

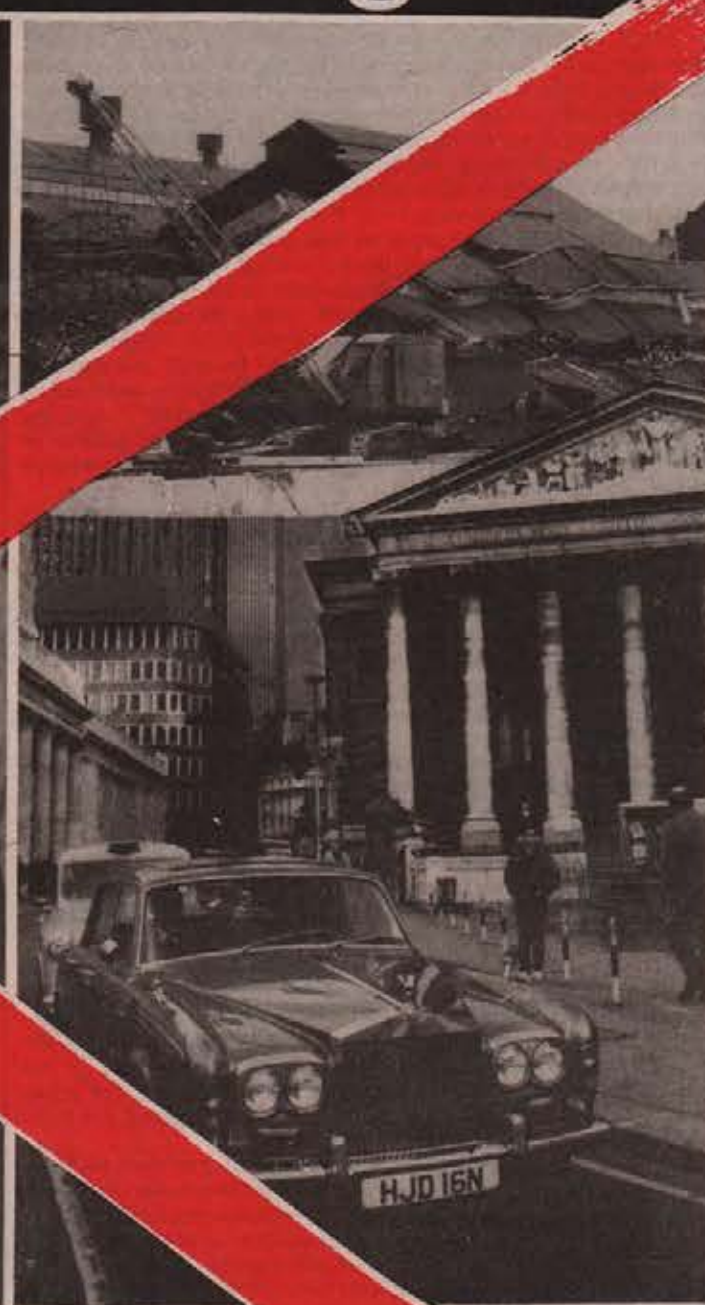
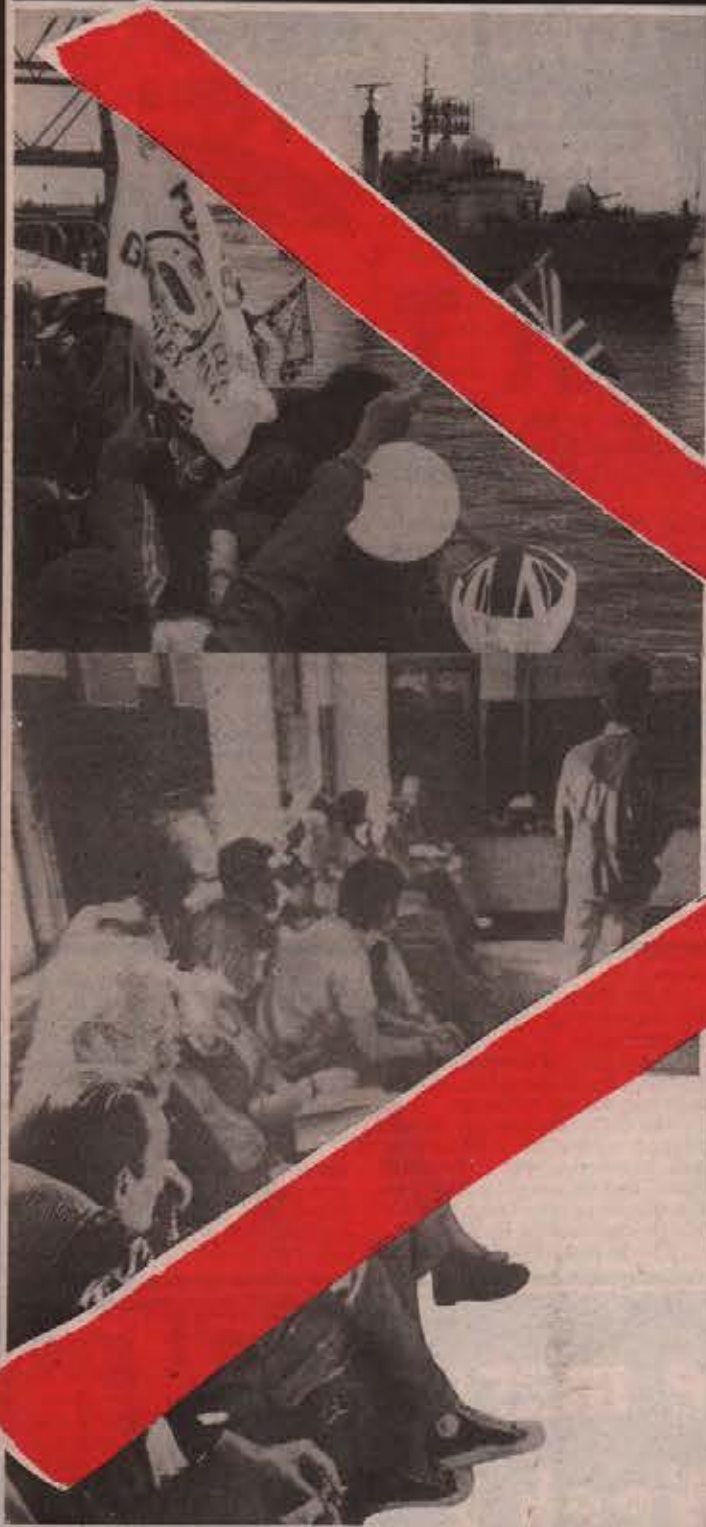
Join the
Labour
Party

Socialist ORGANISER

Fight the
witch-
hunt

Paper of the Socialist Organiser Alliance No. 131 May 12 1983 25p Claimants and strikers 10p

Knock Thatcher out of Downing St!



Stop Healey!

BY watering down and reneging on even Labour's limited conference policies, the right wing appear to be doing their best to lose working class support.

Pace-setter in this is Denis Healey, who boldly announced last weekend that if Labour is re-elected, a new 'social contract' to keep down wages will be in force 'within weeks' — in good time for the August pay round.

'I am determined, and so are our colleagues in the union movement, that we cannot afford to dodge the issue for 12 months and have the sort of crisis we had in 1975. We have to get the thing moving right away'.

The answer to Healey and his bureaucratic friends must be for the left in the Labour Party and the unions to get moving too: while fighting for a Labour vote, we must step up the campaign against all forms of wage controls and for defence of working class living standards.

INSIDE

**4 pages of Election
background**

CROSS OUT THE TORIES!

By John O'Mahony

SO THE Tories have dared 'go to the country'. Good! We can beat the Tories!

They decided for June knowing that inflation, unemployment and the economy would look even worse in the autumn. They claim that the merciless economic and social quackery they have inflicted on the working class has 'worked', even though it has increased and deepened the devastation that the world slump would have produced anyway. But the facts and trends speak against them.

Unemployment will continue to rise. The international position of the pound means an inevitable new rise in inflation.

The Tories know they lie when they say 'the corner has been turned'. Nothing has been turned except another loop in the continued downward spiral of British society.

They know they lie when they say things are going to get better from now on. The local election results showed them that their claims are accepted by far fewer people than they think. They know that the spurious glory which Mrs Thatcher won by her dirty little war in the South Atlantic is wearing off, and that the 'Falklands Factor' in British politics is getting smaller and smaller.

Their claim to be a 'successful' government has an increasingly

Continued back page

EDITORIAL

The myth of new jobs

THE Tories are going into the election with an official jobless figure of over 3 million, a real total of 4 million or more, and official predictions that the dole queue will continue to get longer. Yet they still have a good chance of winning.

Why? Because they have convinced many people of their line on jobs — that no short term measures will do any good, and in the long term the only answer is to sweat it out and improve British capitalism's competitiveness. As industries like steel and cars dwindle, new ones will rise to take their place.

This is an old theory — part of Thatcher's 'return to Victorian values'. There is also a long-standing reply to it from a working class point of view — by Karl Marx.

It is true, said Marx, that as the process of profit-making expands, so also, in general, does the employed working class. But the process, by its very nature, goes in fits and starts.

"The enormous power inherent in the factory system of expanding by jumps, and the dependence of that system on the markets of the world, necessarily beget feverish production, followed by over-filling of the markets, whereupon contraction of the markets brings on a crippling of production". And the whole cycle "depends on the constant formation, the greater or less absorption, and the re-formation of the industrial reserve army" of the unemployed.

Moreover the specifically capitalist nature of production — the way it is done for profit and not for need — means that technical progress becomes a positive agent for expanding the 'reserve army'.

"Machinery not only acts as a competitor who gets the better of the workman, and is constantly on the point of making him superfluous. It is also a power inimical to him..." — a weapon for speed-up, for increasing employers' control of the work process, and for depriving skilled trades of their positions of strength.

Thus little credit can be given to the bourgeois economists' faith that capitalist development will eventually produce "a compensation for the misery, the sufferings, the possible death of the displaced labourers during the transition period that banishes them into the industrial reserve army."

"The demand for labour is not identical with increase of capital, nor supply of labour with increase of the working class... Capital works on both sides at the same time..."

"The overwork of the employed part of the working class swells the ranks of the reserve, whilst conversely the greater pressure that the latter by its competition exerts on the former, forces these to submit to overwork and to subjugation under the dictates of capital. The condemnation of one part of the working class to enforced idleness by the overwork of the other part, and the converse, becomes a means of enriching the individual capitalists..."

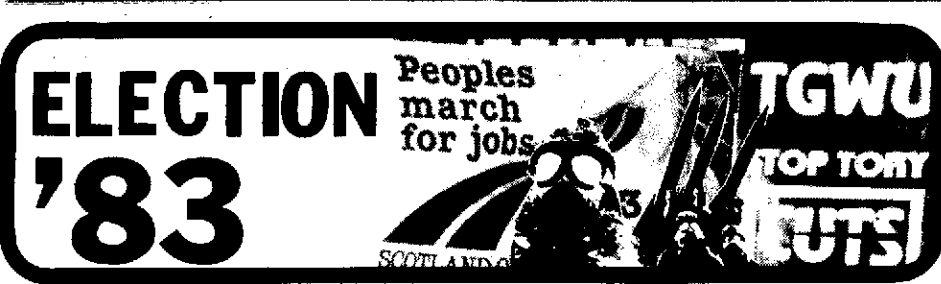
The last 15 or so years — with improved transport technology, more refined division of labour, and the fuller development of conditions for capitalist manufacturing in the Third World — have seen productive capital more and more operating in terms of a world industrial reserve army. Thus the masses of unemployed in the Third World become a weapon used by capitalists to enforce speed-up world-wide — and conversely, super-exploitation of employed workers in the Third World becomes a weapon to increase unemployment world-wide.

What consolation remains in "the hideous theory... that after a period of growth and transition, even its crowning success, the factory system based on machinery grinds down more workpeople than on its first introduction it throws on the streets"?

None of this is inevitable. It is a result of the system of production for profit, and can be fought just as that system can be fought.

Public service jobs can be defended and expanded. A shorter working week — work-sharing under workers' control — can be imposed without loss of pay. Factories where closure or mass redundancies are announced can be occupied, to demand nationalisation under workers' control. The big banks and monopolies can be taken into common ownership (without compensation), and production organised according to a democratically-organised plan rather than the fluctuations of profit.

The alternatives exist. The problem is to mobilise the labour movement to fight for them.



March on against Tories!

Dave Flanagan of the Sheffield Centre Against Unemployment, spoke to SO.

Do you think the march is proving to be as useful as it was planned to be?

No.

Why not?

Firstly, there has very little democracy. In Sheffield, people were invited onto the steering committee. There were no delegates as such from interested groups.

It was totally stitched up by the Communist Party and Paul Hudson, a local CP leading light.

The wide base seems to have been used as an excuse to ignore the politics, for example when certain slogans were banned. How do you feel about the non party political stance of the march?

It's a load of crap. Look at the 1981 march. In Tory areas it had no support. The Tories see it as party political.

Why should anti-Tory politics be covered up just to gain acceptance from one or two churches etc? Just about everybody on the march knows that the Tories can not provide full employment, and that we need to change the government or the system.

I'd say we need a government committed to socialist policies, and obviously we need to defeat the Tories before anything can be done.

How could the march have been organised better?

Firstly, it could have been officially announced earlier. Then invitations should have gone out and public meetings should have been organised to elect the committee.

Instead there was a secret meeting in T&G House, in a small room. A number of people including myself were kicked out at first because we had not been invited. They said: 'This is an invitation-only meeting. How can we organise anything efficiently if all and sundry turn up?'

Different union branches sent in £125 sponsor money and names: they were looking for participation. Only three marchers from Sheffield got trade union sponsorship direct.

The only way to solve unemployment is to have a socialist party in parliament.

The unemployed should organise themselves into democratic unions, not a CP front, and by sheer numbers they should be able to worry enough politicians to get something done.

WITH THE election set for June 9, the climax of the People's March — Sunday June 5 — will come just four days before polling day.

That's a great opportunity for Labour — hundreds of thousands in the streets of the capital, publicising and protesting against the Tories' demolition-squad economics.

Only Labour could conceivably implement the policies needed to restore employment — expanded public services, a shorter working week, nationalisations. The Tories do not even pretend to have any programme for jobs other than waiting for the automatic mechanisms of the profit economy to bring a revival.

Yet People's Marchers have been banned from shouting 'Tories Out!' Ironically, in the front line of imposing this 'no politics' line is a party supposedly to the left of Labour — the Communist Party.

There may also be moves to scale down People's March activities because of the election campaign.

Labour and trade union activists in the People's March town committees should block any such moves — and fight against the ridiculous and hypocritical 'no politics' rule.

YORKSHIRE/Humberside marchers have protested against the Morning Star's claim to be "the paper of the People's March". But the senior marshal banned any vote on the resolution.

A proposal that the Star be asked to withdraw its self-description was put to a marchers' meeting on May 8. The marshal prohibited a vote:

* because it would mean any resolution could be put forward,
* it was against TUC guidance.

lines,

* the People's March as such has no authority to put forward resolutions,

* anyway, decisions for the People's March are taken by the marshals, not the marchers.

But there was a debate. It was pointed out that the Morning Star was the paper of the Communist Party, and that three quarters of the marchers did not wish to identify themselves with the CP.

The Morning Star has support-

- Official jobless figure: 3.2 million, two million more than May 1979.
- Real jobless figure — including those on government schemes and those not claiming benefit: five million.
- Since 1979 — manufacturing employment has fallen 22%.
- For every 100,000 who lose their jobs — deaths increase by 5,000, mental hospital admissions by 6,000, and prison intake by 1,900.
- The National Institute for Economic and Social Research reckons that if present policies continue, the official dole queue figure will stand at 3.75 million after another five years.

ed the march, but it does not always tell the truth about it. On May 5, for example, it talked of 'disquiet over outside attempts to involve them in ultra-leftist chants'.

There has never been any outside attempt to involve marchers in 'ultra-leftist' chants, and, besides, the slogans objected to were such as 'Tories out!' and 'We demand the TUC/Withdraws support from the MSC'.

Yorkshire march diary : Week 2

AFTER leaving Wakefield, we marched to Barnsley, stopping at North Gawber colliery before marching into Barnsley for a reception at the NUM headquarters. Thursday: spent in Barnsley. Trips organised to the as yet uncompleted centre for the unemployed, Lyons Bakery and Shaws carpet factory.

It was encouraging to experience the strength of the union at Lyons. The workforce had made a collection for the march.

While in Barnsley we stayed at Northern College. The students were fully in support of the march.

From Barnsley to Rotherham through Wombwell for symbolic foot-washing by local church people, and stopping at Manvers colliery.

In Rotherham: met up with the Humberside leg, and the next day walked to Sheffield. The march was split into two, and our leg passed Firth Derihon, where the workers have been occupying for five weeks.

Even on strike, they collected for us, although I feel we should have collected for them.

On joining with the other leg we marched into Sheffield, followed by about 3000 supporters. The reception in Sheffield was tremendous, and finished with a rally on the steps of the Town Hall.

On Saturday we went into Sheffield, leafleted, and helped with Sheffield women's groups and unions who had stalls around the themes of women's unemployment.

The Humberside leg, when we split up, passed GKN Shardlow, where the workers were threatened with suspension if they came out in support of the march.

All along our route this week, the support from workers, the unemployed, pensioners, and in fact most people we passed, has been very strong, and therefore most uplifting — although it does make me question the funding of the march when we collect money from the unemployed and pensioners who can obviously barely afford it.

Don't get caught!

IN THE rush for the election, don't forget this year's Labour Party conference.

The deadline for resolutions is July 8. Normally wards would discuss them in June. But now most regular June ward meetings will be cancelled.

Make sure your ward organises a special meeting in June to discuss resolutions in time to go through the GC for the conference schedule.

The last Socialist Organiser delegate meeting decided to back model resolutions from the Labour Committee on Ireland, the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (its resolution on the 'Greenwich amendment', and the constitutional amendment to clause 9), and the Labour Campaign for Gay Rights. There will also be a SO model resolution on incomes policy.

Also: the closing date for payment of affiliation fees is June 10. Make sure your CLP treasurer doesn't miss it, or you lose your vote!

LABOUR PARTY AGAINST THE WITCH-HUNT!

Join LABOUR AGAINST THE WITCHHUNT

Membership open to Constituency Labour Parties, trade union organisations, Labour Party affiliates, and individuals.

Fee. CLPs and unions £10, wards £5, individuals and other organisations £3. Write to-LAW, 11 Wilderton Road, London N16.

ELECTION '83

Peoples
march
for jobs

TGWU
TOP TORY
UTS

SCOTLAND

Fighting for a Labour vote - and for our own policies

John Bloxam

secretary of the Socialist
Organiser Alliance, spoke
to Martin Thomas

What should socialists be doing
in the election?

Campaigning for Labour — but
also for our own policies. For
socialists politics can't begin
with the announcement of the
election and close down on poll-
ing day for the next five years.

Socialist Organiser has arg-
ued constantly that we need to
organise the Left, rally the rank
and file against the entrenched
Labour Establishment, and fight
to transform the whole labour
movement. We need to continue
that struggle through the elec-
tion campaign — to conduct the
campaign in such a way as best
to organise and prepare for a
fight to beat back a re-elected
Tory government, or to resist
pro-capitalist policies by a new
Labour government.

The slogan: 'The left must
organise', remains as true now
as ever. It can't be shelved for
the duration of the election.

How can we organise this sort of

campaigning?

'Socialists for a Labour Victory'
is aiming to produce six draft
leaflets — on incomes policy,
jobs, women's rights, national-
ity and immigration, the Bomb,
and youth — by the end of this
week. SLV will prepare artwork
ready for Constituency Labour
Parties (CLPs) to print from, and
there will be a mailing to CLPs
this week.

SLV will also circulate a
speakers' list; and it has under-
taken to circulate good model
leaflets produced by individual
CLPs. The Labour Committee
on Ireland and the Labour Cam-
paign for Gay Rights are plan-
ning to put out model leaflets.

How much time is there?

Not very much. The national
Labour manifesto will have been
decided by the time this SO
reaches readers, and probably
the right wing will take the op-
portunity to sweep out many
radical policies.

We must make sure that the
same thing does not happen at
local level. First of all make sure
your election address is decided
by the CLP, not just done by the
candidate alone or the candidate
and agent.

Get a campaign committee
elected, or failing that make

sure that the CLP executive
takes the decisions.

Whatever you do, don't waste
time. If necessary, write your
own leaflets locally and then get
them 'syndicated' nationally
through SLV or SO.

What about the 'Anti-Tory
League' idea?

Try to get representation for
trade union bodies, unemploy-
ed groups and community orga-
nisations on your local Labour
campaign committee.

We should also push for
LPYS and women's sections to
have the right to run their own
campaigns for youth and women
— to do their own leaflets, to
have their own sub-budgets,
and to have speakers on each
platform. They in turn may be
able to draw other youth or
women's groups into their cam-
paigns.

Labour election platforms
should also have black speak-
ers. And in areas with sizeable
immigrant populations, we
should insist on leaflets in their
own languages.

But the central drive of a
Labour campaign must be for a
class vote against the Tories.

We should argue for CLPs to
approach local shop stewards'
committees — and make the ini-
tial contacts ourselves to ensure
that no time is lost.

In 1974, I know, Ford Hale-
wood stewards brought candi-
dates in to address the shop
stewards' committee, and they
helped to organise canvass
teams. Labour Parties can also
organise factory gate meetings,
and do special leaflets co-
sponsored by the stewards. Take
the initiative in your own work-
place!

This should be linked with set-
ting up Labour Party workplace
branches. Where these branch-
es already exist, make sure they
swing into action. Where they
don't, but there is a nucleus of
Labour Party members in the
workplace, get them together
now.

Get them campaigning — and
recruiting — through the elec-
tion period, when interest in
politics is higher than usual.
Then the formalities of getting
the workplace branch recognis-
ed can be sorted out after the
election.

What if your CLP is right wing
dominated and won't accept any
SLV or left-wing material?

What you can do is limited. By
law all election leaflets, posters,
etc. have to be put on a candi-
date's expenses, so there is no
scope for freelance material.

Newspapers don't come under
that law, so you can certainly
sell Socialist Organiser. A right
wing CLP is likely to object to
you selling Socialist Organiser
door to door on a canvass — but
there's nothing to stop you sell-
ing to other canvassers (who of-
ten outnumber the regular
attenders at ward meetings),
or coming back later to sell door
to door.

The real point in a right wing
CLP is that active participation
in the canvassing — getting to
know other activists, recruiting
new members during and after
the canvass — is a precondition
for changing that CLP in the
future. And even in a right-wing
CLP some SLV-type ideas — like
joint work with local shop stew-
ards' committees — may win
wide support.

What other ways can we link
the election campaign to ongo-
ing work?

Make sure every election leaflet
has a 'Join the Labour Party' slot
on it. When you are canvassing
and a voter tells you that they
will vote Labour, don't just mark
your card and move on. Ask
them if they will take a Labour
poster, join the Labour Party, or
help canvass.

If a voter says that s/he nor-
mally votes Labour but is fed up
with the Labour leaders' record
— again, don't just mark your
card and move on. Explain how
socialists in the Labour Party
are fighting to transform the
party — ask him or her to join.

If your local Labour Party has
been doing its work properly,
then you won't have voters say-
ing: "All the Labour Party ever
does is ask us for votes. Between
election times we never see
you". But if voters do say that
— then make sure your local
Labour Party is different in fu-
ture. For a start, follow up the
election with a recruiting cam-
paign.

• Labour Committee on Ireland,
BM Box 5355, London WC1N
3XX.

• Labour Campaign for Gay
Rights, 61A Bloom St, Man-
chester 1.

First lethal shots that launched Thatcher campaign

by Harry Sloan

AS Thatcher's campaign task
force sets sail for the TV
screens and the constituen-
cies, a major element in its
public image of 'resolute gov-
ernment' is its record in the
Falklands/Malvinas war.

Yet the whole war, which cost
hundreds of lives and hundreds of
millions of pounds on both sides,
was deliberately triggered off by
Thatcher just as a possible peace
treaty had been finalised. The
fateful decision was to order the
sinking of the Argentine Cruiser
General Belgrano on May 2, 1982.

The Tory warmongers obtained
immediate and lasting support
from the Labour leadership —
with Peter Shore outstripping

even extreme right wing Tory Ju-
lian Amery in his advocacy of
full-scale invasion of the Malvinas.

Only a handful of forces in the
labour movement (some defend-
ing Argentina's claim to the Mal-
vinas; others opposing the imperi-
alist war effort; still more simply
against the human and economic
cost of the war and its political
repercussions) stood firm against
the tide of jingoism and war fever.

It is only since the seizure of
the Malvinas, as the enormity of
the expenditure required to im-
plement Thatcher's 'Fortress Falk-
lands' policy has come home to
yesterday's pink patriots, that it
has been possible to get much of a
hearing for views which question
the wisdom of the war itself, in
particular the persistent one-man
campaign by Labour MP Tam
Dalyell for an inquiry into the
sinking of the Belgrano, which has
now won support from 169 MPs.

In last week's Daily Mirror,
Paul Foot revealed crushing new
evidence that a peace treaty had
been between Britain and Argentina had

been painstakingly hammered
out, typed up and bound in red
leather awaiting signatures from
each side when Thatcher gave the
instruction to the captain of the
submarine Conqueror to sink the
Belgrano.

Interceded

He interviewed former Peru-
vian Foreign Secretary Dr. Javier
Arias Stella, who, jointly with
Peruvian President Belaunde and
US Secretary of State Alexander
Haig argued out a 7-point peace
palm. Haig interceded with British
Foreign Secretary Francis Pym;
Belaunde negotiated with Argen-
tine junta chief Galtieri. Foot
writes:

'Dr. Arias Stella told me: "We
were very excited, very hopeful.
Why?"

"Because we believed that the
final proposal would be accepted
by the Argentinians. We knew
that Mr. Haig had been in very
close touch with Mr. Pym, so we

assumed because Haig had agreed
the plan that Pym had agreed it
too."

The deal provided for an
immediate ceasefire, a withdrawal
of all forces from the Malvinas,
a period of international control of
the islands, excluding both Britain
and Argentina, and a negotiated
settlement to be concluded by
April 30, 1983. It was both a
climdown and a sort of victory
for both sides.

But Thatcher, having goaded
the Tory backwoodsmen into full
cry, would accept nothing that
smacked of compromise. Hence
the cold-blooded decision to sink
the aging, lumbering old Argen-
tine cruiser, which was outside
the British exclusion zone and
headed away from it towards its
home port.

'Then suddenly, at shortly
after 6pm, a phone call came for
President Belaunde. It was from
the American State Department.
It was followed almost at once by
another from President Galtieri.
Terrible news had just come in.

'The Argentine Cruiser Gener-
al Belgrano had been sunk by Bri-
tish torpedoes with dreadful loss
of life.

'The deal, Galtieri raged, was
off. There was no treaty, and no
peace.'

The consequences are well
known. This is the kind of 'reso-
lute approach' which Thatcher is
now promoting in the Election,
and which her 'Fortress Falk-
lands' policy is designed to per-
petuate.

'Though some Labour leaders
have taken their distance some-
what from the Tory warmongers,
none has yet declared the neces-
sary commitment to withdraw
the provocative British garrison
from the Malvinas and promote
the economic integration of the
islands with Argentina, which is
the only way of protecting the
way of life of the island commu-
nity.

At present their quiet if bleak
and grassy landscapes are being
transformed into a noisy and
bustling imperialist military base,
speckled with graves, wreaths, and
other grisly reminders of That-
cher's war.

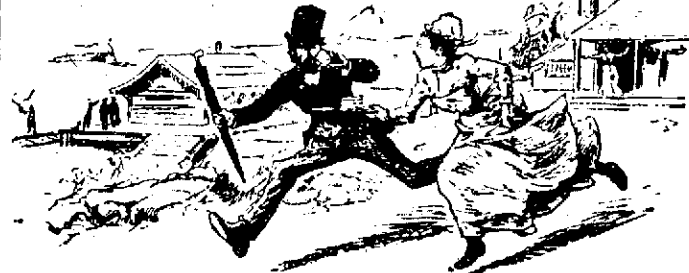
SAVE SOUTH LONDON HOSPITAL!

Save South London
Hospital Campaign
meets every Thursday
at Balham Food & Book
Co-op, High Street,
Balham at 8.00 p.m.



SAVE SAVE SAVE
THE SOUTH LONDON HOSPITAL

No time to lose!



• Socialists for a Labour Victory, 28 Middle Lane, London N8.

Jobs and services massacred

ELECTION '83

Peoples march for jobs

TGWU TOP TONY CUTS

Why women must fight for Labour

THE HEAVIEST burden of every one of the Tories' attacks has fallen upon women.

Two million are out of work — having lost their jobs or been removed from the workforce by Thatcher's policies of slump and cuts in the public sector.

Textile jobs have dropped by 34%; leather jobs by 27%, clothing and footwear by 29%, along with vast cutbacks in light engineering and other industries in which women workers predominate.

The slashing of health, education, school meals, social services and the civil service have cut further tens of thousands of largely women's jobs — with the first to go being part-time staff, often married women not eligible for redundancy payments or unemployment benefits.

Child care

The destruction of nursery facilities has loaded countless women with the burden of child-care, preventing them holding full-time jobs; the axing of old peoples' homes, the closure of hospitals and the growing waiting lists for NHS treatment further saddle tens of thousands with the burden of caring for elderly parents, relatives and children.

As wages have been held down, and often family incomes have plummeted through unemployment, it is predominantly women who have had to struggle to cope with soaring rents and rate bills, price rises on almost every item, and the worsened housing conditions brought by cuts in council repairs, and the chronic housing shortage.

Between May 1979 and April 1983, prescription charges rose from 20p to £1.40 — an increase of 600%.

And in public transport, fares continue to rise.

British Rail fares are 67% higher than in 1979, much more than the rise in prices generally. Bus fares have increased 77% on average since 1979.

Some communities have lost their services altogether. Many more have become virtual ghost towns in the evenings and on Sundays.

Since 1980, four fifths of Britain's local authority social services departments have been forced to reduce levels of provision.

Nine hundred day care places for the young physically handicapped were cut in England between 1979 and 1981 — a reduction of 9%.

House building has fallen to its lowest level since the 1920's — except for the war and immediately after — while nearly 400,000 building workers are on the dole.

There are — 2,500,000 dwellings estimated to be seriously affected by damp, 800,000 households living in overcrowded conditions, 800,000



SAVE THE SOUTH LONDON HOSPITAL



households living in shared accommodation and unknown thousands of people homeless.

Of course not all this will be put right at once should Labour get elected on June 9. But it is all certain to get worse under the Tories — whose attempts to buttress up the institution of the 'family' in which the woman remains chained to the home, and largely excluded from the workforce, makes them even more willing to attack women's rights at work.

Some of Labour's policies could make a big difference if

implemented. The Party is pledged to extend and enforce equal pay legislation; compel local authorities to step up nursery facilities; increase the maternity grants and child benefit; provide refuges for battered women; and remove obstacles to free abortion on demand on the NHS.

The leaders of course will seek to duck some of these policies: but the only way to fight this is to put them in office and organise now to call the leadership to account.

Vote Labour — and fight for socialist policies.

Bigots on parade

OVER recent weeks, 'Life', the anti-abortion group, has carried out a massive leafletting campaign. They claim to have leafleted two million homes with a lurid leaflet entitled 'Two million too many!' Cleverly worded, it says 'We're not blaming any woman who has an abortion...' then goes on to say women are forced to have abortions — that's what a 'social' abortion means. The back page says 'Two million abortions have been carried out under the 1967 Abortion Act. That means that two million human beings have been put to death...' but of course they're not blaming any woman who has an abortion!

The fact that over 1 million women have been able to obtain legal abortions since 1967 is proof enough that it needs to be kept legal and safe.

NAC (National Abortion Campaign) has produced a pro-choice leaflet pointing out that before 1967, women died, were maimed and became infertile as a result of illegal

dangerous abortions. NAC points out that though there has been a considerable improvement since the '67 Act (except for the North of Ireland, where the law does not apply) — the horrors of backstreet abortions have disappeared in Britain, the '67 Act does not go far enough.

Women still do not have the right to choose for themselves, we depend on the co-operation of doctors, the availability of facilities. Copies of the leaflet can be obtained from NAC, 374, Gray's Inn Road, London WC1.

Life are planning a rally in Hyde Park on June 25 — with such luminaries as Mother Theresa speaking. NAC is organising a picket of this rally called 'Ladies' against women'. The point is to show who is trying to stop ordinary women from determining how their own bodies are used. If you want to be part of this picket or help organise for it, ring NAC on 01-278 0153.



PHOTO: JOHN HARRIS

Council trade unionists in Islington have drafted a 'support Labour' leaflet for distribution to council workers. And the London Labour Party is preparing a number of drafts, including the one below on racism.

NO WAGE CONTROLS! FREE TRADE UNIONS

THE Tories say there are no wage controls but we have suffered from them for the last four years.

The Tories' 'cash limits' have been used to keep our wages down, or make us pay for rises by lost jobs and cuts.

Everyone else in the public sector: the nurses, hospital ancillaries, water workers, and firemen have been hit too.

The SDP support this Tory policy and want to toughen it up by a massive system of controls to screw down every workers wage.

Labour's Policy

LABOUR is the only party which is firmly committed to free collective bargaining.

Year after year Labour conference has declared its opposition to any incomes policy and has rejected calls for 'discussions' with union leaders on wage curbs.

Labour has learnt its lesson since the wage controls of the 'social contract'.

Support the low paid

LABOUR is against incomes

policy because it hits the low paid. The only people whose 'wages' are never controlled are the rich: shareholders, judges, bankers, speculators, and company directors.

Council workers, especially in low paid jobs are always the first to suffer. The only 'wages policy' that makes any sense at is the unions' policy for the low paid: a legally enforceable national minimum wage to be legislated by a Labour government.

More Jobs, Less Hours

THE Tories have used anti-union laws, fear and unemployment to hold down wages.

LABOUR has an alternative: free collective bargaining, increased public spending, and an end to the 'cash limits' on council spending. That will create jobs, not just the 'training schemes' on slave labour rates that Tebbit wants.

Council workers should vote Labour on June 9 because:

☐ Labour is against wage controls

☐ Labour will create jobs not destroy them

☐ Labour will guarantee the right of unions to organise, to standards, and to take industrial action.

☐ Labour will repeal Tebbit's anti-union laws and Prior's 'Employment Act'

It is black people who bear the brunt of Tory attacks on workers' living standards.

Under this government:

- Registered unemployment among blacks has more than doubled;
- There has been a massive increase in harassment under the immigration laws;
- The police have been given more arbitrary powers;
- A new racist Nationality Act has been passed.

These attacks on black workers are only a part of the Tory assault on all working people — black and white alike. The Tories use racism as a tool to divide working people — because as long as we are divided we can do nothing to stop the Tories.

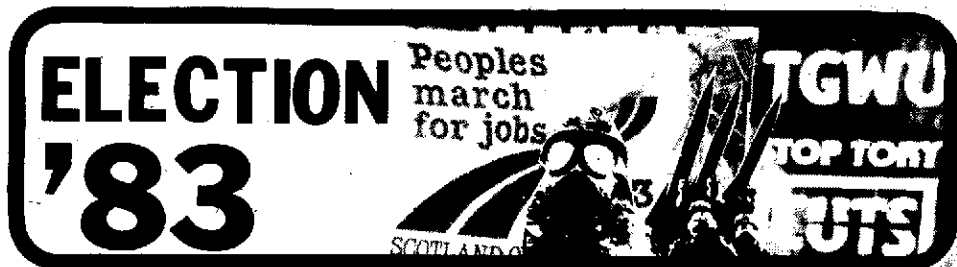
But united we can defeat them. The London Labour Party fights for:

- Repeal of the racist Nationality Act and the 1971 Immigration Act.
- An end to discrimination in jobs, housing and education.
- Greater democratic control of the police.
- Socialist measures to rebuild the economy and provide real jobs and real improvements in living standards.

WOMEN'S FIGHTBACK 10p

MAY 24 LET'S STRIKE OUT THE MISSILES

FROM: 10b Landseer Rd, London N19



"No point in Labour leaving action to the peace movement"

IF YOU understand socialism then you understand the capitalist game is the war machine and you see the need to dismantle the paraphernalia of that war machine.

There's a strong Labour element in CND — especially on this year's Council — but they're loth to support Labour overtly. Labour CND isn't creating a struggle in the Labour Party that isn't already there, but it's working to bring CND's politics into the Party, and organise that struggle to put pressure on the leadership.

Specialist

Labour CND is a "specialist section" of CND: it has its own AGM, but its constitution is ratified by CND, and CND funds it. We don't have members of Labour CND as such, we encourage people to join national CND. But our support is much wider than just our 3,000 named supporters and it is growing. At last year's AGM we had 60 people, at this year's we had

Joy Hurcombe

secretary of Labour CND, spoke to Jenny Fisher

350. People came to fight for the policies they wanted Labour CND to adopt.

One of the most contentious issues was the Register, and I'm glad we decided not to register, though we do think the Register is not the main issue now.

Our main task at the moment is to provide information on the section of the Campaign Document on nuclear disarmament. This information is needed by activists in the constituencies.

It's very difficult, as we haven't got a full-time worker — unlike Christian CND, who have had one for two years. We're appealing for funds for a full-time worker at the moment.

We want more campaigning.

A criticism I would make of the Labour Party and Labour CND is that we haven't led campaigns.

The Labour Parties are beginning to hold disarmament meetings, and we're getting more and more requests for speakers. But it's pointless the Labour Party passing resolutions if it leaves all the action to the peace movements.

Massive

The Labour Party Conference decision was a massive victory for Labour CND. We had been working to co-ordinate votes at regional level and in the unions.

The immediate reaction from the right was to issue disclaimers in the press and on television! So we wrote to CLPs asking them to send protests to the NEC, and demanding that Foot make a clear statement. To our knowledge, 100 CLPs made those protests, and we'll continue to press for the implementation of Party policy, with no fudging!

The Campaign Document is very good in that the leaders have acknowledge the support for Party policy. When they say 'close existing bases, abandon existing and new nuclear weapons, refuse Cruise and Trident, it's a victory.

But we must recognise the element of sabotage in the Campaign Document on Polaris. That's unacceptable. Even in CND there's a feeling that we should jump on the anti-Cruise/Trident bandwagon, restrict our campaigning to getting rid of those in the first instance, and play down CND's policy of withdrawal from NATO.

We must have total opposition to this compromise. No way can we campaign if there's already been a complete compromise with the right. If all we do is get rid of the new nuclear weapons, we keep the stalemate we've got at the moment with the existing ones!

Make sure

We must also make sure we don't get caught up in a non-nuclear defence policy which relies on a non-British nuclear strategy: that's the other reason for withdrawal from NATO. We can't stay in NATO and try to 'change its strategy from within, to make it a defensive alliance'. We must recognise it for what it is: a nuclear aggres-



20,000 joined a Youth CND march and festival last Saturday, May 7



PHOTO: JOHN HARRIS

long time, and can only be done with our allies, especially with existing alliances. Labour CND is working for unconditional commitment to remove the bases.

We must be realistic and understand there have to be negotiations on the mechanics of removal. But consultation is one thing, negotiations imply you can concede something. Discuss the timescale, not the issues.

We're working hard to see that the bases will be closed in the lifetime of a Labour government, not merely negotiations completed. Frank Allaun has unsuccessfully tried to get clarification on the Programme's unclear statement.

Despite our lack of funds and a full-time worker, local Labour CND groups are proliferating, and campaigning in their own areas and regions. And support for Labour CND is moving CND to a politically realistic point of view: vote Labour. CND-existing as a broad grouping is OK, but Labour is the only way to get disarmament.

The will of the women at Greenham is spectacular. There's been nothing like it. The labour movement should encourage and welcome such activity: at the same time working class and working women must be actively involved.

It's wrong to denigrate the women's movement: but we should be asking why we haven't done it ourselves, why we've failed to get our message across.

The peace movement is still largely middle class. But how do we get through to the readers of the Sun? The people at the bus queues? The Greenham women have captured the media — and met with some understanding from working class women. This could be the way.

sive alliance. It's committed to a first strike objective.

The immediate concern for Labour CND is the manifesto commitment on Polaris. There's no way that Labour Party conference voted to use Polaris as a negotiating tool. If Polaris is a negotiating tool, then you're involved in arms control, not disarmament. And it's the last 37 years of 'arms control that have brought us today's nuclear stockpiles!

Negotiate

The commitment to have a 'non-nuclear defence strategy in the lifetime of a Labour government' is not good enough. It's a contradiction to say they want a 'non-nuclear defence policy', but still have to 'negotiate' with Polaris. What negotiations? Who with? If they know they're going to dismantle it anyway, what is there to negotiate about?

There should be a clear commitment to decommission Polaris straight away: the fleet takes six months to recall.

Their intention is to win kudos from an international setting, where Foreign Secretary Dennis Healey leaves a conference having got rid of a few SS20s. They're naive: they think there's a chance to gain international respect.

Who from? The working class is not benefitted by the capitalist war machine. The nuclear issue

affects the international working class — and the Labour response to it shows up the other nationalist elements in the Labour Party programme. It's contrary to international socialism.

Campaigning against NATO's nuclear policy is also a campaign against NATO's policy in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

The other thing they're looking for is an opportunity for coalition with the Alliance — although Foot has been quite categorical, now he's been pressed, that they wouldn't accommodate Labour's policies to those of the Alliance.

The position on the bases is also ambiguous. The Programme says it would take a

ALL OUT!

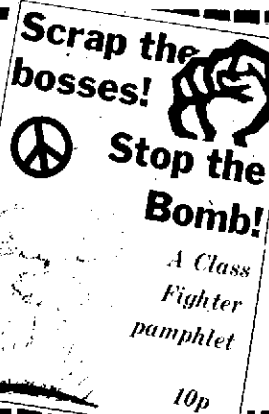
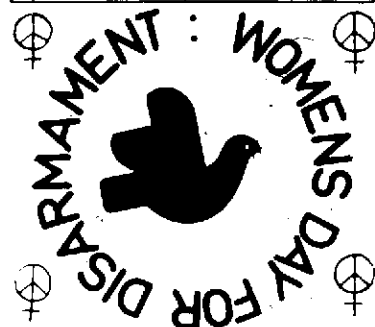
MAY 24

* NUPE and ACTT have pledged support, and the NALGO leadership has promised to consider requests for strike action from local branches. Press for action in your workplace: call on men to take supportive strike action and help by organising cresses.

* Phone 0273 553466 for your regional contact, find out what's happening locally. If nothing — organise a local group, plan action.

* Press Labour Party women's sections and Labour NFZ councils for support.

* Leaflets can be got from the London Greenham office, 5, Leonard St., London EC2.



New

The Bomb and how to get rid of it — a new pamphlet from Class Fighter. 10p plus postage from Class Fighter, 214, Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.

Demanding public inquiry Demonstration called by Roach campaign

THE Roach Family Support Committee has called an all-London demonstration for Saturday May 14, assembling 12.30 pm at Bethnal Green Gardens.

The demonstration will demand an independent public inquiry into the death of Colin Roach, who was shot dead in Stoke Newington police station on Wednesday, January 12. It will also assert the right to protest — 98 people have so far been arrested on other Roach Family Support Committee protests.

The RFSC intends to bring legal action against local police Commander William Taylor for conspiracy to assault, conspiracy to arrest and conspiracy to use violence against participants in the various protests.

LESTER LEWIS of the RFSC and Hackney North Labour Party reports:

AT THE start of the campaign for an independent public inquiry into the death of Colin Roach, the Roach Family Support Committee wrote to Home Secretary William Whitelaw.

RFSC called on the Home Secretary to set up a public inquiry into all the circumstances surrounding the death of Colin Roach in Stoke Newington police station. Numerous other organisations and individuals also wrote to Whitelaw making the same demand.

In response, the Home Secretary accepted the need for a 'full, independent and public inquiry into the matter'. However, he argued that such an inquiry would be provided by the inquest. This latter argument is fallacious and has been thoroughly discredited.

Inquest

Firstly, the Coroner, Dr. Douglas Chambers, publicly stated that his inquest was not a public inquiry and that the Home Secretary was wrongly and badly advised. He demonstrated this by pointing out that in the case of Kevin Gately, who was killed by the National Front, both an inquest and a

Three students from St. Martin's School of Art Film School have made a film entitled 'Who killed Colin Roach?', it shows the campaign in its various dimensions.

This video is available from RFSC, and can be used for showing at meetings, youth clubs, schools, colleges, etc.

During the course of filming, all three members of the film crew were arrested. Two were charged and one released without being charged.

Details from RFSC, 50, Rectory Rd., London N16 7PP. tel.: [01]-254 7480.

public inquiry were held.

Secondly, when the coroner went to the High Court over the venue of the inquest and the interested party status of Hackney Black People's Association, he was rebuffed by Mr. Justice Woolfe on both counts. In his judgement, Mr. Justice Woolfe said, 'Although an inquest is therefore an inquiry which is to be held in public, it is not intended to be a public inquiry, using that phrase as referring to the type of inquiry which the Home Secretary has been asked to set up'.

Given those circumstances, the Home Secretary also has to



PHOTO: CLAPTON YOUTH CENTRE

98 people have been arrested on Roach Family Support Committee demonstrations

bear in mind that over 100 members of Parliament have signed two Commons Motions calling for an independent public inquiry.

The Home Secretary can not dither any longer. Now is the time for him to announce the setting up of the Independent Public Inquiry, regardless of whether it is held before or

after the inquest.

RFSC calls on all individuals and organisations who support our central demand to write to the Home Secretary again on this matter. Letters should be sent to William Whitelaw MP, Home Secretary, The Home Office, Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1.

'A final decision will be made by the newly elected Council and we will continue to get our full grant until then.'

Meanwhile, strong support for the continued funding of the Gay Centre has come from the biggest Town Hall Union, NALGO. In a letter to the Leader of the Council, Roger Jones, NALGO Branch Secretary, calls for the full refunding of the Centre.

While he is not surprised that the Government has acted in a discriminatory way, he does express surprise that the Council appears to be falling in with the Government's decision. A decision to cut the Centre's grant, he says, will only increase fears amongst employees of the Council who are gay that they could face the sack unless they keep quiet about their gayness.

Councillors think again on gay centre

THE decision of Manchester Social Services Committee to cut the grant to Manchester Gay Centre, which it has funded for the past five years with the aid of a Department of Environment grant, has not been accepted by a full meeting of the Labour group of councillors.

Paul Fairweather, Gay Centre Liaison Officer, said after the Council meeting on Wednesday April 27:

'The decision of the Social Services Committee to cut the Gay Centre's grant will now be referred back to the Policy Committee for further discussion.'

'We are very relieved that Labour Councillors have decided to think again and hope that we will now be able to convince them that the Gay Centre is worth refunding.'



Blue murder in Derry

FOLLOWING an inquest last week, the parents of Gary English and Jim Browne are calling on the Director of Public Prosecutions to bring murder charges against British troops.

Gary, aged 19, was knocked down by an army landrover and then killed as the landrover reversed back over him. Jim, aged 18, was killed by being thrown into the air by a landrover. It happened on April 19, 1981, as the landrovers plunged into a demonstration in Derry in support of the hunger strikers.

Paul Clements, a BBC reporter, said: 'I saw one boy go up in the air four or five feet. I was dumbfounded, I couldn't believe my eyes; I expected to see at least half a dozen people dead'.

In August 1981 one driver and his NCO were charged re-

spectively with 'reckless driving' and 'aiding and abetting'. But in January 1982 they were found 'not guilty'.

The defence case was that Gary had been hit as he ran across the path of the landrover. It rested heavily on the evidence of a forensic expert — evidence which was torn to pieces at the inquest.

According to Gary's father, Michael English, the reason for this verdict was that the public prosecutors 'went to court with a weak case, I believe, by design'. The senior prosecuting counsel left the court on the third day of the trial — leaving all the rest of it, including cross-examination and the summing up, to the junior counsel.

'If we cannot succeed against so blatant a miscarriage of justice', says Michael English, 'then what chance is there for any normal society' in Northern Ireland.

Hunger strike in Portlaoise

NICKY KELLY, a member of the Irish Republican Socialist Party, went on hunger strike on May 1 in Portlaoise Jail, Southern Ireland. In a letter from prison he explains why.

'IN 1976 I was arrested under the Offences Against the State Act, and held incommunicado for a number of days. I was severely beaten and tortured by the police (and) forced to sign a confession, admitting to taking part in a robbery in which I was not in any way involved (the Sallins train robbery).'

In 1978, before the non-jury special court in Dublin, I was found guilty with two other co-accused. The so-called confession was the only evidence against the three of us. This juryless court found that my statement was voluntary despite the fact that in the course of the trial expert medical opinion which included prison doctors confirmed that I was brutalised while in custody.

I was sentenced in my absence to twelve years' penal servitude. I jumped bail in the final days of the trial and fled to the USA.

In April 1980 the Provisional IRA claimed responsibility for the Sallins train robbery and stated that neither I nor my co-accused were involved.

The following month my two co-accused were released by the

appeal court. I immediately returned from the USA. I was of the opinion that justice would be done the second time around.

For the last three years I have remained incarcerated for something I did not do. During this time I have pursued every judicial process and exhausted all legal channels in an effort to secure my release.

Now I feel I have no alternative but to embark on a hunger strike'.

• Write to the Irish Embassy in London and the Justice Minister, Government Buildings, Upper Leeson St, Dublin 2, to demand the release of Nicky Kelly. Send messages of support and donations to: The Release Nicky Kelly Committee, 11 Grange Terrace, Blackrock, Co. Dublin.



DEFEND THE NEWHAM 8!

The Newham 8 — Asian youths aged between 15 and 21 — face charges of conspiracy as well as threatening behaviour and actual bodily harm.

They were arrested on September 24 1982 after an incident with plain-clothes police officers. In the previous week there had been three major racist attacks on Asian schoolchildren at Little Ilford School, in Newham, and an incident where 60 or 70 white youth with iron bars and sticks went on the rampage in East Ham and Manor Park.

Send invitations for speakers, or resolutions of support, to Newham 8 Defence Campaign, c/o PO Box 273, London E7 9JN.



Background to war in El Salvador

50 years of struggle against repression

THE concentration of the Salvadorean working class in the centres of economic and political power has long given it a significance out of all proportion to its numerical size.

This lesson has been well learnt by the country's rulers who have attempted either to co-opt or repress the proletariat in order to achieve "stability".

The coffee boom of the late nineteenth century led to the establishment of an elementary economic infrastructure and a corresponding growth in the working class — at this time the most important workers were those on the railways, ports and in such skilled trades as printing.

In 1923 the first labour unions were formed (many of them composed of artisans) and in 1924 the Regional Federation of Salvadorean Workers (FRTS) was established. As the unions grew, so did the politicisation of the most advanced layers of the proletariat.

In 1925 the Salvadorean Communist Party (PCS) was formed by organisers from Guatemala and Mexico. At first the PCS was mainly student based, but throughout the late 1920s it waged a political struggle against the anarchists and syndicalists who controlled the FRTS and by 1930 it had established control over the labour federation.

Red Aid

The PCS May Day parade of 1930 was attended by 80,000. The PCS also organised many workers through such front organisations as International Red Aid (SRI), which distributed propaganda in support of political prisoners and gave material aid to their families.

Despite these advances the PCS was still organisationally very weak. Until 1929 it took its instructions from the Guatemalan Party and then from the Comintern secretariat of the Caribbean in New York.

It was only in 1930 that the PCS established its own Central Executive Committee resident in San Salvador. The cell structure, however, remained weak.

The world economic crisis of 1929 had a devastating effect upon the Salvadorean economy. The fall in demand for coffee meant that most of that year's harvest was left to rot in the fields. Because the coffee economy had swallowed up vast sections of arable land and turned peasant communities off of their farms, the depression meant unemployment, and starvation for many.

Those who remained in work saw their wages fall from 50 to 20 centavos a day. Between 1928 and 1931 the national income fell 50%.

As peasant resentment mounted, the PCS began to organise in the countryside. In April 1930, 50,000 peasants signed a petition

By Paul Muddle

demanding a minimum wage law. Many joined the SRI. The government response was repression — laws prohibiting agitation were passed and between November 1930 and February 1931 1,200 were imprisoned.

In mid-1930 the government surprised everyone by announcing a free presidential election for February 1931. The winner was Arturo Araujo, a "good landlord" figure and head of the newly formed Labour Party. Araujo promised a motley collection of reforms such as improved sanitation, greater municipal autonomy, free medical aid, etc.

Araujo's hollow rhetoric achieved nothing except greater mobilisation among the peasantry and a growing anger among the landowning oligarchy. Enraged by Araujo's support for worker candidates in the December 1931 Mayoral elections, the army staged a coup and handed power over to General Hernandez Martinez.

Throughout the Araujo period the PCS had been organising workers and peasants more and more effectively. A PCS manifesto which appeared in Sonsonate in May 1931 proclaimed:

"The Communist Party of El Salvador denounces the government of Arturo Araujo as a government of assassins and animals and calls on the poor workers and peasants of the world to solidarity with their brothers in El Salvador... The Communist Party calls all the poor workers and peasants of El Salvador to bloody struggle against the national bourgeoisie, who are unconditionally allied to Yankee imperialists..."

The new dictatorship, however, allowed the PCS to take part in the municipal and congressional elections of January 1932. In those places where the PCS won seats, they were denied them by ballot stuffing and other frauds.

It was at this point that the PCS decided to set a definite date for rebellion. A Revolutionary Military Committee was established and a barracks revolt prepared. In the countryside the SRI increased its agitation.

The PCS, however, was betrayed and on January 18 (only four days before the revolt) the leadership was arrested and the barracks revolt crushed. With the urban insurrection stifled at birth the peasant "jacquerie" was headless, nevertheless it went ahead and in some rural towns soviets were established for a few days.

It was a relatively easy matter

for the army to suppress the revolt, and in the fortnight of reprisals that followed it is estimated that up to 30,000 were slaughtered.

Martinez remained in power until 1944, during which time all labour unions were outlawed and laws were passed against industrialisation. He was eventually overthrown by an alliance of the working class, radical democrats and some sections of the military. In October 1944 however there was a counter-coup and the old regime re-installed.

The December revolution of 1948 brought to power a regime of radical officers and civilians. The official Revolutionary Party of Democratic Unification (PRUD) promised social reform and economic growth.

The PRUD recognised that in order to win urban support and expand the domestic market it would have to pass some legislation in the interests of the proletariat. Urban (but not rural) trades unions were legalised and minimum wage and social welfare legislation was passed. Workers thus had certain privileges vis-à-vis the rest of the population.

The PCS had been slowly rebuilding its cadre since about 1936 and between 1948 and 1951 they attempted to build a new national labour federation. With the support of shoemakers, barbers, many small craft unions and the electrical workers they twice set up new national groupings.

The government, however, would not allow any independent working class organisations and on both occasions PCS organisers were arrested and beaten up.

As long as coffee and cotton prices held up well on the world markets the PRUD taxed landowners and redistributed the surplus in the form of credits to industry and the construction of such infrastructural projects as the Hydro-Electric dam on the Lempa river. In 1957, however, prices on the world market fell and the Salvadorean economy was wracked by unemployment.

Toppled

Political gangsterism by the PRUD alienated many erstwhile supporters and in 1960 the regime was toppled by a heterogeneous alliance of young officers, workers, and pro-Cuban intellectuals.

In a repeat performance of 1944 the new Junta was soon overthrown by a "Directorio" of mildly reformist officers. The new President Col. Rivera, declared that "in El Salvador the exploitation of man by man is ended" and declared his support for Kennedy's "Alliance for Progress."

Laws were passed giving agricultural labourers one day of paid rest a week, nationalising the mortgage bank and imposing currency controls. Urban rents were controlled and noises were made about agrarian reform.

The official Party of National Conciliation (PCN) soon came to an accord with the landowners, however, and concentrated its efforts on industrial growth. In 1961 the Central American Common Market (MERCOSUR) was formed.

It had long been recognised that the domestic markets of the Central American republics were too small to promote industrialisation and thus it was hoped that growth would be promoted by reducing or abolishing tariffs between the republics and erecting common tariffs against imported goods.

Industrialisation was promoted by establishing Central American credit agencies which were generously funded by US loans. Throughout the 1960s intra-regional trade flourished and



A victim of the death squads

foreign capital flooded into manufacturing in alliance with domestic capital.

The PCN sponsored an official trade union federation, the CGS, which in the early 1960s organised more than 15,000 workers. Repression of the independent left wing unions (the CGTS and then the FUSS) drove them to concentrate on purely economic demands.

The PCS accommodated to this economism and to the radical petty bourgeoisie (organised around the Christian Democrats) by putting forward a programme of demands for improved working conditions and advocating a progressive "anti-oligarchic, anti-imperialist" alliance.

The industrialisation experienced under the MERCOMUN was capital intensive and between 1961 and 1971 the labour force in manufacturing grew only by about 4%.

Industrialisation had favoured those countries with a more developed manufacturing base (Guatemala, El Salvador) against the less developed economies (Honduras, Nicaragua). Honduras experienced a continual trade deficit with its northern neighbours and underwent little growth, furthermore it was flooded with Salvadorean peasants who had been expelled from their land by the oligarchy.

The resentment of the Honduran bourgeoisie against its Salvadorean competitors boiled over into a six-day war in 1969. Because the "progressive" Christian Democrats supported the war effort so did the PCS.

El Salvador won the war, but it had lost the Honduran market, and more importantly it was no longer able to push its peasantry across the border. The vast influx of refugees in 1969 created an even greater land hunger and gave greater urgency to the demand for agrarian reform.

The issue of agrarian reform split the more moderate wing of the PCN from the openly pro-oligarchic wing and gave great impetus to the united Christian Democrat/MNR (Social Democratic/PCS) presidential campaign of 1972. By ballot stuffing and manipulation of the electoral machinery, Molina of the PCN beat Christian Democrat Duarte by 22,000 votes.

Reformists in the military responded to the fraud by an attempted coup, supported by Duarte, which was bloodily crushed in a day.

Fraud and intimidation have characterised the Salvadorean political process ever since. When

Molina transformation" a mild "agrarian transformation" in 1976 the oligarchy had him ousted and replaced by the more reliable Romero. Protestors claiming that Romero's election was fraudulent were massacred in front of San Salvador cathedral on February 28, 1977.

Peasant unions such as the radical Christian FECCAS and the UCS flourished from the mid 1970s and soon became aligned with the FPL (Forces of Popular Liberation), a Castroite split from the bankrupt PCS. Simultaneously, the PCS lost control of the urban workers federations FUSS and FENASTRAS which jointly comprised one-third of the total workforce and organised such strategic sectors as the power workers.

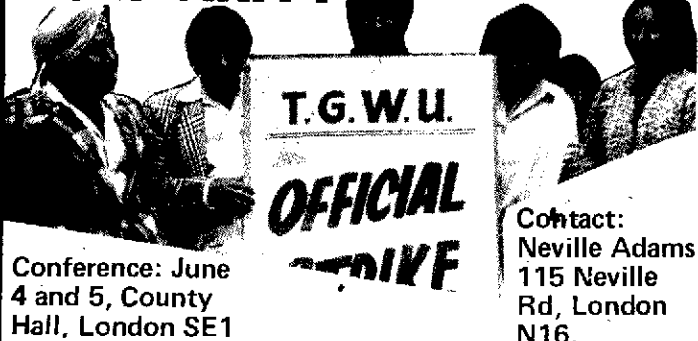
This split led to the formation of FAPU (Front of Popular Unified Action) which argued for a broad "anti-fascist" alliance co-ordinating parliamentary and extra-parliamentary activities.

The reformist coup of October 1979 failed to achieve either the land reform or the democratisation it promised. The PCS had five ministers in the new government. In the interest of unity with the "progressive bourgeoisie", FAPU gave the regime a breathing space to see how "anti-fascist" it was. Assassinations by the army and "death squads" escalated and the last fragments of the PCS's "peaceful road" illusions were shattered.

Reagan and Thatcher have supported the Salvadorean bourgeoisie's attempts to "democratise" El Salvador. Britain was the only European state to send observers to the farcical March 1982 elections. In addition, Britain is playing a major role in the militarisation of Honduras — Reagan's new garrison in Central America.

It is the duty of all British trade unionists to show solidarity with our class brothers and sisters in El Salvador.

Black trade unionists SOLIDARITY



Conference: June 4 and 5, County Hall, London SE1

Contact: Neville Adams 115 Neville Rd, London N16.

LABOUR MOVEMENT CONFERENCE ON EL SALVADOR
COUNTY HALL LONDON MAY 14

SPEAKERS Judith Hart
Jenny Pearce (author of 'Under the Eagle')
Salvador Moncada (FDR Representative)
Salvadorean Trade Unionists

DELEGATES invited from Trade Union & Political Party branches
FURTHER INFORMATION from:
El Salvador Solidarity Campaign
29 Islington Park Street
London N1 Tel: 01-359 2270

Wide spectrum unites under umbrella of Salv

Drawing the wrong lessons from Nicaragua

WORKERS who follow the news on El Salvador or attend rallies or conferences where solidarity is expressed with the struggle, will know that the political representatives of the guerrilla forces are the Democratic Revolutionary Front — the FDR.

But behind this single title and behind its well-known leaders on their travels round world capitals, lies an organisation profoundly divided in its social and political basis.

Formed in April 1980, the FDR is in reality an umbrella grouping spanning the whole political spectrum from the Guevarist left, through the official Communist Party to the social democrats, the tiny Social Christian Party and leading Christian Democratic politicians who formerly served in the junta.

General secretary of the FDR at its formation was Enrique Alvarez, a former agriculture minister for the Duarte junta. Other one-time junta-men in the FDR include Hector Dada (former Foreign Minister); Ruben Zamora (ex-Minister of Presidency); Ramon Mayorga (ex-junta member) and Guillermo Ungo (leader of the social democratic MNR and ex-junta member).

It is the involvement of these bourgeois political leaders (who for a period actively participated in a regime which slaughtered hundreds of workers and peasants in the service of their US overlords) that distinguishes the FDR from the apparently similar 'broad alliance', the FSLN, which led the overthrow of Nicaraguan dictator Somoza.

By Harry Sloan

In Nicaragua whole sections of the capitalist class had themselves run into conflict with the monolithic state apparatus controlled lock, stock and barrel by the Somoza dynasty. Denied any other means of asserting influence over events, they threw in their lot with the more radical petty bourgeois forces of the FSLN.

The eventual revolutionary overthrow of Somoza installed as a result a cross-class ruling junta in which the radical forces rested upon the mass movement of workers and peasants, while the capitalist elements sought to defend their property and profits. The 'alliance' has come under enormous strains — but while various bourgeois leaders have left the Sandinista government and began to mobilise against it, the petty bourgeois forces have not taken decisive steps to expropriate the capitalists.

Nicaragua remains a 'mixed' capitalist economy in which the right to strike and the rights of left wing organisations are restricted while the 'progressive' bourgeoisie have in large part become agitators for counter-revolution.

The defeat of Somoza by such a confused cross-class alliance however has had a massive impact upon revolutionary forces elsewhere in Central America, despite the fact that conditions — particularly in

El Salvador — are very much different.

In El Salvador, within months of the Nicaraguan victory, groupings that had previously fought against the notion of a reformist bourgeois government, and argued for the leading role in the struggle of the working class or a 'worker-peasant alliance', abruptly switched line and began to pursue a Sandinista-style 'broad alliance' with apparently progressive bourgeois politicians.

By 28 February 1980 the main left wing groupings and the Communist Party (which had had five ministers in the October 1979 junta) had come together to form the Coordinadora Revolucionaria de Masa (CRM), whose programme is an explicit call for a cross-class alliance.

The section entitled 'The Revolutionary Democratic Government. Its Composition and its Platform of Political, Structural and Social Changes' states:

"This government will be based on a broad social and political foundation formed in the first place by the working class, the peasants and the advanced middle classes. Intimately united with them will be the social classes prepared to carry forward this platform, managers of small and medium sized industries, artisans and agricultural businessmen, (small and medium coffee growers and other branches of agriculture and cattle raising).

It will also include honest professionals, the progressive clergy, democratic parties such as the MNR (Revolutionary Nationalist Movement), the advanced sectors of Christian Democracy, worthy and honest army officers, who are willing to serve the interests of the people and all other sectors, groups, persons or segments which are in favour of broad democracy for the popular masses, independent development and popular freedom."

The programme goes on to call for the nationalisation of foreign trade, electricity, oil and banks, but:

"all without affecting the small and medium companies, which will be given stimulus and



The leverage of the FDR leaders depends upon the militant mass support

support in every way . . ."

(Tasks and Objectives, subsection e).

It calls for the destruction of the repressive bodies ORDEN, the Guardia Nacional and the Policia de Hacienda but not the army.

A new army will be created: "constructed during the course of the revolutionary process, into which will be incorporated those healthy and worthy members of the present army."

(ibid., subsection g). A later paragraph confirms that this includes officers.

This appeal to the 'progressive' bourgeoisie was swiftly taken up — and within two months the CRM got together with the Democratic Salvadorean Front (FDS) — a cobbled grouping of social democrats, Social Christians, dissident Christian Democrats and right wing trade unions — to form the FDR.

The motives for these right wing forces in joining the opposition appear to be mixed.

Some of those politicians who have joined the opposition may have been offended by the brutal methods of their former colleagues in the junta.

But the main reason for their change of allegiance appears to be their calculation that the repression was simply fuelling resistance and stood no chance of ensuring prolonged stability of economic development.

In addition, their political weight and 'respectability' has been lent to the FDR only on the understanding that its programme is restricted to reforming the most brazen aspects of

the dictatorship and creating a structure for a 'mixed' economy.

Though much of the public rhetoric of the FDR appears to the left of that produced by the Sandinistas, and it is stridently anti-imperialist and anti-dictatorial, it is not in general anti-capitalist. Nor does it offer any independent political line for the Salvadorean working class.

In fact the declared political objectives of the FDR constitute a significant step backwards by several of its more left-wing

US State Department". Two months later, as a principal architect of the FDR, Cayetano was to be sitting next to Zamora in a common "front".

The BPR had for years attacked the Communist line of seeking an alliance with the Salvadorean bourgeoisie and its 'belief in the possibility of the growth of a "national" independent bourgeoisie; a position that for many years has lost its objective basis and possibilities, to the degree that international

The founder of the Salvadoran Communist Party, Agustin Faribundo Marti, is well known for having campaigned alongside the Nicaraguan revolutionary Sandino — from whom today's rulers of Nicaragua take their title of 'Sandinistas'.

But what is seldom mentioned in this context is that Marti broke with Sandino over the "merely nationalistic and non-revolutionary nature" of Sandino's fight against the US marines.

Marti was executed after the disastrously-led 1932 insurrection in El Salvador. The guerrilla forces who today incorporate his name into the title of their liberation front look to his internationalist decision to join with Sandino, rather than to his subsequent criticism and break from Sandino's narrow nationalism.

Thus one of the few positive lessons from the early history of the Salvadorean communist movement has been buried in the demagogic pursuit of a cross-class 'national' alliance.

component groupings.

One clear example of this is the Popular Revolutionary Block (BPR), which split from the Communist Party in 1969-70). Its leader, Cayetano Carpio* formerly General Secretary of the CP, as recently as February 1980 denounced Ruben Zamora as "in close alliance with the

monopoly capital has been penetrating our economy." (The People's Alternative, 11 July 1976).

* Cayetano Carpio, known as 'Marcial' and head of the FMLN, recently committed suicide following the murder in Nicaragua of fellow commander Ana Maria.

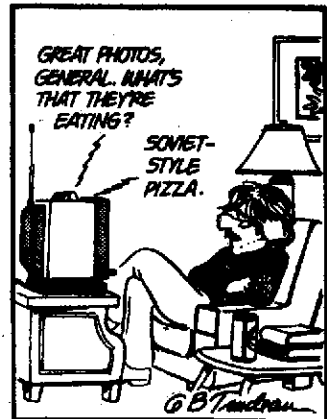
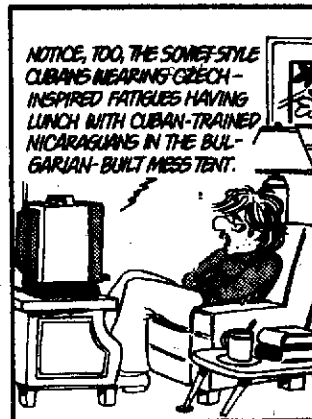
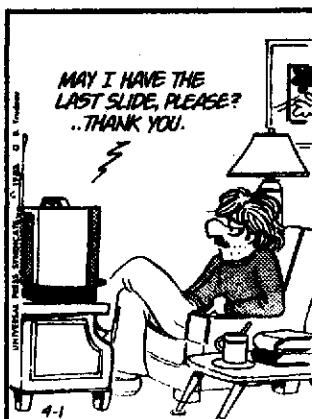
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DONESBURY



Salvadoran "Democratic Revolutionary Front"



In February 1980, then guerilla leader Cayetano Carpio (above centre, with Nicaraguan leaders Borge and Ortega) denounced former junta man Zamora (far right) as a close ally of the US State Department. A month later he welcomed Zamora and social democratic leader Ungo (right) into the FDR.



the left organisations

We must aid the struggle of the left-wing fighters

The BPR argued instead for a "revolutionary front", which they insisted must:

a) be led and oriented in its struggle by the proletariat and its revolutionary principles, the indispensable condition of the Popular Revolution towards socialism.

b) have as its fundamental driving force the worker-peasant alliance, based on the revolutionary alliances of the people. The worker-peasant alliance will have to draw around itself the advanced members of the petty bourgeoisie and of the middle strata...

(The People's Alternative) But though breaking from the CP, the BPR did not break from Stalinist politics — and instead looked to the alternative varieties of cross-class alliance argued by Mao and the Vietnamese leader Giap. It did not stress the leading role and political independence of the working class — leaving the possibility of dissolving that independence into the confusion of a future "Revolutionary Front".

The events of Nicaragua appear to have tipped the balance in this regard and convinced the BPR leaders that the strategy they fought against for ten years should in fact be applied, and that they should join the struggle for a government which, in Cayetano's words: "will not be socialist, but, rather, a government that, with the efforts of the entire people, will build an economy on the soviet basis of independence and sovereign development."

Similarly, the Nicaraguan revolution undermined the political stand of the FAPU, which was set up in 1974 from a group of trade union caucuses to the left of the CP. In February 1980, FAPU declared (correctly) that: "the fundamental social classes are the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and that the struggle between these two classes constitutes, without any doubt, the essential nucleus of class struggle in El Salvador."

(Polemica Internacional, February 1980).

But only a month later the same grouping was arguing that:

"the second lesson which the Sandinista Revolution has taught us is the necessity of

establishing the broadest alliances with democratic forces..."

(Pueblo, 10 March 1980). In other words at a point where the Salvadoran Communist Party was hopelessly discredited by its participation in the 1979 junta, and its political line of collaboration with the bourgeoisie was wide open to attack from the left, a misreading of the lessons of the Nicaraguan revolution led the left instead to capitulate to the Communist Party.

Small wonder that with the FDR firmly established on a

There are large forces that see themselves as Marxists

THE Salvadoran regime now speaks occasionally of political democracy but has reverted to outright repression in its attempts to smash the workers' movement, e.g., Decree 44 militarises the workforce. Strikers can be court-martialled for disobeying orders. Decree 196 outlaws strikes by public and municipal workers. Decree 366 disbanded the power workers' union (STECOL) after a one-day strike and Decree 507 legalises confessions obtained by torture.

reformist — albeit radical — platform, it has drawn diplomatic support from bourgeois governments in Mexico and elsewhere, fulsome praise from the class collaborators of the so-called "Socialist International", and the backing of the Stalinist leaders of Moscow and Havana, who have all joined attempts to pressure Reagan to negotiate a settlement with the FDR.

The paradox is that while the fighting in the field and the mass popular support which constitute the negotiating strength of the FDR come from the left wing forces, the top-level talks and political manoeu-

vres are largely in the hands of the bourgeois leaders who have little if any mass support in El Salvador.

While it is clearly the case that solidarity with the Salvadoran struggle must at the present time be directed through the centralised fronts — the FDR and FMLN — it is also important that this is not confused with acceptance of the political line and strategy of the FDR leadership, or advocacy of the type of bourgeois reformist government which they propose.

We must find every way possible to aid the struggles of the left wing fighters in El Salvador in defeating imperialism and its stooge regime: but we must recognise that there can be no long term solution to the problems of the working masses of El Salvador without the overthrow of capitalist rule.

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

As the Trotskyist Transitional Programme pointed out in

1938: "When the party of the proletariat refuses to step beyond bourgeois-democratic limits, its alliance with the peasantry is simply turned into a support for capital as was the case with the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries in 1917, with the Chinese Communist Party in 1925-27, and is now the case with the 'People's Front' in Spain, France and other countries".

To these examples could of course be added the tragic lessons of the Chilean "Popular Unity" government in which the "Marxist" Allende and his sup-

porters tied the Chilean workers movement to an alliance with "progressive" capitalists and generals.

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

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

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

Marxists

There are large forces among the rank and file of the left wing organisations, in the trade unions and in the guerrilla groups that already see themselves as Marxists engaged in

the struggle against imperialism.

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

Militias

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

In this way any tendency of workers to rely for their protection on petty bourgeois guerrilla groups can be combatted and new blows struck at the regime.

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

In particular it is important to raise the demand for the opening of the books of industry, of the banks, of the large agricultural suppliers and transport concerns, to show how both the workers and the poor peasants are exploited to boost the

profits not only of imperialist finance capitalists but also of "democratic" capitalists in El Salvador itself (who oppose the present regime because they see it as simply an obstacle to further extension of their own profit-taking).

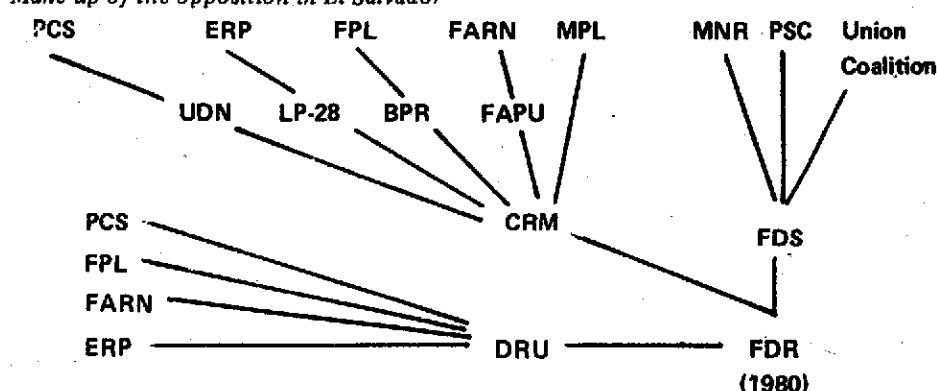
Wedge

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

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

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

Make up of the opposition in El Salvador



DRU: Direccion Revolucionaria Unificada
FDR: Frente Democratico Revolucionario
FDS: Frente Democratico Salvadoreno
CRM: Coordinadora Revolucionaria de Masas
MNR: Partido Social Cristiano
MPL: Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario
UDN: Union Democratica Nacionalista

LP-28: Ligas Populares 28 de Febrero
BPR: Bloque Popular Revolucionario
FAPU: Frente de Accion Popular Unificada
MPL: Movimiento Popular de Liberacion
PCS: Partido Comunista de El Salvador
ERP: Ejercito Revolucionario del Pueblo
FARN: Fuerzas Armadas de Resistencia Nacional

International news

Danger of anti-Communist pogrom Khomeini cracks down on Tudeh Party

LAST WEEK, Iran's Islamic Republican Party (IRP) regime dissolved the Tudeh Party (the Moscow-loyal Iranian 'Communist' Party).

The IRP regime has long ranked amongst the world's most repressive governments. Independent working class activity and organisation are banned. Women have been reduced to mere objects by the "Law of Retribution". A genocidal war is being fought out in Kurdistan to deny its inhabitants the right to self-determination.

There are 30,000 political prisoners in the country's jails, and the use of torture and summary execution is commonplace.

The Tudeh Party's response to this viciously anti-working class regime was to support it.

Twisting logic into its opposite the Tudeh Party declared that the regime really consisted of two "lines": the Imam's line (supposedly "progressive" and "anti-imperialist") and the Hojatieh line (the reactionary line).

Repression

Insofar as the Tudeh Party acknowledged the existence of repression in Iran at all, the repression was attributed to the influence of the Hojatieh line, whilst the alleged "gains" of the "Revolution" were thanks to the Imam Ayatollah Khomeini. Was not the fact that he had once said "God is a worker" proof that the Ayatollah was progressive?

The Tudeh party helped whitewash the regime and aided its witch-hunting of all forms of opposition, claiming that "the working class of Iran has given its unequivocal support to the popular and anti-imperialist Revolution".

It is a sad commentary on the extent of the influence of Stalinism on the British labour movement that leading figures in it such as Joan Maynard, Alan Sapper and Terry Marsland (deputy general secretary of the Tobacco Workers Union) have lent their support to the Tudeh Party's front organisation in Britain, the ludicrously named "Committee in Defence of the Iranian Revolution".

The Tudeh Party's craven support for a thoroughly reactionary regime flowed from its subservience to the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union who favourably looked upon the IRP regime as a possible ally in its bargaining with American

By Stan Crooke

imperialism.

Thus, in the interests of the reactionary Kremlin bureaucracy, the Tudeh Party boosted the "anti-imperialist" credentials of the IRP regime. It's "anti-imperialism" was in fact a fairly spurious affair (it bought arms from Israel and executed members of the Fedayeen minority who had fought alongside the PLO), but the Tudeh Party ignored such minor details in its efforts to arrange a marriage of convenience between the IRP regime and the Kremlin bureaucracy by an uncritical wooing of the former.

And even if the IRP regime did possess an "objective anti-imperialist content", such an approach rested upon a fundamentally wrong political method, unfortunately not alien to any number of supposedly Trotskyist organisations. It isolated the anti-imperialist struggle from the general class struggle and elevated it above the latter.

This kow-towing before the IRP butchers meant that the Tudeh Party could continue to operate at a time when most other political organisations had already been banned by the IRP. But in February of this year 70 of its leading members including the General Secretary Nourredin Kianouri were arrested on the grounds that they were "Soviet spies".

Even then the Tudeh Party maintained its slavish subservience to the Ayatollah and to Andropov. A statement issued by its Central Committee in March declared that it "is wholeheartedly linked to the anti-imperialist and popular revolution of Iran, and still resolutely struggles for the unity of all genuinely revolutionary forces of Iran and the support for the Islamic Republic against imperialist provocation."

It claimed that the real threat to the "Revolution" came from conspirators "undoubtedly acting under the directives of the CIA and other imperialist and Zionist intelligence organisations."

But all this cant was to no avail. At the beginning of May Kianouri appeared on Iranian television and confessed to

being a Soviet spy: "There was espionage, deceit, treachery. These are serious aberrations and they deserve the most severe punitive actions that the Islamic Republic may decide to mete out."

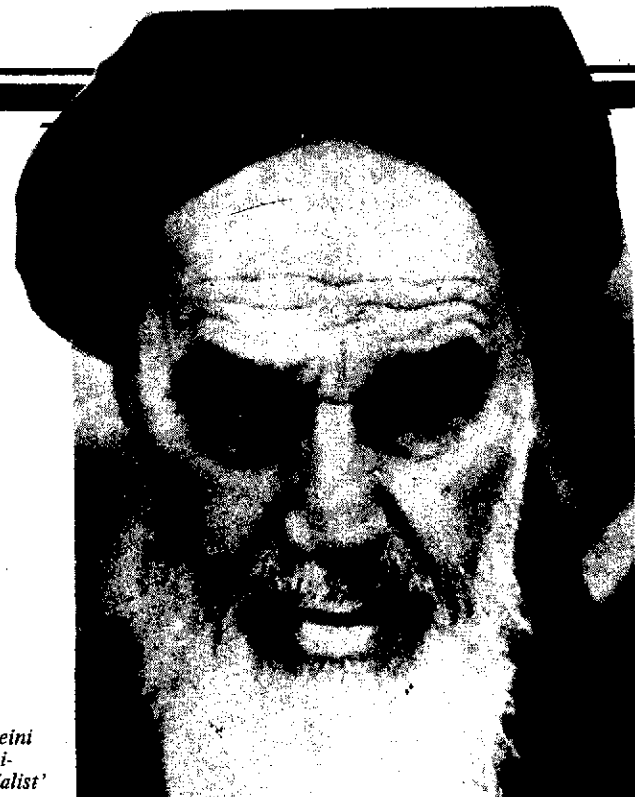
The irony of this confession should not be overlooked. In the thirties the Stalinists in the Soviet Union perfected the technique of forcing prisoners to confess to being spies for a foreign power. Now the same technique was being used against Stalinists themselves.

Kianouri's recantation was the signal for a total clamp-down on the Tudeh Party. The commander of the Pasdaran (so-called "Revolutionary Guards") ordered all members of the Party to report to the local centre of the Pasdaran within a week.

This order was issued immediately after the Pasdaran commander had met with Khomeini to discuss what should be done, and yet it is Khomeini who is meant to be the head of the "progressive" line in the regime!

Having spent so much time and energy whitewashing the IRP regime and covering up for its repression, the Tudeh Party has now itself fallen victim to that repression.

While socialists must stand for the defence of the Tudeh Party against the repression of Khomeini, its fate is a grim warning for all others who elevate the "objective anti-imperialist struggle" above the general class struggle and tail-end third world nationalism, in the Middle East or anywhere else, by imputing a "progressive content" to thoroughly reactionary regimes.



Khomeini - 'anti-imperialist'

Poland's facade of 'normality'

THE REACTION of the Polish authorities to the successful May Day demonstrations called by the Solidarnosc underground has been to pretend that little happened.

They portray Walesa as a 'has been', and say that they have no reason to talk to him.

Their real face is revealed in their actions. The brutal beatings of demonstrators could be seen on your television screens. Walesa and all those around him are harassed continuously - arrested and then released.

Underground Solidarnosc leaders are arrested in raids and show trials prepared.

All this takes place in the background. The public face is one of 'normality'.

One section which does have a role to play, according to the bureaucracy, is the church.

The May Day events will not stop the invitation to the Pope.

As Premier Jaruzelski said on Saturday: "The more deeply the Church sees the socialist state as the embodiment of higher national interests, the greater the bilateral benefits in (Church/State) co-operation."

The Church hierarchy have responded to this. They realise that they have a privileged position in Poland, and they mean to preserve it. They also realise that from this position they can gnaw away at the foundations of the nationalised property relations.

Beating the workers will not stop the Pope's visit, nor the imprisonment of Walesa, nor the imprisonment of the Underground leaders.

Because the bureaucracy does not want to antagonise the Church, who it sees as its defender, many workers have been using Church services as a starting point for demonstrations.

Cardinal Glemp, the head of the Catholic Church in Poland, also on Saturday attacked 'political demonstrations in churches'.

Polish workers will have to break from this church hierarchy if they are going to make a political revolution.

Paper deal for Schultz



Schultz - a paper victory

GEORGE Schultz's desperate bid to rescue the Reagan plan for the Middle East has predictably failed. In any case, a paper triumph - with Israel and Syria signing the same document but each meaning different things - could have done no more than briefly buttress Reagan's reputation in a pre-election period.

The Palestinians meanwhile are exposed to the mercies of a Phalangist regime in Lebanon and a rule of occupation on the West Bank and in Gaza. Their losses have been heavy, both during the civil war in Lebanon and during the war against Israel. Thousands are in detention. Many more are overseas, in retreat, only partially regrouped for effective action.

In Lebanon the population of the camps relies for protection on the imperialists while those in the Beqa'a rely on the Syrians. Both imperialist and Syrian forces are themselves ready to attack the Palestinians if the time is right.

Belgian workers fight racism

by Martin Thomas

10,000 people marched through Brussels last Sunday, 8th, in defence of the rights of immigrant workers.

The demonstration was supported by Belgium's two main trade union federations, the Socialist FGFB/ABVV and the Catholic CSC/ACV. Leading the CSC/ACV contingent was a large and vocal contingent of Muslim workers.

Other contingents came from local anti-racist committees and from the far-left groups.

The march was in protest against moves by several municipalities over the last year to stop issuing identity cards to immigrant workers. The municipalities say that they have a financial crisis and can afford no more immigrants.

The consequences for immigrants are that they can't get jobs, they can't get welfare benefits, and they are vulnerable to victimisation by the police. In Belgium everyone has to have an identity card always with them, and the police can demand to see it at any time.

Immigrants who already have an identity card dare not move for fear that the municipality they move into will refuse to register them at their new

address.

This refusal to issue cards was initiated a year ago by Roger Nols, mayor of Schaerbeek and a member of the Francophone-nationalist FDF. It was, and Nols said it was, illegal - legally, the municipalities can refuse to issue a card only if the person does not live in their area. But other mayors - including Socialist Party mayors - have followed Nols' example, and Jean Gol, minister of justice in the right wing coalition government, now talks of introducing a law to legalise the municipalities' attitude.

There are some 900,000 immigrants in Belgium - about 9% of the population. But the racist harassment is directly mainly against the 105,000 Moroccans and 64,000 Turks.

These communities have also suffered physical attacks from extreme Flemish nationalist and other fascist groups. In some areas there have been moves to form self-defence squads.

The roots of the growing racism are to be found in Belgium's deep economic crisis. Unemployment, at 14%, is even higher than in Britain, and on a dollars-per-head basis Belgium is much more heavily in debt than even Mexico or Brazil

Nesat Tolunay and Selim Duzgun have won the right to stay in Britain.

These two Turkish immigrants had been threatened with deportation by the Home Office. As members of the revolutionary organisation Dev Yol, they faced jail or death if sent back to Turkey.

A campaign by the Turkey Solidarity Campaign and others has now succeeded in stopping the deportation.

Contact TSC at BM Box 5965, London WC1N 3XX.



Fete

This year the annual fete organised by the French Trotskyist group Lutte Ouvriere is a joint event with the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire.

The fete - at Presles, near Paris on May 21-22-23 - is a weekend of relaxation, but also of politics, with revolutionary groups from many countries represented. A contingent of SO supporters is going over. If you want to go, contact Ellen Taylor, 532 Abbeydale Rd, Sheffield 7 (0742 589307)



Andrew Hornung looks back on the music of blues artist Muddy Waters, who died last week

City blues rooted in the Delta sound

MUDDY Waters' greatness is a paradoxical thing. Here was a musician of restricted range who for the most part stuck to a narrow slice of southern blues — the blues of the Mississippi Delta and was part of its northern transformation into a hard-edged electric Chicago blues.

When folklorist Alan Lomax first met McKinley Morganfield (Waters' real name) on Stovall's plantation in 1941, the 26 year old farm labourer played at least three songs: "Country Blues", "I Be's Troubled" and "Burr Clover Blues".

Excited, Lomax asked Morganfield whether the "Country Blues" tune was used for any other blues he knew. "Well," answered the singer, "this song came from the cotton field and the boy went and put the record out, Robert Johnson, he put out 'Walking Blues'."

"Did you know the tune before you heard it on record?" asked Lomax. "Yes, sir," answered Waters, "I learned it from Son House." Lomax had never heard of Eddie "Son" House who lived nearby, who had taught Johnson and Waters and played with Charlie Patton.

Lineage

This then was the lineage of the great Delta bluesmen: Patton, House, Robert Johnson and Muddy Waters, with Muddy extending that tradition into the post-war electric period.

Unlike the other great formative influence on the Chicago blues scene of the late forties, Elmore James, Muddy stuck to that down home style energised now by the use of electric guitar, amplified harmonica,

and often a driving piano. To these were added a second guitar, bass and drums.

The tunes and lyrics often followed the pattern of the Delta blues with its frequent use of bottleneck, but the feel was totally different from that provided by the Son Sims group with which he had recorded for Lomax (guitars, fiddle and mandolin).

Expand

Muddy's repertoire did not expand qualitatively in Chicago, although a long line of prowess songs (I'm Ready, Hoochie Coochie Man, I'm a Man, etc) added to the songs of love, loneliness, infidelity and hardship. In fact, there was a narrowing in his output: country dance numbers and religious songs were dropped.

Gradually — with the help of sidemen like Little Walter (on harmonica), Jimmy Rogers (guitar) and Otis Spann (piano) — a distinctive, deeply rooted, brooding, sometimes gloomy sometimes raw and bullish city sound was distilled that seemed somehow also to retain the essence of the Delta sound.

Muddy's move to the North in 1943 meant more hardship. He worked as a truck driver: "It was pretty ruggish, man". The blues had been starved by the rationing of shellac and the big bluesmen of the earlier period of Chicago recording, Big Bill Broonzy, Big Maceo Merriweather, Tampa Red and others huddled together on the decaying South Side looking for recording or performing dates.

Muddy's first chance came in 1945 or '46 when he recorded "Mean Red Spider" for the 20th

Century label. A while later he recorded — this time under the name Muddy Waters — for Columbia but the sides remained unissued for decades. It was not until he started to record for the Aristocrat label, owned by the Chess brothers and later called Chess, that Muddy found any success.

That earlier period had been dominated instrumentally by the piano as much as guitar. The best known guitarists, Broonzy and Tampa Red, played a wide variety of blues with a light jazz-inflected urban feel — often in a comic idiom.

Recording at the end of World War Two was still divided between popular and "race" records. Black, "race" music sold almost exclusively to black people buying from shops in the black ghettos or black townships. Nevertheless, the feel of the music of the late thirties and early forties reflected a mood among blacks wanting to get away from the South and its sounds. Like the West Coast "City Blues" a little later, it was a more clipped sound appealing to black listeners proud of their new, city ways, their new suits and hair straighteners.

South

The huge emigration from the South made possible by war

service and war production meant that the Chicago ghettos bustled with tens of thousands of blacks — mainly men — from Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas and Tennessee.

Rather than patiently suffering the humiliation of "country folk" jokes, they asserted their roots with a fierce pride however much they hated the South.

Brasher

The music of Muddy, Elmore James and Howlin' Wolf was their music. And it was this brasher, louder, more bustling and driving music that Muddy stuck to and made his own. From it there developed slashing styles, more crying styles. A series of newer arrivals from the South, Magic Sam, Otis Rush, Buddy Guy, Jimmy Dawkins — to mention only the guitar giants — blazed, flashed and stung out their sounds.

But Muddy stuck where he was. The black listeners didn't. In the main they stopped listening to blues, going over to soul — the less soulful the better. The majority of blacks who did stick with the blues listened to the newer players at the various clubs and lounges of the South Side.

By the early sixties Muddy's audience was increasingly

"a brooding, sometimes raw and bullish city sound"

white. There were European tours (Britain in 1958) and college campus gigs, jazz festivals and shows; almost all were white audiences introduced to Muddy Waters through the Beatles and Rolling Stones (who took their name from a Muddy Waters track). Later Muddy was able to command the kind of fees that took his band out of the ghetto dives and country jukes for good.

"I don't hardly play for a black audience any more," he told writer Peter Guralnick. "Now and then I have a booking in the black. But not too often. It's not that I don't want to play for my peoples. I love to play for my peoples, man, but I just been busy."

There were times when Muddy was less busy, when his records were not selling well. Once in the sixties and again in the seventies he was "relaunched" with a different sound — more psychedelic, more in the Jimi Hendrix vein — but it didn't last and didn't go down well. Again he returned to the Muddy Waters sound, sad

or declamatory, the electric Delta sound.

In the last few years he made several more albums — more produced by Johnny Winter — which are very close to the spirit of the early fifties Waters-Rogers-Spann sound, often reworking favourite songs like "King Bee" and "I'm Ready".

In the later years he played less guitar, giving his sidemen more opportunity, but his voice lost none of the deep, resonant authority of the earlier years.

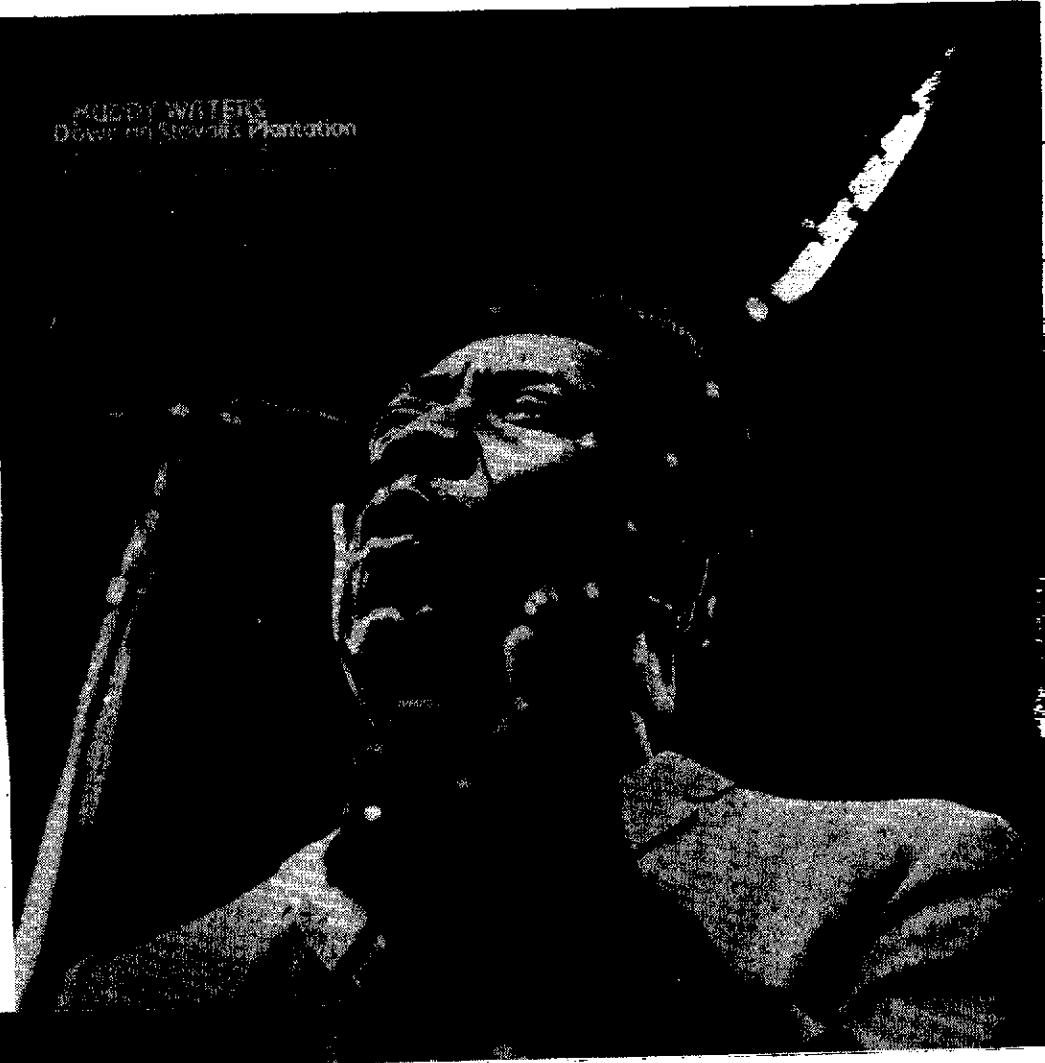
It was never the anguished sound of Robert Johnson with its complex, jagged guitar work. Muddy's voice was always darker, and more magisterial, and his guitar work simpler and more insistent.

If Muddy rarely strayed from his roots and developed little, he was the greatest exponent of that brand of blues that lifted white rock out of the frantic rockabilly clatter into the age of hard rock. Black music a popular white music will forever be in Muddy's debt.



HARD TIMES

From Pluto Press: an analysis of capitalism in crisis from regular Socialist Organisation contributor Bob Sutcliffe. £2.50 from bookshops, or (with 50p post and packing) from Pluto, The Works, 105a Torriano Avenue, London NW5.



YCND conference



Manchester, July 2. For details contact YCND, 11 Goodwin St, London N4. To join YCND, send £1 to 11 Goodwin St.

Agenda

Paid ads 5p per word, £4 per column inch. Send copy to Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8, to arrive by Saturday for inclusion in the following week's paper.

SOUTH London CND/labour movement conference, Saturday May 21, 10am to 5pm, at Battersea Arts Centre, Lavender Hill, Battersea. Registration £2 per delegate, £1 unwaged, to Nick Guttman, Battersea CND, 16 Chivalry Road, London SW11.

SOCIAL in aid of the TGWU International Hotel and Catering Workers 1/1647 branch. Saturday May 14, 7.30, at The Cock Tavern, Phoenix Rd, NW1. Tickets £1.

BROADWATER Four Defence Campaign/Newham 8 North London Support Group/Haringey Immigration and Nationality Action Group: 'Resistance to racism social'. 8pm to midnight at Haringey Community Centre, Brabant Road, Wood Green, London N22. Tickets £2, unwaged £1.

Labour CND West inaugural meeting. Sunday June 26, 2.30pm, Taunton CLP meeting rooms, 24 East Reach, Taunton. LP members only.
CONFERENCE of Socialist Economists conference 1983: The World Economy in Crisis. July 9 to 11 in

Sheffield. Details from 25 Horsell Rd, London N5.

'DROP the charges now!' Stoke Newington and Hackney Defence Campaign meeting, Thursday May 12, 7.30, at Stoke Newington Library, Small Hall, Edwards Lane Entrance, Stoke Newington Church St, N16.

'IRELAND and Labour': public meeting called by Islington South Labour Party. Speakers: Ken Livingstone, Clive Soley. Tuesday June 7, 7.30pm, Islington Central Library, Fieldway Crescent.

'THE Fight Against the Police Bill': national conference Sunday May 15, 10.30am to 4.30pm, Hackney Town Hall. Credentials free from Room 116, Hackney Town Hall, Mare St, London E8.

'POPULAR Planning for Social Need': conference 'to develop a democratic Alternative Economic Strategy'. Saturday May 21, 11am-5pm, County Hall, London SE1. £2.50, £1 unwaged. Organised by CAITS.

DEMONSTRATION against the Police Bill. Sunday May 22, assemble 11 am at Brockwell Park, Brixton, and march to Hyde Park. Called by National Campaign against the Police Bill.

NEWHAM 8 Defence Campaign. Details of activities, speakers and model resolutions from PO Box 273, Forest Gate, London E7.

GREATER Manchester CND trade union conference. Speakers Ron Todd (T&G), Les Huckfield MP, Greenham Common speaker. Afternoon workshops. Saturday May 28, Town Hall, Manchester. Further details: 061 682 9334.

RICHMOND LPYS public meeting. Tuesday May 24, 8pm, at Starr House, 57 Church Road, Richmond, Surrey. 'Socialism and Peace': speakers Tariq Ali, Keith Vaz (Labour PPC), Chris Hickey, and a woman from Greenham Common.



Drop the charges!

ROACH Family Support Committee: march and rally 'For an Independent Public Inquiry into the death of Colin Roach in Stoke Newington Police Station'. Saturday May 14, 12.30pm, Bethnal Green Gardens, near Bethnal Green tube station, E2.

Where to find Socialist Organiser

• SCOTLAND

Glasgow. For details of meetings contact paper sellers or Stan Crooke, 114 Dixon Avenue, Glasgow G42. SO is sold at Maryhill dole [Tuesday mornings] and Rutherglen shopping arcade [Friday lunchtime].

Edinburgh. For details of meetings ring Dave, 229 4591. SO is sold at Muirhouse (Saturday 10.30-12) and the First of May bookshop, Candlemaker Row.

• NORTH-WEST

Wirral. Contact Colin Johnstone, 1 Wellington Rd, Wallasey. Next meeting: Thursday May 12, 8pm, at the Labour Club, Church Rd, Seacombe. 'Democracy in the unions'.

Liverpool. Contact 733 6663. SO is sold at Progressive Books, Berry St, and at News from Nowhere, Whitechapel.

Manchester. SO is sold at Grass Roots Books, Newton St, Piccadilly. Contact: 273 6654.

Stockport. Contact c/o 38 Broadhurst St. Meetings every Sunday, 7.30pm: phone 429 6359 for details. SO is sold at Stockport market every Saturday, 11 to 12.30.

Rochdale. Meets second Monday of the month, 7.30 Castle Inn.

Hyndburn. Contact Accrington 395753. Meetings weekly — see SO sellers for details. SO is sold at Broadway, Accrington, Saturdays 11.30 to 1pm.

Stoke. Contact Arthur Bough, 23 Russell Road, Sandyford (84170).

• YORKSHIRE AND NORTH-EAST

Huddersfield. Contact Alan Brooke, 59 Magdale, Holey, Huddersfield HD7 2LX. Durham. SO is sold at the Community Co-op, New Elvet.

Leeds. Contact Garth Frankland, 623322. SO is sold at Books and Corner Books, Woodhouse Lane.

Bradford. Contact Barry Turner, 636994. SO is sold at the Starry Plough bookshop.

Sheffield. Meets every other Wednesday, 7.30pm at the Brown Cow, The Wick. SO is sold outside Boots, Fargate (Saturday 12 to 1) and the Independent Bookshop, Glossop Rd. Contact: Rob, 589307.

Hull. Meets every Wednesday, 8pm: details from SO sellers. Childcare available. SO is sold at the Prospect Centre (Saturday 11 to 12).

Halifax. Contact 52156. SO is sold at Halifax Wholefood, Gibbet St, and at Tower Books, Hebden Bridge.

York. Contact 796027. SO is sold at Coney St on Saturday mornings, at the Community Bookshop, outside

the dole office most mornings, and at the University on Friday mornings.

• WALES

Cardiff. Contact 492988.

• MIDLANDS

Birmingham. Meets alternate Fridays, 7.30pm, the Hen and Chickens, Constitution Hill. Next meeting Friday May 20. SO is sold at the Other Bookshop,

Digbeth High Street.

Coventry. Contact Keith White, 75623. SO is sold at the Wedge Co-op, High St. Meets on first and last Thursday of the month, 7.30 at the 'Queen', Primrose Hill St, Hillfields.

Leicester. Contact Phil, 857908. SO is sold at Blackthorne Books, High St.

Northampton. Meets every other Monday. Next meeting May 16. Details: contact 713606.

Nottingham. Meets every Friday, 7.30pm at the International Community Centre, 61b Mansfield Rd. SO is sold outside the Victoria Centre (Saturday 11 to 1) and at the Mushroom Bookshop, Heathcote St.

• SOUTH

Oxford. SO is sold at the Cornmarket (Saturday 11 to 1) and outside Tesco, Cowley Rd, Friday 5 to 7. Also at EOA Books, Cowley Rd.

Basingstoke. Public meeting May 16: 'Is a Socialist Revolution Possible in Britain?' 7.30, Chute House.

Socialist Organiser is not just a paper. We fight to organise workers in the struggle for a new leadership in the labour movement. If you agree with what we have to say, you can help.

• LONDON

North-West London. Readers' meetings first Sunday of month. Phone Mick, 624 1931, for details. SO is sold at Kilburn Books.

Hackney. Contact Andrew Hornung, 28 Carlton Mansions, Holmleigh Rd, N16.

Haringey. Contact 802 0771 or 348 5941. Meets every other Thursday, 7.30, Trade Union Centre, Brabant Road.

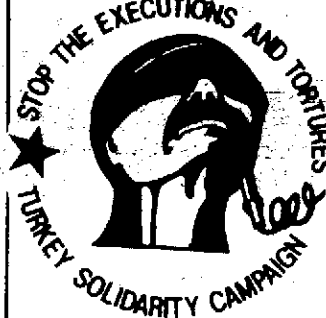
Hounslow. Next meeting Sunday May 22, John O'Mahony on 'Socialist Organiser and organising the left'. For venue see SO sellers. SO is sold outside All Saints Church, Hounslow High St, Saturday 10.30am to 12.

Islington. Next meeting Sunday May 15, 6pm to 7.30pm at Caxton House, St John's Way: business meeting. For childcare phone Nik, 278 1341.

Southwark/Lambeth meets every other Wednesday at Lansbury House, 41 Camberwell Grove, SE5. Business meeting 7.30pm, open forum discussion 8.30pm.

Tower Hamlets. Meets fortnightly on Fridays, 6.30 to 8.30pm. Contact 377 1328 for details.

SO is sold at the following London bookshops: Colletts, Central Books, The Other Bookshop, Bookmarks, Bookplace (Peckham Rd, SE15), Kilburn Books, and Reading Matters (Wood Green Shopping Centre).



Where we stand

- Organise the left to beat back the Tories' attacks! No to attacks on union rights; defend the picket-line; no state interference in our unions! No to any wage curbs. Labour must support all struggles for better living standards and conditions.
- Wage rises should at the very least keep up with price increases. For a price index calculated by working class organisations, as the basis for clauses in all wage agreements to provide automatic monthly rises in line with the true cost of living for the working class. The same inflation-proofing should apply to state benefits, grants and pensions.
- Fight for improvements in the social services, and against cuts. Protection for those services against inflation by automatic inflation-proofing of expenditure. For occupations and supporting strike action to defend jobs and services.
- End unemployment. Cut hours, not jobs. Fight for a 35 hour week and an end to overtime. Demand work-sharing without loss of pay. Organise the unemployed — campaign for a programme of useful public works to create new jobs for the unemployed.
- Defend all jobs! Open the books of those firms that threaten closure or redundancies, along with those of their suppliers and bankers, to elected trade union committees. For occupation and blacking action to halt the closures. For nationalisation without compensation under workers' management.
- Make the bosses pay, not the working class. Millions for hospitals, not a penny for 'defence'! Nationalise the banks and financial institutions, without compensation. End the interest burden on council housing and other public services.
- Freeze rents and rates.
- Scrap all immigration controls. Race is not a problem: racism is. The labour movement must mobilise to drive the fascists off the streets. Purge racists from positions in the labour movement. Organise full support for black self-defence. Build workers' defence squads.
- The capitalist police are an enemy for the working class. Support all demands to weaken them as a 'bosses' striking force: dissolution of special squads (SPG, Special Branch, M15, etc.), public accountability, etc.
- Free abortion on demand. Women's equal right to work and full equality for women. Defend and extend free state nursery and childcare provision.
- Against attacks on gays by the state: abolish all laws which discriminate against lesbians and gay men; for the right of the gay community to organise and affirm their stand publicly.
- The Irish people — as a whole — should have the right to determine their own future. Get the British troops out now! Repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Political status for Irish Republican prisoners as a matter of urgency.
- The black working people of South Africa should get full support from the British labour movement for their strikes, struggles and armed combat against the white supremacist regime. South African goods and services should be blacked.
- It is essential to achieve the fullest democracy in the labour movement. Automatic reselection of MPs during each parliament and the election by annual conference of party leaders. Annual election of all trade union officials, who should be paid the average for the trade.
- The chaos, waste, human suffering and misery of capitalism now — in Britain and throughout the world — show the urgent need to establish rational, democratic, human control over the economy, to make the decisive sectors of industry social property, under workers' control. The strength of the labour movement lies in the rank and file. Our perspective must be working class action to raze the capitalist system down to its foundations, and to put a working class socialist alternative in its place — rather than having our representatives run the system and waiting for our turn to turn the tables of the bankers and the bosses.

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By Alan Thornett

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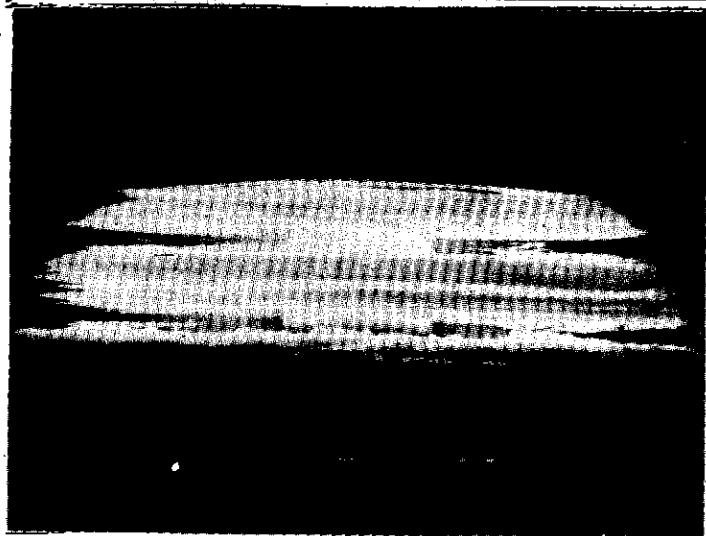
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Ireland and missiles

I WOULD like to draw your attention to the fears held by many Irish people that the "Free State" might become embroiled in a nuclear holocaust.

Sean MacBride, a former minister of External Affairs and a Nobel and Lenin Peace Prize winner, has recently launched an attack on what he sees as a trend towards abandonment of Ireland's traditional neutral stance.

He pointed out that by voting with NATO powers at the UN or abstaining when calls were made to outlaw nuclear weapons the Irish government was behaving as if it were a covert supporter of the alliance it refused to join in 1949.

Of course, the fact is that Irish neutrality is a fiction. The Dublin government is mortgaged up to the hilt, totally in debt to the EEC capitalists. As

the economic situation gets worse, the last vestiges of the so-called neutrality will fall away.

Already it is the case that those opposing the retreat from neutrality are being branded as "Irish Republican extremists".

Sean MacBride has quite rightly pointed out that NATO participation would make Ireland a prime target — especially if nuclear bases were spread along the coast. The Russian backfire bomber, coming in from mid-Atlantic makes it increasingly essential that NATO has missile bases in Ireland.

It is to be hoped that the Irish people take up the fight of the Greenham Common peace campaigners.

Yours,
WILLIE MOLONEY
Coventry

Economics of smoking

I THOUGHT I would write and tell you some more information on why the government doesn't hold big anti-smoking campaigns. Perhaps, like myself, more readers will try to give it up and donate the money to SO!

On talking to a heart and lung specialist the other day, I was intrigued to find out that it is much cheaper for the government to let everyone kill themselves by smoking — and his arguments did not include the revenue from tobacco tax.

1) People die earlier and thus do not claim pensions.

2) Diseases caused by smoking kill people off relatively quickly, and NHS treatment is cheap, compared to, say, the cost of looking after someone with senile dementia for 15 years. Not much can be done for someone with lung cancer — the treatment probably only costs £5,000.

The types of heart disease caused by smoking usually kill people in their sixties or early seventies — and really is quite cost-effective!

Tax

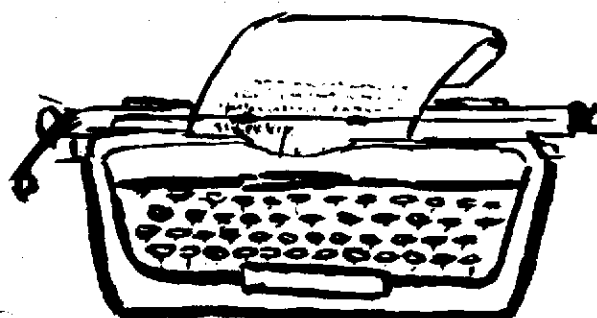
They have probably paid for their treatment by paying tobacco tax — plus they save the government from paying pensions.

Smoking is supposed to shorten your life by 2-5 years. So five years of old age pension is approximately £15,000.

With the elderly population on the increase, smoking as a revenue saving voluntary euthanasia scheme must seem attractive to the government. "Smoke more — die younger and faster for your country!"

MARY IRESON,
Cardiff

Writeback



Send letters to Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8. No longer than 400 words, please: longer letters are liable to be cut.

Is Trotskyism outdated?

JOYCE Brown's letter (SO, 28 April) is an attack on the struggle for a new leadership in the trade unions.

She talks of the need for "new solutions to old problems" and attacks me for believing that matters were settled once and for all by Leon Trotsky in 1938.

But what the letter really says is that what Trotsky struggled for was meaningless and that we in 1983 must "find" new solutions.

Left wing activists are no different than the rest of the rank and file, and there is no crisis of leadership.

Isn't this incredible, written at a time when Leyland workers showed how strong were their feelings and how deliberately the trade union leadership sold them down the river?

Joyce asked what we mean by the struggle for leadership. She then goes on to attack transitional demands which are designed to connect the problems of today with the struggle for socialism.

What kind of "new solutions" can replace such a method?



From her position on import controls one can only think a propaganda campaign in the working class is the answer to counteract its backwardness.

This "solution" goes way back before 1938 — as does blaming the working class. The Transitional Programme

was not 'invented' by Trotsky: it was a development on the previous struggles of communists.

It is true we too must develop Trotskyism to meet the needs of the 1980s, but that does not mean junking it.

TONY RICHARDS

Socialist Action view of LCI conference

YOUR report on the AGM of the Labour Committee on Ireland amused us greatly. From a newspaper that simultaneously calls for a programme of appeasement to the Loyalists (John O'Mahony) and all out support for the military struggle of the IRA (report of YS conference) — the attribution of 'zany' to characterise our policies reads rather like an attempt to revitalise the sagging confidence of your own supporters.

It escaped your reporter's notice that by and large it was the policies of Socialist Action that informed the building of the Plastic Bullets Conference — the most successful LCI event this year. Far from the gloomy pessimism of your writer, Socialist Action supporters think that the LCI can play a positive role in shaping the debate of the Labour Left in the coming months. The following 'zany' proposals were put forward by

Socialist Action supporters and backed by the LCI.

1) That LCI opposes the witch-hunt and continues to recognise expelled members and CLPs.

2) That LCI affiliates to the SLV and plays an active role in situating Ireland in that campaign.

3) That the LCI should take a full discussion on campaigning in the unions at its AGM and adopt proposals for doing this.

(We were opposed to SO ideas about establishing a front organisation in the unions).

4) That we build on the dialogue between the Labour Party and Sinn Fein opened by both Ken Livingstone and the Plastic Bullets conference.

5) That this year's model resolution and campaign around Labour Party conference focus on opposition to the Unionist veto in general and Prior's Assembly in particular.

6) That the LCI scraps the useless model of Labour and

Ireland produced by SO supporters and produces a magazine that will be widely read by those interested in the debates opened by Livingstone among others.

The LCI has been in an impasse over the last year and has missed out on the majority of chances it had to play a role in the developing current for withdrawal inside the party and the unions. If it doesn't take up the challenge to lead these developments, it will be replaced by some other body which can. We think our proposals constituted a modest step in the right direction.

One thing is certain. Socialist Organiser, dithering between the positions of Militant and the Provisional IRA, is playing no role at all.

Comradely greetings,
MARTIN COLLINS
New editor of Labour and Ireland, and Socialist Action supporter

Workers Socialist Review

Got your copy?

Articles on the stewards' movement, the public sector and the fight against cuts and privatisation, lessons from the NHS strike, and unions and the Labour Party. Polemics on the Socialist Workers' Party and the Communist Party. Features on the left and the Stalinist state 'unions', and on workers' politics and national liberation. From the arsenal of Marxism: Leon Trotsky on boom, crisis, and workers' struggle.

70p (plus 16p p&p) from WSL, PO Box 135, London N1 0DD



It's time to rethink

WOULD it be a reasonable proposition to suggest that Labour go into the forthcoming election on the Election Manifesto of 1935?

Only a lunatic could agree. Yet Tony Richards asserts that our practical policy flow straight-forwardly from a document produced thirty-six months later. Tony operates on a crude "big bang" theory of epistemology: all history led to the explosion of political thought that finds its manifestation in the Transitional Programme, and this programme is now sufficient to lead us into the Garden of Eden.

We are in the centenary year of a great revolutionary, whose life-work was dedicated to arguing that politics was a science. Across the whole spectrum of the organic and inorganic sciences, there have been tremendous developments in knowledge and method in the last forty years. What was the state of nuclear physics in 1938? What was the state of the theory of relativity? In 1938 astronomers seriously believed Mars was an oxygen-based planet! And Preston won the FA Cup that year using tactics which would nowadays see them taken to the cleaners by Stockport County. The political theory of that era bears as much relationship to the necessities of the eighties as the antique crooning of Al Bowley does to the music of Duran Duran.

Religious

Yet Tony has a fundamentally religious rather than scientific conception of politics. For this Narnook of the North politics was frozen once the great prophet

spoke. The decades since then have constituted another ice age. Tony must realise that the thoughts of great men a long time ago are not always a helpful guide to the task of today.

When John McIlroy suggests a mild rethinking, Tony reacts in the same way that Pope Pius the Third responded to Martin Luther. Reliance on the Holy

Books is for Talmudic scholars, Socialist Organiser must pioneer new breakthroughs, new innovations. The ice must be cracked. Otherwise Socialist Organiser will end up like Tyrannosaurus Rex. And I'm talking about a prehistoric monster, not a pop group.

Yours fraternally,
NOEL HIBBERT

A QUESTION OF SOLIDARITY



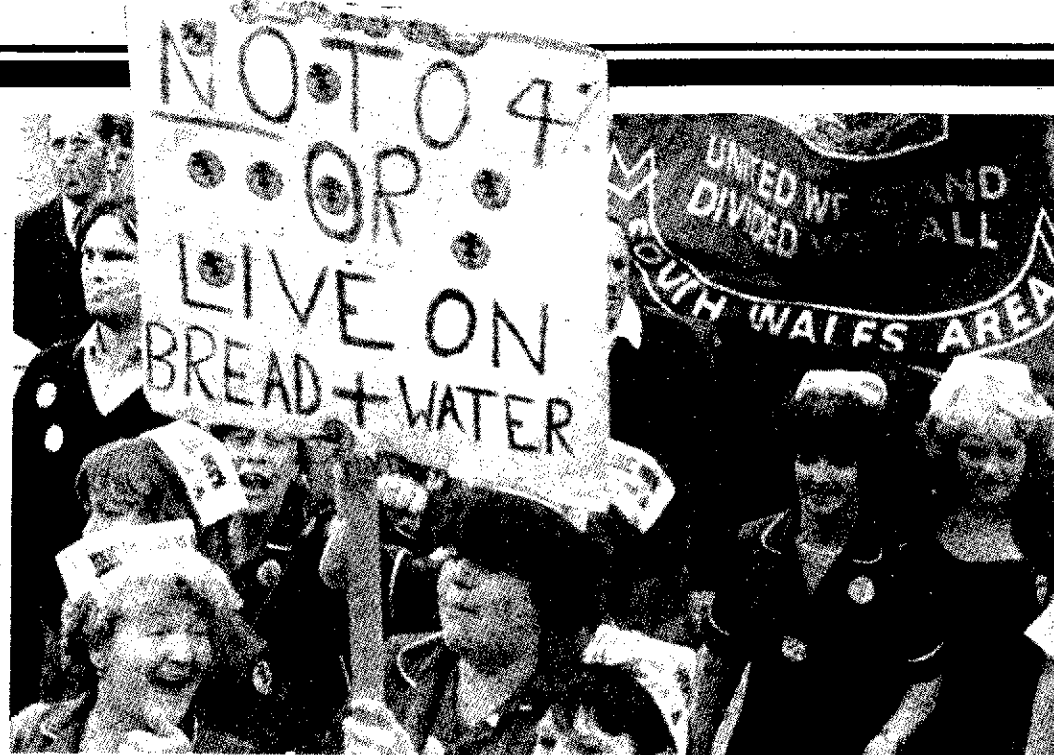
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PHOTO: JOHN HARRIS



After the NHS pay sell-out - the anger remains

Cuts, pay and privatisation

PHOTO: JOHN HARRIS



NUPE general secretary Rodney Bickerstaffe

NUPE agenda reflects members' anger

By Martin Barclay

chair, Unit 3 health branch, South Glamorgan (in personal capacity)

THIS year's NUPE Conference comes at a crucial time for workers in local authorities and the NHS.

We are faced with a Tory government that is ready to move in for the kill after their victory in the NHS dispute last year. Their favourite weapons are cuts in services and the use of private contractors to replace whole sections of the public sector. These have been tried and tested in the Local Authorities.

Last year, Wandsworth dustmen took strike action against private contractors while NUPE Conference was actually going on. The new Tory Council in Cardiff is threatening to privatise rubbish collection virtually as its first act.

Labour's mediocre performance in the recent local elections shows that Labour Councils were fooling no one with talk about good housekeeping. They gave in to the Tories and cut the services, and most Labour voters know it.

After the TUC Health Services Committee sold us down the river last winter, it was the turn of the NHS to get the treatment. Oxfordshire Regional Health Authority spearheaded the attack by announcing a programme of devastating cuts and closures that

would leave the area with a 9 to 5, weekdays only health service. Private Contractors like Pritchards and OCS Cleaning Ltd. have been lined up to move in by the DHSS Headquarters, to take over cleaning, catering and laundry services.

Where hospital staff are not actually replaced by contractors there will be attempts to tighten up on bonus schemes and sickness, etc., in a bid to make departments 'compete' against the contractors.

The Agenda of this year's Conference reflects the anger of NUPE members to these threats to their livelihood. There are a large number of motions opposing privatisation and private medicine, but the most useful ones are those put forward by Gateshead Central and Edinburgh Hospital

South district branches.

They set out in detail how we can organise the fight against cuts and contractors by establishing joint trade union committees at local and national level to organise public campaigns and, by revitalising the Joint Shop Stewards Committees which sprang up during the NHS strike, to organise the membership of all the NHS unions into a solid united front.

The lessons of last year are not lost, and motions on pay and industrial action criticise the EC for its failure to campaign for the 1982 Conference decision for an all-out, indefinite strike in the NHS. Others reject one-day and regional strikes as demoralising and token action, and criticise the TUC Health Services Committee for even considering a two year pay deal.

The message is clear: all-out action is the only way to win in the future.

Reject

Most of the motions categorically reject wage restraint, whatever government is in power, with only one motion arguing in favour.

A clear message needs to go out from NUPE Conference to the Shadow Cabinet, and the Labour Party's NEC that we will take no part in an incomes policy, whether it's called a national economic assessment or not. Most NUPE members remember the last Labour government and the 'Winter of Discontent' too well to fall for this one.

As far as the internal affairs of the Labour Party are concerned, most of the main motions call for an end to expulsions from the Party, and the scrapping of the Register. Glasgow Eastern Hostels Branch calls for tangible opposition by affiliation to Labour Against the Witch-hunt and the Labour Steering Committee Against the Witch-hunt, and by supporting the right of CLPs to refuse to expel individuals.

Although the list of issues is smaller this year, two that stick out the most are on women and on Northern Ireland.

Last year's Conference passed a wide-ranging composite on women's rights, positive action, child care facilities and affiliation to Women's Fightback. Since then

Chapple sucks in former militant

ONE of the few unofficial strikes to hold firm and challenge Phase 2 of the Labour government's wage controls in 1977 was that of the electricians in the Port Talbot steelworks.

The leader of this shop floor revolt - which stayed solid for over 3 months - was Wyn Bevan.

Now Bevan has left that message of class struggle against class compromise far behind him as he scales the heights of the EETPU bureaucracy. The former firebrand convenor has become the servile advocate of Japanese-style

management techniques in British industry, and, as an executive council member of the EETPU, an architect of 'pioneering' agreements designed to eliminate the involvement of shop floor members in industrial struggles.

The deal Bevan helped formulate with the Japanese firm Toshiba - and has also agreed with the British microchip company Immos - is designed to eliminate strikes by the introduction of binding arbitration. The central feature of this is that all differences are resolved at top level between offi-

cial and management - with the membership being confronted after the event with an agreed or 'arbitrated' *fait accompli*.

The incorporation of Bevan into the right wing EETPU bureaucracy - paralleling the degeneration of many former left wingers once they become full-time officials - is another testimony to the immense pressures brought to bear on individual militants who are not part of an organised, political struggle for an alternative leadership in the labour movement.

Scargill sounds the retreat

IF ANYONE doubted that Arthur Scargill is in retreat over the jobs issue, his latest proposed tactics to fight closures should spell matters out clearly.

Speaking to delegates at the NUM's NW area conference, Scargill mapped out a plan to oppose closures of 'uneconomical' pits by partial rather than national strike action - in which the 30 most profitable pits would be brought out on indefinite strike action, subsidised on full wages by a levy on the rest of the union's membership, who would remain at work.

As if to underline how futile and demoralising this partial stoppage would be, Scargill himself argued that in this way 'We could keep a war of attrition going for a year or two years.'

To even imagine an action in these terms is to ignore the fact that the Coal Board would be supplied with coal continuously throughout that period, and to ignore the fact that miners whose jobs are not threatened would be transformed willy-nilly into the battering ram for those whose jobs are threatened but who would still be working!

It is hard enough in recent experience to secure solid supporting action to defend jobs even when the workforce facing redundancy takes strike action or occupies the workplace. It is high on impossible to envisage mass supporting action for a week or two, let alone a year or two, to back up workers who do nothing themselves.

What would Scargill advise the strikers at the 30 key pits to do for the year? There would be no sense in them picketing other pits - or in picketing Coal Board customers, since the tactic depends on coal supplies being maintained. Does their part in the struggle come down to spending a year or more on the allotment or decorating?

Like so many 'innovative',

partial strikes in recent years, the Scargill plan is not a plan for class struggle but an avoidance of the necessary fight to raise the consciousness of the membership as a whole - not least in the 30 'top' pits - on the scale of the NCB attack need for united, all-out strike action to defend jobs.

Instead Scargill and the NUM Executive should be pumping out pamphlets, leaflets and verbal information popularising and explaining the statistics the Union has accumulated on the threat to jobs - to ensure that when the next crunch comes the members are prepared to vote for a strike.

Closure threat succeeds

YET another threat of plant closure by BL management has borne fruit - in the form of a climbdown by unions on a savage pay and productivity package.

A mess meeting in Grantham on Thursday, May 5 had initially rejected the ultimatum by bosses at Aveling-Barford, a BL subsidiary, that they accept the deal or face the sacking of 800 out of 1,100 hourly-paid workers.

The mood was so solid that a Central TV team was unable to find a worker prepared to oppose the decision.

Yet the issuing of redundancy notices brought a retreat, and a second mass meeting agreed to accept the deal for a five month trial.

Every such retreat not only worsens conditions and axes jobs in the plants concerned, but further encourages BL and other employees to back up their every demand with the threat of closure.

Strikers face sack



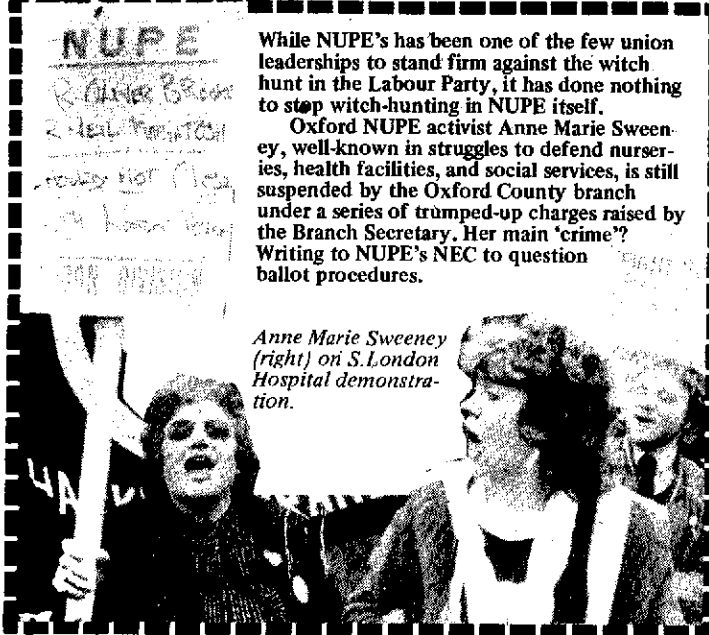
Firth Derihon (Tinsley) Joint Works Ctee: c/o Paul McKey, 17 Melin Way, Sheffield 5.

Redundancy notices have been sent out to the 400 strikers at N Greening Ltd, Warrington.

The workers struck against moves by management to abolish the annual wage claim, end negotiated holidays, reduce trade union facilities, and axe 89 jobs. Now Greenings - a subsidiary of Johnson Firth Brown - has followed up by sacking the lot.

The strikers have sent delegations to seek support round the country, as far afield as Glasgow and London. They have also been in contact with the sit-in at Firth Derihon (another JFB subsidiary) in Sheffield.

Messages/donations: N Greening JSSC, c/o Len Blood, 26 St John St, Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside.



Anne Marie Sweeney (right) on S.London Hospital demonstration.

Courts used to break picket line

TWENTY-FOUR Transport and General Workers Union members are now in their eighth week of strike action against wage cuts at Hodkin & Jones Concrete Works at Darnall, Sheffield; part of the Monks Building Supplies Group.

On March 1, management brought in new piece work rates amounting to an overall 20% wage cut. Management said that this was necessary to be able to compete for orders. It was also probably necessary to pay for the new Rolls, BMW and Porsche cars they'd just bought.

The concrete works is also the only fully-unionised plant in the Monks group.

Immediately the 32 workers worked to rule, protesting that they had pointed out several other ways of saving money, which management had ignored.

Threats and disciplinary notices were issued, until finally 12 concrete casters were sacked on Friday, March 18, and the rest walked out with them.

By that evening, management had started interviewing new people sent from the job centre.

There are now 18 scabs working in the plant, 2 of them strikers who have gone back. They have been provided with a bus to get through the 24 hour picket lines.

The most effective picketing has been at Monks Building Supplies Shop across the other side of Sheffield, on Queen's Road. Here, Blue Circle Cement have been turned away, and (after crossing a few times) British Rail lorries.

A large part, however, is carried by cowboy firms who believe self-employment means that they are immune.

Because it's been effective, management took them to court. A summons was issued in the name of one of the strikers (not a steward) 'and others' for the crime of secondary picketing.

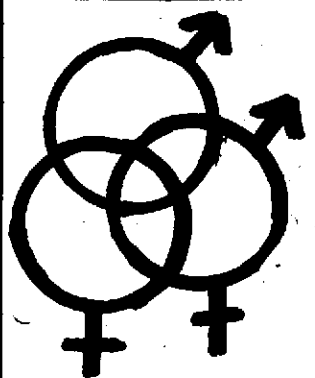
Four went to Leeds High Court last Friday, May 6, and were told outside the court that the law was quite straightforward, they had broken it, and so they could save themselves 'thousands of pounds in costs' if they just agreed to stop doing it.

Isolated, with virtually no union support, they felt they had to agree.

And so Len Murray can feel pleased that his £1-million 'Fight Tabbitt Fund' remains safe in the bank.

The workers have been active in seeking support. With the arrival of the Peoples' March for Jobs in Sheffield last Friday, they met it on the outskirts of Sheffield, and marched with it to the City Hall, handing out leaflets. On Monday they joined up with members of Shallow Labour Party outside Monks on Queen's Road, and joined it as it passed.

Send messages/donations to: R. Horne, 74, Hands Rd., Sheffield 10.



Labour Campaign for Gay Rights, c/o 61A Bloom St, Manchester 1

Screws turned on Timex sit-in

AS THE sit-in at the Timex Milton factory in Dundee enters its fifth week, signs are that the dispute is coming to a head. Unfortunately, management is making the running.

There has been no attempt to spread the occupation, or other forms of solidarity action such as blacking, to other Timex plants, not even the second Timex plant in Dundee (Camperdown).

Last week, twenty punch-card and computer operators at the Camperdown plant (which produces computers) spontaneously blacked work transferred from the Milton plant. They were immediately suspended. Their solidarity action and management's vindictive response provided a clear basis for linking up Camperdown and Milton into a united fight.

But the effort was never made by the union leaders. Four days after they began, the blacking and the suspensions were lifted.

The unions' tactics are still to argue that the Timex factory in Besancon in France, to which the watch-manufacturing is being transferred, is being unfairly subsidised by the French government in contravention of Common Market regulations.

Compulsory

Of the 197 workers who faced the threat of compulsory redundancy, only 120 are left in the sit-in. The decline is basically due to management's threat to sack those who refused to accept redundancy (so that they would lose their severance pay).

20 involved in the occupation accepted redundancy; and so did another 40 not taking part in it.

Of the remainder of the workforce, 180 are not involved in the occupation and 200 are. These 200 have now also been threatened with dismissal.

On top of all these threats of dismissal, management has also stated that it will be taking legal action against 'those unlawfully occupying the Milton plant', though it has yet to specify what this legal action will involve. (Probably the serving of an injunction as at Plessey's and BL in Bathgate).

Divide

Management has also worked to divide off those in occupation from the Camperdown workers by praising the productivity and 'industrial relations' record of the latter and claiming that the workers at the Milton plant brought the job losses upon themselves by their low productivity.

Finally, management is also working to deprive the sit-in of support from the rest of Dundee in general. Sinclair Research, whose pocket-size TV sets are due to be manufactured in Dundee, has claimed that the sit-in is threatening the whole project.

The Tories' Scottish Industry Minister, Alex Fletcher, will now be meeting members of the STUC General Council this Sunday (May 8) to try to get them to exert pressure to end the sit-in 'for the good of

Dundee'.

He may well find that they don't need much persuading. Denied active and meaningful support from their union leaders, the Timex workers face a ruthless but skilful management which has succeeded in whittling down at least some of the support for the sit-in, and now believes the time is fast approaching for the final coup de grace.

Only a radical change in tactics by the occupation can prevent defeat, either now or in the longer term. First and foremost, the dispute must be extended to involve other Timex workers, particularly at the Camperdown plant, and a Dundee-wide propaganda campaign must be mounted to counter Sinclair Research's threats of pulling out.

Guarantees of blacking from trade unionists outside of Dundee must be fought for and won to counter Sinclair's threats.

Instead of appealing for capitalist civil servants to investigate which government invested what money into which factory in whatever country, the workforce must demand that the company's books be opened to trade union inspection.

And, however difficult it may prove, active support from Timex workers outside of Britain, particularly at the Besancon plant, needs to be mobilised. In the absence of an international fightback by the workers, a multinational like Timex will always succeed in playing off one workforce against another.

Aire Valley: the fight back

'CONDITIONS at the mill: workers paid £1.02/hour for a 60-70 hour week. A day shift from 7.15 am to 7.45pm, with only a half hour dinner break. No overtime rates, though overtime working, including Sundays, is compulsory.

'No guaze masks, no first aid kit, no guards on the carding machines.'

A picture of life in the textile mills of Victorian England? No: a quote from a leaflet by the Aire Valley Yarns Support Committee describing conditions there which led to the current strike.

The leaflet was handed out at a support meeting in Leeds on May 7.

Liquart Ali, the sacked shop steward, explained to the meeting that they were now in the 8th week of the strike. They had kept up a 7 day a week picket, 24 hours a day, in appalling weather. The strike was official, and they needed more money as the Social Security had withheld payment to

their families.

They joined the union because of the factory conditions, and because they wanted to be treated like human beings. But the police have been treating them just like the bosses!

From the beginning police were standing in front of scabs, and scab lorries, in order to get them into the factory. As support had increased the Police Task Force - the Leeds equivalent of the Special Patrol Group - arrived, and the arrests started.

'This strike can be won,' Liquart said, 'we are fighting, we are as strong as when we started, and with more support we can beat the scabs.'

Peter Booth, a full time Transport and General Workers' Union Textile officer for the strike spoke of the importance of the strike for the half a million workers in the textile industry, many of them working in sweatshop conditions, many of them Asian.

Dole office strike

by Mick Liggins (Hackney Trades Council executive and Hackney North LPYS)

AS THE CPSA voted overwhelmingly to accept the government's 4 to 6% offer last week, workers in Hackney walked out on strike in a dispute over space.

The workers find it unbearable to work in the cramped conditions, and they also see that it is unfair to claimants.

The dispute dates from last year, and the only concession from management has been a 'caravan' across the road.

Since the walk-out an emergency dole centre has been established at St Mark's Church, Sandringham Road. Pickets have been put on both centres. The unemployed themselves

are reported to be cooperating with the strikers, causing as much fuss as possible with the management grades who are manning the booths.

A collection was taken at Hackney Trades Council, and the strikers are receiving 50% pay from the unions.

The local labour movement must support this struggle, on the picket lines and by resolutions of support.

The strike also poses a real opportunity to link the unemployed with the employed, through a joint struggle and local mobilisation for the People's March on June 5.

Coaches are being booked through the People's March town committee, and we are asking for support for mass leafletting the weekend before.

It needed real courage, after the loss of more than a quarter of a million jobs in the industry, to join a union and fight for the betterment of conditions.

These 21 workers were among the finest trade unionists in Britain today.

The demands of the strikers are for the reinstatement of Liquart Ali; the reinstatement of all the workers on strike; and for the recognition of the T&G.

Messages of solidarity and donations to: Aire Valley Yarn Strike Support Committee, c/o 34, Dirkhill St., Bradford 7.

Mass pickets at the factory gates at 7pm on Friday & Saturday evenings. All-day mass picket Saturday June 18.

CPSA censure on Graham

by Steve Battlemuch and Mike Grayson (in personal capacity)

THIS conference this week of the civil service union CPSA has voted by a massive majority to censure CPSA general secretary Alistair Graham for his role in the pay campaign. He had issued a circular arguing that the government offer of around 4 per cent was the best that could be achieved.

Conference accepted the offer, on the basis of a 4 to 1 vote for acceptance in a membership ballot.

However, the fact that over 4000 members were prepared to take all-out strike action without strike pay is a good basis to build on for future struggles.

Despite the setback on pay, members are still willing to fight the Tories on the no.1 issue of the moment - jobs. This week delegates have heard from a fight back in Liverpool DHSS against staff cuts, and a dispute on work



Plans to merge APEX with Chapple's EETPU suffered a conference setback

Victories for APEX left

by a conference delegate

THE annual Conference of the clerical union APEX, held in Scarborough from April 23 to 26 could well turn out to be a watershed for the left in the union.

It was a low-key affair - with demoralisation and caution amongst many delegates as a result of the lengthy witchhunting 'Committee of Inquiry' in the London Area. This inquisition concerned members allegedly involved in an unofficial meeting in a hotel at the previous year's Conference. In APEX, individuals in opposition to the Union Executive who meet together for a drink are seen as a threat to that Executive, and dubiously deemed as acting against the Constitution.

Nevertheless the left won a number of key victories, notably over the Executive Council's determined drive towards a merger, or at least Confederation, with the EETPU and possibly the GMBU.

In the January/February issue of the union journal general secretary Roy Grantham had made passing reference to the preparedness of the Union to sign union recognition agreements including no-strike clauses, as part of a joint recruitment drive in 'greenfield' electronics sites with the EETPU's white-collar section, ESA. An emergency resolution of the Tuesday from Holborn Branch calling for no such agreements to be signed was passed 3 to 2 on a hand-count, against the EC recommendation.

As APEX membership continues to decline, down further from 122,000 in 1982, the need for a merger is clear. But any merger must be principled, and a merger with the EETPU could not possibly be so.

Some victories were achieved too over union democracy. All individual votes at EC now have to be recorded in the minutes. And the union is now committed to resist any attempts to introducing of postal ballots in voting procedures. Both moves were opposed by the Executive, but passed by Conference.

On the negative side, rule changes were approved giving Branches the right to meet less than once a month, but at least 4 times a year. And attempts to relax the requirement for a secret ballot prior to industrial action were narrowly defeated.

1984 is Rules Revision Conference, and thus in itself gives a golden opportunity for the many anti-democratic practices in the Union to be challenged (a further article will discuss these). 1984 too will be the first Conference under the new right-wing President, Ken Smith. He is a lightweight replacement for the retiring Denis Howell.

He was elected this year with the support of the Communist Party against the challenge from Tribune MP David Winnick, but is unlikely to command the same authority within the Union as his predecessor. Both these factors bode well for the left within the union, provided the left is prepared to take advantage of them.

conditions at Hackney Unemployment Benefit Office is still in progress.

The announcement of a June 9 election certainly raised the tone of conference. Fringe meetings organised by Socialists for a Labour Victory and Trade Union-

ists for a Labour Victory have been very well attended. The issue of CPSA affiliating to the Labour Party will be debated later on in the week.

* Full conference report next week.

CLASS FIGHTER

MAY ISSUE

10p plus postage from 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.

Scrap the bosses: stop the BOMB!

Socialist ORGANISER

Cross out the Tories!

from page 1.

hollow ring to it. By October it would have been further eroded and perhaps exploded by events. So — with lies in their mouths, and in their hearts the vicious intent to smash up the labour movement if they win — they go to the country while the going is good.

We can beat them, despite their present lead in the public opinion polls. The lead is big, and it will take a lot of work to crack it, but it is not big enough to make the election absolutely safe for Thatcher. Leads crumble, as Harold Wilson's did in the 1970 election. If we mobilise the labour movement and its allies, we can knock Thatcher out of Downing Street.

If the Tories beat us, and Thatcher is returned for a second term, there will be no holding them. There will be a new legal onslaught on the unions, this time aimed to break up the existing labour movement by blocking union money to the Labour Party. There will be a further drive to dismantle the welfare state. Present nuclear military plans and alliances will continue undisturbed, and new missiles will be deployed in Britain. The social devastation will continue unchecked and untended.

We must beat Thatcher!

Socialist Organiser has called for an anti-Tory crusade. It is still not too late to mount it. *Now is the time to mount it. If we don't launch such a crusade, the labour movement stands to suffer the disaster of a Tory election victory.*

There is reason to believe we can win, but we will not win unless we mobilise.

The left must take the initiative in building a local anti-Tory crusade around each Constituency Labour Party. The unions are committing money and organisers to the campaign on a scale unknown for decades. Draw the rank and file of the unions into the local election campaign. Approach convenors, shop stewards, and your union branch secretary, and discuss ways of reaching and organising politically inactive Labour Party supporters. Initiate Labour Party workplace branches.

Approach nuclear disarmers, women activists, and activists from community and ethnic groups, and ask for their participation in rousing the local working class communities and oppressed groups for a crusade to drive out the Tory vandals.

Campaign on socialist politics.

It would be far better if we were going into this election with a completely transformed Labour Party, one with socialist politics, full accountability, and leaders firmly under rank and file control. The fight for that transformation is still going on.

Even so, a Labour victory is unconditionally better than a Tory victory. The Tory party is the party of big business. It acts against the labour movement with class hatred. *Labour is the party of the labour movement.* If its leaders rat on their limited commitments, the labour movement can take up once more the struggle for accountability, and mobilise itself to oppose anything a Labour government does against the interests of the working class.

Right now the main enemy is in Downing Street. The first task, and the decisive one now facing the labour movement, is to mount an anti-Tory crusade that will change that on June 9.

SHIPYARDS SIT-IN CALL

By Lol Duffy

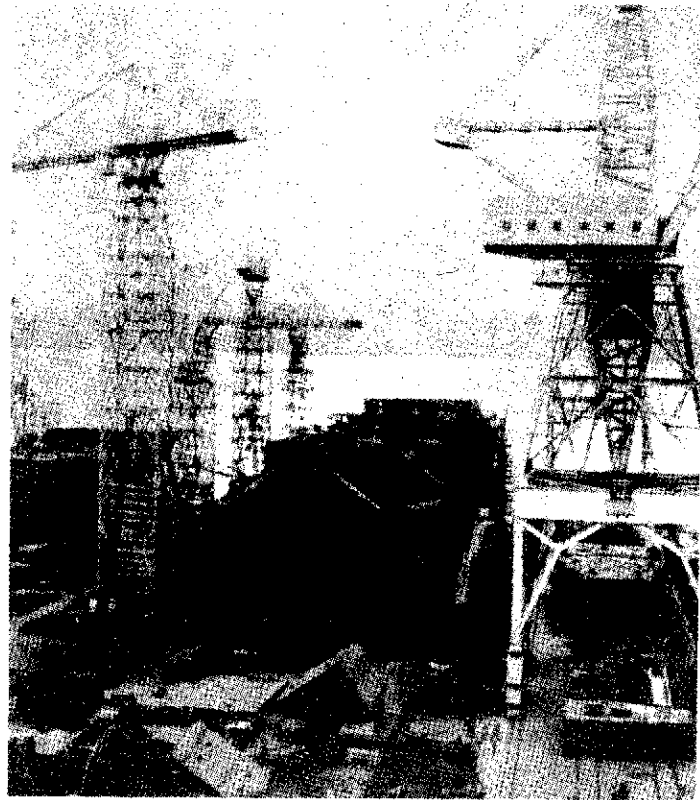
DELEGATES from every shipyard in British Shipbuilders have called for the occupation of each yard unless management withdraw their threat of 9,000 redundancies.

The meeting, on May 4, had been lobbied by workers from Tyneside, Merseyside, and various yards in Scotland.

According to the report given to the meeting by the Confed. Shipbuilding Negotiating Committee (SNC) any change in plan by British Shipbuilders is very unlikely, and the Chair of BS, Robert Atkinson, has said that double the number of redundancies may be needed by the end of 1984 if no more sizeable orders are gained.

The recommendations have now got to go back to mass meetings in every yard, for their reactions, and it seems likely it will gain support: only seven delegates voted against the call for occupations.

One problem with the proposed action will be the call for the wage claim to 'lay on the table' while the fight against redundancies is carried out. The fact that we are rejecting BS's reasons for imposing should also mean that we reject BS's reasons for proposing a wage freeze. The fight for a secure job goes hand in hand with the fight for a decent wage, and both issues should be the basis for the occupations. It is no more morally justified to fight for a job with a



lousy wage than it is to fight for a job with a decent wage.

Meeting

The SNC was due to meet BS sometime this week — although it is rumoured that the meeting has been postponed. Most yards will have their mass meetings by the end of the week: that is when we will know whether the fight is on or not.

I appeal to everyone reading this article to go out and campaign for the maximum support for this strike. The mood in the yards is not one of 'the sooner

we can take the Tory government on the better', but it is one which says 'what alternative have we got apart from the dole?'.

Occupations on an industry-wide basis have not been carried

Spread Albion strike!

IN ANOTHER show of resistance against BL management, 1750 workers at the company's Albion plant in Glasgow have been on strike since Monday against compulsory redundancies.

The strike — unofficial and indefinite — came in response to management demands for 146 redundancies. After successive waves of voluntary redundancies, 'there are no volunteers left', announced convenor James Maclean.

The urgent task now is to spread the action in this truck plant into the rest of the BL corporation.

out before, and are an important step in the fightback against the attacks on our standards of living.

A MASS meeting of Confed workers was held at Cammell Lairds Shipyards on Thursday May 5 to vote on a proposal to occupy the yard against enforced redundancies. The meeting did vote in favour of the occupation, but a large number abstained.

The issues involved at Lairds — and throughout BS — are not just redundancies, but privatisation of the yard, and a return to the days of casual labour: when you turn up at the gates, and if your face fits, you get a day's work.

A lot more needs to be done to show that there is an alternative to the dole, and one of the main issues in this fight must be workers' control of their industry.

Winning the war of Jenkins' seat

Mary Lewis reports from the ASTMS conference

The NEC of ASTMS opposed this, putting the only woman NEC member up to speak against it. But as the debate was about women, and a large section of the conference had decided to have nothing to do with them and gone out for coffee, to the NEC's dismay the motion was carried.

A similar exodus of delegates occurred in the debate on race relations.

The Broad Left fringe meeting was well attended — over 100 people turned up. But the founding conference of the Broad Left will not take place until July 2, policy and aims will be decided then. The temporary steering committee was thus holding a meeting to explain why a Broad Left was needed without being able to say what policies would be campaigned for.

In spite of it, the need for the Left to be organised was clear.

Michael Foot was the excitement of Sunday — and as he was uninspiring (despite the statutory standing ovation) you can see how boring the day was.

However, on Sunday there was also a composite motion on the national minimum wage, supported by the NEC and carried, which reversed ASTMS previous policy to support campaigns to maintain differentials.

On Sunday night a fringe meeting on Ireland was disrupted politically when supporters of Militant intervened in a way which prevented any development of the discussion on getting a troops out policy in ASTMS. The ASTMS Irish caucus is to remain in existence, and will hopefully get involved in the Broad Left.

The main victory for the left against the platform was on Monday morning, when a rule change was carried — with the necessary two-thirds majority — so that the ASTMS members on the TUC General Council now have to be elected at conference. Although Clive Jenkins will almost certainly (at least for some time) win such an election, the democratic difference of having him elected by and accountable to conference instead of being there by right of his job is obvious.

The unexpectedness of this victory (we thought we could achieve a simple majority, but doubted our ability to get the two thirds) made it even better.

May 5 pattern

THE TORIES showed a net gain of 128 seats from the May 5 council elections. But 'independents' showed a net loss of 247 —

and most 'independents' in local government are Tories in disguise. So a net loss of 119 would be nearer the mark.

The Alliance did badly. Labour had a net gain of 37.

So a general election victory is not impossible. It will take an effort — if May 5's voting pattern is reproduced on June 9, the Tories will, it is estimated, come out with an overall majority of 64.

BAS HARDY reports from Liverpool, where Labour gained control for the first time in ten years.

At last the people of Liverpool were no longer prepared to be conned by the phony pavement politics of the Liberals. Nine Liberal seats fell to Labour. The added bonus was that the colourful left-wing candidate, Jimmy Hackett, defeated Tory leader, Reg Flude, in what was considered to be a safe Tory seat.

The Liverpool result nailed the lie that left-wing policies lose votes. The Labour Manifesto commits the new Council to building 6,000 new Council houses, a major housing repairs programme, the creation of 4,000 new Council jobs, and the reopening of Croxteth Comprehensive school.

Militant

At least one fifth of the Labour Councillors are Militant supporters.

Labour policies will inevitably put the City into conflict with Central government and the so-called 'Minister for Merseyside', Tom King.

The Labour Party intends to carry out its programme without recourse to massive rate rises. If this line is maintained and the government dissolves the Council, a new phase of struggle will begin in Liverpool.

FUND

WHEN A General Election is called, political groups turn to their supporters for funds.

The Tories go to big business, the Labour Party turns to the unions, and presumably the SDP and Liberals turn somewhere too.

Socialist Organiser won't be mounting the same scale of election campaign, but with the whole country talking politics, maintaining a socialist weekly paper is vital.

So far this month our fund has been limping along. £25.25 last week was followed by an even more dismal £22.50 this week. Total for May so far: £47.75 — when we should have had £500.

So now we're turning to you! A £5 donation from just 100 readers and supporters would bring us £500, and £5 isn't much of a sacrifice if you're waged.

Write a cheque today, tomorrow visit 50 readers and ask them for contributions.

Send your £5 now to: the Treasurer, 214 Sicket Court, London N2 7ST