

Socialist Organiser

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Join the LABOUR PARTY

Write to 150 Walworth Rd, London SE17 1JT

Pickets are key to civil service victory

by Stephen Corbishley

LAST SATURDAY, 25th, two managers led a squad of heavies that broke through the civil service picket line at Companies House.

They pushed into the building, smashed into the room where post was being stored, grabbed it and left.

This bizarre raid shows the increasing pressure some civil service bosses are under as the civil service unions' strike goes into its 10th week.

But the Tories are not budging. While Thatcher flew off to the Middle East, Soames made the latest 'offer' to the union leaders: no extra money for 1981, and vague formulas

for 1982.

Even though the Tories are losing probably 40% of revenue, and their short term economic strategy is under pressure, for them this battle is a political one, about retaining the confidence of the bosses and the bankers.

ALL-OUT

The central topic in every union meeting for the last week has been: how do we escalate? when will the union leaders move? how do we organise for all-out strike action?

Some groups have already started. After the walkout over the Navy scabbing at Faslane,

the DHSS offices in Aberdeen and Dundee have come out on indefinite unofficial strike. And an unofficial stoppage closed the big DHSS/DE benefit-paying computer centre in Livingston, Scotland, for three days from Monday 27th.

The West of Scotland coordinating committee has already called for an all-out strike from May 25th, and workers in Humberside have put an emergency motion to CPSA conference demanding all-out action from June 1st. Branches in East London DHSS and DE are already agitating for action to be started sooner.

In Manchester, a meeting of over 100 activists voted for extended all-out action.

Divided between the 'left-sounding' bureaucrats of CPSA and SCPS who want to bend to the aroused mood of anger, and the IRSF and IPCS who are terrified by where this strike is leading them, the national union leaders are placing great stress on the success of the recently-started rotating strike action in Britain's major airports. They have refused to bring out the docks Customs and Excise workers.

EDGE

We need all-out action — plus flying pickets to keep the strike solid and to hit other areas like the miners did in 1972:

docks, airports, freight terminals, railway depots.

The pickets are the way to give an all-out strike the militant edge that will bring speedy victory. And that's why bringing out the DE/DHSS benefit-paying computer centres in Reading and Livingston will be counter-productive.

The solidarity of other workers cannot be won while we cut off millions of claimants and unemployed from their only source of money. The Tories cannot be and must not be relied upon to look after the unemployed. We must maintain this service to the working class, while hitting every service to the ruling class.

France: 670,000 vote Troskyis

by Martin Thomas

"IN THE first place, my didature is a Left candidate against the candidates of Right, Giscard and Chirac who are very directly, also as a family matter, the representatives of the privilege, the wealthy, the rich, and those who aren't suffering from the crisis."

"But I also want to present a face of the Left different from Marchais and Mitterrand's."

"You can't vote for Mitterrand without first giving him a warning: that would mean approving his past record, belonging to governments which pursued anti working class policies, and giving him a blank cheque..."

"A warning must also be given to Marchais, telling him that he can't play with impunity with the hopes of the workers. You can't approve Marchais' policy towards the migrant workers, or support he gives to the Euzeland leaders for their intervention in Afghanistan and perhaps give them for intervention in Poland tomorrow..."

That was the call of Arlette Laguiller, the Trotskyist candidate in the French presidential election. And on Sunday 26th, 670,000 voters gave those 'warnings' by voting for her.

They voted for a candidate who said that workers rely on their own struggle and who campaigned specifically against high arms spending, calling for the money to be used towards creating useful jobs instead.

Those 670,000 will be voting for Mitterrand against Giscard in the second round run-off. But, most importantly, they will be continuing the struggle whether Mitterrand wins or Giscard.

670,000 votes for Laguiller was good, but less than some comrades hoped: in the previous presidential election, in 1974, she got 595,000 and another Trotskyist, Krivine, got 94,000.

The biggest voting change was the Communist Party slump to 15% of the vote. Workers were disgusted by the cynical antics of CP candidate Georges Marchais, the tough-guy jousting with the Socialist Party ("we'll organise mass strikes if Mitterrand wins and doesn't have CP ministers in his government and blatant racism (a call for a total ban on immigration, support for CP municipal councils who are complacent about "too many" immigrants in their areas).").

Thatcher's blood-offering to Paisley

BOBBY SANDS will probably be dead by the time this issue of Socialist Organiser goes on sale.

All the signs point to a bone-headed Thatcherite determination not to budge.

Sands, who is 27 years old, has spent almost the whole of the past decade in jail. He symbolises Catholic youth in Northern Ireland under Partition and Direct Rule.

Thatcher represents decades of determination by successive British governments to maintain the unjust and unworkable partition of Ireland.

The Tory government dare not offend the Paisleyites. And it is greedy for a victory over a captive, with no resources to fall back on other than the will to die rather than accept criminalisation and prison-regime degradation for himself and his fellow prisoners of war.

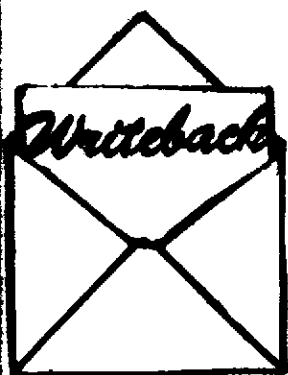
Thatcher would be the last person to understand that, in moral and even in political terms, the victory will go to Sands, who surely believes what James Connolly, the revolutionary socialist and Republican shot after the 1916 Rising, wrote:

"If you strike at, imprison, or kill us, out of your prisons and graves we will still evoke a spirit that will thwart you, and maybe, raise a force that will destroy you. We defy you! Do your worst!"

The shame of the British labour movement is that we let them, Labour and Tory governments alike, continue to do their worst.



Above: picket of Fianna Fail conference in Dublin. Left: Bobby Sands



Write back to Socialist
Organiser, c/o 214 Sickert
Court, London N1 2SY.

Neither jibes nor insults

AS OLIVER Maurer and John
Cunningham's criticism (SO
39) of my article *The SWP and
the Labour Party* raises some
important points, I would like to
reply briefly.

The flea-elephant analogy
is a rather hackneyed image
often used to give verbal force
to an argument about relative
size and to induce a sense of
helplessness to bring people back to
reality where inflated estimates
of self-importance are operating
in their minds.

I would never criticise the
SWP for being small. What is to
be criticised is their failure to
live up to this, their delusions of
grandeur, their inflated belief
that they constitute an alter-
native to the Labour Party for
the hands of workers. In this
situation it is essential to argue
honestly that their assessments
suffer from a politically debilitat-
ing lack of proportion.

A suggestion that the SWP

are the bearers of bubonic
plague or irritants to innocent
but unhygienic canines was
intended or, I hope, understood.
I have in fact often used this
phrase with members of the
SWP without the argument
being inhibited or it being per-
ceived as a gibe or insult.

I do agree that more attention
should be paid to the language
we use. One point, for example,
which the comrades do not
make, is the sexist connotations
of 'shrew', for which I apol-
ogise.

2. There was no intention to
deride the SWP's work at Gard-
ners. What is at stake once
more is their illusions of grand-
eur. There is all the difference
in the world between admirable
support work and the leader-
ship of important disputes.

I still think the article makes
that distinction. Gardners was
not the SWP's Minneapolis
or even Cowley Assembly Plant,
by a very long chalk. The polit-
ical direction of the dispute was
'Broad Left' — the political
basis of its leaders such as John
Tocher and Tommy McAfee.

3. If the SWP can't mobilise
its own members, who can? The
problem is that it lacks the abil-
ity to influence and mobilise
wider potentially important lay-
ers of workers in the way even
the CP did from the '20s to the
'60s. It is in no position to mobil-
ise workers on the scale of the
LCDTU a decade ago.

The problem again is that it
does not come to terms with this
— witness the light-minded resolu-
tions for strike action passed
at Rank and File conferences
with no chance of them being
acted upon.

4. Again, if the SWP is not
actively committed to its own
front, the Right to Work Cam-
paign, then who is? Fair dos,
this campaign was very useful
indeed in highlighting the prob-
lem of unemployment; much
less so in mobilising support to
fight it.

I think the reason for this
stems from the SWP's failure
to grasp the powerful attach-
ment of workers to the existing
labour movement and the fact
that the existing leadership
runs the show not simply
through organisational man-

oeuvres, but through political
ideas.

They failed to take the fight
into the unions on this basis in
a consistent day-to-day fashion,
and have relied on spasmodic
campaigns. If you are impatient,
try to walk around existing
structures and establish your
own substitutes, you will be
avoiding the real political prob-
lems.

You will be leaving the
important terrain to the right
wing, and most important you
will not be very successful. In
other words, the same errors
are at work in the SWP's 'rank
and file-ism' as in their attitude
to the Labour Party.

5. Once again, the SWP are
to be praised for their initia-
tive on the Anti Nazi League.
Active commitment, however, is
insufficient. What is the polit-
ical basis for that commitment?

My own view would be that
the SWP failed to attempt to
educate and develop the youth
attracted to the ANL by raising,
for example, the question of the
link between immigration con-
trols and racism, by pushing for
the ANL to support workers'
defence, by arguing against
those who supported state bans.

6. Surely the comrades are
not seriously arguing that the
SWP's internal democracy is in
any way adequate. They should
talk to the members of the var-
ious expelled oppositions from
Workers' Fight to the ISO on
this question.

This is a key area, where we
have to tell the truth and not try
to brylcream SWP members
with diplomatic evasions. The
SWP represents a gross carica-
ture of the democratic central-
ism it claims to support.

7. Now who's into insults and
jibes? 'Crude Trotskyist' —
moi? My mum says that's like
calling Nat Cole a rough blues
shouter or Viv Richards a crude
slogger!

Finally, I hope that future
writers will not take the com-
rades' advice on pussyfooting,
but will continue to express
themselves thoughtfully but,
where needed, forcefully. The
best elements in the SWP, as in
the labour movement generally,
appreciate a little plain talking.

JOHN McILROY

False impression of Conference on the cuts

I THINK that Val Woodward
(SO 39) gives a wrong impres-
sion of the facts concerning the
Lothian Regional Labour Party's
special conference on the cuts.

It is not true that the special
conference was called to test the
'feasibility' of a 'no rate rise'
policy. The Regional Party was
proposing that a campaign be
built over the coming year on a
'no rate rise' basis, with partic-
ular emphasis on the trade un-
ions, in order to test its 'feasib-
ility' — not, as comrade Wood-
ward suggests, to decide there
and then whether or not it was
feasible.

The purpose of the confer-
ence was to bring together lab-
our movement bodies through-
out the region to gain support
for such a move.

As for the delegates who
made it clear that 'it would
mean conflict with the unions',
these were mainly the branch
officials of the local unions —
many of whom had not even con-
sulted their membership on the
question of rate rises, never
mind attempted to build support
for such a stand. But this is the
crux of the whole issue.

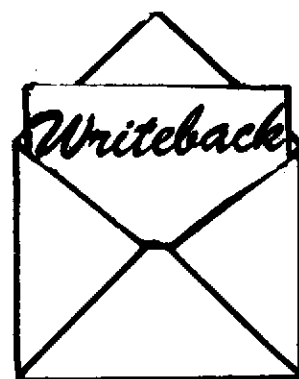
At a Regional Labour Party
aggregate held at the end of last
year, there was general agree-
ment that rate rises meant a
cut in working-class living
standards and would become
impossible anyway because of
proposed government legisla-
tion. There was also a trend pre-
sent at the aggregate, and domi-
nant at the special confer-
ence, that argued 'people have
to pay for their services', and
'we would have to convince
people the services were 'value
for money'.

This, coupled with the un-
willingness of the local officials
even to attempt to win support
for a 'no rate rise' policy has re-
duced the Regional Labour Party
campaign to an effort to
convince the working class that
rate rises are inevitable to
maintain services until the gov-
ernment stops cutting back on

the Rate Support Grant.

It is this aspect of the cam-
paign which I and other SO
supporters have continued to
attack, while constantly pledg-
ing and trying to build support
for the Council's 'no cuts'
policy.

JOE BAXTER,
Edinburgh.



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WORKERS' ACTION

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Dissident, anti-Soviet, or just plain mad

IF WESTERN science tends to
serve capital rather than the
 lofty goal of truth it aspires to,
science under the Russian bur-
eauocracy isn't exactly a bowl of
cherries, as Dr Anatoly Koryagin
has found at the cost of his
freedom.

Consultant psychiatrist to
the dissident Working Commis-
sion to Investigate the Use of
Psychiatry for Political Purpos-
es, he independently examined
people confined to, or threaten-
ed to confinement in, Russian
mental hospitals.

In an article in 'The Lancet',
Koryagin states that none of the
people he examined were ment-
ally ill. They had been classified
as such because they had said
or done 'anti-Soviet' things. He
points out that none of the 'pat-
ients' had been misfits. 'All
these people were 'positive'
Soviet citizens with real pros-
pects of succeeding in society'.

Government 'psychiatrists'
diagnosed 70% of them as
psychopaths and 30% as schizo-
phrenics. In most cases they
were said to be 'paranoid'.

One government psychiatrist
said of one patient examined by
Koryagin, 'No normal person
can be opposed to the Workers'
and Peasants' State'.

Koryagin now faces 12 years
in prison followed by exile for
'anti-Soviet agitation'.



Space shuttle

LIKE MANY SO readers, I was
very impressed with the flight
and landing of the Space Shuttle
(after the dissident computer
had been dealt with).

Many of the projects made
possible by a relatively cheap

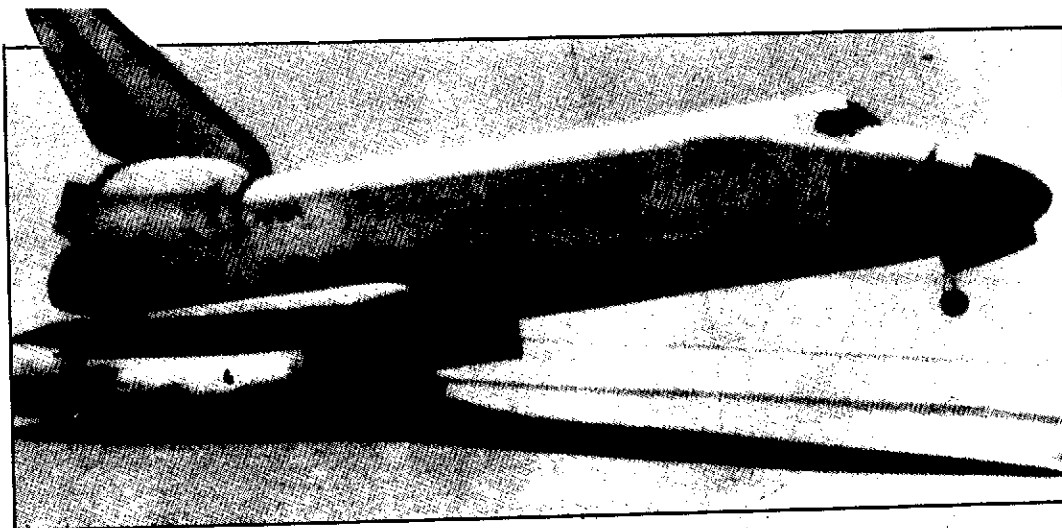
re-usable form of space trans-
port (in conjunction with the
orbiting space-lab due in 1983)
will tell us more about our en-
vironment, the sun, planets and
stars, while other projects in-
volve experiments or industrial
processes only possible under
the weightless conditions of
space.

I am sure that the socialist
society we are aiming for will
find resources to continue this
sort of peaceful use of space.
However, it's not going to be
all solar energy and weather
forecasts now, as it's the United

Imperialist States of America
which flies the Shuttle.

One third of the Shuttle's
missions will be devoted to 'de-
fence' — putting spy satellites
in orbit, or communication
satellites for military command-
ers. The US Department of De-
fence will also test laser beam
weapons to knock out 'enemy'
satellites and missiles.

This will add a new twist to
the arms race spiral and result
in more resources being wasted,
which might otherwise go
towards satisfying the needs of
the working people of the world.



The shuttle touches down

IUDs: 50 years of neglect

WOMEN USING intra-uterine
contraceptive devices (the IUD
or 'coil') have long been known
to be more likely to get pelvic
inflammatory disease, caused by
bacteria going up the Fallopian
tubes, which can cause sterility
among other problems.

This has been thought to be
because bacteria can pass up the

tail of the device, which protrud-
es through the cervix (or neck of
womb) into the vagina and is
used to check that the coil is still
in place. Indeed, one pioneer
of IUD contraception removed
the tails from his devices 50
years ago because of this fear.

However, 18 years ago, nylon
tails were reintroduced for some
IUDs.

A mere four years ago, the
presence of a tail was found to
play a role in causing pelvic
inflammatory disease, and the
association of IUDs with PID
has been regularly reported
since then. However, only re-
cently has it been proved that
IUDs with tails cause bacteria
to enter the womb.

Now, four years ago it was
shown that the healthy womb
[uterus] is free of bacteria
[unlike the healthy vagina,
which has quite a large popula-
tion of bacteria, as has the
mouth and skin and guts of the
normal human]. It has also been
shown that bacteria are introdu-
ced to the womb when IUDs
are put in, but they are all gone
after a month. The healthy
uterus must produce something
that kills off the bacteria.

But in a survey of 22 women
with IUDs who were having

hysterectomies [removal of the
womb], published three weeks
ago in the British Medical Jour-
nal, it was found that while the
five women with tail-less IUDs
had bacteria-free wombs, 15 out
of 17 with tailed IUDs had bac-
teria in their wombs, which were
potential causes of disease.
[None of the women were actual-
ly suffering from any disease
from this — many other factors,
such as stress, may need to be
working before bacteria can
cause disease].

Not only does the tail allow
bacteria to enter the womb,
it seems to stop the womb from
protecting itself [perhaps by
irritating the skin of the cervix,
which normally seems to pro-
duce the bacteria-killing sub-
stance]. Since many healthy
vaginas contain potential causes
of disease, it is clearly danger-
ous for IUDs with tails to be
used. [That's on top of the other
problems of IUDs, such as pain-
ful, heavy periods].

So why is the tail still used?
And why was this research not
done before?

This result could have been
obtained 50 years ago! It is
typical of the neglect of women's
problems by the medical estab-
lishment.

Fund falls short by £141

Not very good. On the 28th of the month, the total
so far for April stands at £359 — £141 short of the
£500 we need each month.

There's no mystery why: comrades have been con-
centrating their efforts on the Labour Movement
Press Defence Fund, which has received nearly
£1,000 so far. But we need 'defence' against our
creditors as well as against the WRP and the libel
case!

Send money to : SO, 214 Sickert Court, London
N1 2SY. Cheques payable to Socialist Organiser.

Why thousands struck for Sands

MARY GREAVES
reports from Belfast

BY THE time this article is published, Bobby Sands, Republican OC in H-Block and Westminster MP, may be dead.

The British government, in furtherance of its imperialist control of Ireland, wants us to believe that this 'fanatical Republican', this 'convicted criminal', and the other H-block hunger strikers and the prisoners of war in Armagh and Long Kesh, have no real support among the Republican and anti-unionist population.

But the election of Bobby Sands by almost 31,000 votes in S.Tyrone and Fermanagh has shown the massive support the prisoners have.

Other events which have been impossible to ignore have been the census form burning on 12th April, and the preceding march which involved thousands of people; the industrial day of action, involving 10,000 people in Belfast alone; and the march held on Sunday 26th April, one of the biggest ever to be held in the Six Counties.

Despite the reactionary call by Derry Trades Council to ignore the industrial day of action (as such action would

import sectarianism into the workplace!) and the refusal to recognise the strike action by the Northern section of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions who were meeting in Omagh at the time (with the exception of one member who addressed the rally), more than 60 workplaces were represented on the march. Several schools were also represented by teachers marching with their own 'teachers against H-Block' banner.

School children walked out of school, and there was a large contingent of unemployed workers under their own banner.

Media

The British media has also highlighted certain riots, particularly ones which resulted in the murder of young Republicans, either by land-rovers or by plastic bullets.

What the British media has not reported is the day to day work done by the local H-Block committees. The activities include organising benefits to raise money for the campaign and collecting money from people on the buses and the taxis.

In the morning, effective demonstrations are held during the rush hours. People

stand along the white line on the road, carrying posters and banners. The line stretches from the Shaws Road to Castle St, some five or six miles.

There have been weekly pickets at the forts and barracks around the city. These pickets have of course been viciously attacked by the euphemistically-named 'security forces'.

Attacks

At one such picket, at the fort on Blacks Road, the demonstrators were attacked by 'Orangies' and the Royal Ulster Constabulary. People were severely stoned and beaten, and the Republicans were arrested, not their assailants.

However, despite this attempt to break the spirit of the H-Block supporters, the pickets and demonstrations continue.

Bobby Sands' election victory has enraged the security forces and has increased the number and severity of the attacks by the Brits and the RUC. A young man was picked up last week on his way home from a friend's house and was released displaying a broken nose, missing teeth, and multiple bruises. Likewise a 15 year old girl in the same week.



The industrial day of action in Belfast

The election victory rally to be held at the City Hall in Belfast was broken up by the RUC, and the SPG attacked and hospitalised a group of people on their way to the rally. It was described on British TV as 'rioting broke out'.

Eyewitnesses say that they have not seen the 'peelers' as vicious as that since Burntollet.

Despite this, the support for the prisoners of war con-

tinues, grows, and strengthens.

To add to the persecution of the Republicans by the Brits and RUC, the Loyalist UDA and UVF have joined forces in a joint war council, and put their members on military alert. They are ready to go into action in sectarian attacks against the Republican areas.

Phil Flynn, a spokesperson for Provisional Sinn Fein, during the Easter Republican oration, said that all the events

during the hunger strike be like a Buckingham Palace tea party if Bobby Sands.

He warned the Republican population to have the defence committees organised for the protection of the districts against Loyalist attacks.

Republican people have enjoyed the protection of law either in Ireland or land, and they will not be to depend on the 'security forces' to 'keep the peace'.



The 'Save Sands' resolution passed almost unanimously

Scots unions say: save Sands

by Roland Sheret

THE SCOTTISH TUC in Rothsay passed an emergency resolution urging 'immediate Government action to ensure that the hunger strike in Maze Prison in Northern Ireland is ended, and the life of Bobby Sands MP is saved'.

The resolution, moved by Hugh Wyper, Scottish secretary of the TGWU, continued: 'The prisoners' demands on prison clothing and prison work have wide support among many sections of the trade union and labour movement and wider sections of society, who see them as humanitarian demands. The resolution in no way supports the granting of political status or support for terrorism'.

Wyper called for unanimous support and asked that there

should be no debate on it, in order that other questions be put aside and the life of Bobby Sands MP be seen as the single issue at stake. Edinburgh and District Trades Council and Stirling and District TC waived their rights to speak as seconds, and the resolution was passed by an overwhelming majority.

Despite such an important statement of support for Bobby Sands from a major trade union conference, this resolution went largely unreported in the bourgeois press. In an earlier debate on Ireland, Alex Kitson, deputy General Secretary of the TGWU, had pointed out that the T&GWW had 130,000 members in Northern Ireland and it was now time that the trade union movement took a stand on the conflict in Ireland. He called for a confer-

ence of trade unions from Britain and Ireland to discuss a solution, and he saw education, housing, and unemployment as the questions that had to be tackled.

Kitson did not mention the national question, and dismissed the demand for withdrawal of troops. Despite this, these statements from a senior official of the TGWU show the pressures building up from the election of Bobby Sands as an MP.

It is up to activists in the trade unions and Labour Party branches to mobilise support for the demands of political status, withdrawal of British troops, and self-determination for the Irish people. The small step taken by Scottish trade unionists at the STUC is something which has to be built on.

by Richard Chessum

BOBBY SANDS' death, always the most likely outcome of the present hunger strike, will nevertheless take many people in Britain by surprise.

After all, the previous hunger strike ended in anti-climax just before Christmas, when a 'compromise' was worked out between the Republicans and the British Tory Government. In the end, people thought, both sides would find some face-saving formula and it would all dies down just as before.

All this was and is a dangerous illusion — for two main reasons.

Firstly, the truth is that the compromise was NOT 'worked out' before Christmas between Republicans and British Tories. What happened was that the British Government managed to isolate the Republican prisoners from political reality and convince them that their demands were being granted, when the reverse was the case.

And it is precisely this previous duplicity of the British government which makes Bobby Sands and the other prisoners so suspicious of political moves to get the hunger strike called off a second time. If the Republicans were to allow themselves to be misled into calling off their action again, no-one would take them seriously a third time.

Labour Movement meeting on Political Status

Speakers: Roland Sheret [Stirling TC], Alistair McRae [asst. div. officer, NUPE], Daisy Mules [Edinburgh TC], Harry McShane [all in personal capacity].

Saturday 9 May, 10.30am, Mid-Hall of City Halls, Albion St, GLASGOW.

Organised by Labour Committee on Ireland [Glasgow branch].

Westminster is not the only location of people anxious to lose the Republican movement credibility. Charles Haughey and the Social Democratic and Labour Party would both love to end the possibility of a final confrontation, and do so in a manner which would give them political credit and discredit republicans.

Bobby Sands' denunciation of Haughey and Hume this weekend is an indication that the prisoners in the Maze are doing things understandably more cautiously this time.

The second main reason why the widespread complacency in Britain was misplaced is that the British government and the Republicans are NOT the only two sides in the current conflict. The Loyalists represent an important third element in the struggle in the north of Ireland, and any concession to the hunger strikers in the aftermath of the Thatcher-Haughey talks in Dublin will increase their alienation from the British government.

Already there have been Loyalist demonstrations, and the paramilitaries on the Protestant side claim to be standing 'in a state of readiness'.

British strategy over the last 12 years has been to placate the Loyalists in order to strengthen the 'moderates' in their ranks, and isolate the 'extremists'. The fact that this strategy has resulted in the very opposite effect from that intended is unlikely to produce any significant change in the direction of Government policy. As long as Britain is committed to propping up the six county state, there is no alternative for any British government, Labour or Conservative, but to do a large part of the Loyalists' bidding.

The end result of all this is the departure of the European Commissioners for Human Rights from the Six Counties empty-handed, without even a visit to Bobby Sands to justify their trip to the North.

The Loyalists are baying for blood, with Paisleyite placards demanding 'let him die', and Official Unionist MPs like Harold McCusker, denouncing 'Re-

publican felons whose names have been the same for 100 years'. Tension in the areas is exploding into violence even before the deaths of hunger strikers, and has been exacerbated by the killing of three Derry youths by the police in the last week.

Whatever happens now is inconceivable that there ever be quite the same again, and that applies equally in Ireland and in Britain. The most likely result is a chain of events that will be impossible for any government to control.

Within Britain, even the Labour Party deputy leader, P. J. Sheehy, has called for the prisoners' demands to be met, and moves to be made towards a united Ireland. Last week he declared: 'not just my opinion, in the view of most people in Ireland and it is the great majority world opinion'.

Ramsey Clark, former attorney general in the Vietnam war administration, when asked why he had not allowed to visit Bobby Sands during his trip to the said heatedly, 'You must see the authorities here that they may give an answer, but I doubt if support for the hunger strikers mounted over the week. Clark addressed a vast meeting in West Belfast on Sunday, drawing a huge march even by the authorities themselves to have been the for many years.

Throughout the world, not the Republicans who are being discredited, but the British and their present Ireland. The people of the Six Counties are likely to be able to inform us all of the consequences of British rule in the coming years. The first victim may be Bobby Sands. But he will be one of many unless events turn out unexpectedly and unforeseen very quickly.

No doubt Mrs Thatcher's brilliantly logical mind will be able to inform us all that a disaster is a disaster, and a disaster is a disaster.

Time for women to get union power

Corbishley

WOMEN'S festival on has been organised in to the attacks women on the Tory govern- Thousands of women over the country will together to discuss and the experiences of struggles against these

important part of the day how the forces of the movement can be mob- wage an effective

Last ten years have big increase in women trade unions. But, struggles for equal increased job opport- despite demands for participation in union despite the mush- of equal rights com- and a plethora of mot- women at union con- trade union positions shop steward to NEC mainly held by male unionists.

TUC has Charters for at work and women in ons, but has done no- campaign for them, their existence is little by rank and file trade members.

more than ever, wom- to be in a strong posi- make sure that their are heard and that struggles are not ignor- and that means positive national changes within ons.

trade union workshops Festival are an import- opportunity for women to organise. The follow- list could be a guide- discussion.

your union meetings work time, and at a

time which is also conven- for part-time workers? If they are held outside work- time, are creches available?

• Are women able to caucus separately within your union locally? Are there any links between women nationally?

• What percentage of the membership is women? What percentage of local branch committees is made up of women? Is there any measure of positive discrimination carried out? (Often, in elections for trade union positions, and for conference delegations, women do not put themselves forward because it seems that male fellow trade unionists know more about procedures and are better-prepared for getting themselves nominated. Reserving places for women on committees and delegations is a positive way of encouraging women to stand for election).

• Is there a national equal rights committee? How is it established — appointed by the NEC? elected by branches? Equal Rights committees should be elected and have firm links with local branches.

• Women's TUC conference: Is your union affiliated? Does your local branch sent in motions? What sort of input should the Women's TUC have into the TUC conference? For example, should there be a guarantee that at least five motions from the Women's TUC will be debated?

• What sort of policies has your union got on nurseries? maternity leave? new technology? low pay? etc. How far has it campaign for them? Do they feature in the current/last wage claim? If so, were they fought for — or just used as something to be dropped early on in negotiations?

• Has your union branch ever discussed the issue of sexual harassment at work? Has the branch women's caucus discussed it?

• Is there a rank and file grouping of women within the union nationally?

And: even if all this is in hand and proceeding satisfactorily, don't we need something more?

Isn't it time the women's caucuses had a lot more say in policy-making; the right to take action on their own account and with their own budget (even regional labour movement bodies have more autonomy than national women's committees); and a profile and public presence appropriate to the vast numbers of women they represent?

The ad hoc, fragmented women's movement in the unions and Labour Party should come together in action, come out on the streets with its own banners, and mount a united campaign on a national arena for women's rights.

And one idea worth discussing at the Festival will be: can we start thinking about an all-unions rank and file women's movement? a sort of rank and file women's TUC, but one that would not only have conferences but also campaigns? Is it possible that such a project could 'take off' quicker and better than the local and sectional union women's caucuses, rather than appearing from a link-up between them after a long process of gradual development?

Immediately: how can women trade unionists best take up the call for a national women's right to work demonstration, which has already been made to the Labour Party women's committee nationally with no results?



Thwaites

THE Socialist Workers' Easter rally at Skegness, leader Tony Cliff announced a change of course does not bode well for in the SWP.

gist of Cliff's argument that it's time that Women's Voice was wound

men's Voice has only since September 1979 present form, as the women's organisation.

then it was, for a time, by open socialist women's organisation, with a sister relationship to SWP.

this basis, non-SWP and women aligned to

Silencing Women's Voice?

other political organisations helped build the WV groups: the much-feted Fleet Street WV group, for example.

Then the SWP took fright and decided to close the lid. Women's Voice was re-defined as the women's magazine of the SWP. This was decided at an SWP meeting a week before the WV annual conference, and then WV women were present with a fait

accompli. The masthead of Women's Voice was changed just days before the WV conference!

Lindsey German became the Women's Voice full-timer in her capacity as SWP women's organiser, even though the Women's Voice Steering Committee (dominated by SWP members) was opposed to this appointment.

Now Cliff is following through the logic — and it's a general logic of SWP politics.

Compare their attitude to the Labour Party, long dismissed as an irrelevant storm in a teacup. All that really matters for the SWP is the SWP and the economic struggle. More militancy equals socialism equals the SWP. A political fight against

reformism doesn't figure — or is simply a matter of boosting the SWP as 'the alternative' to the Labour Party.

It is the same with women and blacks. If women and blacks become sufficiently militant in strikes, then they will join the SWP. And the strikes will wash away sexism and racism. Simple!

No decision has yet been

made by any of the leading bodies of the SWP on Women's Voice, but it's a fair bet that if Cliff says so then Women's Voice will die a death.

Many women in and around the SWP are rightly angered by this attitude to recruiting women purely on the basis of struggle and the general need for organisation, not relating to the double oppression of women. In contrast to the SWP leaders, they want a movement which fights to win working-class women to socialism by building on the logic of their struggles.

Women's Fightback is trying to do just that. Work with us. Help us build a movement.

JOE LOUIS — BLACK HERO

Cashman

LOUIS, the former world light boxing champion, known as the 'brown' died last week at the 56. In the mid-'30s Joe was for a while the champion of his own de- exploited, segregated Afro-American and of anti-racists there.

Arena

boxing ring was the un- arena in which the Nazi for white racial supremacy put to the test, and the black man against they were tested. happened like this.

son of Alabama share- who moved to Detroit, worked at the Ford auto- plant in Detroit. He won American Amateur Union heavyweight boxing cham- pionship in 1934. He then professional with Jack

('Chappie') Blackburn as his trainer.

Blackburn taught Louis the importance of balance and timing in punching. The famous Joe Louis jab, the killer punch that only travelled six inches, was not a gift of nature, but a technique 'Chappie' taught him in hours of training on a heavy bag.

He won all his professional bouts — until June 1936 — and was recognised as a potential world champion. Then he fought the German Max Schmeling, whom Adolf Hitler had hailed as the representative of German manhood. Schmeling knocked out Louis in the 12th round.

It was made into a great day for the Nazi propaganda machine and for the idea that human-kind is divided into superior and inferior zoological species. The underman had gone down to defeat before the 'Aryan'.

That was the proper place for the black and other inferior races.

It came to symbolise — and

not only for propaganda minister Goebbels — the rise of Nazi power.

Despite his defeat, Louis got a shot at the title in 1937, and knocked out Braddock to take the crown.

Now the Schmeling camp mounted an international campaign for a match between the champion and Schmeling. Essentially it was mounted by the Nazi Party of Germany, aided by their sympathisers, especially the Nazi movement in the USA, the German-American Bund, etc. They attacked the American domination of world boxing, and mounted a sustained campaign of racist violence and insults against Joe Louis.

Nazis

It ceased to be just a sporting affair, and became a test of the racist doctrines of the Nazis.

On June 22, 1938, Louis and Schmeling met at Madison Square Gardens, New York. Louis was and felt himself to be

the champion of the underman, Schmeling was not just the champion of Nazi Germany but also of racist Jim Crow America.

Louis stormed out of his corner at the sound of the bell, and beat Schmeling unconscious in a record 2 min. 4 sec. of the first round! Louis retained the championship, and retired undefeated in 1949.

Chester Higgins described what Louis meant to the blacks of America:

"He gave inspiration to down-trodden and despised people. When Joe Louis fought, blacks in ghettos across the land were indoors glued to their radios, and when Louis won, as he nearly always did, they hit the streets whooping and hollering in celebration.

"For Joe's victory was their victory, a means of striking back at an apprehensive and hateful environment. Louis was the black Atlas on whose broad shoulders blacks were lifted, for in those days there were few authentic black heroes".

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HAROLD WILSON, who admits he avoided any trouble with conference decisions by ignoring those he didn't like, and who thinks that the choice of Labour leader ought to rest 100% with MPs, has launched a thought-provoking attack on Tony Benn.

Among some robust insults, Wilson points out that Benn is "barmy".

"He is completely out of touch with reality. He thinks the shop stewards are the people who count above all, and the party activists..."

Barmy? It's up to trade union and Labour activists to show just who is 'barmy'.

WITH ENEMIES LIKE THESE

The Benn-bashing bandwagon is now gaining ground — and not only on the Right. A lot of so-called 'left-wingers' have been

set a-leaping by Benn's decision to run.

Neil (Unity = Compromise) Kinnock (who couldn't guarantee that a Labour government would restore the Tory education cuts when it got back in office) describes as a "fantasy that insults adult intelligence, invites derision, and guarantees disappointment", the idea that major policies could be carried out within a few weeks of taking office.

How come the Tories can manage it then, Neil? And what about the 'disappointment' and 'derision' of workers under the last Labour government?

But perhaps the most weird and wonderful arguments against Benn standing have come from Eric Heffer. In a very long article in 'Tribune', full of 'delicate issues' and 'problems and complexities' so problematic

and complex as to defy mere understanding, Eric says he thinks Benn shouldn't stand because he AGREES with Benn's platform; that we should defend the method of election of Leader and Deputy Leader by NOT having an election. The subtlety and wisdom of this man leaves us mere mortals gasping!

But the drift is clear: for the Left to beat down the Right would lead to conflict, outcry, and all sorts of trouble. Better stay with the good old days, when the Left knew its place — whining, declaiming, but resigning itself to defeat.

FROM LITTLE SCUM

Younger readers, still recovering from a hectic Easter at YS conference, should breathe a sigh of relief that they weren't at a rather more noxious gathering in Sheffield, the Federation of Conservative Students' conference, the launching-pad into Tory politics proper.

Here, amid accusations of NF infiltration, black-shirted union-jack-sporting skinheads walked unchallenged, the night's entertainment consisted of the singing of racist songs ['we don't need no coons and niggers', to the tune of 'Another Brick in the Wall'] — when they weren't busy with more strenuous activities.

One left wing student's car and the Conservative Campaign for Homosexual Equality stall

were vandalised.

From such little scum do 'great' Tory Prime Ministers and Home Secretaries grow.

BACK TO TAFF VALE

A little-known clause in the Tory Employment Act has been quoted by Lord Denning in a judgment that opens the way for all strikes to be outlawed.

Hadnor Productions had gone to the Court of Appeal after failing to get an injunction to lift blacking of their films by ACTT members at Thames TV. The ACTT felt that Thames buying in lots of ready-made films was a threat to their jobs, and were blacking Hadnor's products in order to put pressure on Thames to guarantee manning levels.

Denning granted the injunction and ruled that their action was interference with trade by unlawful means.

In his judgment he quoted the clause in the Employment Act repealing section 13(3) of Labour's 1974 Trade Unions and Labour Relations Act (which itself replaced the Tory Industrial Relations Act). This section said that inducement to breach of contract was not in itself actionable, and did not constitute 'unlawful means' for the purpose of establishing 'tort', i.e. a civil wrong.

The repeal of this section and Denning's interpretation of it in this case means that unions can now be held liable for damages and are open to injunc-

tions to call off any industrial action.

TORIES TURN THE SCREW ON LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Faced with attempts to get round their plans by Labour councils, the Tories are turning up the pressure.

Seven Labour councils have been given a deadline of May 13 to come round over the sale of council houses. If they haven't shown by that date that they are making genuine efforts to allow sales, they will be given 72 hours' notice to turn over all relevant documents to government officials who will then complete the sales.

And, in a move to stop councils getting round cuts by increasing rates, the Tories are introducing a consultative document on rate reform, which will include a ceiling on business rates. They hope to put this rates ceiling into operation by the next session of Parliament.

Both these measures show the Tories' determination to close off any avenue of retreat for Labour councils, and show the bankruptcy of their 'buying time' strategies. If it wasn't clear before, the Labour councillors should at last get the message: Stand and fight, or cave in. There is no middle way.

Scottish TUC votes to back gay rights

At Rothesay on 24th April, the 84th Congress of the Scottish TUC voted unanimously to support homosexual rights in a comprehensive motion moved by Liam Chalmers, NALGO Scottish district, and seconded by Jane Meehan, Edinburgh and District Trades Council. Last year, the Labour Party adopted a similar policy in Scotland.

GAY RIGHTS: EMPLOYMENT

On May 1st, Edinburgh District Council were to debate whether or not to recommend that 'sexual orientation' be added to the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities' model clause on discrimination in contracts of employment. The move by Labour's manpower spokesperson, Cllr Richard Kerley, was only narrowly defeated in committee.

At the back of every Councillor's mind is a letter dated 10th April from the Employment Protection Appeal — a joint NCCL/gay movement campaign. The EPA had spelled out the facts which lay behind the summary dismissal of Ian Fleming from his job as Lord Provost's Secretary last November.

It is now clear that some senior District Council officials had used Fleming's hidden homosexuality to get rid of him, and one Director had gone tittle-tattling to the Edinburgh Evening News as part of a homophobic character assassination. The matter is to go to an Industrial Tribunal.

GAYS INTERNATIONAL

The recent 3rd annual conference of the International Gay Association (IGA) in Torre Pellice, near Turin, Italy, opened with a speech of welcome from the Communist Party vice-mayor to the 200 delegates, and closed with calls to end the registration of homosexuals and prostitutes in the Mexican state of Nayarit, and motions condemning the deliberate murders of gay men and lesbians by the present government of El Salvador and the brutal police treatment of gays in Spain which has occurred since the attempted coup of 23 February.

There has been a partial split off of women in IGA who have set up an independent International Lesbian Information Service. IGA decided to open an office in Mexico City to serve the whole of Latin America, to survey the world's political parties, and will hold the 4th annual conference in Washington DC in June 1982.

BENN CAN WIN!

BENN can win. That is the message that all committed socialists must press upon any faint-hearted comrades who think that the deputy leadership contest has already been decided by 'Trade Unions for a Labour Victory' (TULV) in a smoke-filled room on December 17 last year.

Then, leading trade unionists met with Michael Foot and the Shadow Cabinet, and agreed that no change in the leadership should take place in the foreseeable future. The minutes of that meeting state, 'TULV welcomes the recommendation of the PLP that no opposition to the leader or deputy leader should occur in the new year'.

But the rank and file in the trade unions will not stand for his return to the bad old days when Lawther, Deakin and one or two others 'arranged' decisions in the Right's favour long before they ever reached the democratic forum of debate. In fact, as Tony Benn said a special meeting of the Rank and File Mobilising Committee last week, the attempt to stop the election is probably our strongest card.

Many who may initially have been unsure about Benn's candidature are now terrified by the dangers of the Orwellian world the 'fixers' seek to plunge the Labour Party back into.

Indeed, Alan Fisher of NUPE, after initial reservations, has now come out at the Scottish TUC in favour of Benn in a contested election. He has said that NUPE will organise a branch ballot of members paying the political levy.

And many of Benn's other supporters have become strangely silent, realising that their little machinations will do them no favour with the rank and file.

But the cat is out of the bag. We now know that the fixers have attempted to perpetrate the most gigantic con-trick upon us. Therefore we can plan our strategy accordingly, and, as Alan Fisher said, ensure that we are able to stand up and say that the system is democratic.

To this end we must:



The Labour deputy leadership must be discussed by the rank and file, not decided by bureaucratic stitch-ups.

- Arrange for Tony Benn to address union conferences from their platforms; where such invitations are not forthcoming, we must arrange fringe meetings at every conference, on a variety of different platforms (CND, Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, Broad Left, etc.), thus emphasising the policies on which his campaign is based.

- Approach every CLP, as Benn can hope to pick up votes the equivalent of one quarter of the whole electoral college here.

- Secure the maximum number of nominations, thus showing overwhelming support when the Conference Agenda is published. Union branches should be submitting amendments or emergency resolutions to their conferences, expressing support for Benn.

- Extend the list of sponsoring MPs. CLPs should make

their wishes known to their MPs. There was an outcry last year in the Foot-Healey leadership contest when the Labour Co-ordinating Committee suggested that MPs completed their ballot papers in front of their GMCs. This time, every vote will be recorded anyway.

We can win. But we must realise that opposition, even among our own supporters, does still exist.

Eric Heffer, who is probably as good a socialist as to be found almost anywhere in the PLP, is still insisting that Healey should be allowed to continue unopposed. Yet only last November, following the Shadow Cabinet elections, Heffer was saying, "the truth is that although Michael Foot has been elected, leader, the majority of the Shadow Cabinet does not really reflect the new spirit and views of the party in the country. Mich-

ael Foot requires people around him prepared to fight hard for the policies he supports".

He was absolutely right, of course, and that is exactly why Benn must oppose Healey this year.

Why, when for the first time in eighty years the Left are winning, should we call off the fight and retreat behind a spurious unity which is nothing more than a soggy blanket to cover up yet another sell-out and betrayal? The so-called Solidarity Campaign is certainly suffering no such illusions, and to don kid gloves now is to play right into their hands. That is the message we must take into our constituencies and union branches.

One final word from that well-known advocate of Labour Party unity, Lord Thorneycroft. As Chairman of the Conservative Party, who could doubt that he was only seeking

the best interests of socialism when he said on BBC's Question Time on October 30, 1980:

"Actually Dennis Healey is my candidate... he is in fact much nearer to me and Mrs Thatcher than he is to Wedgwood Benn... he is a worthy leader of any party... There is an enormous common ground between Denis and the Tory Party."

"He is a great protagonist of defence; he's built up and sustained a nuclear deterrent; he believes in the use of the money supply; he is against import controls; he doesn't believe the country ought to be governed by the trade unions, and, above all, he doesn't think really the leader ought to be elected by this wholly unrepresentative caucus that they propose."

"Now there's a man after my own heart!"

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

KICK OUT THE TORIES!

Labour democracy

and the

fight for a

WORKERS

GOVERNMENT

A Socialist Organiser Pamphlet

CAPITAL

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Strikes planned to back jobs march

by Ray Saunders

SUPPORT FOR the "People's March" is growing all the time. Liverpool Trades Council are calling for a city-wide strike on May 1st, as the march sets off for London. Strike action is also possible as the march passes through Sheffield and Birmingham.

And on Sunday 31st, 100,000 are expected to turn out for one of the biggest demonstrations against unemployment there has ever been.

On Saturday 30th there will be a special concert, appropriately enough, in Brockwell Park, Brixton.

All this support is more despite than because of the activities and policies of the march organisers.

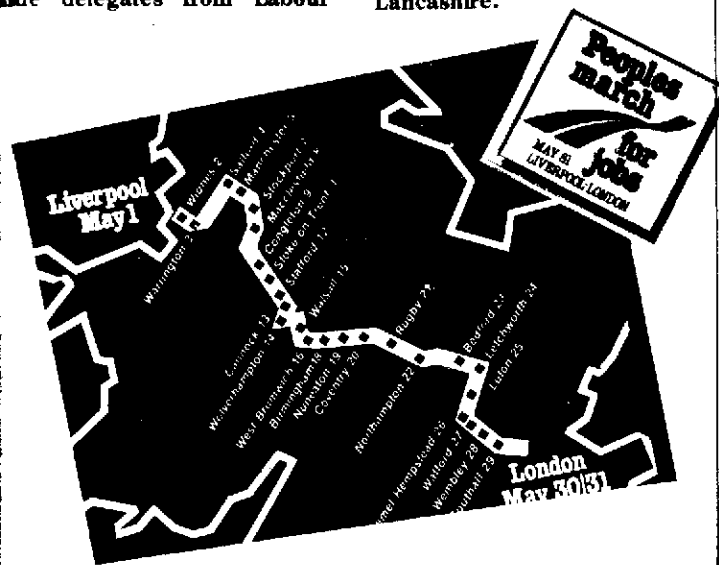
The support committees in the various towns that the march will be passing through have not been encouraging rank and file delegates to participate. In some cases, bona fide delegates from Labour

Parties and Trade Unions have been unable to find out when or where the committees actually meet.

And the organisers (including CP members) are deliberately playing down calls for strike action, for fear of alienating the various church-people and 'respectable' worthies who are giving the march token, moralistic support.

But it is now much easier for unemployed workers to get onto the march. The requirement for marchers to be sponsored for £100 has now been dropped (apparently because so few unemployed people had been able to get sponsored) and any unemployed person who wants to march can now take part.

Any unemployed who want to join the march should immediately contact Colin Barnett, Secretary North West Region TUC, 222 Stamford St, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire.



In addition to the main Liverpool-London Peoples' March there is also an eastern leg starting from Sheffield.

And in South Wales local trade unionists have organised their own feeder march. This starts in Llanelli, West Wales, on 16th May and marches across the valleys to Newport in East Wales where 50 marchers will join the main march.

Scotland's march gets scrapped

by Ian McCalman

THE SCOTTISH unemployed youth march from Glasgow to Perth, scheduled to culminate in a rally outside the Tory Party conference on May 9th, has been cancelled.

At the Scottish TUC annual conference in the week after Easter, Stirling Trades Council chairperson Ian Wyles asked why. Replying on behalf of the General Council, Jimmy Milne claimed that responsibility for calling off the march lay with the Youth Advisory Committee, and that the main reason was 'organisational problems'.

This furtive evasion stood in sharp contrast to the platform declamations about fighting a possible 20% of the workforce being on the dole in the next four years, and the standing ovation for the workers in occupation at Lee Jeans.

Perth Trades Council secretary Bill Day, when interviewed on this issue, indignantly refuted Milne's claim that 'organisational problems' were to blame.

"The march was planned prior to Christmas by the Youth Advisory Committee. Dougie Harrison, on behalf of the Committee, came to Perth Trades Council and asked us to organise accommodation and food for 100 marchers, all of which was done by mid-Feb-

ruary.

"In the meantime nothing emanated from the STUC concerning the sponsorship of marchers, but we went ahead and sponsored a marcher. We are confident that other Trades Councils were doing the same. We even booked the Cooperative Hall for the marchers, and when the Fire Officer said £1,500 was needed for emergency lighting, the local Co-op decided to go ahead and have that done.

"The local Railway Club agreed to provide food and refreshment. The 'organisational problems' were well in hand.

"Then less than two weeks ago, out of the blue, came a circular from the STUC calling it off. The decision was said to be taken by a meeting of the Youth Advisory Committee, but I know for a fact that only four people were present.

"Now, in place of the march, there is to be a protest rally in Perth on May 9th, but we have been told by the STUC that it should not pass close to the City Halls where Thatcher will be speaking.

"The whole affair underlines for me the lack of conviction of the STUC in fighting unemployment as a whole, never mind youth unemployment. I am disgusted with the cynical way in which it has been handled."

by Judith Bonner & Ashok Gangaram

350 PEOPLE crammed into the Railway Hotel in Coventry last Saturday evening (25th) for a meeting called by *Barriade* and *Socialist Organiser* supporters in the North-East Labour Party Young Socialists.

The meeting, called at very short notice, was to protest at the brutal murder of Satnam Singh Gill the previous Saturday by a bunch of racist skinheads. Amidst hundreds of shoppers in Coventry's busy city-centre precinct, Satnam, a 20 year old student from Henley Further Education College, was stabbed to death with barely a murmur from any of the passers-by.

This was only the most extreme example of the racist thuggery the black community in Coventry have had to endure.

Filthy racist abuse, muggings, a large and intimidating presence of racist skinheads, police harassment and the fear of murder, have made many parts of the city no-go areas for blacks.

However, the meeting was not called simply to allow people to vent their anger and frustration, although both anger and frustration were very much in evidence at the packed meeting.

It was called specifically to discuss the question of black self-defence, and it was felt correctly that the black community should discuss how defence should be organised, rather than the mainly-white Left saying, "Here's a defence group — we're here to defend you".

Only by involving broad sections of the Asian community and anti-racists could such defence squads realistically come to life.

As one of the young Asian speakers from the LPYS put it:

"We should have united years ago, we should have been fighting those racists before. Why has it taken the death of Satnam to make us organise like this? If we'd formed defence groups before Satnam wouldn't be dead now!"

The speaker also clearly pointed out the attitude of the police.

Sick

"The Superintendent said we asked for police protection, so they doubled the number of cops in Foleshill [Coventry's main Asian area]. But the racist attacks happen in other areas. 'So why aren't they in the areas where these racist thugs are?'"

The way the police 'protect' the black community was shown that very evening, when several strutting uniformed cops came in before the start, trying to intimidate people. They were politely but forcefully asked to leave.

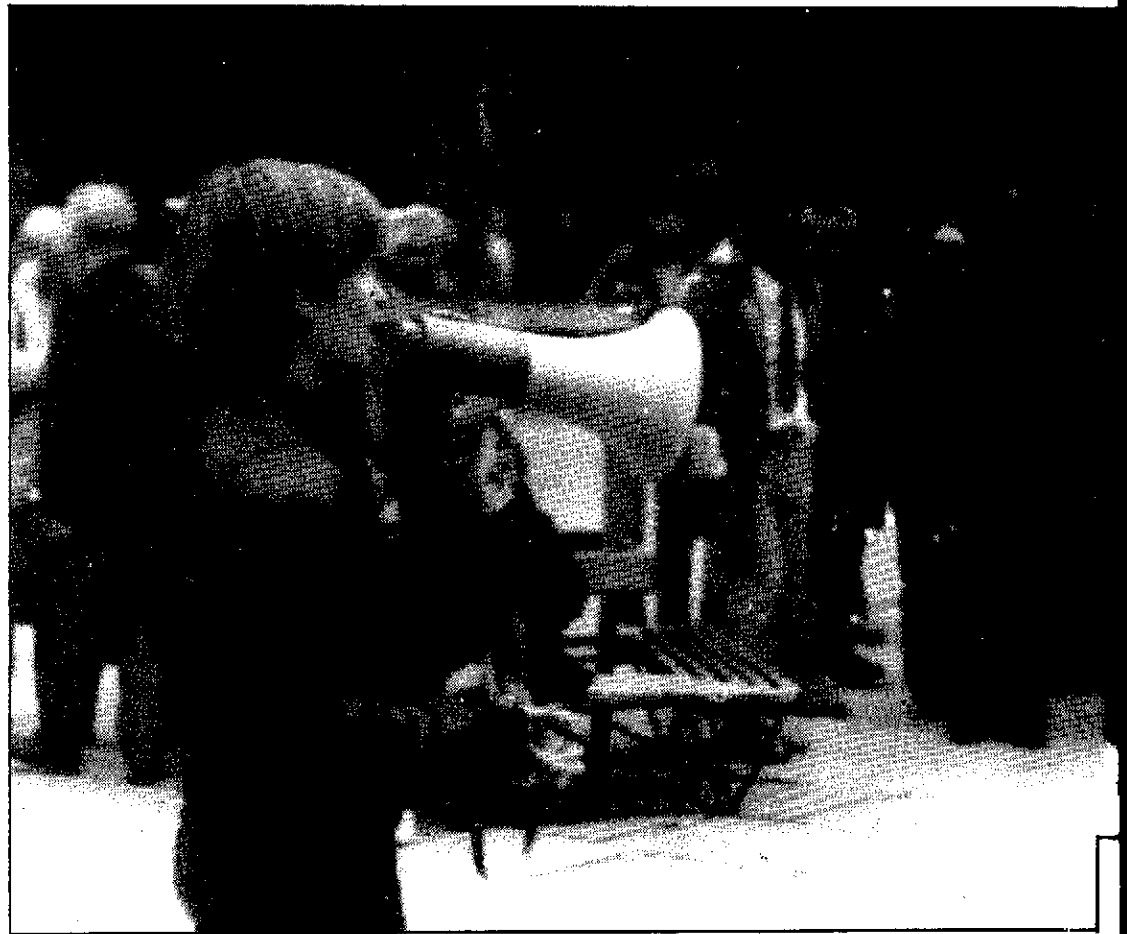
Speaker after speaker from the floor stressed that the Asian community was sick to the teeth of being a scapegoat for the Tory and Labour government-inspired racism carried out by Thatcher's unpaid bootboys.

"No longer must the skinheads and attackers consider the Asian community an easy target which is afraid of fighting back", said one youth, speaking in Punjabi.

Although Asian community leaders, temple leaders, the Indian Workers' Association and anti-racist groups had formed the Coventry Committee Against Racism in response to Satnam's death,

RACIST MURDER IN COVENTRY. YOUTH FIGHT

Anti-rac defence!



Youth rally against racist attacks

large numbers of youth felt that the reaction of the Asian community leaders was too passive.

Compare the response in Coventry to Satnam's death to the response in Southall when Chaggar Singh was killed. There, the very next day 600 people held a rally and march. In Coventry, a rally was held one week after the event. Although lively and noisy, it only attracted about 200 people. Given the passivity of most established anti-racist groups like the ANL, and the reluctance of temple leaders to give anything but 'moral support', this was not surprising.

Also, although the Coventry Campaign Against Racism is prepared to campaign for letters of support from the

labour movement, do leafletting, and organise a national anti-racist demonstration in Coventry for May 23rd, many of the youth felt that it failed to involve them fully in the committee and the struggle. Also, it failed to offer concrete ideas as to how black should practically defend themselves against future attacks.

In the crowded meeting, these questions were debated for hours. Despite the anger, the overcrowding and discomfort, and the difficulty in keeping a minimum of order in such a meeting, precise and positive proposals were adopted.

• The group set up will be called the Anti-Racist Defence Squad.

• The meeting fully endorsed the right of the black com-

munity to defend itself against racist violence.

• We will organise a presence in the precinct every Saturday.

• We will help to organise a national march, and argue for support from the labour movement.

• We will work closely with the Coventry Committee Against Racism.

• We will leaflet the People's March about the connections between racism and unemployment.

Link

The force of feeling at the meeting also seemed to convince the elders involved in the Coventry Campaign Against Racism of the need to defend the young people arrested at the rally that afternoon. The CCAR has undertaken to pay the probable finds.

The meeting elected a Committee from among the militants present which will have the political and administrative responsibility of organising anti-racist self-defence and trying to reach out and link this as closely as possible with the labour movement — trade unions and Labour Parties — in the city.

If the frustration and bitterness of Coventry's black youth is not to be dissipated in isolated and random attacks, it must be organised now into a disciplined force, determined to prove that racist and fascist attacks will under no circumstances be tolerated.

How the YS organised

COMRADES got back from the Bridlington conference of the LPYS on Monday night.

News of the murder spread quickly, and on Tuesday night a YS meeting of about 20 youth [mainly Asians] got together to discuss how to respond.

We all agreed on a consistent and major presence at the precinct every Saturday. So we started by organising for a rally the following Saturday. But that wasn't enough. We needed to get some sort of self-defence group organised to patrol the precinct and possibly other areas in the city.

Leaflets were printed, advertising a meeting on black self-defence to be held the evening after the first show of strength in the precinct. They were distributed to the Asian community at temples, meetings, and other gatherings.

And we also took our ideas to the Upper Stoke Labour Party ward meeting on Thursday night. We got full backing.

It is a shame that the ANL and SWP did not take up this call with the same vigour as did the branch of the mass party which they are forever condemning as a waste of time.

BACK...

ist

by Jim Denham

WE'LL probably never know exactly what started the Deptford fire that killed 13 young blacks. But two facts can be stated with certainty: it wasn't an accident, and the police systematically tried to cover up important evidence pointing in the direction of a racist attack.

The inquest has established that the fire began with the ignition of a liquid solvent in the front room of the house where an all-night birthday party was in progress. Leading Fireman William Vine told the inquest of the strange colours of the flames: "I've never seen

Deptford: the police don't want to know

flames of this colour in a house fire", he said, "only in chemical jobs or factories where there are chemicals present."

A crude incendiary device, an aluminium tube containing a mixture of sodium chlorate and sugar, was found by police in the front garden of the house. It has been established that this device *didn't* cause the fire — but could it or its contents, have been used as a fuse?

And anyway, as police scientist Peter Pugh remarked, finding such a device outside a house just gutted by a fire was "an awful coincidence". More important, why did police Commander Stockwell conceal, throughout the period between the fire and the inquest, the existence of the device?

All along the police had insisted that a bomb wasn't responsible because no other

container had been found inside the house. But the police claims that forensic evidence ruled out a firebomb were shown to be untrue.

In an approximate mock-up of the front room of the house (shown in court on a video tape) Mr. Douglas Higgs, of the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, used a mixture of simulated household solvents to show how a fire could have been started and a polystyrene con-

tainer completely consumed. Mrs. Armza Ruddock, who lost two children and her home in the blaze of January 18th, told the inquest how two different policemen, on two different occasions immediately after the fire, had told her a petrol bomb had been used on her home. The police, of course, deny ever having had reason to suspect a bomb.

Any reasonable person would consider that there is good reason to suspect racist arson at Deptford. Certainly, the black youth demonstrating outside the court last week had good reason to chant "We're not dumb, we know it's a bomb".

POLICE BANS HIT THE LEFT

by John O'Mahony

THE National Front says that it will evade the police ban on marches in London by attaching itself to the labour movement May Day march (which the police are allowing!).

Empty cheek and publicity-seeking, probably. But what do we do if the NF does turn up? Let this diseased gang of racist thugs, loonies and anti-union Hitler-lovers march with us?

Either we prepare now to be able to send them away with reason to be sorry for themselves or we will need police protection. Very probably the organisers of the march will rely on the police to "keep the peace".

But asking the police to deal with the fascists means inviting them to use powers which are invariably used against the left too.

Recently something like a new police policy has emerged in different parts of the country to ban racist and fascist marches. For many years they have gone to enormous lengths to protect the fascists' liberty to publicly provoke and insult black people and advocate violence against them. (Remember Martin Webster marching alone with a Union Jack in Manchester protected by thousands of police?)

Not any more: now they issue blanket bans which forbid most labour movement demonstrations, demos on Ireland and so on together with fascist marches. The long-time policy of the soft Labour left and the CP to demand police 'bans' on the fascists is increasingly police policy it seems.

The result is a serious attack on the traditional and once hard-won labour movement right to demonstrate. Fascists and racists have a harder time but so does the labour movement. In a situation of widespread strikes, to take an obvious example, police bans could be used at the discretion of the police against assemblies of strikers in the street, marches etc.

Reliance on the police to deal with the fascists is a double-edged weapon: it means to surrender to them liberties which the working class and the labour movement need and which we should never under any circumstances surrender to anyone. And should the ruling class begin to work with the fascists (as in Germany when Hitler struggled towards power) then the top policemen would begin to use such powers to favour the fascists and to hit at the labour movement, the blacks and the left.

On May Day we must be prepared ourselves to protect the London labour movement march from pollution or disruption by the racist filth of the NF. We must, if we get a chance, march over the NF on May Day, not with them.

Brixton: Tories try to shift blame from cops to blacks



by Jeff Slee

TWO WEEKS after the Brixton riots, the police are carrying out a series of raids in the area, looking for stolen goods but also trying to show the local community that 'law and order' has been restored.

Tonight, for example, I saw six police charge into a house on a local estate.

This can only harden the community's anger against the police, which was clearly expressed at a meeting in Brixton Town Hall, called by the Labour Party Young Socialists on the Wednesday following the riots.

Knight

Over 400 people — mostly young blacks and whites — showed their agreement with Lambeth council leader Ted

Knight when he demanded the withdrawal of the police from Brixton. They are, he said, like 'an army of occupation'. "We want to break the Metropolitan Police", he continued, "because it is no longer answerable to anyone but itself".

Aim

Since then, in a letter to the *Guardian*, Knight has disavowed this demand for 'cops out'. But the Brixton youth won't drop the demand so easily.

The Tories have set up an inquiry under Lord Justice Scarman, the veteran white-washer of Red Lion Square. Their aim is to try to shift the blame for the events away from the police.

Two local Labour MPs, John Tilley and John Fraser, have both called for coopera-

tion with the inquiry. Tilley argued at the LPYS meeting that if Brixton people don't cooperate, "it will be used against us".

But the point is that the Scarman inquiry — whether or not Brixton people cooperate — will be aimed at finding out what's wrong with the Brixton community that caused the riots, rather than seeing racism and the police as the problem.

Local

Many people in the local labour movement, and almost unanimous opinion in the black community, are for boycotting the inquiry. The demand has been widely raised for a labour movement inquiry. And people from the black community are discussing an inquiry of their own.

COPS BATTER IRISH MARCHERS

by Mick Woods (Kilburn branch, Brent East CLP)

ONE DAY after a massive force of police had shepherded 200 Nazis around the edge of Greater London, the cops were out in force to attack an anti-imperialist march in Kilburn.

About 500 demonstrators turned up to a rally by Kilburn tube which heard the sister of a 'blanket man' and veteran pacifist Pat Arrowsmith make the case for political status. We then attempted to march to Downing Street in defiance of Whitelaw's ban on demonstrations in the Greater London area.

We were followed by cops, and after a few hundred yards

were met by a police cordon. Rather than trying to break through and get to the heart of Kilburn, where more support should have been found from the local Irish population as they were coming out of the pubs, we sat down — an old pacifist trick.

Passive resistance does not work in situations like this, however, and while we were sitting down in the road chanting 'Bobby Sands MP' the cops were laying into us with fists and boots.

About 40 comrades were arrested, and a few were quite badly injured. I saw one young woman being kicked on the ground, and one lad from Leicester had to stay in hospital

overnight after a savage beating from three coppers. Several banners were damaged, including Brent East CLP's.

After this, some demonstrators went on to Downing St, where further arrests were made.

On the bright side, this was the most serious attempt to date to defy the state ban on marches, and a definite political point was made, as reports were carried on Capital Radio about the protest.

Next time we need more people, a bit more determination, and definitely we won't take the police attack sitting down.

JAILED FOR SELF-DEFENCE

by David Snape

FOR YEARS black people in Blackburn have been the victims of fascist-inspired violence. A year ago a group of young people, black and white, got together to defend their area, called Lower Audley, against attack.

They felt that the police were not doing anything to protect them, and they decided to protect themselves.

As a result of the defence group being formed, fascist violence in Lower Audley was stopped, though it still existed in other parts of Blackburn.

Several youths have now been arrested on various charges, for taking part in their own defence.

On April 9, at Blackburn magistrates' court, a 16-year old black lad, Nasir Khan, was sent to detention centre for three months. Many people believe that the worst charges had been placed on the black youth, and Nasir in particular ('offensive weapons'), and they believe it is because the police think he's the leader. Police told him they would get him.

Nasir is also to appear at Preston Crown Court in May, with another member of the group, on further charges. It's likely that his sentence will be lengthened and that the other youth will be jailed as well.

The Audley Defence Campaign has been formed to raise money towards the legal costs of the defendants, and to publicise their case.

Cheques to Audley Defence Campaign, 65 Lancaster House, Preston, Lancashire.



Building for workers' defence

MEETING, after much debate, adopted the name 'Anti-racist Defence Squad'.

Dave Spencer, a Socialist Organisation supporter and a Labour candidate in the West Midlands County Council elections, said, "at the moment we cannot call ourselves workers' defence groups, since it is not workers in general who are on the front line, specifically black workers."

But the name black self-defence is not adequate either. We want the labour movement as a whole to take a stand on and defend its black members and sisters.

The name 'anti-racist defence squad' is more realistic. It shows that we want to develop further — with the full participation of all workers in the group.

The committee elected under this very well. It will be talking to all labour movement branches for money and resources in the defence

of the most effective ways involving workers, black and white, will be to approach trade unions at their place of work. At workplace level that we need the close trust between workers and the organisational structure and experience can effectively run a work-defence squad.

Work stoppages to protest at racist attacks are also possible, especially in areas of the city's transport like the buses, overwhelmingly manned by Asian workers. After all, it is them, their sons and daughters, and their families, who are on the front line.

by Sean Matgamna

NEWSLINE, daily 'newspaper' of the WRP, has unmasked a new Tory agent [or worse] in the labour movement — Tony Benn!

In a virulently hostile editorial on the Labour Deputy Leadership elections entitled 'The strange case of Mr Benn' (15. 4.81), he is denounced for splitting the left, for going against 'the trade unions', for defying the majority of Tribune MPs who oppose his candidature, and for merely providing the Tories with ammunition!

Newsline thinks Benn knows he can't win. "So what then is he playing at?", they ask indignantly. In the agent and spy-obsessed WRP world the question translates automatically to mean: what is the ulterior motive, who is he serving, whose agent is he? These are the fundamental questions of all WRP life.

The Newsline writer goes on rhetorically, "Is this [standing against Healey] the action of a

The strange case of Newsline's switch on Benn

man deeply concerned about the future of the Labour Party and anti-Tory struggle, or someone who is willfully trying to break up the mass movement and create unnecessary diversions". (Emphasis added). There are no two answers to a question when it's put like that!

So have you got that, Mr Benn? Whose game are you playing? Who are you working for? What sort of agent are you? The Newsline writer obviously thinks he knows. The clue, which he shares with the reader is in the answer to

the question: what will be the result of the election if Benn loses it? The profound thinkers of the WRP have succeeded in working it out in advance: if Benn loses, Healey will be deputy leader. Thus, concludes the editorial, "By his action, Benn is consolidating Healey", who is "pro-NATO, pro-EEC, and pro-armed forces".

Of course, if Benn didn't stand, Healey would be none of these things and would obligingly cease to be deputy leader too! Therefore by opposing him in the election

Benn is aiding the "pro-NATO, pro-EEC, pro-IMF and pro-armed forces" cause.

Since for the Newsline and the WRP all the world's a Le Carré novel and all the men and women in it either agents and their dupes or intrepid spy-hunters — themselves — that translates for the hardcore readers into something close to the view that the 'strange' Mr. Benn knows all this and works to achieve it and therefore must be... etc.

Benn, like advocates of resistance to the Tories and to Labour councils who adminis-

ter the cuts, is thus bracketed as one of "Thatcher's people" — and implicitly as worse.

There is a political logic to this of course. Yet it was very sudden. Newsline's chiming in with the anti-Benn crescendo of the Tory press. *Until the previous day it had championed Benn and supported his candidacy!* Its first response was a reflex-left attack on Foot and Co. ("Foot shows his colours", April 3rd). An editorial ("Foot shows his real colours", April 4th) went right down the line for Benn against Foot and his Tribune allies:

"This (Foot's argument) is intended to try to put Benn in the position of a splitter who is disrupting party unity by challenging Healey. In reality it is an argument against ever having an election for the leading posts since there will never be an ideal occasion to hold it... Foot appeals to Benn on the basis of party unity, but this is simply a cover for capitulating to the blackmail of the right wing (emphasis added) who keep threatening to join the Social Democrats unless they get their way in the Labour Party."

That is not at all badly put. An editorial ("Benn is right to stand", April 6th) continues in the same strong terms. Healey is "the IMF's man in the Shadow Cabinet". Trade union "bureaucrats" who say Benn's candidacy is "not helpful to party unity", "have been stirred from their sleep because they see another challenge to the right wing in the Labour Party".

Sudden

Explicitly it concluded by supporting Benn's "right to challenge Healey and the right wing and to rally the rank and file of the labour movement in ousting him in October at the Party conference".

Even the "news" coverage was heavily biased, after Newsline's fashion, towards Benn, right up to Tuesday April 14th.

Then came "The strange case of Mr. Benn". Benn suddenly changed from a champion against "the IMF's

man in the Shadow Cabinet" to someone helping the right wing strengthen their position.

Ten days later Newsline threw the book at Benn in an editorial "Mr. Benn the ardent Zionist", which was a meandering diatribe clearly aimed at the WRP's friends, the Arab generals and millionaires who run Libya and Iraq.

The editorial, which also denounced the vigorously anti-Zionist SWP as pro-Zionist, may have been aimed to explain its change of line to the WRP's Arab well-wishers.

Why the change of line? No explicit explanation is offered to Newsline readers (though the encoded references pointed WRPers towards the 'explanation' that Benn is some sort of an 'agent').

Libel

My opinion is that it was probably the WRP's response to Benn's signing the SO condemnation of the WRP's libel case and the call for a Labour movement inquiry: nothing else in the situation was new at that point. The precise explanation doesn't matter very much though.

The point of tediously tracing the 'line' of the WRP on this is that it shows graphically what the WRP is. No political organisation, whose members possessed and exercised normal critical judgement or were influenced by the common human need for consistency and its corollary, rational explanation for changes and about-faces could make such an erratic zig-zag, explained only by half-hidden insinuation based on assertion and black-is-really-white logic.

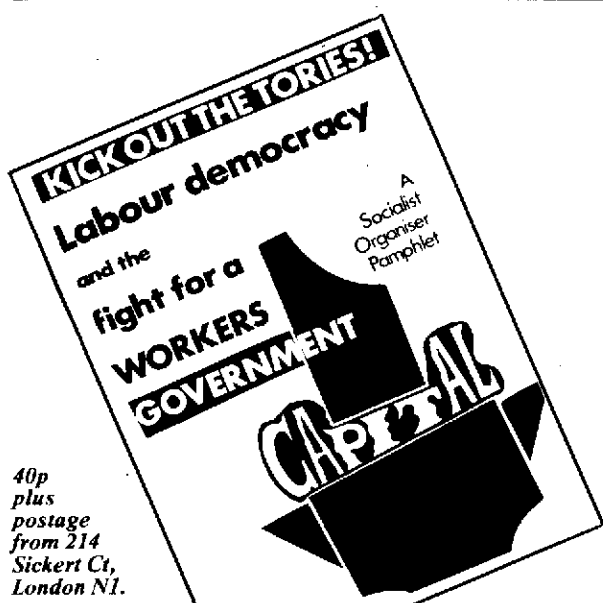
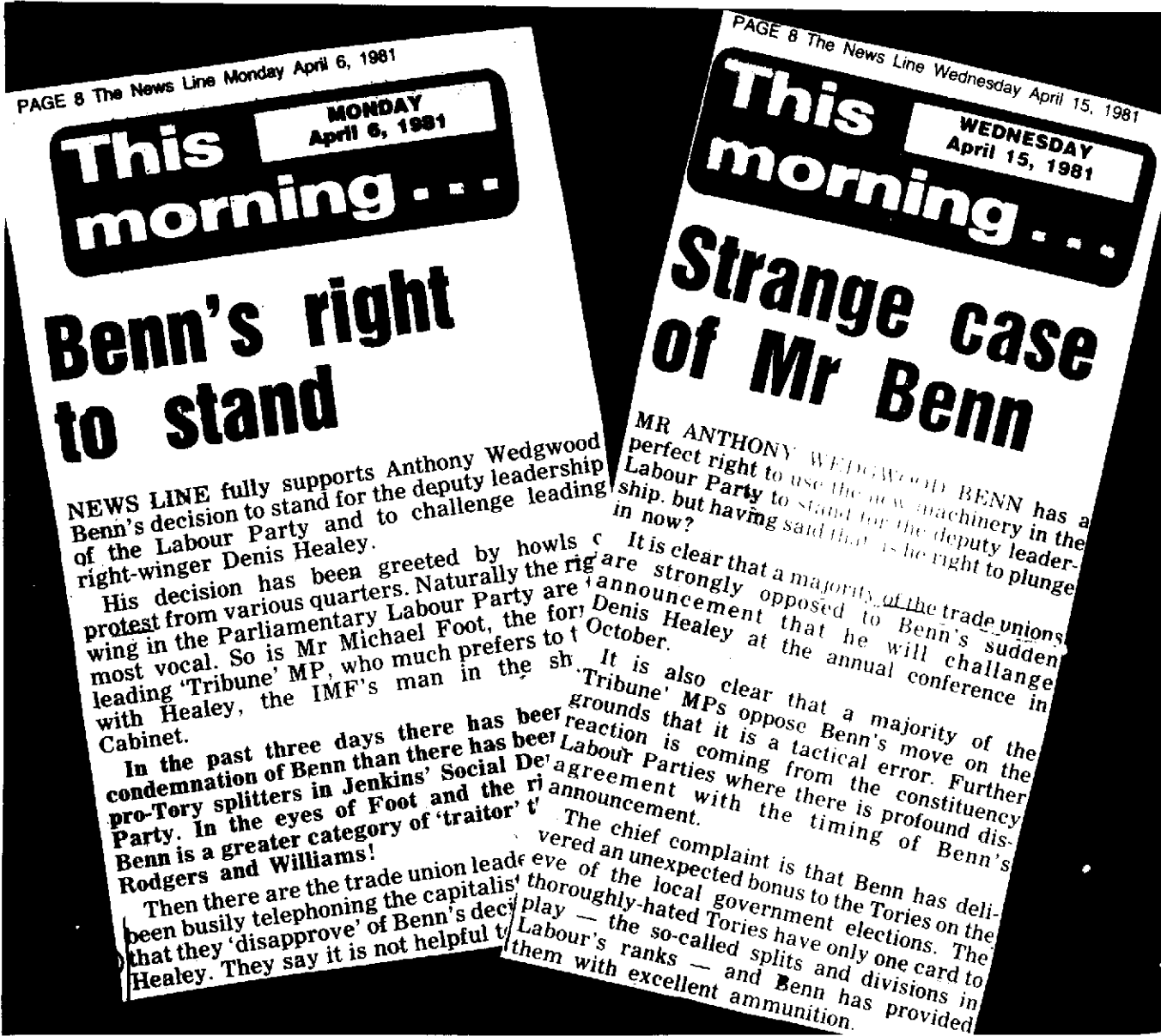
The point is that the WRP, which began as a genuine political tendency, has long since become a depoliticised apparatus which uses politics and political ideas where they serve its leaders' interests and drives, but for which politics is no longer central or the determinant of what it does (and doesn't do) or who it will ally with.

Spies

The apparatus is self-perpetuating with unstable "politics" and a membership conditioned to think of the world in essentially apolitical terms of spies and conspiracies on the one hand, and, on the other, to blindly follow every word of an infallible and all-seeing leadership, which does, says (and gainsays) what it likes. Actions which define someone today as a champion of the left, define him the following day, with the circumstances essentially unchanged as really a hidden agent of the right — on the say-so of the Ayatollah of Gobbledygook and the conscienceless scribblers who write it up for him.

This is not a political organisation but an alien sect in the labour movement.

Those lefts in the London Labour movement who work with the WRP should be asked what they think about Newsline's latest 'discoveries' about Tony Benn.



WHERE WE STAND

- ★ Organise the left to beat back the Tories' attacks! No to attacks on union rights; defend the picket lines; 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 of the working class. Support all demands to weaken them as a bosses' striking force: dissolution of special

squads (SPG, Special Branch, M15 etc), public accountability etc.

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

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

WHILE MODS fought it out with the police in Scarborough, Republican youth fought the army and RUC on the streets of Derry, an Asian youth was murdered by fascists in Coventry city centre, and Brixton smouldered, the annual conference of the Labour Party Young Socialists met in Bridlington. The contrast was stark.

Any socialist movement that relates imaginatively to young people's concerns about unemployment, racism, and war, should be able to win hundreds of the youth who are beginning to fight back. And the task is urgent: the fascists are already appealing to unemployed youth with their own 'political answers'.

But the Labour Party Young Socialists dominated by *Militant* presents a very different picture from what's needed. Although it has grown somewhat in the last year, its membership — on *Militant*'s own admission — is only about 7,000. The YS had a membership of 25,000 in the early '60s — when unemployment was at a fraction of its present level, and the youth fightback was nothing like as big.

Instead of trying to find a way to reach the mass of youth coming into activity for the first time, the majority of the delegates to YS conference sat complacently proclaiming formulas about the need for bold socialist policies, nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, and the transformation of capitalist society to a socialist one geared to the needs of the working class.

Many of the people who had come into the YS over the last year looking for a political alternative were put off by the sterile repetition of lifeless formulas. But there was an opposition to *Militant* at Bridlington, mainly organised by *Barricade*, which won increasing support for building a real socialist youth movement.

Nowhere was this clearer than in the debate on nuclear disarmament. Even the growth of the CND mass movement has not shaken the *Militant*'s complacency — much.

The disarmament debate caught the *Militant* 'disarmed' themselves: the main composite on disarmament was moved by Huyton YS, reflecting *Barricade* views, and there was no *Militant* composite. Instead, the National Committee had to use their position as controllers of the apparatus of the YS to issue a statement outlining the *Militant* position. And they then had to amend it to correct the 'typing error' which omitted the call for affiliation to CND.

According to the summing-up, 'A nuclear war will not happen by accident. Nuclear war is possible only if the workers' movement is defeated'.

After this brilliant statement, we were treated to a stunning argument against calling for withdrawal from NATO.

YS Left strikes out for a campaigning movement

'Withdrawal from NATO would not prevent a nuclear war', 'They [the British ruling class] will not withdraw from NATO because they can't afford it. NATO's absolutely essential to them'. Therefore socialists do not call for withdrawal from an imperialist military alliance — because the ruling class can't afford to do it!

Anyone active in CND who came to the conference looking for a lead for that activity from the YS majority would have been disappointed.

On gays (or homosexuality as the *Militant* prefer to call

bottles and petrol bombs against plastic bullets, armoured cars and professional soldiers.

The *Militant* refused to call for political status or to support the fight of the Republicans against the agents of the British ruling class in Ireland. They made a point of attacking Bobby Sands, with the ridiculous argument that 30,000 people had not voted for Bobby Sands, but 30,000 had voted against Harry West. (And that 29,000 hadn't voted for Harry West; those 29,000 were simply registering a vote against Bobby Sands).

The National Committee

ing YS.

- Fight for democracy in the LP and YS.

- Full union rights for the unemployed. Unionise the YOP schemes. Cut hours, not jobs. Build an unemployed workers' movement.

- Fight for the YS to take a lead in the fight for women's rights and for gay rights.

- Unilateral disarmament and withdrawal from NATO.

- Troops out of Ireland now. Political status now. Support the Labour Committee on Ireland.

- Fight racism, drive the fascists off the streets. Build

labour movement support for black self-defence, and for united black and white labour movement defence squads where possible.

- Fight to gain genuine rank and file control of the labour movement. Fight for a workers' government based on working class direct action. Never again a Labour government which governs for the bosses against the working class.

At Bridlington we found that hundreds of YS activists support policies like these. On the streets, thousands are beginning to fight for them. Now it's our job to organise!



Clockwise: protest as platform blocks El Salvador debate; Aylesbury YS delegate Andrew McDonald; the debate continues off the conference floor; Welwyn YS delegate Chris Brind; and the *Barricade* bookstall.

it), there was no debate, despite a petition signed by 54 delegates and over 200 visitors, and despite the fact that six YS branches had submitted resolutions.

We were told from the platform that the single-sentence resolution from Hackney Central YS, the only *Militant* resolution on gays, was quite adequate, because it expressed the YS position.

All it said was that the YS opposes discrimination against gays. But that position is really no better than any dogooder, Christian, or liberal could come up with. Gay-baiting in the labour movement must be fought. It was in evidence at the YS conference and at the YS summer camp last year, yet we were told that the YS has no time to discuss it... and the gay-baiting will go on.

We demanded and will continue to demand that there is a session on gays at the YS summer camp. If we cannot even discuss the issue in the YS, then there is no hope of fighting to rid the labour movement as a whole of anti-gay prejudices.

If on gays, *Militant*'s attitude is taken liberal piety, on Ireland it puts a socialist gloss on the sort of stuff you read in the bourgeois daily papers.

Bobby Sands had been given the last rites the night before the Irish debate. Two youths had been killed by the Army. The youth of Derry were taking on the RUC and the British Army, armed with

statement on the Fermanagh/S.Tyrone by-election consisted of a determined attempt to make sure that nobody, but nobody, thinks that the *Militant* supports, condones, or sympathises with the Republican cause. The Provisionals can't be condemned enough for standing candidates in an election and hindering the attempts of Trades Councils to have workers' candidates elected (workers' candidates who would not address themselves to the question of the Border or to the presence of British troops in the North).

Political status is not even mentioned in the statement: the question for the blinkered *Militant* is simply one of bad prison conditions.

The resolution from Welwyn and Hatfield YS called for the YS to campaign for political status and troops out of Ireland, arguing that British socialists must support those fighting British imperialism.

Time and again it became clear the present YS leadership is incapable of building a living, fighting youth movement. But the YS is important: the YS conference is the biggest political youth event of the year, and it's a crime to let *Militant* have it all to themselves.

And there was a serious revolutionary opposition. *Barricade*, together with *Red Youth*, has planned a conference to form a 'National Left Wing Youth Movement' on 23rd May in Coventry.

The leaflet about this put out at Bridlington proposed the following skeleton policies:

- Build a mass campaign-

Polish farmers: the Stalinists' gamble

by Alexis Carras

THE RURAL Solidarnosc union in Poland — which claims the support of over one million Polish farmers — has finally forced the government of General Jaruzelski to officially recognise its right to exist.

This move has been widely interpreted as a sign that the Polish government is prepared to compromise with the workers' and peasants' movement.

In fact it is another sign of the weakness of these self-appointed 'leaders' in the face of the major upsurge which has rocked the country for months.

Brutal

Since the 16th of March farmers have been occupying the union buildings in the city of Bydgoszcz. It was the attack on Solidarnosc members in Bydgoszcz last month, by the brutal militia, that almost led the country again to the verge of a national general strike.

Then, the authorities managed to reach a compromise with Lech Walesa and moderate elements in Solidarnosc and, in exchange for certain concessions, the threatened

strike was called off. However the Solidarnosc rank and file revolt against the compromise was so strong that Walesa's position has been considerably weakened.

Occupations by farmers were still continuing and new ones were breaking out all the time. For example, in Wroclaw 100 Rural Solidarnosc members took over the party headquarters. Similar actions were planned for other cities like Torun and Czesochowa.

So the 'Communist Party', itself battered by rank and file members pushing for democratic reforms, decided to yield on the question of Rural Solidarnosc's recognition, for the time being at least.

To remain intransigent on the question of Rural Solidarnosc's legality would have opened up a whole new Pandora's Box of difficulties for the Polish Stalinists. Walesa's position within the union would have been further undermined in the eyes of the union militants. The road of compromise — the 'small step strategy' of partial reforms so assiduously preached by the intellectuals around the Catholic church and Cardinal Wyzynski — would have been discredited for good.

The Rural Solidarnosc union will be made legal offic-

WHAT BARRICADE DID AT Y.S. CONFERENCE

- Put out five bulletins, explaining the Barricade-supported motions on CND, Ireland, women, Labour democracy, general economic policy, gays, Poland, etc.

- Held a Women's Fightback meeting attended by 50 people.

- Held a Barricade meeting on 'Our Politics and the Fight for a Workers' Government' attended by 100 people, with a fraternal speaker from 'Red Youth'.

- Circulated a petition calling for a conference debate on gay rights, signed by 54 delegates and over 200 visitors.

- Ran a very successful bookstall.

- Collected 239 signatures for the Labour Movement Press Defence Fund.

- Put down emergency motions on Bobby Sands, the WRP libel case, and Brixton.

- Circulated a petition calling for a YS women's conference.

- Collected signatures for a debate on El Salvador, and organised a small protest — between conference debates — against the platform's blocking of the debate.

- Held a gay workshop.

- Organised a meeting for the Labour Committee on Ireland.

- Proposed the setting up of the National Left Wing Youth Movement, and got many YS members interested in coming.

- Sold over 250 copies of *Barricade*.

National Left Wing Youth Conference

24-25 May [bank holiday weekend].

Political discussion, films, evening gig, and lots more. Sidney Stringer School, Coventry. £2 waged, 50p unwaged and YOP

Further details — agenda, accommodation, transport — from NLWYM, c/o PO Box 135, London N1 0DD.

Crisis

Another aim is to persuade many of Poland's industrial workers who still have links with the countryside and may own plots of land to return to the rural areas and take up farming again. By this means the bureaucracy hopes that the effects of the mass redundancies and factory closures which it wants to push through will be cushioned.

It is up to the Polish workers and farmers to use this new victory, not to service the bureaucracy's desperate attempts to cling to power, but to further democratise the country. In place of fake solutions imposed and led from on high, they need to solve the dire crisis of the economy — in their own interests — and install their power.

barricade No 7 15p

15p plus postage from PO Box 135, London N1 0DD.

JOBS NOT BOMBS

Ansells comes to a head

by Jim Denham

THE THREE month strike at Ansells Brewery, Birmingham, has reached a decisive stage.

On Good Friday, the overwhelming majority of the 1000 strikers voted to reject the bosses' 'compromise' offer of 300 jobs at distribution depots, and to step up their action to force the re-opening of the Aston Cross brewery.

They also decided to reimpose their picket of the Allied Brewery at Romford (picketing there had been stopped after pressure from T&G officials) and to extend the action by picketing Allied's Burton Brewery as well. (Allied own Ansells).

Core

The solidarity and determination shown at the meeting obviously shook the Ansells bosses. The following Monday the Daily Mail and the Birmingham Evening Mail carried red-baiting smear stories alleging violence from strikers against landlords and draymen, and claiming that the strike had been taken over by 'a hard core of Trotskyists'.

The source of the stories is obviously Allied management, and it is significant that the head of security at the Ansells brewery is an ex Metropolitan policeman who is known to be on friendly terms with 'Daily Mail' reporters.

An Ansells striker told SO, "There has been some aggro during the strike, but every incident we know about has been started by scabs. The most we've ever done has been to defend ourselves."

Gaffer

"One of the incidents the 'Mail' referred to, where the windows of the 'Harlequin' pub were smashed, was nothing to do with us at all. It was a group of skinheads who'd been ticked by the gaffer!"

"Several of the other incidents, we've never even heard about before. As far as we can tell the only basis for these smears is that a group called 'Workers' Power, who aren't directly involved in the dispute, put out a bulletin arguing for defence of picket lines. The management got hold of that leaflet and build a whole fairy tale around it."

"As far as we're concerned, it just goes to show how desperate the management are."

The bosses have also made good use of the press to publicise the tiny minority of strikers who have applied to take up the company's 'final offer' of 300 alternative jobs. Ken Bradley, the chairperson of the strike

And the press start a witch-hunt

Daily Mail Special Report on how the militant Left brought fear and violence to an industrial dispute

THE Special Branch has been called in to investigate an extreme Left-Wing terror campaign against pub managers and their families.

In a dispute which has taken on an ugliness almost unknown in Britain, thugs have intimidated and attacked lorry drivers, cut lorry brake lines, smashed pub windows, and threatened landlords, their wives and children.

Now detectives are convinced that Trotskyist 'hard men' have infiltrated the three month-old dispute which has closed down Ansells' brewery in Birmingham.

The Special Branch involvement mirrors mounting Government concern at the way Trotskyist groups are exploiting industrial conflict throughout the country.

One group which has continually sought to whip up hatred and spread the strike through the whole of Ansells' parent company, Allied Breweries, is a little-known sect called Workers' Power.

The group, which numbers no more than 100 members, has distributed pamphlets to Ansells workers urging them to step up their action as a 'strike against the Government'.

Attack

In a letter handed to Ansells police, Workers' Power extremists urged: "Steps should be taken to make sure pickets are prepared for police attack with defence squads ready to physically defend the picket line."

The dispute goes back to the introduction of a new

But the short Transport Workers' Union in the hour of forcing the management to re-open the Birmingham pub and depots to its to cut off the supply of beer.

It is this fight which the extremists have entered. The Special Branch probe has uncovered a hard core of up to 30 political extremists believed to be behind the violence.

TGWU leaders emphatically deny that their men are involved

Trots go to war on pub fa

REPORT BY ROBERT PORTER PETER BURDEN AND JOHN

Faced with attacks and telephone threats, most landlords are reluctant to discuss the intimidation.

But one Birmingham pub manager, who has been in the thick of the trouble, said: "There has been damage to a lot of pubs and we do not believe it stems from ordinary pickets. Hooligans and political extremists have jumped on the bandwagon."

used wire-cutters to cut brake lines, trailers, cut off lorry followed to threatened.

Another manager, Mr. [name], has been in one of the pubs in the area.

Threats



Ansells pickets (above) — victims of a press smear campaign

committee, told us, "As far as we know around 113 people have applied."

"Our response has been to advise all our members to do the same, so that Ansells will be faced with 1,000 applications for work."

Pick

"But we won't stand by and allow the management to pick out 300. We're still insisting on all 1,000 workers being reinstated on acceptable terms and conditions. Until we get that, the strike continues, and so do our 24-hour pickets at Romford and Burton."

Donations, letters of support, etc. to Joe Bond, 23 Barnett Rd, Erdington, Birmingham B23.

which allowed greater flexibility for shop floor militancy.

Such multi-employer agreements only cover 27% of workers (including workers covered by wages councils). Only 11% of firms with over 1,000 employees still have multi-employer agreements.

Linked to this bargaining trend has been the growth of check-off and the closed shop, both fostered by management.

Check-off (bosses deducting union dues directly from pay and passing them to the union) now covers 73% of manual workers and 72% of non-manual workers. This trend started in a big way in about 1976.

Closed shops have also developed, spreading from their traditional strongholds to cover 1/3 of industry.

Nearly all unionised plants now have the shop stewards system. Since 1972 over half the managers surveyed had formalised their relations with their stewards.

And there has been a major growth in the number of full-

time stewards: there are now four times as many as in 1964, and they outnumber ordinary union full-timers.

The report seems to show that many of the tasks that Donovan laid down from British capitalism have been carried out — mainly during the period of downturn under the last Labour government.

Whether this will have the results Donovan hoped for is another matter. But the tasks posed for socialists on the shop

floor is clear.

Lack of adequate political answers on the shop floor to deal with the crisis and the Labour government permitted these developments. And a militant response to the bureaucratisation will have to come to terms with the crisis of the 80s.

We need a drive for union democracy at the factory level — coupled with a fight for socialist policies.

Shipyards strike call for May 8

SHIPYARD WORKERS across the country are banning overtime and demanding that British Shipbuilders should withdraw its plans for enforced redundancies.

And the unofficial National Shipbuilding Shop Stewards' Combine, meeting over the weekend of the 25th-26th, is

now calling on the union leaders to start STRIKE action from May 8th.

This call should be supported. With shipbuilding in its present state of decline, overtime bans are a weak weapon. Effective action must be strike action — backed up with preparations to occupy the yards to prevent removal of machinery and ships.

Teachers' leaders go down the Chapple road

by John Cosby

THIS YEAR'S NUT conference in Eastbourne took place in the wake of the suspensions of National Executive member Dick North and five other officers of Lambeth NUT. There is also disciplinary action pending against other militants from London for attending the Annual General Meeting of the Inner London Teachers' Association (ILTA) after being told that ordinary members would not be allowed to attend — for the first time in many years.

The suspensions of the 'Lambeth 6' came up on the first day of the conference, in two motions to suspend standing order so that discussion of the suspensions could take place. The first motion was from the executive, who wanted to discuss the following resolution:

"Conference welcomes the determination of the officers of the union to protect the membership against the actions of those who show contempt for the union's rules and procedures, and who undermine the policies of the union as agreed by the national conference."

When the motion to suspend standing orders was moved and seconded by executive members, the new president, Jack Chambers, declared that no more speakers cards had been submitted, and moved to a vote amid protests. On a show of hands the vote was very close, and certainly did not receive the necessary two-thirds majority to suspend Standing Orders, but Chambers declared it carried.

When a card vote was called for, he replied that it was not allowed on a suspension of standing orders.

Cards

Chambers then ruled the Lambeth branch's application to suspend Standing Orders 'out of order' because it called for the reinstatement of the six suspended members, and the rules state that the decision of the appeals committee is final. So much for conference being the ruling body of the union.

When conference reconvened on Easter Monday, Chambers' rulings were challenged. The challenge on ruling the Lambeth motion out of order was rejected by the conference, but Chambers admitted that he had made 'mistakes' in the debate on the executive motion.

Speakers' cards had been submitted, but (he said) they had not been passed to him; and he should have taken a card vote when requested, according to union rules.

Ruled

The card vote was eventually taken, and the executive failed to achieve the necessary two-thirds majority — so the 'Lambeth 6' were never discussed.

Most other conference time was spent discussing long-winded executive reports, memoranda, and financial reports, and was of course monopolised by executive members. Very little time was spent on motions from local branches.

An emergency resolution from Lambeth branch on the Brixton 'riots' was not discussed as it was not considered important enough by more than two-thirds of the delegates.

The executive were only

defeated a couple of times all week. The most important was on the disarmament debate.

The executive amendment on 'peace education' contained no mention of nuclear weapons or even disarmament. Conference threw it out in favour of a Communist Party-inspired resolution which expressed 'deep concern' at increasing arms spending and favoured multilateral disarmament.

An amendment from Hackney branch calling for withdrawal from NATO, unilateral disarmament, and affiliation to CND, was not even discussed.



Dick North — one of the 'Lambeth 6'

Not the best outcome, but at least disarmament can now be discussed in local branches without being ruled out of order for being 'outside of the aims and objects of the union'.

The conference burst into life again late on Wednesday afternoon, with another Communist Party-inspired amendment from Greenwich branch, which called for all divisional meetings to be closed to ordinary members of the union (like at the ILTA AGM this year). The witch-hunting speeches in favour of the amendment were met with a barrage of heckling from the supporters of the 'Lambeth 6', who were referred to as 'dirty linen' and 'a mob', and were accused of packing the ILTA AGM with non-union members.

Jack Chambers took full advantage of the heckling to expel a Southwark delegate and rush to a vote, which was carried without a speaker being called against.

The conference report in the Times Educational Supplement noticed that, "The NUT is determined to keep a tight rein on all forms of protest against the decline in the education service and is now set to go down the road laid by Frank Chapple, general secretary of the electricians' trade union, in weeding out local officials who disagree with the national line."

The conference ended on Thursday with the traditional vote of thanks to Chambers "for his able conduct in the chair". For the first time in the memory of most delegates, this was opposed — but it was carried anyway.

Clearly the conference has shown militants in the NUT that one of the major obstacles to mounting an effective fight-back to the Tories' onslaught on education lies within the NUT leadership itself.

a socialist organiser 30p
broadsheet

the fight for trade union democracy

Bureaucracy spreads on the shop floor

by Mick O'Sullivan

LAST week's 'Economist' magazine had a double page spread on a forthcoming report from the Warwick University Industrial Relations Unit: "The changing contours of British Industrial Relations".

The report will be the fullest investigation since the official Donovan report in 1968.

Donovan identified a problem for the bosses: two distinct systems of bargaining: the official structure and arbitration procedures, and the unofficial organisation, setting the pace from the shop floor and led by the stewards.

Donovan's answer was to incorporate the "unofficial movement".

The survey shows how far down the road the bosses have gone with this. Corporate and plant (not shop) level agreements have become dominant, especially between 1968 and 1978. They have replaced industry-wide and multi-employer agreements,

Hadfields: occupy now!

by Ros Makin

A STUNNED meeting of Hadfield workers last Wednesday (22nd April) heard the Hadfield's boss Dan Norton say that, out of the total workforce of 2,600, only 700 will be left in the East Hecla plant while the Leeds Rd. plant will close completely.

Hadfields are blaming this on government policy and on Ian McGregor and BSC in particular.

The closure is the outcome of the Phoenix II Plan drawn up by BSC boss Ian McGregor in an attempt to streamline the steel industry. The aim is to concentrate steelmaking at plants operated by BSC Special Steels and GKN and to minimise competition for BSC, regardless of the loss in terms of workers' livelihoods.

However Norton has admitted that Hadfields (part of Tiny Rowland's Lonrho empire) had asked BSC to nationalise Hadfields last June because massive government subsidies to BSC had made it difficult for Hadfields to compete.

Hadfields now claim that the government wants to close Hadfields completely and sack all the workers, which the company has refused to do, not out of any concern for jobs, but because they would have had to provide redundancy payments.

They have also admitted that Hadfields have been making losses of £1 million a month since last July.

So nationalisation — of course with massive compensation — and subsequent closure would be very convenient for Hadfields

bosses. But the closures will be disastrous for the people of Sheffield and have repercussions throughout the rest of Sheffield's industries.

There have already been 6,000 redundancies since the beginning of the year, largely in steel and engineering. Unemployment has now reached 10% of the working population.

In addition the Employment Services Agency has admitted that there are up to 1,700 people on work experience and job creation courses, nearly 1,000 on short-time working and unknown numbers who haven't bothered registering e.g. married women who receive no benefits.

Official union reaction to the closures has been typically weak. George Caborn, District Secretary of the AUEW (Sheffield's most powerful union) called for the big unions to use their industrial muscle... not to prevent job losses, but to put an end to the government talks.

Caborn appears to object to Phoenix II, not because of the massive job losses, but because the unions haven't been involved in the negotiations.

Caborn has even said that some sort of restructuring might have to take place.

The Joint Shop Stewards' Committee, backed by the shop-floor, are strongly opposed to Hadfields' proposal. They are committed to fighting all the proposed redundancies and retaining as many jobs as possible.

Instead of waiting for negotiations workers should take direct action now, by occupying the two plants until their jobs are guaranteed.

Scottish ladders fight scab threat

by Stan Crooke

AS THE sit-in by ladders at Bestobell Insulation Ltd in Whiteinch, Glasgow, enters its third week, there is still no sign yet of any climbdown by management.

The dispute began seven weeks ago when Bestobell management brought in boilermakers to do insulating work on emergency supply vessels at the Glenn Shipyard on the Clyde. The ladders, members of the Transport and General Workers' Union, refused to work with them since there were unemployed ladders on the union's books.

The ladders staged a sit-in at the shipyards and were backed up by sit-ins by ladders at other shipyards on the Clyde

(Fairfield, Govan, Yarrow, Scotstoun Marine) and at Grangemouth. But after four weeks police moved in and cleared out the ladders from the Glenn sit-in.

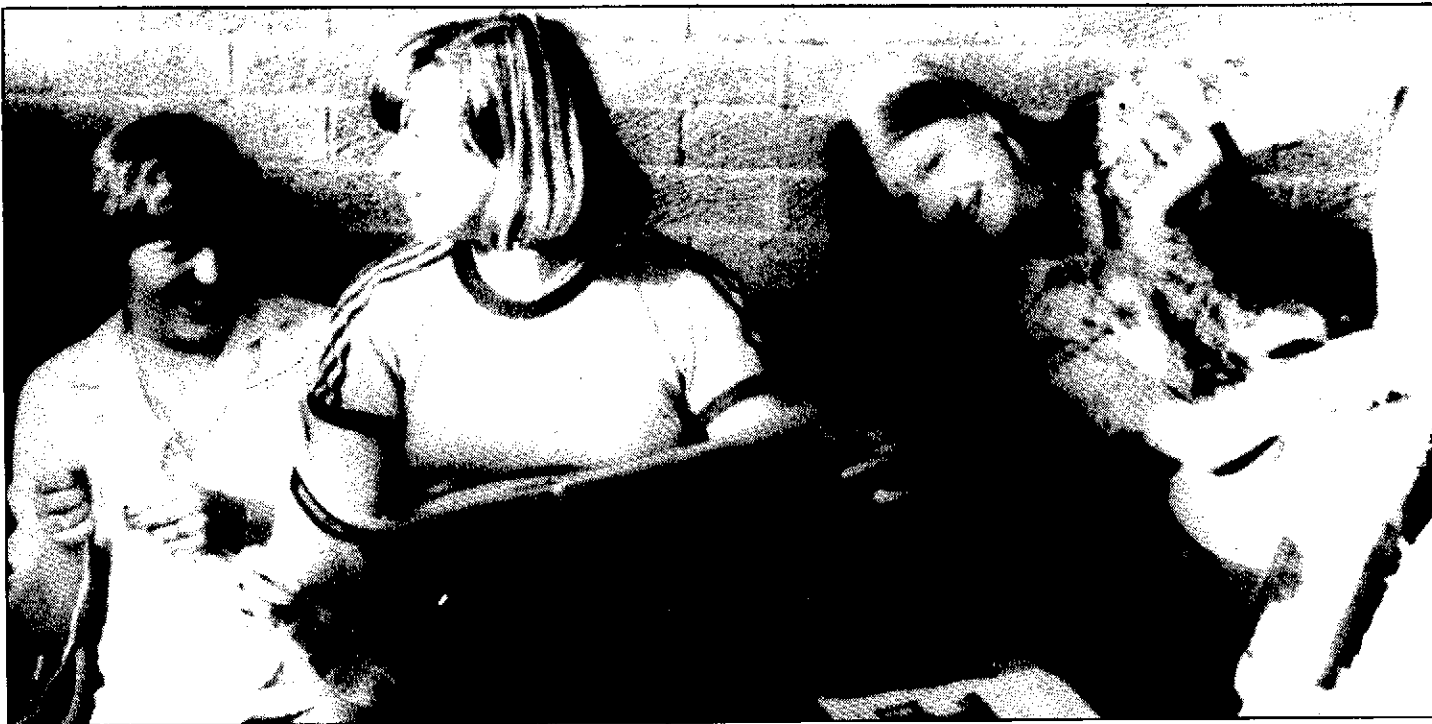
Despite the eviction the ladders showed no sign of giving up. At first they put pickets on the gates at Bestobell and then, on the 7th April, the 70 ladders from all the shipyards began an occupation of the office block, forcing management to operate, as far as they could without the company files and a workforce, from a prefab next to the perimeter fence.

Memories of the Isle of Grain dispute are fresh in the ladders' minds: "No Isle of Grain here", and "We are fighting for the right to do our own work and not scabs doing it instead",

read the posters in the windows of the occupied building.

Management have been keeping their heads down so far. Apart from an unsuccessful attempt to get a writ served on the ladders by a sheriff's officer (the ladders refused to accept it), they have not made any moves. And a threat by police to evict the ladders was just as unsuccessful; the ladders stayed put and the police didn't turn up again.

The strike is not yet official. In fact, union officials haven't even been seen at the sit-in. But in spite of not getting the backing they deserve from their union, the ladders are confident about the result of the sit-in and determined to continue it until they win.



Lee Jeans women are still in occupation. Donations and messages of support: c/o TGWU, 4 Brougham St, Greenock.

Victory for water workers

by Stan Crooke

THE THREAT of escalating an unofficial strike by water workers in Glasgow into an unofficial strike by all water workers in Scotland was enough to force a speedy retreat by their local council employers last week.

The strike began in Glasgow on April 13th, when 250 water workers struck spontaneously to demand parity with English and Welsh water workers. In the latest pay settlement, the latter had a £5 supplement incorporated into their basic pay, and therefore included in calculations for overtime and bonus payments.

But in Scotland the £5 supplement was only to be consolidated into the basic, which meant that it would not be taken into consideration in such calculations. When union negotiators (GMWU), despite instructions from their membership to achieve parity, returned with this offer, the result was an immediate strike.

By the fourth day of the strike, workers in Paisley, Greenock, Gourock, Port Glasgow, Miln-grave and Lennoxton had come out in solidarity, and nearly 200,000 homes were being hit by the strike. But the anti-strike propaganda in the press was a lot dirtier than any water coming out of the taps.

Stand-by services for hospitals, renal dialysis machines, etc. were organised, but no mention of this was made in the press, which instead portrayed the strike as a threat to human life. And the press picture of 'strike-happy water workers' doesn't square with the fact that pay talks had been dragging on since last September (seven months ago!), but only now had the workers struck to back up

their demand for parity.

Labour councillor Robert Gould, chairperson of the local authorities' negotiating committee, helped the press in its offensive against the strike by claiming that parity with English and Welsh workers would mean a reduction in the offer being made to Scottish water workers. "Strike threat — workers want LESS!" read the headlines in the papers the next day!

But local union officials went even further than Gould in opposing the strike, by ordering the Glasgow men back to work and trying to prevent the strike spreading to other treatment works around Glasgow. Fortunately no-one took any notice of the union full-timers: at a mass meeting on Glasgow Green on the third day of the strike, there wasn't a single vote for a return to work.

Water treatment works were picketed throughout the strike, but with varying degrees of effectiveness. At the North area works in Sydney St, there was nothing going in or out, and arrangements were made for picketing over the Easter weekend, while at the West works in Balmore Road a lot of vehicles were going in unchallenged and there was confusion about picketing arrangements over Easter.

But at emergency talks in Edinburgh on Good Friday, the council's negotiating committee, faced with the threat of an all-out Scottish strike, backed down and accepted the demand for parity. Commented Billy McNab, the shop stewards' convenor, after the climb-down: "We're over the moon about the result. We've got a settlement identical in every shape and form to the English one".

YOP strikes spread

"We went on strike because of the pay and working conditions. Pay is only £23.50 a week and you have to pay your own fares".

Joe Campbell is the spokesperson for trainees at the YOP workshop in Rosyth St in the Gorbals, Glasgow, who struck on Wednesday April 24th. The YOP scheme is supposed to give unemployed youth training and 'opportunities'; in fact, says Joe Campbell, "I'd advise nobody to go on them. Cheap labour, that's all it is. You're just as well off on the broo".

"Conditions at the workshop are bad; you have to supply your own clothes and that, you're sacked on the spot for gambling, the toilets are dirty, you can't play football in the yard 'cos of the Health and Safety Act, and the heating's below the limit."

"17 of us had already had one 1-day strike, after we read in the Sunday Mail about a strike by other people on YOP schemes. We were threatened with the sack, but decided to organise another strike for the 24th."

"I went and told everyone, 'If you're willing to lose a day's pay and try to get better conditions, then come out on strike a week on Wednesday'. 48 out of 50 of us came out. The two who stayed in had only just started at the workshop. I've only got a month to go, so I was chosen as spokesman."

"We want £5 or £6 more a week, and the money for travelling expenses and that. And the staff is for us doing this."

"We're going on strike again on May 14th. We all lost £4.70 because of the last strike, so we've got to wait a fortnight before we can afford to come out again. But I'm going to organise other workshops to come out with us this time. I know people in the Govanhill workshop, and my mates know people in the Oatlands and Govan one."

GORBALS GOES FOR A SIT-IN

by Stan Crooke

At a meeting held last Monday (April 27th) parents in the Gorbals who have been campaigning since the beginning of the year against the proposed closure of two local nursery schools decided to organise for an all-out occupation of at least one of them.

Despite the support which the campaign has received from Labour Party and trade union branches, the majority Labour group on Strathclyde Regional Council voted by 33 to 25 at its April meeting to approve the closures. This decision made the outcome of the vote at the full council meeting a foregone conclusion.

The parents were therefore faced with a straight choice: organise for occupation or give up. Contrary to the claims of Labour councillors and union bureaucrats that "people haven't got the stomach for a fight", the parents unanimously voted for occupation, some time before the implementation of the closures in June.

The month ahead will be used to build support for the occupation and keep up pressure on the councillors. There are a number of ways of supporting the campaign:

- get motions passed at union and Labour Party branches backing the occupation and demanding that the council back down;
- get as many people as possible to help in the running of the occupation, if only for a few hours each week;
- help raise money to cover the running costs of the occupation;
- unions in the water and electricity industries must refuse to disconnect supplies to the nursery schools, and NALGO must refuse to do any paper work concerned with the closures.

— people are needed to go round the local factories and leaflet the local dole office to build support for the occupation and also to contact local parents of pre-school age children, who have a direct interest in stopping the closures;

— Glasgow Trades Council and the STUC, which back the campaign on paper, must be committed to active support for the occupation and the campaign in general.

A meeting is being held at the end of May to finalise plans for the occupation, though, should the date of the closure suddenly be brought forward, the appropriate alternative measures will be taken.

The address for donations and messages of support and for further information about the campaign is "Parents against Nursery Education cuts", C/o F. Lockhart, 21 Polmadie Road, Glasgow G5 0HA.

Labour: keep this nursery open!

by Paul McGann

AFTER five weeks of the occupation to stop closure of Beal St nursery in Leicester, the occupation committee and Leicester County Council seem to have reached a temporary stalemate, probably until after the May County Council elections.

The Social Services Committee offered the nursery to the parents on a self-help basis at a meeting on 15th April.

But the meeting was lobbied by 40 parents and children. The parents were so uptight at the inaccuracies and downright lies told by the Tories on the Social Services Committee that they staged a token occupation of the office of the Director of Social Services, and demanded an immediate meeting to correct these inaccuracies and to put once again the case for keeping the play centre open and staffed by Social Services.

The 'Leicester Mercury' has played its own part in the campaign for a self-help scheme by taking parents to a self-help

nursery in Nottingham... where the parents running the nursery 'informed the 'Mercury' that they saw self-help as a temporary measure until Labour gained control of the council, and if they had been sure of support from the labour movement they too would have occupied.

Self-help basically means that parents pay for it themselves, and in an area of high unemployment and low income like Highfields in Leicester, where Beal St is, the parents correctly see this as a non-starter.

The fight is now on to commit prospective Labour councillors to keep the play centre open, or in the event of Labour not getting a majority on the County Council to commit the Labour-controlled City Council to take over the facility.

The occupation is still strong with support coming in from the local population, trade union movement, and Labour Parties. Messages of support to: Beal St Action Group, 1 Pegasus Close, Highfields; Leicester.

Socialist Organiser

Chapple
does it
again

by an EETPU member

THE 7,000 strong Central London Branch of the EETPU was suspended before Easter.

Its crime? Refusing to accept the National Executive appointing a delegate in its name to a South London Labour Party.

Mr Lees, one of a series of delegates appointed by the executive over the heads of the branch, was refused delegate's credentials by Bermondsey CLP because the branch hadn't appointed him. The Central London Branch then refused a National Executive instruction to make the appointment — scarcely surprising since, according to branch secretary Danny McCarthy, Lees hasn't attended a meeting for over 14 years.

EETPU 'boss' Frank Chapple is fighting a campaign to flood local Labour Parties with right wing delegates in the South London borough of Southwark. Labour councillors — including the owner of a chemist's shop! — have been 'recruited' to the EETPU and installed on GMCs after failing to get delegated by ward branches.

To carry out this campaign, Chapple is prepared to destroy active branches... and it isn't a new thing. Branches have frequently been suspended before, and many more 'merged'.

Plumbers' lodges, traditionally less subservient to Chapple, have been a particular target. The total number in London has plummeted from over 30 at amalgamation to only four today, covering huge areas.

Delegates to the EETPU conference in Blackpool this month should use the opportunity to show what they think of Chapple's 'dirty tricks' and his clubbing-down of union democracy.

A resolution from the North London lodge says, "the executive council's policy of closing lodges and branches has not been in the best interests of the membership, and should be reversed".

Isolation weakens rents fight

THOUSANDS of tenants all over the country have been on partial rent strike since the beginning of April. But now there is a danger that the rent strikes will become isolated and demoralised.

In Scotland, 20,000 are on rent strike (Scottish Tenants' Organisation estimate).

3,000 of these are in the Renfrew District alone, where the tenants on the Glenburn estate in Paisley have called on the Renfrewshire Federation of Tenants' Associations to organise a mass public demonstration of tenants and the labour movement.

But this call from 230 tenants was rejected by the Federation, which preferred to call a lobby of the regional councillors instead.

The Glenburn tenants also want to form a tenants' defence committee to protect those on rent strike from harassment and eviction.

Feeble leadership has hindered the rent strikes. The Communist Party controlled Scottish Tenants' Organisation has shown a distinct lack of desire to win. At its Annual Conference held in Renfrew on April 11th, all that was up for debate was the flabby "Charter for Scotland's housing", which is so weak it doesn't even refer to fighting against the sale of council houses.

They had also invited Malcolm Rifkind, the Tory spokesman on housing. Of course he refused. But the very thought of inviting such an arrogant representative of the ruling class engaged in an all-out attack on council housing, in the midst of a rent strike reveals the spineless nature of the STO.

In Glasgow the Glasgow Council of Tenants is keeping to its normal routine of monthly meetings where the rent strikes merit the same priority on the agenda as the minutes of the last meeting and correspondence.

The GCT has also gone along with NALGO's proposal to send out warning letters to tenants on rent strike who were in arrears before the rent strike began. Apparently these tenants are "eroding the campaign by jumping on the bandwagon".



Not even one Labour Council has been willing to defy the Tories this time like Clay Cross in 1972 — and that's left the rent strikes much weaker.

NALGO has agreed however, not to process any eviction notices.

The GCT also reckon that withholding the rate increase is too 'complex' a business. For tenants, paying the rate increase is a business they can't afford with the rate increase being almost as high as the rent increase.

A tenant from Cambuslang, where 3,000 are on partial rent strike said, "I didn't mean to pay any of the increase — rent or rates. At the rent office they told me I'd better pay the new rates as it was the advice of the tenants' association."

"It was only when I got to the counter that I realised how much it was, £6.56 extra just for the rates and the rent increase is £10. I wish now I hadn't paid the rates and I won't be paying it next month, no matter what the Tenants' Association say."

In Basingstoke, the Tory leader of the council has resigned over the rent increases and Labour won the by-election. The rent strike is in a weak position, but the action committee has just put out the third issue of its strike bulletin.

Stop reselection being carved up

THE Campaign for Labour Party Democracy has announced:

"We are shocked at the announcement of a 'reselection' in West Bromwich West, in which the GC decided by 23-21 to shortlist only the sitting MP, even though one of those excluded had eight branch nominations."

"When Conference repeatedly decided in favour of reselection it was taken for granted

that it would be conducted by the normal procedure."

"This is explicitly confirmed in the NEC's own reselection guidelines, issued only a few weeks ago. We know of no case in the past where the NEC has authorised a shortlist of one, except where there was only one nominee."

"The rules only authorise shortlisting if the number of nominees makes it necessary."

We therefore urge the Labour Party NEC not to endorse any reselection based on the abuse of shortlisting, which reduces the selection conference to a farce.

"We note that West Bromwich West is not the only constituency where this applies and call on the NEC to insist that every CLP goes through the proper reselection procedure."

NUPE militant denounces WRP libel action

"PLEASE find enclosed a small donation towards the fight that 'Socialist Organiser' is waging against the WRP."

"I was very angry to read of the WRP's [libel] action against you", writes Conway Xavier, chairperson of the London Divisional Area Committee [NHS] of NUPE.

"In the past I have supported the 'Newsline' in their very good coverage of hospital disputes. During the low pay fight and the fight against the cuts the 'Newsline' could be relied upon to give first class coverage."

"The fact that myself and many other militants within NUPE could have been duped into giving support for that paper in their general fight against the Tory government is a reflection of their total dishonesty."

"No working-class organisation can use the bosses' courts to attack another working-class organisation."

"I will certainly do my best to ensure that the influence of the 'Newsline' within the anti-cuts fight in NUPE is diminished as soon as possible [not that it was much in the first place, but they were always ready to report on our actions]."

Support for us against the WRP's use of the wealth of Ms Redgrave to gag us is coming from other quarters too.

There have been donations from labour movement organisations, including Haskins shop stewards' committee, Basingstoke, Huyton LPYS, Euxton branch Chorley CLP, and Moss Side branch LP.

MPs Bob Cryer and Ron Brown [Leith] have added their names to our petition, and other recent signatories include:

Mike Waller [secretary, Lambeth NALGO]; John Murphy and Dave Cox [Longbridge BL stewards]; Jim McCabe [NUPE]; Mick Brightman [AUEW]; Mick Cannon [EETPU];

Ian Wyles, Roland Sheret [Stirling TC]; Mike Morris [Fife TU action committee]; Elizabeth McKenzie [Falkirk TC];

Harry McShane [veteran Marxist and one-time associate of John Maclean];

Pat Olley [Newham Labour councillor]; Ian Olley [TGWU,

Royal docks, and Newham NW CLP]; Derek Sawyer [Islington N. CLP]; Norman Jacobs [Harwich CLP];

Paul Foot [well known journalist and SWPer], veteran Trotskyist Charles van Gelderen;

Andy Bevan [National Youth Officer of the LP], and 238 other comrades at the LPYS national conference.

Tribune has told its readers the facts and asked them to support Socialist Organiser. So has Socialist Challenge, which supplied details of the activities of the US WRP [the Workers' League].

The WL specialises in finger-pointing Trotskyists on the alleged grounds that they are all FBI and CIA agents or their dupes. The author, Brian Grogan, notes that the tiny WL has a wealth of information that would only be available to state agencies.

And the Morning Star has carried a news story about the case.

We still face heavy legal costs if the WRP does not back down. Please keep the signatures and the money coming in.

Appeal for funds

LABOUR MOVEMENT
PRESS DEFENCE
FUND

Send donations to Jonathan Hammond [Hon. Treasurer], c/o 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY. Cheques payable to 'Labour Movement Press Defence Fund'.

Name:

Address:

Organisation:

Donation:

GLC ELECTIONS Tories turn to scare stories

by Martin Thomas

LABOUR should win the Greater London Council election on May 7th — unless squalid scaremongering has more power than we think.

The Tories declare: "We are fighting the Marxist [i.e. Labour] threat because we do not want to see our great city go the way of many fine old East European cities which are now under the communist yoke". They denounce Labour's proposal to demand public accountability for the Metropolitan Police as an attempt to exercise 'party control' over the police.

They interpret Labour's promise to eliminate stream-

ing in schools as 'wanting to prevent achievement'. And so on.

As for positive policies, the Tory manifesto hardly contains any. They are fighting the election 'on their record' — a record of four years' control of the GLC in which GLC house-building has been practically abolished; rents have risen 140% while prices generally have gone up 54%; and bus and tube fares have gone up 110%.

Labour's manifesto proposes several reform measures — a 25% cut in fares followed by a freeze; a new GLC direct labour operation; a rent freeze; and a municipal Enterprise Board.

More significantly, it promises to use the GLC as a platform for fighting the Tory government. The London Labour Party is working to make councillors accountable to the Party. And the Labour slate reflects an organised effort by the Left to get candidates who are committed to carrying out the Manifesto.

If a Labour GLC is really going to fight the Tories, then an active rank and file movement will be needed in the Labour Parties and trade union branches — to organise direct action, to hold the councillors to their promises, and to be ready to lead the fight independently if the councillors buckle.

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A LABOUR INQUIRY, NOT THE COURTS

We, the undersigned, condemn Vanessa Redgrave's and the WRP's use of the courts against the labour movement press. We support the proposal that a labour movement inquiry be set up to investigate the statements made in the Socialist Organiser article.

NAME ORGANISATION

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