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Fight the
witch-
hunt

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Why Kinnock is Golding's dream

WITCH-HUNTER in-chief John Golding has endorsed a Kinnock/Hattersley team for the Labour Party leadership, saying that a combination of 'the respectable Left' and 'the moderate wing' is needed.

And indeed Kinnock has done quite enough to prove himself 'respectable' in John Golding's eyes. He sabotaged Tony Benn's campaign for Deputy Leader. As front-bench spokesperson on education, he threatened to resign if Labour committed itself firmly to reversing Tory school meal price increases. And this is his record on six important recent votes on the NEC, as compiled by the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy.

Keep commitment to nationalise clearing banks: **AGAINST**.

Amendment to remove NEC's arbitrary powers over groups in the Labour Party: **AGAINST**.

Total opposition to incomes policy, support for minimum wage: **AGAINST**.

Replace Benn by Golding as chair of Home Policy Committee: **ABSTAINED**.

Allow CLPs full re-selection after the boundary changes: **ABSENT**.

Expulsion of Militant editorial board: **FOR**.

Hattersley is an open right-winger: an aggressive advocate of nuclear weapons, of incomes policy, and of the witch-hunt. Kinnock is a 'left-winger' of the stripe of Harold Wilson or Ramsey MacDonald: marvellous left preaching, vicious careerist practice. No wonder the leading trade union bureaucrats think that Kinnock/Hattersley (in which-ever order) is a 'dream ticket'. A Kinnock/Hattersley ticket would mean sugary phrases about Party Unity masking a redoubled purge of the Left.

Eric Heffer and Michael Meacher are on a different side of the fence from Kinnock. On all the six issues cited above, while Kinnock voted with the Right on the NEC or abstained, Heffer voted with the Left.

We should campaign not only in the CLPs but also in the broader arena of the unions, where Kinnock has more credit as a left-winger.

The Hattersley camp is pressing for more democratic procedures to decide how unions vote on the leadership. They have their own motives: obviously Kinnock did his groundwork with the general secretaries better than they did. But that should not deter the Left from also pressing for ballots through branches (where a conference vote is not possible) and for maximum discussion at rank and file level.

There is no question of 'letting the Right in'. The leadership vote is by eliminating ballot, not first past the post. If and when Heffer is eliminated, we can (with gritted teeth) vote for the fake-Left Kinnock against the open right-winger Hattersley.

But the first job is to build a real left wing campaign in this leadership contest. And that means a campaign behind Heffer and Meacher.

CHILEAN WORKERS ROCK THE JUNTA

by Harry Sloan

CHILEAN dictator Pinochet's fight for his political life has already brought death to demonstrators, blood on the streets, the jailing of union leaders, and the opening of a new concentration camp in the far north of the country.

But far from subduing the protests from growing sections of Chilean society, Pinochet's latest crackdown has been met by escalating strike action, and now the calling of an indefinite general strike by leaders of 1½ million workers.

The first big protest was on May 11. A mass demonstration was followed by street fighting in which two were killed and 550 arrested. Subsequent police raids on working class districts brought 2,000 arrests and 200 detentions.

The Workers' National Command — an umbrella group of labour organisations which called the May 11 protest — then organised a follow-up protest for June 11 and the 11th of every month until the junta concedes workers' demands.

Crushed

June 11 proved to be the biggest challenge since Pinochet rode to power over the crushed and tortured bodies of working class and student militants in September 1973.

Tens of thousands took to the streets in Santiago, Valparaíso, Concepción and other cities — to be met by police using dogs, tear gas and guns. Hundreds were injured, three killed, and



1973: the rule of fear. But now the terror is losing its grip

1,351 more arrested — including the main organiser of the protest, Rodolfo Seguel, Christian Democratic leader of the 'key copper miners' union CTC.

Pinochet followed up the repression by publicly threatening to 'harden the Government', which is among the most barbaric of the dictatorships in Latin America.

But the threats did not intimidate the copper workers, who on June 17 walked out on strike at the Teniente, Chuquibambilla, Salvador and Andina mining, smelting and refining works, demanding the immediate release of Rodolfo Seguel.

At the Salvador workers, management promptly sacked 900 strikers, as Pinochet bluntly

threatened to imprison trade union leaders.

'We are going to give them what all of you are asking for — a heavy hand'. And he warned political leaders, 'Politicians, sirs, go away from here, we do not want you any more'.

As the copper workers stood firm, Pinochet put two mines under military control, and threatened to exile union leaders in the remote north of the country. The ten-year ban on political activity was re-emphasised by interior minister General Montero, as police rounded up more copper workers' leaders, and leaders of the construction and farm workers' unions.

In response to this a further, clandestine, meeting of the



Workers' National Command met and called for an all-out indefinite general strike from Thursday June 23.

As a further body blow to Pinochet, the announcement of the strike call was made by Adolfo Quinteros, president of the confederation of truck owners, which had once been a base of Pinochet's support.

Quinteros was promptly arrested — but this alliance between the truck owners and the militant workers is a symptom of the isolation of Pinochet's regime from the mass middle class support which it once mobilised in the overthrow of Salvador Allende's 'Popular Unity' government.

The June 11 day of protest had produced surprising levels of support from the well-to-do as well as the working class districts of the Chilean cities. Pinochet's disastrous monetarist economic policies, bringing 30% unemployment, the collapse of Chilean banks, and a 20% drop in industrial production last year, have alienated the wealthy landowners and the industrial capitalists as well as the working class.

Chile's economic plight rules out the kind of economic concessions to the workers which defused mass strikes in Brazil in 1978-9. The options are limited.

Within the ranks of the armed forces groups of young officers have been circulating duplicated documents advocating radical alternative policies including a

break from the IMF and a moratorium on debt payments — which could only be implemented through the removal of Pinochet.

With the General formally installed in office until 1989, and no established political structure to fall back upon, there are few safety valves available if the general strike proves solid, and succeeds in breaking down the barriers of fear which have held back wider opposition, sections of the armed forces may see a pre-emptive coup and a switch of policies as the only way to head off a pent-up explosion of potentially revolutionary dimensions.

Pinochet, on the other hand, appears to be looking to a combination of brutal repression with political confusion as the means to stem the tide of revolt.

Swallowing earlier arrogant words, he has announced that 120 leading Christian Democratic politicians are now free to return to Chile.

The massive resurgence of working class struggle in Chile, however, cries out for the development of a revolutionary leadership politically independent of the Christian Democrats — who welcomed Pinochet's 1973 coup — and committed to secure the rights of Chile's workers and peasants through the overthrow of capitalism.

The Thatcher government in Britain is eagerly courting Pinochet's junta as part of its development of 'Fortress Falklands'. Admiral Montero, head of the Chilean navy and a member of the junta, is making an official visit this week.

The workers' movement must mobilise the fullest possible solidarity with the Chilean workers — through an immediate boycott of Chilean trade, and especially of military supplies to Pinochet.

**INSIDE: Fight Tories' plans
Jeremy Corbyn on tasks of new MPs**

EDITORIAL

Woe to the vanquished?

"WOE to the vanquished: to the victor the spoils". This is the idea which will guide the Tories in their second term. They feel that they won a crushing election victory over Labour, and that they now have a mandate to govern as they like.

The details will be set out in the Queen's Speech on Wednesday afternoon. We go to press before it is delivered, but an outline has already been leaked to the press.

The Tories will start by: bringing in a further measure of union 'reform'; taking away union immunities for any strike not preceded by a ballot; completing the hiving-off of British Telecom and bringing in new measures of privatisation; tightening the financial controls on local councils to make them mere instruments of central government; and starting the process of abolishing the metropolitan councils and the GLC.

These are all measures of class war against the labour movement. What is the labour movement going to do about them?

Docile acceptance will encourage the Tories to step up the attack. The Tories have targeted the welfare state and will openly attack it once a decent interval has elapsed since their denials in the election campaign that they had a 'hidden manifesto'.

But is the labour movement in a state to fight? Pessimists will cite the recent smashing electoral defeat, and the ravages which mass unemployment, the employers' offensive, and wretched leadership have wreaked on industrial militancy. The right wing and the softer Left will therefore counsel docility and patience.

In fact the electoral defeat of Labour does not accurately reflect the relationship of class forces in Britain. The massive Tory majority in the Commons does not even accurately reflect the Tory vote, down 2% on 1979, let alone tell us anything about what the attitude of millions of workers who voted Alliance, abstained, or even voted Tory, will be in struggles that the labour movement initiates over wages, conditions, union rights or the welfare state.

58% of trade unionists who voted, voted Alliance or Tory. What they may have thought or imagined at the election does not change the fact that they will be affected by most of the class-war measures of the Tories. Their views on wages, jobs or unions in general may not correspond to what they do when their own wage, job, or union is at stake. They will fight back if the stable hard core of the labour movement does.

There is no mechanical relationship between the attitudes that the mass of workers will take to direct struggles and how they vote. In 1968 the most powerful general strike in history occurred when ten million workers struck in France. Factories were seized throughout the country. The workers refused the initial wage concessions offered them. It was plain even to hostile commentators that they wanted more, that they wanted to transform society.

Yet a mere matter of weeks later, after the Communist Party and Socialist leaders had sold out the strike, these left parties got fewer votes in the subsequent general election than there had been strikers. And the same holds in reverse: it is possible for a bad election defeat to be followed by militant struggles.

Woe to the victors

The worst thing that could happen to the labour movement would be for us to accept, even subconsciously, that on democratic principles we must agree that it is "woe to the vanquished". If the labour movement mobilises, it can be 'woe to the electoral victors' before Thatcher's elected span is out. Health workers and carworkers have recently shown how much militancy there is. It can be developed and built on.

We must fight back. The first thing to do is to withdraw from collaboration with the Tories. The TUC must break off participation in bodies like the NEDC.

We could have won the election if we had launched an anti-Tory crusade, organising all those groups who have reason to hate and fear the Tories — women's groups, black groups, etc. — around the local Labour Parties (as Socialist Organiser proposed). We can still mount that crusade.

Labour MPs can disrupt business and dramatise the issues: they should do so.

We must rebuild the shop-floor stewards' movement. It is impossible to predict exactly the course a revival of industrial militancy will take: we can and should prepare for it.

The Tories didn't win the election — we lost it (partly because of the SDP split). The labour movement can still fight this reactionary Tory government to a standstill where it matters.

Chile Solidarity Campaign:
129 Seven Sisters Rd,
London
N7 7QG.
(01-272 4298)



How the left press responded

By Martin Thomas

IN THE week following the general election, many activists must have looked to the left press for new inspiration.

And the left papers certainly addressed themselves to the challenge. The question is, how?

For Socialist Worker the answer was: Don't worry too much about large-scale politics. The way forward is *small strikes*.

"Opposition to Thatcher can be built in the factories and workplaces. It won't be built by calls for action from the top..."

SW's 'What We Think' column expands further on this scenario of local struggles and reveals a real pessimism about the current mood of the working class.

"Winning financial support for [the Greenings strike] on the shopfloor is important... Most workers won't contribute just now, but those who do can be won to identifying with that fight for jobs... Small disputes like Greenings can be important in changing workers' ideas".

In the centre pages, SW goes even further overboard, singling out the Bermondsey by-election, Benn's defeat in Bristol and Pat Wall's in Bradford, "which", it claims, "all showed that the left cannot draw the different sections of the working class into a new political unity any more than the right can".

SW is conspicuously silent about the two Militant supporters who were elected in Liverpool and Coventry.

Instead it spells out the SWP's strategy.

"The central task of winning workers to socialism a few at a time [...] and of building up spreading the struggles of large numbers of workers, has never been taken seriously".

In short, for the SWP all the policy and leadership struggles in the existing mass labour movement are so much froth and fury. Never mind all that, it tells us — instead, the job is to build a new, really socialist, movement, bit by bit. This 'new inspiration' looks

very much like despair.

Nobody could accuse Militant of despair. In a crazy mirror image of Socialist Worker, it insists that the existing labour movement is moving irresistibly to the left. It's not so much a matter of struggle, more an unstoppable Law of Nature.

It presents a scenario in which: "The Tory Party could split in the same way or even on a greater scale than has the Labour Party". And "The SDP/Liberal Alliance has probably seen its high point".

In the Labour Party, argues Militant,

"There will be no major swing to the right". Objective processes will work wonders. "The chronic decline of British capitalism, as well as the general policies of Thatcherism, will have a profoundly politicising effect upon large layers of workers".

In fact, everything looks good, with a prospect of "stronger shop floor trade union organisations... the general developments inside the trade unions will be towards the election of militant leaders, more willing to fight... Office and shop floor representatives will be replaced, especially by younger militants. District and regional committees... likewise... some workers will even go direct from Toryism to Marxism... The defeat and the abysmal performance of the right wing will only accelerate the moves to the left and increase the support for Marxist ideas" and, hey presto! "More and more workers will come to the conclusion advocated by Militant".

Don't worry a bit about the future. "The recovery and renewal of the Labour Party is assured".

One can picture the Shores, Hattersleys, Duffys and Basnetts bending under this inexorable logic and meekly handing over the apparatus of the Labour Party to the left wing!

But while Militant anticipates an unstoppable rise of their fortunes, the eyes of Socialist Action have been focused through articles by John Ross on another comforting notion — the decline of the Tory Party!

Never mind their massive majority and the immediacy of the Tory attack that will follow: Ross assures us that: "These election results are part of a decline of the Tory vote which has now been going on for fifty years". (This conclusion is reached by starting from the 'National Government' landslide in 1931).

Strangely, Ross does not find room to mention the parallel decline in the Labour vote, which is now at its lowest since 1918. His conclusion — even while the Tories draw up legislation designed to sever Labour's links with the unions and destroy it as an electoral force — is that the main danger is from... the SDP!

"The Tory Party will rapidly become dramatically unpopular", Ross writes. They are likely to be "crushed in by-election after by-election". The problem is that "the entire press, and every other weapon [...], will be mobilised to ensure that the Alliance defeats Labour".

So? "The aim must be to get this government out and to force a new general election in which the Tories are crushed".

It's a pity that amidst these heady speculations on the future, Socialist Action didn't find time to consider the lessons of the failure of the Socialists for a Labour Victory campaign, and to recognise now (as they did not prior to the election) the need for such campaigns to have an independent rank and file orientation if they are to resist pressures from the leadership and reach out to the vital new forces in the working class that must be won to the fight for socialist policies.

Tasks before the new MPs

Jeremy Corbyn reports from Westminster

THE election campaign just gone will go down in history as one of the turning points in our struggle; Labour fought on a manifesto that included many of the main policy proposals put forward from our conferences over the years and the old right of the Party quite clearly tried to sabotage the Party.

Speeches from Callaghan and Healey were deliberately at odds with the Party policy, and Frank Chapple, chairman of the TUC, went so far as to endorse the SDP candidate in North Islington.

On the other side the Tories and SDP bought themselves massive amounts of newspaper and other forms of advertising, exploiting the unfairness of the electoral law, and created a media stampede which was trying to tell working people that there is no alternative to mass unemployment, inner city poverty, nuclear arms and discrimination against women and ethnic minorities.

The Saatchi and Saatchi route back to Victorian values does not preclude the use of high technology mass indoctrination techniques or the use of the 'big lie' of opinion polls.

The Tory election machine and the willing chorus from Fleet Street in praise of Thatcher are frighteningly reminiscent of the 1968 Nixon campaign for President in the USA. Perhaps when unemployment has gone over five million and the jobless school leavers are up to ninety per cent of the press lords will be prepared to publish 'The big lies of 1983'.

What the Party has to recognise now is that the crisis of capitalism has reached such proportions that another five years of the Thatcher Tories will wreak total havoc on millions; unemployment is already at four million and in inner city areas like Islington the underlying trend is an even faster rise and for youth, already sixty per cent without a job, the prospects are bleaker than they have ever been.

It is not the basic message of the Party that is wrong, far from it, the problem is one of leadership and credibility.

The Parliamentary Party must understand that the battles against the Tories will not only not be won in Parliament, they will not be understood at all if the obsession with Parliamentary games continues.

The new Labour MPs met for the first time on Wednesday after the election defeat and after hearing from Michael Foot and Dennis Healey we were then treated to a nauseating discussion about the election of a speaker; the choice of Tory clothing manufacturer Bernard Weatherill was portrayed as some sort of 'victory' for the back bench opinion and this Parliamentary 'matter' was then dispensed with by Jim Callaghan taking his place as 'father' of the House.

To those of us sent to Parliament to fight against the ravages of mass unemployment and for a socialist system it all seemed a million miles away.

However, the Campaign Group of Labour MPs looks like being bigger than in the last Parliament, is committed to weekly meetings and to building and developing the closest possible links with the constituency and trade union lefts; our job is to be fighting, working and organising outside Parliament to defeat the Tory government, expose the crass hypocrisy of the SDP and rebuild our Party.

Press Gang

by Patrick Spilling

Never mind the ballots...

NEWS THAT striking ABS technicians are threatening to black out live coverage of the Kincock-Hattersley election will come as a shattering blow to readers.

This contest, in the best tradition of British sporting greats, brings innocent pleasure to pensioners, pundits, and Tories of every type.

Now the ABS are demanding the right to triple expenses if they have to listen to one more Hattersley speech, threatening to put the mockers on this contest.

This promised to be one of the great sporting contests since Supperbrat Tony Benn has been sidelined for calling Party leaders names.

Sick

Now these ABS criminals expect us to listen to the election on Radio 3 medium wave.

What a sick comment on our union bosses.

How much better if they would follow Frank Chapple's advice and demand that the TV coverage go on — but the election

be cancelled.

Chapple knows that these things are done better in the SDP.

How refreshing to have one union leader, at least, not afraid to say what the ordinary average Fleet Street editor is thinking.

There is just one word to sum up Roy Jenkins — statesmanlike. After his great triumph at Hillhead and his victory in leading the SDP into second place almost everywhere, he had the good grace to step aside.

Hideous

And what follows? Do we get one of these hideous slanging matches like in the Labour Party, where everyone stabs each other in the back? No. We get a calm handing over of power to Dr David Owen, the man who knows the sunken Belgrano when he sees one. One person, one vote, and Roy's the one person.

As for Chapple himself. How many people does he have to beat to become chairman of the TUC? Quite.

Only last week the Queen gave her personal stamp of approval to the SDP style of leadership in a veiled way by sending a message of congratulations to Yuri Andropov of the Soviet Union.

Yuri has just been elected president. But did you have to see 15 rounds of gruelling contest first? Did you have the unseemly sight of Politburo members calling each other revisionist swine at party conferences in front of TV cameras? Of course not. Even the reds know how to do these things with dignity. Only the Labour Party doesn't.

Mob

The Queen sent her congratulations. It was a veiled way of saying well done Roy and David to the two men who should have had Labour's seats in the House of Commons if only we had an electoral system which completely outlawed lefties from sitting in parliament at all.

So why is it the Labour Party has to tear itself apart in public just so they can claim they have 'democratic accountability'. That's the logic of the mob.

Besides, we can tear the Labour Party to pieces perfectly adequately without wasting time on elections.

So get those ABS sods back to work. Let's have a lot more TV spectacles on the Labour Party and a lot less of this voting nonsense.

Foot in the door for Kinnock

WHY DID Michael Foot rush post-haste from Ebbw Vale to London in the early hours of Friday June 10?

The answer is not unconnected with the fact that Neil Kinnock plainly knew on Election night that Foot was likely to announce he was standing down as Labour leader.

Kinnock is Foot's chosen successor; and Foot's delay and mad dash to London were in large part to make arrangements on the Friday to give Kinnock a flying start in the campaign for the leadership.

With late election results still being declared, and the body of the torpedoed election campaign still warm, Foot met with union leaders Clive Jenkins (ASTMS) and Moss Evans (TGWU). They worked out a plan of action that would secure votes for Kinnock before any other possible candidates even knew for certain the contest was on.

The scheme was that: *Jenkins would attend the ASTMS NEC meeting on the Saturday, and propose a resolution nominating Foot as party leader, or Kinnock "if" Foot refused to stand.

*He would take this for

endorsement to the ASTMS Labour conference delegation meeting on the Sunday.

*From there he would telephone Michael Foot, and tell him of the nomination.

*When (surprise, surprise!) Foot declared he would not be standing, Jenkins would ring Kinnock, who would promptly accept.

*Then Jenkins would at once ring the Press Association, revealing for the first time that Foot was standing down, simultaneously with the ASTMS block vote for Kinnock.

*From there on Moss Evans could use this momentum on the Kinnock bandwagon to knock down any possible resistance on the TGWU Executive, and press through a further hefty block vote of support for Kinnock.

All went according to plan. Jenkins successfully routed an attempt on the ASTMS NEC to have the union take a "low profile" and nominate nobody, made the arranged phone calls on the Sunday — and by the middle of Brian Walden's "Weekend World" programme, the news of the leadership election was announced to one of Kinnock's rivals, Peter Shore.

CP weighs in against Heffer

ERIC Heffer's candidacy for the Labour leadership is opposed in the unions not only by the right wing and soggy 'left' among the top bureaucrats, but also by the Communist Party and its fellow travellers.

Although the CP paper 'Morning Star' has hedged its bets, CP members in ASTMS have warmly supported the union's 'initiative' in launching the Kinnock bandwagon. CP members in the TGWU raised their hands in unanimous endorsement of Kinnock on the union's General Executive Council.

Morning Star correspondent Mick Costello is 'confident' that this will be carried by delegates at next month's TGWU conference.



Heffer

ference.

In the Sheet Metalworkers' union, Stalinist general secretary George Guy is one of four national officers recommending Kinnock's nomination.

In throwing their trade union support behind Kinnock, the CP plainly hope that they can back an ostensibly 'left' candidate while retaining their cosy links with the right wing of the bureaucracy.

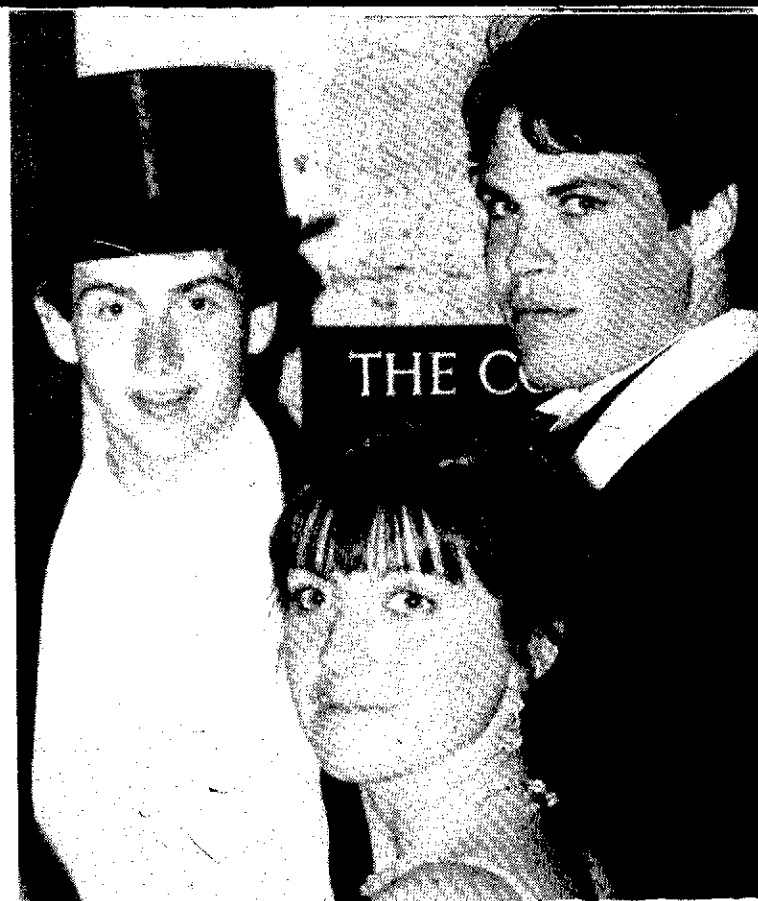
There is no reason to believe that this stance would change should Kinnock win the post and embark upon a full-scale purge of the Left.

Get out of that armchair and into the country!



Labour Party Young Socialists summer camp 1983: July 30 to August 6. All Young Socialists should come; a week of YS workshops, Class Fighter meetings, and very much more debate than there is at YS conference.

Contact Class Fighter, 13 Buxton Road, London N19 for details and transport. Bring sleeping bags and tents.

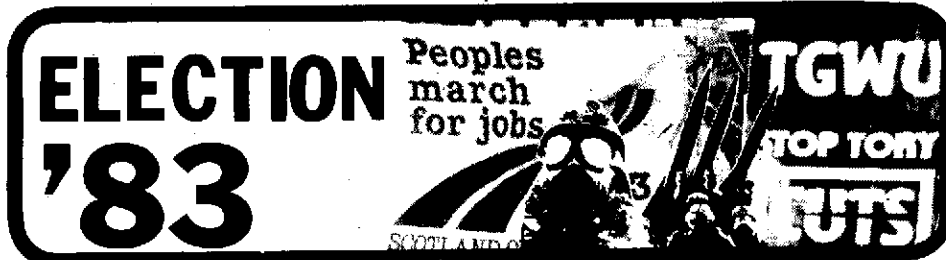


The ruling class's annual celebrations, with an added spice this year because of the Tory election victory: Ladies' Day at Ascot, and the May Ball at Trinity College, Cambridge



JOHN HARRIS

More post-election comment



Audrey Wise, Labour candidate for Woolwich

There were two principal causes for the defeat. One was that most of those running the campaign simply weren't in sympathy with the policies on which they were running, and it showed. The manifesto wasn't put across in a credible manner.

They accepted the manifesto, but they either had no intention, or were incapable, of running a campaign on it.

This was compounded by the fact that it was very much a television election, and all attention focussed on our leader. Leaving all other more complex matters aside, whoever designed Michael Foot's programme really needs serious examination.

So on every level, from the level of the merest question of competence right through to the key politics, it was a disaster.

On defence, they didn't even succeed in capitalising on the fact that the majority of the population doesn't want Cruise.

If the local campaigns had been run at that level of competence, then we would have finished up with no MPs! The fact is that, certainly in my area, you had a contrast between a really hard-working local campaign and every possible clanger dropped nationally.

I've heard it said that the Labour Party is grief-stricken, and I think that's true. I hope that as well as being grief-stricken it's also very, very angry.

We're in a bad position. At a deeper level, I think that there has been both lack of political education in Britain, and mis-education by the ruling elements in the Labour Party, for many, many years. It takes an awful lot of overcoming.

People reacted best to the defence of the Health Service. Other socialist policies we haven't been so successful with. I think it's partly because we haven't really listened — we've gone in too much for experts and not enough for the people at the receiving end.

Right wing ammo for the media

Jerry Hughes, secretary Labour Against the Witch Hunt and political assistant, London Region Co-Op committee

The results of the general election in London disguise the details of how local Labour parties fought the campaign, and the significance of this for a future Labour victory.

In the four constituencies in which I worked, the Labour Party presented the electorate with a socialist candidate standing firmly on party policies, at no point trying to fudge the manifesto. In all (Ealing North, North Westminster, Hornsey and Wood Green, and Hackney North and Stoke Newington) the party did not rely on the 'traditional Labour vote'. On the doorsteps, on high streets and in public meetings, the party argued the case for socialist policies. Publicity material not only took up local issues, but related these to the national fight against Thatcher and for socialism.

Listen

Accompanying the candidates in each constituency, I found voters wanting to know what Labour policies really were, and a willingness to listen and more often than not to be persuaded.

The national election campaign influenced the individual constituencies through the media, and through visits of the national leaders. Neither can be said to have helped the campaign.

In Ealing North, North Westminster, and Hornsey and Wood Green, canvassing revealed a high number of undecided voters. These people were doubtless helped to their final

decision by the party's national projection. They saw a leadership that was unsure of its policies and unclear in its delivery.

The media found leading Labour figures providing them with ammunition to attack the party. At the local level, Dennis Healey waffled in a speech in Ealing North, and Michael Foot never quite made his appointment in Hornsey.

The general election found constituency Labour Parties willing to fight a vigorous and committed socialist campaign that could win support. We have got a strong grass-roots organisation in many constituencies. What we need urgently is a party leadership and National Executive Committee equally committed and positive.

We need now a party leadership that fights the Tories with as much determination as the old leadership attacked the members and policies of its own party.

Richard Chessum, Labour candidate for Warwick and Leamington

There were a number of things that lost us votes, which we found going round on the doorsteps. Surprisingly, what lost us most votes was something not related to policy at all — it was just that people thought that Michael Foot was a bumbling old fool and not up to being prime minister.

So obviously the leadership of the Labour Party is important. The other lesson that we've got to learn is that if we're going to have policies which are different from the past, like unilateralism, then we've got to have two or three years at least campaigning hard for them, as a party, in a unified way.

We found no end of people who said they weren't going to vote for us because of our defence policy — and the Common Market, too: they were afraid that they were going to lose their jobs if we pulled out of the Common Market. There just hadn't been the kind of campaign that would offset those fears.

On the Labour Party leadership — we have a problem that the Parliamentary Labour party is not as left wing as we hoped it would be. I don't think there's the slightest possibility that we could get anyone of the hard left elected in the present circumstances. My own view is that it's obviously going to be between Shore and Hattersley and Kinnock, and I think it's in the interests of the whole left that we support Kinnock, although it may go against the grain with us because of his role on the National Executive.

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.

Next National Council meeting, open to delegates from CLPs and trade union bodies: Saturday July 2, 12 noon, Camden Town Hall, Judd St. entrance.

The unions must choose We have to get out on the streets

Joy Hurcombe, Labour candidate in Shoreham and secretary of Labour CND

Unfortunately I think the Labour Party has failed to get its policy across over the last four years. For example the lack of support for the People's March. It's crazy to suppose you can just put across a programme without campaigning for it.

Inside the Labour Party we'll be into a period of recrimination. No doubt there'll be a lot of mud slung at the Left. But the start of the decline in our credibility was Callaghan's speech on defence policy which quite deliberately sabotaged the manifesto. The Left will have to keep fighting for clear policies.

People had genuine concerns about disarmament because they hadn't heard the issue presented except one way. When Callaghan made his speech about Polaris we lost all the concern about Cruise.

In the whole campaign there wasn't much socialism. It's really no alternative to propose borrowing and reflationary methods without taking control of the economy, and people realised that. We'll never get our message across unless we get it on a socialist basis.

I think there were socialist principles involved in some of the policies. The Labour Party does start off from some socialist concerns, but not a revolutionary concern to change things rather than tinkering around within the system.

Over the next five years, there will have to be a positive fight against Tory policies. We'll have to go out on the streets, as far as I can see. The trade unions will have to make a choice as to

whether to cooperate — which is their usual policy — or to fight. I think there'll be a lot of public disorder when people see what the Tory policies really are.

And we'll be fighting back very strongly for unilateral nuclear disarmament. We hope the Labour Party will lead demonstrations on this issue.

Kevin Flack, Labour Party agent in Lewisham East

It went quite badly wrong. We were so sure of victory here.

In terms of future perspectives, people like Ken Livingstone and Michael Meacher seem to have got it right that we must turn to extra-parliamentary work as a priority, particularly to the struggles of the unions.

We've got to put a lot more effort and energy into the Labour Party branches working in their localities, with union struggles or with community groups, tenants resisting rent increases, and so on.

Dennis Healey said that the by-elections coming up must be the priority, but I don't think that's going to make any difference. We've got to be working outside the traditional Parliamentary routes, and at the same time building a very strong base of support for the Labour councils that are going to resist the Tories.

It's going to be very tough, but there is a real spirit to fight back. We've picked up 150 to 200 new members in our constituency during the election campaign, and they'll all be eager to do work.

Election
'83

Peoples
march
for jobs

SCOTT AND O

TGWU
TOP TORY
CUTS

JOHN HARRIS



"Labour lacked all credibility when its leaders were attacking the manifesto"

Vast public ignorance

Colin Ellison, Labour candidate in Halesowen and Stourbridge

The result: we got hammered. The next task is to win back the popular vote. How we do it, I don't know. Things are going to get much rougher in the next four years. So any policies we can propose will look less practical to the know-nothing voters.

We lost votes because most of the working-class voters in this area didn't believe that we should get rid of nuclear weapons, and they didn't believe we could reduce unemployment by two million. We're up against a vast pool of public ignorance. If you talk to people about things like Keynesian economics, they just don't understand.

People learn by two things — rational argument and hard experience. We've got to provide the rational argument, and the Tories are going to provide the hard experience.

We can't rely on the trade unions. The only way we can beat the Tories is through hard organisation.

Martin Willis, Labour candidate for Birmingham Hall Green

The reason why we lost it was that although people didn't have a lot of time for Thatcher's government, and although they generally thought the policies we were putting forward were likely to be more successful, they didn't trust the Labour Party to put them into action.

That was a consequence that we've spent 2½ years talking out our internal difficulties. That was necessary to do, but it didn't put out a strong picture to the public.

During the campaign, too, I don't think our policies were presented as clearly as they should have been.

Now, obviously, there's the leadership question. So I think we've got to look at certain areas of policy which need closer argument. I want us to remain committed to unilateralism, but we've got to be much more specific about what we are intending to do on conventional defence.

I hope that the Labour Party, and other socialist parties, will play a major role in non-violent resistance to the introduction of Cruise missiles at Greenham Common over the next few months. That'll be a crucial test.

Graham Bash, political editor, London Labour Briefing

We lost the election because the Labour Party lacked any credibility at all when its leaders were attacking the manifesto on which the election was fought. We had the worst of both worlds: a manifesto which, for all its weaknesses and limitations, went beyond and outside of consensus politics, but which lacked any credibility at all because the leaders were attacking it.

We're left in a very, very difficult position. I think the central question we now face — and we've faced it before as well — is the struggle for the machinery of the Labour Party and the unions. The central question is the crisis of leadership.

We're in a contradiction, because we're left leaderless in the Parliamentary arena with Benn's defeat in Bristol. What we should do in the leadership election is this. We start from saying that the constituency left and the trade union left can have no confidence in Kinnock. In a final ballot we may be forced to put our cross against his name against Hattersley or Shore. But to start off with a vote of confidence in him would be a disaster.

It's absolutely vital that the hard left comes up with an independent campaign and independent candidates. Probably that will not be more than a token, for the moment, and not a struggle for power but it nonetheless lays the basis for such a struggle tomorrow.

Finally, I think we have to say two things. We failed because the left's struggle for power within the Labour Party only went halfway. It was very good at constituency level, but it was never brought into the trade unions. That's why Benn failed

to win the Deputy Leadership, that's why we lost the election, and that's why the left is in a relatively weak position today.

Flowing from that, I think there's now got to be structures within the hard left to unify our common struggle. If we don't get this off the ground soon, we're going to be in difficulties. To that end, London Briefing is coordinating an initiative in calling for the Briefing groups to meet again in County Hall on July 3 to see if we can get some structures in which to unify sections of the hard left and the revolutionary left at a national level. I hope we can make some progress.

Dave Edwards, Labour candidate for Coventry South West

The ruling class brought the SDP on the scene in order to keep their power base. We've got to sweep them out of the way. They have brought this third party in against the advance of the socialists in the Labour Party. We've got to tackle the SDP, expose them like we expose the Tories.

I think the national leadership could have run a harder campaign, a more political campaign.

My own Constituency Labour Party has come out of it very healthy. We have a prospect of recruiting many members and building a mass party. That's the way to beat the Tories and the SDP.

On the trade union front it's going to be a very difficult four years. We're going to face legislation after legislation. I think that the unions should withdraw from bodies like the NEDC. If the Tory government announces fierce anti-union laws, they should have nothing to do with the state at all — nothing to do with ruling-class politics.

I've got a faith in the working class that they can rise above attacks by the ruling class — but they need a mass party to do it.

CLPD

No time to lose!

by Francis Prideaux

WITH PARTY conference only three months away, the deadline for resolutions and nominations (July 15) is less than three weeks off. The rank and file will have to move fast if we are to have any effect.

Model resolutions have been prepared by CLPD on Party unity and the need to end expulsions. One supports the Greenwich amendment, one gives the final decision to the Party conference (as opposed to the NEC), and one is itself a constitutional amendment to Clause IX. There are three further draft texts — on PLP democracy, on nationalising the 25 top companies and on the general principle of positive discrimination.

The Women's Action Committee (WAC) propose five additional resolutions which make specific demands for women in the Party. Three were raised at Blackpool last year but have not yet succeeded. The others seek to give to the women's organisation and conference the official status and constitution which they still so conspicuously lack.

Draft texts are available from CLPD, 10 Park Drive, London NW11 (tel. 01-458 1501) and WAC, 39 Calderdale Road, London SW4 (tel. 01-622 3983).

CLPD is also seeking support for those declared candidates for Leader and Deputy Leader — Eric Heffer and Michael Meacher respectively — who clearly have the best record on Party democracy issues. Please note that your CLP's nominations will be ruled out of order unless they are accompanied by the signed consent of your nominees. The main challenger for Eric Varley's position as Treasurer will now no longer be Michael Meacher but committed unilateralist Albert Booth.

It remains essential for all seven of the CLPs' representatives on the NEC to vote solidly against the witch-hunt. Whether or not Neil Kinnock becomes leader, it is imperative that the job of replacing him with Norman Atkinson is now completed following the good groundwork begun last year.

Allan, Atkinson, Benn, Heffer, Richardson, Skinner and Wise are the strongest team to win. Diversionary candidates should therefore be discouraged.

BRIEFING

National meeting of
Briefing groups

Sunday July 3, 11.30am,
County Hall, London
SE1.

The left's struggle for power went only half way

Build workplace Labour branches!

You need ten members to start a branch in any workplace. The definition of 'workplace' is left open in the rules: separate branches can be established in separate sections of a large factory or office complex.

The Labour Party membership of workplace recruits has to be processed through their ward branches. But the workplace branch can send one delegate to the Labour Party GC in each constituency where it has at least ten members living.

Women ask 'What's in it for us?'

Only socialism can lift burden of housework

LAST WEEK we carried a piece by Ken Livingstone calling for the labour movement to shift from the Alternative Economic Strategy (increased public spending, import controls, planning agreements, etc) to a much more radical approach.

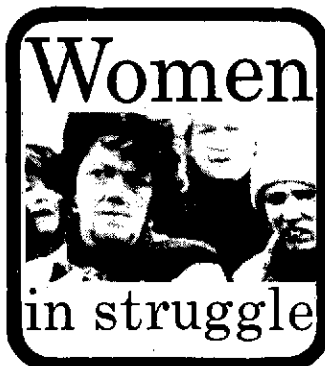
Livingstone's call broke a long-standing consensus. It is the first time that a major figure outside the organised Marxist left has argued for a left alternative to the AES.

However, there has already been a strong criticism of the AES, if not an outright challenge to it — from many feminists in the labour movement. This criticism is summarised in a new pamphlet, 'What's in it for us? Women and the AES', from the South East Region TUC.

In many ways the pamphlet is excellent. It is well-written, it raises crucial issues, and its criticism of the AES are telling.

'If 'full employment' simply

By Tina
Davies



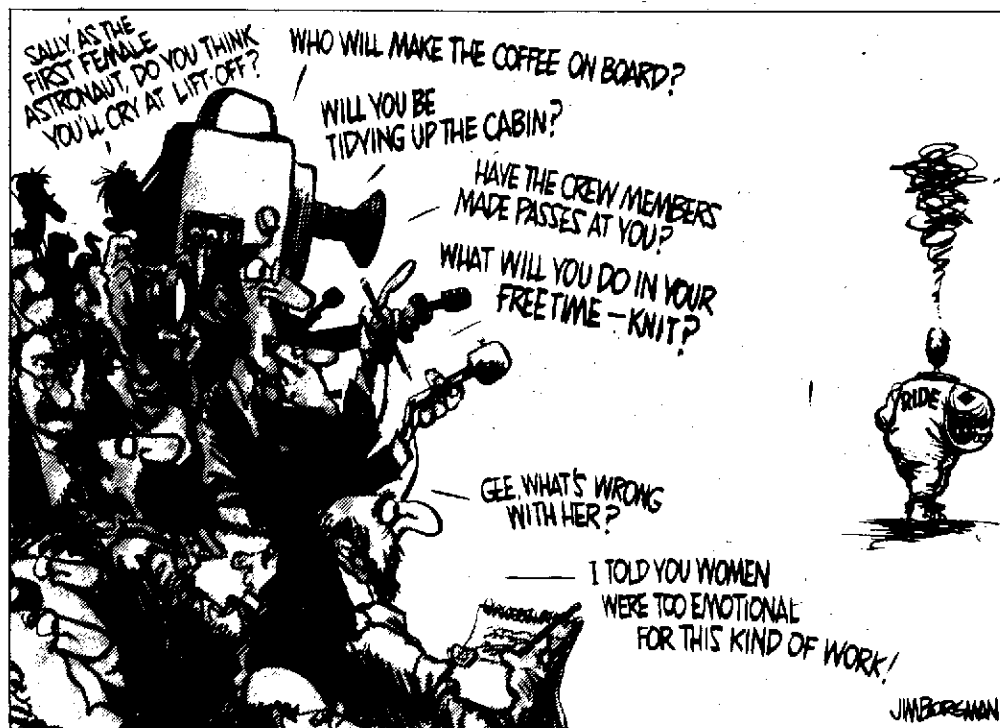
means cutting down as far as possible the number of registered unemployed, it will not tackle the problem of women as the 'hidden unemployed'... If

the 'full employment' goal is pursued without changing the way domestic work is shared between men and women, it could reinforce existing inequalities...

And in public services: 'the last thing women need is more of the same... Nursery-building has to come first rather than being an optional extra. Health and education services need remoulding to fit the needs of women.'

As for new housing: will it 'be designed with access not only to adequate child-care facilities but also to community laundries and restaurants, and with safe, easy access to shops, transport, play areas, etc? Will old housing stock be overhauled with similar aims in view? What kind of priority will be given to eliminating damp and improving cooking and washing facilities in individual homes?'

The pamphlet also stresses



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that, 'It is action now that's important.' 'Women', it points out, 'are already taking action on issues seen as integral to any alternative economic strategy aimed at benefitting all working people'. It cites the NHS dispute, Lee Jeans, Plesseys, the Liverpool typists, and cuts struggles.

But how does 'action now' link up with the overall strategic questions? That's not at all clear.

The pamphlet does make some links: shorter working hours as a central issue both in 'action now' and strategically. 'shorter working time shouldn't just be seen as a strategy for tackling unemployment. It is a precondition of genuine equality and the sharing out of unpaid as well as paid work.'

It also talks about local 'alternative plans' for public service

provision — though without mentioning the issue of opening the books of the relevant authorities, which should be part of that struggle.

But there is no mention of workers' control — which, surely, provided there is positive discrimination for women in the workers' committees exercising the control, can be a crucial bridge between immediate struggles and transforming society.

Instead, the pamphlet implicitly assumes that all its criticisms can be dealt with by tacking bits on to the AES or shifting priorities within it.

Despite the many important things it says about the 'unequal balance of power between women and men', the pamphlet thus relies fundamentally (as the AES does) on reforming action from above by the thoroughly male-dominated capitalist state machine.

The 'shifting priorities' argument is actually quite dangerous. 'Many unions have a strong commitment (in theory) to state child care provision, but', the pamphlet asks, 'will this be carried through to the point where it is given priority over other forms of public spending?'

Whether nurseries or universities should be a priority might well be a real question in a socialist state. But the pamphlet operates entirely within the framework of the AES — i.e. of private profiteers owning and controlling crucial chunks of the economy. As long as those

private profits continue, it is disastrous for the labour movement to get caught in arguing about one public service versus another, rather than about getting wealth out of the hands of the capitalists.

Essentially the pamphlet assumes that the AES is fine for men and only needs adjusting to serve women as well.

But even if the AES were fine for men, the issues of women's oppression are sufficiently subversive to blow it to bits. In its opening pages the pamphlet shows clearly how women's unpaid labour in the home dovetails with their position as cheap and disposable wage-labour. But then it goes on to discuss ways to alleviate this system of domestic labour/wage labour, rather than to overthrow it.

The pamphlet does talk about the need for child-care provision and for 'new services, such as community laundries and restaurants, to ease the burden of domestic work' — but only as added priorities for the AES.

The socialisation of housework — for that's what's implied — cannot, however, be just another item of public spending in the AES. Its implications for the reorganisation of the economy and for capitalist control over wage labour are too far-reaching. It can only be won together with the ending of that capitalist control.

* 'What's in it for us?' 30p plus postage from SERTUC, Congress House, Great Russell St., London WC1.

Roots of male violence

ELIZABETH Wilson, in her book 'What is to be done about Violence against Women', marshals a great deal of evidence and provides us with much ammunition for smashing the cultural stereotypes in our society. The book, published by Penguin in association with the Socialist Society, is one from a new series of 'Crisis in the Eighties' issues.

She uses, almost exclusively, a feminist analysis, and I found it difficult to reconcile this with her plea at the end of the book for a 'more socially cooperative' society. She locates rape, domestic violence, harassment at work, incest, etc., within a general understanding of women's oppression in which the source of men's power is seen to be patriarchy, made possible by the 'superior' social, political and economic power of men. Her penultimate

Anita Preston
reviews the
new Penguin
book on
violence
against
women

line, 'That is why I am a socialist' didn't seem to fit too snugly with what she argued throughout her book.

However, she does explode many of the myths surrounding sexual violence.

According to popular myth the rapist is a Jekyll and Hyde character, a maniac, a beast.

Rapists such as these are atypical. Rapists are ordinary, their behaviour is indistinguishable from much of 'normal' male behaviour.

And what's more, it will be other 'normal' folk, largely men, who will decide whether a woman has been raped or not. An acquittal means there was no rape. The woman's actual experience is denied.

In what other crime is the 'victim' accused of having encouraged the crime? Is one encouraging muggers by carrying a handbag? As recently as 1975 Judge Sutcliffe remarked 'It is well known that women in particular, and small boys, are liable to be untruthful and invent stories.'

Wife beating, still looked on as a music hall joke, often involves a degree of violence which if it occurred in the street could result in heavy

prison sentences. 'The family is a very violent place.' Ms Wilson asks us to consider how we would feel if there were 40,000 victims of soccer hooliganism in London? But the estimated number of beaten women — 40,000 — produces very little indignation.

Elizabeth Wilson is highly critical of the conservative bias of many social workers using a 'family therapy' attempt to reconstruct the 'family'. It is amazing, in a society where we can be sent to prison for a small social security fraud, that incest aggressors, who are a real danger to their families, are not.

Ms Wilson also charts historically the violence of pornography, the nature of sexual harassment at work, the parallels between prostitution and marriage, and the way that feminism has brought many horrors to light.

The silence is over. In the '50s and '60s there was a blanket denial that women were oppressed at all. More recently the taken-for-granted behaviour of men has meant a new leap into a new definition of the political. Men, faced with a challenge, in many instances showed what their true colours were, and replied with insults, anger and contempt.

Midway in the book she uses a quote from 'Shrew', a quote that highlights the radical reappraisals that women engaged in the struggle are obliged to make.

'One has to deal with the uneasiness that comes with a shift of loyalties from one's husband or lover, maybe, to the group of women. The safety and reflected power that makes it comfortable to identify with one's oppressor has to be given up and strength found to identify with one's oppressed group and other oppressed groups.'

Youth conference

Youth CND conference: July 2-3, UMIST Student Union, Manchester. Open to YCND members and to visitors.

Delegates from YCND groups: 1 delegate per 4 members. Visitors must notify YCND office before conference. Registration fee £1.50 for visitors and delegates.

JOIN

Membership of National CND is £6 (adult), £9 (couple), £3 (student) and £1 for Youth CND (under 21). Send to CND, 11 Goodwin St, London N4.



International news

Central America Will Reagan get desperate?

"WE SUCCEEDED in Chile, in Bolivia, in Guatemala militarily... That's the only thing they understand: might is right".

This comment from a White House official cuts aside the flimsy veil of rhetoric on 'defence of democracy' which has been used to obscure the brutal policies of the Reagan government in Central America.

Reagan has insisted that, "We will not permit dictators to ram communism down the throats of innocent people in one country after another in Central America".

But if he is to stop the gathering momentum of struggle against American-sponsored dictatorships, he must reckon with the likelihood that US military intervention could prove to be his last and only resort.

As another official told Newsweek:

"Military intervention, which was inconceivable, now is only improbable, and if El Salvador is about to fall to the communists, it becomes inevitable. An-

other country is not going to fall to communism while Ronald Reagan is president".

In a desperate effort to turn the tide of the war in El Salvador which has been running consistently in favour of the FMLN liberation forces, and destabilise or overturn the anti-imperialist Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, the US is pursuing a ruthless two-pronged policy.

On the one hand millions of dollars are being funnelled into strengthening the military forces of the Salvadorean regime: on the other, US cash and arms are being liberally dispensed to gangs of former Somoza National Guardsmen and mercenaries in order to create a counter-revolutionary guerilla force aimed at undermining the Sandinistas.

In El Salvador, 5000 of the army's best troops with US trained officers and US advisers are currently mounting what could be a make-or-break sweep of San Vicente province, aimed at driving out the FMLN and

implementing a Vietnam-style 'pacification' programme.

The tactic failed lamentably in Vietnam, and it is no more likely that the bloodthirsty government troops and their equally brutal American advisers will be any more successful in El Salvador.

In Nicaragua, however, where the counter-revolutionary guerilla forces have been assembled largely outside the country, with hefty transfusions of dollars, Washington now claims to have a reactionary fighting force of 8,000 men. They hope that in the more sparsely populated regions these forces can swiftly take control of substantial areas — posing a major military headache to the Sandinistas. The 'contras' are increasingly supported by the Honduran army across the border to the North.

But the imperialist position in Central America is far from strong. The contras in Nicaragua have struck no chord of popular support, and even Washington admits that they are unlikely to



US-trained Salvadorean troops: how long before US combat troops are sent?

overturn the Sandinistas.

And in El Salvador, too, the isolation of the army from the workers and peasants in the towns and countryside is a major weakness.

This was recently pinpointed by retiring General Edward C. Meyer. He told reports that he had no moral qualms about US intervention:

"If I thought that sending the 82nd Airborne would do the job, I'd recommend it today". The

problem was that, "I don't know how to design right now a US military solution to the problem. Unless you have the support of the indigenous people, you're not going to solve a guerilla war".

Meyer also warned of the plight of American soldiers "off at the end of the string without the support of the American people".

Nevertheless there are plans to rush in a new influx of US ad-

visers to operate in the front line in the event of a major setback. That could be the trigger to a Central American Vietnam.

It is ironic indeed that Reagan should be contemplating resort to such military methods in the very week in which the stirrings of the Chilean workers' movement and victorious struggles of the Bolivian miners have underlined the limits of even the most barbarous 'solutions' to the crisis of imperialist authority.

Moscow silent on Khomeini's pogrom

THE reaction (more exactly, lack of reaction) of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to the banning of the Tudeh Party in Iran casts a revealing light on the nature of Soviet foreign policy and avowed support for "the international working class in its struggle for peace, democracy and socialism."

The Tudeh Party (TP) is the Moscow-loyal Iranian "communist" Party. Its leading members were arrested in February, the party as a whole was banned in May and since then another 1,600 of its members have been arrested to date.

Its leaders have been cruelly tortured — some to the point of death — as the regime has attempted to extract "confessions".

Given the complete servility of the TP to its mentors in East-

By Stan
Crooke

ern Europe and the Soviet Union it might be expected that the latter would condemn the Iranian government's action and mount a vigorous campaign in defence of the TP and for the overthrow of the regime.

On the contrary, in fact, the attack on the TP has been passed over in virtual silence by the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Since the repression of the Tudeh began, just two articles have appeared in Neues Deutschland, for example, the Stalinist daily paper in East Germany.

The first, sandwiched between articles on CIA support for the Afghan guerrillas and on 1,200 members of the "Mongolian Revolutionary Youth Association" setting up home for themselves in the Gobi Desert, reads as follows:

"The People's Party of Iran (Tudeh Party), according to reports of the Iranian news agency IRNA, has been declared dissolved by the State Prosecutor. Leading officials of the party were recently arrested."

The second report is equally brief.

The only text in Neues Deutschland which deal with the banning of the TP in a less perfunctory fashion are an edited statement issued by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the TP and the speech made by TP Politburo member Ali Khavari at the international conference on "Karl-Marx and our Epoch" held in East Berlin in April.

The texts trot out the usual TP line: its members are "patriots" who are "loyal to the Iranian revolution"; its activities have been carried out "in agreement with the appropriate bodies of the Islamic Republic"; any criticisms it has of the regime are "neither hostile nor destructive"; and the accusations levelled against the Tudeh (that it spies for Moscow) are the invention of "counter-revolutionaries" backed by the imperialist powers.

The same basic indifference to the banning and persecution of the TP can be found in Pravda and other press organs of the Stalinist bureaucracy, including Soviet Weekly, the main mouthpiece of the Soviet bureaucracy in this country.

At first sight this might seem particularly odd. The repressive nature of the Islamic Republic Party (IRP) regime in Iran is well

documented. Yet Stalinists and their fellow travellers defend it as "progressive".

Even when the TP is banned, the Stalinists still remain silent on the IRP's countless crimes against the working class and seeks instead to placate it.

In reality though, it is perfectly logical: the foreign policy of Stalinism, for all its turgid demagoguery about "proletarian internationalism", is based on defence of its power and privileges in the Soviet Union and East Europe.

If this means accepting repression of the working class and collaboration with reactionary regimes, then the Stalinist bureaucracy is only too willing to do this.

Stable

And in the case of Iran in particular, the Stalinist bureaucracy, in its own interests, wants to see a stable, repressive regime in power: unrest in Iran could all too easily spread to the Soviet Union itself given the extent to which sections of the Soviet population of Central Asia are related to sections of the Iranian population.

(The Turkic language of the Azerbaidjanis and Turkmeni, for example, is spoken on both sides of the border, whilst the two million natives of Soviet Tajikistan speak Pharsee, which they share with Iran. The strength of Islam in Soviet Central Asia provides another particularly strong link with Iran).

The close links between Iran and the bordering regimes of the Soviet Union, which have a long history of resistance to the central bureaucracy, therefore make it particularly vital for the Soviet regime that Iran is governed by a regime strong and ruthless enough to quell potentially



Khomeini's firing squad executing Kurdish militants

infectious unrest in the country.

It was this factor that lay behind the Soviet Union's friendship with the openly pro-imperialist dictatorship of the former Shah. He was a guarantee of stability in the region.

Hence the readiness of the Soviet Union to construct power stations in Ahwaz and a major steel works in Isfahan, to train engineering students in the Soviet Union, and to maintain high level diplomatic links with the regime (e.g. Podgorny's meeting with the Shah).

Myth

The Tudeh Party's alleged "history of heroic resistance" to the Shah is a myth. Those leaders of the TP who did not flee to take refuge with the Shah's friends in Moscow went over to the side of the regime: Nikkah took over responsibility for radio censorship; Jaafarian joined the Rastakhis Party, the Shah's own party in his one-party state.

It was therefore natural that the Stalinists should seek an alliance with the Shah's successor. But given the nature of, and contradictions within, the IRP regime, this was no easy task. The result was the present policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy and the TP (as long as it existed).

The Stalinist bureaucracy hoped that Khomeini could do the same job as the Shah: crush all militancy and working class resistance.

The TP faithfully carried out this line, by praising the IRP regime and aiding it in its repression of the Iranian left.

Then the assassins of yesterday became the victims of today. But the Stalinist bureaucracy pursues the same line still: virtually ignoring the repression of its own mouthpiece in Iran, the bureaucracy still fawns before the IRP regime.

Hence the absence of any criticism of the IRP regime, the maintenance of over 1,000 Soviet technicians in Iran, and the silence about Iranian support for Afghan guerrillas (as compared with its lengthy protests about CIA support). And even with the Tudeh facing open repression, the Stalinist bureaucracy still sent heartfelt congratulations to the Iranian regime on the fourth anniversary of its "revolution".

Persecuted

Like millions of other workers before them, the Iranian working class is persecuted by a regime which the countries of the 'socialist camp' seek to support.

But it is of no benefit to the Iranian masses to be oppressed by a pro-Soviet Union rather than a pro-West regime.

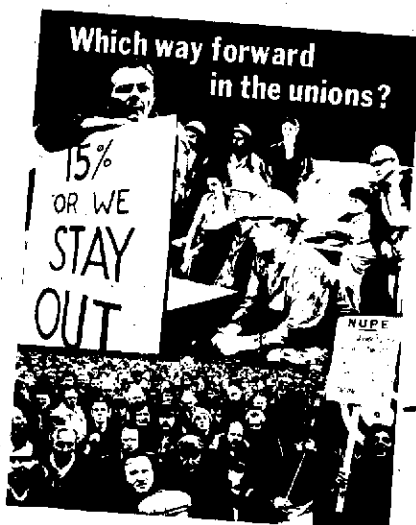
The Iranian working class needs to lead the revolutionary struggle against the IRP regime and against the attacks it would face once victorious from both imperialism in the West and Stalinism in the East.

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International news

Poland

Why Jaruzelski is pleased to welcome the Pope

By John O'Mahony

SOLIDARNOSC lives! Eighteen months of martial law have allowed the Polish Stalinist state and the Russian overlords of Poland to smash the open structures of the Polish workers' movement, but Solidarnosc still lives in the underground.

The visit of Pope John Paul II has given it the chance to show its strength in the open. Demonstrations of as many as a million people have greeted the Pope as he moves about Poland from one religious shrine to the next. Everywhere Solidarnosc banners, placards, badges and hand signs have dominated the gatherings and turned them into tremendous political demonstrations against the regime and for the right of the Polish labour movement to exist.

They also call — in a more muted way — for the right of the Polish nation to control its own destiny free from the overlordship of the USSR. The Polish Pope in Poland symbolises Polish nationalism as well as Catholicism.

Fusion

Since the creation of the new Polish labour movement in the strikes of 1980, there has evolved a fusion of Polish nationalism, Catholicism, and trade unionism. The labour movement with its weapon of mass revolutionary general strikes established itself as the most powerful and dynamic force in Poland. Other forces have attached themselves to it, and in the case of Polish nationalism are naturally a part of it.

A strange set of historic reversals has occurred. In their way they are even stranger than the spectacle now before us of the Bishop of Rome, head of one of the richest and most thoroughly reactionary organisations in the world, publicly championing Solidarnosc against the Polish dictators.

The old Polish labour movement was anti-religious, and the revolutionary Marxist segment of it anti-nationalist. But that labour movement was pulverised by the military dictatorships in the '20s and '30s. The Polish Communist Party, heir of Luxemburg and Jogiches, was form-



The Pope's visit has allowed Solidarnosc to show its continuing strength. The Church reckons it can contain the movement. But can it?

ally dissolved by Stalin in 1938 because, he said, it was 'incurably infested by Trotskyists and fascists'. Its exiled leaders in Russia were slaughtered, and its membership lists in Poland turned over to the capitalist dictatorship there.

Deeds were then done against the Polish people by the old oppressor, Russia — this time, in the name of 'communism' — which still fill the Polish people, and Solidarnosc activists, with bitter national outrage, and ensure that a just and proper national consciousness is a central part of the new Polish labour movement.

In 1939 Hitler and Stalin jointly invaded and partitioned

Poland. Trotsky at the time said that the Poles and others in Stalin's area were being reduced to 'semi-slavery'. He did not know the full story: of the 13 million people in Stalin's areas, five million were Poles and the rest Ukrainians and White Russians. Of the Poles alone, between one and 1½ million were deported to Russian labour camps, and not many of them ever got back to Poland. As late as 1956, the demand was still being raised by the Poles for the return of 'exiles' of 1939-40. Wholesale massacres took place.

During the war which started in 1941 between Russia and Germany, a Polish CP was re-

constituted and put in power as its tool by the Russian Army when it occupied Poland in 1944. In the late '40s, Poland was turned into a replica of the USSR — industry was nationalised and agriculture collectivised in the hands of a bureaucratic state.

The Catholic Church came into full-scale conflict with that state. Its leader was jailed, and a feeble state-loyal 'Catholic' church set up. There were two sets of reasons for the clash. On the side of the Church, there was its traditional anti-socialism and natural objection to the new state religion of pidgin-Marxism and worship of Stalin and his Polish satraps. But there was also a clash of direct interests: the Church was a very big landowner, and was expropriated.

On the side of the state, the motive was the need to eliminate any social force independent from itself. (For the same reason the Nazi regime came into conflict with the German churches: it could brook no rivals.)

However, the retreat from the high tide of Stalinism after Stalin died in 1953 led to basic changes in Poland. Collectivisation was abandoned and land returned to the peasants. The first stages of an agreement to coexist with the Catholic Church were reached in the mid '50s.

Another paradox: the restoration of autonomy to the Church and the recreation of a small farmer class made any return to totalitarianism (that is, absolute and unchallenged state monopoly through every area and dimension of society) impossible in Poland. The spectacle of Jaruzelski debating with the Pope before the Polish people shows how far Poland is from the USSR, despite the tyranny of martial law.

Despite the six or seven years of sharp conflict between Church and state, the Stalinist revolution in Poland in fact strengthened the Catholic Church there. After the war

Russia kept the areas annexed in 1939 from Poland and in return gave Poland a big chunk of East German territory. Ten million Germans were expelled. The Polish Catholic Church took over the Lutheran churches. Millions of Russian Orthodox believers had been lost with the eastern territories. Millions of Polish Jews had been murdered. Post-war Poland was more or less monolithically Catholic.

To people of Walesa's sort, the Catholic Church was the alternative to the pidgin-Marxist state religion of their oppressors. Catholicism received a tremendous boost.

Today the Catholic church is one of the most powerful forces in Poland, and a major force for stability under the existing bureaucratic system. That much is also made plain by the Pope's visit.

If Jaruzelski allows the Pope to tour Poland making political demands and criticisms — calling on the regime for dialogue with the people, and respect for



Jaruzelski

the people's rights and the 1980 Gdansk agreements, while Cardinal Glemp advises civil peace and moderation — it is in recognition of the role of the Catholic Church in keeping things quiet and legal, and in the belief that the political demonstrations triggered by the visit can, with the aid of the Church, be controlled. The Pope has obliquely called for an end to Western sanctions. Cardinal Glemp is seen by the more militant Poles as a 'collaborator' for his role in (critically) upholding martial law.

The idea that the Church is beaver away with the goal of undermining nationalised property is wide of the mark. The Catholic Church is the oldest bureaucracy in existence, and has spanned 2000 years during which it has been entwined with different social systems.

Right now it is symbiotically entwined with the Polish Stalinist bureaucracy. It is almost a liberal wing of the bureaucracy, though distinct from it and pursuing its own interests.

If the Church throughout the Stalinist states could get the sort of status and freedom of action that it has in Poland, then it could coexist with the bureaucratic Stalinist system indefinitely: it would probably even find accommodation to Stalinist bureaucracy on these terms easier than it found accommodation with rising capitalism.

In any case there is no doubt that the Church in Poland is committed to coexistence, and is well into the third decade of it. It is a pillar of the Establishment. For now it is the reforming wing of the Establishment for the reason that, unlike Jaruzelski, it has mass support and believes it can control it.

We will see whether the Church and the martial law authorities between them, each in its different way, can continue to control the Polish workers.

The Pope's progress through Poland has everywhere allowed Solidarnosc to take a roll-call of its strength. Its strength and popularity is still tremendous. Knowledge of this must reinvigorate the Polish workers' movement and — whatever the Church would like — undermine Jaruzelski.

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Bob Fine



Israeli soldiers and tanks in Beirut



Grim anniversaries for P

JUNE 5 is a black day in the history of the Middle East, since it marked the start of the Six Day War in 1967.

In the course of that whirlwind operation Israel defeated the Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian armies, expelled hundreds of thousands of Syrians and Palestinians from their homes across its newly gained frontiers, and settled for a prolonged occupation over more than a million others.

This year the same cursed day also marked the first anniversary of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, massacring tens of thousands of Palestinians and Lebanese, expelling once more hundreds of thousands (many of them for the third or fourth time) and establishing its occupation over more than a million others.

Sponsors

The sponsors of the last invasion had no time to commemorate their anniversary. They have been too busy in recent weeks with new plots to achieve the same strategic aims for which they unleashed the last war.

US Secretary of State Shultz redefined these aims in the framework of the agreement signed on May 17 by Israel and the regime in Beirut. It calls for:

"Continued Israeli military supervisory presence in southern Lebanon, with an open right of military intervention. Strengthening of the US and European imperialist occupation forces in Lebanon.

From our reporter in Haifa

"Steps towards 'normalisation' of relations, which under conditions of occupation could only mean economic and political enslavement of Lebanon.

"The 'secret' parts of the agreement include a ban on any Palestinian presence in Lebanon, military, political, social or cultural.

"The most important part of the agreement, signed between Israel and the US alone, calls first for the Syrian and Palestinian forces to get out of Lebanon and guarantees an even higher level of US military and economic aid to Israel.

This testifies to the fact that in order to establish the rule of the falangist President Gemayel the US is encouraging Israel now to a new full scale war against the Syrian army in Lebanon.

Since the PLO forces retreated from Beirut and since the Israeli army occupied the city and initiated the massacre in the refugee camps, Sabra and Chatila, there has been almost no change in the war situation.

This stalemate not only



Lebanese troops take away Palestinian fighters

stopped the seemingly unstoppable force of the invasion, but has begun to tip back the balance of power.

The Syrian army has reinforced itself, and seems more ready to confront an Israeli assault now than it was a year ago.

The Assad regime has seen the imperialist stranglehold tighten around Syria with the new 'Israeli-Lebanese' agreement. As a result Syria is now better armed and air-defended — by the Soviet Union, whom the US wanted to oust altogether from any foothold in the Middle East.

The PLO has not, as expected, been pushed into the deadly embrace of Jordan's King Hussein by the blows it suffered in Lebanon. Instead it has been pushed by imperialism's harsh tactics to gather all its strength to stand up and defend its last positions in northern and eastern Lebanon.

Meanwhile, the Lebanese forces opposed to Israel and US occupation are beginning to gather and emerge in strength.

Gemayel's signing of the treaty with Israel brought a wave of strikes and demonstrations and the establishment of a front of all forces opposed to the agreement including parties of the traditional bourgeois leaders, as well as all left and socialist movements.

The opposition criticised the agreement sharply but as a rule stops short of questioning the

them, and are calling for the implementation of a 'small plan' to create a 'security zone' some 45 kilometres along Israel's northern border.

They claim that this zone could be held for a longer period without so many casualties.

It should be noted that the Israeli 'Labour' Party, and parts of the Peace Now movement now call for this plan, which actually means annexing to Israel an area containing 750,000 Lebanese.

They say a withdrawal from these areas will be possible if Israel's security is protected by Israel's own puppet Major Haddad.

The chances of Haddad holding on without Israel are slender. So far the Israelis claim to have enlisted 1600 Lebanese to his militia, and his forces are no more than a thin cover for Israeli army units.

The US officials have said they wouldn't even hear of an early Israeli withdrawal from any part of Lebanon without securing the regime in Beirut.

Israel's preparations for long occupation suggest that they do not see the 'independent' Lebanon project as feasible.

In Sidon, the capital of the South, the last wave of repression was carried out to 'destroy all social institutions, trade unions, the chamber of commerce, etc., and to force the emigration of anybody liable to constitute a centre of opposition to prolonged occupation.

The 'grand plan' calls today for a new full-scale war in the north. The 'small plan' means a full-scale war against the population in the south.

War

The anniversary of the war and occupation was marked by the people of the West Bank and Gaza by strikes, demonstrations and clashes with the police. Curfews were declared in advance to cover many refugee camps — one of the tactics introduced by the new Israeli war minister Arens.

The biggest university in the West Bank, Al-Nagah in Nablus, was closed by the military governor for the rest of the year, joining many high schools. In

Bir-Zeit, the meeting by national and left movements was attacked by the Moslem Brotherhood.

The effects of the prolonged war are starting to strain the nerves of Jewish society which has been used to short and easy victories.

Near Begin's home there is permanent picket showing the number of Israeli soldiers who died in the invasion.

By this week, the official Israeli count reached a symbolic 500 dead. The TV and press carry constant reports from new funerals, where parents and friends blame the government for the death of their loved ones.

Official criticism of the publicity given to the rising number of victims can only infuriate more people.

Some soldiers are openly refusing an order to enter Lebanon, and are routinely sent for some 30 days to a military prison.

They are organised under the banner of the 'There is no border' movement, which collected two thousand signatures: soldiers and officers requesting not to be sent to Lebanon.

For the first ten months of the war some three were jailed every month. For the last two months refusals have started to grow in number and the total has reached 60.

War Minister Arens claims that refusals on principle constitute a problem. He notes that there is a much wider tendency to avoid service in Lebanon by soldiers giving family health or economic reasons.

More than one hundred thousand people joined a Peace Now demonstration in the centre of Tel Aviv on Saturday night, June 4.

The leadership didn't agree the slogan calling for an immediate withdrawal from Lebanon, but the demonstration was a success.

The Peace Now leaders also avoided mention of the 10th anniversary of the 1967 occupation, but again slogans were shouted by the participants like 'The war's head is in Lebanon, and its foot is in the West Bank'.

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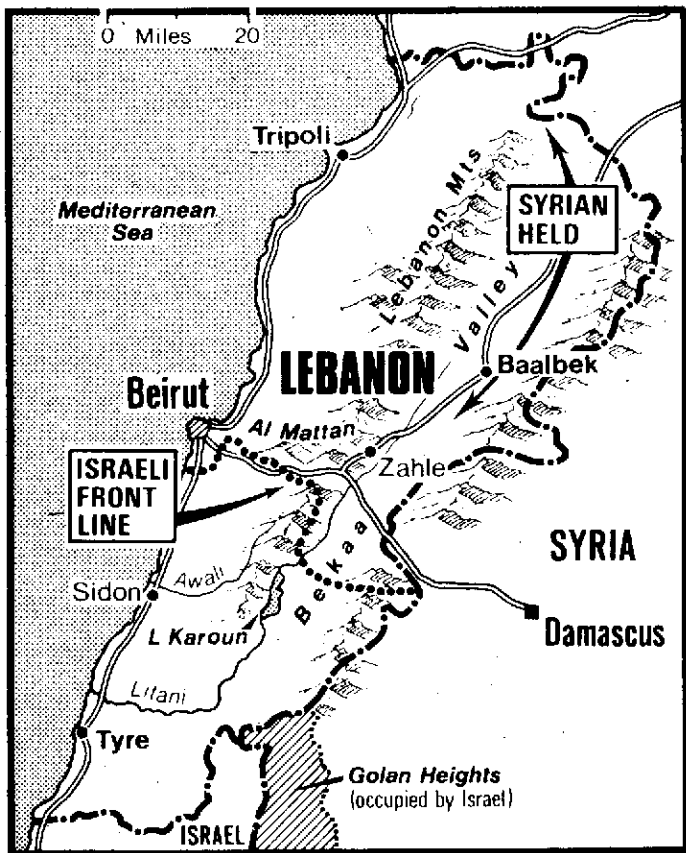
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'Bloody government, o



Palestine



The Committee Against the War had its own demonstration in Tel Aviv, two hours earlier the same day.

Jewish-Arab

Shadowed by the Peace Now demonstration, it drew some 3,000, and differed from the amorphous Peace Now by its joint Jewish and Arab participation, by the organised shouting of slogans, and by its content: denouncing also the 1967 occupation and calling outright: 'Bloody government, get out of Lebanon!'

The soldiers' movement 'There is a border' formed a contingent in the Committee's demonstration, and went on to join the Peace Now march.

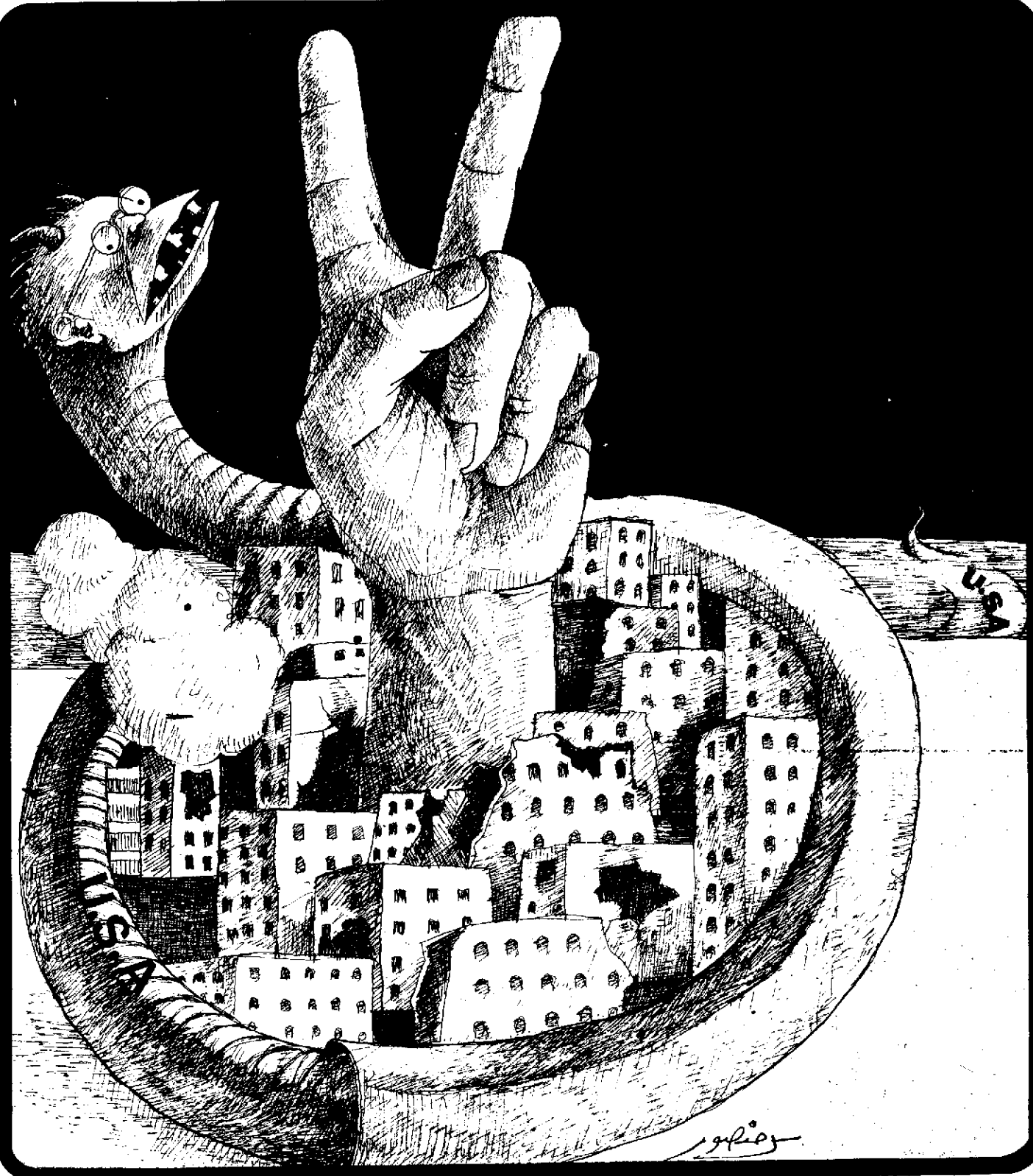
There the organisers demanded the soldiers distance themselves from the official demonstration and form a separate block some 50 metres away.

It drew a big part of the Peace Now crowd under the slogans of the Committee Against the War, including 'Peace talks with the PLO today!'

Still earlier the same day, some 300 people gathered to the Sons of the Country demonstration at Um-El-Fahem. These young Palestinian workers and students raised slogans like 'Ours is a popular revolution, and it will continue until victory!'

Arrest

Their leaders are under house arrest in different Arab villages and neighbourhoods across the country, and many of their supporters face trial, prison or heavy fines for former demonstrations in response to the Sabra and Chatila massacre and on the 'Day of the Land' two months ago.



PLO demonstration for Palestinian rights

ut of Lebanon!'

Reply to angry Castroite

THE anonymous, but apparently 'Very Angry Reader' who wrote last week in defence of the Salvadorean Communist Party and the US Socialist Workers' Party offered up some strange and evasive arguments against my article in Socialist Organiser no.133.

The whole letter is couched in terms of opposing 'camps' — 'imperialism' on the one side and 'revolution' on the other — which denies any independent perspective for the working class.

From this blinkered starting point, any criticism of the leadership of the 'revolutionary' camp is seen not as a means of educating the workers' movement, but as a blow against the 'revolution'. Equally, the 'Angry Reader' feels able to justify deliberate falsifications which conceal the reactionary nature of the Salvador CP leadership, as a way of defending the 'revolution'.

Hence we find, behind the bluster, our 'Angry Reader' makes no attempt to deny that the American SWP deliberately omitted references to the Salvador CP's brief and inglorious period in what s/he admits was "the pro-

imperialist regime from October 1979 to January 1980", in a potted history of the Salvadorean left.

'Angry Reader' takes up the same theme — of lending a 'revolutionary' aura to Stalinist leaderships — when s/he argues that the Cuban leadership is a revolutionary force distinct from Moscow. Proof is of course thin on the ground — and we are offered examples from Bolivia in the late 1960s, and the Vietnam war.

Our reader is apparently not so 'Angry' about Castro's military support for Ethiopia's barbarous dictatorship in its bid to crush the Eritrean people, or his support for the repression of the Polish working class.

These are Stalinist positions. The Castroite leadership, which rose to power independently of the Stalinists, was protected and given vital aid by the Kremlin, and assimilated politically in the late 1960s, when Castro supported the crackdown in Czechoslovakia. Cuba today is sponsored to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars a year by an approving Moscow bureaucracy. It maintains

cordial relations with the government of the most powerful bourgeoisie in the area — i.e. Mexico.

Certainly some differences of interest exist with Moscow. Castro's strategy for Central America is for stability through the establishment of 'democratic' cross-class regimes. He has repeatedly urged negotiations to achieve this.

Where negotiations fail, and mass struggles are underway — as in Nicaragua — the Cuban leadership is not opposed to revolutionary means to secure 'democratic' forms of government. This is not so strange. In El Salvador even former bourgeois politicians from the 1979 junta have joined the revolutionary armed struggle, but they seek through revolutionary means to secure a reform of the bourgeois state on democratic lines, not a socialist revolution.

The Salvador CP seeks just the same. One reason it switched from participation in a repressive junta to participating in the fight against the regime is that the guerrilla forces adopted a weak programme which fitted in completely with the CP's decades-long

search for an alliance with the so-called 'progressive bourgeoisie'.

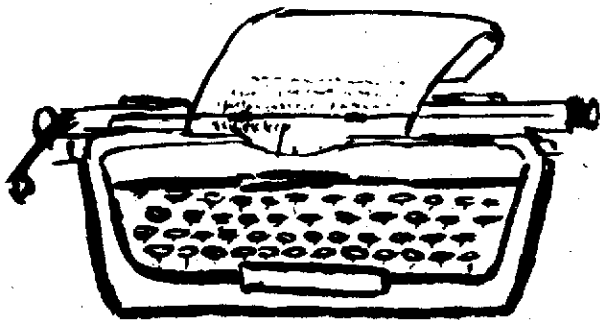
The reason the CP is now floating ideas about the unification of 'parts of all the revolutionary organisations of the left' into a single party under 'iron discipline' is to crack the whip and rein in the more revolutionary elements who may become impatient at the restricted demands of the leadership of the FMLN/FDR.

The reason the American SWP and our 'Angry Reader' welcome such proposals is because they have capitulated politically to Stalinist positions, and turned their backs on the bitter lessons learned by the Trotskyist movement.

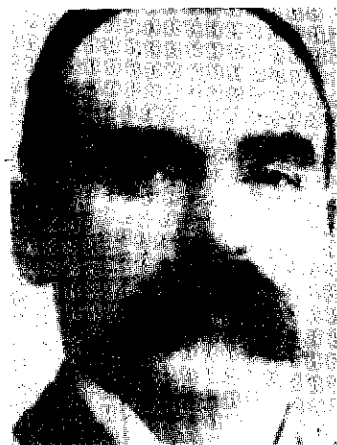
Socialist Organiser should continue to focus as consistently as it has done on the developing struggle and the need for maximum solidarity with those in the front line. But we must not retreat from pointing out the political dangers that face the heroic fighters of the FMLN, and pointing to the Trotskyist politics which provide the only coherent alternative.

HARRY SLOAN

Writeback



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



Connolly

Struck by new vehicle

IN YOUR report of Upper Heyford you don't mention the one thing that struck me. The police moved us from Heyford to Banbury in curious new vans nothing like the old Black Marias or the 'simpler transit vans they had available. These were arranged with five minuscule cells on each side of a corridor, one person locked in each cell and the five bolted by an iron bar going right across.

I've been arrested on a large number of non-violent direct actions (not far short of 100 as far as I can recall) and I have never seen such vans used before — not even in Northern Ireland.

If anyone had a tendency to claustrophobia, the cells, which are the very minimum in which people could be got, would set off a reaction; and if there were a car accident, it would ensure that prisoners so carried would be killed.

Terrify

The use of these — explicable I suppose, when transporting people between maximum security gaols, for bank robbers and so forth, — on this demo, raises two possible explanations, both rather unpleasant:

Either they were trying to terrify the demonstrators and this obviously unsafe means of transport was meant to a hint as to what could happen in custody;

Or they use these transports generally for any offence, in which case it is quite possible that an absent-minded elderly person, picked up for shop lifting, might be so transported — which could easily cause a heart-attack.

Fraternally,
LAURENS OTTER

Connolly, class unity and the Irish struggle

IN THE May 26 edition of your paper a certain Alistair Todd of Cambridge claimed the sanction of James Connolly for his proposition that attempts to unite Protestant and Catholic workers were "screamingly funny" in their absurdity. To substantiate this rather sweeping assertion he advanced two proofs — a specific one drawn from history and a more general one drawn from sociology.

Citing an exception to prove the rule Todd insists that the brief but very real unity achieved between the Falls and the Shankill during the 1932 Outdoor Relief Strike cannot be seen as a model for future activity. His reasoning is most instructive.

He doesn't deny Protestant capacity to express class solidarity with Catholic workers. His objection is that such solidarity can only emerge when "there was no apparent threat to partition in the mind of Protestant workers." To clinch the matter Todd tells us that Protestant access to alleged privileges crucially modifies the wage-labour/capital relationship. So much so that they "can have nothing in common with the Catholic working class."

Todd has most succinctly woven together a number of themes that constitute in large measure what I would describe as the pathological condition of the British Left on the Irish question. Consequently his reasoning is worthy of critical scrutiny.

Firstly the facts. Not only did Connolly (and Larkin) not regard it as peculiar to unite Protestant and Catholic workers around bread and butter issues, but they actually achieved some success when they worked for such unity.

In July 1911 for instance Connolly led out 300 dockers (Catholic) in sympathy with Protestant employees working for the Head Line Company.

Seamen

Most seamen had just settled a dispute in which they had been supported by dockers and now Protestant seamen reciprocated when cross channel dockers (Protestant) and deep sea dockers (Catholic) came forward with their own demands.

Collections for the strike were preceded through the streets of Belfast by a "Non-Sectarian Labour Band" composed of players drawn from both Orange and Catholic brass bands.

Three months later the Band was wheeled out again, this time in support of Catholic 'mill girls' who had approached Connolly for help in forming a union. Better paid Protestant 'mill girls' were already organised in the Textile Operatives Society, but many defied their leader Mary Galway and came out in solidarity with the Catholic workers.

Connolly had his enemies, of course, who like Alistair Todd were hostile to Connolly's

efforts to forge trade union cooperation between Catholic and Protestant workers.

While he was attending Mass during the 'mill girls' strike, the celebrating priest launched an attack upon him, and Mary Galway sounds uncannily like Alistair Todd when at the Belfast Trades Council she complained of Connolly's 'interference' and told him to "confine himself to the class of workers he was sent to represent."

What Connolly found "screamingly funny" was something quite different. Namely the reliance upon English literature and arguments to promote socialist sentiment in the very different conditions of Belfast.

Readers who wish to judge the matter for themselves can find the quote in its full and proper context on page 267 of the Penguin selection of James Connolly's writings or on page 41 of the Cork Workers Club pamphlet 'Ireland upon the Dissecting Table.'

Solidarity

Let us examine a little more closely the limited capacity of Protestant workers to express class solidarity. This is restricted, so Todd tells us, to periods when the threat to Partition is lifted.

Todd is unquestionably correct in recognising that while Protestants feel their sense of community to be under threat class sentiment is overwhelmed

by national sentiment. But what is so remarkable about that? However regrettable it may be the historical record is quite unambiguous. The working classes of all countries have invariably put nation before class when they have felt the borders of their territory, their community, their nation to be under threat. Whether the threat is real or imaginary the response has been the same.

During the history of the German dockers, there are not a few proud moments of class solidarity with their English counterparts, but I would suggest to Alistair Todd that it would indeed be screamingly funny in its absurdity to seek evidence of such unity during the fire bombing of Hamburg.

Quite unwittingly Todd has pointed to what could be the beginning of wisdom on the Irish question. The class unity of Protestant and Catholic workers against capitalism can indeed flourish, as Alistair Todd admits, but only if Protestant sense of cultural separateness from the Catholic Irish nation is respected.

Conversely, as long as socialists endorse the 'irridentist' republican campaign to subjugate Protestants into a nation they feel no part of, no working class unity will ever be possible.

The significance that Todd wishes to attach to the sectarian operation of the wage-labour/capital relationship also bears little examination. In no capital-

Not so fast!

I THINK David Harris (report from Amsterdam, SO 136) is jumping to conclusions a bit too quickly.

From a report of a union meeting in Rotterdam which decided on a two-day transport workers' strike, he moves to a criticism of the Dutch Labour left paper *Offensief* for not making "any specific call for the linking up of action meetings such as that in Rotterdam... a call to build towards local soviets and a national soviet."

Between a militant strike meeting and soviets — workers' councils, implicitly posing a revolutionary challenge to the capitalist state — there is a great distance.

Revolutionary levels of

struggle cannot be developed simply by Marxists calling for them. If Marxists respond to every militant strike by calling for soviets, then surely we are more likely to discredit the idea of soviets than anything else.

So I think David Harris's criticism of *Offensief* on this point is misplaced. As to the aptness of *Offensief*'s policy apart from that, I cannot judge — but I am made sceptical by the fact that despite the different conditions *Offensief* uses exactly the same slogans and tactical formulas for the Netherlands as Militant uses for Britain.

MARTIN THOMAS
Islington

EL SALVADOR

News Bulletin No 20 May-June 1983



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1953

Stalinism and the division of Germany



Khrushchev and Ulbricht

Part Two

Last week's article on the 30th anniversary of the East German workers' uprising of June 1953 charted the explosive events and their immediate aftermath.

But the strikes and street battles arose as a result of a long history of Stalinist activity in East Germany, which meant that among those purged for their leading role in the uprising no less than one third were veteran members of the Communist Party since before Hitler's rise to power in 1933.

In this concluding article, Harry Sloan looks at the record of Stalinism in Germany.

HAD those old Communist Party members in East Germany who rejected Trotsky's views been in a position to examine objectively the conduct of their own leadership during and after World War 2, they would have found ample evidence to confirm its counter-revolutionary nature and the need for its overthrow.

The 1930s had begun with the criminally divisive and sectarian line which decreed that the Social Democrats were worse than the fascists — "social fascists". In Germany this split the working class and allowed Hitler to power in 1933. But by 1939 Stalin was in an alliance with Hitler — an alliance which was to leave the Soviet Union almost fatally vulnerable to the Nazi invasion of 1941, and which summed up the cynical nature of Stalin's "anti-fascism".

Those German Communists who had survived Hitler's Gestapo and Stalin's previous purges were now told to cease any mobilisation against the Nazis. Many who resisted this line or who were thought unreliable were cold-bloodedly handed over to the Gestapo. Only after 1941 were they given the green light to fight the Nazis.

By Harry Sloan

In 1943, on the other hand, Stalin ordered Walter Ulbricht, Wilhelm Pieck and other old CPers in exile to set up an embryonic government in exile based in Moscow. Its personnel included bourgeois forces and former Nazis among captured German military men.

Later Ulbricht was to concentrate on shaping up a ruthlessly dependable gang of bureaucrats to implement Stalin's plans for Germany after the war.

Stalin's initial objective had nothing to do with the extension of socialism into Europe: it focused exclusively on defending the Soviet Union by military and diplomatic means.

For this reason he set out to go through the motions of implementing Allied plans for the "democratic reorganisation" of Germany as a single state, while in fact determined to ensure that at all costs Germany be prevented from re-

emerging as a military threat to the USSR.

At first Stalin leaned towards the establishment of a Communist-Social Democratic government in a unified Germany. But when that proved less and less feasible, he came down firmly for the partition of Germany as a second option.

And to assist the reconstruction of the ravaged Soviet economy and take advantage of German technology, Stalin wanted to seize and ship out as much industrial plant as possible.

To achieve this, he needed a government in the Soviet zone which would — with Red Army support — be able to hold down capitalist elements, while at the same time containing the working class.

The militancy of the working class was a real problem in this scheme: they had seen the arrival of the Red Army as the start of a revolutionary struggle quite the opposite of Stalin's plan for establishing a bourgeois coalition government.

In Saxony, Halle and Magdeburg and even some sectors of Berlin, the first reaction of the workers was to occupy the factories, set up plant committees and establish workers' control. Red flags were hoisted over most of the factories and in working class housing districts.

Repressed

But the independent initiatives of the rank and file workers were repressed, or allowed to peter out by the Red Army administration established in the Eastern zone. The rank and file anti-fascist committees were dissolved. The Communist Party was forcibly merged with the Social Democratic party, and then extensively purged to produce a monolithic utterly bureaucratic formation; opponents of the merger were arrested. And the Stalinists even set up new, artificial bourgeois parties.

By 1948, though there had been extensive land reform, and the mines and sections of industry had been nationalised, 90% of enterprises remained in private hands. Significantly, this 90% covered only 33% of industrial production: it was with the lesser capitalists and petty bourgeoisie that Stalin had attempted to consolidate an alliance.

This line switched only in 1948, after the outbreak of the Cold War, revealing that the Western powers intended to integrate the Western zones economically and militarily into the imperialist alliance.

In summer 1948, the remaining bourgeois ministers were undermined and removed, nationalisations were extended and a centralised plan was

introduced. But still the workers were denied any direct power or democratic control in the "Democratic Republic".

In August 1949 however the Stalinists tried once again to sound the note of class collaboration, issuing through the "National Front" an appeal for unity to:

"All Germans from the east and from the west, capitalists and workers, former members of the Nazi party and those who were persecuted by the Nazi regime."

Once again this failed to entice the imperialists. But the Kremlin leaders had not ruled out even a united capitalist Germany — provided some agreement for permanent neutrality could be secured.

Lurch

So while Ulbricht's leadership embarked in July 1952 on a new lurch towards "Sovietisation" — forced industrial development, squeezing living standards and sacrificing production of consumer goods — the Soviet leadership was not so enthusiastic.

Ulbricht ran into hot water with this scheme — which was opposed by the Stalinist unions. He appealed in 1953 for Soviet aid: but it was not forthcoming. Instead he was told, shortly after the death of Stalin, that he should alter course, slow the industrialisation, provide more consumer goods and make some "liberal" concessions to the middle classes, the peasantry and the clergy.

Among these concessions were a halt to the collectivisation of farming; an abandonment of "coercive tax collection methods"; and the provision of "ample" short-term credit for craftsmen, retail and wholesale traders, private builders and transport undertakings — in the hopes of improving the output of privately-produced consumer goods. The state plan for heavy industry was "corrected" and output of consumer goods boosted.

With this rather feeble bait, coupled with the tokenistic freeing of 4,000 political prisoners on short sentences and liberalisation of travel from West to East, the Stalinists hoped to lure bourgeois forces in West Germany into renewed discussions. Significantly, none of these concessions benefitted the East German working class: it

was to the capitalists and petty bourgeoisie that the Stalinist attentions were devoted.

The reason? They hoped even at this late stage to forestall the impending commitment of West German troops to the developing anti-Soviet NATO alliance: the question of preserving the nationalised property relations in East Germany or the prospects for socialism in Germany as a whole were seen as completely subordinate to the military and diplomatic needs of the Soviet Union.

Small wonder that with this as a background, so many long-standing German Communists were in 1953 prepared to risk everything by taking to the streets against their own leaders.

Small wonder also that the Stalinist slanders against the demonstrators — who were branded as "fascists" and imperialist agents — rang particularly hollow inside East Germany.

In fact the 1953 revolt was solidly proletarian in its support and in its methods, and contained not a hint of demand for the restoration of capitalism or even (surprisingly) for the withdrawal of the massive Russian army of occupation.

In contrast to the Stalinist leaders, the workers looked to working class action and class unity to reunite a divided Germany, under a workers' government.

Though after the event, the imperialists obviously attempted to exploit the uprising for their own propaganda purposes, they were plainly as unprepared and startled by the struggles as the Stalinists themselves.

Hesitant

Not a little alarmed that a reemergence of militancy in the East and an open appeal for class action to reunify Germany under a workers' government might strike an echo among the proletariat in the West, the imperialists were hesitant on how to respond.

Though approached directly by a delegation of strikers, the American radio station RIAS in West Berlin did not broadcast the general strike call on the evening of June 16. There was no attempt by the West to exploit the events militarily — and in Berlin Western border police intervened to restrict

workers seeking to join in solidarity with the Eastern strikers.

Though the imperialist response to anti-bureaucratic struggles has become more sophisticated through subsequent experiences in Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia, it remains the case that explosions of proletarian anger contain a revolutionary dynamic which alarms the imperialists nearly as much as the bureaucracy.

Reagan and Thatcher's support for Polish Solidarity was a carefully guarded support mediated through the reactionary elements of the Roman Catholic Church. The revolutionary potential of Stalinist rule and its replacement by a workers' government based on mass proletarian democracy would give a huge impetus to the class struggle on a world scale.

Species

Yet the most immediately endangered species in such struggles is the Stalinist bureaucrat, whose power and privilege rests not — like the capitalist class — upon their ownership of wealth and property, but upon their ability to retain office through the containment and repression of the working class.

1953 marked the start of a new period in which the apparent stability of such bureaucracies — which had caused many former Marxists to draw wholly pessimistic views that the Stalinists had somehow consolidated as a new ruling class — was shaken, and the class struggle reemerged as an obvious factor in the East as well as in the West.

It was not only in Germany that such resistance to Stalinist rule emerged. Driven on both by economic pressures and political grievances, and encouraged by the death in March 1953 of the blood-stained supreme bureaucrat himself, Joseph Stalin, workers in Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Hungary also took action, while July 1953 even saw strike action by the political prisoners in the Vorkuta slave labour camp in the Siberian waste.

This telling confirmation of the irreconcilable opposition between the interests of the working class and the entrenched power and privilege of the bureaucracy might have been thought to have massively strengthened and encouraged the forces of Trotskyism on a world scale. Unfortunately, for reasons which subsequent articles will explain, this was not to be the case.

What the June events did was to underline beyond any doubt the potential for political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies in the deformed workers' states and the USSR itself, and the necessity for a revolutionary programme and Trotskyist parties to prepare that fight.

Trotsky on Stalinism

The classic Marxist analysis of Stalinism is Leon Trotsky's 'Revolution Betrayed: What is the Soviet Union and Where Is It Going?' Available via Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8: £2.50 plus 50p postage.



The needs of German workers were subordinated to Moscow's needs

Agenda

EAST LONDON CND rally with Tony Benn, Arthur Scargill, Alf Lomas MEP, Tony Hart, and Jenny Edwards. Chair: Jo Richardson MP. Wednesday June 29, 7.30, East Ham Town Hall.

PALESTINE Solidarity public meeting: 'Lebanon, one year on'. Friday July 8, 7.30 at County Hall, London SE1.

LABOUR CND West inaugural meeting: Sunday June 26, 2.30pm, Taunton CLP meeting rooms, 24 East Reach, Taunton. LP members only.

LABOUR Movement Conference on Ireland: July 15, from 10am at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Sponsors include Clive Soley, Tony Benn, Ken Livingstone. Delegates £3, observers £2, details from LMCI, Box 189, 32 Ivor Place, London NW1.

CONFERENCE of Socialist Economists conference 1983: The World Economy in Crisis. July 9 to 11 in Sheffield. Details from 25 Horsell Road, London N5.

'VOICE of Solidarnosc': £8 for 6 months to Solidarnosc Information Office, 314-320 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8DP (01-837 9464).

PLASTIC Bullets: a working conference to launch and plan campaign activities. Saturday June 25, 1pm to 5pm at County Hall, London SE1. Organised by Labour Committee on Ireland.

CRISIS in Zimbabwe — a Socialist Perspective. Public meeting organised by SOFAS, the Socialist Forum for Southern African Solidarity. Saturday June 25, 2pm at Caxton House, 129 St John's Way, London N19.

SILENCED Women: an evening presented by the Writers' Guild and Index on Censorship. Friday July 15, 7.30 at the Little Ship Club, Bell Wharf Lane, Upper Thames St, EC4.

PREPARING for power: a labour movement conference for the '80s organised by the Revolutionary Communist Party. July 16-22, Central London Poly, New Cavendish St. Registration £10 (£8 UB40), cheques payable to RCP Association, to BM RCP, London WC1N 3XX.

Model resolutions

THE deadline for Labour Party conference resolutions is July 15 — so make sure you don't miss it.

As well as our own model resolution on fighting the Tories (printed last week, and already passed by Wantage & District CLP), SO is supporting the resolutions below.

Labour Campaign for Gay Rights:

Conference recognises the contribution which lesbians and gay men have made to the labour movement. It notes with concern that there are still many legal and social obstacles which prevent lesbians and gay men from participating fully and equally in society. It condemns particularly the way in which the press has attacked and smeared a number of Labour Party members who have openly supported lesbian and gay rights.

It calls for the following points to be adopted as party policy at local and national level as appropriate.

1. Legislation to protect lesbians and gay men from unjust discrimination in housing, employment and education and to ensure genuine and equal access to all

public services.

2. The legalisation of homosexual acts for adults over the age of 16 in all parts of the UK and including the personnel of the armed forces and merchant navy, along with the repeal of other parts of sexual offences legislation which discriminates against gay people.

3. Legislation to end the hostility shown towards lesbian mothers by the judicial system and the social services, and a recognition of the right of gay people to bring up children free from harassment.

Further, conference calls on the National Executive Committee to initiate a campaign in the labour movement to promote an awareness of gay oppression and the role to be played by the Labour Party and trade unions in overcoming it.

Labour Against the Witch Hunt:

Conference recognises that the struggle for democratic socialism requires Labour to remain a broad-based party containing many different strands of socialist opinion. Conference accordingly defends the traditional right of party members to belong to pressure groups within the

party, provided that they accept the party's objectives and do not oppose its official candidates in elections.

Conference notes that a constitutional amendment to this effect was submitted by Greenwich CLP to the 1982 conference and is, therefore, coming before the 1983 conference as part of the NEC report.

To ensure that the Greenwich amendment is properly debated, conference now instructs the chair and the Conference Arrangements Committee/Standing Orders Committee to bring it separately before the conference, with the same speaking time for mover and seconder as in the case of other conference resolutions.

Socialist Organiser Extraordinary General Meeting: Sunday June 16, 11.30 to 2.30 at County Hall, London SE1. The meeting will be discussing a date for the AGM (constitutionally there has to be a General Meeting in June, but a full meeting is not possible because of the general election), and perspectives after June 9. Please make sure that at least one SO supporter attends from each group.

What next?

Socialist Organiser 'After the election, what next?' meetings have attracted sizeable audiences in Sheffield, Hull, Northampton, Basingstoke and Coventry — including an unusual number of people new to politics.

These are some of the remaining meetings scheduled. If your group has not planned a meeting, get moving now!

Leeds. July 1, 7.30, Chapel-town Community Centre. Speakers: Cllrs Garth Frankland (Leeds) and Barry Turner (Bradford).

Rochdale. July 11, 8pm, Castle Inn, Manchester Rd.

Wirral. June 26, 8pm at the Labour Club, Church Road, Seacombe.

Tower Hamlets. June 30, 7.30, Bromley Public Hall, Bow Road, E3. Speaker: Jeremy Corbyn MP.

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

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

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, 11-12.30.

Wirral. Contact Colin Johnstone, 1, Wellington Rd., Wallasey.

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

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

Stoke. Contact Paul Barnett, 151, Broadway Meir, Stoke-on-Trent (328 198).

• YORKSHIRE AND NORTH-EAST

Huddersfield. Contact Alan Brooke, 59, Magdale, Honley, Huddersfield HD7 2LX.

Durham. SO is sold at the Community Co-op, New Elvet. Meetings 6.30pm Tuesday, Student Bar, Dunelm House. Contact John, 43004.

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 Wicker. SO is sold outside Boots, Fargate (Saturday 12-1) and the Independent Bookshop, Glossop Rd. Contact Rob, 589307.

Hull. Meets every Wednesday, 8pm: details from SO sellers. Childcare available.

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, Consti-

tution Hill. Next meeting: Tuesday 21: Marek Garztecki (from Solidarnosc Trade Union Working Group) on the present condition of Solidarnosc. Phone 471 1448 for venue. 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.

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, MI5, 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 crumbs from the tables of the bankers and the bosses.

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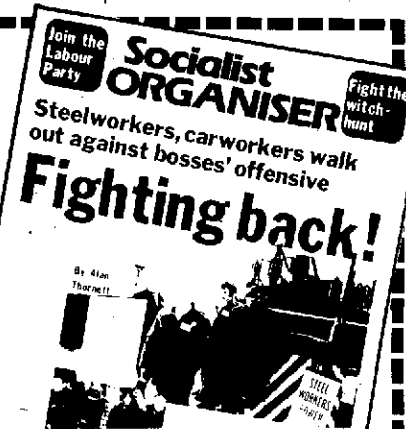
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SCIENCE

By Les Hearn

READERS who have been following the controversy over "yellow rain" in South East Asia are probably totally confused. Are the Russians using chemical warfare or is it an American smear campaign?

The latest idea about "yellow rain" (where yellow spots contaminated with rare and deadly mycotoxins — poisons from fungi — have been found in areas where local people are said to have suffered serious and sometimes fatal symptoms) is that they are a natural phenomenon.

According to Professor M. Meselson of Harvard, the spots are bee poo! Bees eat lots of pollen but keep the residue for months before flying out of their hives for a gigantic crap.

They may deposit up to two-fifths of their body weight as yellow spots which cover the area. Harvard University frequently pays for the cleaning of cars spattered by their bees.

Meselson says the Harvard and SE Asian yellow spots look the same and both contain pollen.

Also fungi can grow on the Harvard bee dung and Meselson thinks it possible that poisonous fungi are growing on the SE Asian bee do's and producing mycotoxins.

But the idea that the yellow spots could cause illness is pooh-pooed by Meselson.

So we must remain puzzled about alleged chemical warfare by the Russians. Meanwhile, known chemical warfare by the Americans remains ignored!

WHILE pesticides have a place as one of the tactics to be used in protecting crops from pests, it is becoming more and more obvious that as a strategy they are totally inadequate and indeed harmful.

Pesticides (insecticides, fungicides, weedkillers, etc) are expensive, they increase the dependence of farmers on capitalist monopolies, they often harm other wildlife (including sometimes the natural enemies of the pests) and anyway the pests frequently develop tolerance or immunity.

One example of this is that rats in Britain are now becoming immune not only to Warfarin, but also to Difenacoum, the most widely used and successful replacement for Warfarin.

Soon rats will be resistant to all anti-coagulant poisons (drugs that cause uncontrollable bleeding) and we will be back where we started!

A more bizarre example of the failure of the chemical strategy in agriculture has been

found in the rich corn (maize) and soyabean fields of the USA.

Here, it has been found that the newest pesticides (the carbamates), designed to be effective for several weeks after spraying are breaking down and losing their potency in a few days.

The culprits are various micro-organisms (bacteria and fungi) which far from being killed by these chemicals, have actually adapted so they can live off them! They may also be living off the urea-based fertilisers which should be encouraging the corn and soya to grow.

The presence of the carbamates in the soil stimulates the micro-organisms to make an enzyme (a type of protein) which can chop the pesticides into bits, releasing energy and

materials for the micro-organisms to grow with.

One response to this problem has been to treat the soil with chemicals that inhibit this enzyme from breaking down the pesticides, but there are fears that the bugs will merely adapt so they can live off the "inhibitors".

So, eventually, agriculturalists will have to switch away from a solely chemical strategy to protect crops, at present grown in vast plantations which are a standing invitation to predators.

They will have to try natural methods of pest control, including developing resistant strains of crops themselves (see my article on genetic poverty a fortnight ago).

AIDS locomotive looming closer

Toby Rose of the Gay Young Socialists Group interviewed MEL ROSEN of the American Gay Men's Health Crisis after a meeting of 250 people in London recently. Gay Men's Health Crisis sprang from New York's gay community as a response to the killer disease AIDS, Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome.

In America AIDS has provoked an anti-gay backlash. Recently, misinformed and inaccurate articles have appeared in the British press which could lead to something similar happening here. A piece in the Daily Telegraph blamed AIDS on 'promiscuous' gay men and called the disease the 'wages of sin'. Other newspapers have predictably dubbed AIDS the 'gay disease' raising fears about gay blood donors and imported blood products from the USA.

What is AIDS?

It is a breakdown in the immune system. It might be a virus, it might be something else. We're not exactly sure. It's a disease which seems to stop the immune system functioning, allowing other diseases to come through.

AIDS has actually been around since the late '70s. But we didn't know what it was until the summer of 1981. It was then that a number of cases came to the attention of Dr. Friedman Keen at the New York University medical centre.

T-cell

He diagnosed Kaposi's Sarcoma in young homosexual men. Kaposi's Sarcoma is a disease normally found in older Mediterranean men, and it does not kill them, but these New York men did die. Dr. Keen did a number of tests and realised that there was something more than Kaposi's Sarcoma. The victims all had a very low T-cell ratio (the T-cell is a type of cell that kills germs).

Half of the cases reported are in New York, with the next most affected area being California, but there are cases being reported all over the States now. 88 cases have now been reported outside the USA.

About 1,400 cases have been reported in the States but this is underreporting by the Centre for Disease Control. Their definition is when someone comes down with another disease as a result of their resistance being destroyed by AIDS. You could have AIDS for a year or two years before you get another 'opportunistic' disease.

We don't know how many have died without us knowing. So far there have been 521 reported deaths in the States, and among the cases reported in 1979 the mortality rate is almost 100%.

Is there a screening process for AIDS?

The problem is that we don't have any definitive test. There is a T-cell test, which is quite expensive, costing about \$50, and also there are some skin tests. These will usually come out with something definitive. But there is no one test. There are also some people who have Kaposi's Sarcoma but don't have a low T-cell count.

How long is the incubation period for AIDS?

The incubation period tends to be from six months to two years.

How is Gay Men's Health Crisis in New York helping AIDS sufferers?

We have about 1,000 volunteers working for us, making it the largest gay health organisation ever. When a person gets sick we send out a crisis intervention councillor and they stay with people until they come out of the crisis.

You tell a person they are sick and dying, and their whole life begins to fall apart. If they are gay, they might go home to an empty household.

We train the councillors ourselves. When the sufferers realise they may not die next week, or next month or even next year, we put them into one of our support groups.

We have Mother/Father groups and lover groups which also have wives in them. We have individual therapists who are all certified social workers and psychiatrists; a buddies system, which is a home-help system, cooking and cleaning when the person can no longer do it for themselves; and finan-

Review

Red Monarch

By Frank Higgins

'RED Monarch' is a movie which will soon be in the cinemas. It was shown on Channel Four TV last Thursday.

'Red Monarch' is a 'black comedy' about Stalin and his 'court' in the years immediately before he died in 1953. It shows him as a crazed paranoid tyrant surrounded by terrified lieutenants and toadies whose lives hang on his mood and whim.

Stalin the tyrant ruled the liv-

es of the people of the USSR and Eastern Europe with powers undreamed of by most mere monarchs. As Trotsky once remarked, if the absolute monarch Louis XIV of France could truly say, 'L'état, c'est moi' (the state, it is I), Stalin, whose state apparatus controlled every aspect of society, could say, 'Society, it is I'.

Court

The court of this 'red Monarch', with its closed-in world of drunken debauchery and murderous intrigue, is presented in the film as a scaled-down, drabber version of the court of the lunatic Roman Emperor Caligula — the one who made his favourite horse a senator of Imperial Rome.

In fact the reports we have of Stalin and his entourage — from his ex-lieutenant Khrushchev's speeches at the 1956 and 1961 congresses of the 'CPSU', from the memoirs of Yugoslav former Stalinist Milovan Djilas, and so on — all back up this picture of life at the court of the 'Father of the Peoples'. Satire and caricature would seem to be redundant, and to make it funny, impossible.

'Red Monarch' makes it very funny, and in general keeps the picture essentially true to what the surviving eye-witnesses and participants have reported. It presents Stalin as a wizened old man, alternately jovial and murderous.

Funniest

One of the funniest touches is that Stalin and his lord high executioner Beria, both Georgians, are played as Irishmen, with the

Russians having English accents. This is a brilliant idea brilliantly realised by Irish actor Colin Blakely as Stalin and by David Suchet as Beria.

Perhaps the main failure of 'Red Monarch' is to convey any adequate idea of the social horrors on top of which Stalin's grotesque court rested — a world with ten million slave labourers, mass terror, anti-Semitism ('the campaign against Zionists and cosmopolitans').

The scene of a mass execution fails to convey it. Many of the victims we see lined up against a wall, with the positions neatly numbered, waiting for a pistol bullet in the back of the neck, are known to us from previous scenes. The arbitrariness and paranoid lunacy of Stalin himself are thus conveyed. But the mass scale of the terror throughout society, the all-pervasiveness of it against the workers and farmers, simply does not come through.

And I wonder how anyone who doesn't know the sober accounts of life at the top in Stalin's Russia can fail to think the film a frivolous invention a million miles from any possible reality.

Rubbish

Unfortunately the politics threaded through the film are rubbish. The only clear and explicit political statement running through it is the idea expressed at the time in the official Stalinist slogan, 'Stalin is the Lenin of today'.

The sustained terror practised for decades against the Russian people by a privileged caste of bureaucrats whose leader, personification, and scourge was Stalin, is identified with the 'Red Terror' carried out against the old ruling classes by the workers in the Revolution and then in the civil war and the wars of intervention by no less than 14 states.

But it is a very funny film worth seeing. And in its main concern it is essentially true to reality.

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NUR must face Tory attack

THE last year has been a turbulent one for the National Union of Railwaymen. It has been the result of a leadership fighting to hang on to a policy of job cuts and line closures (in return for the hope of a pay rise), against a membership increasingly becoming aware that they cannot afford to carry on selling jobs.

In the end, general secretary

by Rob Dawber

Sid Weighell went, and with the union's Annual General Meeting beginning at the end of June, the opportunity exists for us to mend some of the damage he did and continue the fight against some of the people he left behind.

The NUR has previously been associated with reactionary policies on most issues (incomes policy, Labour Party witch-hunt, nuclear disarmament, etc) and inactivity where its policies were any good (opposition to line closures, etc). But a look at this year's agenda suggests grounds for optimism.

The biggest single group of resolutions, for example, is on nuclear disarmament, and every single one calls for either scrapping of Britain's nuclear weapons, or resistance to Cruise or affiliation to CND or support for Labour Party conference policy or a combination of these.

Unity

Likewise on Labour Party unity. The first resolution deplores the threat to members of "arbitrary victimisation and expulsion" and calls for support for the Greenwich constitutional amendment which would give groups in the party the right to organise for their views.

And an amendment calls for the reinstatement of the five members of the Militant Editorial Board. However a different amendment "totally supports the Labour Party leader and his NEC in their decision to eliminate the cancer of the Militant tendency." The notion of 'unity' is a strong one to trade unionists and it will be hard work to convince delegates of the folly of uniting behind Healey, Shore, Hattersley and Kinnock, rather than having a party able to discuss within its ranks solutions to the problems it faces.

Hopefully delegates will remember Weighell's attacks on the Militant tendency in the NUR, accusing them of dividing the union, and his attempts to have leading members of the Broad Left (most of them not Militant supporters) expelled.

Way

Sid Weighell was well known for his advocacy of incomes policy, and a resolution on this seeks to keep the NUR that way: "This AGM reiterates its support for a fully planned economy



Weighell

with a future Labour government." As I argued at my branch a fully planned economy is a desirable thing, but in practice this resolution would mean planning (keeping down) wages while no real control could be kept on profits, prices and dividends under a capitalist system. We decided to oppose it.

However in the NUR a vote against past policy doesn't necessarily mean it is no longer our policy! A paragon of democracy this one: it works like this. All resolutions are grouped under separate subject headings in an order chosen by Head Office. At the AGM the President calls only the first resolution and whether it is adopted or rejected he (it's always a 'he') then rules all the rest as having fallen.

In this case, if the AGM rejects this resolution (that we support an incomes policy) the President will rule the other resolutions in the group out of order. That would mean we have no policy. We would then revert to previous policy which is... support for an incomes policy! And Tebbit wants democracy?

The Serpell Report, as an outline of options for the Tory government, hangs over the railway industry. The NUR's campaign against it so far has been only on the level of propaganda.

The first resolution on this seeks to keep it that way, but an amendment from Sheffield City Branch is to insert 'including industrial action' in the appropriate place. This, if passed, would reverse last year's decision in which the AGM expressed opposition to closures but deleted the reference to using industrial action to that end.

Obviously it was our weakness in this regard that encouraged the Tories to consider something like the Serpell Report.

Oops - sorry!

IN THE explanation of the 'multiplier' in my article on Keynes last week, I made an arithmetical blunder. It does not affect the argument but I had better explain it.

I gave the example of a £1 million cut in investment in circumstances where people on average save 20% and spend 80% of income at the margin.

Any cut in demand leads to a cut in income - lost income by the workers and capitalists who would otherwise get wages and profits making the goods demanded - and therefore to a further cut in demand, to the amount of 80% of the lost income. The £1 million cut in investment therefore leads to a total cut in income of £1 million, plus 80% of £1 million, plus 80% of 80% of £1 million, plus 80% of 80% of 80% of £1 million etc. . . .

I wrote that this total amounts to £4 million. In fact it is £5

million.

Another way of looking at it is this. To balance the £1 million cut in investment we need a £1 million cut in savings. But a £1 m cut in savings corresponds to a £5 million cut in income. Thus the £1 million cut in savings requires a cut in total income (and equally in total demand) of £5 million.

MARTIN THOMAS

HODKIN AND JONES: AN APOLOGY.

Due to lack of time and misinformation, it was incorrectly stated in last week's SO (no. 136) that the workers in dispute at Hodkin and Jones had returned to work. This is untrue. The workers are still out and scab labour is in use. I apologise and will make a £10 donation to the strike fund! A fuller report will follow.

MICK SIDAWAY

NALGO climbs down on pay

WHEN THE conference of the National and Local Government Officers' Association (NALGO) took place in Douglas, Isle of Man, last week, one of the contentious items was the choice of venue.

Homosexuality is still illegal in the Isle of Man. There was a well-attended fringe meeting on gay rights, and a demonstration through the town (possibly the first ever demonstration in Douglas).

Conference voted that future venues should not include places with such discriminatory policies.

The issues which dominated the week's debate were the local government pay agreement and policy towards racism. The 4.9% offer from the local government employers was accepted, but so at the same time was a motion of censure on the negotiators, who had accepted 4.9% only one day after being instructed to seek a 'substantial increase' on 4.25%!

It was revealed that the employers' offer was conditional on it being recommended by the negotiators. So who is working for whom?

Bill Hamilton of Newham NALGO, in proposing the censure, declared that in future we had to be sure that claims were not 'bungled and mismanaged'. We do not however have any such guarantee.

The acceptance of the pay offer was a setback, and so was the defeat of a resolution from Haringey NALGO proposing positive action to combat racism. One example highlighted by the proposer was that local authority jobs should all be advertised externally as well as internally in the authority - so that disadvantage is not perpetuated.

A motion from Islington calling for the expulsion of fascists from the union was also defeated.

Conference did however pass resolutions to fight the disbanding of the GIC and to impose very firm controls on the Temporary Employment Schemes.

Shipyard closure threat

MANAGEMENT at Cammell Lairds shipyard, Birkenhead, have now said that 600 more workers will be laid off this week (beginning June 20), and the yard closed down the week after, if there is no return to work by the welders.

Those boilermakers on fixed term contracts which finished on June 17, who would normally have got an extension, have been sent a letter telling them they are sacked.

At the welders' meeting on Thursday June 16 they voted by a large majority to stay out until the 15p coded welding allowance is paid in full, and all those who were working at Lairds when the strike started are reinstated. This means that no-one returns to work without those on fixed term contracts also returning.

The boilermakers' stewards' committee has reaffirmed its support for the welders, and has also said that the boilermakers will not return to work without the fixed term workers. The committee met again today, June 20, to discuss ways of stepping up the action and bringing the strike to an early settlement. We have yet to hear what the rest of the Confed stewards plan to do.

Boost for Aire Valley strike

THE strike at Aire Valley Yarns received a boost last weekend when 500 people marched through Farsley in support of the 21 strikers.

The march included members of the TGWU and GMWU from other local textile plants and several Leeds City councillors.

The strike, over the sacking of TGWU shop steward Liaquat Ali is still solid and the strikers are now in their 13th week of maintaining a continuous picket of the mill.

Liaquat Ali's case has been taken to an industrial tribunal but the case won't be coming up for two or three weeks.

The majority Labour Group on Leeds City Council is putting a resolution supporting the strike to the council meeting on 29 June. Plans for a delegation of councillors to the picket line were postponed because of the election.

The TGWU have made the strike official but have done little else. An official call for a mass picket could easily raise the 200-300 pickets needed to stop scabs entering the mill which would be a further boost to the morale of the strikers.

Messages/donations to: Aire Valley Yarns Strike Support Committee, c/o 34 Dirkhill Street, Bradford 7.

Stalemate at Cowley

BRITISH Leyland management has still not tried to enforce the end of early finishing at Cowley.

At the Assembly Plant local discussions ended with the workforce rejecting management plans. The next move is national discussions, but they have not yet been scheduled.

In the meantime the management have been putting all their efforts into getting the neighbouring Body Plant to accept, thus isolating the Assembly Plant.

Letters to the shop-floor, and foremen approaching workers individually have all been to no avail.

Despite the right wing nature of the plant's union leadership, who have changed the claim from defence of the washing up time to a buy out.

This week the management said that the bonus would go up by £9 a week if the workers worked for the extra time. Instead of calling a mass meeting the union leadership called a floor meeting. Two areas accepted the management position by a small majority. The rest of the factory overwhelmingly rejected it.

On the crucial Maestro floor the workers went further. Both day and night shift voted to initiate an overtime ban and to revert to previous work practices. This will affect production.

Management are saying that the workforce has earned a lot more bonus, but can only have it if they give up their 'wash-

hands" time - and this met with great hostility from the workers who see it as blackmail.

Lies exposed

THROUGHOUT the recent Cowley Assembly Plant strike, management said that it was the only plant in BL that clocked out early. Nobody from the union side contradicted them.

But the lie is exposed by the decision of management at BL's Body Plant at Swindon to take away their two minutes' early leaving time on Monday.

Management are selling this by saying that workers could be earning up to £28 bonus by October, instead of the present £18.75 limit.

Union leaders at the plant are welcoming this move to what is called Audited Plant Status, and the opportunity to earn more bonus. But this bonus means jobs lost, as does lengthening the working day. Hopefully the workforce will reject the false promises.

The local paper as always, is helping management by saying in their editorial that the workforce will have to accept longer working. They have also trotted out a familiar line:

"Indeed it seems as though Swindon is now the only BL plant at which an early get-away from work is still allowed."

NO LURE
FOR
B.L.
WORKERS

Fight back!

JOIN THE LAC!

Join the Leyland Action Committee
Contact: 194 Dawlish Rd, Birmingham 29

Scrap the bosses!

Stop the
Bomb!

A Class
Fighter

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

COHSE: Democracy breaks in

COHSE, once a union which fitted its name, is slowly changing.

It is no longer a safe haven for health workers who want to shirk the militancy often connected with NUPE membership; it is no longer a non-political union where Tory trade unionists can survive with no problems of conscience.

And, slowly but noticeably, it is becoming a difficult union for the bureaucrats. The stranglehold of the officials is beginning to loosen.

This year's conference, following immediately after the general election, offered a real chance for the COHSE leadership to give a warning to the Tories that it would not tolerate five more years of low pay and increasing rundown of the NHS.

It could have promised and supported firm policies for a real fightback.

Instead, the new general secretary, right winger David Williams, avoided any talk of positive action on pay or privatisation.

The conference was a mixture of successes and failures for the left. The first major victory came on the opening morning with a successful challenge to standing orders and a resolution carried on total opposition to

Tebbit, including support for secondary action, rejection of any state financing for secret ballots, and non-payment of any fines.

But Williams quickly bounced back and got through a rule change "to protect the members" which effectively complies with some of the provisions of the Employment Act.

Disunity on the left was particularly apparent in deciding whether or not to support an NEC recommendation to raise contributions for two years in order to set up a strike fund. Only a handful of Group 81 (COHSE Broad Left) supporters argued for the left to support the resolution.

For others, suspicion and mistrust of how the money would be administered overrode the political significance of having an established strike fund as we come into a period of intensive attacks on the NHS by the Tories.

This uncoordinated approach continued throughout the conference and effectively blocked any real left strategy during many of the debates. Group 81 gained a reputation and a following at last year's conference. This year it was subjected to a growing threat by sectarian and propagandist positions.

The pay debate was particularly important. However, instead of having a clear call to

support a resolution calling for a flat rate increase of at least £20 per week for all NHS staff, the left was split.

The resolution which was passed was a straight Militant demand for a minimum weekly wage of two-thirds the national average. This formula has time and time again been shown to be unworkable and meaningless and the fact that the NEC could recommend its acceptance should have been a warning.

However, frustration with this year's two-year settlement meant another defeat for the right wing officials when they argued that mandating them to negotiate only one year settlements would "tie our hands". The debate coincided with the distribution of an NEC statement demanding a reopening of pay talks on the 83/84 settlement.

The President tried his best to pronounce the resolution lost but was forced to call a card vote, and the resolution was carried by 300 votes.

Resolutions on privatisation were composed to produce a hard hitting call for a real fight. Williams pulled the new rule change out of his hat and argued that it was out of order. The debate could possibly have been won, but mindful of previous defeats the President limited the contributions and cut short the speakers.

Williams, anxious to develop and promote his own style of leadership, spent the first day or

so getting the feel of the conference. He talked about the need to re-establish trust, his desire to defend the membership.

But the cliché-ridden facade crumbled quickly and permanently during the last few days. His speeches during the TUC and Labour Party sessions were full of empty claims of desire for unity and strength in fighting the Tories. He said that it was time to "unite together" to "end the left attacking the right and the right attacking the left".

But when he had the opportunity to do just that by supporting a resolution from Hackney to stop the expulsions and support the Greenwich amendment at Labour Party conference, he showed his real witch-hunting intent.

Following vicious speeches attacking the left as "maggots, flies and leeches who should be excised soon", Williams proclaimed that there is no witch-hunt.

It was an amazing display of the true Williams — a right wing, empire-building witch-hunter who is determined to get rid of anyone who opposes him. He refused to allow Michael Meacher, a COHSE-sponsored MP, to address the Conference.

With such clear notice of the fight ahead, the left must now consolidate and build a fighting cohesive alternative.

The week was marred by the political insensitivity of the SWP who produced a leaflet on the first day containing a scathing 'obituary' of Spanswick.

This cleared the way for a full-scale attack on all the left in a special debate about the leaflet.

Clearly the SWP preferred to divert the attack from issues to personalities in an attempt to salvage some attention.

Militant supporters spent the week using the machinery and conference floor for pure propaganda purposes. They closed ranks and went on the defensive when challenged. Rather than fight for policies which will advance the offensive against the leadership and unite activists to build an alternative Militant are concerned only with building the Militant tendency.

But despite the problems and set back there were strong advances. More delegates than ever before are activists and accountable to their branches.

Standing orders committee for the first time was not under the control of the officials or the right wing. The steady pressure for democracy in the union, begun by Group 81, paid off.

Having fought for two years to force the NEC to implement a 1981 resolution for COHSE to affiliate to the National Abortion Campaign, we finally won. It was a victory for women and for democracy.

This year's COHSE conference did not have a large number of significant political victories, but the union is not the same as it was three years ago. Democracy is breaking in — the right wing rule is being strongly challenged.

London teachers strike back against compulsory transfers

ON Wednesday June 22 at least 1,000 Inner London teachers are taking strike action against compulsory transfer. By Friday 17th at least 30 schools had definitely decided to strike, and others have decided to send delegations to the march to County Hall.

More schools are expected to take decisions on Monday.

This is the second one-day strike this summer against the

ILEA's policy on transferring teachers from one school to another. Some schools are being told to lose 15-20 teachers because they are "overstaffed". This strike is even bigger than last summer's strike on the same issue, and reflects the anger of London teachers.

Compulsory transfer has long been a focal issue in the NUT Inner London Division (ILTA). The left achieved a

historic clean sweep at this year's election for ILTA officers on a clear platform against compulsory transfer, and the intimately related issue of job loss.

Robert Richardson, ILTA general secretary for 17 years (a headmaster of course!) was finally unseated. Under his leadership the NUT agreed to the ILEA's policy of transfer: in 1976 there were 24,000 teachers in ILEA schools — today there are about 21,000.

Furthermore, he was prepared to give ground on lunch hours and a code of conduct which would include after-school duties during the London Contract negotiations (now abandoned, since the ILEA officers realised that the union's new London leadership would not compromise on the 1968 school meals agreement).

Richardson remains on the NUT National Executive and chairs the Action Committee. Since the introduction of Rule 8 local branches have lost their autonomy to take industrial action. In the past two years Lambeth and Southwark branch officers have been suspended from union membership for organising strike action without the approval of the Action Committee.

When over 500 teachers struck last summer against transfer, without Action Committee approval, the ILEA drew back from some transfers — but

two Southwark branch officers, Amanda Leon and Gil Lowenstein were expelled from the NUT!

This summer's strike has again failed to win the approval of the Action Committee (sic). The National Executive are determined to marginalise the left officers of ILTA by not supporting their campaign to save jobs in Inner London. Had the action been "official", then the action would have been totally solid.

Despite what happened last year, NUT members in London have shown their determination to fight on.

Although Frances Morrell has replaced Bryn Davies as Leader of ILEA, there has been no change of policy on transfer. Although the ILEA has launched its Equal Opportunities and other programmes in defiance of the Tory government's threats to dismantle it, the NUT had to remind Ms Morrell that it is precisely women and black teachers who are the first to be transferred from pillar to post, as they are predominantly stuck on the lowest scales and on the least secure contracts.

The ILEA's reasons for transfer seem rational: they want to ensure that all schools have their fair share of all resources, which includes staffing. The new ILTA General Secretary Richard Reisser has dubbed this as "East European-style

planning."

Teachers are not like photocopiers, to be shunted around. The quality of education for school students depends not just on staff numbers, but on their stability and morale.

Fifteen years ago, London schools were in turmoil because of massive staff turnover. Falling rolls and the contraction of the service have greatly reduced teachers' movement from job to job. Paradoxically this has improved educational standards and reduced class sizes. Now the ILEA, like all educational authorities, are shedding staff, and once again upsetting the kids' education.

The union have lobbied the ILEA with a clear message: we will fight alongside you against the Tories, but stop attacking us!

The fight in London will be a key test for the Socialist Teachers Alliance, the major left grouping in the NUT since the demise of the SWP-led Rank and File Teacher group. The STA will be fighting for national union backing for all-out strikes in schools affected by transfer as well as further all-London one day strikes.

It will also continue to lobby the ILEA Labour Group. All Labour Party members in London can support this action by putting pressure on their ILEA member to change their policy: Fight the Tories, not the teachers!



Fighting RACISM

HALIMAT Babamba, who has been fighting for the last 11 months to remain in Britain, heard on June 6 that the Home Office has finally agreed to let her and her children stay permanently.

Halimat has lived and worked in Leeds since 1980 when she came here with her husband from Nigeria. Hakeem, her eldest son, is now four years old. Mustapha, 15 months, was born here. Halimat has made her home here and knew that if she was forced to go back to Nigeria, her husband would get custody of the children and she would be separated from them.

Halimat says: "I feel so happy and relieved. I've always believed that my home is here and my children's home is here. And I want to say thanks for everyone who fought for me and supported me. Thanks to you all — I'm very grateful."

SUPPORTERS of Parveen Khan will be picketing at 5 Lower Belgrave Street, near Victoria Station in London from 9.45 am on June 29 when her appeal against refusal of welfare benefit is heard.

The DHSS have refused Parveen both Supplementary Benefit and Child Benefit — on the grounds that the Home Office say she is an illegal immigrant.

Parveen came to this country in 1979 to marry Shaikat Khan. They did marry and have two children — Imran and Irfan. In November 1981 the Home Office said that Shaikat had come here illegally as a young boy. They said that this in itself made Parveen an illegal immigrant 'by deception' even though she deceived no-one and told no lies. Shaikat then went into hiding leaving Parveen and the children.

A defence campaign was set up to help Parveen. On two occasions (November 1981 and February 1982) this prevented the Home Office from removing them. Since then, however, the Home Office have neither deported her nor regularised her stay. She is living in a vacuum.

Manjit Kaur is in almost identical circumstances. Support for the two women and their children is being organised by the Khan and Kaur Families Defence Campaign, c/o 593 Stockport Road, Longsight, Manchester 12.

Viji KUMAR, a Malaysian teacher, is the latest victim of Britain's racist immigration laws.

Viji, who teaches at Stoke on Trent sixth form college, faces deportation on June 30 when his work permit runs out. Yet Viji, an engineering graduate, has worked and lived in Britain for seven years.

He has done nothing wrong. He has his home, his friends, his work and his girlfriend here.

For 18 months until February 1981, he worked at the Serck engineering firm in Birmingham, and he was a member of TASS. His work permit covered him until October 1981.

But in September 1981, after a few months on the dole, he took up a postgraduate certificate of education course at Keele University. He was granted a student visa for the period of this course, until October 1982.

Viji then got his teaching job, but when he turned up for the first day the head told him he could not teach because the Department of Employment had written saying they would not grant a work permit. The same day, Staffordshire County Council education department contacted the DE, who then reversed their decision and granted a work permit until June 30 1983.

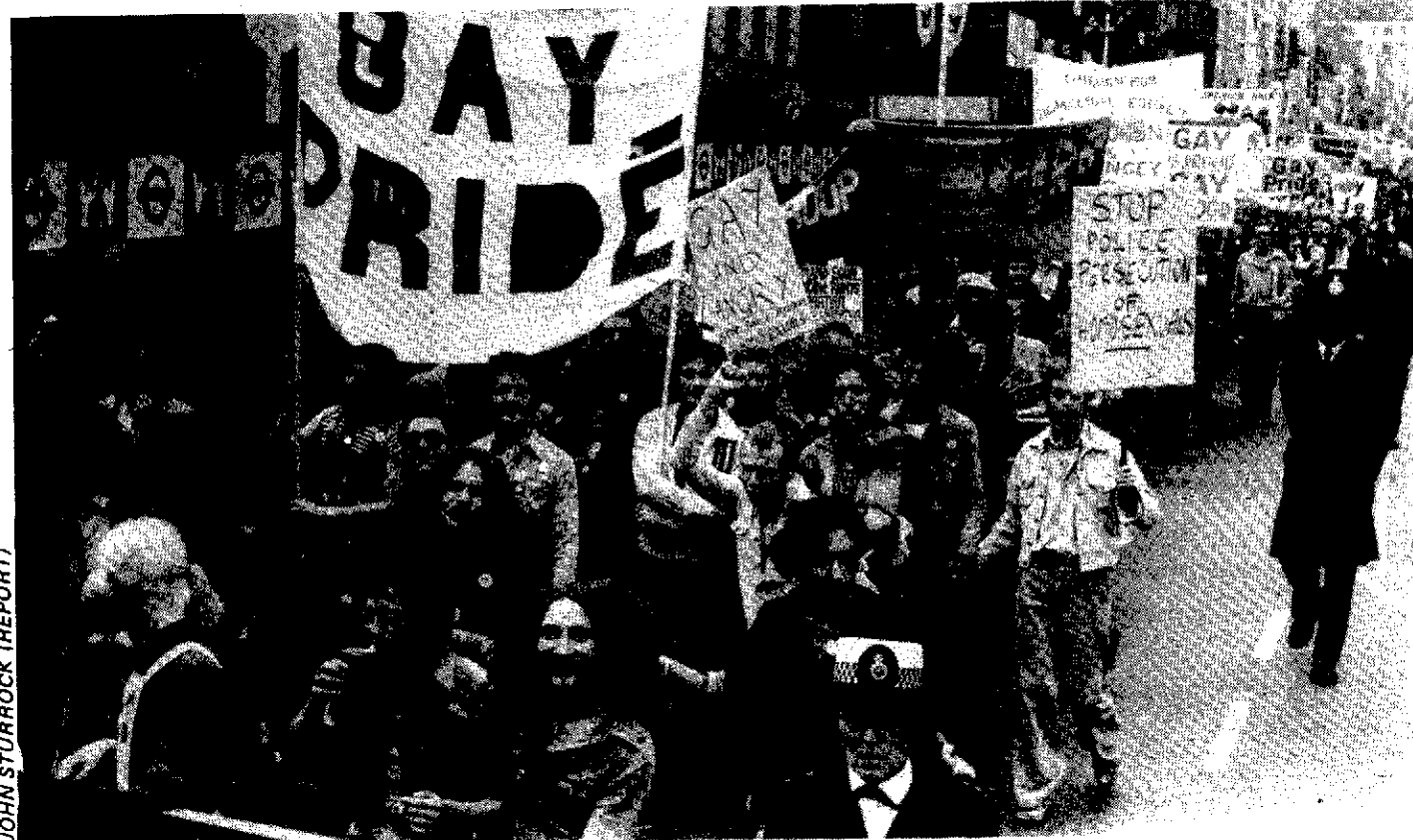
Readers can help by writing protest letters to Immigration, The Home Office, Lunar House, Croydon. Contact: Viji Kumar, Defence Campaign, 10 Burrell Court, Bromley St, Coleridge, Stoke on Trent.

SAVE SOUTH LONDON HOSPITAL!

Demonstration and lobby of the District Health Authority: Tuesday June 30, 4.15, Industrial Therapy Unit, Springfield Hospital, Burntwood Lane, SW3 (Tooting Bec tube)

WE SAVE THE SOUTH LONDON HOSPITAL! WE SAVE THE SOUTH LONDON HOSPITAL! WE SAVE THE SOUTH LONDON HOSPITAL!

Socialist ORGANISER



Lesbians and gays are no longer willing to put up with discrimination — or patronising 'toleration'

PROUD TO BE GAY

THIS year's Lesbian and Gay Pride week — which commemorates the Stonewall Riots of June 1969, when gays in a gay bar in New York fought back against a police raid — takes place with massive threats looming to the limited freedoms lesbians and gay men have won.

The re-election of the Tory government means that the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill will be reintroduced soon with virtual certainty of being passed.

The Bill contains provisions which are a special threat to gay people: police will be able to arrest people to prevent them causing an "affront to public

by Will Adams

decency" (so for us to show affection in public becomes an arrestable offence); police will have legal powers to carry out intimate body searches on people they've arrested (which will be used to check for evidence of buggery and to harass and degrade gay people); and the powers police will have to search the records of gay advice agencies will mean that gay people turning to these agencies could find themselves on police records.

The ideological assault of the Tories, based on rigid nuclear family norms, leaves little room for lesbians and gay men. In this climate victimisations of gay workers are likely to increase,

and the courts will continue to proclaim that lesbians and gay men are unfit to bring up children.

Cuts in the NHS will mean we'll have to fight for the funds that are desperately needed for research into the causes of AIDS.

Defending and extending our freedom to choose our sexuality must be the immediate goal for gay people. To do this we need to organise.

But organising on our own, though important, is not enough. We're not likely to defeat the Tories by ourselves. We need to join with other movements that are fighting back.

If we are to succeed in stopping the Tories, then we have to raise our demands in the Labour Party and trade unions, and make sure they're committed to

Cashing in

IT'S GOOD to know that the spirit of free enterprise is not dead.

During World War 2 the US-based multinational ITT did very good business with the Pentagon while its German operations were simultaneously enjoying excellent profitable relations with the Nazi regime. ITT made military equipment for both sides.

In 1944-5, as the Nazis went down to defeat, ITT boss Sothenes Behn appeared in Europe as a colonel in the US Army, and busily set about getting ITT into shape for post-war business. Other ITT officials appeared in high-rank uniforms; they got ITT factories in the Russian Zone dismantled and moved to the US Zone, and were quickly coining profits again.

The finishing touch came in

the 1960s, when ITT finally won compensation money from the US government for war damage to its factories in Germany — including factories which had been making bomber planes for the German air force.

The operations of the Falkland Islands Company during the Falklands war were smaller-scale, but no less ingenious.

When the Argentines occupied the FIC sold them wool at a 40% mark-up on its usual price. They even sold wool that didn't belong to them at all.

Then the Argentines were driven off the islands. Resourceful as ever, the FIC picked up the abandoned wool — and shipped it to Britain to sell it again!

Now the FIC is making millions by high charges to the British occupying forces for the use of company premises as billets.

LESBIAN & GAY PRIDE WEEK

gay rights and don't ditch these commitments on the grounds that they're 'unpopular' or 'will lose us votes'.

Join the parades for Lesbian and Gay Pride week — and join the Labour Party and the Labour Campaign for Gay Rights, and fight to make sure we can go on being proud of our sexuality.

• **Lesbian Strength Parade.** Saturday June 25, assemble 1.30, Old Change Court, St Paul's, London.

Lesbian and Gay Pride Mixed Parade: Saturday July 2, 1.30 from Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park, London. After the parade, at ULU, Malet St: meetings, workshops, stalls, women-only floor, plays, music, bars, swimming, disco.

Roach family fight on

On June 20 an inquest found that the death of Colin Roach was suicide. The Roach Family Support Committee immediately put out the following statement, declaring that its campaign for an independent public inquiry would continue.

The case for a public inquiry into the death of Colin Roach remains undiminished by the illogical and nonsensical verdict of suicide at Clerkenwell County Court yesterday. [June 20].

People who think otherwise simply do not understand the case. Colin Roach died in mysterious, still unexplained, circumstances, in Stoke Newington police station on January 12 1983. The basic fact that this took place in Stoke Newington police station represents the context in which we will continue to campaign for an independent public inquiry.

No-one who was aware of the violence and monstrosities which have taken place over the years in Stoke Newington police station will be satisfied that they know the true circumstances until there is an independent public inquiry. We should not forget that in 1971 Aseta Simms died mysteriously as a result of injuries which emanated from within Stoke Newington police station. Her death to this

day remains unexplained. Dr Douglas Chambers was the coroner in that inquest [as in the inquest on Colin Roach].

In 1978 Michael Ferreira died at Stoke Newington police station following his being taken there after being stabbed by two National Front people, and the police failed to act responsibly, preferring to question his friends rather than contact an ambulance.

We are all aware of the outrageous violence meted out to Mr and Mrs White, who were awarded £51,000 exemplary damages against Stoke Newington police in 1982, and the brutality perpetrated against Mrs Knight and her family when the police had the callous audacity to charge her with assaulting the police. Mrs Knight and her daughter were acquitted on all charges, and are now taking out a civil action against members of Stoke Newington police.

This is the general context of violence and, in our view, racism, within which Colin Roach's death took place. Given the number of unanswered questions which remain, the discrepancies which exist, and the differing and contradictory accounts given by the police as to what happened on January 12, there is absolutely no way that we or anyone can be satisfied with the outcome of the inquest.

At the inquest no evidence whatsoever was presented to allow anyone to say anything of a definitive nature. In his summing up the coroner biased the jury blatantly and outrageously.

Still the questions remain. There is no positive evidence of any kind whatsoever to say what happened to Colin Roach. The coroner admits that no-one knows what happened to Colin Roach after he entered the police station.

Roach Family Support Committee: 50 Rectory Rd, London N16.

Greenings

THE STRIKE by 400 workers at Greenings in Warrington is now in its 13th week. The employers have sacked them, but the strike — to stop the company making 89 redundant, imposing a cut in holidays, and withdrawing trade union facilities — is still solid.

200 turned out on June 6 to a mass picket on the gates when the company offered to 'reinstatement' any worker who would scab.

The workers are now convinced, having listened to what management itself says, that the company know they are beaten and that their main object now is to stop the trade unionists from appearing to have gained the victory. Arthur Conheny told us. "This disgusting attitude shows the shallowness of local management when people's jobs are at stake".

The company now threatens closure. But the strikers dismiss this as a "hollow threat" and promise mass pickets if they try it.

Donations to: N.Greening JSSC Fund, c/o Len Blood (Treasurer), 26 St John St, Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside.

FUND

The £1,000 target set for the June fund is fading away. £137.55 this week doesn't make up for dropping behind earlier in the month.

The June fund stands at £572.05. There's a week to go, and £427.95 to raise. Send donations to: 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.

Thanks this week to: Sheffield SO supporters, for collecting £5 at their 'After the Election' meeting, for raising £8.55 on a 'how many votes will the RCP win in Sheffield Central' sweep, and to Rob Dawber, £5, Merseyside SO, £21; Cheung Siu Ming £50; Brian Elkington, £20; Pete Radcliff and Penny Barnett, £14; and readers in Bath, who sent £14 with their subscription renewal.