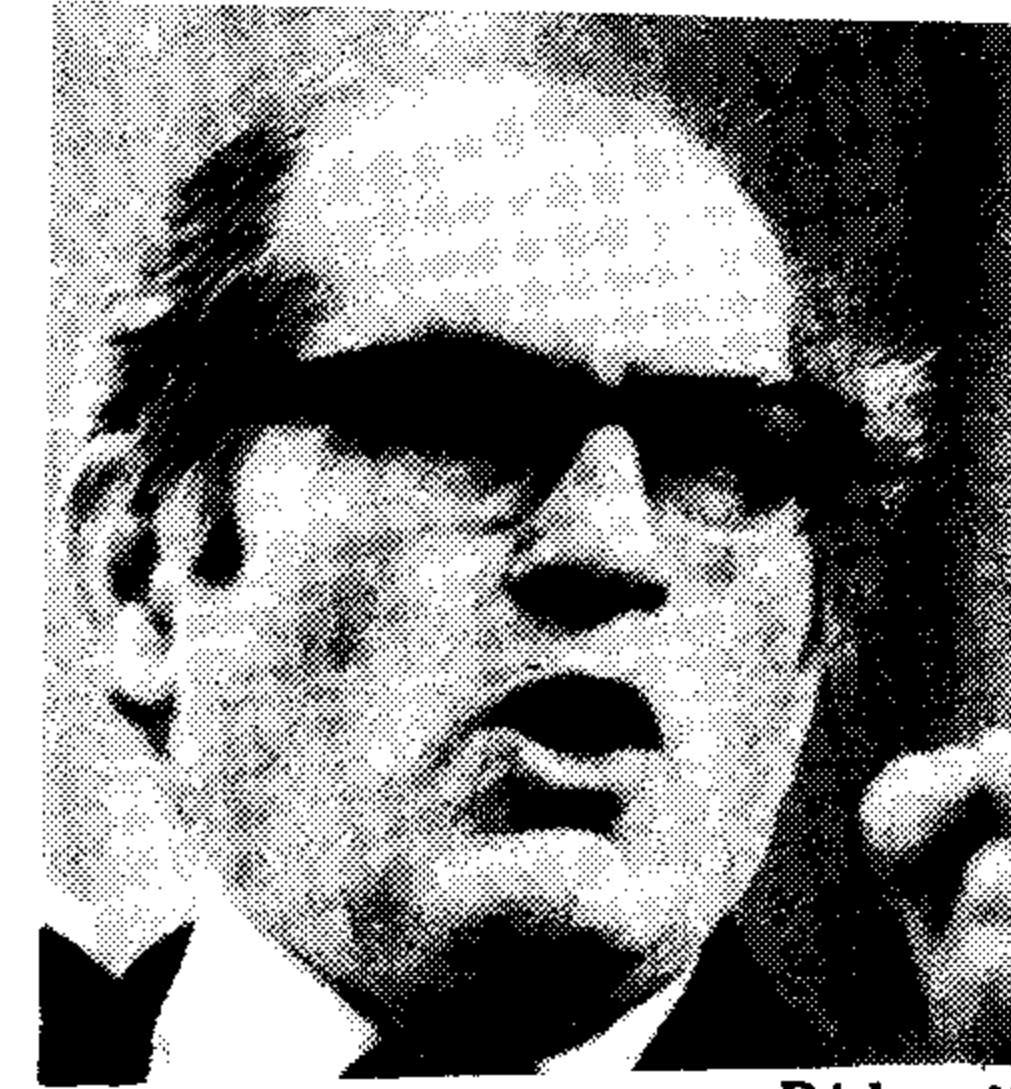


PHOTO: Mark Risher, IFL

Bidwell

Posters, leaflets and badges advertising the 'Carnival Against the Nazis' organised by the Anti-Nazi League are being churned out by the thousand and distributed to workers and youth.

The Anti-Nazi League has set itself the objective of organising "on the widest possible scale

against the propaganda and activities of the Nazis in Britain today" in order "to alert the people of this country to the growing menace of the New Nazis".

To this end it has thrown wide its doors to any personalities from the worlds of politics, sport, entertainment or the arts who "irrespective of other political differences" agree to unite to oppose the Nazis.

Can this approach yield the desired results? It is possible to defeat and destroy fascism through propaganda?

While the fascists feed off frustration at real material problems of unemployment, housing shortages and social service cuts, can a diverse grouping of well-intentioned Liberals, football managers, Labourites and academics provide a clear answer?

All the evidence so far confirms our view that they cannot.

Prominent among the sponsors of the ANL, for instance, is Tribuneite 'left' MP Sidney Bidwell—who joined four other Labourites and five Tories in signing a Parliamentary Select Committee report proposing stringent racist measures to stop immigration and crack down on immigrant workers already in Britain.

'Victory'

The ANL cannot consistently and clearly oppose the NF's vicious racialism with such elements in its midst.

Nor can the ANL sharply take up the way in which the NF anti-strike and 'law and order' propaganda threatens the democratic rights of the trade union movement, when ANL spokesman Peter Hain was among the first to welcome as a 'victory' the 2 month ban on marches imposed by Lib-Lab Home Secretary Rees.

Under this ban workers organisations have been prevented from marching anywhere in London, and huge squads of police turned out to protect an NF mass canvass in the Ilford by-election.

Its heavy representation of non-socialist forces renders the ANL incapable of presenting a socialist programme in defence of jobs, wages and the social services. It cannot even call for the breaking of the Lib-Lab deal since leading Liberal Lord Avebury and others are sponsors!

Defence squads

And its emphasis on mere propaganda and publicity against the fascists means that the ANL does not advocate the most obvious form of defence against the very real attacks by the National Front and other fascist groupings on immigrant communities and the labour movement.

For those ANL supporters who insist that the fascists must be fought 'here and now', we reply that the way to do this is to organise workers defence squads to deal with fascist attacks.

Union bureaucrats, bishops and politicians will not stop NF thugs beating up black youth and workers. Nor will the police who rush to defend the NF from counter-demonstrators.

But serious preparation in the trade unions, workers' political parties, tenants associations and youth organisations can stop them.

Well-meaning

We call for defence squads to be set up, based on factories, workplaces and working class estates.

If the ANL or any other organisation would fight for such a policy, then the Workers Socialist League would fight alongside it on this issue.

But all the signs are that the Anti-Nazi League, for all its outward appearance—is a movement restricted by its composition and its avoidance of politics to a well-meaning but quite inadequate badge-selling and poster-pasting jamboree.

WSL conference offers political lead to youth

No youth today needs to be told that Britain, like the whole of the capitalist world, faces a most serious economic crisis.

Youth at school daily face the effects of massive cut backs in education spending.

Youth at work face low wages and the collaboration of union leaders with the Lib-Lab government to head off any struggle for a decent wage.

Youth on the dole face a future without a job. Each year tens of thousands of school leavers are unable to find work or are placed in "job creation" schemes which only keep them temporarily off the dole.

Coalition

For youth who leave home, it is almost impossible to find decent accommodation at a reasonable price.

These are the effects of a crisis which we are not responsible for.

But the Labour leaders, in an undeclared coalition with the capitalist Liberal Party, are determined to make the working class pay.

And in this they have the full support of the bureaucrats who head the trade unions.

Instead of fighting for the independent interests of the working class, these trade union leaders act to tie the working class to the employers through their agents in the working class—the Labour leaders.

In the past 12 months workers in one industry after another have shown their determination to fight wage controls.

Not interested

But union leaders like Jones, Scanlon and Murray, have set out to block such struggles as the firemen's strike and settle claims within the government's 10% "guidelines".

When it comes to the problems faced by working class youth, these bureaucrats just aren't interested.

Since they have no intention of fighting the Lib-Lab government they have nothing to gain from organising young workers and unemployed into the unions.

With the leaders of the labour movement themselves spearheading the attack on workers' jobs and living standards, the fascists see an opportunity to recruit youth on the basis of their racist propaganda.

By blaming the crisis on blacks the fascists try to disguise the fact that the crisis is an international crisis of the capitalist system and pose instead the "simple" solution of sending

immigrants back.

They also hope in this way to divert attention from their real aim—to destroy all workers' organisations and leave the working class defenceless before the attacks of the employers.

But the twin evils of the economic crisis and the growth of racialism and fascism cannot be successfully fought as long as the working class is saddled with its present leaders.

The task confronting workers and especially working class youth is building a new, revolutionary leadership in the working class, capable of leading a successful struggle for power in opposition to the reformists and Stalinists who are committed to the defence of capitalism.

Such a leadership can only be built through a fight in the workers' movement for the Trotskyist Transitional Programme. This programme takes as its starting point the conditions facing the working class and its consciousness,

and advances a series of demands—sliding scale of wages, work sharing on full pay, etc—on which workers can immediately fight but which all lead to the one conclusion—the need for the working class to take power and establish a socialist society.

Cheerleader

No existing socialist youth movement is prepared to lead the fight to build a Trotskyist leadership.

The Labour Party Young Socialists—the largest socialist youth movement in Britain—supports the Transitional Programme in words. But in practice it acts as nothing more than 'left' cheerleader for the right wing coalitionist Labour leaders.

"Give us our head, put us on show and we will win the support, the allegiance and the enthusiasm of young people . . . Give us the means and we will broaden Labour's support; bring in youth in their thousands".



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Despite the large number of police present at Saturday's NF 'public meeting' (to which only 30 people were admitted from the public) a number of anti-fascists were assaulted by fascist thugs.

The Economic Crisis and the Way Forward for Youth

SUNDAY 7 MAY at 2.00 p.m.
Lecture Room 2
Digbeth Civic Hall
BIRMINGHAM

Credentials (20p) are available to WSL members and supporters from: WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR



Labour candidates fight coalition

Local council elections are taking place throughout the country on May 4.

We reprint below the local Labour manifesto from Ray

Massey and John Plant in the Kensington ward for the Newham Council in East London.

We think this indicates the kind of policies on which the necessary fight back can

begin.

The candidates see their campaign as part of an effort to defeat the Lib-Lab coalition and also as a continuation of the fight, in which they have both played a key role, against their Tory MP, Reg Prentice.

Next week we hope to publish an interview with one of the candidates explaining these policies more fully.

will fight for the following policies.

*Opposition to all cuts in housing, education and health services whether initiated locally or nationally.

*Committees of workers and housewives should be set up to determine the need for expanded programmes of public services. These committees should ensure that inflation is not allowed to erode the public services.

*Support for the campaign against the closure of Plaistow Hospital. Save Newham hospitals.

*A crash programme of public building, in cooperation with the building unions, to provide council housing and to replace outdated school buildings. Expand the Council's direct work department to meet this programme.

*Opposition to the TGWU GLC plans to build housing for sale in Docklands where thousands of families are waiting for council housing.

*Freeze all Council rents.

*Opposition to the use of racism. Refuse the use of Council buildings to the National Front and other fascists. Build a labour movement defence organisation to stop fascist attacks.

*A massive expansion of women in Newham Council and to improve education facilities for Newham children.

*Buy out the private landlords. This is the only way to maintain and improve housing standards. The Council should campaign against having to pay compensation to landlords who are not in need.

Labour reprieve at Garscadden

The narrow victory of right wing Labourite Donald Dewar in the Garscadden by-election is not so much an endorsement of Labour's treacherous policies as a clear rejection of Toryism and its nationalist counterpart.

This fight must now be carried much further by Scottish workers—into the struggle to remove both "right" and "left-wing" supporters of the Lib-Lab coalition and construct a principled leadership to defend workers' independent interests.

The candidacies of the Communist Party, Scottish Labour Party and Socialist Workers Party in Garscadden really contributed

nothing to this struggle either in terms of political clarity or alternative programme.

A similar situation seems certain to prevail in the forthcoming Lambeth by-election, where five 'left wing' alternatives to Labour are each adding their own brand of confusion and opportunism to the situation.

Little gained

Workers Revolutionary Party, Socialist Unity, SWP, Socialist Party of Great Britain and "South London People's Front" candidates will jostle each other on the doorsteps and main streets of Lambeth.

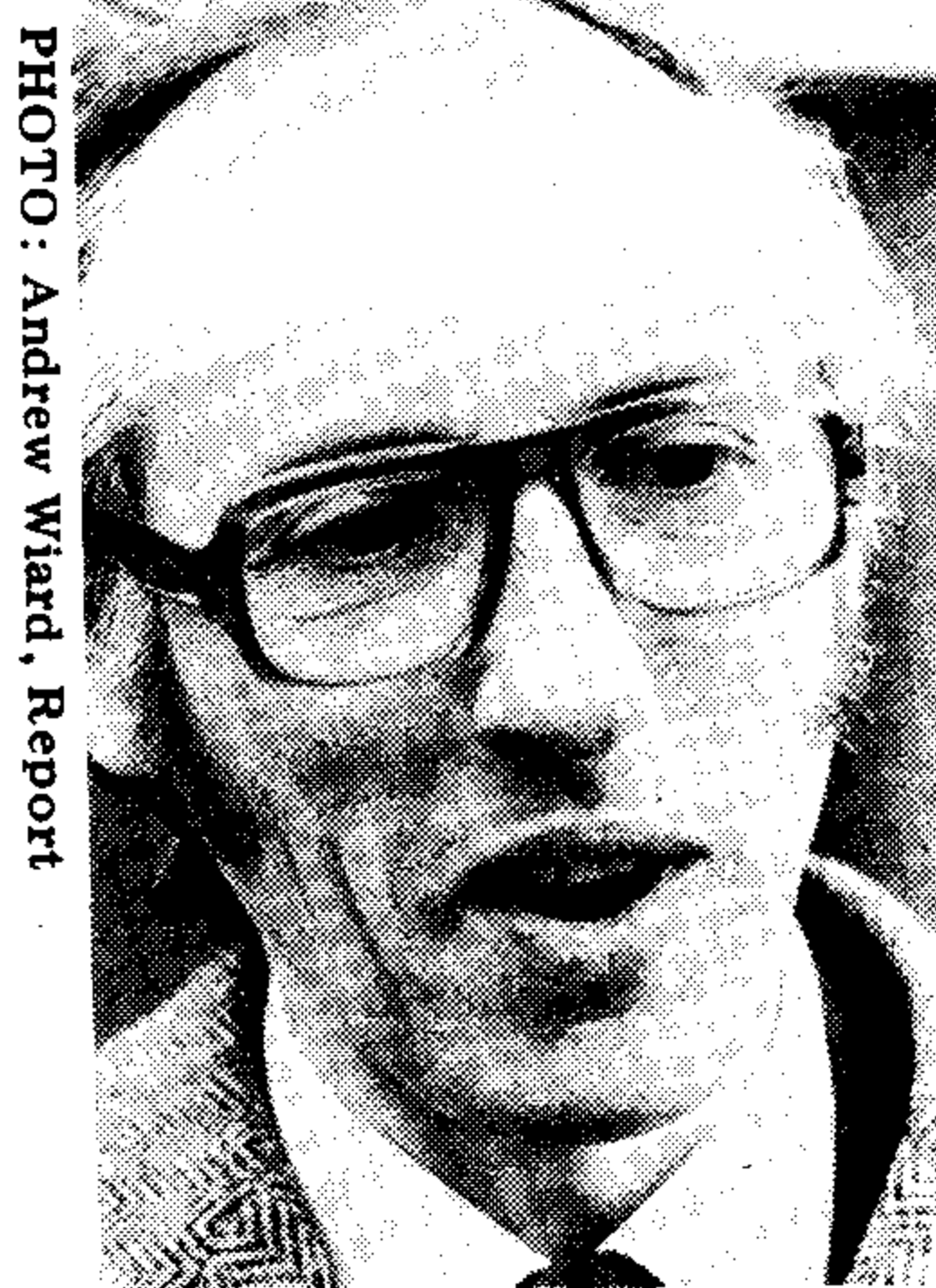
While there is no objection in principle to standing revolution-

ary candidates there seems little to be gained from it at this stage.

Political struggles

The WSL stands by its policy of calling for a vote for the Labour candidate, coupled with a political struggle in the Labour and trade union movement to break the Lib-Lab coalition and remove its defenders.

Experience has shown that it will be in the process of this kind of practical fight, and not in simply casting a protest vote against Lib-Lab betrayals, that workers will become convinced of the necessity to break from reformism and construct a revolutionary leadership in the workers' movement.



Dewar



SNP candidate Bovey

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Left MPs lap up budget dregs

While for workers up and down the country the budget was an occasion for no more than a yawn, a shrug, or at best a sigh of relief at the static price of drinks, Labour's 'left' MPs seem to have been much more enthusiastic.

Coventry MP Audrey Wise, for instance, who joined with fellow 'left' Jeff Rooker to vote against a provision in last year's budget, apparently declared herself completely converted to Healeyism in the Parliamentary Labour Party meeting following the Budget.

Overjoyed

Healey had "listened to the voice of the Labour movement", crooned an ecstatic Wise, who confessed that until this Budget she had regarded him with some pessimism.

Hearing that he had won the Wise seal of approval—and recognising that in this she spoke for every one of the Tribune Group of grovellers—Healey was apparently overjoyed.

Astonishment

According to *Labour Weekly's* sycophantic reporter:

"As she spoke, Mr Healey's face registered in turn surprise, astonishment, pleasure and delight.

"And when she said that she had regarded him with some pessimism until this Budget, Mr Healey was said to have removed his spectacles and looked as if he was about to burst into tears..."

Tears of laughter, no doubt, since Healey realised that, without so much as a shot fired he had just foisted yet another Tory Budget onto an endlessly spineless Parliamentary Labour Party.

"Achievement"

Indeed only 30 Labourites even bothered to turn up to the meeting and, according to *Labour Weekly* "none of the speakers failed to commend Mr. Healey's general achievement".

This "achievement" consists in having attained post-war record levels of unemployment on top of an all-time record cut in the living standards of the working class in the course of three years of rigid wage controls.

Incapable

The fact that Wise and the Tribune Group now sing the praises of these policies in unison with Labour's extreme right wing Manifesto Group is clear proof to those that still need proof that Labour's 'left' MPs are incapable of offering an independent lead or an alternative programme to the working class.

Those 'lefts' that refuse to fight for the interests of the working class and bloc with the Labour leaders in support of the Lib-Lab coalition and the politics of class collaboration must be removed, along with their right wing masters.

A revolutionary leadership must be built within the working class movement, on a programme to defend jobs, working conditions and workers' living standards.



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Labour Weekly is up in arms over a new witch-hunting Tory booklet entitled "The Hidden Face of the Labour Party".

Articles apparently centre on the allegation that an "unchecked Trotskyist and Communist Conspiracy" is underway inside the Party. Among those attacked are Marxists in sheep's clothing are Tony Benn, Joan Maynard, and, believe it or not, Tory ally Syd

PRESS GANG Wooden lady

It's little wonder that most of the capitalist press was so scornful about the broadcast of Parliament. Their room for manoeuvre to bill the proceedings as higher than they are has been drastically reduced.

At the end of Healey's droning budget performance, Thatcher sounded as if she had woken up suddenly and was not sure where she was.

The only certain fact on which she could fix her mind was that she had not seen the budget before.

One should have some sympathy for her. The budget produced by Healey was probably almost exactly the same as the Tories would have introduced.

It is not easy to produce a stinging attack on a budget which is obviously designed to do as little as possible in the hope that capitalism will not get any sicker.

This did not stop Thatcher's speech being hailed as a savage onslaught on Healey in the more strident of the Tory press.

Nor did it stop the *Daily Mirror* and the *Daily Mail* squaring up to each other like rival football fans arguing about a penalty decision.

For the *Mirror* the Labour bureaucracy had produced near perfection—a sort of fiscal 'Sound of Music' with something for all the family.

The *Mail* saw the same proposals as being more like a double horror bill. Its attacks made the *Telegraph* and *Express* look soft on social democracy.

The *Financial Times*, having less need than Mrs Thatcher to be seen to be hostile gave cautious and lukewarm approval to most of the measures.

But later in the week the patient took a turn for the worse.

The trade figures were the worst for ages, which was not well received by the press despite Whitehall's description of the steadily worsening of the figures as 'erratic'.

Inflation continued to fall, but production figures showed no signs of an increase—a fact which makes the high import figures in the balance of trade more

serious.

By this time the partisan insult swapping in the press had subsided.

A more serious attempt to assess the budget's effect was made by Francis Cairncross in the *Guardian*.

Her Economic Notebook for the day was headed 'The budget time bomb' and forecast that the increased spending that would result from the budget would bring a sharper crisis.

Her conclusion was that the best Healey could hope for was a run on the pound which would damp down the money supply. But even this would bring him small comfort.

"A run on the pound would produce a crisis in the gilt edged market, a squeeze on living standards, pay revolt, a need to jack interest rates".

With that kind of assessment Cairncross advised Healey to go for an early election.

Opportunities for another setpiece budget show, broadcast and cheered from the sidelines, have been considerably reduced.

THE MATERIALIST VIEW OF HISTORY

Scientific analysis of social change

By Hilary Jennings

The material world cannot be understood without grasping the fact that all things are in a process of movement, change, growth and decay.

This was the lesson of last week's article on dialectical materialism—the scientific method of analysing the contradictory material forces within things that produce these changes.

Neither objects nor events could be seen as stationary, permanent or devoid of internal contradictions.

And just as matter itself has been shown by scientific research to have its own internal laws by which atoms and sub-particles move, so, too, historical change—the movement of material forces over time—takes place according to understandable material laws and causes.

Major advance

Historical materialism is the application of the scientific method of analysis to the understanding of history, and marks the major advance of Marxism beyond aimless and idealist conceptions of history as dreamed up by bourgeois historians.

Before Marx, history was seen as simply a matter of a succession of individual events—in the words of Henry Ford “one damned thing after another”.

All “analysis” centred on the role of individual statesmen or kings. There were good kings, bad kings, progressive kings or reactionaries, great men and wicked men.

And behind the actions of these individuals was supposedly nothing more substantial than individual thoughts and ideas. Individual wars were waged and continents ravaged for the sake of ideas and abstract ideals.

Good King

Religion was seen as the latest—and most baffling—idea of all. Wars and “civil wars” were apparently fought solely because of religious disagreements.

According to this kind of idealist analysis the English Civil War was a battle between the supporters of the old king who had ringlets and lace collars and who



The capitalist system, like all class society is based on want and scarcity

supported the established church, and the supporters of Cromwell who had short hair and warts and were puritanical fanatics.

That the English revolution represented a struggle between two opposed classes for their material interests and that the religious ideas were mere expressions of those class interests is denied by bourgeois thought.

For the bourgeoisie the world is full of individuals in unending competition.

Class struggle

For a Marxist the basic division of the world is a material division between different social classes and, as Marx says in the *Communist Manifesto*:

“The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle.”

This is the cornerstone of a Marxist view of history. It does not diminish the significance of individuals, or of individual actions, for as Marx states in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*:

“Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please. They do not make it in circumstances chosen by themselves but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past”.

As Marxists we are engaged ceaselessly in the class struggle; it is therefore important that we understand the history, the movement of the class, struggle, and the stages of its historic development.

Division

Modern capitalism is a system that depends upon a division between those who sell their labour power in order to live and those who buy it; society is torn between the makers and takers of profit—labour and capital.

This form of social organisation and class struggle has not always existed, nor is it in any way spontaneous or natural; but class struggle itself is age old.

Class conflict and class society did not fall from the skies nor rise from the seas; they emerge in time as the social form of the relations of production, of a particular historical stage of economic development.

Fetters

What distinguishes humanity from animals is that human beings produce their means of subsistence—food, shelter and clothing—and they produce these socially with other human beings.

The division of society into possessing and non-possessing classes rests on the inability of each historical stage of development of the productive forces to supply wealth in terms of commodities in quantities sufficient to eliminate scarcity and want.

Only the massive technological advances made in the course of the epoch of capitalism now make it materially possible to envisage a social system in which want could be eliminated.

But the fetters of capitalism's requirement to produce only for profit and not to satisfy social need now obstruct such a development.

Struggle

To go forward to unleash the material forces developed under capitalism means that the propertyless proletariat must mobilise in revolutionary struggle internationally to overthrow and expropriate the capitalist class that owns the means of production.

In place of capitalism a socialist system must be established, with the mission of expanding and developing production in order to pave the way for a classless, communist society.

Not possible

Unlike animals, people do not live merely in nature but

Karl Marx

also in society and as Franz Mehring argued:

“The basis of all social community is the form of production of material life.”

In other words, who and what you are derives from what and how you produce. It is not materially possible, for an intellectual, free-thinking inventor to emerge spontaneously from a society based on the hunting of animals with sticks and stones.

Material changes

A certain way of life, of social organisation and of thought derives from each particular type of organisation of production.

Changes in ways of life or patterns of thought do not themselves merely emerge as a result of material changes in the organisation of production and in the class relations which are the social expression of the economic basis of society.

Marx puts it thus:

“In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production.”

The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society—the real foundation, on which legal and political superstructures arise and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond”.

Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy.

Opposition

While the major factor in the movement of history is the class struggle, the material basis of that struggle is the economic division of society into those who own the means of production and those who do not.

The forms which this division has taken have varied during the course of human history:

“Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guildmaster and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an

uninterrupted now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes”.

Communist Manifesto.



The Catholic church is ideal for

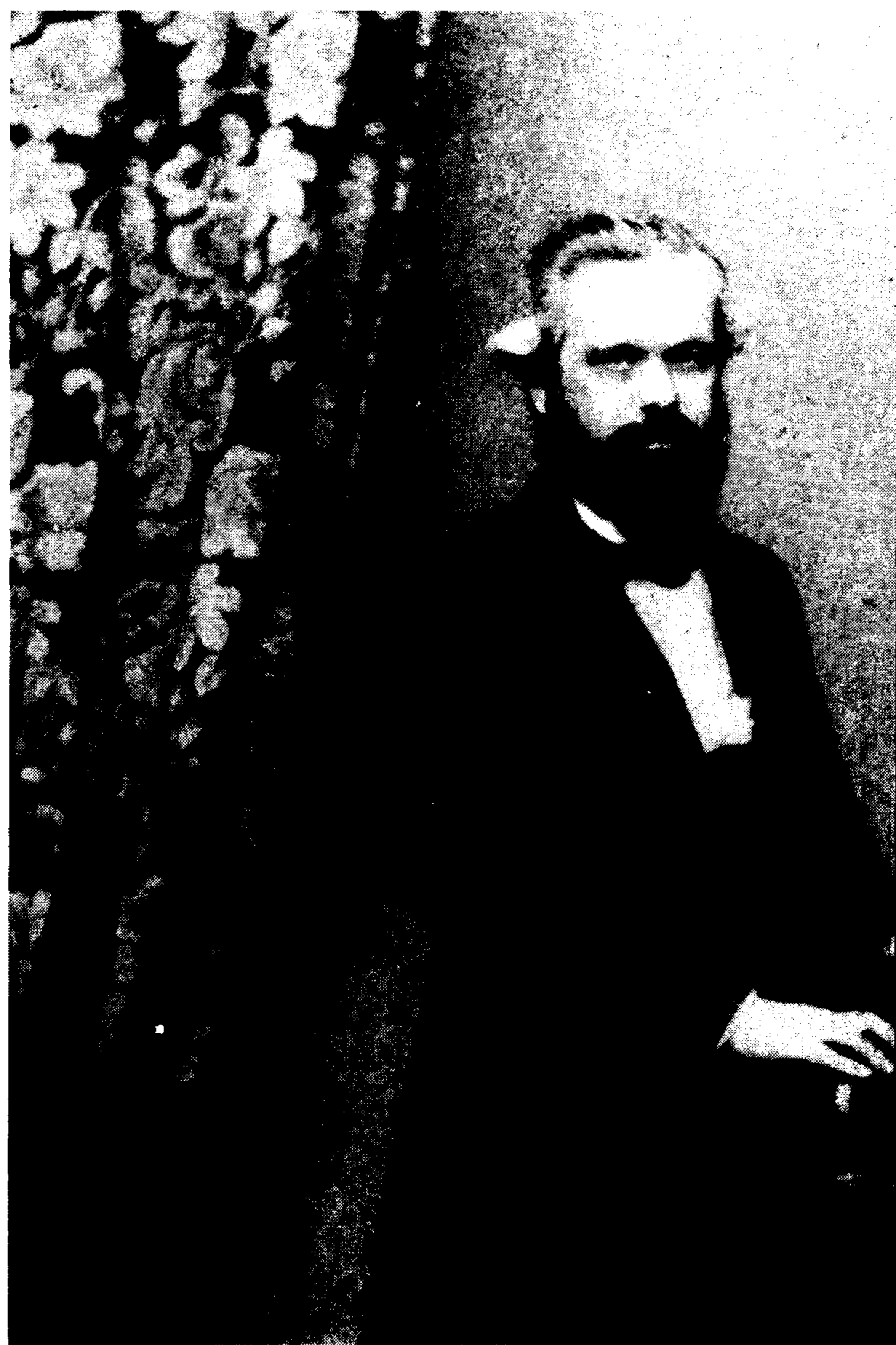
The form of conflict and struggle alters as the productive basis of society alters.

In that struggle, the material interests of the opposing groups are reflected in what Marx calls the superstructure of society.

In this arena are all the legal, philosophical, religious and in a word, ideological expressions of the basic economic divisions.

Thus the law under capitalism is based upon the notion of private property which is the basis of capitalist production.

The bourgeois family unit exists as the mode of organisation of sexuality and child-care which is appropriate to capitalist production, both in terms of the inheritance of property in the male line (which requires monogamous marriage to prove paternity); the forcing of children into acceptance of their roles in society; and as the domestic unit which at minimum cost to the employer prepares the male worker for sale of his labour power.



bourgeois speech they are almost always used in a different sense.

Engels shows this clearly in Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy:

"By the word materialism, the philistine understands gluttony, drunkenness, lust of the eye, lust of the flesh, arrogance, cupidity, avarice, covetousness, profit hunting and stock exchange swindling—in short, all the filthy vices in which he himself indulges in private. By the word idealism, he understands the belief in virtue, universal philanthropy, and in general, a 'better world' of which he boasts before others but in which he himself at the utmost believes only as long as he is undergoing the hang-over or bankruptcy consequent upon his customary 'materialist' excesses. It is then that he sings his favourite song, 'What is man?—Half beast, half angel!'"

Mehring in 1893 added his own comment on the distinction between bourgeois idealism and the pursuit of a principled goal:

"If one wants to use the words in this metaphorical sense, then it must be said that today the profession of historical materialism demands a high moral idealism, since it invariably brings with it poverty, persecution and slander, whereas every careerist makes historical idealism his cause, since it offers the richest expectations of all earthly goods, of happiness, of fat sinecures, of all possible decorations of merit, titles and honours."

The basic distinction in philosophy is therefore between the *materialist* school that declares the objective material world is primary and the source of all ideas, and the *idealist* school that insists that man's thoughts or God's thoughts are primary and that the material world is some kind of embodiment of these thoughts or ideas.

Objective basis

But within the idealist camp is a wide spectrum of apparently very diverse positions, including all of the religions.

Through historical and materialist analysis of religion it is possible to see the objective basis for the different types of belief as particular social groups struggle for existence under varying material conditions.

Mehring cites the example of a nomadic tribe in Siberia whose economy is based on following the movements of their reindeer.

They suffer "terrific storms whose causes they could not explain", "lose their reindeer suddenly by an epidemic disease which defies human remedies" find themselves "frightened by magnificent auroras that set the whole universe ablaze" and their people "decimated by pestilences whose nature they could not understand and whose disastrous effects they were powerless to avert".

Their religion is consequently a simple worship of powerful spirits whom they implore to keep them from harm.

But openly attempting to control the events of life by appealing to the spirits of the air is entirely inappropriate today in an age whose technological advance means that rockets can travel millions of miles beyond the earth's atmosphere.

Yet this does not prevent various more modern forms of idealism from gripping the minds of the masses—though in a less overtly religious and mystic fashion.

No room

Another example of how religion reflects the economic divisions of society is found within the Hindu caste system in India where each



Engels

individual is born into a particular caste which defines the job he will do, as potter, weaver or "unclean" washerman.

There is no room within this rigid religious system for the development of new trades, technological change or economic innovation.

The way different religions express the interests of different classes is shown very clearly in periods of transition from one method of organising production to another, in periods of revolutionary upheaval.

Marx puts it thus:

Conflict

"At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or—this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms—with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto.

From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution.

The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure.

In studying such transformations it is always necessary to distinguish between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophic—in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out.

Just as one does not judge an individual by what he thinks about himself, so one cannot judge such a period of transformation by its consciousness, but, on the contrary, this consciousness must be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the conflict existing between the social forces of production and the relations of production.

No social order is ever destroyed before all the productive forces for which it is sufficient have been developed, and new superior relations of production never replace older ones before the material conditions for their existence have matured within the framework of the old society".

Critique of Political Economy.

The emergence of capitalism and its establish-

ment as the dominant force in a society hitherto dominated by landowning or feudal aristocrats is one example of this process.

We will briefly outline some of the developments which have taken many authors whole volumes to discuss.

Catholicism

Under the feudal system of production, everything depended on the owners of land. The feudal lords, barons and monarch also owned the labour power of the serfs and villeins who worked the land and were tied to a particular village and a particular lord.

In exchange for tilling the lord's land or a payment of goods, the serf or villein was allowed to work his own small strip of land.

The religion appropriate to this rigid hierarchical mode of production was that of Catholicism, which enshrined the "divine right" of kings (and barons) to rule, and a fixed order of things.

There was next to no free market, and exchange of goods for money was only of very secondary importance.

Such a situation meant that only a very limited army of free labour was able to be employed in new manufacturing industries.

Restrictions

And rigid legal restrictions hampered the rising merchant class and kept them from political power, despite their growing economic strength.

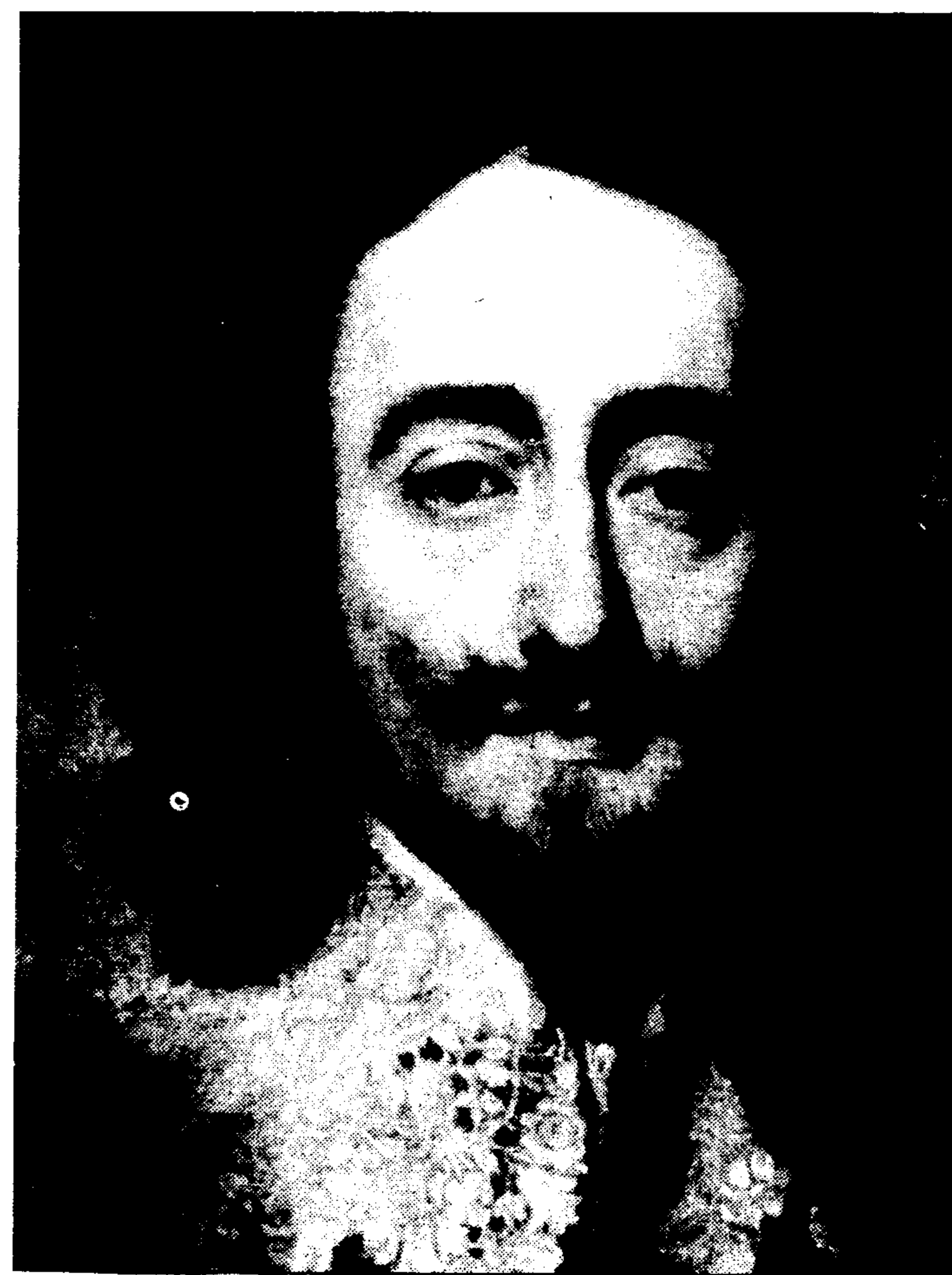
This held back the ability of this section of society to take advantage of new openings and innovations that promised to develop the productive forces and increase the volume of wealth produced in society.

New trade routes were opened up, new techniques of navigation were discovered, new continents were revealed, new areas of knowledge were unlocked with the development of the printing press and the translation of material from Latin into English.

For those sections of society panting to exploit these new developments the feudal fetters and the ideology supporting them were increasingly a material obstacle to the expansion of manufacturing.

Economic power

Increasingly the most advanced sections, of the rising bourgeoisie came into conflict with the ideology of



Charles I—social contradictions cost him his head

feudalism—with the Catholic Church.

The economic power of the bourgeoisie forced a bankrupt Henry VIII to break the bond with the Church.

The Reformation established a church in which the individual insists on his right to communicate directly with God and make his own way to heaven—a bourgeois conception of progress towards the "ideal".

But still the restrictions on individual enterprise upheld by the absolute monarchy proved irksome to the commercially productive sector of the propertied classes—the bourgeoisie.

Overthrown

These social relations were overthrown in the English Revolution. The monarchy, when restored, was restored within the context of a society in which the bourgeoisie was dominant.

This process, unleashed in the guise of a religious struggle under the leadership of Cromwell in the 17th Century, was not complete until in 1832 the Reform Act firmly established Parliamentary power in the hands of the then expanded and strengthened industrial bourgeoisie.

Leap forward

By taking the reins of power from the absolute monarchy and the landowning aristocrats, the early industrial bourgeoisie created the conditions for a massive leap forward in the development of the productive forces.

Scientific and technical skills flourished in the early

climate of competitive capitalism, in a way that no other system could have provided at that point of time.

But now the development of capitalism has brought to the fore the material contradictions within this, the most advanced and yet most polarised form of class society.

Incompatible

The working class, the propertyless class of society, cannot achieve any long term solution to its material problems of falling living standards, mass unemployment and increased exploitation in the framework of a society in which production only takes place in order that the propertied class, the bourgeoisie, should accumulate profit.

The further development of the productive forces is incompatible with the capitalist system.

The task now is to equip the working class, the only consistently revolutionary class in society, with a revolutionary leadership and a programme which will mobilise its full strength in the struggle to overthrow capitalism, destroy its state apparatus, and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and a planned, socialist economy.

In this way a material foundation can be laid for the eventual elimination of class distinctions in a communist society in which the primary struggle is not between opposed social classes but between mankind and nature to prolong and enrich life for all.

The religious beliefs which have developed under capitalism are those which sanction individual competitiveness.

These brief examples reveal the fact that "the ruling ideas of any age are



hierarchical regimes

the ideas of the ruling class" and that particular sets of ideas flourish at particular times as expressions of material economic interests.

Materialist vision

Thus we begin to see that changes in ideas, and the development of new concepts are a response to material changes in the mode of production.

"The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness."

Critique of Political Economy.

This materialist vision is a direct challenge to the idealist view that it is people's ideals which shape their nature and which move history.

For this reason the very terms 'idealism' and 'materialism' can sometimes cause misunderstanding since in



The Paris Commune 1871—the first major proletarian threat to capitalist rule.

IN REVIEW

BLAKE: THE REBEL ARTIST

David Whitfield reviews the Tate Gallery exhibition of prints and poetry by William Blake. Admission to exhibition is 50p.

The great French Revolution of 1789 convulsed and transformed the entire world. Revolutionary ideas had exploded in a language that nobody could fail to understand.

Throughout Europe, the radical bourgeoisie looked to France as an inspiration—and an example. Tyrannical monarchs trembled, and churchmen made their peace with god.

Shock

The shock was no less severe in England, where the middle class had already staked its claim to power a century before.

Tories spluttered in gibbering rage, and the state unleashed packs of spies to infiltrate the secret revolutionary societies of artisans, workmen and petty bourgeois radicals.

Hired mobs and 'agents provocateurs' did much to wreck the work of these groups.

But they were as helpless as King Canute to stay the spontaneous wave of enthusiasm that swept through the country.

New age

The revolutionary songs and ballads were devoured along with the political writings of Tom Paine, and other radicals and atheists.

Artists did not hold aloof from the general ferment, and in their work many hailed French Revolution as the dawning of a new age of



'And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.'

liberty.

For generations of English writers, it stood as the rallying point for all apostles of freedom and democracy.

Most were later to disown the ardour of their youth and, like Wordsworth, took on respectability with middle age by cashing in their political principles for financial security.

Disillusionment

A very few struggled like Shelley to develop their political ideas when the progress and degeneration of

the revolution brought bitter disillusionment.

Fervent belief

But it is the work of William Blake which gave the clearest expression in English art of those forces which erupted in the Paris of 1789.

Born in 1757, Blake lived through the experience of both the American and the French revolutions. When he died in 1827, the Bourbon monarchy had long been re-established in France.

For all the political defeats and betrayals of this

turbulent period, he never abandoned his fervent belief in the ideal of liberty that had pervaded the rhetoric of the revolutions.

Whether from malicious irony or perverse stupidity, the British bourgeoisie has selected some of Blake's verse to pompously chant in one of its patriotic anthems.

Yet even the stifling dreariness of school assemblies is not enough to deaden the power of the writing in 'Jerusalem'.

Blake's lifetime was not simply a period of great political upheaval.

Patronage

The major historical moments were themselves the product of deeper transformations, which were to have even more profound implications for artists.

This was the age of the Industrial Revolution, and its effects were not confined to those directly involved in the new factories and industrial towns.

As capitalism expanded, the market economy and production for exchange came to dominate in every sphere of economic activity. Art was no exception.

In the past, artists had gained their living from the patronage of wealthy aristocrats.

By a lengthy and complex process, this system broke down into a situation where the artist was fundamentally dependent on being able to sell products in a free, competitive market.

This development had a traumatic effect in every sphere of artistic production. It was the real cause of many a 'romantic' suicide and 'tragic' early death.

Blake escaped either fate, but was constantly at the mercy of the same hostile circumstances.

'Eccentric'

To sell his art to a wide audience, he needed publicity. But the elite of patrons and their favourites was still sufficiently powerful to exclude and dismiss work so 'eccentric' as Blake's.

His response to this situation was vehement:

"The Enquiry in England is not whether a Man has Talents and Genius, But whether he is Passive and Polite and a Virtuous Ass and obedient to Noblemen's Opinions in Art and Science. If he is, he is a Good Man. If Not, he must be Starved"

The major part of Blake's work took the form of etchings of his own texts with his own illustrations. These were subsequently coloured.

Almost all his writing was produced in this way—text and graphic layout were conceived together, and any attempt to separate them out severely weakens the impact of either.

In editions of his poetry alone, the 'prophetic books' take on a daunting character, with masses of unrelieved type that create an inevitable impression of congestion.

Seen in their original form, they have an immediate power and compulsion.

Vivid images

The mythological types and characters that Blake used to express his vision of human history become vivid images rather than the turgid or ponderous exercises they often seem in bald print.

These plates were not large, and peering at them under glass frames in the Tate exhibition is not the best way to view them. However the only real alternative offered by bourgeois publishers is luxuriously priced volumes.

The exhibition also includes a wide range of Blake's other work: oil paintings, water colours and illustrations both of biblical



"Times on times he divided and measur'd Space by space in his ninefold darkness, Unseen, unknown."

scenes and for the writing of other poets.

Intensity

It appears to have been laid out with the sole aim of cramming as much material as possible into the available space, and this causes minor frustrations at almost every turn.

But even caged in such conditions, some of these works still have the power to communicate a thrill of excitement.

That power conveys the intensity with which Blake experienced the social and political revolutions of his age.

(When he imagined his critics asking, 'When the Sun rises, do you not see a round dish of fire somewhat like a Guinea?', Blake's reply was: 'Oh no, no, I see an Innumerable company of the Heavenly host crying 'Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God Almighty'.')

Enthusiasm

The hatred of tyranny and energetic enthusiasm for liberty which were expressed in the storming of the Bastille can be found again in Blake's depictions of the monsters

from the biblical Apocalypse, or his presentation of the revolt of America against British colonial oppression.

This is not simply a question of their political content—it is produced by every aspect of their technical form and execution.

In his drawing of the human body, Blake was able to regain the strength and vigour which characterised the masterpieces of the Renaissance.

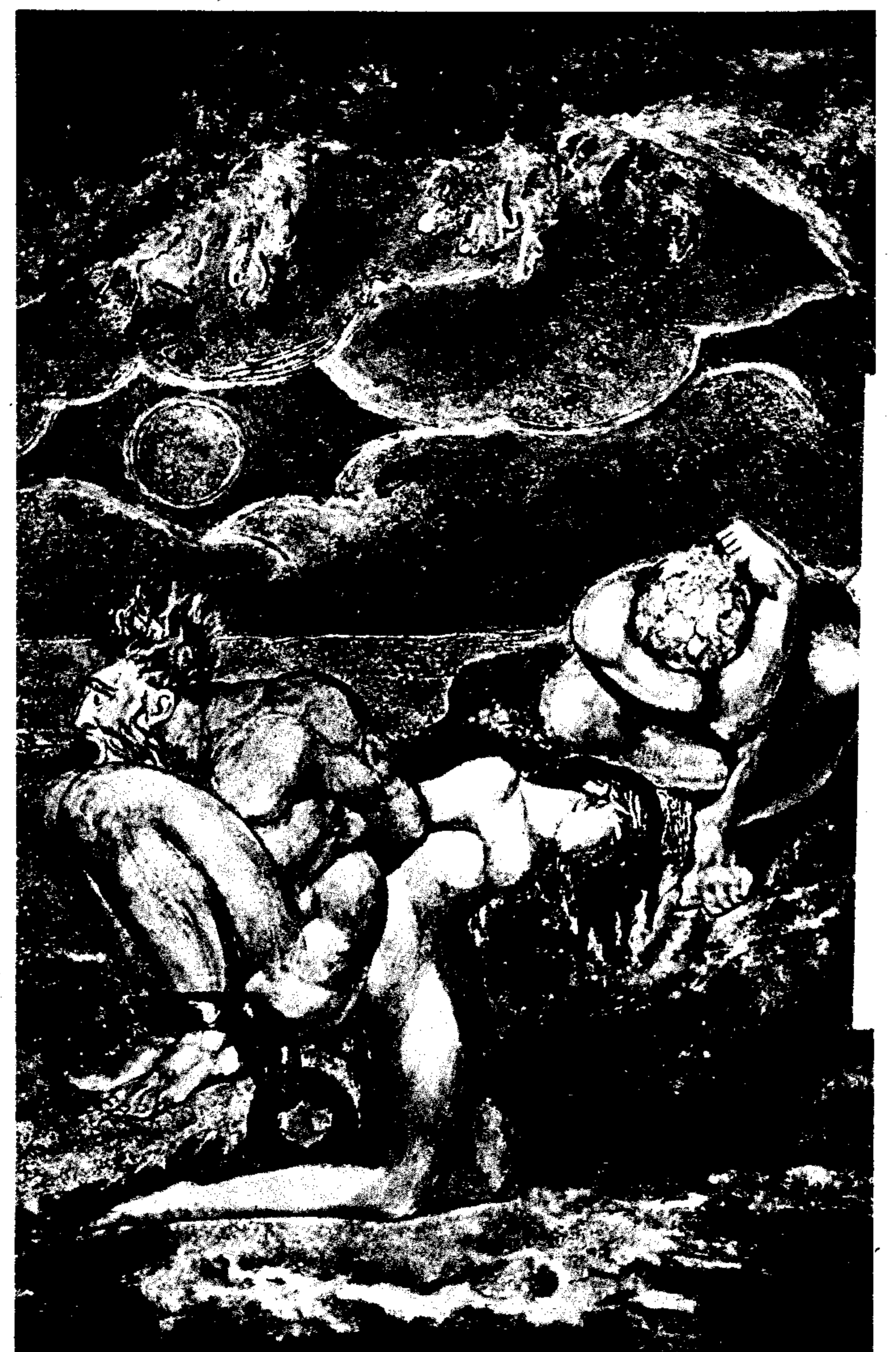
His colouring is never gaudy or flashy, but has the brilliance and the delicacy of sunrise on a clear day.

Boundless energy

All this is bound up within forms and shapings that are powerfully compressed, giving an overwhelming sense of boundless energy about to burst forth from the confines of established order.

This exhibition is invaluable for gaining some understanding of the power of the bourgeoisie in its revolutionary youth.

But even simply as a collection of artistic products it is an experience that should not be missed by any of our readers who can afford 50p and an hour at the Tate.



"Enslav'd, the Daughters of Albion weep; a trembling lamentation Upon their mountains; in their valleys, sighs towards America."

BOOKS

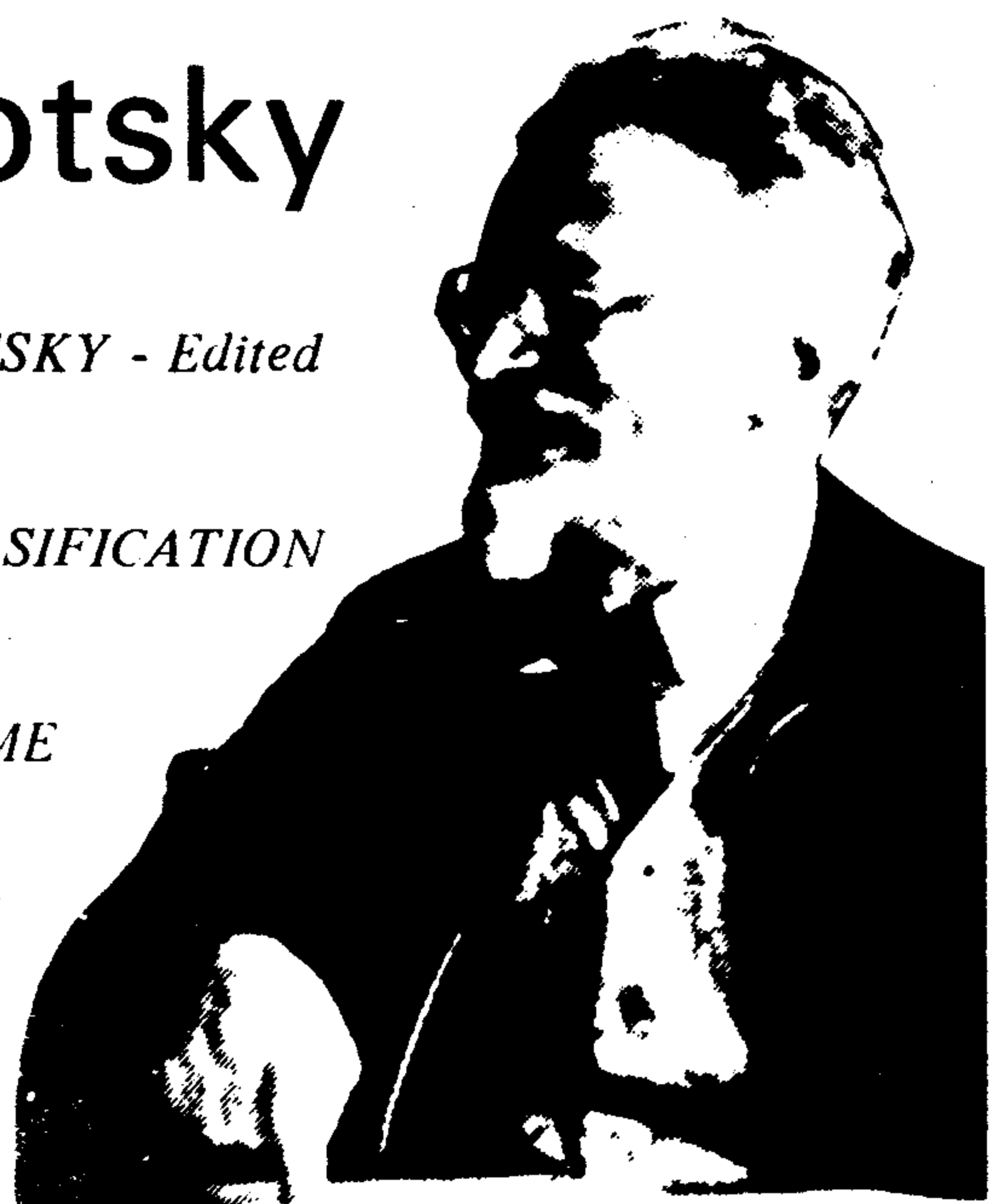
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OUR POLICIES

Workers and technology

Technology represents the accumulated experience of humanity's struggle to achieve mastery over nature.

It is the knowledge of how to apply the tools with which human labour can transform nature into useful objects to meet our needs and desires.

But technology does not exist independently of history, and its value can only be assessed by analysing the part that it plays in social life.

The growth of capitalism was completely bound up with the enormous technological advances of the Industrial Revolution.

By using new machinery and new processes, the rising class of industrial employers was able to produce goods on a scale barely dreamed of before.

Dominance

It was the developments in physical science and engineering which gave them the basis to introduce factory production, and gain complete dominance over the market.

But to gain this position, the capitalists needed to employ human labour.

They did so with a vengeance. In return for virtually ceaseless work in terrible conditions, workers received wages that were scarcely enough to keep them alive in the slums of the industrial towns.

In reacting against this situation, which destroyed their precarious stability as artisans or smallholders in the former society, some groups began campaigns of machine-breaking.

Reactionary

But despite the strengths of this militancy, such a response was in essence reac-

tionary.

What the Luddites did not see was that the machines, which today were the instruments of oppression, could in the future be transformed into the tools of liberation.

Capitalism had plunged millions into an abyss of human misery and degradation.

Progressive

But at the same time it had developed the productive forces of mankind to an extent that no other economic system could have achieved at that stage.

For all its barbarities, capitalism overall played a progressive historical role in this early phase.

But capitalists did not, and do not enter into production from humanist motives. Their aim is profit.

Commodities are produced within capitalism not primarily because they can satisfy human needs, but because they can be sold to realise profits for individual capitalists.

Such a system of production could not continue to utilise technological advances in a way that benefitted humanity as a whole.

Major obstacle

It was even forced to distort more and more the real gains which had already been made.

Inevitably, capitalism passed over from a progressive phase into its present role as the major obstacle to the further development of the productive forces.

The anarchy and perpetual conflicts within a system grounded in competition for markets and profits lead directly to economic crises of crippling severity.

In the epoch of imperial-

ist decay, these same contradictions create trade wars and thrust the whole of humanity into global warfare.

Capitalism can offer the world no prospect but that of barbarism in every area of social life.

Yet even in this period, bourgeois class rule still permits certain advances in technology to be employed.

As the pressures to gain markets intensify, capitalists frantically seek for ways to produce their commodities more cheaply.

More sophisticated machinery, computerisation, the use of transistors or other methods may give them the opportunity to undercut their rivals and win control of the markets.

Class issues

But these developments cannot be detached from the reality of history, and viewed in idealistic terms as purely 'progressive'.

They take place within class society, and in the context of the class struggle they inevitably become class issues.

Such techniques are introduced only when they further the interests of the individual capitalists concerned.

This is shown clearly enough by the actions of companies in suppressing and sabotaging certain new discoveries.

Where their sole aim is to prevent other concerns from undermining their own trading position, they will regularly buy up rights from inventors—and then not even utilise them for themselves!

Unemployment

But these grotesque episodes are only one aspect of the situation.

Where new technology is introduced, it does not come alone but is attended by parallel developments.

Employers gladly seize the chance of such upheavals to force through speed-up in disguised forms, and generally worsen working conditions to their own advantage.

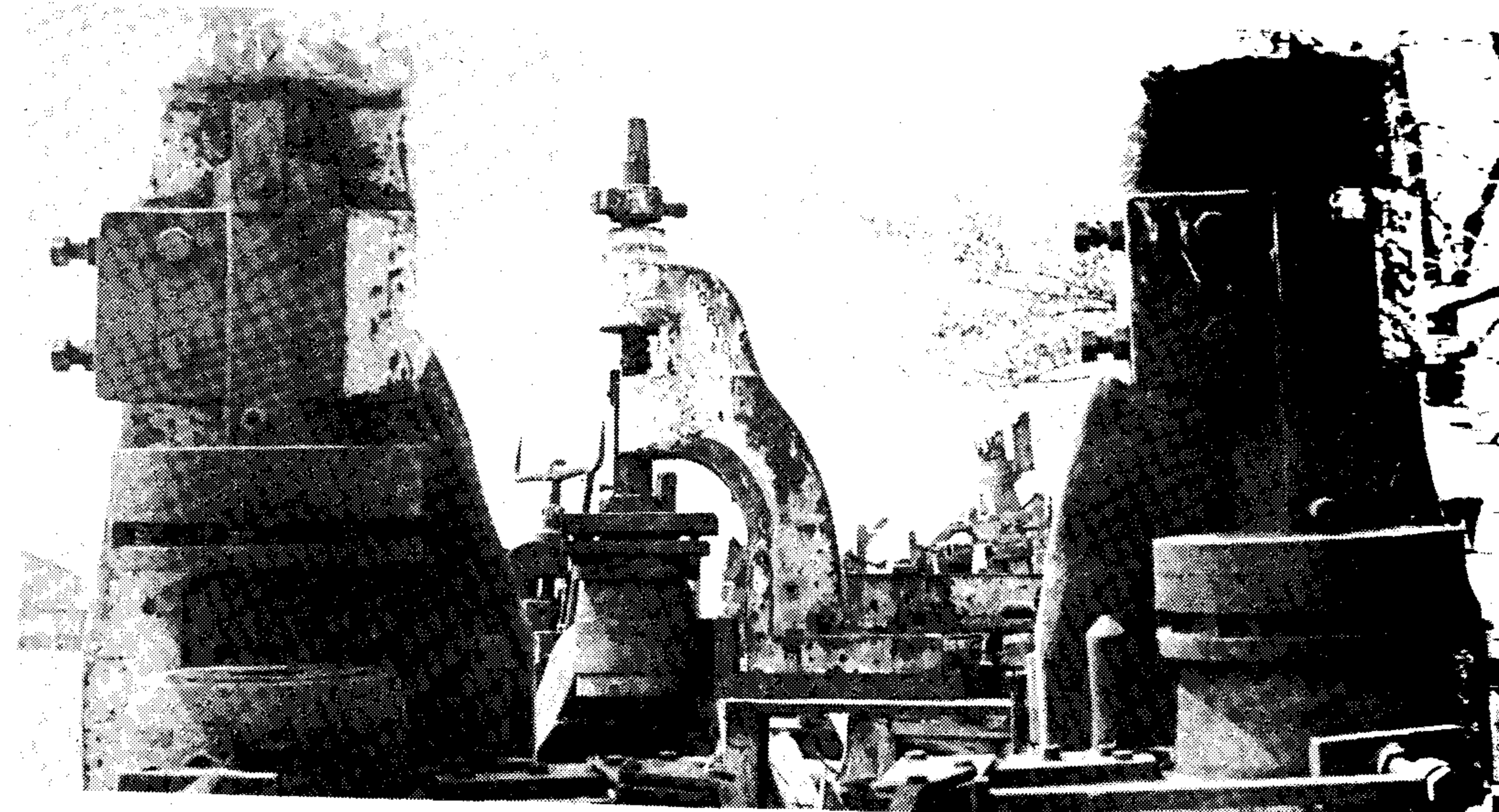
But above all such changes herald unemployment.

Machinery with higher capacity for output is not now installed so as to provide the commodities for new and expanding markets.

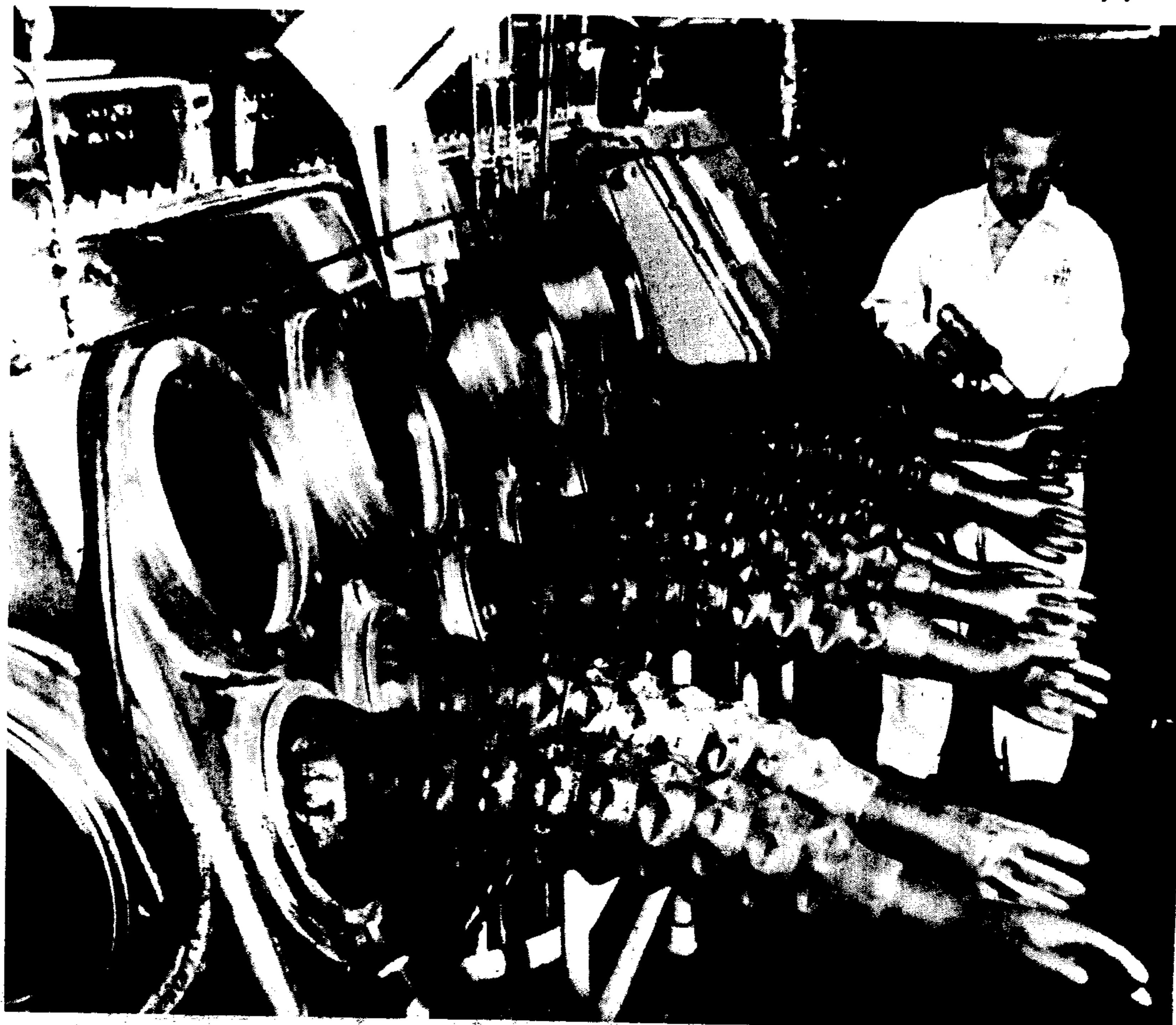
The capitalist's markets are saturated, and even contracting as the crisis grips still harder.

Cheaper production

Their purpose is to yield cheaper production for the capitalist, and not for the benefit of the workers.



Obsolete plant outside Leyland's Cowley factory



Many hands make light work—but capitalism now fetters changes that might benefit workers



Technical advances can improve the life of all

If the plant is more efficient, but output remains stable, then of course less workers are needed for production. Such a shift makes economic sense only if the employer can reduce the workforce.

Where a quick killing on the market is necessary before competitors can follow suit, then employers will 'shed labour' by declaring immediate redundancies.

Work sharing

Where the advantages are to be gained in the longer term, then they can take the softer option and argue for that favourite ploy of union bureaucrats, 'natural wastage'.

This is simply a bourgeois euphemism for the long-term destruction of jobs.

Our answer to both these attacks is clear and unequivocal: the introduction of new technology must be made to benefit the workers, not the capitalists.

in the future.

If it is to mean that fewer hours of work are available, then work sharing on full pay must be established under the control of elected workers' committees.

This is not a demand to be confined to one factory. It is the general demand with which unemployed and employed workers must unite to combat all unemployment.

Where management refuse to concede this demand their pleas and protestations must be met with the demand that they open all their accounts and prove their inability to pay.

'Bankruptcy'

Whether their claims that 'bankruptcy' threatens them are genuine or not, we fight alongside these demands for the private property of these capitalists to be nationalised under workers control.

Capitalism was able to expand as an economic system because of the

Industrial Revolution.

But to employ these gains to its profit, it was forced to employ wage labour, and so created in the proletariat the class which would bring about the downfall of bourgeois rule.

Workers have no interest in perpetuating capitalism. Socialism alone can satisfy their demands by developing the productive forces to the stage where universal scarcity and want can be abolished.

Historic role

In that development, the technological advances made through history will be fully employed within a planned economy to benefit humanity as a whole.

As the necessary goods are produced to meet international needs, then further innovations will release workers from these labours to develop their full human potential in every area of life.

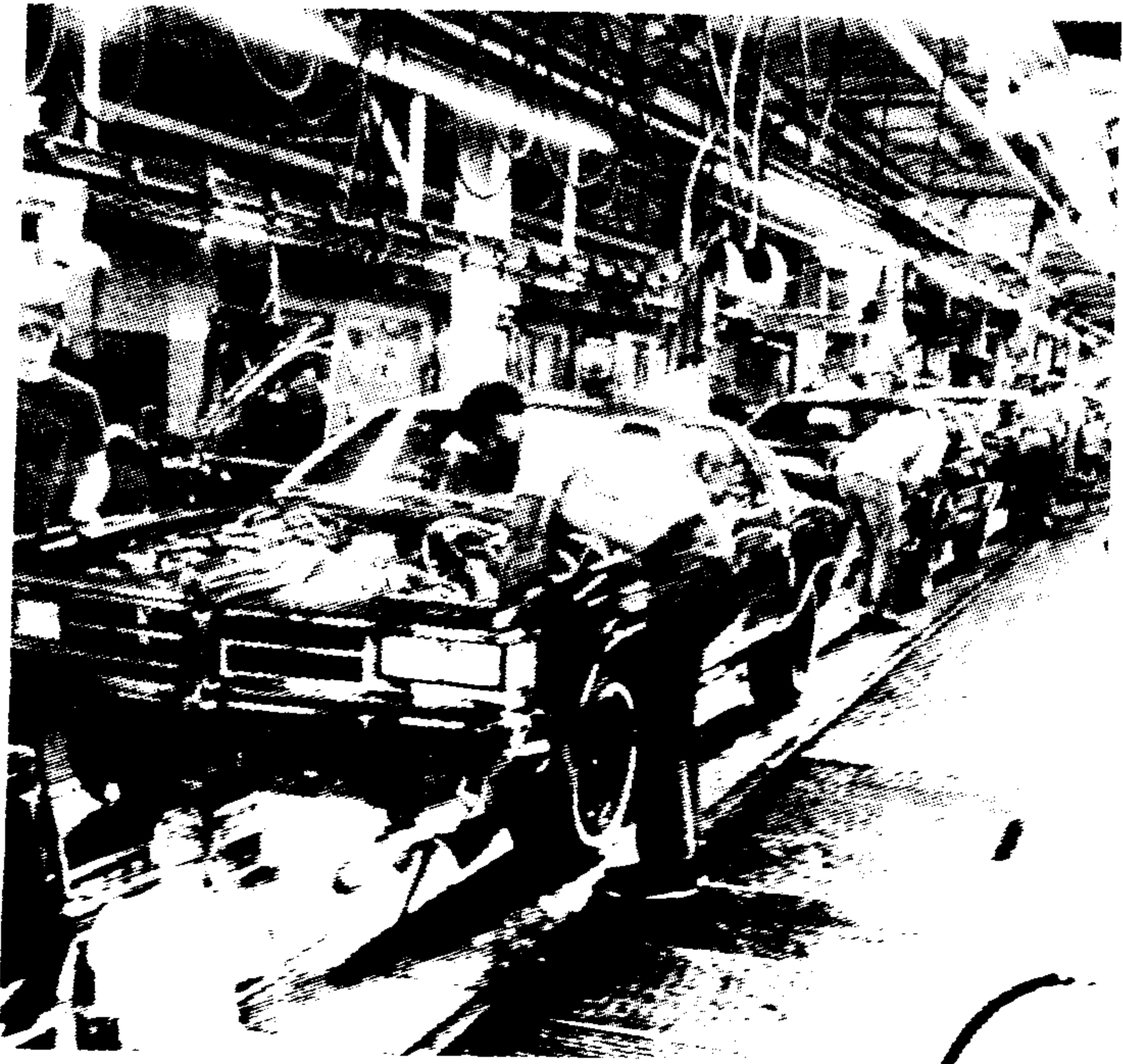
Technology will then begin to fulfil its historic role, which is not to enslave men and women but to liberate them.

From the shopfloor or the dole queue such a prospect may seem a utopian mirage.

Revolution

But the struggle for socialist revolution can be advanced even from today's conditions and today's struggles for lesser demands.

By mobilising workers as a class with its own independent interests, the fight against the attacks made with new technology by the bourgeoisie is an integral and vital part of that battle, and the Trotskyist programme of transitional demands the key weapon to place in the hands of the workers.



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Bonus plan to slash jobs in Leyland

For some time now British employers, through the Lib-Lab government and the right wing in the trade unions, have been pressing for workers to accept incentive schemes.

Yet these same bureaucrats have at the same time felt obliged to bemoan the high level of unemployment—even while pressing schemes that add to it.

One of these schemes is that advocated by British Leyland management. Two weeks ago it was thrown out by a 2-1 majority in a ballot of BLMC workers.

But since the union national negotiating committee has refused to oppose the scheme on principle, and Leyland will certainly come back with it in a slightly rearranged form, it is worth examining the technique through which it aims at attacking shop floor organisation, imposing speed-up and cutting jobs.

"Trial period"

The scheme proposed a "trial period" of six months. No doubt this would operate the same as the one year "trial period" for the worker participation scheme—where most workers never had the chance of a second vote.

During the initial trial period the Leyland prudently proposed to leave out a clause which stipulates that workers would have to increase production by 1½% every three months in order to achieve the same bonus as in the previous quarter.

There is little doubt that Leyland intend to use this clause for escalating speed-up

in order to force workers into arguing for gang-cuts in order to maintain their bonus.

This is because there are only two ways the bonus can be increased. Either production is increased—at a time where declining world markets are the rule—or by cutting the number of man hours, through gang cuts, which reduce the number of jobs.

Consultative

The proposed Leyland scheme would operate on a plant basis—thus ensuring that only plant convenors and not individual sections have any control.

But even convenors would only have a consultative role, since none of Leyland's decisions could be challenged. All proposals and all monitoring would be in the hands of management alone.

No bonus would be paid for loss of production—whether this be the fault of the company or trade unions. Whether shortages of components or industrial disputes stop production, Leyland declares that "bonus cannot be paid unless it is earned".

The basis of the scheme would be manning levels arbitrarily decided by Industrial Engineers. This would assert management's complete right to determine manning levels, and weaken the power of shop stewards in each section.

Monthly basis

The bonuses would be calculated on the relationship between the "allowable" hours agreed by Industrial Engineers and the actual hours paid.

Indirect workers, provided

they accepted I.E. manning levels, would achieve the same bonus as direct workers.

And, to ensure that it is completely out of the control of the shop floor, the bonus would be worked out on a monthly basis.

Stewards at Cowley calculated that in one typical month the "bonus" they would have received in exchange for accepting all these attacks by management would have amounted to a princely 25p per week!

'Participation'

The whole scheme is designed to follow up 'participation', in which whole sections of convenors have been transformed into complete and utter management stooges.



Edwardes

The incentive scheme would lead these stooges to directly arguing for job-cutting. And at the same time Leyland hope it might ease the pressure on wages among Leyland workers.

Meanwhile, as *Socialist Press* has repeatedly shown, with or without the bonus scheme, management remain on the offensive on manning levels throughout the combine, with the complete collaboration of convenors.

This is why the rejection of the incentives plan must be followed up by the end of worker participation in Leyland, the setting up of Open the Books Committees by stewards committees in each plant, the defence of the Speke factory and all 3,000 jobs and an all-out fight in defence of jobs and conditions in every plant.

Massey lay-offs

Massey-Ferguson has released its long awaited statement on the future of production at its Banner Lane, Coventry plant.

There will be an almost complete lay-off of production workers for two weeks from April 24.

In June there will be lay-offs for one day a week and a two day stoppage in July.

As we reported in last week's *Socialist Press* the production cuts at Banner Lane have affected jobs at Birmid Qualcast, Warley and led to short-time working at Sterling Metals, Nuneaton.

The Nuneaton firm has followed the Massey-Ferguson statement with the announcement of a two-week lay-off of its own.

Workers at these factories must fight now for the policy of opening the company books as part of the fight for work sharing on full pay.

OPEN RR BOOKS

2,500 staff from TASS have voted full support and £2,000 for manual workers in dispute with Rolls Royce management in Coventry.

The pay dispute which has led to occupations at the Parkside and Ansty factories is over the annual claim of 10%.

The company have offered 9.7%.

Following the imposition of sanctions, Rolls Royce laid off the manual workers who attempted initially to stage work-ins.

This proved impossible without power and the factories are now being occupied on a rota basis.

Heavy picketing at Ansty last Monday led 1700 staff to return home.

On Tuesday of last week, Mr. John James, head of Rolls Royce in Coventry delivered a blistering attack on the workforce.

He claimed that the dispute was not over 0.3% but over the ending of piecework—something the company has been working for over a long period:

"If we fail to get rid of the piecework system in Coventry the alternatives are unthinkable."

This is a wages war which we must win in order for the company to remain viable and remain competitive in a very tough business".

Management are claiming that the 0.3% is being kept back to finance the change-over from the piecework system.

Union leaders responded by arguing that management had suddenly re-introduced discussion on piecework into the negotiations.

Only 350 workers out of several thousand at Parkside remain on piecework.

Workers should resist management attempts to break these remaining sections.

Clearly the fact that these workers are willing to fight for such a small amount shows a high degree of militancy.

This militancy must be directed towards the fight to open the books of Rolls Royce management in order to uncover their long-term plans for making the firm "viable" by increasing the exploitation of the workforce.



Workers leaving Cowley Assembly Plant—a typical month might mean 25p per week bonus!



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

GARNERS CONFERENCE STRIKES A BLOW AGAINST OFFICIAL SABOTAGE

The major development in the Garner Steak House strike for union recognition over the last week has centred around the conference called and sponsored by the strike committee, the TGWU Region 1, SE Region TUC and the Greater London Association of Trades Councils.

For different reasons both strikers and the TGWU bureaucracy have been aware of its crucial importance for some time.

For the strikers it represents a major opportunity to take their policies of Saturday mass pickets, blacking of suppliers to the company and demands for a regional levy into wider layers of workers; and a chance to commit to action all the major labour movement bodies sponsoring the conference.

Threat

Such policies are inevitably opposed by union officials who see them as a threat to the stranglehold they have exerted on the strike and to the balance of forces with the employers on which their bureaucratic privileges depend.

For this reason TGWU Catering Officer George Abrahams and the assorted bureaucrats who had sponsored the conference viewed it with some apprehension.

After it had been called a newly elected strike committee had emerged, fighting to mobilise the TGWU around these policies.

The assembled platform of left talkers now faced the danger of being committed to action to win the strike.

To forestall this threat the bureaucracy used two tactics in the conference.

Watering down

On the one hand they continued their well-established practice of watering down the actual policies of the strike committee into demands for 'financial donations', 'strong pickets' and outside help from other unions on blacking.

Obviously under tremendous pressure from the TGWU bureaucracy, strikers' leader Rahman did not call in his report for mass picketing (even though the last strike committee bulletin advertised the conference as discussing ways to build the mass pickets).

Adoption

He called instead on trade unionists to "adopt a steak house" for regular picketing. He ignored the question of a Regional financial levy and called instead for the conference rank and file to come forward with suggestions for raising finance.

The question of blacking was also turned away from the TGWU representatives on the platform, into asking what suggestions other unions had for blacking.

The rogues gallery of left talkers on the platform (which included George Abrahams, Brian Nicholson, General Executive Council (GEC) member, Jack Dromey of the SE Region TUC and Labour 'left' Sydney Bidwell) then spent 1½ hours committing their organisations to this emasculated policy, and praising the TGWU leaders for their conduct of the strike.

Abraham's claim that the strike committee controlled the running of the strike and that the TGWU leaders responded to their wishes conveniently overlooked the fact that no letter had been circulated to TGWU branches



Dromey

containing the actual policies of the strike committee.

Abrahams himself had blocked support for a regional levy in the 1/647 International Workers branch of the TGWU and had earlier sought, without strike committee permission, to negotiate a return to work in exchange for an ACAS inquiry.

Abrahams finished his speech lyingly claiming that the TGWU had done everything possible to back the company.

Move in

Nicholson related how the TGWU had decided to "move into the industry in a big way" and that the Garners struggle had the "100% backing" of the GEC—for what this is worth in practice.

Dromey's left blather was marked by his assertion that this strike was further proof that the black and brown workers that had fought at Grunwick and Garner were the 'cream of our movement'. Yet throughout the

meeting, Dromey had been sitting next to Sydney Bidwell, the so-called left Labour MP who has endorsed the racist recommendations of the Parliamentary Select Committee—which plans to harass, drive out or bar the entry of these same 'black and brown' workers.

Bidwell, having had the effrontery to sit on a platform including seven union members of the strike committee scurried from the meeting before he could be challenged.

Sharp edge

The sharp edge to the meeting however came from the contributors from the floor.

These immediately went beyond the policy limitations imposed by the platform and posed the question not of what the rank and file were going to do to win the strike but what the bureaucracy on the platform especially from Region 1 of the TGWU, were going to do to win the strike.

This came first with divisions in the bureaucracy itself.

Eric Rechnits, GEC member and Region 1 Committee member whose area covers Smithfield meat market, contradicted Abraham's claim that everything had been done to black Garners.

He said he hadn't heard of the conference until an hour before it started. As far as he knew no blacking action had been taken at Smithfield.

Pledge

He then pledged himself and the Regional Committee to black all those companies that supply Garners with

meat. Bloomfield, NUR catering section member, then pointed out from the floor that this, as at Grunwicks, meant challenging the law.

He then asked for clarification on where the TGWU stood on the matter.

Nicholson replied, giving tacit support to secondary blacking, and defending the TGWU's record at Grunwick.

The TGWU alone had been prepared to cough up money for the law suit that would follow the blacking of services in that dispute, he claimed.

The strongest contribution of the evening came from a delegate from the TGWU 5/833 Branch.

He contrasted the strength of the membership in current recognition disputes (Grunwick out for over 18 months; Sandersons out for a year) with the sabotage and betrayals of the TGWU leadership.

Blacking refused

He related the way in which the Executive of the TGWU had recently refused to implement a national blacking of Sandersons and had left their members isolated at Grunwicks.

He then went on to focus on the policies that would prevent such a betrayal in the Garners dispute in calling for the sponsors and especially representatives of the TGWU present to support Rechnits's call for secondary blacking of supplies to Garners.

He then asked whether the TGWU would support the call from the then current strike committee bulletin for mass picketing which was in no way the same as Dromey's proposal of 'major picketing'.

But rather than making appeals to other unions for money he demanded to know whether TGWU representatives in the meeting would support the call for a regional levy.

Recall conference

He finished by proposing there should be a recall conference in six weeks if the strike wasn't won.

This drew an angry response from Nicholson who completely defended the leadership of the TGWU and refused to support the call for a regional levy on the spurious grounds that if they gave it to Garners they would have to give it to everyone.

In closing the conference,

Abrahams read his intended press statement which was amended from the floor to include the demand that the sponsors should commit themselves to a recall conference in six weeks time if the strike was not won.

The outcome of the conference is of major significance not merely to the Garners strike but to all the other recognition strikes being fought at the moment.

"Drowning in support while thirsting for action" was Mrs Desai's description of the Grunwick strike at a similar conference held last year, sponsored and attended by many of the left talkers who attended this conference.

Unlike last year, however, the Garners strikers refused to be drowned in the empty rhetoric of the likes of Dromey and Nicholson.

Despite the fact that the final press statement did not commit the sponsors to all the policies of the strike committee the bureaucracy were forced to go beyond the policy limitations they had sought to impose.

Leading members of the TGWU at regional and executive level were forced to commit themselves in public to 1) blacking of suppliers who continue to deliver to Garners, 2) to concede that they weren't opposed to mass picketing in principle and to promise the mobilisation of large delegations on picket lines and finance for the strike.

Independence

That these bureaucrats were forced to make these concessions is a reflection of the growing independence from the full time officials of certain sections of the leadership of the strike.

The bitter lessons that these workers have learnt is that they have to fight their own leadership every inch of the way in getting support for the strike and defeat the employers.

The way forward for the strike leadership is clear. The bureaucracy have to be kept to the pledges they made at the conference and made to account for their failure at the recall conference.

The fight for a regional levy and mass picketing has to be renewed within the TGWU 1/647 Branch and within Region 1 of the TGWU and connected with the struggles continuing at Grunwicks and Sandersons.



Power

Power sacking a part of Edwardes' plan to break unions

As we go to press, it appears that British Leyland management are standing by their decision to reject the final appeal against the sacking of John Power, AUEW convenor at the Service Division in Cowley.

Power is also District President of the AUEW, President of the Oxford Trades Council, and the prospective Parliamentary candidate for the Labour Party in Aylesbury.

He was sacked following management allegations that he overdrew expenses for attending meetings of Leyland's new National Negotiating Committee.

Until now Power has received solid support from workers within Service Division, where he has been convenor for 12 years.

Although he has been one of the most outspoken and publicised supporters of the Edwardes plan for rationalisation, speed up and decentralisation of Leyland, Power's sacking would strike a serious blow at trade union strength within Leyland.

There is no doubt that if

management is successful in this attack, further sackings will follow as Edwardes tightens his grip on individual plants and joins with union officials to root out opponents of speed up.

Ironically, Power is due to appear tomorrow (Tuesday) at the resumed inquiry into the 9 TGWU members facing disciplinary charges at the hands of Regional union officials.

Power as Trades Council president is co-author of 8 pages of wild allegations which could result in additional disciplinary action against the Cowley 9, who are already charged with such heinous "crimes" as having deep political disagreement with the TGWU General Executive Council, walking out of a District Committee meeting and publishing the details of the 5/293 Branch Secretary's commission.

Among those subject to

the TGWU inquiry are Cowley Assembly Plant convenor Bob Fryer and three deputy convenors.

Two of the deputy convenors face a recommendation that they be banned from all office, while the third, Alan Thornett is threatened with expulsion from the union.

Leyland workers thus face a deadly double threat—with both Leyland management and their own bureaucratic leaders determined that there must be no opposition to Edwardes who plans drastically to increase the rate of exploitation on the shop floor, and to destroy the independent strength of the trade union movement.

Power, who chose to side with the union bureaucracy against the newly elected left-wing TGWU leadership in the Assembly Plant could now fall victim to the same class collaboration—with not a

finger lifted in his defence by the AUEW and TUC officials he has served so slavishly.

And the way in which Leyland have moved against Power indicates the huge dangers to the independence of the trade union movement that are contained in the growing system of expenses-paid 'participation' and other committees within Leyland and other industries.

There is no independent voice equipped to check on the facts of the expenses paid out to the convenors and stewards who are sucked into these senior levels of collaboration.

For the protection of both members and trade union representatives it is essential that elected trade union committees be established to vet and administer the payment of all expenses incurred in the course of union activity.

Such committees would ensure that no union representative was paid more than his membership and would prevent management producing trumped up charges as a pretext for victimisation.

A fight for this policy must be linked to the fight to break from participation, to resist the imposition of the

Edwardes plan and defend jobs and working conditions from the attacks of management and the union bureaucracy.

Despite our total political hostility to the political positions represented by Power, the Workers Socialist League stresses the urgency of resisting this attack by management on an elected convenor.

The removal of witch-hunters and agents of the bureaucracy is a task to be accomplished by the workers movement and not by management.



PHOTO: Andrew Wiard, Report

The picket line at Claridges

Threat to nursery occupation

As we go to press, Oxford County Council have made the first moves towards evicting the trade unionists and parents occupying the South Oxford Nursery Class in the fight to prevent its closure.

A notice from the Tory Council was delivered to the nursery on Monday, declaring that the nursery was "unlawfully" occupied, and states that the County Secretary "would be grateful" if the occupants would quit the building no later than 4pm this Wednesday.

Further action

If this is not done, the Council states that it reserves the right to take such further action as may be necessary to secure possession of the building.

The Oxford City Nursery Campaign which has organised the occupation has called for the maximum turnout of supporters on Wednesday afternoon to affirm that the

occupiers will not merely turn tail and melt away in the face of these threats.

The County Council action comes at a time when support for the occupation of the South Oxford Nursery Class is still pouring in from trade union branches, trades councils and Labour Party bodies as well as from individuals.

Determined

A determined and enthusiastic fight against the cuts in education spending such as this well deserves the interest and support it is enjoying.

This interest has now taken on international significance, with a visit from 20 Danish school students this week, who took the children on a trip up the River Thames on their barges and help from a Japanese woman representing a similar nursery occupation in Japan.

Coalition

The occupation underlines the determination that exists in the working class to defeat

the Lib-Lab coalition government's spending cuts.

There is clearly support for a policy of fighting to defend social services by a sliding scale of spending, rising point for point with inflation, as assessed by committees of trade unionists and housewives.

Similar committees must also seek to scrutinise all aspects of local government spending, to discover who benefits from this spending while the working class has its essential services slashed, and ensure that these firms are nationalised, without compensation, under workers' management.

O'FISHALL

Because of the importance of the article on the Garners' conference, O'Fishall has been held over for one week.

CLARIDGES FIGHT ON

Despite the frivolous way in which the bourgeois press have greeted the week old strike at 'top peoples' hotel, Claridges, this strike for union recognition and reinstatement is the most recent example of the massive move towards unionisation in the hotel and catering industry.

This strike was precipitated by the dismissal of shop steward Dick Elvidge who in unionising the key kitchen section of the hotel clearly represented a threat to the management.

Majority

Over 150 members of staff representing the overwhelming majority of chamber maids, kitchen staff and floor waiters came out at 1pm on Monday 10 April.

This action has clearly hit the services of the hotel which has been forced to operate a severely restricted menu and to cut facilities of

hot water and central heating.

Despite this and the apparent support of the public, it will clearly take more than this action to win the strike.

Issuing appeals to the international bourgeoisie not to use the hotel as the first strike bulletin does, will never win a strike against a management who have made it clear that there will be no concessions on union recognition or the reinstatement of the victimised steward.

Picketing itself has been severely restricted by a police limit of 11 pickets between the three entrances.

What is crucial to this strike is the mobilisation of the working class in its support.

The way forward is clear. Claridges is part of the Savoy chain of hotels which includes the Savoy, the Connaught, the Berkley, Simpsons of the Strand, and Stone Chop Houses.

In fact the strikers themselves are members of a GMWU branch which covers this chain. These workers

must be called out in solidarity action immediately.

(Even the *Evening Standard* noted the devastating effect this would have on management).

However any fight for such a broad mobilisation will encounter the bitter hostility of regional official Gerry Tilston, well known to *Socialist Press* readers for his sabotage in isolating the Metropole strike last year.

Tilston has convinced the strikers by building illusions in the class collaborationist policy of taking the dispute to ACAS and in Elvidge's case to an industrial tribunal.

Bitter lessons of other disputes have shown both the class bias of these organisations and their total ineffectiveness.

It is essential that the Claridges workers learn the lesson of the 3-month old Garner strike. They must consolidate the independence of the strike committee and demand that their full time officials call out the hotel workers in the same branch.