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Socialist Organiser

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**NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION
AGAINST POLICE HARASSMENT
AND FOR THE SACKING OF
CHIEF CONSTABLE OXFORD**

3pm. Saturday 15th August, from
Sefton Park Obelisk, Liverpool.

Called by the Liverpool 8 Defence Committee
Liverpool Black Organisation, and Charles
Wootton Centre. Supported by North West
TUC and Liverpool District Labour Party.

LICENCE TO KILL!!

by John Lister

GO OUT at your peril. In Thatcher's Britain anyone on the streets of the big cities — whether they are there to protest or simply walking home from visiting relatives — is now fair

game for savage police attack.

This has been true for years in Ireland, where British troops and RUC thugs daily use rubber and plastic bullets, tear gas, batons, boots and high-speed vehicles to intimidate and repress people in the nationalist ghetto areas.

It was shown to be the case in Britain in 1979, when the brutal goons of the Special Patrol Group murdered anti-fascist militant Blair Peach on the streets of Southall, only to be shielded from prosecution by a brazen police cover-up.

London's police chief McNee made no bones about it: stay off the streets if you want to stay out of trouble, he declared.

Since then, the tactics of the SPG have become standard police tactics.

In Bristol, Brixton, Southall and a whole series of deprived inner-city areas of slump-hit Britain, these same tactics have provoked an angry and militant response from youth pushed beyond the limits of endurance by continual harassment.

Lethal

Merseyside police chief Kenneth Oxford echoed McNee's arrogant warning to workers not to exercise their democratic right to march or walk the streets. Anyone out and about on the streets must be a law-breaker, he declared.

Putting Oxford's words into horrific practice, police vans in Toxteth last week adopted the lethal Northern Ireland tactic of mounting the pavement at high speed to break up crowds.

Almost at once one youth was pinned against a wall by a van — his back

broken. Another, 22 year old David Moore, a disabled youth on his way home from visiting his sister, was dragged along an alley at high speed by a police van before it drove over him and sped off without stopping.

Moore was left mutilated and dead.

Meanwhile, Oxford's foot police were also on the rampage. Men and women were beaten up — and then left bleeding on the pavements, with police making no attempt to arrest them.

One man was slashed by a policeman armed with a machete. A young woman who witnessed the murder of David Moore was clubbed by a gang of police with truncheons.

The Toxteth police action was brutal. And it was calculated as a revenge action. Like the savage raids in the aftermath of the Brixton riots, it had nothing to do with arrests — but was designed as a bloody retaliation for the blows inflicted by an angry community.

In Thatcher's Britain the police know that they stand now in the front line of repression, forced to combat struggles of workers infuriated by mass unemployment, chronic poverty, homelessness and racial oppression. No wonder their pay has increased by nearly 60% since Thatcher came to office.

They know that they can only hold the line through the intimidation of whole communities.

The driver of the police van that killed David Moore may face charges; or he may be protected in the same way as the police killers of Blair Peach.

But no worker in Toxteth or anywhere else should be in doubt now that the police are ready and willing to kill, with the full backing of the State.

To deal with this brazen violence, some dreamers in the labour movement have begun to plead for democratic control of the police.

McNee, Anderson, and Oxford should certainly be removed; but we must recognise that they would only be replaced by another, similarly brutal, cop.

In reality, there is no way that the police, these hired defenders of the capitalist class can be made accountable to the workers' movement.

The demand must be for the withdrawal of the police from riot-torn working-class areas, and their replacement by workers' defence patrols, which alone can carry out community self-policing.

The TUC and Labour Party have already called for the disbanding of the SPG; but the spread of SPG tactics shows that the demand must be widened.

The defeat of the Tories must be coupled with demands for a workers' government that will disband the present police force as a crucial part of the struggle for a socialist society.

LICENCE TO KILL! TORY H-BLOCK SLAUGHTER CONTINUES —p.8-9

REAL POWER BEHIND CHILDISH POMP AND CEREMONY

by William Booth [our Court Correspondent]

"NO FEELING", wrote the conservative journalist Walter Bagehot in 1867, "could seem more childish than the enthusiasm of the English at the marriage of the Prince of Wales".

It would be a mistake for socialists a century or more later to be misled by the banality and vulgarity of the multi-media extravaganza inflicted upon us into underrating the importance of the institution of monarchy.

It remains to this day a vital link in the continually forged and re-forged chains that bind up the capitalist order.

It is quite obvious that the chords of regimented communal ecstasy which were struck by the events of last week could just as easily have formed by some other circus, perhaps org-



The Royal pram

anised as a major football match — or a Nuremberg rally.

The forms of the monarchy are designed to appeal to all the most senti-

mentalised and primitive reactionary impulses.

They put together the most outdated of all political institutions with all the trappings of the most

conventional and oppressive petty-bourgeois sexual mores.

The whole package is deliberately and cynically used to lend a touch of glamour and stability to a political and social system that is otherwise seen as vicious, violent, never quite free from the stench of corruption and hypocrisy.

The origins of the modern monarchy in the British system of government derive from the political settlements which followed the bourgeois revolution of 1640 and the executive of Charles I in 1649.

The acceptance of Charles II in 1660 and still more of William III in 1688 and George I in 1714 stripped the monarchy of all the pretensions of hereditary succession and

'divine right'.

The 'constitutional monarchy' survived because the bourgeoisie needed both a focus of loyalty to their state and an institution which could arbitrate between their various contending factions.

Thus the monarchy has not simply a symbol of the power of government but an instrument for ensuring its continuity.

This power remains of crucial importance, but it has not always been exercised in exactly the same way.

During the reign of George III in the 18th century, it was established that the King could not decide by his own political preferences who the members of the government should be.

However, he could be

part of the process of transition, and ensure in cases of doubt that an acceptable alternative was agreed.

Thus the ceremony of new Prime Ministers going to see the monarch for 'kissing hands' is no empty gesture.

The political uncertainty in the days that followed the General Election of 1974 is only the most recent example of the value of the monarchy in such a situation.

King George V in 1931 played a crucial role in smoothing over the difficulties and making the contacts between the Tory, Liberal and Labour leaders to set up the so-called 'National Government', which was at the time the only hope of the crisis-racked political and economic system.

The recent bally-hoo around the monarchy aims at preparing the majority of the population for accepting this political function.

The political proclivities of Edward VIII, dropped in 1936 for offending against the narrowest canons of petty bourgeois morality, are well known.

His sympathies for Mussolini and Hitler were scarcely concealed, and his possible use as a means of surrendering to the fascist powers in 1940 was actively canvassed.

It is of some interest that the next step in the political career of the Prince of Wales most frequently proposed is that he should become governor-general of Australia.

The last notable action by an Australian governor-general was the 'coup' of 1975, when John Kerr 'sacked' an elected Labour government which had lost the confidence of the capitalist class.

Socialism without republicanism?

"TO HOPE to achieve Socialism without Republicanism is the sort of thing that could only occur among English-speaking people; it would hardly be possible for men with any profound knowledge of history, of any understanding of the economic and psychological links between different institutions".

That was Bertrand Russell, in 1926, reviewing Leon Trotsky's 'Where is Britain Going?'.

"How can they dare threaten bourgeois prop-

erty", Trotsky asked of the British labour leaders, "when they do not even dare refuse the Prince of Wales pocket money?"

"The royal power, they declare, 'does not interfere' with the country's progress, and is cheaper than a president, if we count all the expenses of elections, etc., etc."

"These speeches of the labour leaders are characteristic of a phase of their 'peculiar' nature which cannot be called by any other name than conserv-

ative stupidity.

"The royal power is weak because the instrument of bourgeois rule is the bourgeois Parliament and because the bourgeoisie does not need any special activities outside of Parliament. But in case of need, the bourgeoisie will make use of the royal power with great success as a concentration of all nonparliamentary, i.e. REAL forces aimed against the ruling class."

"The English bourgeoisie has always well

understood the dangers even of the most fictitious monarch in certain situations."

"Thus, in 1837, the English government abolished the designation of 'Great Mogul' in India and removed the bearer of the name from the holy city of Delhi, in spite of the fact that this name had already begun to lose its prestige. The English bourgeoisie knew that under favourable circumstances the Great Mogul might concentrate in himself the forces of the

independent upper classes directed against English rule."

Magic

"To proclaim a socialist platform and at the same time to declare that the royal power does not 'interfere' and is actually cheaper is equivalent, for instance, to a recognition of materialistic science combined with the use of magic incantations for toothache — since the latter are cheaper. Such little

'insignificant' traits fully characterise a man by showing the complete emptiness of his recognition of material science and the complete fallaciousness of his system of ideas."

"The socialist cannot consider the question of monarchy from the point of view of present-day book-keeping, especially with doctored books. The matter at stake is a complete transformation of society, a purification from all elements of serfdom."

"This task, both politic-

ally and psychologically, excludes any possibility of conciliation with the monarchy".

Without

And today? Only a few left-wing Labour backbenchers, plus one maverick right-winger [Willie Hamilton], will go as far as Russell went.

The entire Labour front-bench, and the Labour NEC too, is still aiming for... Socialism without Republicanism.

BAROMETER OF POLITICAL CRISIS

QUESTION: What is the collective noun to describe an assembly of 2,000 or so parasites, exploiters and compromising labour bureaucrats?

ANSWER: A royal wedding.

They came [these parasites etc]; they saw; and then, for the most part, they rushed off home to sort out the political and social problems they faced in their own countries.

Those of the assembled rulers, that is, who were not overthrown during the ceremony.

"Undoubtedly for the bourgeois press the most poignant story of the wedding was the overthrow of President Dawda Jawara of Gambia, a man who the 'Daily Express' says is 'the kind of democrat Africa needs'."

Some of the leaders with whom he rubbed shoulders in the Cathedral, however, might well have been relieved to suffer the same fate, which would at least have released them from the crises they have to confront.

While New Zealand premier Robert Muldoon was kneeling in prayer, thousands of his police were engaged, unsuccessful-

fully, in a physical battle with anti-apartheid demonstrators, whose success in stopping one of the matches of the Springboks' rugby tour, has called the whole authority of the right wing government and the police into question.

Muldoon's Australasian neighbour, Malcolm Fraser, nearly didn't make it to the wedding at all as a result of the sharpening wage struggle, which has placed his government under a new threat.

And there were some notable absentees who really didn't make it. The last minute panic withdrawal of the King and Queen of Spain — interpreted by the British capitalist class as an insult about on a par with the French Dauphin's gift of tennis balls to King Henry V — was the result of the extremely delicate political situation which has existed in Spain since the coup attempt of February 23.

Fascist

With fascist forces inside and outside the army growing in strength and confidence, Spain's 'democratic' government took advantage of the Gibraltar honey-

moon to stage a public nationalist gesture designed to pull the rug from under the feet of the pure fascist right and the most pro-coup sections of the military.

Another absentee, President Ronald Reagan, was too busy twisting the last few Democratic arms so as to ensure the passage of his tax cut proposals designed to help alleviate the suffering of the rich in the world's richest country.



Dawda Jawara

PRESS GANG



DOCTORS hit out today at a drugs craze which has ruined the lives of millions of innocent women.

The killer habit has been mercilessly forced on the population by a mafia-type family determined to cling to power and privilege whatever the misery.

Their pitiful victims are of all ages and backgrounds. Millions are sinking at this very moment into debt, poverty and slavery.

Yet in their own eyes these trapped women are in the midst of a wonderful fairy tale. Under the influence of the drug they submit themselves to a lifetime of servitude and domestic drudgery.

The new mania is called Royal Family sniffing. People who get hooked claim it is cheap and harmless. In the long run the cost is fatal.

Last week, in a bid for a larger share of the booty, a flagrant public procession was held by the main drug pushers. A police force in the direct pay of the family, looked the other way as vast quantities of poison were poured from an open

carriage.

Afterwards, Sir David McNee, Police Commissioner, said his officers had successfully prevented any breach of the peace. There had not been any "so-called glass carriage".

Eye-witnesses claimed that a man and woman were in the carriage — one of them in paramilitary uniform.

The woman has been identified as a former nursery nurse who gave up work for a life of idle luxury. Some claim, however, that the nurse was secretly murdered and replaced by a multi-million pound robot almost indistinguishable from the real thing.

But behind this couple — be they human or humanoid — are the hard men and women of The Family who followed the procession at a discreet distance, watching the effect of their raid.

Millions of pounds have been spent on researching and packaging the drug, but how it works is still baffling medical science.

The basic idea is a sugar coated pill of such intense

nastiness that its effects can last a lifetime.

One effect of the drug is thought to be to persuade women to attach themselves to violent and dangerous men. Women who have swallowed large doses have later been admitted to casualty departments in hospitals up and down the country, suffering from severe beatings.

Liaison takes place at pagan ceremonies in which the women symbolically subjugate themselves to a lifetime of breeding, cleaning, cooking and washing. In the fantasy which the drug induces the victim believes she is a beautiful, mysterious creature whose ambition is to be a "good wife" (an obscure form of servant).

In men the symptoms are weaker but can still prove fatal. They include strutting about with hands clasped behind the back, megalomania, split personalities, (referring to oneself in the plural), dissolving Parliaments and declaring war.

Behind "The Family" lies a whole shadowy apparatus of drug pushers which

includes the police, the judiciary and parliament. Trade union and Labour Party leaders have also been prominent in the campaign to legalise The Family and their lethal poisons.

All are thought to take in millions in spin-off profits.

STOP PRESS: A team of scientists claim to have come up with a top secret antidote to the poison.

Research teams, hidden in secret hiding places around the country, are working on a formula which will: bring down The Family; expose those who secretly support them; banish the drug from the eyes of millions for ever; establish a new order based on truth, equality and justice.

The team have been working on this formula, developed by a Mr K. Marx over 100 years ago.

Sir David McNee confirmed last night he was mobilising thousands of extra police to find these cells. "We cannot have the people taking things into their own hands", he said.

Overtturn, not U-turn!

**Socialist
Organiser
EDITORIAL**

For months Labour and trade union leaders have been trying to get the Tories to "do a U-turn". Is the promised day in sight?

Top Tories Francis Pym and Lord Thorneycroft have joined the Prior/Walker faction in criticising Thatcher's policy. Pym warned, "the British people will not be prepared for very much longer to tolerate the worst effects of the recession, if there is not a clear sign that the sacrifice will have been worthwhile".

The CBI has flatly contradicted Howe's claim that "we are now at the end of the recession."

Influential bosses' papers like the Economist and the Financial Times are openly contemptuous of Thatcher's headbangers.

The Tories' monetarist snake-oil has failed. The riots have shocked them. The rise of the SDP will probably take more votes from them than from Labour.

What is the "alternative economic strategy"?

of the Tory dissenters? They are not united, but the main proposal is an increase in government capital spending, to be compensated by harsher cuts in current spending.

This may ease unemployment slightly; more to the point, it will revive the profits of hard-pressed construction and supply firms.

Wage controls would probably also be part of a Tory "alternative strategy".

There may be a majority in influential Tory and ruling class circles now for a change of line. But Thatcher and Howe have the advantage of being the sitting tenants.

Their opponents are not very clear and confident, and have no leader strong enough to challenge Thatcher.

For the labour movement, however, the main point is that the Tory "alternative" is just another tactic for the same aim — to restore British bosses' profits at the expense of the

working class. For a government representing the bosses and bankers and operating within a severe capitalist crisis, the options are very limited.

The Tories cannot be cajoled or nudged into benevolent reformist policies. They can only be beaten back, thwarted, made unable to govern and driven from office.

POWER AND PROFITS

SEEN your electricity bill this quarter? Astronomical is hardly an adequate word. Last year electricity prices rose by no less than 27%. In April they went up again by 12.5%.

Where does all the money go to? Well, if you believe the Electricity Council, then even after these thumping increases — far outpacing the increases in wages in the same period — they are still in deep financial trouble.

deep financial trouble.

Their accounts show a loss of £272 million for last year.

Or possibly a profit of £373 million — depending on how you read the balance sheet!

But either way the message is clear: huge sums of cash, extracted from working class families and from the workforce in the power industry are being siphoned off — via the Electricity Council and every other nationalised industry — into the pockets of the bankers and their capitalist shareholders.

While workers open their purses and wallets to pay their bills, is it not high time we opened the books — of the Electricity Council, the Gas Corporation, the Post Office, British Telecoms, and the oil firms among others — to elected committees of trade unionists and consumers — to show once and for all who profits in each case — and who should therefore be top of the list for nationalisation?



WILD WANDSWORTH

From those wonderful folk that gave you the great Council Estate Property Sales Boom — the "intentionally homeless" line.

Mr. and Mrs. Din and family had the misfortune to live in Wandsworth — in a flat above a shop, which the family managed while Mr. Din worked full time.

The shop wasn't paying, the Dins got badly in arrears with rent and were threatened with eviction.

They took advice and were told they couldn't be evicted without a court order. However, things got worse, the arrears were mounting up, the electricity got cut off, they were served with a distress warrant for rates arrears and they feared they'd be liable for costs if the landlord went to court.

So they moved out to stay with relatives in Upminster.

Four months later, unable to stay with relatives any longer, they applied to be housed under the Homeless Persons Act. They were told that since they had left before they had actually been evicted they were "intentionally homeless".

They took Wandsworth Council to the County Court to compel them to rehouse the family and won.

The Council appealed and the Appeal Court on a 2-1 majority ruled, on the narrowly legalistic view that since they had left voluntarily before they were forced to, that they were indeed "intentionally homeless".

The Dins are appealing to the House of Lords. In the meantime, if you're threatened with homelessness make sure you're carried kicking and screaming from your dwelling in case anyone should think you're going voluntarily.

★ ★ ★

MUSICAL HIT LISTS

A new game from the makers of 'Penalty!' — a war of nerves between local authorities and the Environment Minister. Here's

how it's played: Michael Heseltine draws up a hit-list of councils who are dragging their feet over the sale of council houses.

The music starts, councils scramble to give assurances that they will process applications. The music stops and all those who've given "precise undertakings as to their time-tables for processing applications" are knocked off the list, the ones who remain on are threatened with takeover by the commissioners and a new list is drawn up.

The music starts... And so it goes on.

For those of you keeping score, the latest results are:

New on the hit list: 7: Gateshead, Hackney, Leeds, Leicester, Norwich, Sunderland, Watford. Off: 5: Barnsley, Burnley, Middlesbrough, Walsall, Waltham Forest.

No change: 8: Birmingham, Bristol, Doncaster, Great Yarmouth, Harringey, Hull, Wakefield, Greenwich.

Warned: 13.

THE PERFECT ISSUE

THE GLC is yet again threatened with surcharge if it tries to implement its manifesto promise to stop the sale of new GLC flats and fill them with people from the 200,000 on the waiting list. And legal action has already been started by one purchaser.

The old Tory GLC included a clause in the contract guaranteeing that all flats in a block would be sold — i.e. buyers would not have to live alongside council tenants who would bring down property values. The new Labour GLC has been warned by officials that they could face legal bills of £½ million for breach of contract.

When the surcharge threat was raised over school meals price cuts, some 'Lefts' on the GLC argued it wasn't the issue to take a stand on. Well, if they want an issue, you couldn't ask for a better one than this: standing up for the homeless against Tory greed and middle class snobbery.



BEHIND POLAND'S SHORTAGES

by Bob Sutcliffe

It is well-known that the Polish government now tells capitalist bankers many more of its economic secrets than it gives to the Polish workers in whose name it claims with ever less conviction to rule.

But last week enough of the economic books were opened to give some idea of the extremities of the economic crisis.

Ironically, on the surface some of the figures look very favourable to the working class. For instance last year wages rose 26% while the official cost of living index went up only 15% — a rise in real wages, it would appear, of about 10%.

But not so fast. This is in fact a case of lies, damn lies and statistics.

What really happened was that wages did go up as a result of union militancy; and the bureaucracy did not dare prices as it wished for the same reason.

But there were simply no goods available to buy with the higher real wages. So workers either had to save useless money (saving increased by 17%) or spend it on the black market, where prices of course skyrocketed.

The most important part

of the black market was in goods which could be bought only with dollars. So there is a roaring black market in dollars.

The official rate of exchange is one dollar for 33 Polish zlotys. In fact you now have to pay up to 240 zlotys for a dollar on the black market.

The combination of bureaucratic muddle and political upheaval has led to a drop in production and supplies of goods, which is much more serious than that in Britain, the advanced capitalist country most deeply scarred by the present economic crisis.

Poland's extraordinary slump is shown by the following list of production figures, which compare production in the first six months of this year with the same period of 1980:

Consumer goods, down 10%; Industrial production, 12.5%; Coal output, 22%; Oil refinery output, 19%; Animal feed supplies, 14%; Cattle population, 7%; Pig population, 13%; Exports to the West, 21.5% and Imports, down 21.8%.

Poland's economy can no longer even supply the population in the pathetically meagre style to which they have become accustomed.

The planners are not talking about economic

'reforms' (how euphemistic can you get?) which will raise many prices 3 or 4 times and which will cut back basic supplies.

Already this month the meat ration has been reduced by a fifth.

And although the Kania government has been forced to review this after a month as a result of threats of strikes and hunger marches, the fact is that it just does not have the meat to distribute.

The decline in the animal population means that the situation is likely to get worse rather than better.

The only short-term answer is to go even further into pawn by borrowing more money.

Easier said than done, when Poland is today the world's most precarious and troublesome borrower.

Poland's debt to the capitalist world, mostly to private banks, was last week estimated as somewhere around £27 billion, while its foreign exchange assets are negligible.

As far as the capitalist bankers are concerned, the question is not lending more money to Poland, but agreeing to temporarily waive the repayments which are already due. In reality Poland is already a massive defaulter since it

does not have the money to pay its debts any more than it has food to feed its people.

But so far no bank has declared it in default. A series of panic meetings has been taking place to try to work out some agreement on rescheduling — i.e. postponing the repayment of due debts.

After extremely bitter negotiations an agreement has now been reached for debts which are due this year. But the same problem will arise for next year and so on indefinitely until the political crisis is solved.

At the same time, the latest figures released for the foreign exchange reserves of the Soviet Union make it almost certain that Brezhnev has also been lending emergency money to the Polish government to try to avert the complete starvation and destitution of the people of the country.

But the basic problem remains, and gets worse every day as these emergency measures run out: the Polish rulers have so much lost the confidence of those whom they rule that they can no longer guarantee production, even at previous low levels.

Bani Sadr's new council

THE Iranian authorities' two most wanted men escaped from Iran and arrived in France last week.

Iran's first President, Abolhassan Bani Sadr, and the best known leader of the People's Mojahedin Organisation, Masud Rajavi, have set up a joint resistance council.

Given Bani Sadr's record as President, it is not surprising that this Council does not represent any fundamental break with the politics that proved so bankrupt in the first two years after the fall of the Shah.

In other words, Bani Sadr, who represents a wing of the bourgeoisie in Iran, has found himself a mass popular base on his own terms.

Meanwhile inside Iran, the authorities continue to hunt out oppositionists and execute them. The Guardian, for instance, reported that nine PMOI members were executed on 30 July. The fact that among those being executed are members of the ruling party and bazaar merchants indicates the depths of the political crisis of the IRP — something that the stage-managed election "victory" of the main presidential candidate cannot cover up.

Socialist Organiser has signed a petition circulated by supporters of the PMOI condemning the repression in Iran and particularly the death of Mojahed Sa'adati, a leader of the PMOI.

Sa'adati, who had been a prisoner under the Shah, was illegally arrested and tortured; after long delays and obstruction by the authorities, he was tried for spying and given a ten year sentence. According to the government, he was then retried and given the death sentence. PMOI sources believe that he was tortured to death during his imprisonment and that the government statement about a second trial and "legal" execution is a lie.



Carrillo: "The communication of the Party with the masses has been done exclusively through Parliament"

Carrillo's crisis Congress

by Bob Sutcliffe

CRISIS is an overused word in politics. But it is not easy to find any other for the state of the Spanish Communist Party, displayed last week at its Second Congress since being made legal in 1977.

First of all, it was reported to the Congress that the membership of the Party—now 100,000—was only half of its figure two years ago.

The Spanish CP has failed to make any of the electoral advances it hoped for in its euphoria after Franco's death.

It has been forced to abandon a short-lived and financially catastrophic experiment with a daily newspaper and revert to a weekly magazine.

In the latest union elections the Socialist UGT almost overtook the Communist Workers Commission.

In the aftermath of the February 23 coup attempt the Party leadership has virtually hidden itself altogether behind the bourgeois political leaders and the monarchy.

And now the long-standing leadership of one of the most slippery and supple of Europe's post-war Stalinist leaders, Santiago Carrillo, is being assailed from two sides in a public and organised way.

Carrillo will survive the

Congress to live another day as general secretary of the Party—but with his authority more impaired than ever.

The two opposing tendencies are the pro-Soviet faction (known as the "Afghans"), led by a large section of the Catalanian section of the Party, the PSUC; and on the other side the 'renovating Eurocommunists' (perhaps 'born again' Eurocommunists) would be better) who want to go further and faster along the road that Carrillo has trod in the last five years.

Waverers

On some organisational questions the two oppositions, with the aid of some waverers of the Carrillo majority, have shown themselves able at moments in this Congress to outvote the Carrillo forces.

But on the disputed political questions Carrillo has been able to hold the line largely because neither of the two opposition factions have been able to provide a convincing answer for a mass party which has lost the confidence of the masses, including its own rank and file members.

Carrillo is able to attack the 'born again Eurocommunists' led by the Basque CP chief Roberto Lerxundi, in the name of 'revolution', accusing them of wanting to convert the Party into a

purely parliamentary social democratic party.

Carrillo admits that:

"Our basic error has been to make policy from above. The communication of the Party with the masses has been done exclusively through its parliamentary representation."

The cadres have deserted the organisation of the rank and file. Our Party thus risks becoming electoralist and ceasing to be revolutionary."

And he applies the same fake anti-parliamentarism to his argument against permitting factions in the Party:

"The legalisation of tendencies would be equivalent to introducing what the electoral game represents in the society into the Party which claims to be the vanguard of that society. Legalised tendencies would look for votes among a passive mass membership reduced to the status of voters."

Despite the fact that Carrillo's regime has reduced the rank and file to the status of ciphers, and his 'revolutionary' conception of the CP has led it into more than five years of the most abject class collaboration, he will still carry the day.

And not only because of his bureaucratic manoeuvres (which help) but also because of the unconvincing nature of the alternatives.

That is one of the reasons that the growth of opposition to the Carrillo line in the Party has still coincided with the massive haemorrhage of 100,000 members from the Party.

The 'born again Eurocommunist' tendency is largely based on petty bourgeois sections of the Party apparatus and elected local councillors, and it is based on very little rank and file working class support.

Basque

It is not surprising that its leadership comes from the Basque country which is the area of Spain where the CP is industrially and electorally weakest.

The "Afghans" are based on the much stronger Catalan section of the Party which is nonetheless split almost in half on the questions involved.

Part of the difference is that the pro-Soviet faction support the re-inclusion of "Leninism" in the official definition of the Party (it

was expunged, so as not to give offence, at the 1977 Congress) and complete support for the internal repression and external military expansion of the Soviet bureaucracy.

But mixed with this Stalinist-loyalist line, which strikes no chord in the working class, is a roughly articulated critique of the grosser aspects of Carrillo's class collaboration.

'Afghans'

It is that which gives the "Afghans" some support among working class sections of the party rank and file, looking for a solution to a political situation which has recently come within a hair's breadth of restoring full-blooded Francoism to power.

Fidel Alonso, one of the leaders of the "Afghans", says:

"The Party leadership has justified the policy of consensus with the right by the need to consolidate democracy and to allow political stabilisation. Five months after the February 23 coup it is hard to say that the policy has been a success."

Moncloa

Carrillo is, however, obliged to defend his policy all the way. Even on the signing of the Moncloa Pact, which blatantly subordinated the interests of the working class to the economic needs of the crisis-torn Spanish bourgeoisie, Carrillo says that if he had the choice he'd sign it again—though with less enthusiasm than before.

If Carrillo holds onto control of his crumbling party it can be expected that he will take the measures he has always preferred to crush opposition—expulsions.

During the Congress one of the best known historic leaders of the Party, Garcia Salve was expelled for publicly uttering criticisms of a pro-Soviet kind.

Carrillo's maintenance of the CP leadership now, therefore, involves the decimation of the party, a fact of which revolutionary socialists in Spain should be able to take advantage by presenting a programme of concrete measures of defence against the prospective fascist coup.

Changing guard at the People's Palace

by Chin Yang

LAST MONTH Hua Guofeng was quietly eased out of his chairmanship of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

The sixth plenum of the 11th Central Committee has demoted him, endorsed a 20,000 word document giving a comprehensive reassessment of Mao, and promoted party general secretary Hu Yaobang as the new Chairman.

Deng

Deng Xiaoping and his protégés have now achieved apparently undisputed control of China.

But the whole bureaucratic regime is becoming increasingly unstable.

For some time the serious capitalist press has noted with approval the changes promoted in China by Deng: an openly pro-Western foreign policy, encouragement for multinational and western governments to invest in China, and, most recently, serious moves to break down collectivised agriculture.

"China rediscovers the family farm", headlines an article in the *Far East Economic Review*, reporting that "big increases in output are claimed, together with reductions in administrative expenditure and an upsurge of peasant enthusiasm for this virtual disbanding of the commune system".

China's collectivised farms have never risen decisively above individual family farming. Modern machines, fertilisers,

and democratic decision-making have been lacking, and there has been pilfering and corruption by managers and cadres.

The Mao experiment in substituting human will-power for these shortcomings failed, and 20 years of enforced collectivisation and low output have now fuelled the spontaneous individualism of the peasants.

China's foreign policy has moved steadily towards appeasing the West since the early '70s.

In June premier Zhao toured Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal and India, promoting China's anti-Russian stance and playing on the Afghanistan issue. Record trade expansion with Brazil, Chile and Argentina follows years of courting the most repressive governments in Latin America.

Most recently, there has been an effort to win support from overseas Chinese, former capitalists, and intellectuals.

Meanwhile the USA has lifted restrictions on the sale of defence-related technology to China.

The economy remains Deng's major problem.

Steelworks

Several large contracts have been cancelled, including a massive steelworks at Baoshan, because of China's lack of infrastructure to support such heavy industrial projects (lack of docks, railway and servicing industries), as well as balance-of-payments problems. The economic reforms, carried out bureaucratically and distorted by competing regional interests, have led to factory closures, unviable projects, and widespread corruption.

Inflation and unemployment have aroused peasant protests, workers' strikes, and demands for Polish-style trade unions.

Deng's faction does not have the will and confidence to carry out a thorough purge of corrupt, incompetent or dissident officials for fear of further loss of the CCP's credibility.

Mao myth

Once the Mao myth topples, the CCP's hold weakens, and the prospect of its overthrow by China's working masses increases.

Deng's faction used their influence and reformist promises to mobilise the masses against the 'Gang of Four' and its supporters in the apparatus. Now Deng has to turn on those masses before they succeed in toppling him.



Deng Xiaoping: master of China?

S. African strikers force concessions

THE TWO-MONTH strike by black shopfloor workers in British Leyland's South African subsidiary was reported ended last week, on the basis of a compromise deal.

Two weeks ago a mass meeting threw out a management offer to reinstate 350 strikers in the first week of August, and the remainder "as vacancies arose".

After the rejection, management promptly denied that they had made any

pledge to reinstate the 350.

But now it appears that a new offer has been accepted, under which 170 were to be re-employed by the end of July, another 200 by August 3, and management agreed to re-employ up to 30 further workers per week until all 511 workers still on strike were reinstated.

The deal is far from an outright victory for the National Union of Motor Assembly and Rubber Workers (NUMARW): orig-

inally 2,000 workers walked out against poverty wages, and none of their pay demands have been met in the settlement.

But the growing tenacity of black workers in their struggle against the apartheid capitalist rulers has been confirmed by the 9-week strike, and the fact that Leyland management after sacking the whole workforce, has been forced to allow the union back into its plants.

New Zealand battles

ARMY units placed coils of barbed wire around the Palmerston North Rugby Ground where the New Zealand All Blacks played the South African all whites.

The anti-apartheid demonstrators opposing sporting links with South Africa were stopped from marching to the grounds by more than a thousand police.

These 4,000 demonstrators were backed up by a further 500 picketing the Town Hall in Wellington where the ruling National Party was holding its annual conference.

Every game has been met with huge demonstrations with, in many cases, the marchers wearing crash helmets and other "riot gear". These scenes have provoked direct Prime

Ministerial involvement: Muldoon has called a meeting to sort matters out and has even threatened to call an election on the theme of "law and order" if the situation doesn't cool down.

Muldoon's "law and order" doesn't stretch so far as the New Zealand Rugby Union.

W.E.LATHAM

Czech dissident jailed

AS THE popular upsurge of struggle against the Polish bureaucracy takes a new turn, a prominent Czech dissident has been jailed for a record 7½ year term.

Rudolf Battěk, a supporter of Charter 77 and an active member of the Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS), was charged with subversion in collaboration with foreigners, and also with assault on a policeman last June.

The "collaboration" charge stems from Battěk's

correspondence with leaders of the Second (Social Democratic) International, including Austrian Chancellor Kreisky and Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme.

More political trials are expected in Czechoslovakia, involving 16 people who were among a wave of 36 arrests in May.

Stalinist

Now more than ever the old guard Stalinist leaders are determined to be seen to crack down on the slightest sign of opposition.

The international workers' movement must rally to the defence of Battěk and socialist opponents of the regime.

SPAIN, AUSTRALIA, ITALY: SOCIALISTS IN THE STRUGGLE

Spain: aftermath of February coup bid

LUIS is a Trotskyist International Liaison Committee sympathiser from Barcelona.

THERE WAS an attempt at a military-police coup last February. What has been the atmosphere in the labour movement since?

At the time of the coup the workers' movement was, in my opinion, in a state bordering on demoralisation. It was confused and uneasy.

Instead of raising the alarm at the dangers to the labour movement from the Spanish state apparatus (police, gendarmerie, armed forces, civil service), the main workers' parties, the Communist Party (PCE) and the Socialist Party, openly support that state apparatus.

But it is basically still the Francoist apparatus installed in 1939 at the end of a very bloody civil war.

This attitude paralysed the workers' parties at the time of the coup. While the army was driving tanks around the centre of Valencia, expecting that the army would turn out all over the country, the parties called for reliance on the state apparatus and the king.

In fact, in the rest of the country the army was dithering — and might have launched a general offensive against the workers' movement and parliamentary democracy.

On 27th February, five days after the coup attempt, there were great mass labour movement demonstrations in which the CP and SP leaders called for complete working class subordination to the

Spanish bosses and their state. They told the workers to rely on the king to protect them.

They deliberately tried to convert the mass movement that arose in reaction to the attempted coup into support for the monarchy.

Has there in fact been a growth in popular support for the king, after his refusal to support the coup?

Perhaps. There was no support for 'Franco's King' in the working class before the coup. Now the CP is trying to convince the working class that the monarch and the monarchy are their only shield against the Francoists entrenched in the police and armed forces.

And the SP?

Worse. But the coup has begun to open the eyes of the working class and induced it to start defending itself and to fight back against the regime over the heads of its leaders.

What form is this taking?

It has two aspects. There is a progressive radicalisation at the base of the trade unions, among the rank and file. The working class youth, who have been confused and demoralised for the last four years by the ballyhoo about a new era of secure democracy, are being pushed into activity.

They have yet to place themselves in the forefront of the struggle — but there has been a beginning, and many of them feel the need for a political commitment.

In the last month or so, another social contract has been signed with the government and the Spanish CBI. It has been massively rejected by the rank and file of the CP unions. It has been

voted down at mass meetings.

So strong has been the opposition that the Stalinist leaders of the Workers Commissions in Catalonia have been forced into rejection of the contract.

The Catalan Federation is to the left of the Carrillo leadership of the PCE. Rejection of the general right-wing policy of the PCE is being expressed by the rank and file of the CP as a call for rejection of 'Eurocommunism' and for 'Leninism'.

Have there been unofficial strikes?

Every day. Electricians, engineers, the steel industry, farm labourers in Andalusia. Usually the union leaders succeed in isolating them. In face of the growing radicalisation of the workers' movement there is crisis in the leadership.

Is there now an opposition in the SP?

There are small groups organised in the Central Branch of the UGT, the union federation linked to the SP.

Then there is the official opposition. It is 'intellectual', allegedly leaning towards Marxism — Pablo Castellano, etc.

The most militant revolutionary workers are not in any party, though thousands have passed through the 'Trotskyist' movement in Spain in the last five years — the LCR (USFI), POSI (Lambertists), PST (Morenoites), and POR (Varga).

Why have the Trotskyist groups proved so impotent?

I think because of the speed of change between 1975 and



Tanks in Valencia during the February coup

1977. First they proved incapable of being an adequate vanguard: now they have taken to falling behind the labour movement. This is especially true of the LCR.

Commissions

In Workers' Commissions meetings it is often hard to know an LCR speaker from a PCE speaker. In the mid-70s these people were sectarian and ultra-left...

What about the youth movements of the PCE and the SP?

They don't exist. Four years ago the SP youth grew a lot. Now there is almost nothing. Then the PCE youth numbered thirty or forty thousand. Now they are perhaps 1500.

How likely is a new coup attempt?

Unless the workers' movement solves its political problems, confronts reaction head-on,

and succeeds in defeating it, it is probable. We must disband the Francoist gendarmerie (the Guardia Civil), purge the army, and bring to trial those involved in the coup attempt.

And we must also win the trade unions to working class policies to fight the attacks of the employers.

Do you want to say a final word?

There is a widespread call

THE Trotskyist International Liaison Committee summer school, held in Oxford from 19th to 25th July, was an international festival of socialism.

Its participants came from the USA, France, Italy, Turkey, Greece, Spain, and Australia as well as Britain.

Alan Thornett presented a survey of international politics and the imperialist wardrum beating. Bob Sutcliffe, an economist well known on the Left, gave a long and detailed analysis of international capitalism.

Tony Richardson analysed the crisis of Stalinism. Steve Zeltzer spoke on the revolution in El Salvador.

There were sessions on social democracy, and on the history and problems of Trotskyists on a world scale.

One of the best aspects of the gathering was the chance to talk to comrades from different countries, and help develop a political understanding based on a real international outlook.

We talked to some of these comrades for Socialist Organiser.

*Next week: an interview on the socialist struggle in the USA.

United

Fighting for such a policy revolutionaries can reach those workers in favour of a united front, and in the class struggle lead them to the necessary conclusions and to revolutionary politics.

Australia—seven weeks of pay strikes

In the past seven weeks, a huge wave of strikes has shaken the conservative Australian government of Malcolm Fraser.

Major industries all over the country have come to a standstill. The post and milk deliveries have been disrupted, and the shops in Melbourne

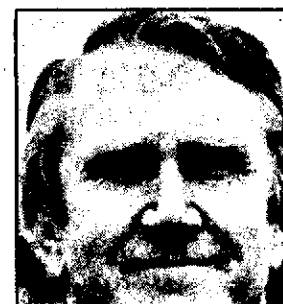
left empty.

Western Australia began to run out of food, with transport workers not making deliveries.

Workers have demanded wage rises, a 35 hour week, and a halt to the proposed anti-union measures and job cuts of the right wing government.

First Fraser offered to revoke suspensions and lay-offs, and cancel some anti-union measures. Now he has backed down on pay, too.

Paul White, a member of the Australian 'Socialist Fight' group, told Socialist Organiser about the background.



Malcolm Fraser

com Australia. At the same time they were proposing massive increases in hospital charges.

Australia has no NHS. We used to have a

system called Medibank where you could see a doctor without paying and the doctor was paid by Medibank, but even that was at the doctor's discretion.

Often the doctor would refuse to treat you till you paid, then you could reclaim the money from Medibank afterwards. However even that system has gone completely now.

The ACTU and CAGEO (the Australian equivalent of the Council of Civil Service Unions) took three weeks even to meet on the issue after

the Razor Gang report was announced.

So they've just said 'take action if you want but don't spread it' and supported a one-off demonstration on 19 August—the day after the Federal Budget.

The major thrust of their response is to be a flurry of press releases before the Budget and a fortnight of intensive TV ads!

The Australian Labour Party leaders, like the trade union leaders, have condemned the cuts and simply announced that they will 'plug into' the ACTU media campaign and some of the demonstrations.

Socialist Fight has been campaigning to combine the marches with direct action to resist the cuts. In our view the government must raise the funds needed or we must kick it out.

And victory for the public sector workers on wages is vital for the fightback against the cuts.

Italy: defending the sliding scale of wages

The Bolshevik-Leninist Group is the Italian affiliate of the TILC.

THE BOLSHEVIK-Leninist Group of Italy is fusing this autumn with two other groups, which will strengthen considerably its intervention into the major developments now taking place in the class struggle in Italy.

The new group will have a majority of industrial workers; the GBL itself is already active in the engineering industry, around the Ansaldo plant in Genoa and the Standard (ITT)

plant in Milan, as well as among the council workers in Genoa.

The major issue facing the working class at the moment is the bosses' offensive against the 'scala mobile', the wage indexing that has been a big obstacle to substantial pay cuts.

The Stalinist trade union bureaucracy are currently opposing this attack — as a bargaining counter to get into the government. But the GBL is fighting for a principled lead to defend wages.

Public

Public sector workers are currently facing a wage freeze, as well as cutbacks in services.

Defence of jobs is another issue that the GBL sees as

urgent, in view of the jobs massacre building up after the defeat at FIAT, where 23,000 workers were sold out.

State

The GBL, alone of the Trotskyist groups, is also fighting against the state repression unleashed upon the ultra-lefts of Autonomia Operaia (Workers' Autonomy), loosely linked to the Brigate Rosse urban guerrillas.

Although the Movimento Sociale Italiano (Italian Social Movement — the main fascist grouping) is passing through a crisis, the physical threat of fascist attacks remains, in particular against students and youth.

The GBL has been involved in organising self-defence in both Genoa and Milan.

Labour Party WHICH WAY IS LCC HEADING?

by John Bloxam

FOLLOWING its 1000-strong trade union conference on July 18th, the Labour Coordinating Committee now plans to organise a meeting of 'representatives of Broad Lefts' in the autumn.

"The LCC, and the Labour Left, are saying that it is now the time to intervene in the trade unions", declared Peter Hain at the conference.

The still-open question, however, is what allies the LCC will seek in the unions. Will it be the leftish bureaucrats or would-be bureaucrats who often occupy the top positions in Broad Lefts, or rank and file militants?

At the July 18th conference, there was a strong commitment to support disputes like Laurence Scotts and Lee Jeans. If the LCC is to continue that approach, then the meeting of 'representatives' should be quickly followed by an



Ken Gill — obstructing the fight

open conference for all members of Broad Lefts and rank and file groups.

But at the LCC's AGM last December, a proposal for just such a conference (from Stephen Corbishley of Socialist Organiser) was defeated. The leading people in the LCC wanted to organise a trade union conference in their own way and at their own chosen time.

The July 18th conference depended on

sponsorship from people like TASS general secretary Ken Gill... who is currently obstructing the fight to win reinstatement for Mike Cooley.

Cooley, a former president of TASS, has been sacked by Lucas Aerospace at Willesden. The TASS Lucas National Negotiating Committee called for several sections on strong sites to be brought out on strike.

Executive

The TASS Executive rejected this call and instead asked Cooley's 40 TASS colleagues at Willesden to strike on their own. When Willesden, predictably, failed to strike, the Executive then declared that they had done all they could, but the members wouldn't fight!

At the LCC conference, TASS militant Mike Young said: "You have to decide. You're either with the Terry Duffys and Ken

Gills, or you're with the Mike Cooleys".

Dromey

Chairperson Jack Dromey just said it was "unfortunate that Terry Duffy and Ken Gill were bracketed together".

It's unfortunate indeed that left-wing officials should act like right-wingers when faced by a real struggle. But socialists who are serious about organising in the unions have no option but to side with the workers in struggle — and to fight for a leadership accountable to and based on the rank and file.

by Steve Macarthur

A MOVE at this year's conference to extend the franchise for the election of Labour leaders in local government now seems out of the question.

A National Executive Committee sub-committee on 'Model Standing Orders for Labour Groups' has instead suggested that quarterly meetings be held between Labour councillors and local Party delegates to discuss progress on the implementation of local manifestos.

Consensus

The sub-committee wants these meetings to 'reach consensus whenever possible', and thinks Council Groups

'should accept' the conclusions reached.

However, the Parties are to have no new powers to increase the chances of manifesto commitments being met by Town Hall leaders.

Views

The recommendations are based on submissions from local Labour Parties and Council Groups, whose views were asked for by the NEC last autumn.

Out of the 237 responses only 58 supported new arrangements for electing Council leaders, while 91 wanted no change at all. The remaining responses called for small and largely cosmetic changes.

Most CLPs failed to respond.

The formal deadline for

submissions has now passed, but the NEC wants the sub-committee to continue meeting. Party members who want to see more accountability to the local Party and manifesto should press for submissions to be prepared.

Copy

CLPs, District Parties, or Local Government committees may still send resolutions or detailed proposals to Walworth Road. A copy of the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy submission can be obtained from Neil Nerva, 48 College Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 8RJ. Send 20p plus s.a.c.

A truce in the fight for democracy?

by MARTIN
TIMMINS

ALTHOUGH the Labour Coordinating Committee partly cover themselves in their foreword by saying, "We don't necessarily collectively agree with every point made", they still have a lot to answer for.

The pamphlet begins promisingly enough with an introduction which recognises the need for "an extra-parliamentary power base for the implementation of socialist policies". The section on the history of the Labour Party, though very disjointed, should be useful material for Labour Party members.

It nails quite firmly the idea that the Labour Party is or has ever been a socialist party, with the author preferring the term 'Labourism' to 'Socialism' when referring to the early Labour Party.

Pete Rowlands manages to chart quite well the widening gulf between the party and the unions, and the TUC's role in emasculating Trades Councils, but more space should have been given to the General Strike.

The only reference is: "The establishment of the TUC General Council in 1921 was aimed at streng-

thening the coordination of trade union forces, and it to some extent succeeded in forcing the Tory retreat on 'Red Friday' in 1925 and the coordination of action in the General Strike" — thus giving the impression that the General Council had nothing to do with the sell-out of the General Strike.

From chapter three onwards the pamphlet really takes a nosedive. We are told about the "rise of a new, leftish, more aggressive trade union leadership (Jack Jones, Hugh Scanlon, Lawrence Daly)" and no more is said about them.

We are not told about Jones' role as the main architect of the Social Con Trick, or Scanlon's "lapse of memory" at the Labour Party conference which wrecked the moves towards Labour Party democracy for at least another year. And we are not told that Daly is now one of the main bulwarks of the right wing in the trade unions.

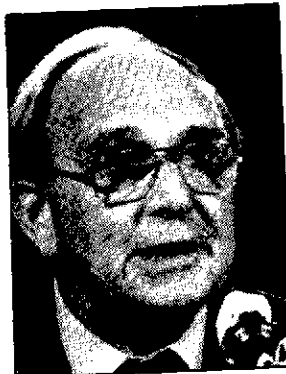
The heyday of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions (LCDTU) is correctly said to have been from 'In Place of Strife' through to the fall of the Heath government, taking in the

mobilisation of the working class against the Industrial Relations Act and the jailing of the Pentonville Five dockers. Pete Rowlands then claims that the decline of the LCDTU was due to workers' "widespread acceptance of the Social Contract".

This may in part be true, but the real reason for the decline of the LCDTU, and of its parent organisation, the Communist Party, is their politics and organisation.

They relied on nudging and coaxing left-talking trade union officials.

One CP full-time official who was very pro-LCDTU in the early '70s is now reaping the bene-



Jack Jones



Why did the LCDTU dwindle after the struggles of the early '70s, like the Pentonville Five [above]?

fits of treating his members in that way. Pat Farrelly is now personnel manager in Lansing Bagnalls Basingstoke factory, where he has presided over the victimisation of myself and others, plus 600 (so far) redundancies among his ex-'troops'.

Farrelly is still a member of the CP, he still no doubt supports the LCDTU.

A section is sub-headed 'Economism', and argues that "the militancy of the early '70s led to the Social Contract", and "that of the Winter of Discontent to the Tory victory of 1979".

Chronologically this may be true, but for a socialist to imply that these setbacks for the working class were caused by militancy is absolutely ridiculous.

What led to the Social Con-trick was the Labour Government's desire to run the capitalist system in a more efficient way than the Tories. What led to the Tory victory was not, as Rowlands implies, Labour supporters going over to the Tories because of trade union militancy, but Labour policies which were indistinguishable

from those of the Tories, causing previous Labour supporters to stay away from the polls.

The balance of Rowlands' comments on industrial militancy is one-sidedly to stress its limits and the danger of it being "seen as selfish, disruptive and unrepresentative".

He goes on to support wage controls — provided they are "flexible, voluntary, kept under constant review and based on mass support from below (!)" rather than on policing from the top". He also demands that wage controls should be linked with reforms like controls of "profits, prices and dividends".

The Alternative Economic Strategy supported by the LCC has already been dealt with in *Socialist Organiser*, so I do not intend to go into it in detail.

On union democracy, we come to what I consider to be the most revealing and the most disgraceful statement in the pamphlet. Faced with false accusations from the Right in the Party and the unions about the Left being anti-democratic, the LCC publishes the

following, "It is all too easy to sloganise in this area and put too much emphasis on the election of officials".

The fact that there happen to be a few 'lefty' officials who are appointed at present does not alter that basic principle. The demand of the Left should be 'Elections for all officials on a yearly basis, subject to instant recall'. Anything less smacks of the type of democracy in the Labour Party before the Wembley conference.

The pamphlet ends with a shopping list of campaigns and demands which nobody to the left of Lord Thorneycroft or Jim Callaghan could disagree with, but the ways to carry out these campaigns need spelling out more clearly.

To make the trade unions a force for socialism, we need a new leadership committed to mass action.

Before we can hope to get anywhere, we have to begin to aim at the mass membership, not just shop stewards and up-wards. They are in the final analysis the only people who can change anything and keep it changed.

Moss Side to quiz cops

by Karen Reissman

THREE weeks after the Moss Side police began their campaign of repression, Moss Side CLP called for the resignation, not merely of Police Chief James Anderton, but also of the Chairperson of the Manchester Police Committee, Peter Kelly. Kelly, a Labour councillor, has given his whole-hearted support to the police's actions, actions which included driving vans at groups of bystanders, arbitrary arrests and beatings of people whose only crime was walking along the street. George Morton, the local MP, said in Parliament the week after that, "the police were in a horrific position and their bravery and devotion are unquestioned."

Well, Moss Side CLP has decided to question them, along with George Morton and all the other councillors and MPs who supported the police. A leaflet dissociating the Party from them will be distributed in the area.

Yet Moss Side CLP defeated an amendment calling for defence squads under the control of the community and local Labour movement, as "utopian".

Revenge

We cannot let the police's thirst for revenge run riot. To that end, Moss Side CLP has agreed to sponsor a demonstration against police harassment in the area and lobby the next Police Committee meeting. Police harassment is nothing new in Moss Side: it has been happening for years. It is more widespread and open than before, and perhaps the riots can force the Labour Party to make a stand on the issue.

Women in struggle

£16 for a 42 hour week!

The misery of childminders

A CHILDINDER may net under £16 for a 42 hour week. If she raises her rates she may lose the children in her care to someone charging less. There is no standard rate, and no minimum rate.

A woman with two under-5s may pay over half her wages to a childminder. If the rates go up it becomes hardly worth her while to work.

Reduced

Local social services departments benefit. They provide too few nursery or other places, catering for 'priority' children and ignoring other need. So they use childminders extensively, often paying reduced rates, or expecting the parents to pay part.

The power to grant or withhold registration for childminders rests with these departments. With registration they can (and do) limit the number of children to as few as three, including the minder's own, and demand certain health and safety measures, feeding arrangements, etc.

Lothian

Lothian is one of the few which also uses its powers to provide training, insurance, equipment and support for the childminders in its area. Most departments use their power only for 'policing' childminders, a disincentive to registering since a limit on the number of children also limits income. Most childminders do the



No sick pay, no breaks, no holidays...

job because they have dependent children or others at home, because they want company for their own children and enjoy working with them, and because they need the money.

Out of that money, they must provide some or all of these: food, heating, fares and entertainment, toys, clothes, equipment (such as prams, pushchairs, etc.), cleaning materials and replacements for damage, wear and tear.

That can add up to over £20 a week.

There is no sick or holiday pay for childminders, no breaks during a working day averaging over 8 hours, and no negotiation structure.

Many reduce their rates for poor parents, and many have less work (and less money) during school holidays.

Angela Coulter's pamphlet looks at childminders as workers. Previous (academic) studies have judged by the yardstick of ideal mother/teacher, and blamed childminders for the poor conditions in which they often work.

And the Victorian anti-'baby farming' sentiments still linger: that good childcare and reasonable reward for it are incompatible.

The Low Pay Unit sent questionnaires to members of the National Childminders Association (NCMA), and received replies from over 800, probably the most organised of registered childminders. It is from these that the average pay and expenses were calculated.

The NCMA, though

increasingly providing support locally for childminders does no more than recommend a standard rate and contract (with parents).

It avoids the demand for local authority salaried childminders, recommended in 1975 in the Childminders Charter by a childminders' group affiliated to NUPE, and endorsed by TUC and Labour Party working parties, the Equal Opportunities Commission, and by the recently formed National Child Care Campaign.

The most recent (1981)

NUPE - strong on posters, weak on action

estimate of the number of registered minders is 43,000, caring for 106,000 children. This is almost definitely an underestimate. In addition, it is anyone's guess how many hundreds of thousands of children are cared for by unregistered minders or informal arrangements with friends, neighbours and relatives.

'Home-like'

This is 'community care' and Penelope Leach, popular author of books on

MANDY WILLIAMS reviews the new pamphlet on the conditions of the tens of thousands of registered and unregistered childminders in Britain.

Fight for NUPE'S Under-Fives Charter

- * Fight for a national plan for under-fives services.
- * Fight for a massive expansion of education and day care places.
- * Fight for an end to low pay in the nursery service.
- * Fight to restore the cuts in nursery building.
- * Fight for under-fives facilities to be available on demand, free of charge.
- * Fight to base the expansion of services on nursery centres.
- * Fight to abolish the NNEB and create an integrated training scheme for all under-fives workers.
- * Fight to provide pre-school facilities with flexible hours to meet the needs of working parents.
- * Fight for local councils to draw up a development plan for all under-fives services.
- * Fight to change the law on childminding and registration.
- * Fight for one Government department to have responsibility for under-fives services.

childcare, and scourge of the working mother, recommends minimal local authority intervention, since this disrupts the 'home-like' qualities of childminding.

Mothers

Coulter ends on the note that 'the childminders are being exploited because of society's ambivalent attitude towards women's employment' (legislating for equal opportunities while it destroys women's jobs). The pamphlet makes a good case for salaried, trained and supported childminders and for unionisation.

Unfortunately she fails to mention the other major reason for their exploitation: society's ambivalent attitude towards women's domestic labour and hence toward childcare. There is a continuum from the registered minder through the unregistered minder and the helpful neighbour, to the mother at home who is just a domestic slave.

Childminders won't get a fair deal until mothers get a better one.

*Who Minds About the Minders? from Low Pay Unit, 9 Poland Street, London W1V 3DG. Price £1. National Child Care Campaign, 17 Victoria Park Sq., London E2 (981 1221).

Tower Hamlets nursery fight

by Susan Carlyle

"THE RATE of children in care is considerably higher than for any other authority", says the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

One in three households are single parents, mainly women, and there are long lists for nursery places.

As well as helping women who work, the nurseries also provide for a lot of children who might otherwise be taken into care.

But at the last full council meeting, £64,000 was lopped off the day nursery budget. There was no discussion, least of all in the local Labour Party, and it was not even put to the Social Services Committee beforehand.

Shadwell day centre, with 35 places, is to be closed completely, and Queen Mary nursery, with 48, has been told it will be moved to a brand new building.

Matron Peggy Nicholls said: "I was told it would be a lock, stock and barrel move. When I went to see the new building it was a great shock to me - just one large room, no bigger than the ground floor of our present two-storey building.

"The places will be cut

by half. Mothers will be attempting impossible journeys because the building isn't anywhere near homes, workplaces, tubes or transport.

"It leaves the central part of this borough completely without nursery provision".

At a meeting on Monday August 3rd, parents together with supporters from Shadwell day centre, the Under-5s Campaign, community groups, and Labour Party and Trades Council mem-

bers, resolved to mount a borough-wide campaign against all cuts and for no closures of any nurseries.

Experiences of other campaigns which successfully fought nursery closures were heard, with speakers from Leicester and Oxford.

*Messages of support c/o 36 Bradmore House, Jamaica St, London E1.

Council watchers

by Ann MacKinley

A CROWD of nursery workers, parents and campaigners packed into the public gallery to watch the Labour councillors at work.

Tory-controlled Oxfordshire County Council was holding its first meeting since the local elections ousted 25 Tories and increased the Labour Group by 16.

Cuts of £2.3 million were forced through, meaning the sack for some council workers and real hardship for those in need of services.

The opposition was

pitiful. One Labour councillor, arguing for a 10p cut in the price of school meals in place of the Tory plan to raise them a further 10p, pleaded that school dinner ladies "didn't want sympathy from the council, but their backing."

Of course the dinner staff are being offered neither. Nor are they getting any leadership from their union, NUPE.

A letter was read out from the local NUPE saying that members were "dis-mayed" at the council's recommendations to increase prices and cut staffing levels.

But in Oxfordshire like almost every other area NUPE officials and branch officers have stood back and allowed the school meals service to be decimated.

Women in public sector banks are up against the bankruptcy of both their own officials and Labour councillors, who see their role as simply beseeching the Tories to be more lenient.

Keeping an eye on the pitiful proceedings in the council chamber is part and parcel of the fight we must wage for a new kind of leadership to defend our jobs and services.



by Rachel Lever [secretary, Women's Fightback]

WOMEN'S FIGHTBACK's yearly conference, our AGM, at the end of August, is to be combined with two days of political discussions and practical 'self-help' sessions. It will be held at a residential centre near Scarborough over the August bank holiday weekend.

Days one and two (the 29th and 30th) will cover basic self-education on socialist ideas, guidelines on campaigning and the labour movement, and sessions on practical and organisational skills.

Day three will be the AGM - and in between there will be evenings free for informal discussions, relaxation, and entertainment.

Cost: £18 for the whole weekend (including food), £7 for unwaged, small charge for children.

We must have registrations (and AGM resolutions) by Aug. 14th. All inquiries to Women's Fightback, 41 Ellington Street, London N7.

Women can join Women's Fightback for £2 a year, and organisations can affiliate for £5 a year (£20 for national organisations).

Nursery pay strike

NURSERY workers in Tower Hamlets would have become the worst paid in the whole of London if they accepted the pay proposals presented to them last week, July 28th.

In fact they passed a motion saying that they were insulted by the proposals and proposed to take action.

Under the proposals, nursery nurses would get yearly pay rises for only three years after qualifying.

Deputies and matrons would get no rise at all.

In some nurseries, workers have already begun industrial action, strictly enforcing the DHSS staff/child ratios. This means sending home some children whose parents are not working, and not operating the waiting list in nurseries which are severely understaffed because of council cutbacks.

The workers are also refusing to do washing, cooking, or cleaning duties.

Tom Thorne, the newly appointed director of social services, has gone off for a month's leave saying, "It is only a first offer".

Other council workers should make sure the nursery workers are not isolated. They suffer cuts too: the home helps budget has been cut by £146,000.

Through the new campaign to stop nursery closures, links can be built.

SUSAN CARLYLE

SOME CONSCIENCE IN THE



Tories' Humphrey Atkins



first time since the troops went in in 1969.

Do you not think that under these conditions, the development of the struggle in the Labour Party, with the prospect possibly of eventually breaking the bi-partisan policy...

It would appear that the bi-partisan policy is coming to an end. But we believe that no English government, Labour or Tory, has the capacity to find a solution to the Irish problem.

They have to admit first of all that the Irish people as a whole have the right to decide their Irish political destinies, and that right does not lie with Westminster. They must recognise that the cause of the violence these past ten years and the cause of future violence is the British presence in Ireland.

When someone in England decides to recognise and admit these facts, then and only then can there be a realistic debate on Ireland and the way forward to finding a political solution.

Any English government, irrespective of whether it is socialist or Tory, has the capacity to admit those facts. When they do it is another matter.

We believe that the Tories can do it. We believe that the Labour Party can do it. But we believe that pressure from the rank and file can hasten the day when the Labour government can do it, if and when they are returned to power.

'They'll never break the Irish people'

Alfred Doherty, father of the dead hunger-striker Kieran Doherty, spoke to Paul White from the Australian paper Socialist Fight.

"My son's been five years in H Block. He was interned for about two years and nine months before that.

Since he was 17 he's had only 8 months of freedom. And in those months he was 'lifted' about 100 times and taken to Castlereagh Holding Centre.

"He's had 5 years of torture, criminalisation and brutalisation. That was the blanket protest. He was also on the dirty protest. Maybe you won't believe this, but it's true; the maggots were crawling through his blankets and his hair.

"The screws forced him to submit to the mirror search. In the mirror search you're naked, and there's a mirror on the floor.

You bend over and they probe your back passage. They pushed him down on the floor and forced his legs open. That was the only way they could do it; he'd never agree to that. Screws are a lawless force.

"The men made a decision to go on a hunger strike, even though the Irish Republican Army advised them not to.

"I went to visit my son. He said: 'Dad and Mum, I want you to support me right through to the end.' And we said: 'Son, do you know what this entails? It's a slow death. Do you think you can go through with it?' And he said, 'Dad and Mum, I'll do it.'

"No father and mother like to have their son die. But Kieran asked us to support him on the five simple basic demands. And after a bit of talk, we said we would.

"During the first fortnight, I asked if he was still of the same mind. He answered: 'Of course, why do you ask?'

"In the morning they bring breakfast in and set it down in front of him. It sits there until lunchtime. Then they bring in lunch, which stays until tea is brought in. Tea is left there until breakfast next morning.

"During the hunger strike there's always food in front of him — food he said he'd never seen in there before, like meat with 3 potatoes (usually only 1½ potatoes are served) and dessert.

"Things were so bad in that hell hole, that they couldn't take it any more. So they went on this hunger strike, and they're determined to carry it on. The Brits want to break us. But, as Kieran said to me: 'The Brits will never learn; they'll never break the Irish people!'

"This last fortnight is the best fortnight of my life — talking to my son, and him talking to me. I thought, when the hunger strike star-

ted that it would be better if he was shot dead in the street — to get it over quickly, instead of this slow death. But I realise now that he's ready to meet his maker.

"I requested the new Irish Prime Minister, Mr Fitzgerald, and the Labour Party's leader in the coalition, Mr O'Leary, to come and see him. They both refused. I appealed to all TDs (MPs) to support the five demands. This got responses from a few, who picked Leinster House (Parliament House) in Dublin. But they haven't done much since.

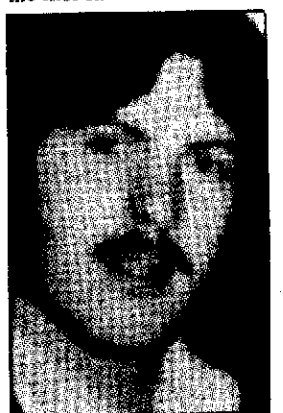
"My wife went to Paris. She's a granny who has never travelled before in her life. She met Mr Mitterand. But if the Irish government don't do anything, you can't expect other governments to act.

"We had good talks with our son. He explained that the five senses start to go, and that he'd eventually pass into a coma. He also insisted that he didn't want any medication at that point. We promised not to let anyone give him medication.

"The press say that we or Kieran are under pressure from the IRA. That's nonsense. He's had five years to think about this. He's been through the blanket protest and the dirty protest. He knows his own mind.

"The British press and television are putting pressure on us, by placing our statements in the wrong context.

"A fortnight ago, an American TV crew came to our house, and took a statement from my wife. At one point in the interview they asked: 'Who do you think is to blame for all this?' The exact words she said were: 'The British government is to blame. As far as I'm concerned, I don't want my son to die, but I'll support him to the end.' But when the Brits got the film off the US TV people, it was cut to simply say 'I don't want my son to die.' They cut out the first and last sentences."



Kieran Doherty

against the British.

Do you think that the British labour movement has a role to play in trying to force the Government to shift on the question of the hunger strikes?

Well, of course they have a role, everyone has a role in trying to force the British Government. But we are beginning to despair that anybody's attempts to make Margaret Thatcher move will succeed.

How do you assess the developments in the Labour Party, where it is quite clear that leaders and former leaders of both the Right and Left are...

Well, it's been our sad experience over many years that what leaders say out of power and what they actually do when they get power are worlds apart. And that's not only true in the Irish situation,

of course.

Government leaders make all sorts of election promises, and when they get elected, their promises are not worth the paper they are printed on.

Ireland being the issue it is, we always hope there is some conscience in the labour movement. But it's been our experience that once these people get into power, everything they said before that is meaningless.

Castlereagh

Political status was introduced by the Tories, political status was taken away by the Labour Government, so Labour doesn't hold much promise for us. One of the worst periods of repression was under Roy Mason, a Labour minister.

It was under him that Castlereagh and other

interrogation centres flourished.

So, while we always look to the rank and file of the labour movement, we have had a sad experience of the so-called leadership of the labour movement.

Part of the crisis in the Labour Party on the question of Ireland, certainly as far as the right wing are concerned, flows from the fact that they cannot see a political solution now to Northern Ireland. Speeches like Callaghan's [calling for a 'broadly independent' Northern Ireland] are a sign of desperation.

On the other hand, statements by people like Tony Benn do reflect a growing pressure from the rank and file. And it has certainly created conditions where it is possible to raise the question of Ireland openly in the Labour Party for the



British troops attack Joe McDonnell's funeral

ish Government.

In the pre-Christmas hunger strike and in the period up to the death of Bobby Sands, there was a mass mobilisation of the nationalist community. Do you not feel that there is some way that mass mobilisation can be used to put pressure on the Government to concede the prisoners' demands?

Well, of course we're very happy with the level of mass mobilisation. Unfortunately, I think it's true to say that no matter how many people are mobilised, no matter what peaceful forces can be mobilised against the British, the British government just chooses to completely ignore them.

They ignore the sacrifice of the prisoners themselves; they ignore the thousands upon thousands of people who demonstrate on the streets peacefully; they ignore the ballot box; they ignored the election of Bobby Sands; they also ignore the election of hunger-strike candidates in the local elections.

They ignore the calls of Cardinal O'Flaich, they ignore the moves by the Irish Commission for Peace and Justice. And it's clear the British government is just bloody-minded about it.

Pound of flesh

They want their pound of flesh. They've got it five times over, and it's becoming very difficult for a lot of people in Ireland to see how the British Government can be pressurised in a peaceful way.

And if they won't move under peaceful and reasonable protest on the prison issue, then it's obvious they are not going to make any move on the national question either. The Republican movement's position and tactics — it's becoming clear — are the only thing the British listen to.

So you think that's the only way the problem can be solved?

I'm not saying that violence will resolve the prison issue. But what I am saying is that the inactivity of the British Government in the face of such criticism, election results, and demonstrations, is creating a situation where people are beginning to understand more clearly the Republican campaign ag-

Women bear brunt of racist laws

by Caroline Beatty

Nasreen Akhtar fights Home Office deportation order

NASREEN Akhtar has lived in England about four years. She has three daughters, one of them born in England.

Her marriage was not happy—her husband battered her and eventually turned her out of the house. As a direct result of her living separately from her husband, the Home Office issued her a deportation order.

Her case illustrates the trap for women who immigrate to the country as dependents. Immigration law effectively states that—once a dependent, always a dependent—or out.

If a marriage breaks down, either a woman has to live silently in an unhappy, even violent home, or she may risk losing her right to stay in the UK.

Living in fear

Some women may want to return to their own families or relatives abroad.

But for others return means humiliation and sometimes real fear for personal safety because of the dishonour which some consider that a separated woman brings on the family.

Then the only hope for a dignified future lies in trying to build an independent life here. At present this choice, hard as it is for any woman to make, does not even exist for many black women because of the threat of deportation.

Nasreen's first husband died in 1971 in Pakistan leaving her with two daughters, Naila and Azmat. Her elder sister in Rochdale, arranged for her to marry a man who was living in Rochdale, and the ceremony was performed in 1974 over the telephone, a valid and not uncommon form of marriage in Pakistan.

To verify that the requirements of the law were met, she has a Pakistani marriage certificate, the authenticity of which is not in dispute.

'Legitimised'

Nasreen applied for entry clearance to join her husband and was finally granted a visa in 1977. She was given six months leave to remain during which time the marriage had to be "legitimised" by registering it under English law.

Nasreen lived in Rochdale with her husband and his family. Two days after coming to England the couple went to the Registry Office, but the Registrar said that he would first have to check



Women fighting deportation (from left): Nasreen Akhtar, Jaswinder Kaur with son Manjib, Nasira Begum, and Cynthia Gordon. Jaswinder and Nasira have now won their appeals.

the documents relating to the previous marriages of both parties.

Permission to register the marriage was not given until eleven months later and by this time the relationship had broken down.

Nasreen felt that she was treated as a servant of the household, made to do far more than her share of domestic work in spite of having a weak back, and was physically ill-treated by her husband.

Finally, just a year after her arrival, while she was about eight months pregnant, her husband made her leave the house with Naila and Azmat.

She went to live with her sister and soon afterwards had another little girl, Sabah.

When the Home Office discovered that she was living apart from her husband and that the marriage wasn't registered, they refused her permission to stay, and sent Nasreen, Naila and Azmat deportation orders in October 1980.

In doing so the Home Office is also in effect preparing to deport a British citizen, Sabah, who is British by birth.

Immeasurably distressed by the problems with her husband, Nasreen now faces the possibility of severance from her only source of comfort and support, her elder sister. She has no family in Pakistan who could help her.

Under immigration law, Nasreen then had a right of appeal to an "independent" adjudicator.

These adjudicators are in fact appointed by the Home Secretary.

Once appointed they are not answerable to the Home Office, or to anyone, and can only be removed with the approval of the Lord Chancellor.

They are supposed to make decisions "on the balance of probabilities" which is a highly subjective criterion, and in contrast to normal legal procedure, the burden of proof is placed on the appellant—i.e. she or he is guilty until proven innocent.

Outrageous

The appeals are public (there are courts in Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, Glasgow and London) but rarely does anyone go to hear them.

Consequently adjudicators, and Home Office representatives, can get away with the most outrageous remarks to appellants and decisions on the cases.

In Anwar Ditta's case her appeal to bring her three children to England was turned down by the adjudicator Mr. Rushton, because he considered her so competent and forceful that he said she must be lying.

He accepted lock, stock and barrel the Home Office case which was largely a collection of smears relating to other members of the family (information which should have been inadmissible in a normal court of law), which contained almost no legal argument, and which was

in effect simply an out and out attempt to discredit Anwar.

Mr Rushton's decision led to another year of misery and struggle before finally Timothy Raison bowed under the weight of evidence and public pressure.

In Nasreen's case the appeal was heard in Manchester before Mr. P.P. Simpson in March 1981.

He was rude to Nasreen and made gratuitous remarks that were racist and sexist.

He agreed openly with the comment of the Home Office representative that "... she could not possibly have considered herself married as she allowed herself to be beaten and thrown out of the house while pregnant."

He observed that it was not uncommon for Muslim women to live with men outside marriage—which, apart from being totally unsubstantiated, was an appallingly insensitive comment in Nasreen's presence.

He accused Nasreen of lying when she said she could not understand English.

He stated that in his opinion the only reason that Nasreen wanted to stay here was to live off Social Security for the rest of her life. He was extremely rude to an expert in Islamic law, shouted at him for not having a degree in English law, and ignored his evidence. In his written determination, which Nasreen received two months later, he states:

"This appeal hinges entirely on the validity or otherwise of an alleged marriage between the appellant and one Abdul Majid. By any applicable standard I regard that "marriage" as dubious in the extreme.

... By neither English nor Mohammedan standard of law, or by any standard of morals or ethics, can this be regarded as a valid and subsisting marriage.

My decision to dismiss this appeal may excite a certain degree of sympathy for the appellant but I do not think it should.

It must be borne in mind—firstly that she (having had 2 children by a previous marriage) "married" a man (who had 5 children by a

previous marriage) she had never seen or conversed with and secondly that she having discovered (not surprisingly) that the alliance was a disaster is resolved to live here on Social Security for so long as she can.

I think that to a great extent she has brought her troubles upon herself.

Her appeal is therefore dismissed."

Although there is no automatic right to appeal again, Nasreen has fortunately and unusually been granted leave to appeal to the Tribunal in London, but it will be several months before a date is set, all months of uncertainty and anxiety about her and her daughters' future.

At any time Timothy Raison has discretionary power to bypass the appeal system and allow Nasreen and her daughters to stay on compassionate grounds, but he is refusing to consider the case until all the legal procedures have been exhausted.

These appeals are at the centre of the legal procedures associated with the administration of immigration law, and are an extraordinary revelation of the way that the law works in practice.

They reflect all the racist and sexist elements of the law. Anyone who wants to know what the law is really all about should go to listen to a hearing. They are public and are heard daily at Aldine House, New Bailey St., Salford, Manchester; 1 Tranquility, Leeds; Thanet House, The Strand, London.

*Besides Nasreen, other women have been fighting their cases to be allowed to remain in the country.

Cynthia Gordon from

Manchester lived in England for 12 years but is now threatened with deportation because she stayed in Jamaica for six years to care for her invalid mother, and has now only been allowed to return to England as a visitor.

Jaswinder Kaur from Leeds and Nasira Begum from Manchester both had to leave their husbands and consequently the Home Office told them to leave the country.

Home Office

All these women have, with the help of support groups been trying to take a stand against the power of the Home Office.

Within the last few weeks Jaswinder and Nasira have both heard that they will be able to stay. So where there is a lot of public pressure and support individuals can win their cases.

Anwar also won because of her campaign. But while the immigration law exists, with its in-built bias against independence for women, the same thing will happen again and again.

As long as this Act stays...

Deportation orders will be issued to separated women, who then will be humiliated at immigration appeals.

As long as the 1971 Immigration Act is on the statute book, it legitimises this harassment of women.

Besides campaigning for Nasreen's right to stay in England, the Friends of Nasreen Akhtar are also trying to get P.P. Simpson

removed from the adjudicators' panel. For more information write to the Friends of Nasreen Akhtar, 59 Ashworth St., Rochdale, Lancs.



Protesters condemn the Nationality Bill

LEE JEANS: UNION WITHDRAWS SUPPORT

by STAN CROOKE

THE National Tailor and Garment Workers Union no longer officially supports the women in occupation at Lee Jeans.

The union had officially supported the workers demand that management should open the books. But this demand is not being raised: according to the union leaders, the dispute with Vanity Fair no longer exists.

Support

When the workers suggested that the union might give official support to help them with a new buyer of the factory, the officials replied it was not possible. The decision to withdraw support had been taken

and nothing could be done about it.

At the start it took the union seven weeks before it officially supported the workers. And even then, the blacking by the T&G on the docks, for example, was organised by the workers themselves and not by the union.

The only thing the women ever got from the union is £9 a week strike pay.

The sell-out has had no effect on the morale of the workers, though they are depending heavily on the offer to buy the factory by Nigel Wright of 'Dickie Dirts'.

Another round of talks was held between Wright and representatives of Vanity Fair in London last Friday, 31st July, without agreement being reached, though

Wright told a delegation from the factory that a deal was 'only a handshake away'.

New talks are planned. There is nothing down on paper yet about the wages to be paid if Wright takes over; the workers are confident because, they say, Wright is 'a very down to earth man'.

So, as the occupation enters its seventh month, the women, deserted by the leaders of their own union, are depending on the results of the negotiations between Vanity Fair and Nigel Wright.

★ Messages/Money:
Helen Monaghan, 55 Cambridge Road, Greenock, Glasgow.



Lee Jeans banner at the end of People's March

BACKGROUND TO VANITY FAIR'S WHEELING AND DEALING

THIS pamphlet covers, at times unfortunately rather sketchily, the history of the sit-in at Lee Jeans and provides background information on the wheelings and dealings of the Vanity Fair Corporation.

It does not aim to draw socialist political conclusions, but the pamphlet is a useful source of information about the sit-in and the corporation, although it would not have been too much to expect a non-sexist cover.

One very clear lesson is that while "good industrial relations" may be very good for the bosses' profit margins, they don't stop factories being shut down.

The pamphlet points out that:

"Apart from a half-day strike last year, the only other industrial action took place in . . . 1971 when the company attempted to smash union organisation . . . the company has lost practically no production as a result of industrial trouble over the last ten years."

Statistics in the pamphlet show that "percentage production against target production" and "overall performance" for the Greenock factory were consistently higher than for the Lee Jeans factories in Derry and Dundonald, and the 'percentage of seconds' was two or three times lower.

Shut down

But when it came to the crunch, the record of 'good industrial relations' and 'good productivity' counted for nothing: Vanity Fair chose to shut down

the Greenock factory and went about it with characteristic dishonesty.

Marketing and distribution staff had been withdrawn from the factory in 1977, and the cutting department in August 1980. But when challenged about possible closure, management denied that there was any threat to jobs—only a few months before announcing the intended shut-down.

Record profits

Vanity Fair claimed that closure was necessary because of the slump in the jeans market. But at the same time they themselves admitted that they expected sales to pick up again in August 1981. And someone, somewhere, must have been buying jeans. In 1980 the corporation achieved record profits of \$45 million and notched up even higher profits in the first quarter of 1981 (and 74% of Vanity Fair's total profit came from the sale of jeans).

The pamphlet goes on to describe the meeting where the decision to occupy was taken, and the kind of problems the occupation has come up against.

Here the pamphlet could have gone into how the difficulties involved in launching and carrying on the occupation for over six months were overcome and how the workers coped

with the radical changes in their domestic lives. But, presumably because the pamphlet is intended for the "general public" rather than labour movement militants, there is no real analysis.

Even so, one point does stand out: the contrast between the spontaneous reaction of the local rank and file to the occupation on the one hand, and the reaction of the trade union officials on the other:

"Early Friday morning, following the first night of the occupation, shop stewards from the local shipyards appeared, offering their support."

This was only the first of hundreds of trade unionists who have visited the factory bringing with them messages of support and financial assistance."

Full-timers

The full-timers from the National Tailor and Garment Workers Union did not react in quite the same fashion:

"It was seven weeks before the sit-in received official backing from the union."

The second part of the pamphlet, entitled "From rags to riches" looks briefly at the history of the Vanity Fair Corporation, particularly from the early seventies onwards when it moved into the jeans

market, which gave a massive boost to its sales and profits.

Between 1968 and 1972 sales increased from \$68 million to \$297 millions, and by 1980 had reached nearly \$634 million.

Vanity Fair has achieved such expansion in sales and profits through tax fiddles and a cynical use of government aid to industry.

As the pamphlet puts it, "VF Corporation is awash with money, but that doesn't stop it taking other people's cash wherever it can, and there is no shortage of offers."

In Greenock: —the local authority provided the factory free of charge.

—rents and rates were waived for the first three

years and half rent and rates were charged for the next three years.

—40% of the costs for machinery were covered by the government.

—£2 a week of each employee's wages were paid by the government.

—the little that VF itself had to invest was helped by cheap loans, again subsidised by the govern-

ment.

Vanity Fair has benefited from similar government and local authority aid throughout the world, especially in Alabama and the North of Ireland, and has also made a habit of setting up plants in low wage countries like South Africa, Brazil, the Philippines, Spain and Hong Kong.

In other words, VF makes its profits by operating in areas which either virtually pay them to set up a plant there and/or in areas where wage levels are so low that massive profits are guaranteed.

And if VF reckons that profits can be increased by transferring production from one place to another (for example from Greenock to the North of Ireland) then it does not hesitate to do so, whatever its impact on workers at the factory due for closure.

At the press conference to launch the pamphlet, Terry Lacey, general secretary of War on Want claimed that such practices by Vanity Fair showed the need "for controls over the mobility of multi-nationals to be tightened up", and this is the argument implicit in the pamphlet.

But multi-nationals have long since grown beyond the control of national governments, even if any of them were seriously concerned to confront their power.

Only the direct action of the working class, exemplified by the fight of the Lee Jeans workers, can take on and break the power of the multi-nationals.



An appeal to Lee Jeans women

THE DECISION of the Executive of the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers to withdraw support from the Lee Jeans occupation is nothing more than a disgrace.

The decision comes in the wake of a massive Tory attack on women's rights and a deliberate policy to bring the union leadership to its knees [not difficult in Len Murray's case!].

The Lee Jeans women work in one of the most exploited, under-unionised industries, and suffer double oppression — both as workers and as women.

The NUTGW, 90% of whose membership is female, has a leadership composed largely of male bureaucrats. The Executive took seven weeks to make the occupation official.

But now we find that it is not only right wing officials, but also the so-called 'left' Communist Party members who are betraying the struggles of textile workers.

I hope the next discussion in the new NUTGW Broad Left will bring to the forefront the betrayals by the CP members on the Executive.

They, like the right wing, offer us no policies to save jobs except the diversionary slogan of 'import controls'.

What I ask is for the women at the forefront of these struggles to link together — with the object of forcing our union officials and EC to carry out policies which defend our jobs, our wages and what small gains we have made in the recent past.

The leadership of Lee Jeans must bring forward the experience of their struggle into the leadership of our union.

We must raise the consciousness of our members and raise the fight to elect true representatives of the shop floor to the EC in the forthcoming elections.

We members daily see

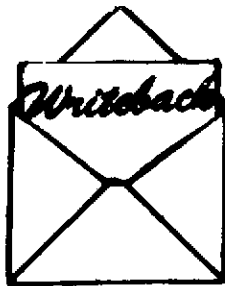
the struggle in the factory over redundancies, cuts in wages [hourly piece-workers on 40-50p an hour are again becoming more and more common]. We know the threat of the sack for organising the union is very real.

But how can we show a strong front if our leadership can't even be at the forefront of our own members' struggles?

I appeal to the Lee Jeans women to send a nomination for the EC, and for more women in the forefront of our union's struggle to come forward and discuss the future of our union and the fight we intend to

take up for policies which will save our jobs and lift the members from under the boot of the employer, where the union leadership seems content to see us.

WINNIE MURPHY, Winsford



Concern at Laurence Scott sell out bid

Dear Socialist Organiser,

As an engineering union member I would like to express my concern at the so called compromise arrived at by our executive over the Laurence Scott dispute.

Here we have 650 workers giving a practical lead in the struggle that all union leaders say they support: the struggle against unemployment.

Our own general secretary, John Boyd, has gone on record time and time again in our journal condemning unemployment.

The Laurence Scott workers gave him and the rest of our executive the chance to do something about it.

They have: by arranging a sell-out of workers who

had been on strike for 13 weeks they have attempted to add another 650 to the dole queue and demoralise other AUEW members fighting redundancy.

I would particularly like to draw attention to the role played by my executive member, Ken Cure.

An executive member is supposed to argue for and defend the aspirations of the members to the rest of the executive.

Yet when a mass meeting of Scott's workers overturned the sell-out arrangements and clearly made their wishes felt, Ken Cure went right on defending an agreement that he had no mandate from the members

to negotiate in the first place.

After 13 weeks of struggle the Laurence Scott workers want more than a return to work with no guarantees whatsoever of continued employment. They want their jobs.

Is there no such thing as union democracy? Do John Boyd, Terry Duffy and Ken Cure believe in union democracy? If so why won't they accept the workers' verdict and continue to support the strike?

What's all this about 'the workers would support us if we give a lead'? Boyd and Duffy have been all too ready to give a lead — in the wrong direction.

ROBERT BROUGHTON Manchester 15 AUEW

The end of 'Peking Spring'

Dear Friend,

Events in China have turned a full circle since the "Peking Spring" of 1978 when Democracy Wall, wall-posters, journals and discussion forums flourished in all of China's major cities.

Today, the same leaders in the Chinese Government who encouraged democracy and supported the criticisms against bureaucracy, are now ruthlessly repressing the

democratic movement.

Since the well-publicised trial of Wei Jing-shen, who received a 15 year sentence, the Chinese regime has arrested in recent months 21 leading editors of unofficial journals throughout the country, and is persecuting all activists in the movement. They have also victimised leaders of student and workers' strikes.

As their biographies indi-

cate, the 21 belong to China's first generation of working class youth since the 1949 Revolution. They consider themselves to be defenders of democracy and fighters against bureaucracy and imperialism. In no way could they be branded as right wing counter-revolutionaries.

Their activities are legal under China's constitution which guarantees freedom of

press, speech and free association. On the contrary, by harassing and holding them in custody without trial, it is the Chinese government who have acted contrary to the Chinese Constitution.

We are a group of Chinese and British socialists who are campaigning for support in Britain for the Chinese democratic move-

ment. Whilst we support the nationalised property relations in China and would defend China against capitalism and imperialism, we are opposed to the repression of these dissidents in China today.

We call on you to support us by doing the following:

- 1) Sign the petition, and urge others to do so.
- 2) Send urgent messages of protest to the Chinese Embassy in London.
- 3) Raise the question in your organisation and subscribe to our newsletter (£2 a year).
- 4) Support our activities e.g. we hope to organise a picket in the near future.
- 5) We need financial donations urgently. All donations will be acknowledged.

Fraternally,
Socialist Committee in Defence of the Democratic Movement in China.
c/o S. Grover,
380 Edgware Rd.,
London W2

RCG antics

AT AN H-Block rally in Leeds Last Wednesday, 29th, the Socialist Organiser speaker was shouted down by members of the Revolutionary Communist Group.

Speaking towards the end of the rally, which followed a 400-strong march, the comrade made some criticism of the Provisionals' lack of socialist direction.

The RCG — disproportionately numerous because other demonstrators had already moved off — stopped him from continuing.

For the RCG, such behaviour flows from their belief that anti-imperialism equals uncritical support for the IRA. But Provisional Sinn Fein and IRSP members present, as well as the chairperson of the local H-Block committee, condemned the disruption. GARTH FRANKLAND Leeds Socialist Organiser

Contraception: the poverty of research

by LES HEARN

ONCE AGAIN, New Scientist provides most of your science news this week, with an article, 'Contraceptives: back to the barriers', by Renee Serlin.

From the 1960s, the contraceptive pill swept the board in the Western countries. It gave women an unprecedented control over their fertility with an unprecedented convenience.

But with the rise of the women's movement has come an awareness of the long-term dangers of taking a drug which affects every cell in the body, as well as an increasing unwillingness to put up with its short-term side-effects.

Women are also unwilling to put up with the discomforts and hazards of the IUD, so there has been a renewal of interest in the oldest forms of birth control — barrier methods.

In these the sperm is either physically stopped from reaching the egg, or killed, or both.

Barrier methods go back to ancient Egypt, and they include diaphragms, cervical caps, vaginal sponges and condoms.

They do have several drawbacks — they all interfere with the spontaneity of sex, and to be most effective they must be used with

spermicidal creams or jellies which can be messy to apply. If used properly, a diaphragm is as reliable as the pill. Unfortunately, it is easy to misplace.

Side-effect

One unexpected side-effect of the pill seems to have been the holding back of research into making barrier contraceptives easier and more effective. This is now being remedied to some extent, though not as much as necessary, probably because they are of quite low profitability.

Modern research has now come up with such things as a vaginal sponge (first recorded 2000 years ago) impregnated with spermicide, which can be left in for up to 48 hours.

If used properly, this can be up to 98% safe.

Cervical cap

The cervical cap, popular in the 1920s, looks like making a comeback. This is like a diaphragm, but fits snugly round the cervix, needs less or even no spermicide, and can be left in place longer than the diaphragm.

The most exciting development is a cap individually

moulded to fit exactly onto the cervix with a one way valve to allow menstrual blood and secretions out but to stop sperm getting in.

In trials in the US, such caps have been left in for 22 months with no detected problems.

Compared with this latest development, the diaphragm seems a poor substitute, particularly since it is designed

to fit tightly against the walls of the vagina and may cause cystitis by pressing against the urine tube which passes along the wall of the vagina.

Such is the poverty of research into barrier contraception, we don't even know whether spermicides are necessary or not. Worrying evidence is now coming to light of possible malformations of foetuses due to

and pesticides amongst others.

This stung the council into activity. Having denied information to the residents in the past, they accused the leaflet of containing "half-truths" and "inaccuracies".

In an attempt to defuse a meeting organised by the Sandford Action Group with the ward councillor, the Council called its own meeting to give "the real facts".

SAG organised for a mass turnout and 300 residents gave the Council and its experts a roasting. After learning "the real facts", residents are now even more determined to stop this tip.

SAG is now trying to get



Feedback on waste

FEEDBACK from science column readers. Arthur Bough of Stoke SO writes about a campaign against the opening of a toxic waste dump only yards away from houses in the village of Sandford in Stoke-on-Trent.

"After unsuccessful attempts to obtain information from a local councillor, a leaflet telling residents about the dangers of toxic waste dumps in other parts of the country (using information from SO Science) was distributed.

It called for a campaign against the tip which was to receive such substances as lead, mercury, herbicides

help from sympathetic scientists and maximum publicity for their fight.

Already, a geo-physicist surveyor has offered to put into writing his belief in the unsuitability of the site.

The Labour councillors involved got themselves into this mess by failing to consult the residents and instead relying on the assurances of council officers. Now they are reluctant to change their minds because to withdraw the licence might result in legal action and payment of compensation to the council.

But we must ask 'what should the council put first — money or people's lives?'

SEVERAL newspapers last Tuesday, 28th July, carried the news that Vanessa Redgrave of the WRP had won an apology after suing for libel on an article in Socialist Organiser.

What wasn't made clear in many reports was that the apology came from the printers — and not from Socialist Organiser.

Socialist Organiser has not apologised, does not intend to apologise — and is strengthened in its resolve not to apologise by the way the WRP's paper Newsline has featured the printers' apology.

Morning Litho Printers got involved in the affair only through their commercial relations [now ended] with Socialist Organiser.

Faced with the wealth of the WRP and the difficulties of the bourgeois legal system, Morning Litho — a small company which prints primarily for the labour movement — understandably wished to cut their losses.

So they apologised. Now a full-page feature appealing for £10,000 for the

'Libel' case: we fight on!

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WRP-initiated 'Youth Training Centres', and based on the printers' apology, seems to be becoming a regular daily fixture in 'Newsline'.

When the libel writ was first clapped on us, some comrades advised us to escape with a formal apology: a few lines of small print, and forget about it.

But the printers' experience shows that the least apology would be an opportunity for a major self-promotion by the WRP.

If we believe our comments were just — and we do — then to concede that for the sake of evading the uphill and expensive legal fight would be terrible cowardice.

We are fighting for the right of free debate within the labour movement, against the use of the courts to suppress comment. In that fight we need financial and moral support. Send contributions to Labour Movement Press Defence Fund, c/o 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.

-Cuts-

Jenkin's plan to victimise black NHS patients



ON MARCH 12 Secretary of State Patrick Jenkin introduced the National Health Service (Charges for Overseas Visitors) Regulations, which he intended to enforce on October 1, 1981.

He has now had to postpone his plan until 1982 because the administrative problems are so huge.

The Jenkin Plan will impose charges on certain people for using the NHS, and the charges will be at private health scheme rates (up to £130 a day).

The money will be retained by the Health Authorities.

The Government's aim is to counter the so-called 'abuse' of the NHS when people receive free treatment in the UK for illnesses contracted abroad. Unfortunately, Mr Jenkin has failed to put any figure on these cases, but hospital administrators have said that they form a minute proportion of the total workload, with no perceptible effect on waiting lists (Guardian, May 19th).

The present position

Broadly there are five groups who can obtain free NHS treatment:

1. Ordinary residents of

the UK.

2. Visitors staying not less than one year.

3. Anyone employed here.

4. People from countries having reciprocal health arrangements with the UK (the Commonwealth, New Zealand, Malta, Portugal, the Warsaw Pact), and

5. Anyone who contracts an illness here.

This means that people from the US, Australia, the Commonwealth, and the Third World have to pay privately for health treatment (except in emergencies and for treatment of communicable diseases — but even then, if they need rehabilitation after initial care they must 'go private').

Who will Jenkin hit?

Under the new system everyone will have to prove that they are eligible for free treatment, otherwise they will have to pay either a private company or the NHS. To prove their eligibility patients will have to answer a list of questions about how long they have lived in the UK.

Anyone liable to be charged would then need to answer further questions about their length of stay

by **GEORGE McLEAN** [Education Officer, Manchester NHS branch ASTMS]

here and might be asked to provide evidence which would be either a work permit, a passport, etc" (Annex C, HN(81)13). This means more delay in the NHS, or more bureaucracy, or both.

Further, it is not difficult to realise that not everyone will be questioned, but rather those with foreign names, strange accents, and dark skins.

Other impacts of the proposals cause equal concern. At present anyone visiting this country for not less than one year will be treated free of charge; Mr Jenkin intends to increase this period to three years. This will split up families and sour relations between the UK and many developing countries.

At present anyone working here can be treated free of charge; Mr Jenkin intends to make workers pay for treatment either during the first six months of their employment or until they have made a minimum number of Social Security contributions. And not only workers but the families of workers will have to pay during this time.

Many migrant workers provide vital services in the ancillary and nursing field. COHSE have pointed out the iniquity of setting up a system under which many hundreds of NHS staff are themselves unable to obtain free NHS treatment.

Ethnic minority groups are concerned that mothers-to-be will be put off seeking necessary care for fear of questioning of their status: this at a time when the DHSS is supposedly encouraging women (especially in the Asian community) to use antenatal facilities.

Mr Jenkin has no idea how he will collect bad debts. He has no idea when he will start the meter running for a patient who is rehabilitating after emergency treatment. He has no idea how much money he will save: one estimate is £5 million out of the NHS budget of £5 billion.

The Guardian reported that all the past research done

by the DHSS concluded that any system of charging would work out more expensive than the 'abuse' it was designed to curb. The COHSE document cites further detailed problems with the proposals.

Equally seriously the Jenkin Plan can be seen as a further step in the direction of private medicine. Apart from encouraging overseas students, settled ethnic minorities, migrant workers (plus families), and smaller groups to take our health insurance, the administrative and clerical organisation which the Regulations entail would be ready to be used to run a health service funded by private insurance.

Insurance

Every extension of commercial medicine impinges in some way on the NHS and takes us further towards insurance-based schemes where individuals will get and only get what they can afford to pay for.

The Manchester NHS branch of ASTMS has begun to organise a serious and informed opposition to these Regulations. We have begun a number of projects with the Manchester Law Centre such as producing a pamphlet trying in the Jenkin Plan to the Yellowlees Report and the Nationality Bill, and producing a leaflet outlining the proposals.

Reprieve

We hope to arrange seminars with hospital groups, ethnic organisations, and other interested bodies. We are thinking of running a day-school in the autumn. We have contacted local Community Health Councils for their response and have been given much useful information by the Commission for Racial Equality.

Mr Jenkin is trying to pass his Regulations through Parliament as a Statutory Instrument by which he hopes to have as little argument as possible. We have a few months' reprieve until 1982 to expose his plan and to organise opposition to it. If you can help in your area, please do so.

Lothian: demand support!

by Joe Baxter

BY THE TIME Socialist Organisation reaches its readers, the Tories will have started bankrupting Lothian Council — unless there has been a last-minute climbdown.

Thursday 6th is the deadline day for the Tories to start imposing £47 million penalties on the 'overspending' Labour Region.

Money will stop coming in, the council's credit will dry up, and

within weeks commissioners could be sent in by the Tories to take over. The required cuts could massacre some 15,000 jobs.

Unions in Lothian are ready to fight this attack with strike action, though under the influence of full-time officials they have scheduled selective rather than all-out strike as soon as there are any cuts or job losses.

The action needs to be spread outside Lothian, especially

through the TGWU, which is committed by its last conference to support anti-cuts Labour councils with strike action. If Lothian goes under, it will be a green light for Tory attacks everywhere.

A petition calling for a national conference to plan industrial action has been circulated by Socialist Organisation and signed by Ted Knight, Ken Livingstone, many other activists, and six Lothian Region coun-

cillors: Neil Lindsay, Paul Nolan, Jimmy Cook, John Mulvey, Jimmy Burnett and Madeleine Monies.

A Labour/trade union conference in Edinburgh on the 25th made the same call.

Unions and Labour Parties should start contacting Lothian now to get this conference convened.

★ Contact: Lothian Action Committee, Ruskin House, 15 Windsor St, Edinburgh.



WILL GLC FUDGE UNTIL 1983?

"If the Government destroys Lothian now, we will be next. Lothian's fight is our fight..."



Ken Livingstone: 'the final phase against the Tories'

Greater London Council Labour leader Ken Livingstone has declared full support for Lothian. And he says: "there can be no doubt that we are entering the final phase of the struggle against the Tories."

"Either we or Heseltine must eventually lose. The new powers [to limit rate rises, planned by Heseltine for 1983] would prevent a fudging of the issue."

Livingstone has called for Labour MPs to obstruct Parliament and stop Heseltine getting his plans through, and for unions to back this up with industrial action.

But the GLC has its own weight to throw into the

struggle, which could make the difference between just calling on MPs and union leaders, and pushing them into action.

Crunch

Will the Labour GLC throw all that weight into battle now, alongside Lothian? Or will it 'fudge' until 1983, see Lothian go down, and face a show-down itself from a weaker position?

It looks like it will fudge.

In its first three months of office, the new GLC has scrapped civil defence and welcomed the People's March. It has ordered a cut in tube and

bus fares, and proposed a ban on office development in central London.

Ken Livingstone has boycotted the Royal Wedding and put out black flags for the H Block hunger strikers.

But on crunch issues the GLC has wobbled. After (predictable) legal advice that it would lead to a surcharge, the manifesto pledge of a cut in school meal prices was lost because of Labour GLC members voting against it on the ILEA.

Tube workers

And the tube workers were initially presented with no more than an 8% offer.

The Labour GLC manifesto warned that its measures might mean another £1 a week in rates for London households by 1984. Now, already, with most of the major spending programmes hardly underway yet, households are being asked for £1.30 a week (plus more for ILEA).

Less than a third of that is for the fares cuts. The rest is mostly to cover ory cuts in central government grant to the GLC.

Ken Livingstone argues that rate rises are a rough redistributive measure which benefits the working class. But what effects will this package have for mobilising London's working class against the

Tories?

The GLC currently faces another possible threat of surcharge because of its block on council house sales. So is it going to go from issue to issue, worrying each time whether this is 'the one' for confrontation?

Letterbox

Is it going to take the rate-rise option of 'fudging the issues' (not legally open to Lothian), or is it going to draw the line, stick to its commitments, and decide to take on the Tories alongside Lothian?

Ken Livingstone's defiant radical gestures will have real value in rousing our movement

against the Tories only if the GLC does stand and fight. Otherwise, to many workers it will seem like politician's politics — loud words are spoken at County Hall and the bills come through your letter-box just the same.

Hundreds of left wing activists helped win the GLC for Labour with a radical manifesto, a manifesto which pledged to use County Hall as a platform to fight the Tories.

Now Lothian needs to have County Hall with it in the struggle. It's the job of the left wing to make sure it does.

Martin Thomas

Cuts

'WE DON'T THINK OF SAVING MONEY, BUT OF SAVING PEOPLE'

by Ann Evans

"IT'S ONLY a matter of time before somebody dies because we've had to pass that hospital".

These stark words summed up the reasons for the staff at St Mary's, Harrow Road, occupying to save the hospital from closure.

NUPE ambulance convenor Terry Pettifer was explaining to a 100-strong public meeting on 30th July the ambulance-drivers' reasons for supporting the St Mary's occupation.

Strength

One of the great strengths of the occupation is the declaration from the ambulance drivers that they will continue to bring patients to St Mary's if the management try to close the accident and emergency department as planned.

Joe Beckles, TGWU branch secretary at the hospital, explained the background to the staff's decision to occupy. The final announcement of Vaughan's decision about the Area Health Authority's proposals is expected this week — in fact, it may have been made by the time we go to press.

Joe Beckles pointed out that it is already rumoured that Vaughan has made up his mind, but is delaying the announcement.

Health

The most enthusiastic applause at the meeting was given to Rita Maxim, the domestics' TGWU shop steward, who appealed for support for

Ambulance crews back hospital occupation



CHRISTINE CADIN

Management have put shop steward Rita Maxim on final warning

the hospital workers: "We do not think of saving money, we think of the health of the people".

Brunt

Ms Maxim is on her final warning after resisting the management's attacks on the domestics' staffing levels over a number of years. These women have borne the brunt of the health authorities' offensive, and are currently in dispute over the management's attempt to force them to do other people's jobs.

John Newey, the

TGWU local official, expressed his support for the occupation. Unfortunately, when asked by Colin Kenny, an ASTMS member from St Mary's W2, if he would fight for the TGWU to give the women full pay if they are sacked, he would only say that his hands were tied by the union rule-book.

The main advertised speaker at the meeting was Ken Livingstone, who besides being GLC leader is also the GLC member for that constituency.

He explained that the

Labour GLC was arguing for elected representatives to run the health service: for the GLC to become the Regional Health Authority for London and borough councils to be district health authorities.

Picket

When Vaughan's final announcement is made, the Occupation Committee will be calling a day of action in the North Paddington area. The form has not been decided, but it might include a demonstration or mass picket.

Many workers from other hospitals and anti-cuts campaigns were at the meeting, and Candy Udwin from the Royal Northern (Islington) campaign asked the St Mary's occupation committee to consider a day of action planned for maximum participation from other hospitals.

As Terry Pettifer had told the meeting, the Tories have 136 hospitals planned for closure in London by 1986, and 17 accident and emergency units in Central London.

Beacon

Socialist Organiser supporters should all be organising in their unions and Labour Parties to get support for St Mary's — especially active support on the picket line maintained outside the hospital from 8am to 8pm each day.

As Anne-Marie Sweeney from the Longworth Hospital Support Committee said, "What's been lacking in the cuts fight is trade union support — supporting strike action from sections that have got the muscle... St Mary's is a beacon in the fight to save all the threatened hospitals in London".

★ Messages/money: John Dolan, c/o Cashier's Office, St Mary's Hospital, Harrow Road, London W9.

Interview with Joe Beckles

YOU WERE at the TGWU conference when the vote for occupation was taken. Do you think the T&G vote on support for occupations and strike action will make a difference to your struggle?

It was a very important vote which will give a drive to strengthen the membership. Our union official has given full backing to our action against the hospital closure.

However, I am not a great optimist, but a bit of a pessimist.

We must look at this in a national way and I can see no let-up in the attacks against the health service. This vicious right wing government is causing disillusion and dissension among workers.

You have beaten the Area Health Authority twice before. You can do it again, don't you think?

It's true that there has been a good response, especially from the TGWU domestics, who will fight to the end.

There will be a good battle here at W9. Whether it will be full-blooded or not, we will have to see.

It is different this time because it is now against the Minister, not just the AHA as in the past. The ball is in his court.

District and local management have been carrying out an assault on the workforce, particularly the domestics.

They have gone for the exploitation of the ancillary

workers, especially, who have felt the full brunt of the attack.

What is the situation of the domestics now?

Over the last 18 months 25 to 30 domestic jobs have gone, and 10 to 15 ancillary full-time jobs.

This week, two domestics were picked on to do extra duties and they refused to recognise the authority of the management. After four attempts to get them to go to the office, they have got a written warning.

The T&G are going to send management a formal letter detailing extra duties they want our members to do. In the light of any future investigation and any action taken against our members, the T&G will consider itself in dispute, and will have to escalate the fight in the NHS and outside the NHS.

We are seeking support from all sorts of people, and are asking the T&G to support any member penalised or sacked by action and finance, such as paying their wages if necessary.

The domestic supervisors are continually trying to provoke people, for example, standing on their feet, pushing them and trying to get them into fights so they can get them sacked. They have suddenly found that there are too many domestics in W9.

The manager is particularly hostile. She has only been here about a year, and is determined to smash the union.

Tories faced with cuts devastation

WORKING class men, women and youth have many bitter and inescapable reasons to be convinced that the Thatcher government's cuts are taking a heavy toll of jobs and public services.

But last week saw even the dispassionate and well-heeled bureaucrats of the Department of the Environment drawing up a devastating catalogue of the effects of the cuts.

Their assessment was made as the basis for a discussion between government and local government representatives at the Consultative Council on Local Government Finance.

Their conclusions are dramatic:

*Existing cash limits will mean the loss of another 150,000 jobs over the next three years.

*Even present cuts in school meals have left local authorities "overspending" by some £530 million per year: to meet Tory limits further draconian cutbacks would be needed.

*Some 50,000 teaching jobs — cutting more than 10% of the education teaching force — are necessary to comply with government limits: this must mean the start of compulsory redundancies.

*Personal social services face cuts in spending of £153 million this year and well over £100 million for the next three years: the report concludes that "withdrawal of services on the scale implied would have intolerable repercussions on clients of social service departments and the NHS, and could not, in practice be achieved in

1981-82."

Even plans to expand the police force could be hit by the Tory economies, and the fire service would face a new round of attrition with the axing of 3,700 jobs.

The pattern of disaster is no surprise.

The fact that the Tories have already got as far as they have towards achieving their obliteration of vital services is the inglorious achievement of the trade union and Labour leaders, who have led no struggles and knifed the most determined resistance by the rank and file.

But things can only get worse unless a fight is taken up. The St. Mary's occupation shows the way.

No cuts! For occupations and supporting strike action to defeat the Tory offensive!

Manchester: to fight Tories or do their dirty work?

by Pete Keenlyside

THE open war that has been going on between the Manchester City Labour Party and the right wing majority of the Labour Group has flared up dramatically again.

In the past week, 17 left wing councillors have been expelled from the Labour Group and a letter has been sent to the NEC signed by 50 Labour councillors calling for an inquiry into the City Party.

Election

This has been accompanied by statements in the press from Norman Morris, leader of the Labour Group, that Labour could lose the next council election if he doesn't get his way.

What has brought this latest outburst is the drawing up of the panel for next year's council elections. Because of ward boundary changes, the election is an all-out one with all 99 seats at stake.

This means that all the sitting councillors have to put up for reselection.

The City Party Executive which has a solid left majority, has refused to endorse anyone not prepared to sign a statement saying that if elected, they would abide by City Party policy. Not surprisingly, this includes most of the present Labour Group majority.

Norman Morris thinks this is dictatorship. He says it will turn Labour council-

lors into puppets. But he forgets that he was elected, as was every other Labour councillor, because he stood as the Labour candidate and not as an individual, or supporter of the Labour Group, the "silent majority" or whatever.

Budget

But there's more at stake than a fight over Labour Party democracy and accountability. Manchester faces a real crisis over council spending. Heseltine has demanded an immediate cut of at least £5 million and by the time next year's budget is drawn up this could rise to £40 or £50 million.

What's involved then is

whether Manchester has a council which fights the Tories and their cuts or one that carries them out.

What is clear is that the present leadership has no intention of fighting. But so far the left has been on the defensive.

If the City Party are going to win support for their stand amongst workers in Manchester, and especially amongst council workers, then the real issues have to be brought out.

A debate on the policies that will be needed to combat the Tories was started at a conference last Saturday and the campaign to get the issues over to people has been planned for the autumn.

But as long as the present leadership remains in power it doesn't matter what policies you have. Part of the fight against the Tories will be the fight to remove that leadership.

Industrial

RAIL STRIKE WARNING

Time
Out
staff
stand
firm

by Andrew Horning

THE N.U.R. will call an all-out rail strike for August 31st unless British Rail improves on its present offer.

ASLEF leader Ray Buckton has declared himself in favour of a strike too, though his union's executive has not made a decision.

Meanwhile, however, the rail white-collar union TSSA has voted against

strike action and is accepting the current 11% in two stages offer from BR.

Strike

This offer disregards the recommendation of the Railway Staffs National Tribunal, which was for a two-stage no-strings 11% pay rise. Sticking to the two-stage formula, BR's offer is for an 8% increase, and productivity conditions for appling the extra 3%.

The 'productivity' strings are part of BR's plans to get rid of 38,000 jobs as their side of a deal with the government over electrification and other investment plans. BR wants fewer people in the cabs of freight and passenger trains, the introduction of 'open stations' [with ticket collectors on the trains], and seven-day rostering.

If seven-day rostering is

introduced, many rail workers will find themselves with less cash in their hands than now, since overtime payments will be slashed.

This fight cannot be left in the hands of leaders like Weighell. NUR branch or committee meetings should be called now, to discuss how to organise for the strike, and to make sure there is no 'productivity' sell-out at the end.



Will they, won't they? Weighell and Buckton talk militant, but is it just sabre-rattling?

LAURENCE SCOTT: DOUGIE DANIELS' DILEMMA

by Gerry Hoffa

Widely read

Furthermore, the Time Out chapel has spent a decade acquiring substantial written and de facto rights over both the magazine's purse strings and its editorial policies.

With a circulation of 83,000 (twice that of the New Statesman, for instance), the magazine has been the most widely read political publication in Britain.

But despite considerable profits, owner Tony Elliott and his management are determined to remould the publication and its industrial relations in a fashion more suited to their new-found allegiance to the Social-Democratic Party.

For merely defending our current agreement, staff have been sacked, evicted, and taken to court three times.

Lawsuits

And last week the management threatened our unions (all of whom have made the dispute official) with lawsuits if they continue to block a scab version of Time Out scheduled for September.

The staff are on low strike pay (currently averaging about £25 a week), but are determined to fight on, buoyed up by hundreds of supportive letters and contributions and the success of our free 12-page strike paper (with added news and entertainment listings) called 'Not... (formerly 'Not Time Out', until a court order erased two offending words from the logo).

★ Donations, messages, and requests for speakers c/o Helen Mackintosh, NUJ Magazine Branch, Acorn House, 314 Grays Inn Road, London WC1, or 01-580 7617.

DOUGIE Daniels is in a dilemma.

The AUEW Manchester North district secretary has strenuously supported the Laurence Scott workers in their 13 week struggle to keep the factory open.

As a supporter of the Broad Left, Dougie, whatever his defects, has honestly opposed the sell-out of the Laurence Scott workers, cobbled together in closed-door negotiations at the Confed conference in Ayr by Duffy, executive member Ken Cure, and Laurence Scotts gaffer Arthur Snipe.

But now it's High Noon for Dougie. He's under orders.

The AUEW executive has withdrawn official

status from the dispute because of the workers' realistic refusal to accept the sell-out, and instructed the divisional organiser and the district secretary to withhold their services from the strikers.

At first, Dougie said, "I'll have to go along with this. What else can I do?"

But he is directly elected by the members and feels a great deal of identification with them, given his record of struggle as convenor at Chloride.

He therefore thinks, "If I support Duffy, what will the lads say?", and "no more votes from Scotts when I come up for re-election".

On the other hand, Broad Leftist Dougie has

got a job to keep when all around are losing theirs.

He is still dithering.

But on Tuesday 27th July the District Committee voted unanimously to reject the Executive's position and support the continuation of the dispute.

Mock wedding

Down on the ground, spirits remain high, and have been boosted by this decision.

On July 29th the Laurence Scotts workers held a mock wedding party, with one of the stewards playing the role of Terry Duffy (who had the brass neck to attend the real thing) as a royal flunkey.

Total disgust sums up their reaction to the be-

haviour of their so-called leadership. They remain defiant and determined to fight on.

For some days now, the workers have been awaiting the arrival of court officials to serve the writ granted to Snipe on July 23rd for repossession of the premises with costs granted against the stewards.

The intention at the moment is not to confront the police but to hold a mass demonstration involving workers from other factories and to maintain external picketing.

★ Messages/money to JSSC, c/o George Fryer, 20 Round Crost, Romilly, Cheshire SK6 4LL.

Pergamon: 6 months out for union rights

by an NUJ correspondent

AS Pergamon Press strikers start the sixth month of their bitter fight against victimisation, by "socialist" millionaire, Robert Maxwell, their union has taken a major step towards stepping up the dispute.

The National Union of Journalists is to tell Maxwell it will consider calling out members of other Maxwell-owned companies, including BPC, unless he reinstates the sacked editorial staff at Oxford and makes a serious offer on their claim.

It has been revealed that Maxwell has been approaching Labour MPs, including the Shadow spokesman Eric Varley with what he terms a "peace package".

Maxwell is floating the idea of selective reinstatement of some Pergamon strikers in return for enforced 100% membership of the NUJ. In other words he is proposing compulsory union membership for scabs and compulsory unemployment for union members.

No public statement on any offer has been made to the strikers (they would certainly reject it out of hand) but it is clear that some leading figures in the Labour Party have at least been prepared to silently acquiesce in secret wheelings and dealings.

Pergamon strikers in

Oxford and the BPC NUJ Chapel in London have both found that the only unions Maxwell will tolerate, are those subservient to his dictat.

Oxford

Any step therefore towards linking the battle of both workforces in united action can only be a strong one. This move is long overdue.

NGA members at Pergamon who have consistently crossed the picket lines are also coming under pressure. Their arrogant, pro-Maxwell ex-leader, Ken Hall, lost his battle to be elected as new full-time secretary of the Oxon and Berks Branch of the NGA.

Now the Branch Committee have called on the NGA National Council to support NUJ members at Pergamon, and have guaranteed support to any individual member at Pergamon who refuses to cross the picket.

A major effort must be made to build the mass demonstration on Monday outside the gates in Oxford. With a united and determined approach, Maxwell can be defeated. This will represent a marked change from the do-nothing promises which are all that have come so far from the NGA leaders.

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Civil servants need new leaders!

by Ted Eames

AS PREDICTED in last week's Socialist Organiser, the civil service unions have voted to end the longest-running national dispute since 1926, and resume work from August 3rd.

All-out

The only union to show a majority in favour of all-out action was the IRSF, the tax workers' union. This vote, after 20 weeks of being in the thick of the fight, is an indication of how much the rank and file

in the Inland Revenue have learnt from the 1981 pay campaign.

The IRSF will clearly never be the same again, and members must now fight for a leadership in the union that is capable of winning the next battle.

The votes to accept the 7½% in the CPSA and the SCPS were disappointing, and there should be no glossing over the fact that they have opened up the civil service unions to a further major onslaught from the Tories.

Failure

The reasons for the votes going the way they did are largely to do with the

failure of the Council of Civil Service Unions leadership to campaign for an all-out strike from an early point in the struggle. This meant that five months after the fight began, the vast majority of members had only been involved in raising strike levies and supporting defensive protest actions.

Political

As emphasised in the special Socialist Organiser civil service supplement, it was the failure of the COCSU leaders to achieve any political understanding of the Thatcher government that created the conditions

for this defeat.

Arbitration

Ken Thomas, general secretary of the CPSA, told members as voting began, "The EC strongly believes that this offer represents the best that can be achieved as far as a promise for arbitration in 1982 and a committee of inquiry for 1983 are concerned".

The costs of the campaign have been high on both sides. The nine unions have paid out in the region of £10 million. The Government has lost well over £150 million in irrecoverable tax losses and benefit overpayments.

And Tory plans to tax unemployment benefit from next April, and various other such plans, have been set back many months.

But for Thatcher no price was too high for beating down the civil service unions. The fight must now be on to halt the next round of spending cuts and staff reductions.

Hidden cuts

Government figures issued last week showed just how far the process of hidden cuts has already gone. The civil service wages bill has been massively below Government

estimates for the last five years (4.3% below last year, and 8.4% in 1979-1980).

Workloads

At the same time the reduction in staff has been matched by a huge increase in the demands on departments like the DHSS and Department of Employment. Many branches of these services can no longer cope with the increased workloads.

The lessons of the 1981 pay campaign and the fighting spirit that sustained it despite its misleadership must now be directed to reverse these cuts.

Socialist Organiser

Gandhi orders ban on strikes

THE INDIAN Government has just empowered itself to ban all strikes and jail not only strikers but those instigating the strikes. Work-to-rules and go-slows can also be outlawed.

According to the 'Economist' magazine, the motive for this move is not economic — there have not been many strikes in India this year — but political. The Congress Party apparently hopes to squeeze out rival union federations and boost the Congress-controlled unions.

So far, the response of the opposition trade unions has been to plan a one-day general strike — which would be in direct defiance of the law.

States controlled by opposition parties could also refuse to enforce the new law — and that could lead to prime minister Indira Gandhi trying to remove the state governments.



500-strong hunger strike blacked out

IN MAMAK military prison, in Ankara, Turkey, at least 500 political prisoners started a hunger strike on 6th July with the following demands:

- An end to tortures and beatings.
- An end to the military training imposed on the prisoners.
- Free access to daily newspapers and books. [Up to now, only books on Turkey's national hero from the 1920s, Ataturk, have been allowed].

On the second day of the

hunger strike, they were severely beaten by soldiers — and one male detainee is reported dead.

The majority of the detainees were severely wounded, and were carried to hospitals by open military trucks.

The families of the prisoners witnessed this and staged a protest outside the prison. Later, they handed in petitions to the Head of State demanding information on the conditions of their relatives.

The hunger strike is

still continuing, despite frequent beatings and a ban on detainees seeing their relatives.

The resistance has also spread to Istanbul. In Hasdal and Metris military prisons, the women detainees have started a hunger strike, later joined by the men.

Nothing further is known because all visits to the prisons are stopped. And, because of heavy censorship, no news on the hunger strike has yet appeared in the Turkish press.

POLISH MILITANTS MOVE TOWARDS WORKERS CONTROL

by Tony Richardson

IN A mounting wave of anger against the proposed price increases of 200% and 400%, and the cut in August meat rations, workers and their families have been demonstrating and striking all over Poland.

For the first time since the struggles began last year, demonstrators, particularly women, have taken to the streets. The biggest of these demonstrations was one of over 10,000 women and children in Lodz, Poland's second city, last Thursday, 30th.

Most of the marchers have been behind simple slogans like 'hungry'.

Strikes have taken place in Warsaw and other cities and many more are planned for next week, culminating in the call for a one-day general strike in the third week in August, proposed by both the workers of Warsaw and the women of Lodz.

The situation of shortages of such basics as soap powder, coffee and sugar, as well as meat, has made the workers of Poland desperate. Queuing has increased, and it takes a great deal of most families' time just to get enough to survive.

The leadership of Solidarity has come under fire from the membership for not coordinating and leading any struggle against the ration cuts.

They have been caught in a trap by the government. While they realise the parlous state of the economy, they have limited themselves to demands which would simply reform the system. They have insisted that their struggle is "a revolution which does not aim to overthrow the government".

As the Solidarity lead-



ership talks of accepting the government's measures so long as 'real worker self-government' takes the masses of Poland are demanding that the measures are not rejected altogether.

At the same time, the mass struggle is continuously posing the issue of workers' control over industry and the economy.

The Solidarity representative at the state air-

line LOT, speaking on their struggle to choose their own manager, said that "this kind of workers' control demand should spread all over Poland".

At Bydgoszcz, eighty factory representatives, meeting last week, demanded the initiation of workers' management.

At a rally in Warsaw outside the Sejm (parliament), on Friday, 300 workers put forward a

Warsaw Solidarity resolution demanding, as well as more food and supplies, "a public inspection of all documents concerning production, distribution, export and import of food".

All of this poses the fight for genuine workers' control — which can only be achieved by a political revolution to overthrow the Polish bureaucracy, something the Solidarity leadership is not willing to fight for.

Socialist Organiser Alliance

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

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The weekly takes off!

DESPITE holidays in many areas, sales of the first weekly **Socialist Organiser** have gone well.

Many former **Socialist Press** comrades who are now writing for and selling **Socialist Organiser** report a good response from their previous regular **Socialist Press** buyers.

And some Cowley factory comrades, in particular, found increased sales — thanks to the greater variety of coverage possible in 16 pages, and the link established with the struggle in the Labour Party.

Meanwhile, we've been given a good start on our monthly £2,000 fund — with £100 from Militant! Mick Woods from North-West London sent us the prize he had won in a Militant raffle.

As well as collecting for the fund, we're also going to be campaigning for sponsorships in the next few months. We're asking union branches, Labour Parties, LPYSs, and other groups who think that our paper provides a valuable service to the movement to pledge a small regular donation and send representatives to help discuss our policy and coverage.

* Send fund donations to **Socialist Organiser**, 28 Middle Lane, London N8. Details about sponsorship from the same address.

The right to know

FIFTY Labour MPs have denounced the Rank and File Mobilising Committee for Labour Democracy for publishing in its broadsheet (right: 20p plus post from 10 Park Drive, London NW11) a list of 150 MPs who signed a statement of opposition to the Wembley decisions.

Mobilising Committee secretary Jon Lansman told **Socialist Organiser**: "Their criticism of the RFMC is absurd. We published a list of names which had never been secret, only difficult to obtain.

"Accountability depends on knowledge, which we were providing. There was no link with reselection, except inasmuch as reselection is a mechanism of accountability".

MOBILISE FOR LABOUR DEMOCRACY

June 1981

