

Socialist Organiser

No 29

Nov. 8, 1980

Claimants and strikers 10p

20p

H Block: don't let them die



STOP THE TORIES, STOP THE CUTS

'Force the Tories to back down on the cuts or get out!' That was the call from the vast majority of the 600 delegates at the Lambeth-sponsored 'Local Government in Crisis' conference on November 1st.

And the way to do that is to mobilise the workers not only in the public services but in industry, too, combining this with a campaign for action by Labour councils, anti-cuts committees and tenants' associations.

The only union represented at the conference by a national officer, NUPE, called instead for a campaign of 'education' to pin the blame for the cuts where it belongs, on the Tories. But it isn't that sort of education that's wanted, it's leadership. Leadership from the TUC, leadership from the Labour Party NEC, from the local Labour councils and from the officials of our trade unions.

A determined stand by them would mean that defiance of the Tories would

not be isolated, it would give confidence to millions of workers that this was a fight to the finish, not just a day's protest.

The fight now is to mobilise the rank and file to beat the Tories, but it is also to mobilise them to insist that our leaders really do lead.

The conference hammered out a programme of resistance to the Tory attacks. Now we have to pull out all the stops to commit every labour movement

organisation, every Labour council and every group of workers to follow the lead that this conference has given.

There is no time to lose. Only a week before the conference, the Tories announced that another £2,000 million would be cut from public spending. At the same time, they are paying their political debts to those who elected them by transferring tens of millions of pounds from the big cities to the Tory-controlled shire

counties.

On top of that, Heseltine also announced a ban on all council house building, although there are huge waiting lists in every major city. At the same time, the Tories' council house selling plans will shatter the already inadequate housing stock under council control.

Rochdale council says it won't sell, whatever the Tories say. In a number of areas, NALGO members in the housing departments have declared that they will not carry out council house sales.

That is the kind of leadership we need. Action now against the Tories — even in defiance of the law — broadening to line up the rest of the movement for all-out war against the cuts.

Twenty-five thousand marchers took to the streets of Belfast on Sunday 26th October, the day before the hunger strikers in the H-Blocks began their fast.

Secretary of State Humphrey Atkins received much media coverage when he announced that the prisoners would no longer have to wear prison uniform. It was not their own clothes but a more 'civillian-style' uniform that he offered them! The prisoners themselves described this 'concession' as a 'cruel piece of teasing'.

But far from demoralising them or confusing their supporters, Atkins has only made them more determined. Since the hunger strike began, many more prisoners have gone 'on the blanket' — refusing to cooperate with the prison regime in any way.

Support from Britain is vital and still needs to be won. Every trade union branch and stewards' committee, every ward and GMC needs to raise the issue of political status for the Irish prisoners of war. And the march on November 15th calling for Britain's withdrawal from Ireland must be turned into a massive demonstration of solidarity with the hunger strikers.

We demand: political status for the prisoners of war! Troops out of Ireland now!

INSIDE

The horrors of H-Block: the reality of British military occupation in Ireland, and the case for political status: pp.6-7



CND marching again — the lesson of last time is that we can't get rid of the Bomb without fighting capitalism: p.7

Local Government in Crisis Conference — A Call to Fight the Cuts. Report p.4

Boom for the booze merchants

ANDREW HORNING

MORE THAN an eighth of men between 18 and 24 drink to excess, if endangering your health can be considered an 'excess'. That's one of the findings in a new government survey on drinking.

Year after year governments bump up the price of beer and spirits by raising tax — and still the boom in drink sales goes on. According to another report published last week, by the Lancashire and Cheshire Council on Alcoholism, we've been knocking it back so fast that the consumption of booze went up by more than 50% between 1969 and 1979.

Why? According to Bill Kenyon, who runs a centre for alcoholics in Liverpool and is executive director of the Council, unemployment is one of the reasons for the sharp rise in drinking.

The frustration, the hopelessness, the humiliation, the boredom and loneliness combine to push the jobless to look for relief from the bottle and the easy cheeriness of the bar-room.

Capitalism is driving millions of us to drink — and hundreds of thousands of our brothers and sisters to drowning not just their sorrows but themselves completely.

KEEN TO increase its take from school meals, Somerset County Council raised the prices. Result: the numbers buying school meals fell dramatically. Now the school meal service is deep in the red and the Council is trying to think of ways of rescuing it.

But to rescue it, they feel, they've got to spend money on a campaign to encourage kids to want school meals. The only suggestion so far — one that has caused some uproar — is to install space invader machines in the canteens.

It is not clear whether the idea was to entice the kids into the eating area and force-feed them on the spot or simply to use the space invader machines as a source of income.

My suggestion would be to have fruit machines where you could win real fruit and then you could get rid of the school meals service altogether. No? Just an idea.

Anyone that can tell Somerset County Council how to save a little money should write to SO. Ideas that don't count are: cancelling debt charges, increasing direct works instead of paying through the nose to private firms, abolishing the post of mayor in all the towns, or anything that smacks of socialism. And you're not allowed to mention fighting the Tory government, either.

THE IRAN-IRAQ WAR

If Iraq wins, imperialism wins

AS AN SO reader, I would like to make some further points on why we as socialists should give our support to Iran and the Iranian masses in their war against the Iraqi regime.

On the question of the Gulf war complicated issues are raised. It is not necessary here to give a detailed analysis of the nature of both the Iraqi and the Iranian governments and their internal policies on the question of national minorities; but the Gulf war is not simply and merely a war between two third world countries, so that imperialism does not have any interest in it.

On the contrary, since the revolution in Iran has upset the balance of power of the USA in one of the major oil producing areas, it is in the interests of world imperialism to support the Iraqi regime and Saddam Hussein, who over the last two years has made closer

links with the American government. Iraq would not have started a full-scale war without American indirect encouragement.

The socialists who argue that 'the present war is neither in the interests of the Iraqi workers, nor the Iranian masses, therefore we should take a neutral position', assume that supporting Iran would consolidate and stabilise Khomeini's regime inside Iran. Even if their assumption is right, and it ends up consolidating a reactionary

regime for a short period, it would only be for a short time, as the masses' conflicting interests with those of the present regime of Iran would lead them in a confrontation with this regime.

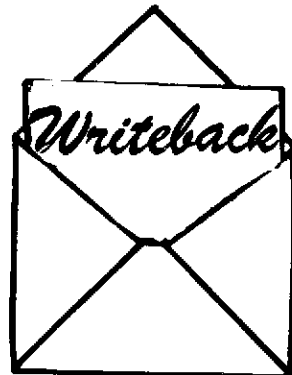
Moreover, we have to consider the fact that the present war is taking place in the context of world capitalist crisis and the resurgence of cold war sentiment on the part of the USA and its NATO allies. A victory for the Iraqi president, a despotic element (who

possesses the main characteristics that the Shah's regime had as the gendarme of the Gulf and servant of the American interest in the region) would result in the crushing of the remaining gains of the Iranian revolution and establish new opportunities for imperialism to re-establish itself and its corrupt influence inside Iran, which has been reduced to a large extent by the Iranian revolution.

This does not mean support for Khomeini's regime, as true socialists do not stand for his reactionary Islamic Republic and its bourgeois nature. But we stand for workers' revolution in Iran, and, alongside taking sides with Iran, condemn and attack Khomeini's and Bani-Sadr's policies, which undoubtedly aim at smashing the workers' demands and the national minorities' rights, as well as women's rights.

Finally, I think that solidarity with the Iranian masses in their defence against the attacks from the Iraqi regime and the imperialists should not be postponed until after the overthrow of the present regime. More specifically building up a united front with the Iranian proletariat is important now.

NAHID DEGHAN



Write back to Socialist Organizer, 5 Stamford Hill, London N16.

support the Spanish Republic against the Franco fascists, and the details of parliamentary and other tactics can only make sense in that context. Foster's & Davies' problem is to show why we should support Iran.

But in fact the comrades seriously mis-state Trotsky's position on the Spanish Civil War. He opposed a vote for military credits in the Cortes (Parliament) not because he did not want arms for the bourgeois Spanish Republic — Trotsky did want the Republic to be armed — but because he was unwilling to express political confidence in the government by voting for the military budget (see 'In Defence of Marxism'). Political confidence was the issue. Comrades Davies' and Foster's interpretation is rather close to the slanderous account of Trotsky's position by the Stalinists and others. Trotsky defended the Spanish Republic (against Franco) despite the regime and while advocating its overthrow. Davies and Foster, through tortuous reasoning, want us to defend the integrity of the oppressive state of Iran because, following the spurious hopes and calculations of the military men in Iraq, they fear for the regime, lest worse follow! It is an inversion of Trotsky on the Spanish Civil War.

Mullahs

But we would not, even while opposing a military coup with guns, support the regime or the mullahs. That's the analogy with Spain. What the reference to Spain really shows is how far from Trotsky are Foster and Davies, who support Iran to 'protect' the regime — they don't 'support' it — from a threat that has not actually appeared!

It is true that Iraq aspires to be the strong state in the area, but we should not therefore support the recent strong state — and in terms of real strength, probably a future one too. The great mass movement that toppled the Shah has been led into a blind alley by the Muslim reactionaries. Their anti-imperialism is not only demagogic, as Davies and Foster say, it very often has as its content a reactionary rejection of much of the modern world. Activities such as the hostage seizure serve the regime as diversions to deflect the masses.

They have not in any fundamental, stable or lasting sense broken with capitalism or imperialism. Within Iran we must support the workers against the regime. Short of an imperialist attack, we have no reason to support the Iranian state.

JOHN O'MAHONY

No reason to defend the Iranian state



Iranian state. But isn't it simply ridiculous to talk of 'self-determination for Iran' when more than half of the population belong to minorities who are oppressed and persecuted by the Persians?

We used to talk of Iran as a sub-imperialism before Khomeini — not only because it was a 'sub-contractor' of US imperialism but because of its level of economic development and role in the area, and because of the oppressed national minorities within Iran. The 'Islamic Revolution' altered only its subcontractor relation with imperialism.

Perhaps the minorities want only autonomy within Iran, not separation. But until they can say what they want without being persecuted or having to choose between the butchering (and anti-Shi'ite) Iraqi regime and Iran, then for myself I'll keep quiet about 'Iranian self-determination' — except against NATO (or the USSR — or both).

But the comrades say — and this is the crux of their argument — it is not the rivalry of the two states over border territory or over the oil-rich Khuzestan area of Iran, inhabited by a persecuted Arab minority, which is being fought over. The real purpose of the invasion 'seems' to be to replace the Iranian regime with former

Shah-ites now in exile in Iraq. It is a political intervention to bring down Khomeini.

The Iraqi regime does want to finish off Khomeini because it fears an explosion of Iraq's oppressed Shi'ite majority. Khomeini calls for the overthrow of the Iraqi regime and its replacement by a Shi'ite theocracy such as Iran's. Should we then sift through the records to see who 'intervened' first, Khomeini or Hussein, and take sides accordingly, against the 'aggressor'? That would be as absurd as siding against whoever fired the first shot.

The idea of 'political interference' is here in fact a refinement of the idea that Iraq acts as proxy for the USA — an interpretation popular with some leftist commentators at the outbreak of the war. Now we have the idea of an 'objective political proxy'.

False

In its clear form, the proxy theory had to be abandoned as obviously false — abandoned, that is, by all but the perennial fools of the Fantasia International, whose most stable delusion is that they are Leon Trotsky's 'Fourth International'. They think there is a profoundly

DENIS Healey is the labour movement's leading 'man of power', a former associate of the CIA and of the British military establishment, of the IMF and NATO, an ex-Minister of Defence and ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer.

by JOHN O'MAHONY

A grubbing, visionless creature, he stands for a labour movement that never aspires to socialism, which continues to commit itself, even now, to a voluntary confinement within limits compatible with the rotting capitalist system and acceptable to the clapped-out capitalist masters of the enormous slum that Britain is becoming; a labour movement which is tied in various ways, but firmly, to the bosses' state.

A healthier labour movement than ours has been for a long time would not tolerate Dennis Healey as a member, let alone as its aspirant leader.

He was not always like this. At the age of about 20, Healey joined the Communist Party and for the last three years of the '30s was a young Stalinist (though he thought himself a Communist). Disgusted when Hitler and Stalin did a deal and partitioned Poland as the first act of World War 2, he, like many others, broke with Stalinism.

But, by the late '40s, working for the foreign department of the Labour Party, he was collaborating with what might be called 'the CIA's Comintern' (or Stalintern).

Information about the CIA's activities became available in the '60s, when some of its 'front' organisations — the Congress for Cultural Freedom for example — were exposed, and again in the wake of the Watergate scandal.

After World War 2 the CIA mounted a major operation in an attempt to shape and control the labour movements then being rebuilt in Europe, or at

The charge sheet against Healey

least to smash the Stalinists (and the real left) within them. For this work the CIA adopted — as far as was possible for it — the techniques of the degenerate Comintern.

Stalin's Comintern had developed sinister methods of manipulating the labour movements it did not directly control to serve the Kremlin's current politics, by buying leaders and publications, corrupting militants, infiltrating its own secret agents, and setting up front organisations to mislead and dupe — all of it organised, in the final analysis, by a department of the political police and its 'collaborators'.

The Stalinists did not invent any of this — the Tsarist police and others had — but using the Comintern's base in the working class they made it into a world wide system. In the late '30s, Trotsky rightly said that these methods and the Stalinist system were the syphilis of the world labour movement.

Help

The CIA, with the help of US trade union leaders like George Meany (and to an extent of the TUC and the Labour Party, which were helping to rebuild the European labour movement), and using many ex-Stalinists and ex-Communists like Jay Lovestone (ex-Secretary of the Communist Party of the USA), attempted with some success to build a version of this system for their own use — in the first place to fight the Stalinists.

Using a network of right-wing and ex-CP collaborators in the European movement, the 'CIA-Comintern' intervened with funds, agents, publications, expertise, and organised collaborators, to



The man from the CIA-intern. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

help create an anti-Stalinist and anti-socialist house-trained labour movement. (Later it would try to do the same with emerging Third World labour movements).

Healey says that, working for the Labour Party, he saw the Stalinist police states systematically destroying the East European Socialist Parties and labour movements, and was reshaped politically by that.

Perhaps it was so. The point is not that he recoiled from Stalinism, but that he recoiled to imperialism. Nothing drew or held him

to the idea that socialism is about the independent movement of the working class to re-make society, a movement that must be free of the state agencies of both capitalists and Stalinist bureaucrats.

Like a whole generation of ex-Stalinists, Healey shifted his allegiance from the Stalinist power not to working class socialism but to the other bitter enemy of the workers and of socialism, imperialism. (There is no evidence that Healey ever was a direct agent. Politically it would add nothing to the story if he had

been).

Having cut his second political teeth like that, Healey became an MP in 1952, then worked — together with Hugh Gaitskell, William Rodgers, and others — with limited success to purge the British labour movement of socialism.

Needs

Since 1964 Healey has served as a minister in those departments from which the administration of capitalism according to its own needs is organised. He looked after the interests of the state and the military as Minister of Defence from 1964 to '70. As Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1974 to '79, he fought within the Labour government for the Treasury view of the world.

Examine almost every anti-working class, reactionary deed of the last two Labour governments, and you will see the hand of Dennis Healey, often as the prime mover.

Representing the armed forces and the arms industry, he successfully fought for social service cuts instead of cuts in military expenditure in 1967 (those cuts seem mild now when the work of the pioneers has been built upon...)

He fought for normalisation of relations with South Africa, including the end of an arms embargo. Naturally, in 1969 he was a champion of In Place of Strife, when the Wilson government tried to tie the British labour movement to the State with which Healey had — and has — such close connections.

As Chancellor in the last Labour government, he began with the declaration that he would squeeze the rich until the pips squeak-

ed — but squeezed the working class and the social services instead.

He spearheaded the drive to cut real wages. He was the linkman with the IMF, and its bailiff in the Cabinet, pushing for Labour's savage 1976 cuts.

He presided over policies that doubled unemployment to 1½ million. Together with Callaghan, he rammed through the £6 limit in 1975 and the attempted 5% limit in 1978-9.

He could — but he won't — lay just claim to being the political pioneer in Britain of the grisly Tory cult of monetarism to which so many human sacrifices are now being offered up. He remains a monetarist.

Nothing shows as clearly as this record what Healey is and represents. It shows that in so far as Healey, the ex-CPer, retained a commitment to the labour movement — at least as an area of operation — it was to a politically neutered labour movement, broken in and harnessed to the mill wheels of capitalism, a labour movement with its strength and vitality sapped and its socialist eyes put out — the sort of labour movement that would be a crime against the working class and a betrayal of its potential to create a better society than the one which now condemns two million families to deprivation and hardship.

Charge

Healey's record is material more suitable for appearing on a charge sheet to support a proposal to drive him out of the labour movement than on an application for the job of leader of the Labour Party. Yet the Parliamentary barons have things so sewn up that he is the favourite and he may win.

If he does, then by their chosen leader the labour movement will know and deal with his supporters in the Parliamentary Labour Party. And with Dennis Winston Healey.

BRIEFING

CAMPAIGNING FOR JANUARY 24

The Mobilising Committee for Labour Democracy is circulating a model constitutional amendment for the Special Labour Party Conference to be held on 24 January 1981.

Much of this amendment has been provisionally approved by the National Executive Committee and sent to affiliated organisations as technical guidance, but there are important questions on which the NEC has preferred to seek the guidance of affiliates before making a recommendation.

In particular there is no recommendation from the NEC on the proportions of the vote to be given to the unions, the CLPs and MPs. It was the failure of any one formula to achieve a majority at Annual Conference which led to the present state of uncertainty, allowing the right wing in the Parliamentary Labour Party a chance to try to foist Dennis Healey on the Party as the new Leader.

The Mobilising Com-

mittee's amendment incorporates the formula for an electoral college proposed by Socialist Organiser: MPs, 30 per cent; CLPs, 30 per cent; trade unions, 38 per cent; Socialist Societies, 2 per cent. It is vital that the Left's vote is not split, and that the maximum number of organisations submit this amendment, or at any rate ensure a firm mandate for it.

In a number of organisations, however, it will not be possible to mandate on a particular formula before the Special Conference. This will particularly be true for the trade unions. In this situation it is essential, the Mobilising Committee stress, that delegates are mandated to vote for only those proposals that satisfy the minimum conditions for a democratic and representative college. They suggest the following resolution:

'This ... resolves to mandate its delegate/s to the Labour Party Special Conference on 24 January 1981 to vote for an electoral college which is both democratically

organised and represents a genuine widening of the franchise to reflect the Party as a whole. It therefore instructs its delegate/s to vote for all electoral colleges which satisfy the following requirements:

1. Annual elections — mandatory when the Party is in opposition, and optional (to be decided by simple majority) when in office.
2. Voting at Conference, with direct voting for every organisation and MP.
3. At least two thirds of the total vote for CLPs and trade unions, with the PLP vote not to exceed that of the CLPs.
4. Recorded voting, with details to be available to every affiliated organisation.
5. Full provision for casual vacancies.

The final date for submission of constitutional amendments is Friday 5th December. Copies of the complete amendment proposed by the Mobilising Committee can be obtained from 10 Park Drive, London NW11 7SH (tel. 01-458 1501).

Will Mason get the chop?

'THREE weeks ago the Yorkshire region of the National Union of Mineworkers passed a resolution which stated that it expected all five NUM-sponsored MPs to vote for Michael Foot in the coming leadership elections. MPs should show their ballot papers to the management committees of their Constituency Labour Parties', Jack Brown, vice-chairman of Barnsley CLP, told SO.

Roy Mason is one of those NUM-sponsored MPs. At the last meeting of his constituency Labour Party GMC, in Barnsley, the vote went 92 to 22 for

Foot. However, Mason 'refuses to be anyone's puppet'.

He refuses point blank to abide by the democratic decisions of his Labour Party rank and file.

The cry of 'puppet' is ironic, coming from a man who has so willingly become the puppet, the stooge of the British ruling class.

A man who recently contributed to a book called 'Collective Security', expounding the virtues of NATO, and published by the 'Labour Committee for Transatlantic Understanding', an outfit financed by

NATO.

A man who has done the dirty work of the ruling class in its suppression of the Catholic community in the North of Ireland.

In truth, we do not need 'puppets' of this kind in our ranks, supposedly representing us in Parliament.

Before Mason became Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Jack Brown told Socialist Organiser, Bar:ley CLP had a 'troops out' policy. In deference to Mason they reversed this policy. It is high time this deference was thrown out — and Mason with it!

The Right gets smarter

TERRY DUFFY, they say, still wants an electoral college with 90% for MPs. But smarter right-wingers are trying to outflank the Left by a different approach.

The Campaign for Labour Victory is pushing a formula under which there will be no electoral college, but just election of the Labour Party leader by individual Party members.

It would be a postal ballot, of course, decided not so much by debate and discussion in Party meet-

ings as by who is most efficient at signing up paper members and by Fleet Street ballyhoo.

Every paper, from the Express to the Mirror, could be guaranteed to back the favourite candidates of the right wing. It would be something like the corrupt and farcical US 'primary' system — with an inbuilt bias to the right.

It would cut out any organised voice for the affiliated trade union member-

ship of the Labour Party, and it would enable a Leader elected outside of the Conference to counterpose his 'democratic' credentials to Conference decisions.

Any sort of democracy is, however, a problem for the CLV. And so they have a safeguard in their formula. Instead of the annual elections proposed by the Left, the CLV proposes that leaders should be elected effectively for life, or until the MPs have no confidence in them.

A call to fight the cuts

ON SATURDAY 1st November, 599 delegates gathered at Camden Town Hall for the anti-cuts conference called by the Lambeth labour movement.

386 were from trade union branches, 115 from Constituency Labour Parties, and 98 from council Labour groups.

With over 1000 people attending in total, the conference adopted a fighting policy against the Tory attacks on council services.

It called on all sections of the labour movement to unite in a joint struggle.

Councils must refuse to sell council houses, to cut services or jobs, or to raise rents or rates in a vain effort to wriggle round the cuts at the expense of local working people. Trade unions and other organisations should fight the cuts with non-cooperation, occupations, and strikes. And the whole labour movement must use every means at its disposal, from strikes and occupations right through to Parliamentary obstruction by Labour MPs, to defend any council victimised by the Tories and to defeat this Government.

"We are at war", declared Lambeth Council leader Ted Knight in his opening remarks.

The labour movement is faced with the relentless attacks of the Tories, said Knight: brutal attacks aimed at the trade unions and the civil rights of the working class. They have pushed through four major rounds of cuts, slashing the rate support grants, subsidies, cash limits, and capital expenditure for local councils.

Cut

On September 18 Heseltine cut another £200 m and introduced special penalties for local authorities which were 'overspending'. On November 21, another cut in the rate support grant for 1981 will be announced.

Faced with this, the official leadership of the labour movement has displayed only paralysis. The right wing Parliamentary Labour leadership can only say: 'try to do your best within the law, and wait for the next general election'.

And so this conference had to be called by Lambeth, when the responsibility obviously lay with the TUC and the Labour Party NEC*.

Where do we go from here? asked Knight.

Rate rises are no longer a way out, he said. There is

by ALEXIS CARRAS

a limit to how much you can ask working class families to bear, and any rate increases would be far too massive.

Knight called for a joint fight combining all the forces of the labour movement, a mass movement which would threaten the very life of the Tory government.

But time for such a strategy is short, he said. This coming January, Lambeth will be deciding its budget for the next year.

"I don't believe we can take a decision which will

leaderships to lead action, defeat is indeed certain. (The other local authority unions were worse than NUPE, not even sending delegates at national level).

Keating argued that Labour councils should fight for an increase in the rates and then, when the Government imposed penalties, resign and seek re-election on the basis of 'who runs the council?' Upon re-election they would refuse to form an administration and simply block cuts going through.

Just as Ted Knight put sole responsibility on the unions to stand in the front line, NUPE wanted Labour councils to do it all. The amendment studiously avoided any reference to the trade union side of this 'joint struggle', and put all the stress on how councillors could manoeuvre until the final crunch.

According to Ron Keating, the earliest date possible at which light would

take a lead. Clay Cross still argue that what they did was right despite bankruptcy and surcharges".

She was speaking for Amendment A, initiated by *Socialist Organiser* supporters in Vauxhall Labour Party, Lambeth NUT, and Lambeth Trades Council.

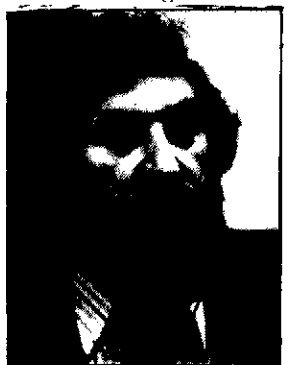
It called for all-out strikes and occupations as soon as any council is threatened with receivership or surcharges. And it argued, as Vanessa Wiseman pointed out, that if strikes do not suddenly break out on January 1st, "then that is no excuse for Labour councils to make cuts".

The anti-cuts fight can not arbitrarily be summoned into existence nationally on a given day. "CLPs, unions, or Labour Councils cannot use the inactivity of others to justify implementing cuts themselves".

Peter Flack (AUEW, Leicester) moved another am-

endment initiated by SO and the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement, on trade union action. He stressed the need for solidarity action to avoid defeats like at St Benedict's. We need strike action against closures and redundancies — and we also have to determine "what kind of public sector we want".

Waller may have raised a few chean laughs with his



Neil Turner. Photo: Tessa Howland (IFL).

speech — but would he have argued against the Polish workers' demands this summer? Inflation-



Ted Knight speaking, Arthur Latham in the chair. Photo: Tessa Howland (IFL).

slash our services and throw people on the dole queues. But if we are left standing alone in isolation, with only congratulatory telegrams, we will be defeated. I ask you to commit yourselves to mass industrial action. We don't want other Clay Crosses".

The hitch in this perspective was Knight's version of 'do or die': either the unions launch mass industrial action by January, or Lambeth, however unwillingly, will balance its books, impose cuts in accordance with Tory policy, and continue the sale of council houses.

An amendment from the National Executive of NUPE (moved by its Assistant General Secretary, Ron Keating) showed that if we wait for the official union

appear at the end of this very long and dark tunnel will be May 1982, when all districts and London boroughs have had their elections, and "when militancy among council workers may be high enough to support industrial action".

Although at war, stated Ron Keating, "my members refuse to be Kamikaze pilots".

"If we wait until 1982 like Ron Keating", replied Lambeth Trades Council president Vanessa Wiseman, "there will be nothing left to take action over. Every section of the labour movement has to play its part."

"This cannot work without the trade unions... Engineers and miners have to take part..."

"And councils have to

protection and an end to secrecy in the economy were two of their major demands. Unlike the SWP, the Polish workers saw the need to go beyond local militancy and generalise the fight for workers' control. So did the conference. The amendment was passed, though narrowly.

Is it one milked by private sector profiteers in drugs, food, building, the banks, and financial institutions? Or do we want the burdens lifted from our services by the nationalisation without compensation and under workers' control of all these sectors?

Mike Waller (Lambeth NALGO and SWP) opposed this amendment, saying that inflation protection

protection and an end to secrecy in the economy were two of their major demands.

Unlike the SWP, the Polish workers saw the need to go beyond local militancy and generalise the fight for workers' control. So did the conference. The amendment was passed, though narrowly.

End

Other amendments from NALGO members in Liverpool, Lambeth and Hackney, called for an end to cuts and rate rises, no more redundancies and natural wastage, a 35 hour week, and non cooperation with new technology which harms working conditions.

NALGO members up and

down the country have been in the forefront of the struggle against the sale of council houses, and the decision by Lambeth Council to go ahead with sales came in for justified attack from these trade unionists.

Graham Durham from North Nottingham CLP made the point that "Rochdale [which has refused to sell] strengthened us by its example, but when Lambeth votes to sell, it weakens the movement. The responsibility on councillors prepared to fight is immense".

SO supporter Neil Turner spoke as one of the few on Lambeth Council who defied the Labour whip and voted against council house sales. He pointed out that rate rises, resignation, even the whole of NUPE's strategy, was purely defensive at best.

"If we do delay, council house sales will go ahead, and we cannot delay until 1982. At the same time, as a Labour councillor, I don't believe that trade unions should shoulder the burden. Labour councils must make a stand".

Fight

It was the mood to fight which dominated the conference. Ron Keating, with his sweeping warning at the beginning of the conference that there is "fear stalking the land, making workers keep their heads under cover", was again and again criticised by speakers from the floor, many, like Susan Watkins, shop stewards in his own union.

As she said, "We've got to the point where we cannot afford not to fight. We're going to lose our jobs if we don't fight, so we've got nothing to lose. However, if we follow NUPE's lead, we won't be fighting at all".

The conference enthusiastically received a speaker from the Gardners occupation and contributed to a collection.

BL shop steward Alan Thorne said that Leyland workers, despite suffering several major defeats in the last year, were once again preparing to come out on a national strike.

He pointed out that statements like Keating's "actually create their own situation. Why is it that these people don't want

What will Lambeth's answer be?

THE LEFT in Lambeth hoped to get two things out of this Conference.

We wanted it to start a nationally coordinated fight against the cuts, and at the same time to manoeuvre the Lambeth leadership into a position where they had to convert their left rhetoric into action, rather than implementing the cuts.

We have to remember that Ted Knight, Matthew Warburton, and Lesley Hammond (the three Lambeth Labour group delegates to the Conference) were prominent in pushing through a package of 4½% cuts in response to the Tories' first

onslaught, 18 months ago — 'in preparation for the struggle ahead'.

These cuts were overturned only after a one-day conference organised by the Labour Party Local Government Committee demonstrated the degree of opposition within the four Lambeth Constituency Labour Parties — opposition which could only be expressed through a barrage of abuse from members of the Council leadership.

Subsequently, members from all four CLPs formed 'Lambeth Labour Left' to campaign for a policy of 'no cuts and no rent or rate increases.

Last April, the Labour group compromised on a package of 50% rate increase, £1.50 on the rents, and 'savings' on growth items, building programmes, and housing maintenance (cuts are what happened outside Lambeth).

Since then a new Performance Review Committee has been searching for 'good housekeeping measures'.

The next step was the decision to sell council houses. Three of the four General Management Committees were persuaded by the arguments of Ted Knight and by a paper circulated at the

last minute by the Housing Chairperson, Matthew Warburton. With time to reflect, opposition in the Labour Parties is now increasing, and there is widespread support for NALGO's action against the council to block council house sales.

In the council chamber only three councillors — Bryn Davies, Steve Stannard, and Neil Turner — defied the Chief Whip's threats and voted against sales. Although ten councillors abstained, the rest joined the leadership in voting with the Tories.

On a number of occasions Ted Knight has indicated that he will imple-

ment cuts if they have to be made, because, he claims, the unions would find his cuts kinder — but before deciding he would wait for the outcome of the November 1st conference.

While there was little enthusiasm at the Conference for Ted Knight's formula of an indefinite strike from an arbitrary date in January, no-one can pretend that there was anything but wholehearted support for a stand against the government which the unions would back with action.

The Lambeth leadership are now in the position where they will lose their left credentials publicly if they sell out in the months to come. It is sadly true that Ted Knight and his allies have lost a lot of respect from the left in Lambeth by

their actions over the last few months. Nonetheless we will do everything in our power to support them in carrying out the strategy adopted by the Conference.

Over the 4½% cuts the Lambeth leadership were honourable enough to accept the weight of overwhelming opinion. They are in a similar position now.

When they report back to the four CLPs at a meeting organised by the Local Government Committee on Sunday November 9th, I hope that they will be proposing that Lambeth reconsiders its position over council house sales and stating clearly that they will make no further cuts in this or the next financial year.

ROS NASH

strike action? Because they are bureaucratised, they start thinking of management's problems."

Jack Brown (Barnsley Labour Party and TGWU) moved an amendment calling on the TUC to prepare a plan for a general strike in defence of working class living standards. "The unions must be prepared", he said, "the country must not disintegrate in chaos".

Ted Shields, a regional officer of the TGWU, backed him up, and gave fraternal greetings to the Conference from the General Executive Committee of the TGWU.

Level

The strong support for this amendment expressed a demand from the conference that the official labour movement leadership should meet its responsibilities — and an awareness that, although the fight must start now at every level, only an all-out mobilisation of the working class can finally defeat the Tories' attacks.

The NUPE amendment was voted down by the trade unions, the Labour Parties, and the Labour groups, and the draft statement introduced by Ted Knight was altered by the acceptance of all the other amendments put to conference.

A Steering Committee of 50 was formed at the conference, unfortunately not elected. Nevertheless this Steering Committee must



Alan Thorne Photo: Tessa Howland (IFL).

get moving as soon as possible. The date of its first meeting has been set for 15th November, in Lambeth Town Hall.

The fight is on to get labour movement organisations committed to the Action Statement which the Conference adopted. (The Steering Committee is mandated to compile a list of these organisations).

Commitment must not remain at the level of pious words, but must be a pledge to take action, starting now, for example in support of Rochdale council and of NALGO members in their stand against council house sales.

And a particular responsibility lies on militants in NUPE to fight for the conference's policy in their local branches and to call on the National Executive of the union to reverse its stand in the light of the Conference.

00

★ The NEC has now called a conference — but late (on December 6th), and only for ruling Labour groups and their CLPs. It can only be an attempted counterweight to the militant London conference, and Labour activists should demand the NEC supports the London conference decisions and broadens its own conference.



Marching is only the beginning. Photo: Peter Slepakura.

Manifesto is decided

THE ELECTIONS for the Greater London Council to be held on May 7th 1981 will provide a real test for the demands of the rank and file to be met.

Manifestos are usually the product of a series of high level Party intrigues designed to water down or neutralise the wishes of Party conferences.

The battle that has been joined at national level has also been fought at regional and local level. In the case of London, the battle has been successful.

The London Labour Party conference voted in 1979 that the leader of the GLC Labour group should be elected by conference, and that the actual manifesto should be decided by a special regional conference.

The National Executive Committee have still to rule on the election of the leader, but in the case of the manifesto the democratic demands have been carried out.

A socialist strategy for London is the product of in-depth discussion by working parties and the regional executive, with affiliated organisations then having the opportunity to amend it.

However, before the

by JEREMY CORBYN

Party and its members run away with the idea that a political Houdini has decided on socialism in one city, the crucial point in the manifesto is the role of a Labour GLC in attacking the Tory government and trying to defend working class living standards.

Control of London government by Labour can only mean anything if the Labour councillors are committed to carrying out the manifesto pledges to restore cuts made in services and expand a whole range of vital services.

Confrontation with the Tory government is the obvious prospect, but the failure of virtually all Labour councils to effectively challenge the Government means that the burden on the new Labour Group will be enormous.

The outcome of the Rate Support Grant/Block Grant deliberations will be another attack on Labour councils, and on services to the working class.

We could be in a situation during the run-up to the GLC election of major confrontations between some councils and the Government. It is essential that the election be used as a trial of strength between the labour movement and the Tories.

In preparing for the election campaign, the Executive have elected a campaign committee to ensure that the manifesto is presented in the clearest way possible, explaining why confrontation with the Tories is the only way forward and that a vote for a Labour GLC is a vote for that aim.

The position that we are facing is a product of years of activity on the constitutional issues by Party activists.

However, the real issue now before us is to elect a Labour GLC prepared to carry out that manifesto and lead the battle against the Tory Government.

If Labour councillors are merely to act as tools of central government by 'administering' the cuts, then a Labour victory could be a nightmare for working people.

S.O. DIARY

BASINGSTOKE. John O'Mahony (SOEB) on 'Poland: Workers Against Stalinism'. 7.30pm, Monday 10 November, Carnival Hall.

□ Alasdair Jamison, 75 Freemantle Close.

BIRMINGHAM. Discussion on fighting unemployment. 7.30pm, Sunday 9th November, White Lion, Bristol St.

□ Doug Mackay, 69 Hubert Rd, Birmingham 29

BRISTOL. Rachel Lever (editor, Women's Fight-back) on 'Women and Labour Democracy'. 7.30pm, Wednesday 12th November, Swan pub, Stokes Croft.

□ Ian Hollingworth, 29 Muller Ave, Bristol 7.

BURY/ROCHDALE. Barry Haslam, 136 Malvern St West, Rochdale.

CARDIFF. John Bloxam (national secretary, Socialist Organiser) and Rachel Lever on 'After Blackpool, what next for the labour movement?' 7.30pm, Thursday 13th November, Four Elms pub, Elm St.

□ Martin Barclay, 21 Dogo St, Canton.

CAMBRIDGE. Will Adams, 68 Beche Rd.

CHELMSFORD. Discussion on 'The State'. 8pm, Wednesday 19th November, at 103 Mildmay Rd.

□ Roger Welch, 103 Mildmay Road.

COVENTRY. Rachel Lever and John Bloxam on 'After Blackpool: what next for the labour movement?' 7.30pm, Monday 10th November, Hertford Tavern.

Cllr Dave Edwards (T&G convenor, Talbot Stoke) on 'The fight for trade union democracy'. 8pm, Monday 24th November, Hertford Tavern.

□ Dave Spencer, 17 Winifred Ave, Earlsdon.

DURHAM. Jane Ashworth, 18 Mowbray St.

EDINBURGH. Discussion on nuclear disarmament and NATO, with speaker from 'Lothian Against the War Drive'. 7.30, Sunday 9th November, William Graham Memorial Hall, George IV Bridge.

Cllr Jimmy Burnett (Lothian) and Cllr Bill Bowring (Lambeth) on 'Rate rises and the cuts'. 7pm, Sunday 16th November, Trades Council.

□ Joe Baxter, 4 Glegyle Terrace.

GLASGOW. Discussion meeting, 6.30pm, Sunday 16th November, TU Centre, Carlton Place.

□ John Wilde, 6 Ruthven St, Glasgow 12.

HUMBERSIDE. Julia Garwolinska, 26 Albany Street, Hull.

LEEDS. Glyn Whiteford, 21 Stafford Chase, Hunslet Grange, Leeds 10.

LEICESTER. Discussion meeting, Sunday 16th November, Richard III, High Cross St.

□ Mark Hall, 38 Portland St.

MANCHESTER. 'How to fight the cuts', 8pm, Thursday 20th November, Ancoats Hotel, Great Ancoats St.

□ Anna Twentymann, 39 Mallowdale Close, Hulme.

LIVERPOOL. Rashid Mufti on 'Anwar Ditta and the immigration laws'. 8pm, Thursday 6th November, Stanley House, Upper Parliament St.

□ Bas Hardy, 76 Ferndale Road.

NEWPORT. Michael Thomas, 125 Brynglas Ave, Newport, Gwent.

NORTHAMPTON. Ross Catlin, 81 Byron St.

NOTTINGHAM. Pete Radcliff, Flat 1, 8 Vickers Street.

SHEFFIELD. Discussion on the Alternative Economic Strategy. 7.30pm, Monday 10th November, Prince of Wales, Division St.

□ Ros Makin, 10 Burns Road, Sheffield 6.

STOKE. Mick Cashman (Wallasey LPYS) on 'Fighting unemployment'. 7.30, Thursday 13th November, Mollart St resource centre.

□ Arthur Bough, 23 Russell Rd, Sandyford.

SUNDERLAND. Steve Leharne, 18 Elstree Sq, Carley Hill, Southwick.

WELWYN. Chris Brynd, 12 Whitethorne, Welwyn Garden City 1.

WIRRAL. Discussion meeting, 8pm, Monday 10th November, Wallasey Labour Club.

□ Lol Duffy, 3 St James Court, Victoria Rd, New Brighton, Merseyside.

YORK. Rob Dawber, 33 Bootham, York.

LONDON

HACKNEY. Ernie Roberts MP on 'Support the Hunger Strikers'. Joint meeting with Labour Committee on Ireland. 8pm, Monday 17th November; for venue phone

□ Nigel Richards, 802 4747

HARINGEY. Mick O'Sullivan, 28a West Green Rd, London N15.

ISLINGTON. Chris Shannan, craft convenor, Islington direct works, on 'Housing and the Cuts'. 8pm, Thursday 6th November, Central Library, Fieldway Crescent.

□ Peter Kenway, Basement flat, 27 Ellington St, London N7.

NORTH WEST LONDON. Mick Woods, 10 St Michaels Ave, Wembley.

LAMBETH. John Bloxam, Rachel Lever and Graham Norwood on 'What leadership and policies for the Labour Party?' 7.30pm, Monday 17th November, Room 125, Lambeth Town Hall.

□ Cheung Siu Ming, 2 Lancaster Ave, SE27.

SOUTH-EAST LONDON. Bob Sugden, 99a Granby Rd, London SE9.

TOWER HAMLETS. Discussion on nuclear power, 8pm, Wednesday 12th November, 66 Brookesley St, E3.

□ Stephen Corbishley, 66 Brookesley St.

NEWHAM/LEYTON. Mike Foley, 103 Chestnut Ave, London E7.

★ All other areas, contact: 5 Stamford Hill, London N16.

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. The same should go for state benefits, grants and pensions.

★ Start improving the social services rather than cutting them. Stop cutting jobs in the public sector.

★ End unemployment. Cut hours, not jobs — share the work with no loss of pay. Start now with a 35 hour week and an end to overtime.

★ All firms threatening closure should be nationalised under workers' control.

★ 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 rent 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.

★ The capitalist police are an enemy for the working class. Support all demands to weaken them as a bosses' striking force: dissolution of special squads (SPG, Special Branch, M15 etc.), public accountability etc.

★ Free abortion and contraception on demand. Women's equal right to work, and full equality for women.

★ 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 stance 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 system in its place — rather than having our representatives run the system and waiting for crumbs from the tables of the bankers and bosses.

Socialist Organiser aims to help build a class-struggle left wing in the trade unions and Labour Party, based on a revolutionary socialist programme. Socialist Organiser supporters' groups are being organised in many towns and cities.

Socialist Organiser is sponsored by the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory.

Britain's Gulag Archipelago



The everyday horror

THE HARASSMENT that members of the Catholic community suffer on a daily basis at the hands of the 'security' forces was described to Socialist Organiser in an interview last year by Vivienne Doherty.

Her brother Don was jailed for 16 years for supposedly blowing up a shop whose owner stated three times that it was not Vivienne's brother who had done it. The 'evidence' that the Special Branch cooked up was quite contradictory.

Vivienne said: 'My brother's case is not unique. There are many people in jail like him and their statements are beaten out of them.'

'I know many people who would never have seen the inside of a barracks or a police station had it not been for the political situation in Ireland over the past ten years.'

'Home life now is absolutely indescribable. Every time the phone rings you think it is something else wrong. My mother has aged ten years in the past two.'

'I've lost count of the number of times the house has been raided and wrecked, and this happens to countless other people.'

Don was put into H-Block and so badly beaten by screws that he was given only 24 hours to live. Fortunately Don did not die, but he has never fully recovered, and is not expected to.

ON SUNDAY October 26, the SAS, with the British Army, burst into homes in the Twinbrook Estate in West Belfast. One of them was the home of Moyra Berkery, who has a son 'on the blanket' and is herself an activist in the Relatives Action Committee.

A RAC meeting was due to take place at her house an hour after the SAS smashed in her front door. They terrorised the people in the house at gunpoint, threatening to shoot them. Eventually the SAS departed, leaving the RUC and soldiers to ransack the house and take away some H-Block leaflets and the proceeds of a H-Block appeal collection.

THE MEN and women of the IRA, those in the H-Blocks and Armagh, and the whole Republican community of the North of Ireland, are engaged in a political struggle to rid themselves of a political enemy.

The Irish Republicans make no claim to be non-violent. They recognise that they are fighting a war — a war of liberation against greatly superior forces, using what methods they can.

The British Government has at its disposal not only the technical might of the British Army, but control of the media and the spec-

The Hblock conveyor belt

ial legislation for the North of Ireland — the Emergency Powers Act and the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Under the Emergency Powers Act, anyone whom the RUC believe is a member of the IRA can be held for up to 18 months. No reasons have to be given as to why they believe this, and the suspect can be released without any charges being made.

The interrogation of suspects at Castlereagh and other detention centres is by now notorious. TV programmes have been made, though not often allowed to be shown on British television. Amnesty International produced a report in 1978 documenting the police brutality. After examining 78 cases, they concluded that 'maltreatment of suspected terrorists by the RUC has taken

place with sufficient frequency to warrant a public inquiry'.

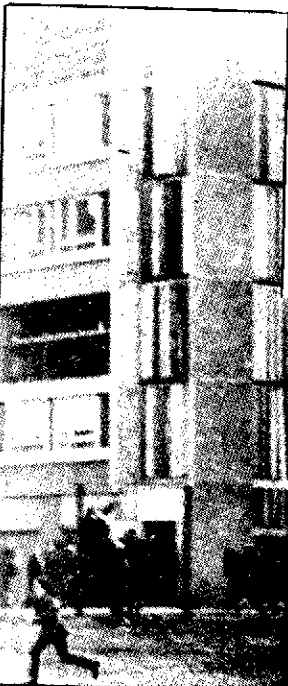
The Government set up the Bennett Committee — though it had no public hearings and investigated no specific cases of ill-treatment. The Bennett report confirmed the beatings and ill-treatment of suspects in Castlereagh.

80% of the men in H-Block have been convicted on the basis of 'confessions' extracted

reagh and similar

The British state — the Diplomatic courts. These courts, one judge and someone is charged with possession of ex-guns, then the prove to the court did not have the than the other. So you are proven innocent

'To the bitter climax of death



In Long Kesh, seven Republican prisoners are on hunger strike, 'to the bitter climax of death, if necessary', demanding political status.

On these pages JO THWAITES argues the case for supporting political status — and for mobilising a big turnout in support of the hunger strikers on the Withdrawal from Ireland demonstration on November 15th. [Assemble 1pm, Embankment, London].

Efforts to organise support for the hunger strikers are beginning in the labour movement. ERNIE ROBERTS MP told SO: 'I support the stand taken by the H Block prisoners in requesting the restoration of political prisoner status. If any of the hunger strikers do die, the situation will become more grave and difficult to solve.'

'Other prisoners will do the same thing and generally this will heighten the violence in the North.'

'Political prisoner status must be granted and the hunger strikes ended, on purely humanitarian grounds if nothing else'.

IF THE prison authorities had their way, all Republican prisoners would be wearing prison uniform the same as any other prisoners. They would be the 'criminals' the British government want them to be.

But the men in H-Block and the women in Armagh have refused to wear prison clothes or do prison work, as they regard themselves as prisoners of war.

Republicans do not recognise the right of the British state to operate in their country. They do not recognise British law, or the British courts which send them to the hell-holes of Long Kesh.

They are fighting to remove the British Army from their country.

The determination of

these men and women is unbreakable. For the past four years, the H-Block men have had only a blanket to cover themselves.

After 17 months the blanket protest was escalated to the dirty protest. The prison screws were punishing the blanket men by tipping toilet pots over in the cells. The blanket men retaliated by refusing to slop out their cells.

The British Press describe this as being 'self-inflicted'. It is a lie. The Republican prisoners had no other way of protesting and fighting back against the screws' harassment. They can only refuse to do what the screws tell them; there is nowhere else to

put the human excreta than on the walls and floors of their cells.

But the filth and squalor is not all the men have to contend with. The screws continually beat them and submit them to vile internal body searches — all in an effort to break them.

The prisoners are locked up 24 hours a day, get no exercise or fresh air, and no reading material. They can have no association with each other, no parcels and no cigarettes.

Republican women in Armagh Jail are allowed to wear their own clothes (like all women prisoners in Britain), but they suffer from the same beatings and humiliation as the men in Long Kesh. They are

allowed only two tery towels a day as they remain protest.

But the British orities cannot them.

For the prisoners years of the only available to the resulted in from the British ment.

So, against vice of the IRA's ship, who feel members have exemplary courage, seven of Block men (the number as the tures on the 1916 Rising proclan have decided to h strike to the death essary, for the d of political status be treated as the ers of war they are

What you can do

IT IS to the shame of the labour movement that the Republican prisoners in Long Kesh, after four years on the blanket, have had to go on hunger strike. These prisoners now have only their lives with which to fight British imperialism in Northern Ireland.

They have started their hunger strike after four years of inhuman conditions. They will probably die within weeks. The labour movement in this country must begin to build a campaign of support for those fighting for political status and Troops Out.

We have, to our shame and degradation, permitted barbarous acts to be carried out in our name. The labour movement must begin the task of redeeming its record of shame over Ireland.

May we be able to have the same pride and respect for the labour movement in this country as the Irish do for their movement of national liberation, and may we begin to build a fightback in support of the Irish people. We must not allow the Tories to send them to their deaths.

Protest meetings sponsored by the local labour movement should be organised wherever possible. Socialists should put resolutions in trade union and Labour Party branches supporting the hunger strikers and committing the branch to support the national demonstrations on November 15th and December 7th, as well as local Labour Committee on Ireland and Troops Out Movement activity.

If you're in the Labour Party, join your local Labour Committee on Ireland group. If there isn't one, set one up.

★ Withdrawal from Ireland demonstration: Saturday November 15, assemble 1pm, Embankment.

★ Demonstration to support the hunger strikers: December 7th, details to be arranged.

★ ★ ★

IN EDINBURGH, Edinburgh Central CLP, on the initiative of Socialist Organiser supporters, is organising a labour movement conference on Ireland for December 6th.

For some time the Scottish TUC have been doing their best to avoid implementing a resolution passed by the last STUC conference mandating them to organise

such a conference. A few weeks ago delegates from Edinburgh Trades Council — which proposed the original resolution to the STUC — were delighted to hear a letter from the STUC executive informing them that the terms of the resolution were to be carried out.

The STUC, the letter said, would be organising not one but four such conferences, in different towns. It was too good to be true: the 'conferences' turn out to be a speaking tour by Terry Carlin, Secretary of the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and... a long-serving member of the Northern Ireland Police Authority.

Ron Brown MP and Bernadette McAliskey have already agreed to speak at the Edinburgh Central CLP conference. It has been sponsored by Edinburgh Trades Council, who are circulating affiliated trade unions.

■ ■ ■ TOWER Hamlets Socialist Organiser group is inviting labour movement bodies in the area to co-sponsor a public meeting on Ireland in early December. Those invited to take part are Tower Hamlets Trades Council, the Labour Committee on Ireland, the local Labour Party women's section, the local Rank and File Mobilising Committee, East London NUT, and East London Troops Out Movement.

■ ■ ■ IN SHEFFIELD Socialist Organiser supporters are planning a demonstration in support of the hunger strikers this Saturday. In NOTTINGHAM Socialist Organiser supporters are setting up a Labour Committee on Ireland group. The BRISTOL SO group reports that it is circulating a model resolution of the hunger strikers round the local labour movement. The BASINGSTOKE and HACKNEY groups have public meetings planned on Ireland — the Hackney one jointly with the Labour Committee on Ireland.

★ ★ ★

Write in and let us know what your Socialist Organiser group is doing, both on the hunger strikers and on other issues. Write to: Socialist Organiser, 5 Stamford Hill, London N16.

THE BRITISH Army has been fighting a war in the North of Ireland for the last 11 years.

They have claimed to be fighting 'terrorism'; yet in 1969 the IRA was virtually non-existent. As the violence against the Catholic community grew, so the IRA became the means by which they resisted.

The Army is trying to wipe out the IRA. It has not succeeded.

The Republican Movement sees the British Army

as an army of occupation, their task as a military struggle to rid their country of British domination, the present episode as part of a fight against British Governments which has gone on for hundreds of years.

The Northern Ireland statelet has discrimination and repression built into its very existence. It is an arti-

ficial state with a 35% Catholic minority trapped in it against its will.

In 1968-9 the Catholics rebelled, the Protestant bigots lashed back, and the British Army was sent in to hold the ring.

The Government claimed it was protecting the Catholics from Orange pogroms, but that was shown for the lie

it was within weeks of their arrival, when the troops took down the barricades the Catholics had put up to defend their areas.

Since then the British Government and the Army, along with the RUC and the Loyalist organisations, have waged a systematic battle to destroy the IRA and to beat down the entire Catholic

community.

In this war Britishists must stand unequal on the side of the RUC against the Army. In Vietnam and babwe, in Angola and ambique, there was question about where stood against imper. There should be no question about where we stand against the IRA.

Only a united Ireland can break the framework of imperialism and let the people live in peace.

Why the war goes on

elt

in Castle-
centres.
ate has an-
ts disposal
k special
urts have
o jury. If
ged with
losives or
have to
that they
m, rather
ay round.
ity until

They certainly are 'special' courts with a very 'special' purpose — to lock away as many potential fighters against the British army of occupation as possible. The Diplock courts are so 'efficient' that there is a 94% conviction rate.

So once the Army and the RUC have got their hands on you, if you are Catholic or you come from the 'wrong' part of town, the chances are you'll end up in Long Kesh.

And, guilty or innocent of the charges as presented, the men and women in Long Kesh and Armagh are political prisoners.

They ARE political prisoners

THE CURRENT Tory government, like the last Labour government, is determined not to recognise the demands of the men in the H-Blocks and the women in Armagh for political status.

They dare not contradict their public pronouncements that they can contain the situation in the North; that there is no war, and that they're dealing only with 'terrorists' and murderers.

They must call the Republican prisoners in Long Kesh 'criminals' — if they were political prisoners, the British government would be admitting to the world that they are at war in the North of Ireland and have been for the last 11 years.

There are now over 500 men on the blanket in H-Block. 157 more joined last week, with the beginning of the hunger strike.

They 'live' in the most terrible conditions. Some have been 'on the blanket' for four years. Yet the British Government claims that these men are nothing but common criminals.

The 'criminalisation' of the struggle against the British Army is a policy dreamed up and pursued since 1975 under Labour, then the Tories. The aim is to isolate the IRA and cut them off from their popular base in the Republican communities.

The army's aim is to beat down the Catholics sufficiently, then hand over to the RUC and UDR and withdraw. The number of troops in Northern Ireland has been cut massively over the last year.

But the policy is based on lies. The Tories now pretend that it is 'impossible' to grant political status, but in fact Republicans did win 'special' status in British prisons in 1972, after a hunger strike.

The status was withdrawn on March 1st, 1976, and all those sentenced after that date suddenly became 'ordinary' criminals. There are still hundreds of 'special category' prisoners — those who were sentenced before March 1976.

Most of the men and women in Long Kesh and Armagh had among the charges laid against them, 'being a member of the IRA'. This charge generally means five years on your sentence.

Aside from any other charges, that in itself defines them as political prisoners.



The march moves off, ex-Labour MP Hugh Jenkins (cap and beard) at the front with other veterans. But it is a young people's march. Photo: Andrew Wlard (Report).

EDITORIAL

Fight the bomb, fight capitalism!

ONE hundred thousand people demonstrated in London against nuclear weapons on October 26.

It was the biggest anti H-Bomb demonstration since the early '60s, and marked the revival of CND as a mass movement.

Most of the marchers were young people who were unborn or babies in the great days of the first mass CND, when 100,000 (1960) and even 150,000 (1961) would turn out — some for four days of marching — for the annual CND Easter demo.

At its recent Blackpool conference, the Labour Party decided for the first time in twenty years in favour of Britain unilaterally renouncing nuclear weapons.

Both events reflect the fact that the world has recently become alarmingly more unstable, and nuclear war is now again seen by millions as a threatening possibility in the period ahead.

NATO is now openly committed to strike first with nuclear weapons. The relations between the nuclear superpowers which hold the lives of all humanity at their collective fingertips have deteriorated dramatically. The decline of US power after its defeat in Indochina allows the eruption of regional wars like the one in the Gulf, with the permanent possibility of the megadeath powers being drawn in.

The young marchers have grown up under the shadow of the Bomb CND set out to ban; but the possibility is a remote one that another such generation will be allowed to grow up if this anti-nuclear movement fails like the last one did.

Why did the last anti-Bomb movement fail so completely to achieve any

of its objectives? And what can we learn from its failure that will help us not to fail this time round?

The central problem of such a movement is to find instruments and methods of effective political action. That is what will make the difference between protests and victories.

The old CND tried for effective political action through the Labour Party. But, together with the Labour Left, it was defeated and routed in the Labour Party.

When, in 1960, the Labour Party was won for unilateralism at the Scarborough Conference, the way seemed open to wage a

massive labour movement campaign against the Bomb. But it proved a false victory. So fierce and effective was the counter-attack by Labour's Right, and so feeble was the then Labour Left, that unilateralism was defeated at the Blackpool conference in 1961.

The unilateralists had come smack up against the fact that unilateralism ran so sharply counter to the interests of the ruling class that for the Labour Party to have such a policy posed a real threat to the possibility of orderly transfer of Government at Westminster, which depends on Labour/Tory bipartisanship on the

things that really matter. There was no way the Labour Party and trade union Right could live with it.

To consolidate unilateralism as Labour's policy required the thoroughgoing defeat of the right-wingers who defend the interests of capitalism in the labour movement. War, and the weapons capitalism considers essential to protect its interests, are not details to be casually altered but are fundamental to the capitalist system. Whoever wants to seriously challenge nuclear weapons must challenge capitalism.

The drive of the capitalist system towards war is

built into the economy's need to expand and engage in rivalry for markets, for raw materials, and for new areas to invest in. It is built into an economy which finds the production of arms more profitable than the production of food for the starving.

Today, the slump sharpens the need of imperialism to defend what it has, and may well lead to a major escalation of military competition.

The labour movement (and the Labour Party) is the only force for effective political action against the Bomb because it represents the only force in society that can challenge capitalism across the board, dealing with the threat of nuclear destruction as the final logical consequence of a whole irrational and dehumanising system.

The only effective anti-nuclear politics will be part of the politics of a politically rearmed fighting socialist labour movement.

The Parliamentary right is on the offensive against the Labour Party policy on nuclear weapons. William Rodgers, Labour's defence spokesman, openly defies Party policy — so do the majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

But today, in contrast to 1960, the Blackpool conference decision on mandatory re-selection gives us a weapon to strike back at MPs who refuse to accept Party policy on nuclear weapons.

And the Left is now bigger, more militant, and altogether more serious than the 1960 Left. This time round we can and must consolidate the Labour Party for unilateralism.

The Left in the Labour Party and the YS must make a vigorous turn, to win the new CND activists to understand that the labour movement offers the only way to disarm the nuclear warmongers.



The turn of the screw

THE government's reaction to the prison officers' industrial action was predictable. Refuse the workers' demands, forget the prisoners' conditions, and ignore civil rights. Law and order is all that counts.

Both government and the screws, of course, claim to be concerned about the welfare of the prisoners. But that's hard to believe when you look at the facts.

Most of Britain's prisons are little more than ancient dungeons. Lancaster prison is listed as an ancient monument (castle with a Norman keep, it says) built in the 12th century — it was rebuilt as a prison in 1788. Shrewsbury was built in 1795 and rebuilt in 1885. Preston was built in 1799 and is virtually unchanged.

Dartmoor was built to hold prisoners from the Napoleonic wars, while Parkhurst was built in 1800 to house juvenile 'offenders'. Pentonville, when it was built in 1842, had cell sanitation, but this was

by STEVE PRICE

later dismantled by the authorities.

Inside these walls, the system tries to break the inmates — through the numbing boredom of pri-

seen. Warders and up are all covered by the Official Secrets Act and so can't say what's going on even if they want to. The rules by which prisons are run are set out in documents called Standing Orders, Circular Instructions and Governors' Handbooks, all of which are secret. Courts could not overturn even the

Behind the prisons crisis

son life, through humiliation and isolation, or through beatings, the 'liquid cosh' of drug overdoses and even death.

The screws are at the knuckle-end of the job. The governors, the Parole Board, the Board of Visitors, the Home Office, and the rest of the hard-faced villains who run the prison 'service' are all part of the same sadistic set-up.

The squalor, the violence and the injustice of prison life usually go un-

most blatantly unjust prison ruling until a precedent was set in 1976; and when a doctor examined George Ince in Albany Prison in 1977, it was the first time in this country that an independent doctor was allowed to examine a prisoner.

Above all, however, prisons are monstrously overcrowded: "designated" for 38,500, they now hold nearly 45,000. They are overcrowded not because crime is on the increase, but because of the mindless

viciousness of the British system of "justice".

According to the NCCL magazine "Rights", "Although the population of England and Wales is only 3½ times that of the Netherlands, its prison population is 12 times greater."

Capitalist justice is based on taking it out on the individual victims of capitalist injustice — victims of the system's greed, poverty, selfishness, insecurity, brutality and alienation.

Those who run the system that creates the crime pose as our protectors and patrons.

But even within the context of this system of justice, the prisons could be emptied of most of their inmates. Sentences could be shorter. The secrecy that protects the thousands of daily abuses could be ended. The parole system, censorship of prison mail and restrictions on visiting could all be abolished. And the horrors of the control units, discipline through drugs and of medical experimentation on prisoners could all be stamped out.

A year ago, an official of

the Society of Civil Servants (the union that represents prison governors and prison administrative staff) wrote prophetically, "Since the early 1970s industrial unrest has been a feature of prison life and, initially, was a consequence of the greater awareness among prisoners of their rights... (After the 1978 industrial action) we envisaged a total loss of control which could only be quelled by armed intervention by another service, with the probability of both staff and prisoners being killed." Now we have the intervention. How long do we have to wait for the killings.

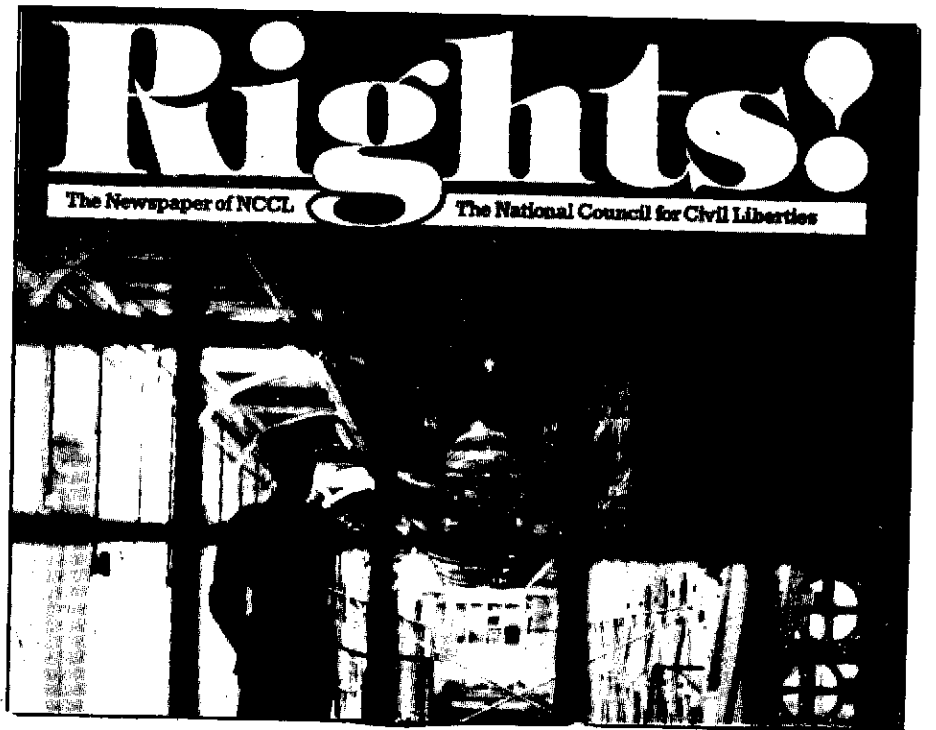


Photo: Home Office

Tories say: no more houses

by DIANA MINNS

ON 23rd October Michael Heseltine announced a moratorium on council house building, and gave all councils until 31st October to send in their current spending figures.

This panic measure is based on Heseltine's claims that local authorities have been overspending by £180 million on this year's allocation.

The harsh reality is that housing has been hardest hit by the Tories' cuts. National expenditure on

housing has been slashed by 48% over the next four years (from £4700 million in 1980 to £2790 million in 1984).

Asked

This year all local authorities received much less than they asked for, and the smaller amount they have been given has been tightly controlled by the Department of the Environment anyway.

Inner city boroughs which have little land to build on have been pre-

vented from buying. The only way they can create new housing is by rehabilitation schemes — but those schemes have sat at the DoE for months, waiting for approval. And then very few properties qualify for the unrealistically low levels of expenditure that the DoE is setting.

Houses are being left empty and unimproved while waiting lists grow.

In Leeds the waiting list has increased by 7,000 in one year, to a level of 22,000. In London, the last two years have seen a 60% increase in applications for

public rehousing.

The effect on jobs of the cuts and of the moratorium will also be disastrous. Direct Labour departments were due to be attacked from April 1981 under the Local Government Bill. Now it is likely that few direct labour departments will survive the rest of the year.

Work

The private building industry will also be affected, as a lot of rehabilitation and new building work

is done by outside contractors.

Other local authority staff will also find their jobs on the line, as there will be no rehabilitation programmes, improvement grants, or mortgages to administer.

We don't know how long the moratorium will last, but every week means fewer properties built or improved, more jobs lost, and no-one re-housed.

A housing crisis has been brewing in many parts of the country. The Tories carry on cutting — but soon it will explode.

The clown turns preacher

FOR NEARLY sixty years, what Charlie Chaplin called 'my first serious drama' gathered dust unseen. *A Woman of Paris*, now re-released and showing in London, lived on only in the admiring recollections of reviews and the acclaim of directors granted a private screening by the great comedian.

A Woman of Paris was written, produced, and directed

by ANDREW HORNUNG

by Chaplin. He even composed the music. But he does not appear in it.

This was to be his great attempt to drop, at least temporarily, the mask of comedy and reveal his serious self. Above all he wanted the film to be 'true to life... life as I personally see it'. He wanted it to be 'as near realism as I have been able to devise'.

It flopped. The critics raved. The public hated it — they wanted Charlie the Clown and they wanted him on the screen, not behind the lamps and cameras.

Every film director throws himself or herself on the mercy (ie. the

money) of the audience. But in Chaplin's case there was nothing cynical or cannily commercial in his mind when, full of optimism, he promised his public, "You are the judge and your taste must be served".

True to his pledge, and shattered by the box-office rejection, Chaplin withdrew the film and kept it under wraps as long as he was alive.

Although Charlie the Clown is not on the screen in person, the best sequences are those which contain his inimitable blend of semi-slapstick and populist social comment.

In a brilliantly funny scene, Marie St Clair (the 'woman' of the title) is bitching about a rival with her flapper friend Fifi. But the camera stays fixed all the while on the face of Marie's masseuse. All Chaplin's scorn for the 1920s equivalent of the jet-set is expressed through the worn face of this listening worker as she pummels, kneads, punches and pounds her spoilt mistress.

Chaplin lovingly pokes fun at the waiters in the high society restaurants



Adolph Menjou holds Edna Purviance [Marie] in his arms.

who flutter and tawn in the presence of the rich, and, of course, at the rich themselves, whose noses prefer the over-powering stench of a rotting woodcock and whose mouths water at the delicacy of truffles that have been rooted out by

The film's strength is the strength of a great comedian and lover of the poor: his eye is sharp but not malicious, his tongue is

sharp but not hectoring.

The film's failure comes when it leaves the sphere of comedy of manners and tries to live up to its subtitle, *A Drama of Fate*. The very idea of 'fate' here subverts the sense of realism, the care and love implicit in close observation. It is inevitably true and unconvincing, a vapid generalisation beyond circumstance and beyond time — a problem as old as the

ages, as Chaplin himself comments.

It relates to a morality so simple, so innocent and at the same time in a modern work so artificial that it fails to command any respect. In its sweeping generality it is the complete opposite of the detailed observation that makes the comic scenes sparkle with life.

In the original 1923 playbill of the Lyric Theatre, New York, Chaplin confided, 'I do not wish that *A Woman of Paris* should appear as a preachment... unless it be an appeal for a better understanding of human frailties'. Yet the film is full of moral preachments, ending with a little sermon about the way that public service heals bitterness of the heart.

The poster for Chaplin's *A Woman of Paris* quotes several critics. One of them, from the magazine *Time Out*, is said to describe the film as 'fascinating'. Actually the *Time Out* critic did not quite say that. He ended his brief review: 'Fascinating, but...'

Unfortunately, it is a big 'but'.



Charlie Chaplin as the tramp in *The Gold Rush*, a great success only two years after the far more ambitious *Woman of Paris* had flopped.

A CONFERENCE for LABOUR WOMEN

Women's Fightback secretary
Rachel Lever writes about the
conference for Labour women
later this month:

We've had preparatory material for the conference from seven national campaigns (NAC, NCCL, CPAG, One-Parent Families, Women's Aid, Fawcett Society and the National Campaign for Nursery Education), some specially formulated in answer to our question 'what would your priorities be for women's rights in a Labour Manifesto?'

Jo Richardson will be there to tell us about the new Women's Rights Study Group set up by the NEC.

We'll discuss how the paper and the campaign material that Fightback produces can be used by Labour women to

turn women's sections outwards, to campaign against the cuts, closures, Social Security Act, unemployment, and all the immediate attacks women are facing.

And we'll be thinking about ways of pressing our claim as women, at every level of the party, to equal rights and treatment: ranging from demands for baby-sitting rotas to the right to approve shortlists to make sure they are not made up just of men.

There's just two weeks to go. Make sure delegates are coming from your party. And would some **Socialist Organiser** men please volunteer now to help with the creche!

A one-day conference for women in the Labour Party called by **Fightback for Women's Rights** with **Islington Central Labour Party Women's Section**

Delegates are invited from women's sections and councils, CLPs, ward branches, student Labour Clubs, etc. **Individuals welcome too.**

AGENDA

■ ■ A programme of democratic reforms for women in the party is being discussed by the Women's Action Committee of the **Campaign for Labour Party Democracy**, with the support of **Fightback for Women's Rights** and the women's committee of NOLS (Labour Students). How can we publicise these demands and organise to win them?

■ ■ There is scant attention to women's needs either in the draft Manifesto of the NEC, or on this year's conference agenda. What sort of policies do we want the party to adopt? How can we put women's needs at the top of Labour's agenda? **Campaigns and groups fighting for women's rights are being invited to suggest what they would most like to see incorporated into Labour policy and Manifesto.**

■ ■ Can the party Women's Organisation be transformed? Can it lead women in a fight against the Tories? Can it go on the offensive in the party, against sexism and for women's rights? What can rank and file women do to win these things?

The conference will be held on **Saturday 22nd November 1980** at **Central Library, Holloway Road, London N7** [corner of Fieldway Crescent, a short walk from Highbury & Islington tube]

☐ 11am to 4.30pm ☐ Creche ☐ Lunch ☐

Registration fee £1

Name

Address

Phone

Party/Ward/women's section

Please return to: Women's Fightback, 41 Ellington Street, London N7 (01-607-9052), together with £1 registration and foolscap s.a.e. for background material, credentials, map etc.

With Women's Fightback going to 8 pages and **Socialist Organiser** going fortnightly, the insertion of WF into SO was becoming very confusing for sellers and distributors alike. **Women's Fightback** will now only be sold separately, though SO will carry regular news of the Campaign we initiated.

NEWS FROM

WOMEN'S Fightback

MARCH FOR JOBS

Women's Fightback will be producing special placards and leaflets for the November 29th March for Jobs in Liverpool.

Local supporters will be out with leaflets to call on women in the Merseyside area to join our women's contingent on the march. Placards and banners will say: IT'S A

WOMAN'S RIGHT TO HAVE A JOB.

It's a simple and basic slogan, and of course the fight for jobs involves taking action such as the workers at Gardners have done. But women have the additional problem that everyone from journalists, Cabinet ministers, trade unionists and workmates are trying to persuade them that it's

the noble and selfless thing to do if they give up work or cut their hours to let the 'real breadwinners', or 'youngsters' etc have the jobs.

Women's Fightback is saying: not one single job should be sold cheap. And every woman that wants to work has as much right to do so as anyone else.

The November issue of **Women's Fightback** is out now. It carries interviews with Marie Muhlolland of Sinn-Fein (GB), Domitila Chungara (the exiled Bolivian women's leader) and Jadwiga Piatkowska, who works at the Lenin shipyard in Gdansk. Also a feature on the politics of contraception by Marge Berer of NAC, debate on **Beyond the Fragments**, reports on women organising in the unions and on women at the Labour Party conference. Plus campaign news and background material for the conference on November 22nd for Labour women.

Single copies are 10p plus postage [up to 3 copies for one 10p stamp]. Orders over 20 post free. From 41 Ellington Street, London N.7. 01-607-9052.



Bring Anwar's children home



Photo Morning Star

ANWAR DITTA, the British born black woman forcibly separated from three of her children by the immigration laws, has had the last legal door slammed in her face.

First, immigration officialdom tried to claim the children were not really hers. When they were faced with irrefutable documentary proof, they shifted their ground, and Anwar's appeal to have her children join her was refused on another technicality — plus a peculiarly prejudiced judgment that she did not conform to their stereotype of what a Pakistani village woman should be like. [Little wonder, since she comes from Rochdale!]

On November 15th, a demonstration demanding 'BRING ANWAR'S CHILDREN HOME' will start from Church Stile, off Drake Street, Rochdale.

A WAVE OF strikes in selected enterprises across Poland, to start on November 12th, is being organised by *Solidarnosc*, the independent workers' movement born in the three months of mass strikes this summer.

Solidarnosc demands that it be recognised as a legal organisation by the state, as was agreed with the Gdansk workers' council at the end of August.

Then, the strike leaders promised to recognise the 'leading role' (dictatorship) of the so-called 'Communist Party' in Polish society. The government afterwards insisted that this should be formally written into the statutes of *Solidarnosc*. The union refused.

by SEAN MATGAMNA

Weeks of haggling with the Warsaw court empowered to register *Solidarnosc* as a legal body were 'resolved' by the judge, who acted with bureaucratic brutality and wrote a new clause into the union's statutes on his own authority, despite the objections and protests of the union. The clause recognised the CP and limited the right to strike to being a 'last resort'.

The union then decided to strike on November 12th for what it 'won' in August.

In fact, many of the agreements and promises of August still remain unfulfilled. The wage concessions have been put back to January 1st by the government, for example.

Whatever its legal status the reborn Polish labour movement continues to grow at a heroic pace. Lech Walesa says that *Solidar-*

Poland: stalemate that can't last

nosc now has ten million members. (The police-state unions claimed 12 million before the strike wave).

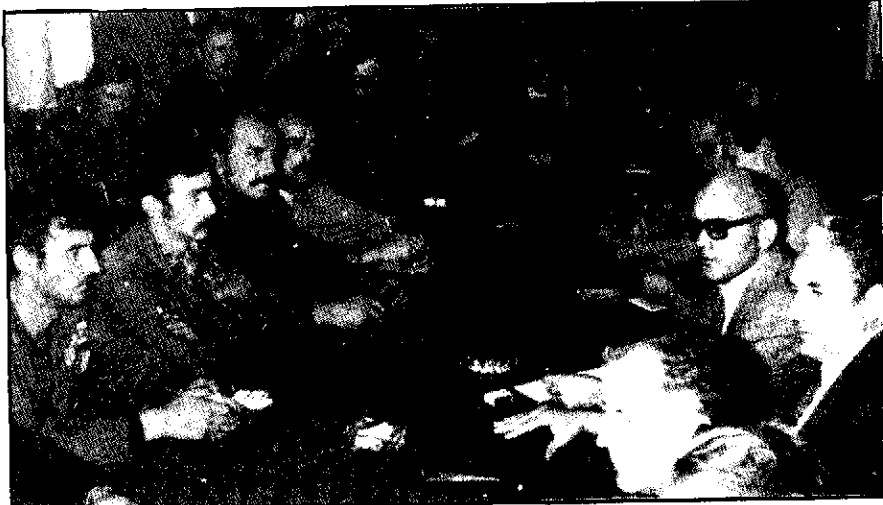
As was inevitable — because there is no freedom of political activity — the workers' movement

against its dissident intellectual supporters in KOR cease.

In fact there is political stalemate amounting to a duality of power in Poland. The self-controlling activity of the workers and peasants and their Catholic

union with the unions. They have the state power, social wealth, and still a massive hold, if no longer a monopoly, on the means of communication, with which to try to wear down the unions.

Their objective is certain-



The bureaucrats' word is worth nothing

uses its comparative freedom to concern itself with issues affecting the whole of Polish society. For example, at the recent negotiations with the government to try to avert the crisis now ticking towards November 12th, *Solidarnosc* championed the right of the small farmers to organise a union, and demanded that repression ag-

intellectual allies could not be suppressed without a bloody and probably prolonged civil war, for which the bureaucracy has not the strength. A Russian invasion would cost them more dearly than Afghanistan or even Hungary in 1956. The Poles would resist.

What is left to the bureaucracy is a war of attri-

tion to re-knit the bureaucratic crust broken and torn in the summer.

Solidarnosc too has committed itself to struggle with the bureaucracy by attrition and by challenging through its own actions the bureaucracy's political monopoly, rather than taking drastic action to remove it (that would bring the Russians in, because

the alternative of not intervening would then be even more costly).

The publicised, soft words of Brezhnev to Kania and Pinkowski, who were summoned to Moscow last week, seems to show that the Russians still retain confidence in the Polish bureaucracy. Though there is, apparently, much ferment and discussion in sections of the 'Party', it remains a stable force pushing from the top to roll back the workers' gains, resisting every forward movement — watching and waiting, entrenched in the state and bureaucratically controlled industry.

It is a stalemate that cannot last long. Massive food shortages, frustration with bureaucratic harassment and double-dealing on one side; and efforts to keep a grip and undo the workers' gains by the bureaucrats on the other even now erode the stalemate, and prepare new clashes.

Nothing short of the taking of power out of the bureaucrats' hands by the workers will decisively secure their interests.

Reportedly there is now much discussion in *Solidarnosc* between 'radicals' increasingly inclined to face this and to go for confrontation, and those, like Walesa, committed to the war of attrition with the bureaucracy, on a terrain controlled by the bureaucracy.

Unless the government gives way, November 12th will mark the beginning of a new round of open struggle — this time more embittered and with the workers less inclined to settle for promises while the bureaucrats remain entrenched in power.

Jamaica: a win for Seaga and the IMF

EDWARD SEAGA (or CIA-ga as it is often spelled) has led the Jamaica Labour Party to a landslide victory over Michael Manley's People's National Party.

The PNP, in terms of ideas something like our Labour Party, while the JLP is like the Tories, came to power in 1972 on a programme of massive public welfare schemes.

Despite occasional socialist-sounding phrases in his speeches and fulsome praise for Fidel Castro, Manley never really challenged the power of domestic or foreign capitalism. His bid to set up an international organisation of bauxite-producing countries — bauxite is Jamaica's most valuable export — foundered on the opposition of Australia and Surinam; his half-hearted land reforms foundered for lack of funds; and the same half-heartedness doomed attempts to control the operations of the international bauxite and alumina companies.

The wrecking plans of Jamaican and international capitalism received an unexpected boost when OPEC jacked up oil prices. Soon nearly three quarters of what Jamaica earned through exports was being spent on oil and servicing Jamaica's growing debt.

The IMF then stepped in to try to force Manley to change course. Manley wanted to give in, but the left in the PNP won out and Jamaica turned for aid to the USSR, its satellites and the radical nationalist regimes of the Middle East.

The more Jamaica turned its back on imperialism, the more the pressure mounted: capitalists withdrew their investments, an international press campaign discouraged tourism (an important source of income and foreign currency) and the JLP, aided by the mass circulation *Gleaner* and a campaign of terror, spread its brand of hysterical anti-communism.

Manley's fall will delight imperialism. It confirms the trend to the right in the Caribbean since the left wing New Jewel Movement took over in Grenada last March. A revolt sympathetic to the NJM on Union Island was put down by the St Vincent Government; in St Lucia the regime turned further to the right; the US used aid for the hurricane damage on Dominica to put pressure on the government of Oliver Seraphine.

Worried by developments in the Caribbean and Central America, imperialism developed a complex strategy, coordinating approaches by Britain, France, the US and Venezuela as well as the IMF. Manley's fall is the biggest prize so far for this strategy.

ANDREW HORNUNG

SPLITS IN AFGHANISTAN

"Communications have been cut off between my people and the world. The Soviets now control all communications", declared Akhtar Mohammed Paktiawal, chief delegate from Afghanistan to UNESCO.

In his speech to the UNESCO conference, he continued: "Afghanistan wants friendly relations with the USSR". But the Russians "have behaved like conquerors: they steal, persecute, and kill".

The decision by Paktiawal and another UNESCO

delegate to denounce the Russian occupation and seek political asylum is the latest of many such decisions by Afghan officials abroad, underlining the isolation of the Russian-backed regime.

Inside Afghanistan, the Afghan army has been reduced by desertions from 80,000 to 35,000 (the Far East Economic Review's estimate) or 20,000 (the Economist's). Factional conflicts rage between the Khalq and the Parcham

factions of the pro-Russian People's Democratic Party.

The Parcham faction of president Karmal is closer to the USSR; but the Khalq is very strong in the army. The Khalq deputy prime minister, Sarwari, has recently been bundled off as ambassador to Outer Mongolia.

Meanwhile Russian helicopter gunships ravage the countryside, trying to put down the rebels. The rebels, divided into numerous tribally-based, backward-looking groups, can do little more than harass and worry the Russians.

But the line-up is clear: the Russian army is suppressing, not just CIA agents (though agents there undoubtedly are in the area), but the huge majority of the people of Afghanistan.

MARTIN THOMAS

Iran jostles for position

AFTER five weeks there is no sign of an early end to the war between Iraq and Iran. The Iraqis have failed to destroy the Iranian resistance in the oil towns of Abadan and Khorramshahr and are becoming bogged down in a war of attrition.

The longer the war goes on, the more problems both the Iraqi and Iranian regimes face. The Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein promised that the war would result in a quick victory, but now faces problems of mobilising enough manpower to keep the war going without provoking unrest. He has been forced to declare ever more sweeping war aims in order to keep up morale.

The Iranians, with their oil supply out of action, their military hardware either destroyed or damaged, and largely dependent on imports of food, desperately need to find allies who will supply them with materials and arms.

Therefore, as the military campaign gets bogged down, both sides have stepped up diplomatic activity.

Iran and the US have been involved in negotiations about releasing the hostages in return for, among other things, unfreezing Iranian financial assets and fulfilling the arms orders outstanding when diplomatic relations were broken off. On Carter's side, there is the pressure of the elections, but also a wish to prevent Iran from being forced to turn to the USSR.

At the time of writing, no final agreement has been reached on the hostages, but Iran needs supplies, arms and spares so urgently that some sort of deal is likely to go through. The US would also like to bolster the Army and right wing in Iran as part of an attempt to draw the teeth of Khomeini's 'Islamic Revolution'.

According to the *Observer*, Israel is also supplying arms to Iran, fearing Iraq as the strongest power which takes an extreme anti-Israeli position. The report states that spares for Phantom jets, helicopters and missiles have been sent by Israel, and it is possible that Israel is acting as a direct conduit for the US.

On the other side, the Iraqis are better off for military equipment and oil. The USSR has apparently continued to supply them with arms, including 135 tanks, since the war began.

King Hussein of Jordan has also backed Iraq, offering to police Kurdistan and other areas of Iraq in order to free Iraqi troops for the front.

The tangled diplomatic web represents a jostling between a number of reactionary regimes, trying to use the war to promote their interests. US imperialism is becoming more directly involved.

While socialists cannot support either Iran or Iraq, we must oppose any attempt by the US to use the war to stabilise their authority in the region.

BRUCE ROBINSON

Phalange wins out in Lebanon

THE MILITIAS of the right wing Maronite Christian Phalange (Kata'ib) Party have finally crushed the rival militias of ex-President Chamoun. After four days of fighting, the Phalangists have established control over the last Chamounist stronghold in the Beirut suburb of Am Rumaneh.

Attacks

Meanwhile the Israeli state has increased its attacks into Lebanon, bombing Palestinians almost as far north as Beirut itself. At the same time fighting has broken out between supporters of Iraq and Iran in the current war in the Gulf. Lebanon, once again, has reached boiling point.

Lebanon is permanently occupied by two 'peace-keeping' armies — an Arab one, mostly Syrian (which was responsible for the attempted smashing of the leftist and Palestinian forces during the Civil War four years ago), and a United Nations army. Also, the south of Lebanon is controlled by the private army of the extreme right-wing Major Haddad, strongly supported by Israel.

The domination of one particular right wing Maronite group, and the renewed Zionist offensive are a set back for the Lebanese masses and the thousands of Palestinian refugees who live, mostly in camps, in Lebanon. The new strength the Phalangists have achieved from their victory, in alliance with the reactionary Zion-

ist state of Israel, could well lead to an intensification of their effort to remove the Palestinian presence from Lebanon. At present Lebanon is a crucial base for the Palestinian resistance.

Right

Socialists should call for the withdrawal of all troops from Lebanon and support the Lebanese left and the Palestinians against Syrian, Israeli and right-wing Maronite oppression. Lebanon — the commercial centre of the Middle East — is crucial for any socialist revolution in the area; a victory for the right wing there is a defeat for workers internationally.

CLIVE BRADLEY

Eileen Crosbie: too little, too late?

THE INDUSTRIAL Tribunal looking into the sacking of nursery teacher Eileen Crosbie has reported that since she disobeyed the instructions of her headmaster, she had broken her contract, and therefore Nottinghamshire County Council was quite right in sacking her.

Perhaps the National Executive and the officials of the National Union of Teachers are surprised by this verdict. Nottinghamshire teachers certainly are not. For months now the three local NUT associations have been sending in resolutions calling for indefinite strike action as the only way to win Eileen Crosbie's job back.

She was sacked for acting in line with official union instructions and refusing to teach a class of 40 under-5s with the assistance of only one nursery nurse.

No matter how much we might rant and rage against this 'hard' authority, the bulk of the blame must be

laid at the door of the NUT National Action (or Inaction) Committee, who have time and time again asked to be kicked in the teeth by the Council in order to show how reasonable they are.

The NUT officials saw the tribunal as an ultimate salvation, and constantly offered us bromides about how well it was going for the NUT and how the County's solicitor was being made to look an idiot. But they fell for delaying tactics, and finally lost.

The local Action Committee went down to NUT headquarters on 30th October to press for more action. The outcome was that there will be a national rally in Nottingham on Saturday 22nd or 29th November, followed by a ballot of NUT members on strike action.

NUT activists must make sure that the action is not too little, too late, and mobilise as many members as possible for the rally and ballot.

IVAN WELLS

NUPE must ELECT officials

"BRO. FISHER will soon be retiring, making the method of selection of the General Secretary a vital issue for NUPE members.

"Do we want his successor to be appointed in the same manner as the Parliamentary Labour Party select the leader of the Party? Or do we want our leader to be elected by the ordinary members (and also subject to regular re-election afterwards)?"

"We call on Bro. Fisher to delay his retirement until after the next Rules Revision Conference in 1982, so that the full issue of election of union officials can be adequately discussed before his successor takes office."

At the NUPE Wales Division Annual Conference in Llandudno on October 18th, a number of supporters of the Rank and File Mobilising Committee got together and put out this appeal.

NUPE activists and full-time officials have played a particularly large part in Wales in the campaign to democratise the structure and practices of the Labour Party. So it is very appropriate

that we should begin to put our own house in order. It would be sheer hypocrisy to argue for democracy in the Labour Party while ignoring the undemocratic structure of our own union, where all officials are appointed.

A motion to elect the General Secretary was heavily defeated at the last NUPE Conference, but it came up as the last item on the agenda and was only given 15 minutes debating time. A motion to elect all full-timers was not debated at all.

NUPE members in the local authorities and the health service are facing yet another round of cuts and yet another ridiculously low pay offer. We will need a more democratic union for an effective fight against these attacks.

The struggle needs to begin now if we are to make any impact at the 1982 Rules Revision Conference.

MARTIN BARCLAY
[NUPE, Cardiff Royal Infirmary]

Copies of the appeal can be obtained from Geoff Williams, 8 Piercefield Place, Cardiff.

become a SOCIALIST ORGANISER supporter

To make **Socialist Organiser** a real campaigning paper that can organise the left in the movement, it needs its own organised activist support — and money.

Local supporters' groups are being established in most major towns to build a real base for the paper.

Supporters are being asked to undertake to sell a minimum of 6 papers an issue and to contribute at least £1 a month (20p for unwaged). So becoming a supporter helps build our circulation and gives the paper a firmer financial base.

If you like **Socialist Organiser**, think it's doing a good job, but realise that it can't possibly do enough unless you help, become a card-carrying supporter.

Fill in the form below and return to:
Socialist Organiser, 5 Stamford Hill, London N16.

I want more information ☐ / I wish to become a **Socialist Organiser** supporter ☐

Name

Address

CLP

Trade Union

7 MONTHS after the steelworkers were pushed back to work, the Tories are planning a similar fight with the Civil Service workers.

Prior to their election victory, a Tory strategy document identified steel-

by STEPHEN CORBISHLEY

workers and civil servants as two key groups of workers the Tories had to beat before taking on other more powerful sections of the labour movement.

The Tories' plans for the Civil Service trade unions are simple: a public sector incomes policy of between 6-10%, which would cut living standards by 10% or more. In fact there are serious discussions in Whitehall about the tactic of offering Civil Servants a "virtually nil rise", by clawing back part of the 1979 pay increase and increasing the amount deducted for pensions.

This of course would be designed to push the civil service workers into a confrontation, as BSC did with the steelworkers.

The Tories have torn up a National Pay agreement signed in 1974, with the excuse that the last Labour government did it too.

The response of the Civil Service union leadership has been predictable. They

Tories target civil service

have made 'rude noises' about Thatcher, while trying to find legal loopholes that will give them the figures prepared by the Pay Research Unit that should have been handed over, under the terms of the National Pay Agreement by November 15th.

These figures are generally estimated to show a possible increase of between 17-20% on a pay comparison basis. In the meantime, the top leadership of the 5 Civil Service non-industrial unions are trying to identify ways of organising action against the Tories, without losing

control of it like the ISTC leadership did with the steelworkers.

Inside CPSA, the Broad Left attempted three months ago to win the necessary branch votes required under the constitution to have a recall special conference to discuss pay by the end of November. We failed.

Instead the right-wing NEC have planned a conference for the end of January at which they plan to defeat the push by the left to reject any chance of returning to the PRU based pay system. They want to ensure that any pay claim

Labour Left debates trade union activity

by Jonathan Hammond

TWO Socialist Organiser supporters were among the major speakers at a Labour Party rank and file trade unionists' conference on November 1st, convened by the Labour Coordinating Committee.

In the first session, 'unemployment and the right to work', Pat Longman, speaking on behalf of Women's Fightback, stressed the ideological attacks on women's right to work.

She quoted Social Services Minister Patrick Jenkin's notorious remark about the Good Lord intending women to stay at home, and drew the conference's attention to the effects of new technology, in particular word processors, on women's employment.

She also mentioned the tactics of blackmail the authorities had used in closing down St Benedict's hospital, and the feelings of guilt deliberately being inducted in working women by the Government's plans to drive them back into the home.

In this session, she followed a vivid account by Gardner's convenor Tommy Macafee of the occupation there, significant because it marks the first positive break in the apparently fatalistic acceptance of the present wave of sackings by the working class.

Stephen Corbishley's contribution — praised as 'tremendously important' by conference chairperson Michael Meacher — was on the experience of the Broad Left in the CPSA.

He referred to the Broad Left's campaign for democra-



Pat Longman. Photo: Angela Taff.

tisation of the union and its successful battle to change the block voting system to the individual vote at workplace meetings.

Phil Holt, who spoke on the Broad Left in POEU, opposed this on the basis that it had led to the Right gaining control in the CPSA. Corbishley argued that a left leadership was worth little if it was not based on active support by the rank and file.

A democratic system is an essential precondition for active rank and file involvement which can then give strength to the leadership faced by a serious challenge from the employers.

As a member of the Broad Left of his union's NEC during 1978-80, Corbishley felt that the Broad Left had

failed because it caved in on pay and public expenditure cuts, and made little attempt to involve the rank and file in its strategy.

He emphasised the links between the need for rank and file struggle in the unions and in the Labour Party to ensure a Labour Government that was truly a workers' government.

The conference was, in many ways, a rather elitist exercise by the LCC executive, without any real decisions being taken. But to their credit the LCC representatives recognised this weakness and undertook to convene another conference in the New Year which will be democratically organised and take decisions on a delegate basis.

put forward will be 'moderate', possibly linked to productivity dealing of some sort or other.

Within the National Broad Left the debate is yet to be concluded on the tactics for going forward. The National Broad Left Conference on November 8th will face two options: one put forward by the Militant group, for some sort of tactical reliance on the use of PRU figures (if they can be obtained) to help 'legitimate' industrial action; and the other put forward by the 'hard left' for a claim of 20% across the board, with a £14 floor, inflation protection for wages and a complete break with PRU.

In any case, preparations for the conflict with the government must be started now. This means first and foremost that members have to be won to the need for industrial action, and all-out strikes, rather than just strikes in selected computer centres. There must be workplace branch meetings to discuss strikes.

And we must explain that this strike if it is won will be a major blow to the Tory government. If it is lost, it will be the start of further attacks on the living standards of other public sector workers, NALGO members as well as firemen and miners.

When the bosses back a jobs demo

FOR TWO hours on Wednesday 12th November the bosses of many hosiery firms in Leicester have given their workers time off with pay to march in support of import controls.

On the platform, leaders of the hosiery unions will sit alongside bosses and Tory MPs, like Nigel Lawson, member for Melton. These are the very same union leaders that have watched thousands of hosiery and textile workers lose their jobs without any opposition.

There is bound to be a strong contingent from the National Front on the march. The nationalist demand for import controls is only one step away from the Nazi slogan of 'British jobs for British workers'.

Socialist Organiser and Women's Fightback are cooperating with other organisations to build opposition to the march and for a real fight in defence of jobs.

There are many small hosiery factories in Leicester but most are owned by a few multinationals like Courtaulds and Coates Patons, which also have factories in places like Hong Kong.

So it's the same firms that are responsible for cheap imports who are sacking workers here. It's the rotten nationalist idea of import controls, peddled by bosses and trade union bureaucrats alike, that we have to hit on the head if we are to start a real fight against job losses.

COLLEEN MOLLOY

Isle of
Grain:
still
waiting

"WE'RE STILL waiting", Isle of Grain shop steward Malcolm Collar told Socialist Organiser.

Two weeks ago, at the last minute before they were due to be expelled from the TUC, the AUEW, the CEU, and the EETPU accepted the TUC's scheme for ending the dispute at the Isle of Grain.

The GMWU laggards who

were sacked from the site last August and have been picketing ever since, are to get their jobs back. The scabs from the AUEW, CEU, EETPU and NUSMW are to be found other jobs on site.

That's what the agreement says. But down at the Grain nothing has changed. "It could be months", Malcolm Collar told Social-

ist Organiser.

And during those months the union bureaucrats could fix up some deal to deprive the laggards of the strong site organisation and strict safety regulations which led the employers to lock them out in the first place. GMWU members must be on their guard.

MARTIN THOMAS

Socialist Organiser

Fund: £430 still needed

Not a very good start. Our fund drive has received £69.21 in the last fortnight.

There is some good news — regular contributions are starting to come in, at 5p, 25p, 50p or £1 a week.

But our budget calls for £500 monthly in regular supporters' contributions plus £500 fund drive on top of that.

Where does the money go? Like every left wing paper, our sales run at a loss. The Fleet Street press makes its profits

through advertising, not sales income).

On top of the regular bills for printing, supplies and overheads, there are vital things to do each week.

The November 29th demonstration against unemployment, in Liverpool will cost us £200. We'll be printing 1,000 extra papers, producing 2,000 posters, and doing placards too.

Send money to: Socialist Organiser, 5 Stamford Hill, London N16.

BL: ALL OUT!

FOR THE LAST three years BL workers have been flogged off with minimal pay rises.

Last year, and the year before that, it was 5%. At the same time, tens of thousands of jobs have been slashed, plants have been closed, the 92-page management document on shop stewards' rights and work conditions has been introduced, and our conditions are under constant attack.

The much vaunted bonus scheme (supposedly worth £15 a week) introduced as the sweetener with the '5% and 92 pages' package last year, has been worth less than £5 in total to most BL workers.

Now Michael Edwards wants BL workers to accept yet another pay insult: this time it's 6.8%, or in real terms, a 10% wage cut. At mass meetings throughout BL last week, the overwhelming majority of workers gave their reply: 'Stuff your 6.8%! All out for the £17 claim!'

On Monday November 3rd senior stewards met in Coventry and responded to the shop floor militancy by calling for a national strike from Tuesday 11th.

Edwards and his friends in the media have been talking a lot about the 'sense of realism' and the 'new spirit of co-operation' that is supposed to have swept over the BL workers in the last year.

The truth is very different: BL workers are angry and bitter, but the combination of blackmail from the

company and treachery from the national union officials has resulted in a series of crushing defeats (notably over the Derek Robinson victimisation in November 1979 and the 92 page document in April 1980). Inevitably this resulted in considerable demoralisation on the shop floor, and the bosses have been able to take advantage of this to force in the 'changed working practices' (mobility, speed-ups, etc.) contained in the 92-page document.

But last week's meetings gave the lie to the bosses' claims that the workforce had turned their back on militancy and were willing to accept further sacrifices to help the company.

The mood at Longbridge (where the 12,000-strong meeting voted overwhelmingly for a strike) was summed up by the convenor, Jack Adams. "To read the press, you would think that the Metro had been produced by a handful of managers and a few robots, but it was the workforce which got that car out on schedule despite all the difficulties, and it is the workforce who are building

it now under very bad conditions and for very little money.

"The company talk about realism, but all we're ask-

BY JIM DENHAM

23,000 (16 plants) against. The company issued figures suggesting that their majority was much smaller (36,000-32,000), and



Will Duffy back the BL workers?

ing for is a realistic living wage. Most of us are lucky to take home much more than £65, and you simply cannot pay the bills on that kind of money!"

The final vote across the whole company was 42,000 (19 plants) for a strike, and

argued that such a close result was no mandate for a strike.

But the senior stewards' meeting on Monday examined the figures in detail, and there can be no doubt that the company's figures are a crude fabrication

intended to demoralise the workers.

The two biggest plants, Longbridge and Cowley, voted overwhelmingly in favour, and even plants like Rover Solihull and the Land Rover (where the vote was narrowly against striking, mainly because of widespread short-time working) are ready to respond to the national strike call.

In a panic the company held a secret meeting with the national officials of all the unions on Sunday 2nd. The officials heard BL's usual combination of pleas, threats and blackmail, and there can be little doubt that many of them would have liked to have been able to capitulate then and there.

But even these seasoned sell-out merchants were unable to ignore the results of the mass meetings.

However, at Monday's senior stewards' meeting, Grenville Hawley (T&G automotive secretary, and chairman of the Negotiating Committee) opposed the strike call and pushed instead for a two day strike on the 10th and 11th November! EETPU officials opposed any strike at all, and argued for acceptance of the 6.8%.

But senior stewards, notably Arthur Harper from Dreads Lane and Bob Fryer from Cowley Assembly, argued strongly for an all-out strike and won the day.

Five days' notice of strike action was issued from the meeting. As officials from all the major unions (including the AUEW) were present when the strike notice was given, they should all be committed to making the action official.

However, BL workers have already experienced the cowardice and treachery of the AUEW in particular, and it would clearly be foolish to place any confidence in these people.

Rank and file strike committees based on the shop stewards committees but open to other militants must be formed in every plant. These committees must be coordinated nationally to ensure that the officials are unable to sabotage this strike as they have done in the past.

All negotiations must be controlled by a delegate conference of stewards from the plants.

Most important of all, BL workers must link up with other groups of workers (notably Rolls Royce, Ford, and the miners) who are also coming into confrontation with their employers and the government.

As one Longbridge worker commented, "Let's kill two birds with one stone, Edwards and the Government".

Gardners workers say Follow this example

THE SIT-IN strike against redundancies of 2400 workers at Gardners in Eccles continues to gain support.

The management have tried to organise a ballot [about whether or not to have a ballot] to divide the workforce. The Manchester Evening News, the local bosses' gutter paper, claimed this week that 1500 ballot papers had been returned, most of them saying yes.

This is impossible — most of the workers are not interested in the ballot at all and have not returned the papers, or have ripped them up. And the management have refused to have their figures checked by an independent observer.

As one striker told *SO*: "They're just trying to undermine the strike".

Gardners is owned by Hawker Siddley (who last year made £120 million profit). The occupation is against plans to sack 500 workers.

It is a vital struggle for the whole labour movement. The Gardners work-

**CLIVE BRADLEY
& PAUL MUDDLE
report on the
Gardners sit-in**

ers, in taking on their bosses, are providing a lead for the fightback that has to be mounted against the Tory government.

The Gardners workers themselves need to defeat the threat to the livelihoods of the people of Eccles. In the area where Gardners is the biggest employer, there are 55 applicants for every job.

And the Gardners fight

must be taken up by the whole labour movement, to stop redundancies.

Judging by the national support Gardners have received, many workers across the country realise this. The strikers have organised extensive factory visiting throughout Manchester — for example in bus depots, where Greater Manchester Transport is trying to lay off 1500 workers. Many workers have said the transport unions should follow Gardners example.

They have also organised trips to all parts of the country — for example to Sheffield, Birmingham and miners' lodges in South Wales. The response has been excellent. In some places support committees have been set up.

On the CND march in London on 26th October, the strikers collected £1200. Hawker Siddley should be nationalised under work-



Seizing the factory, fighting for jobs. Photo: John Sturrock (Report).

ers' control. In fact, Hawker Siddley do not even claim Gardners is unprofitable; they just want to move production elsewhere.

We can't afford bosses like this, who, as one striker said, "wouldn't mind throwing 2400 people on the dole". We should get rid of the parasites.

One of the strikers, when asked what he thought of the idea of nationalisation, said: "If it was for the benefit of the working man, great". It would be — provided the workers fought to keep the control they have won with their sit-in.

The Gardners workers need support — not just

financial support, though that is essential, but also strike action in solidarity. It can be the beginning of a national fightback, uniting the labour movement against unemployment.

As Garry Marsh, one of the strikers, said to *SO*: "We just want people to look at Gardners and say: we'll do it too".