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**INSIDE:
Election Special**



Hoover, Airways cut wages ! 4 percent limit in public sector

ROBBERY!

by Roy Evans

LAST MONDAY, Thatcher dropped the 'wets' from her cabinet and replaced them with hardline monetarists. She replaced James Prior with Norman Tebbit at the Department of Employment with instructions to put the boot into the trade unions.

24 hours later the government announced a new 4% guideline for public sector wage settlements in the coming wage round.

These moves bring a new dimension into the already full-scale attack being carried through against the working class by the employers on three fronts - wages, jobs and trade union rights.

Steps

In the last few weeks a number of major employers have taken steps which can only be seen as a qualitatively new stage in the attacks on the standard of living.

The latest and most vicious example is the proposal made last week by the US-owned domestic appliance multinational Hoover. They told the trade unions that they intend to proceed with a 10% cut in the existing wage rates to be followed by a four-year wage freeze until October 1985.

These proposals were part of a nine page document which also calls for the introduction of work sharing and for severe restrictions on trade union activities and facilities in the factories.

Hoover, who claim to have lost £6.1 million in the first six months of this year, have backed the document with a threat to close either its plant at Cambuslang, its plant at Perivale, or both.

They also threaten cuts at Hoover's major plant in Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales.

Impasse

These unprecedented proposals are designed to actually cut the wage rates rather than impose small wage settlements and allow inflation to cut the standard of living.

It comes hard on the heels of similar cuts in the wage rates by Pan Am and British Airways where management are calling for

while TUC sits and talks

9,000 redundancies as well.

At Vauxhall Motors, 16,000 hourly-paid workers have been offered a 4% wage rise tied to productivity strings and a big redundancy programme.

Similar

BL management are likely to make a very similar offer on Friday of this week and have embarked on a vigorous programme designed to effectively smash the power of the trade unions in the corporation.

Senior shop stewards at Longbridge and elsewhere have been ordered back on their jobs; shop stewards meetings are being constantly refused and facilities to operate curtailed.

British Airways management have arrogantly informed the unions that there is no point in negotiations since they have

stated their position and there is nothing left to discuss.

Mr John Collier, TGWU National Officer for Civil Air Transport responded to this dictat which wipes out the basic function of the trade union at a stroke, with the following words:

"We are getting very close to the situation where we will have no alternative but to start fighting".

The fact is that the working class is getting "very close" to the situation where they cannot afford their present leaders and will have "no alternative" but to replace them.

Weakness

There is no doubt that the arrogance and boldness of the employers stems directly from the weakness of the trade union leaders at every level.

The airlines are encouraged in their attacks by the

disgraceful conduct of the unions, in that industry in refusing to effectively support PATCO.

They see the TUC go on bended knee to Downing Street two weeks ago to talk to Thatcher and emerge saying they had "made progress" and thought they had been "listened to".

Hoover's announcement came in the final days of the TUC conference which despite a welcome swing to the left on a number of issues such as unilateralism, the EEC, and sanctions against the South African apartheid regime, and support for SWAPO were paralysed when it came to action against the Thatcher government.

They passed important motions against any form of pay curbs but did nothing about the vicious pay curbs now being introduced by the government in both the

private and public sector.

Thatcher is allowed to push unemployment through the 3 million mark while the TUC talks in polite terms about a powerful alliance of public sector workers. Such an alliance is desperately needed, but will it ever get off the ground? Championed by people like Sidney Weighell who has just called off a national rail strike and sacrificed tens of thousands of jobs in the process it is likely to remain a dead letter despite Thatcher's 4% challenge.

Plan

These are the leaders the employers often see when they pick their battleground and plan their strategy.

But that does not mean they are right. These leaders are not the working class.

The leaders are running scared, but workers face the pressure every day.



Last Monday's decision, alongside the reshuffle, to raise the Minimum Lending Rate, ensures that far from the economic crisis easing, it will get worse and inflation will rise.

Tiger

But Thatcher is riding a tiger. The working class, particularly those most directly in Thatcher's firing line, are frustrated and

angry.

Hoover workers have voted to resist the wage cut. BL workers are spoiling for a fight with Edwards over the wage review. And they reflect the mood of the working class as a whole.

The workers remain trapped in a crisis of working class leadership. But this may well not be enough to save the Tories over the coming months.

Thatcher's Cabinet changes - p3



Eleventh hour backing for rent strike

by Ian McLeish

AFTER six months of frustration, worry and abuse that Glasgow tenants have suffered during a rent strike (some of the abuse has been so bad that one old woman in Cambuslang Rent Office collapsed with a heart attack), the Scottish Tenants Organisation has at last announced that it will firmly fight the rent strike.

It could well be too late. The Scottish Tenants Organisation and the Glasgow Council of Tenants have done nothing to maintain and build on the initial anger and determination to win that tenants clearly showed. The number of tenants on rent strike has greatly decreased, leaving those still fighting in an even weaker position.

Glasgow District Council has wisely chosen this as the best time to try to smash the tenants completely. Their tactic has been to pick out a few isolated individuals and "advise" them that they must quickly pay their arrears or else!

Warning

As far as we know, only two tenants in Cambuslang have received these warning letters. One tenant panicked and immediately paid up but the other has made it clear she won't be paying without a fight.

She contacted her local tenants' association and the

fight back is being organised by all the local tenants' associations through the Cambuslang Tenants' Action Combine.

The plans for action already worked out include:

1) Contacting NALGO — making sure they know what has happened and finding out what they intend to do.

2) Organising a meeting between the Combine and Glasgow District Labour Group.

3) Agreement that in the event of anyone getting taken to court, the Combine will pay all legal costs.

4) Organising a mass public meeting to work out further action.

Sadly, lacking from the proposals so far is yet another promise made by the STO and the GTC right at the start — the assurance that if anyone is threatened with court action, then the protest would be escalated into an all-out rent strike.

The struggle is at a very low point at present, but this latest attack must be turned upside down to sharpen the conflict and inject the struggle with the boost it so badly needs.



Rent strikers protest in 1972

Bradford anti-racist campaign

TWO meetings in Bradford last week attracted over 100 people to each.

One was a meeting called by the July 11 Action Committee in defence of the Bradford 12.

The 12 Asian youths have been charged under the notorious conspiracy laws, and could face sentences of anything up to life imprisonment.

The other meeting was in defence of Mumtaz Kiani, who is threatened with deportation.

A number of Labour Party branches and constituencies, and now Bradford Trades Council, are supporting her campaign, and a demonstration will be held on 17 October in Rochdale in order to link Mumtaz Kiani's case with Nasreen Akhtar's.

Both women's cases follow the pattern of the threatened deportations of Jaswinder Kaur and Anwar Ditta, showing up yet again the racist and sexist nature of the immigration laws.

They face deportation as a result of the breakdown of their marriages — their right to be here depending on their husbands.

If the marriage breaks down, then, according to the Home Office, they have no 'right' to remain.

Contact Mumtaz Kiani Defence Committee, c/o 4th Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate, Bradford 1.

PICKET IN SUPPORT OF NASREEN AKHTAR
Appeal against deportation
October 19 at Thanet House, The Strand, London at 11 am

Police admit race prejudice

THE police are prejudiced against West Indian youths. That's official: and they're proud of it.

Detective Superintendent Dick Holland is deputy CID head for West Yorkshire [which includes Bradford]. He told a seminar last weekend that 'searching West Indian youths wearing jeans and T-shirts, and who were hanging around pedestrian precincts and subways, often turned up handbag snatchers and muggers.'

'Searches of long-haired, unshaven youths carrying a

pack and sleeping bag or blanket', he also claimed, 'were the ones most likely to reveal the possession of cannabis'.

'That is the sort of discrimination and prejudice we want from officers', he concluded.

The Police Federation backed up Holland, who also complained about mild recommendations from the recent Royal Commission on tightening up for authorisations for searches, roadblocks and secret surveillance.

'Many hours of patient

police work go into surreptitious surveillance — particularly by specialised police squads — and the result then goes in to the intelligence system to be used at a future date.'

What's clearest of all is that Holland and his colleagues will continue doing secret surveillance and picking on West Indian youths, whatever Royal Commission recommendations or the law says.

It's time we got organised to expose and oppose them.

MARTIN THOMAS

Tarkan campaign boosted

THE campaign by Turkish socialist Dogan Tarkan against deportation to Turkey got a boost last week at the TUC.

Fire Brigades Union president Bill Deal spoke to the Congress on Dogan Tarkan's case. And a petition supporting Dogan Tarkan was signed by Joe Marino, Jack Collins, Tom Jackson, Arthur Scargill, George Guy, Lawrence Daly, Bob Wright, and others.

Many British MPs have also backed Dogan Tarkan. They have five members of the Danish parliament. Support has come from the Indian Workers Association and Haldane Society of Socialist

Lawyers. Among labour movement bodies taking up the campaign has been the Labour Party International Committee, CLPs in Ashford and Nottingham, Southwark, Leicester and Oxford Trades Councils and a telegram to

the Home Office from NUPE, Neath Hospital. Nearly 1,800 have signed the petition.

Dogan Tarkan spoke at the Turkey Solidarity Campaign rally in London last Saturday, and the TSC is

campaigning for him. Unfortunately the Campaign for the Defence of Democratic Rights in Turkey so far is not campaigning for Dogan Tarkan, though at the CDDRT rally last week Ernie Roberts said he would take up the issue in Parliament.

Torture

Support is still urgent — within days or weeks Dogan Tarkan could be deported, to face torture and possibly execution at the hands of Turkey's military rulers.

Contact: Friends of Dogan Tarkan, BM Box 5965, London WC1N 3XX.



SOLIDARITY WITH E. EUROPEAN WORKERS

THE East European Solidarity Campaign has agreed to contribute a column to Socialist Organiser. In this first article, VLADIMIR DERER explains the aims and activity of the campaign.

THE East European Solidarity Campaign (EESC) was founded in 1978 by members of the Labour Party, Communist Party and Socialist Workers Party, and individuals in the labour movement.

It gives priority to campaigns on behalf of victims of totalitarian oppression in Eastern Europe and the USSR, and to providing labour movement organisations with information about such oppression.

Currently it focusses attention on the events in Poland and the persecution of Czech Chartists and Soviet dissidents.

The following greetings telegram was sent in the name of the EESC to the First Congress of the free Polish trade union:

"We send warm greetings and congratulations to NSZ Solidarity on its first anniversary and first congress. Your struggle for working class rights and for democratic rights — for the right of all the Polish people has inspired socialists and trade unionists in Britain.

"We condemn the international campaign of vilification and threats against Solidarity. We also deplore the fact that Solidarity has been forced to struggle every inch of the way to defend the gains of the Gdansk-Szczecin-Jastrebie agree-

ment. We consider that the Polish workers have opened new horizons for the working class and socialist movements throughout Europe.

Learn

"We in the EESC and in 'Labour Focus on Eastern Europe' are doing what we can to bring the message of Solidarity to the British labour and trade union movement. We have much to learn from you."

Just before the House of Commons went into recess, the EESC's honorary officers Philip Whitehead MP and Eric Heffer MP collected 64 signatures among Labour MPs for a petition to the Czech government asking that the current criminal proceedings against 19 supporters of Charter 77 be

stopped.

The EESC's latest bulletin urges CLPs to protest against the fraternal delegate status given to the representatives of the USSR, East Germany and Czechoslovakia, invited to the Labour Party conference.

The EESC's fringe meeting at this year's Labour Party conference will be addressed by Jacek Kuron, a leading member of the Polish Workers Defence Committee (KOR). It will be held on Monday 28 September at 7.30 pm at the Hotel Metropole, County Suite.

Further information can be obtained from EESC Convenor, Vladimir Derer, 10 Park Drive, London NW11.

LAMBETH'S ANSWER

'RED' Lambeth Council have come up with a novel contribution to London's housing shortage — knocking down perfectly sound blocks of flats.

Why? You may well ask. Well, it seems that the Tinworth Street estate has been branded as 'evil'. What, Satanism in Kensington? Is Lambeth under demonic possession? Not quite, though to read some of the more hysterical outpourings of the Standard, you could be forgiven for believing council leader Ted Knight is the Evil One incarnate.

No, it seems the estate is plagued by vandalism, hooliganism and wanton violence to a hideous degree. Tenants claim they are so terrorised by gangs of youths that they are afraid to leave their homes.

This was even accepted in mitigation in a recent Old Bailey case, where a man was given a lighter sentence for killing a neighbour than the judge would otherwise have handed down.

Now, all this is very nasty for the remaining tenants of Tinworth, who quite understandably want to see the whole place razed to the ground. But it doesn't seem to justify Lambeth Council

giving in to superstition and claiming, in the words of Housing Chair Matthew Warburton 'the only answer is to demolish the flats'.

He admits 'The flats themselves are not bad', and Lambeth Council is fully aware of the real reasons for the intolerable conditions on the estate: 'The flats became what we call hard-to-let. As a result families who have been

evicted from other estates for rent arrears have been rehoused there. The result has been that the poorest and most deprived tenants have ended up there.'

It appears that Lambeth Council have no other plans for tackling poverty and deprivation apart from moving it elsewhere — and knocking down the flats. Sounds a bit like vandalism to me...



Clive Jenkins: still beaming

Clive Jenkins, like those inflatable Father Xmas's always seems to land on his feet.

Jenkins' union, ASTMS, recognising that in these hard times the money would be better spent elsewhere, decided to forgo its usual lavish reception. Clive was apparently not at all put out by the prospect of a drought of champers:

You always knew it was the case, but it's good to get statistical confirmation.

An analysis in 'Sociological Quarterly' shows that other things being equal, whites have 18% more chance of getting probation than blacks. And young and unemployed people are more likely to get prison sentences for the same offences than older, employed people.

You don't have to look far to see the logic of this. A prison sentence places a question mark over a person's whole future, but if you're young, black and unemployed you've got no future to look forward to anyway.

And it certainly does keep them off the streets.

there's plenty other receptions to go to.

And he was proved right. The booze flowed by the bathload at the binge to celebrate the election of his assistant general secretary, Muriel Turner, to one of the women's seats on the General Council.

The question is, who paid for it? Santa Claus?



Sick as parrots

Internecine warfare and fratricidal strife again?

Who is going to elect the Leader? Will the NEC decide the Manifesto? And does the leadership have the right to impose a parliamentary candidate against the wishes of the local party?

These are the issues that are tearing apart the SDP and could threaten to blow away the SDP/Liberal alliance. All these Labour

turn-coats, refugees from mandatory reselection and incumbents of rotten boroughs which have moved to cleanse themselves of their rottenness, must be as sick as parrots.

Workers can defeat Thatcher's new gang

Stop collaborating : start fighting!

THE Tories' plans were announced before the 1979 election. "Our economy has been pushed into a loss of profit", said Margaret Thatcher. "The situation can only be put to rights if considerable price rises can be made and accepted without any response in the form of wage increases."

Now they have announced a new stage. The 'norm' for public service pay rises next year will be 4%, while inflation is running at 11% and unlikely to fall.

Some employers, encouraged by the Tories, had already taken 4% as their figure too - like Vauxhall. BL may go for a similar amount, and Lucas have imposed a 5% figure.

Hoover, British Airways, and Pan Am have demanded money wage cuts. The West Midlands CBI has recommended other firms to follow their example, and national CBI leaders commented that many firms could not 'afford' as much as 4%.

The Tories and the bosses are out to cut workers' living standards drastically - by 10%, 20%, or however much is necessary to repair the still-falling rate of profit.

The announcement of the 4% norm came straight after a Cabinet reshuffle in which the 'wets' were sacked or shifted and monetarist hard-liners were promoted. The new Cabinet has immediately started talks on more public spending cuts.

And in the Guardian on Tuesday 15 September Peter Jenkins reported:

"Norman Tebbit goes to the Department of Employment with instructions to throw the statute book at the trade unions..."

"The Parliamentary draughtsmen have been at work on the following options:

"1. Placing trade union funds at risk if their members engage in political strikes, secondary embargoes or other illegal action.

"2. Making trade unionists 'contract in' to the political funds which finance the Labour Party instead of having to pay up unless they 'contract out'.

"3. Insisting that all trade union elections are conducted by secret ballot.

"4. Strengthening the safeguards against closed shops.

"5. Tightening the law against secondary picketing."

Full scale implementation of these proposals would make Heath's Industrial Relations Act seem like a pinprick, and the Tories may well be more cautious. Nevertheless, more union-bashing is ahead from Tebbit, who said as he left his luxury flat on the first morning of his new job, "All the talk about less hours and more money is moonshine."

This new stage of the Tory assault can be defeated.

The reshuffle reflected the political weakness of Thatcherism more than its strength. After being sacked, Tory minister Ian Gilmour said, "It does no

harm to throw the occasional man overboard, but it does not do much good if you are steering full speed ahead for the rocks. And that is what the Government is now doing." His views are shared by strong sections of the ruling class.

The CBI fully agrees with Thatcher on wages, but wants increased public spending on capital projects (and more cuts on current expenditure). Influential bosses' journals like the Financial Times and the Economist query Thatcher's tactics for attacking the working class.

In face of the growing clamour of the 'wets', Thatcher had to concede or counter-attack. She has counter-attacked, hardening the line of the Government, and will seek to strengthen her position by new spectacular victories over the working class.

But there is a growing will for a fightback in the working class. No longer is there a mood of waiting resignedly until the crisis is past. More and more workers see that the Tory attacks are not a passing problem, but will continue and get worse until they are stopped.

The Tories have just one great source of strength - the feebleness, the cowardice, and the inaction of the TUC leaders.

Last week in Blackpool there were plenty of loud speeches against the Tories. But all the TUC leaders plan to do about the Tories is... talk to them.

Ever since the end of the steel strike last year, the main trade union leaders have been committed to

the view that direct action against the Tories is not feasible and should be avoided or stopped.

They still sit with the Tories and bosses on the NEDC, and plenty of them serve on Government committees or public sector Boards.

Also, Labour councils have been implementing the Tory cuts, and Labour MPs, apart from one brief show of defiance, have done nothing but politely debate in Parliament.

None of the main leaders of the labour movement has been openly, clearly challenging the line that restoration of profit levels - i.e. capitalist 'viability' - is the first priority. None has said that the first priority must be to safeguard wages and jobs with automatic cost of living increases on pay, and work-sharing without loss of pay - and that if the present system cannot provide that, then it should be replaced.

Tony Benn has made the call for the labour movement to 'disengage' from the institutions of Thatcherism. The new Tory assault makes it urgent for activists to take up this call.

We should demand the trade union leaders withdraw from talks with the Tories, from the NEDC, and from Government committees and public sector Boards. Labour councils should defy the cuts. And Labour MPs - especially Left MPs - should systematically and persistently filibuster, to hold up the Tories' attacks in Parliament and sound the alarm.

Break collaboration - start fighting back!

Marching against unemployment

by Dave Ayrton

At a meeting of some 60 labour movement delegates in Sheffield on Saturday 12 September, plans were discussed for the Trans-Pennine March. The existing South Yorkshire Steering Committee for the march was endorsed and an extra five members elected.

The march - organised by the People's Campaign for Jobs, which is carrying on the Peoples March for Jobs campaign - starts on October 7 in Sheffield, and ends in Blackpool on

October 16 with a demonstration outside the Tory Party conference.

Although the Trans-Pennine March has no political demands, other than support for the TUC Campaign for Jobs, it does have a labour movement orientation - unlike the People's March, which was supposed to be 'non-political', despite the fact that 99.9% of its support came from the labour movement.

Another major difference is that it looks increasingly likely that the Trans-Pennine March, in its later stages, will

unite with the Right to Work march from Liverpool - despite initial opposition from the bureaucratic leadership of the Trans-Pennine March.

Both marches should be fully supported by all labour movement activists, and so should the call for unity.

For details of the Trans-Pennine March, contact Albert Bedford, Transport House, Sheffield (phone 71323), or Bill Innes, 40 Park Lane, Leeds (phone 458442). For the Right to Work march: Right to Work Campaign, 265a Seven Sisters Road, London N4.

UNEMPLOYED movements from Rotherham, Barnsley, and Sheffield have decided to launch a South Yorkshire Federation of unemployed movements, and hope to expand to a Yorkshire and Humberside federation. Contacts have already been made with Hull.

The federation will be supporting the national unemployed conference in London on October 31, and will be campaigning for free bus fares for the unemployed.



Thousands marched to Brighton last year: more will go to Blackpool this October

Livingstone hit by Telegraph smear

by Gerry Byrne

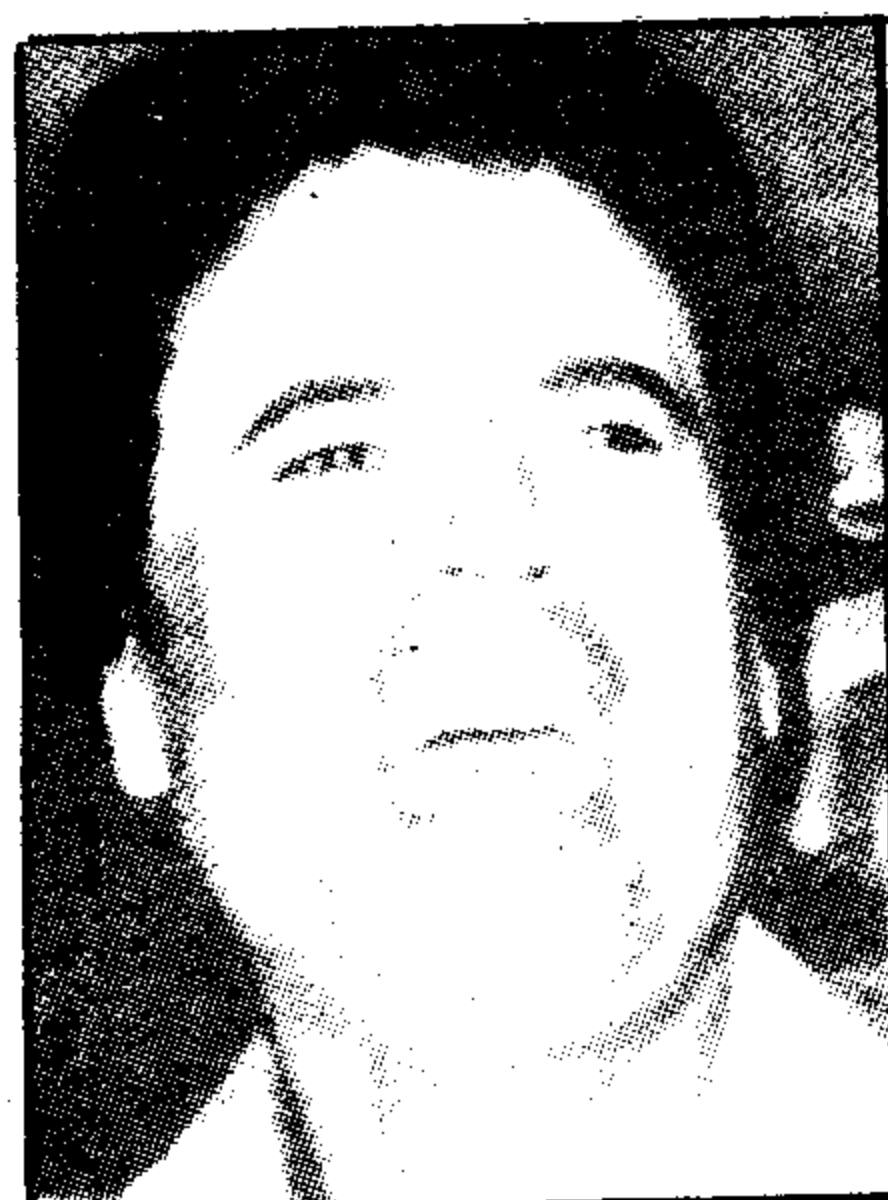
Ken Livingstone has surely edged Tony Benn into second place as the man the hysterics of Fleet Street love to hate.

Folk of a nervous disposition have argued that he's invited such treatment by his outspoken defence of, for example, gay rights and the Irish hunger strikers.

But most Labour movement activists are sick to the back teeth of politicians who say one thing in the comfort of cosy left circles and another in public. If Ken Livingstone is prepared to use his weight as GLC Leader to publicise and strengthen 'unpopular' causes then he should be backed to the hilt.

Hacks

Now, the hacks have come up with a new charge - 'Gaddafi gold'. The Sunday Telegraph has as its lead headline 'Gaddafi cash aids left-wing groups', and the accompanying picture features Labour Herald, the new local government left paper edited by Livingstone with Lambeth Leader Ted Knight and Lambeth Hous-



Gaddafi Chair Matthew Warburton.

The article goes on at length about charges from unnamed 'reliable sources' that the Libyan government has given large sums of money, as much as £50,000 at regular intervals, to British sympathisers. The Workers' Revolutionary Party (WRP) and its paper New Line are specifically mentioned.

The article points out that Astmoor Litho, which

printed the first issue of Labour Herald, also prints the News Line and the Libyan government paper The Green March. The implication is that Labour Herald is also funded by or has unspecified links with the Libyan government.

Guilt

Now this is an ancient if not honourable technique of political mudslinging - guilt by association and dark hints of foreign paymasters.

What evidence does the Sunday Telegraph give to back up its claims about 'Gaddafi gold'?

In relation to the WRP, the claim is significant if circumstantial: News-Line's craven political support for Gaddafi; the fact that after the collapse in 1976 of the WRP's previous paper Workers' Press in dubious financial circumstances, all its debts were paid, Astmoor Litho rose from the ashes, and

was able to launch News Line as a financially viable concern; the extremely large sums of money the WRP has to throw around (Monday's News Line boasted of a substantial legal fund for taking action to silence its critics).

The WRP, of course, denies all this. Monday's News Line carries a full page article entitled 'The Sunday Telegraph, 'Libyan Gold' and the WRP', which manages to combine astute nailing of the Sunday Telegraph's technique with quite staggering political hypocrisy.

It points out that Astmoor Litho's dealings with both Labour Herald and The Green March are on a purely commercial basis and makes great rhetorical play of this for several paragraphs.

Fair enough. But this contrasts rather strikingly with their attitude to another printer's commercial contract.

When Morning Litho, who at the time printed Socialist Organiser, apologised in court for an article in SO linking the WRP's political support for Gaddafi with their political practice in Britain, News Line splashed it, and tried to give the impression that Socialist Organiser had made the apology - which it most certainly did not. It is, as our readers know, still fighting the case, and has launched an appeal calling for a labour movement inquiry, and condemning the WRP's use of the bourgeois courts to silence labour movement critics.

For serious labour movement activists the question of whether or how money changed hands is a subsidiary detail to the political poison the WRP injects into the labour movement. The facts of this are clear.

Sometime around 1976 when Workers' Press collapsed and News Line took its place, the WRP had a complete change of line, to become the most sickening and sycophantic supporter of Gaddafi and other oil-rich capitalist regimes.

All this is well documented and further proof is

offered every day in the pages of News Line - to take but the latest example, the glorification of the Khmeini regime which is at this moment butchering leftists and their families down to young children.

News Line has sold itself to Gaddafi up to its neck, and it matters little what price it got. If the WRP really have received no money, whether directly or indirectly, from Gaddafi, more fool the WRP. It only proves they're more stupid than squalid.

Monsters

So where does that leave Labour Herald, which was clearly the main target of the Sunday Telegraph? After all why go after the little fish when there are weighty monsters like Livingstone to fry?

Apart from guilt by association, the evidence here is flimsy.

One glance at the first issue reveals it as a rather worthy offering, lacking the political bite even of Labour Weekly.

Hardly wild-eyed stuff, and certainly there's no uncritical coverage of Libya.

Still, it's rather disingenuous of Ted Knight to state 'We have never thought about Libyan gold or been offered Libyan gold'.

Knight has a long and somewhat compromised relationship with the WRP. He's certainly aware of the accusations about Libyan links. In Norwood Labour Party he opposed Socialist Organiser's appeal against the libel writ. And he has spoken for the WRP at a public meeting to set up one of its Community Councils.

Ken Livingstone, too, cannot be unaware of the allegations of financial links with Gaddafi. He signed our appeal for a labour movement inquiry into these and other allegations which were made in the SO article that brought the WRP's libel writs.

Ken is a rather unlikely target for the accusations of being bought by the WRP or the Libyan government. He is, however, too busy helping to think - with the problem of covering with pigs, however innocently, is that the sun does tend to linger

World news IMPERIALIST HANDS OFF ANGOLA!

THOUSANDS of South African troops are still occupying large areas of southern Angola, despite the recent announcement by South African generals that they were withdrawing after "completing their task".

This "task" has included the bloody massacre of hundreds of Angolan and refugee Namibian working people, the destruction of whole villages, roads, bridges, crops and livestock.

This terror and sabotage is continuing, with growing signs that the bosses' apartheid government will try to set up a Lebanon-style buffer zone and install the pro-imperialist puppets of Unita.

Arms

The buffer would be aimed to halt the flow of arms and SWAPO guerrilla fighters into Namibia, where the working people are waging a courageous struggle against South African military occupation and the South African puppet regime.

The buffer would also be aimed at taking further the attempts by the South African regime to impose a terrorist discipline over the Angolan masses.

These moves are getting the active support of imperialism, led by the Reagan government. The half-hearted verbal opposition of the French and West German governments, and the "neutral" stand of Thatcher arise from confusion and division amongst the imperialists about how best to crush the revolutionary struggles of the Namibian working people, and to reverse the gains of the Angolan masses.

Their diplomatic protests should not for one minute blind workers to the fact that they, and the monopoly capitalists behind them, are the deadly enemies of workers and oppressed across the world.

The South African government has made a big noise about the existence of Soviet weapons and military instructors inside Angola. This has been held up as proof of "communist subversion", and as a justification for action to defend Western "free enterprise".

Spread

Reagan, and the openly anti-working class media of the capitalists in Britain, have seized the chance to spread their anti-Soviet war-mongering propaganda. SWAPO is portrayed as a terrorist organisation and depicted as a threat to the lives of the Angolan people.

The Soviet weaponry, instructors and the 20,000 Cuban soldiers are portrayed as Moscow's instrument for colonising Angola and trying to grab Namibia through SWAPO. In this topsy-turvy world picture, the South African state, although mildly criticised for going a bit too far, is portrayed as the defender of Western "democracy" against communism.

The imperialists have grown rich through the sweat and blood of millions of working people across the world. Their capitalist system of profits means hardship and suffering for millions, when there could be peace and plenty.

Their troops have been used, are being used, and will



Thousands of South African troops are still in Angola

be used against the struggles of the oppressed.

Then they try to tell workers that it is Soviet weapons and Cuban troops in Angola which are a threat to democracy! In the name of so-called 'democracy', US weapons and instructors are being used to massacre Salvadorean working people; British troops are terrorising Irish workers and youth; French troops in Africa and US troops in South Korea are propping up murderous dictatorships.

Every day in the world, workers and oppressed in struggle for a decent standard of living and for democratic control over their daily lives, are being killed by the "democratic" imperialists and their agents.

The imperialists, their governments, and their media direct their propaganda against the Soviet and Cuban governments. But the real target of their actions is working people struggling for their economic and political liberation, in southern Africa and beyond.

The Stalinists of Moscow and Cuba claim to be on the side of the oppressed.

But as privileged bureaucrats themselves they are totally opposed to the mobilisation of workers and oppressed in a struggle to smash imperialism which if successful would also endanger the political dominance of the Stalinists.

They have been forced to give military and other aid to the liberation struggle in order to keep a political influence over it. At every point, the Stalinists act to hold back struggle and to collaborate with the capitalists.

They are enemies of the working people of the world. But it is up to the working class of the Soviet Union, Cuba, Angola and throughout the world, to deal with the Stalinist betrayers of socialism — the imperialists can never be allies in this task.

Defended

In the face of the profiteering and warmongering of the imperialists, the Soviet Union and Cuba must be defended — despite the Stalinist bureaucrats who today hold power.

It is the same as defending a trade union against the bosses, despite the fact that treacherous bureaucrats may be in control of the union.

Soviet weapons are produced by the labour of Soviet workers. Cuban soldiers are working people in arms. These weapons and these fighters must be provided and used to the full, in order to help the defence of Angola and SWAPO against South African and imperialist

aggression.

The Angolan workers have shown in huge demonstrations in Luanda and other towns, that they are willing and determined to fight this aggression shoulder to shoulder with their Namibian and Cuban class allies.

Forward

They need arms and military training in the struggle to defend their anti-colonial revolution and move forward to a workers' government.

In this struggle, the Angolan workers face the political obstacle of the MPLA government which they themselves swept into power — but which puts class collaboration before the interests of working people.

The Angolan workers and their Cuban class allies face the obstacle of the Stalinists of Moscow and Cuba, who want to hold back mobilisation and compromise with "democratic" imperialists at the expense of the oppressed.

And the courageous SWAPO guerrilla fighters and workers inside Namibia face the same political obstacle of class collaboration in the top leadership of SWAPO.

By Jim Farnham



Cuban troops in Angola

IN BRIEF

MOROCCO

LAST WEEK Thatcher gave a specially warm welcome to the Moroccan foreign minister — a sign of the imperialist support for Hassan's bloody regime, which in June sent its army against a general strike in Casablanca. The strike was called against price rises (mainly staple foods) and developed into an uprising in the working class districts. At least 100 workers and youth were murdered. Last week, at the time of the visit, there were more arrests of union leaders.



Thatcher welcomed Hassan's minister

LIBERIA

IMF/US government pressure has brought a cut in Liberian rice subsidies, pushing up the price of the staple by 20%. This is the same issue which sparked off riots against the Tolbert regime in 1979. Earlier this year, Sgt. Doe's government cut wages in response to similar dictates from finance capital.

In January, Monrovia dockers struck against this and other attacks. The recent executions of top government/army figures are a sharp sign of the underlying crisis of political control facing the regime. They are a preparation for the escalating attacks on the masses that will be necessary for the petty bourgeois regime in order to enforce austerity measures.

SIERRA LEONE

THERE have been reports that a general strike in Sierra Leone is into its fourth day. President Siaka Stevens has declared a state of emergency, closed down the unions, and arrested leaders and militants. This is clearly a continuation of the general strike mobilised last month, despite the government ban and the union leaders' restraining efforts. That strike was suspended after government promises of concessions on food prices. Workers are demanding cuts in prices of basic necessities (which are rising in direct response to the international bankers' demands), more jobs and better housing.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Last week the army in the Central African Republic took over under General Kolingba, ousting the former French puppet ruler, Dacko. French troops — who number more than the local army — did not intervene, showing that French imperialism has sanctioned the changeover, as it did more actively when Bokassa was kicked out for Dacko.

The coup comes at a time of rising mass militancy, focussing on prices and shortages, and on the dictatorial rule of Dacko (who had already declared martial law to counter demonstrations sparked off by his obvious fiddling of presidential elections. The coup is imperialist-backed (with distinct signs of US involvement) and obviously a preventive measure to head off this militancy and struggle. In fact, a national strike over wages and prices was threatening to develop.

BRAZIL

LAST week Lula and ten other Brazilian union leaders had their jail sentences overruled by a top military tribunal. The sentences had been imposed by a lower military court for their role in the massive 1980 metal workers' strikes.

This is a clear retreat by the government from direct confrontation at a time of developing militancy and struggle. Recent struggles have included a ten-day riot by workers in Salvador city against a 60% busfare increase, spreading to other towns (Belo Horizonte, Belem). And there have been militant land occupations by landless rural poor, (e.g. in Amazonia) which have been viciously put down by landowners and the army. The economy, moving deeper into crisis, is bound to provoke greater and greater resistance. Industrial output is falling, and hundreds of thousands of workers have lost jobs or been put on short-time (there are of course no unemployment benefits).

INTERNATIONAL ACTION

Turn TUC words into action!

THE WORKING people and fighters in Angola and Namibia need the maximum supporting action from the labour movement in Britain and internationally.

Labour leaders must not be allowed to tie our movement to an alliance with capitalists — no matter how "democratic" they may try to look.

Those leaders who take a stand for solidarity must move to mobilise class action. Arthur Scargill and other TUC leaders last week sent a letter to Thatcher calling for aid to Angola, for Tory support of UN sanctions against South Africa and for a meeting on the issue.

The TUC leaders have backed Congress resolutions calling for UN sanctions, and for support of SWAPO.

These are fine words but without mobilising workers, they will remain as useless as all the fine words of the past.

Calling for UN sanctions is like asking the CBI to take action against a capitalist in the interests of workers.

This is very convenient for those labour leaders who want to turn workers away from knowing and relying on their own class strength, who fear the mobilised strength of workers. These leaders act at every point to convince workers that they have no power to intervene in international affairs.

In reality, the working class has a massive power to do just that. The whole world economy — its production and its trade — is in the hands of workers. Military weapons are produced and transported by workers. Workers have the strength to halt the flow of weapons to the South African state, through blacking action that is internationally co-ordinated.

A campaign in the international labour movement could be mobilised to add real weight to the demand for economic and military aid to Angola and SWAPO.

Those labour leaders who have taken a stand on democratic accountability and socialist policies, must show that they are willing to extend these to the international level, and to back a campaign for building international links of working class solidarity and for arms blacking.



Momentous appeal to East European workers

by Alexis Carras

"AN APPEAL to All Workers of Eastern Europe".

"The delegates [of Solidarnosc's First National Congress], greet the workers of Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Czechoslovakia, the GDR, and all the nations of the Soviet Union.

"As the first independent trade union in our post-war history, we are deeply aware of the common aspirations of our peoples.

Despite the lies spread in your countries, we assure you that we are an authentic representative of the working class - 10 million strong - born from workers' strikes.

Vision

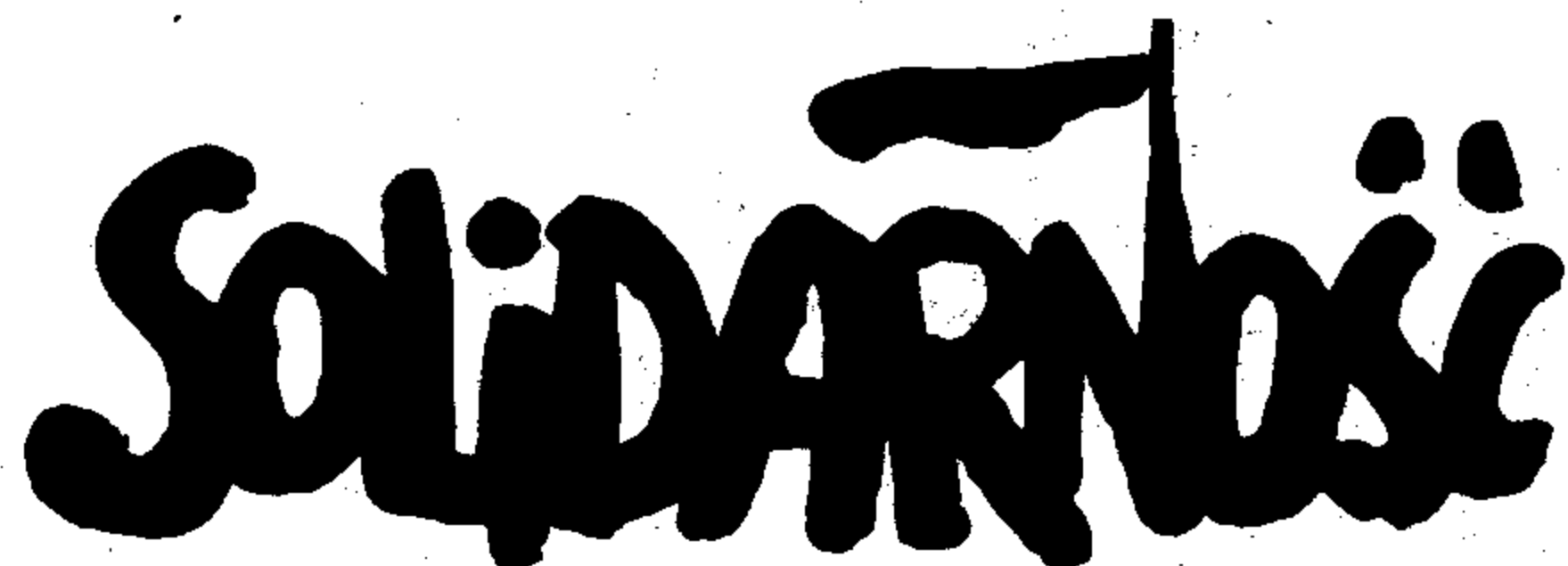
Our aim is the fight for better living conditions of all workers. We support those among you who have decided to take the difficult road of struggle for a free trade union movement. We believe that, in the future, which is not that far off, our representatives will be able to meet one another and exchange experiences."

It is only at rare moments in history that such appeals can be made to the working classes of the world.

The appeal of the newly established revolutionary Soviet Government in 1917 - "To all the Toilers of the World" - the founding addresses of the revolutionary Communist International are some of those few.

They represented a working class on the advance, confident of its own strength and vision of a future society.

Solidarnosc's Address to the Workers of Eastern Europe - similarly falls into this category of proclamations when not only these self-same workers have found their own powerful democratic voice - but reaching out their hand to their brothers and sisters of the other Stalinist



dominated states - see the necessity of raising to their feet all the oppressed and downtrodden of Eastern Europe.

It is an address which needless to say must have sent chills down the backs of all bureaucrats, careerists and those used to exercising untrammelled arbitrary fiat for years (and years), without a murmur of protest from their victims.

It is an address, short and to the point, but portentous and great. It is the signal of the coming East European political revolution.

Contrast this Appeal, unanimously voted by hundreds of delegates representing a genuine ten-million strong working class movement with the vicious yet frightened reaction of the Kremlin leaders.

The contrast is remarkable. The response purports to be a proclamation issued by a group of car workers from the Likhatchev factory!

Future

The statement bears the unmistakable imprint of the Moscow bureaucracy:

"Those force instigating anarchy and chaos, who have hidden behind the call to 'rectify' and 'renovate' socialism... have let slip

their mask and are now deliberately exalting and acclaiming the counter-revolution."

Not satisfied with this rubbish "the Likhatchev car workers" go on to sing the praises of "existing socialism", and assert that:

"The authors of the appeal call on us to disown, to betray the millions who perished in the struggles against imperialism... to betray our communist future"

It has always been the case that all oppressor classes groups and castes in history have wilfully identified their role and vision of society with the common good.

Camps

The "communist future" talked about so laughably in this "workers' reply" is nothing more than the contrived future of bureaucratic power, wealth and privilege of the Stalinists, which is now being mortally threatened.

For the real communist future lies not with them, but with the countless imprisoned working class militants, like Klebanov and the Association of Professional Workers incarcerated in the prison camps and psychiatric hospitals of the bureaucracy.

For them, Solidarnosc's



Appeal will be like a trumpet call of sanity. A vindication, tearing through all the cant and madness of the bureaucracy's terror.

And Solidarnosc's message will reach them, wherever they are, as no doubt now despite the

bureaucracy's grasping control of the means of information - millions of workers throughout Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union are talking of Solidarnosc's open challenge to their common masters.

For Solidarnosc has

managed to survive a year. As Moscow says, it has finally thrown off its mask. This is the mask of a rather unconvincing and fictitious "syndicalism" and political disinterest.

Not only has the "leading role of the Party" been

junked openly (including by PUWP members of Solidarnosc themselves) by Solidarnosc delegates, but free elections to the Sjem have been demanded, with all the Pandora's Box of dilemmas and dangers that implies for the PUWP.

And along with the persistent and determined call of the movement for workers' control and access to the media - Solidarnosc has sharply nailed on the head what the stakes are in Poland today:

"The authorities, scared by the perspective of the development of workers' control, seek to choke it and deprive us of the right to manage the factories and above all to elect and recall the directors. All this is covered under references about the defence of socialised property and the State. In fact it's done in the name of the egotistical interests of the bureaucratic Party-State."

Censorship

The opening part of Solidarnosc's first congress, originally planned to run only three days, (in fact it went way over time, and is to be continued later in the month) was by any standards momentous.

It was a Congress held, in effect, under siege, as 100,000 Soviet troops played their war games just across the border in Bielorussia to the East, joint Soviet-Polish manoeuvres were held in Silesia to the South, Soviet-East German exercises to the West across the Oder, and the Warsaw Pact Fleet sailed ominously amidst the fog off the Baltic coast.

Yet if they were meant to silence the delegates into a cautious self-censorship, the manoeuvres were a visible failure.

It is not possible to cover and bully a movement down after years of silence and oppression - as the Catholic-sponsored right wing within Solidarnosc discovered to its own embarrassment as well.

These more conciliatory elements, fearful of the "secular left" around KOR, proposed a vote that every morning at 8, before each Congress session - mass should be said by all delegates.

It was meant as a clear slap in the face for Kuron's KOR, especially in a congress overwhelmingly composed of practising Catholics. To the credit of the delegates, the right in fact lost the vote.

It was only after another delegate got up and somewhat red-faced screamed that attendance at mass was "of course" a voluntary matter of personal choice - that the vote was overturned.

Solidarnosc and in particular the KOR wing of the movement, (or the "secular left") have once again been showered with a veritable storm of abuse and lies by the Russian press and their lackeys in Eastern Europe.

The fact that Soviet reaction has for the time being, once again remained at the level of vilification and ominous military games, must not blind us to the very real possibility that an intervention is always an option the Soviet leaders will never renounce.

Australian workers give lead in solidarity

LAST WEEK'S national trade union congress in Australia unanimously backed a resolution for solidarity action in support of workers in South Africa.

The resolution calls for a week of blacking action against all South African vessels and cargo beginning Monday 14 September, in protest against the arrest of over 200 black trade unionists this month.

Members

The South African workers are members of the militant union movement in the Eastern Cape, centred on the East London industrial area. Most are in the South Africa Allied Workers Union, which organises the majority of factory workers and is the major political force in the working class townships.

The others belong to the General Workers Union, which organises the dockers, and is allied closely to SAAWU.

These workers have been arrested for the 'crime' of

fighting for working class needs, against the bosses and their vicious apartheid regime.

They, and black workers throughout South Africa, will draw great strength and confidence from the solidarity action by Australian workers. And this blacking action can strike real blows against the bosses' state.

The Australian move gives a magnificent lead for international working class solidarity action.

It points the way to mobilising workers behind demands and actions that support our class allies in struggle, and that hit our common class enemy, the international capitalist class.

Pleas

It shows a real fighting alternative to the dead-end pleas for UN sanctions, which take solidarity out of the hands of workers and lead them to rely on bosses' governments.

The capitalist media in Britain recognised the potential threat of the Australian

blackening campaign, and greeted the news with silence.

And despite the commitment of floor speakers to action against the apartheid-capitalist state, it seems that TUC leaders preferred to ignore this major lead for solidarity during last week's TUC congress. Congress motions for UN sanctions against South Africa, while a welcome indication of workers' feelings of solidarity, can be no substitute for the necessary class action.

Cover

In the hands of labour bureaucrats, such motions are little more than a cover for their refusal to mobilise the massive strength of the labour movement in support of our South African class allies, and a cover for their policy of class collaboration.

Socialist Organiser calls on workers and militants to raise this issue in union branches, trades councils, Labour Party wards, AAM branches, and the coming

Labour Party congress - calling for a campaign of blacking action in support of the arrested South African workers, and for the building of links with the Australian and other labour movements to lay the basis for future co-ordinated solidarity action.

Support

The TUC congress has backed a resolution - motion 15 - moved by Mike Power of the NGA - which calls for direct action against multinationals in support of victimised workers.

Oxford Trades Council has sent a similar resolution for the AAM annual conference (see SO 52).

Such resolutions should be taken up as widely as possible, and class solidarity action fought for.

*Messages of support for the arrested South African workers to: SAAWU, PO Box 7002, East London, 5200, South Africa and GWU, 9 Benbow Buildings, Beverley Street, Athlone, Cape Town, South Africa.



Turkey week of action

A SUCCESSFUL week of solidarity activities including meetings, demonstrations and a rally in central London marked the first anniversary of the military coup in Turkey.

Links

As well as a lobby of the TUC - drawing attention to the threatened execution of trade union leaders from the Turkish DISK confederation, well attended meetings were organised in Newcastle and Bradford, the latter in association with the Bradford Palestinian Campaign. Useful meetings were also held in Leicester, Leeds and Oxford.

On the morning of September 12 a demonstration was mounted outside Downing Street and a letter

handed in to the Prime Minister's office in protest at the Thatcher government's continued links with and economic aid to the junta.

The question of Dogan Tarkan's threatened deportation was also referred to, as it had been throughout the week. Dogan Tarkan reported directly on the progress of this defence campaign at the rally held later in the day, which ended with a fund-raising social.

Many useful contacts have been made, particularly with trade unions, which will strengthen the TSC's work in the future, and local committees will be set up in some towns for the first time.

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

Anti Apartheid Movement Conference. Sunday November 1 from 10am at Westminster Cathedral Conference Centre, Morpeth Terrace, London SW1. Open to all AAM members. details from AAM, 89 Charlotte St, London W1 (01-580 5311).

—Women in struggle— Should women be expected to control teenage youth?

SHIRLEY FROST discusses the difference between child care and child control.

THE family is the basic institutions of socialisation in our society, even when children spend a large portion of their time at school.

Whereas in the younger age groups, the responsibility of parents is mainly seen as care, the older the child gets, the more assertive she gets, the more the responsibility is seen as control.

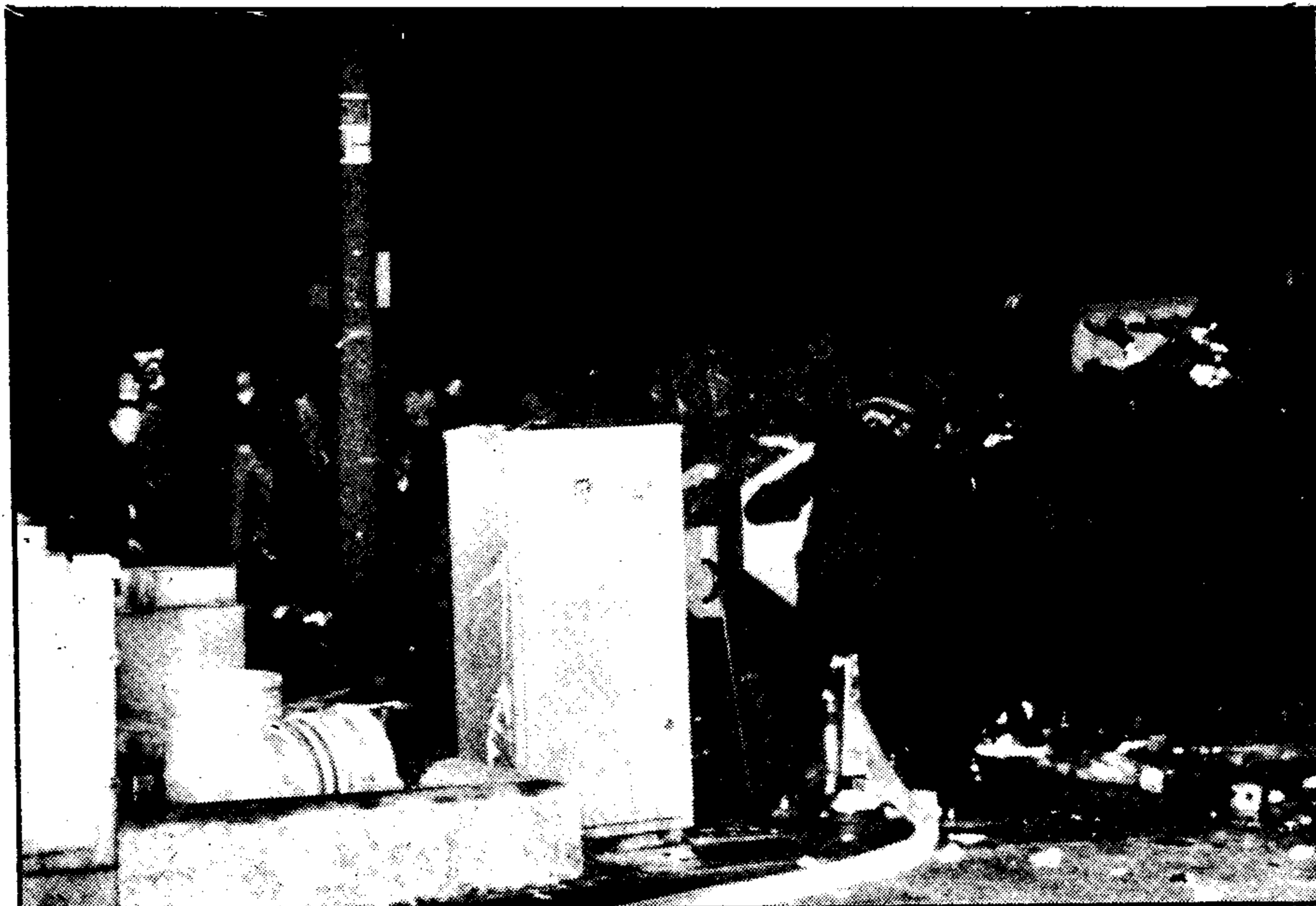
Virtues

Although the upbringing of children is less harsh than it was even 50 years ago, and children are seen as having individual rights and protection against exploitation and abuse, parents are still expected to transmit to their children the virtues of cleanliness, tidiness, politeness, obedience and respect for authority.

This is also the overriding ethos of the school.

Whereas in the early stages of a child's life, the state is reluctant to act as a substitute for parents (for instance in providing day care), this reluctance is less evident later on when the issue becomes control. Parents are expected to both care for and control their children, but the issue of care seems to fade from view, the older the child gets.

But parents also have less and less influence on their children, as time goes by.



The peer group, school, the media, the environment all shape children's identity.

Nevertheless parents are still held responsible for what children do, or don't do.

There are two approaches to child care and control prevalent today, the liberal and the authoritarian.

For a while in the 1960s, liberalism was on the ascendant. Now we are in a period of recession, liberalism is being thrown out of the window.

The police force typifies authoritarianism, and their approach suggests the liberalism was only ever a thin smear. The talk is now of

capital punishment, compulsory work schemes, detention camps, military training.

The country was shocked to learn that 9 or 10 year olds were at the riots. They should not have been. In the 20s and 30s, during a similar economic slump they were frequently seen at demonstrations of unemployed workers, and were batoned by police.

In trying to identify the causes of the riots (as if unemployment, social decay, racism and police harassment were not enough) parents were blamed.

References were made to the divorce rate, and that old chestnut the 'broken home'

(nothing like hitting a parent when she is down), endorsed by no less a champion of women and children, Erin Pizzey!

Working mothers are also thrown into the mellee.

In short, the family is not doing its job, and parents must be brought into line.

Parents will be fined for their children's offences; parents must impose discipline in the home; parents must set an example.

We the parents must act now or the state machinery will do it with gusto.

All this seems pretty extreme, but it explains why control is more important to the State than care.

For instance there is no legislation which lays on local authorities a general duty to provide for the welfare of the child over five except residential care. The concept is even more remote for the teenager, where again such terms as 'unruly' are frequently used to commit a child into 'care' — a euphemism for control.

For the teenager the most that is on offer is recreation, which is subsumed under education. The youth service is seen principally as an educational provision, when its aim is containment.

Resources

But even this is pitifully inadequate when put against the needs of young people themselves. For none of the facilities offered to children over five are consciously geared to care, although undoubtedly many of the workers in the field are very caring people. But they don't on the whole expect to substitute for parents.

In fact there is within the play movement a strong tendency away from control or even care in the usual sense, in that freedom from any interference by adults is the goal and the ideal. Yet I believe that the school-age child continues to need an environment in which care is an important feature, albeit of a different kind from that needed for younger children.

When it comes to talking about care for the teenager, the concept hardly has any

meaning at all for most people.

We can show that we care by giving them a place of their own.

The youth service has never been given all the resources it needs to fully meet the needs of young people. This has to change because in its absence, they often have no alternative but the street, where the lack of interesting activities creates apathy or the temptation to 'make something happen' which inevitably leads to conflict with the local community and the police.

Youth centres, or their equivalent should be open directly after school and during the school holidays.

The bulk of children attending playschemes are aged up to 9 or 10, after this they tend to vote with their feet if the situation is not to their liking. This means the scheme has to be attractive enough for them to want to come.

To ignore this is to leave them to the uncertainties of the street.

Hysteria

Schemes which provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere with interesting activities achieve this. Children attending Gingerbread Corner, the scheme set up by Croydon Gingerbread, were heard to say 'You mean someone wants us?' when attending for the first time.

This must strike a chord in the heart of every work-

ing parent, and contrasts strongly with the Inner London Education Authority playcentres, on which many working parents depend and are undoubtedly useful, but which operate in a much more impersonal way.

We need to take as much care of the over-fives as we do with the under fives and plan accordingly. They need contact with people outside the family and to feel that they count for something in the community.

The break up of communities means that there is often a rift between generations which needs to be healed. The opportunity to participate in planning their own environment will enable them to have a model which is democratic — which I would suggest as an alternative to the simply liberal or blatantly authoritarian.

We need a dialogue between adults and children which takes account of rights on both sides. We need to create a community of interests between families and between parents and other adults and to win progressive minded people over to our idea that child care provision is neither the curtailment of freedom, nor the need only of young children.

There is an alternative to the present hysteria being waged in the media and elsewhere about control and about parents' responsibility to exercise it at all costs.

Amendments ditched by conference bureaucrats

The CLPD column this week is from Heather Gaebler

15 amendments to a resolution on positive discrimination in favour of women were ruled out of order by the all-male Conference Arrangements Committee, allegedly because they were unrelated to the substantive motion. Needless to say the substantive motion was also on positive discrimination. It argued that five resolutions chosen by the National Conference of Labour Women should be debated at Annual Labour Party Conference as of right.

Women are furious that yet again the Labour Party conference agenda will allow little or no time for debate on women's issues.

The 15 amendments demanded the setting up of an NEC working party to investigate 'other forms of positive discrimination.'

The complete lack of interest shown by the Party in women's rights has not yet been acknowledged as being of major detriment to its potential support and also in terms of political activists.

Women feel that it's about time they did. But this will not be done without a united and sustained challenge to the all-male

bodies, such as the Conference Arrangements Committee, which control Party procedures and therefore the party as a whole.

The Women's Action Committee is calling on all CLPs whose amendments to resolution 29 were ruled out of order, urging them to refer back to Conference the relevant section of the CAC report given at the beginning

of the Conference. The WAC hope the CLPs will mandate their delegates to support the reference back. It also calls on CLPs to get their GCs to pass the following emergency resolution:

"This Conference deplors the rejection by the Conference Arrangements Committee of some 15 amendments on positive discrimination for women to a

motion also on positive discrimination.

Their rejection by the all-male Conference Arrangements Committee means that once again women's issues will not be debated at Annual Conference. The Conference therefore requires that resolution 29 and the disallowed amendments be placed on the Conference agenda for debate".

Challenge to TUC sexism

by
Gerry Byrne

MISS PIGGY should have been here at this hour! Union leaders have a notoriously dismissive attitude towards the people who pay their wages, even more so if they happen to be women. So it's nice to see even a gesture of protest at the sexism and complacency that's rife in the all-boys-together jamboree of the TUC.

Alan Fisher of NUPE, he of the leonine rhetoric and mouse-like deeds, is the leader of a union with an overwhelmingly female membership. So his fat-

uously sexist comment about women needing large handbags was particularly galling to the few women delegates there.

Ivy Cameron of the bank workers' union rounded off her speech on women's unemployment by presenting Fisher with a large shocking pink shopping bag.

Nor were other delegates exempt. After pointing out that women had been in the forefront of industrial struggles, she asked why any delegate should sound surprised at this.



Alan Fisher

Did they believe, with Martin Luther, that men had larger brains for thinking and women had larger hips for childbearing?

"Well, I've seen some big bums around congress"

Liverpool typists battle on

by Alexis Carras

400 typists and machine operators for the Liberal-controlled Liverpool City Council have been on strike ever since July 6.

The strike is about regrading and bringing typists' paltry wages into line with wages of other local government workers.

The women have been mounting day-in, day-out pickets of all entrances to council buildings. They hold daily strike committee meetings and weekly mass meetings.

Unfortunately, national

NALGO leadership is not shifting very fast to aid the women. The only concrete recommendation so far is to go to ACAS! All that ACAS has done is say the strike must not be escalated while arbitration is in progress.

This is not the kind of help the women need.

Liverpool NALGO have called on their national leadership to recall the national delegates' meeting.

Messages of support to Liverpool Typists' Strike Committee, c/o NALGO Branch Office, Duchy Chambers, 24 Sir Thomas Street, Liverpool 1.

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WHY WE SAY 'VOTE BENN'

by Jo Thwaites

HOW the T&GWU will cast its 1¼ million votes in the deputy leadership election will not be finally decided until the delegation meets on September 27 — the start of Labour Party conference.

But the Executive will meet on the 21st and make a recommendation. The delegation is unlikely to go against the Executive.

It is expected that the Executive will recommend a vote for Silkin in the first ballot. The second ballot is not clear.

How the recommendation will compare with the results of the 'consultation' with the Regions is anybody's guess.

No details of these 'consultations' are being published, but they seem very unlikely to show a majority for Silkin.

But in some regions the consultations haven't got as far as branch meetings. They have only gone to the District Committees or to the branch secretaries, with no time for a branch meeting to be consulted. Region Five circulated Silkin's election material, but not Healey's or Benn's.

In Region 6, branches have been consulted, but branches never known to speak before, particularly in South Manchester, are recording votes for Healey. There is no doubt that some full-timers have been working all-out to get in votes for Healey.

The most democratic way of making the decision on the TGWU's vote would have been to vote on it at the Biennial Delegate Conference. But it was clear to the leadership of the Union that that would have meant a vote for Benn — so no vote was taken.

All the machinations of the TGWU's leadership show that they know that if the rank and file had anything to do with it, then the T&G delegation would vote for Benn on the first ballot.

The Executive meeting that will take the decision on how to recommend the delegation to vote is on Monday September 21st. A lobby of this EC meeting is being organised. Come and support it — at 8.30am, Transport House, Smith Square, London SW1 (nearest tube, Westminster.)

"WHAT IS the Blackpool TUC all about if the people who voted for policies this week are not interested in whether or not these policies are carried out?"

These telling words from Tony Benn in last week's Blackpool debate with Healey and Silkin sum up the essential reason why he should be supported.

Benn alone of the three candidates stands for the election and accountability leadership in the labour movement.

Benn alone has taken up the fight for democratic control and broken down the unspoken division between Labour Party politics and the trade unions. In fighting for party democracy he has broken up the old cosy 'unity' between the tame 'left' and the right wing, and has been willing to trample on the toes of the trade union bureaucracy.

Aspirations

Benn's decision to stand against Healey, and his appeal over the heads of the union leaders to the rank and file membership of the whole labour movement, has fundamentally changed the conditions in which socialists argue against the right wing.

The platform of policies on which he stands is not a perfect platform. But it reflects the present aspirations of wide layers of the workers' movement.

In the Blackpool debate he stressed that the election contest was about:

"... getting rid of Mrs Thatcher; restoring full employment; restoring the rights of trade unions; advancing the rights of women; and it is about getting a freedom of information act; leaving the Common Market; having a non-nuclear defence policy, and getting rid of American nuclear bases."

He went on to declare himself firmly opposed to



At Blackpool and Wembley, Benn was the standard-bearer of democratic reform

the disastrous policies of the last Labour government:

"We cannot go back to 1979, to the policies of wage restraint which not only undermined the Labour Government but undermined the role of the trade union movement, because trade union officials — like the old unions in Poland — were agents of Government policy rather than representatives of the membership."

In stark contrast to this, Healey nailed his colours firmly to the mast of the policies which brought the 1979 Election defeat.

Bluntly he argued that it is not the right wing but Benn and the left who have betrayed the working class!

"Those who have betrayed the working class of Britain are those who have forced us for two whole years to fight one another when we should have been fighting the Tories and who through ideological narcissism are helping to keep in power the most brutal government in living memory, a government which has committed itself to destroy our trade union movement."

Healey's stubborn defence of the anti-socialist policies of previous Labour governments was combined

with a firm commitment to NATO and the EEC:

"We cannot hope to avoid the disasters which now threaten the whole human race simply by ignoring them or by retreating into a neurotic isolationism which treats every international organisation set up to tackle them simply as characters in a cavalcade of monsters..."

As the unanimous favourite candidate of the Tory press, Healey was of course duty bound to discount the power and influence of the media and attempt to turn the tables and portray Benn and the left as "elitists".

But with Healey making no bones of his opposition to key Labour Party and TUC Congress policies — unilateral disarmament, rejection of wage controls, rena-

tionalisation without compensation, and withdrawal from the EEC — it was left to John Silkin to make the most dishonest presentation of the evening.

Sensing the predominantly left-wing politics of the 1,000-strong audience, he put forward a carefully-couched radical-sounding statement which skilfully concealed his opposition to the democratic reforms fought for by Benn.

His opposition to the Wembley decision was smuggled into a passage welcoming the wider franchise in leadership elections as the way forward... but stressing that the "ground rules" would have to be set out in the future!

Silkin declared himself against "authoritarianism" but then revealed that by

this he actually means accountability. Deliberately confusing the Chartists' call for secret polling for all in General Elections with the left's struggle to make leaders accountable to the membership for their actions, he proclaimed:

"The Chartists demanded secret ballots to end intimidation: no recorded votes for them!"

As a candidate who only emerged late on as the stalking horse of a few bashful right wingers in the PLP and trade union bureaucracy, Silkin felt obliged to defend the existing leadership against the criticism of the left:

"Some claim that the Party is becoming dominated by bureaucratic trade unions and lacking vigorous leadership."

"But the best leaders are not always the dominant, extrovert personalities, the folk heroes."

Sometimes, he implied, a stodgy nonentity, a fake left "conciliator" like himself is an ideal choice — offering occasional flurries of left rhetoric combined with consistent accommodation to the right wing in the unions and the Labour Party.

Clear

The debate spelled out the choices facing workers. The three candidates offer either:

*A defender of wage controls, NATO and the IMF, and a staunch opponent of unilateral disarmament, party democracy and accountability.

*A slippery and evasive opponent of party democracy and accountability, who proclaims his support for unilateralism but hedges on the issue of a new social contract "call it what you will".

*Or the leading advocate of party democracy and accountability, committed to implement Conference policies, openly criticising the discredited policies of 1979 and even now proclaiming that there is no solution through simply trying to reform capitalism.

We think that the choice is clear for all to see.

We need to drive forward the democratisation of the Labour Party and the unions as part of the fight for a new leadership committed to the struggle for socialism.

That's why we say 'Vote Benn'!

CENTRE PAGES:

The charge-sheet against Healey
Activists say why they back Benn

BACK PAGE:

The Bomb, wage control, cuts --
the issues at stake
Now organise the Left!

HEALEY: THE CANDIDATE FOR NATO AND THE IMF



JOHN LISTER
reviews the
contenders

MAJOR Denis Winston Healey is a dedicated, committed politician. Since his first involvement in the Labour Party he has been dedicated to the furtherance of the politics of the right wing and committed to preserving the interests of British imperialism.

He has never had — or sought — any real links with the rank and file of the Labour Party or with the trade union movement.

Having had his momentary "fling" at left wing politics while still at University — he briefly joined the British CP — Healey took up a full time office post at Labour Party headquarters in 1946 — serving as secretary to Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary in Attlee's government.

Greatest

Healey's reference to Bevin in last week's debate with Tony Benn as "the greatest ever foreign secretary" was no chance remark. From the very outset Healey was an eager supporter of Bevin's collaboration with the US imperialist leaders to consolidate capitalist rule in post-war Europe, and his efforts to maintain the British Empire.

Healey was to draft a pamphlet extolling Bevin's policies, and remained at his desk in the International Department until 1952 when he entered Parliament.

Healey's impeccable right wing credentials singled him out as a rising star for the Labour leadership — and for the "talent spotters" of US imperialism.

In 1954 Healey became the London correspondent of an anti-communist magazine, *New Leader*, produced in New York and backed by funds from the J.M. Kaplan Fund — a CIA front organisation.

The magazine openly advocated the infiltration of foreign socialist parties.

By the late 1950s he had become a close crony of Hugh Gaitskell, going with both Gaitskell and Anthony Crosland to attend functions of the CIA-sponsored "Congress for Cultural Freedom".

Funding

Gaitskell and Healey also went as guests of Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, to attend sessions of the "Bilderberg Group". The group was run by an influential American, Joseph Reiginger, who also arranged US Marshall Aid funding for the European Movement.

Also prominent in these CIA-infested circles was Dick Taverne — later to become the trailblazing Lincoln renegade.

Sponsorship for the European Movement came from the nefarious "American Committee for a United Europe", whose members included the former head of the CIA's forerunner (the OSS), and CIA men Allen Dulles and Tom Braden.

The CIA had not invested without hope of return. In the wake of Labour's electoral defeat in 1959 Gaitskell, together with Crosland and other right wingers, took up a fight dear to the hearts of the US imperialists and British capitalists — to delete Clause IV — the call for nationalisation — from the Labour Party constitution.

In this struggle, and in

Small wonder Healey defends NATO - whose policies he helped draw up!



his determination to "fight, fight and fight again" against unilateral disarmament and socialist policies following his defeat at the 1960 party conference, Gaitskell felt certain he could count on the support of Major Healey.

Healey was brought into the Shadow Cabinet in 1959 and remained there — as Shadow Foreign Secretary, Shadow Secretary for Colonial and Commonwealth Affairs, and then Shadow Defence Minister — until the election victory of 1964.

Healey became Wilson's Secretary of State for Defence for the whole 1964-70 period of Labour government. And in that capacity too he was able in his own way to repay the hospitality of the CIA.

Trim

While being forced by the growing economic crisis of British imperialism reluctantly to trim back global military commitments, Healey put forward a substantial new structure for forces pay, providing them with a thumping 15% increase for many grades, and offering a system of "bonuses" for less pleasant duties — such as Northern Ireland. The scheme is described by Wilson as "unprecedentedly generous".

No such generosity was applied by Healey to the social services or the forces

struggling against imperialism. In 1967, the economic crisis brought a cabinet debate on spending cuts. Healey adamantly refused to contemplate cuts in the defence budget.

Instead, he suggested, money should be raised by lifting the embargo on arms sales to South Africa, and by making cuts in social service spending. According to the Crossman Diaries:

"Denis Healey and Tony Crosland both observed in passing that we must have sharper Party discipline. Denis said that some of these fellows who were tabling motions against cuts in the social services should be thrown out..."

Healey took his responsibilities seriously — becoming a key member of NATO's Nuclear Planning Group. Harold Wilson writes of these early discussions of what has now become the infamous notion of "limited Theatre Nuclear War".

Warning

"Equally it provided the most sophisticated account so far published of the thinking behind NATO's developing attitudes on the doctrine of the controlled nuclear response to any outbreak of fighting in Europe. This was again based mainly on Denis Healey's leadership in NATO and providing, as it did, a means of studied restraint in escalation [!] was a warning to all concerned to think again before a

possible outbreak of fighting in Europe led to thermo-nuclear exchanges and all-out nuclear war." (*The Labour Government 1964-70*, p.775).

Opponent

Small wonder therefore that Healey today remains a foremost opponent of unilateral nuclear disarmament and defender of the NATO alliance whose vicious policies of escalation he helped to formulate 13 years ago!

The defeat of the Heath government in February 1974 brought Wilson back to office and Healey the post as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Healey's starting point was the fight to hold wages down, trading on the much vaunted "social contract" with the TUC leadership. Initially this was attempted through subsidies and a cut in VAT.

But at the same time Healey's first budget raised electricity charges, rail fares, phone bills, postage, petrol prices and the cost of alcohol and cigarettes.

Healey was also busy cutting taxes paid by big industry — to the extent that few big firms now pay corporation tax.

His second budget declared the objective of "improving profitability and liquidity in the company

sector and shifting resources from consumption into investment and exports".

By the spring of 1975 all pretence of concern at workers' living standards was jettisoned as Healey's budget slashed food subsidies, housing subsidies and subsidies to the nationalised industries.

Healey's attitude was spelled out in the wake of the railway unions' 30% settlement in June 1975. He threatened that if the social contract pay limits were not tightened he would use "Tory policies" to cut living standards.

TGWU leader Jack Jones was quick to respond. He steamrollered through the union's conference acceptance of a £6 limit to wage increases. Healey seized the opportunity, and announced a formal limit of £6 — state control of wages.

He argued: "We must accept a 10% cut in the standard of living and public expenditure. The alternative [!] is to crawl to the IMF and accept the terms they impose upon us."

Controls

In March 1976 as talks began on phase 2 of wage controls, Healey's package of £3,000 million cuts prompted a revolt by 37 Tribune MPs. But the same MPs then trooped through the lobbies to support a vote of confidence in the govern-

ment's economic policies — including the cuts.

Wilson's resignation brought a leadership election within the PLP. Healey lost out to Callaghan as right wing candidate for the run-off against Foot.

August 1976 brought phase 2 of pay controls — a savage 4½% limit on pay rises, following hard on yet another package of £1,000 million cuts.

While no challenge was mounted to these policies by the Party conference, November 17 saw 80,000 trade unionists on the march in protest against the cuts.

Unofficial strikes began to break out against the phase 2 limits — including engineering workers, BL toolroom workers, Port Talbot electricians and Heathrow airport maintenance staff. All were left isolated by the TUC. Yet in the midst of these strikes Healey unveiled his phase 3 figure — a 10% ceiling to rises.

It was this limit that was to prompt the first major official union opposition to the pay laws — the 9 week long firemen's strike. Yet the TUC again successfully isolated strike action to this one union, ensuring that only the firemen broke through Healey's net.

By July 1978 Healey had the gall to follow an announcement of a 40% increase in police pay with a revelation of the figure for phase 4 — a miserable 5%. It was this figure which was to provoke the "winter of discontent", and trigger a fight back within the labour movement.

September 1978 saw the TUC rebel against the 5% figure and in October the pay policy was heavily defeated in the Labour Conference.

Wave

The ensuing wave of pay strikes included Ford workers, bakers, journalists, transport drivers and public sector workers who staged a second 80,000-strong demonstration in January 1979.

As the Thatcher leadership seized upon the disarray

of the Labour government to force it from office, Healey joined with Callaghan to run through an election manifesto based on still more cuts in real wages and further measures to safeguard company profits.

The result was a heavy defeat in the May General Election. Massive rank and file resentment against Healey's record and that of the Labour government as a whole has since been the major driving force in the fight for democracy and accountability within the Labour Party.

It is indeed ironic that Healey's actions in office from 1974-79 are a major reason why he is now forced to contest an election for the Labour Deputy Leadership against Tony Benn.

While Benn stands on a platform of criticising the performance of the Labour government and offering a left alternative, Healey stands four-square in defence of his record and for a reversal of the limited gains so far achieved by Labour rank and file.

Heckled

Put on the defensive by Benn's direct attempt to appeal to trade union activists over the heads of the bureaucratic leaders, Healey has waged a "campaign" which has consisted of a torrent of right wing union headquarters, back-room vote-fishing, and occasional disastrous fringe meetings, which he has been roundly heckled by the left and openly supported by rank and file workers.

But Healey must recognise that in the longer term his position can only grow weaker. Even were he to scrape home and win the deputy leadership in October, he cannot seriously hope to roll back all of the gains made by the Labour left in the last two years.

His old colleagues R. Jenkins, Shirley Williams, David Owen and Willie Rodgers have already signed the writing on the wall. Major Healey joins the march into the Liberal sunset?

Silkin's candidacy

JOHN SILKIN's candidacy in the deputy leadership contest rests not on his record of having done anything but on his supposed ability to avoid annoying people.

His active service under Wilson and Callaghan governments included three years as Wilson's Chief Whip.

Silkin's election address claims that this period came to an end when he was:

"... sacked as Chief Whip for opposing anti-union legislation, *In Place of Strife*, which was supported by the other two present candidates for the deputy leadership."

In fact as Harold Wilson points out the decision to

remove Silkin was based on his failure to impose sufficient discipline on the votes on the Budget. Silkin was sacked from the government: indeed as Wilson writes:

"Very soon, as so often happens, John Silkin was fully absorbed in one of the most agreeable of ministerial tasks — the Ministry of Works".

Silkin went on to serve the 1974-79 Labour government, and thus to share responsibility for the action of the Wilson/Callaghan leadership.

Silkin has never been noted for anything — alone as a left wing



The Ford workers rebelled against the 5 per cent limit: Now Benn leads the rebellion against such policies within the Labour Party.

BENN: CRITIC OF LABOUR'S BETRAYALS

TONY BENN served as a minister throughout both of Labour's last two periods of office. In Wilson's 1964-70 governments, Benn held office as Postmaster General, then as Minister of Technology and Minister of Power.

During this period Benn put forward no open criticism of Wilson's right wing policies, and was a keen supporter of Barbara Castle's anti-union White Paper *In Place of Strife*, which was eventually abandoned after heavy opposition from the trade union movement.

His loyalty to Wilson continued in the 1974 government, when Benn took office as Industry Secretary, acting as front man for Wilson's strategy of handing huge cash subsidies to private industry through the National Enterprise Board.

His Industry Bill included attempts to draw shop stewards into organised class collaboration through various forms of "workers' participation". A model of this approach was Lord Ryder's plan for the reorganisation of British Leyland which successfully undermined the independence of the shop stewards movement

— creating ideal conditions for Edwardes' subsequent attacks.

Removed from the Industry post, Benn was then allocated to the Department of Energy, where he helped oversee the exploitation of North Sea oil and gas by private oil monopolies.

As a cabinet minister, Benn shared responsibility for the imposition of wage controls and the other reactionary policies carried through by the Wilson/Callaghan government up to the electoral defeat of 1979.

But since that point Benn's political energies have been directed towards the fight for democratic reforms and accountability within the leadership of the Labour Party.

Openly criticising the record of the governments he was a part of, Benn has begun consistently to argue that the class collaborationist strategies of Wilson and the right wing cannot succeed in reforming capitalism.

He has emerged as the clear leader of the leftward movement within the Labour Party, and his challenge to Denis Healey in the election for the deputy leadership has opened up an

unprecedented debate on policies and the accountability of leaders to the rank and file throughout the labour movement.

His political stance remains that of left wing reformism: the Alternative Economic Strategy is little more than a package of measures to modify the pace of the capitalist crisis. And the nationalism implicit in Benn's calls for import controls has now been extended and rationalised into the theory that imperialist Britain has now become a "colony" deprived of "national independence".

Left

Nevertheless as the standard-bearer of the left, and leading advocate of much needed democratic reforms and accountability within the Labour Party, Benn, with his inadequate and belated criticisms of previous Labour policy is plainly preferable as a candidate to Healey — a dogged opponent of such reforms and supporter of the old policies.

It is for this reason that we call for critical support to Benn as the candidate of the left, the candidate for democracy within the Labour Party.

WHY THEY BACK BENN

'What's happening in the Labour Party will spill into the unions'



Jake Ecclestone joined the Labour Party because of the Benn movement

JAKE ECCLESTONE, newly elected Deputy General Secretary of the National Union of Journalists was among those who gave Benn a standing ovation after last week's debate in Blackpool. He told **SOCIALIST ORGANISER:**

"I only joined the Labour Party this summer, though I had held my own views for some time. Until now the Party always seemed so corrupt — not interested in socialism at all.

"What Benn — and others as well — have done is to try to get *accountability*. The nub of it is that leaders should not be in it for themselves, they are there to represent other people. They must be called to account for how they vote, speak and behave.

"The NUJ is democratic

compared with other unions, but it's not perfect. I'd like to see the regular election of all officials — only a few are elected at the moment.

"What impresses me most about Benn and what struck me at the TUC last week was the feeling of apprehension among union leaders that what has been started in the Labour Party will spill over irretrievably into the trade union movement.

"People will say that what's good enough for MPs is good enough for General Secretaries. I'd like to see that.

"After all why does the General Secretary of the TUC emerge unelected from Congress House?

"I think Benn has an appealing personality, and a genuine concern for people. I don't know whether he's ambitious — it seems that he's not.

Chile

"What slightly worries me is the view he and others put of socialism in Britain is so far in advance of what the Labour Party has been about — at least in my lifetime. I think if they try to put it into practice there will be a physical response.

"Has Benn thought through how they could respond if Labour began passing legislation which really did begin to shift the balance of power and were met by resistance from the establishment?

"I don't think this country is all that different from countries like Greece or Chile. Statements by some of these Chief Constables in the last few years show the attitude of these people to the authorities which are supposed to control them.

"Some aspects of Benn's record bother me — he's no saint. And I wonder whether he's tough enough: sometimes he seems just too nice.

"But I think these are minor considerations compared to the structural changes he and others have helped bring about in the Labour Party.

Flabby

"Of course it could be argued that if Benn had been run down by a bus, these changes would have happened anyway. But Benn is the leader of the Left and leaders do have an important role.

"I think now that if Benn were knocked down by a bus the movement would carry on. The Labour Party will never go back to the PLP choosing the leader alone — even if the balance of the electoral college is not right yet.

"I think it's sad that Michael Foot is so vicious, but it's a measure of how flabby the Party has become. As for Hattersley and Shore, I don't think they're socialists at all."

Healey 'A brick wall'

DAVE COOK, Secretary of the 45,000-strong Division 3 of ASTMS was one of those who supported the successful fight to pledge the union's votes to Benn:

"I think the point is that while Benn's not perfect he is the one who best articulates the policies wanted by the rank and file.

"I wouldn't describe him exactly as an open door. But let's say he's at least a door that's ajar.

"So when there's a door ajar we'd be fools to keep battering away at a brick wall — like Denis Healey — wouldn't we?"

Scotts back Benn

"THE best wishes of all the Laurence Scott workers go with Tony Benn in his contest with Healey and Silkin. We fully support the fight for alternative socialist policies in the Labour Party."

PETE ROWAN, Chairperson, Joint Shop Stewards' Committee.



Reg Race: Benn's the only candidate who stands for change

'We must change the Party'

REG RACE MP told us:

"Tony Benn must be supported because he is the only candidate who supports the transformation of society.

"He understands clearly that the decay of capitalism in Britain means that concessions, both political and industrial, to the working class, are not on the agenda for the Tories or right wing Labour.

"Higher real wages, full employment, and expanded social services, can only be won by changing the Labour

Party so that it is committed to a socialist strategy.

"Tony Benn's commitment to democracy in the Labour Party is also crucially important. He is the only candidate who supports mandatory re-selection, the control of the Manifesto by the NEC, and the Wembley conference decision on the electoral college.

"We must not allow the next Labour government to be sabotaged by MPs who think more of their independence than they do of the political programme on which they were elected."

Extend democracy

PETE WILLISMAN is the candidate sponsored by the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy for the CLPs section of the Labour Conference Arrangements Committee:

"The last Labour government took scant notice of policies adopted overwhelmingly by the Labour Party conference and of great importance to trade union-

ists. Opposition to public expenditure cuts, low pay, and wage restraint, are examples.

"Only an extension of democracy and accountability within the labour movement can provide the conditions for ensuring that this sorry history is not repeated.

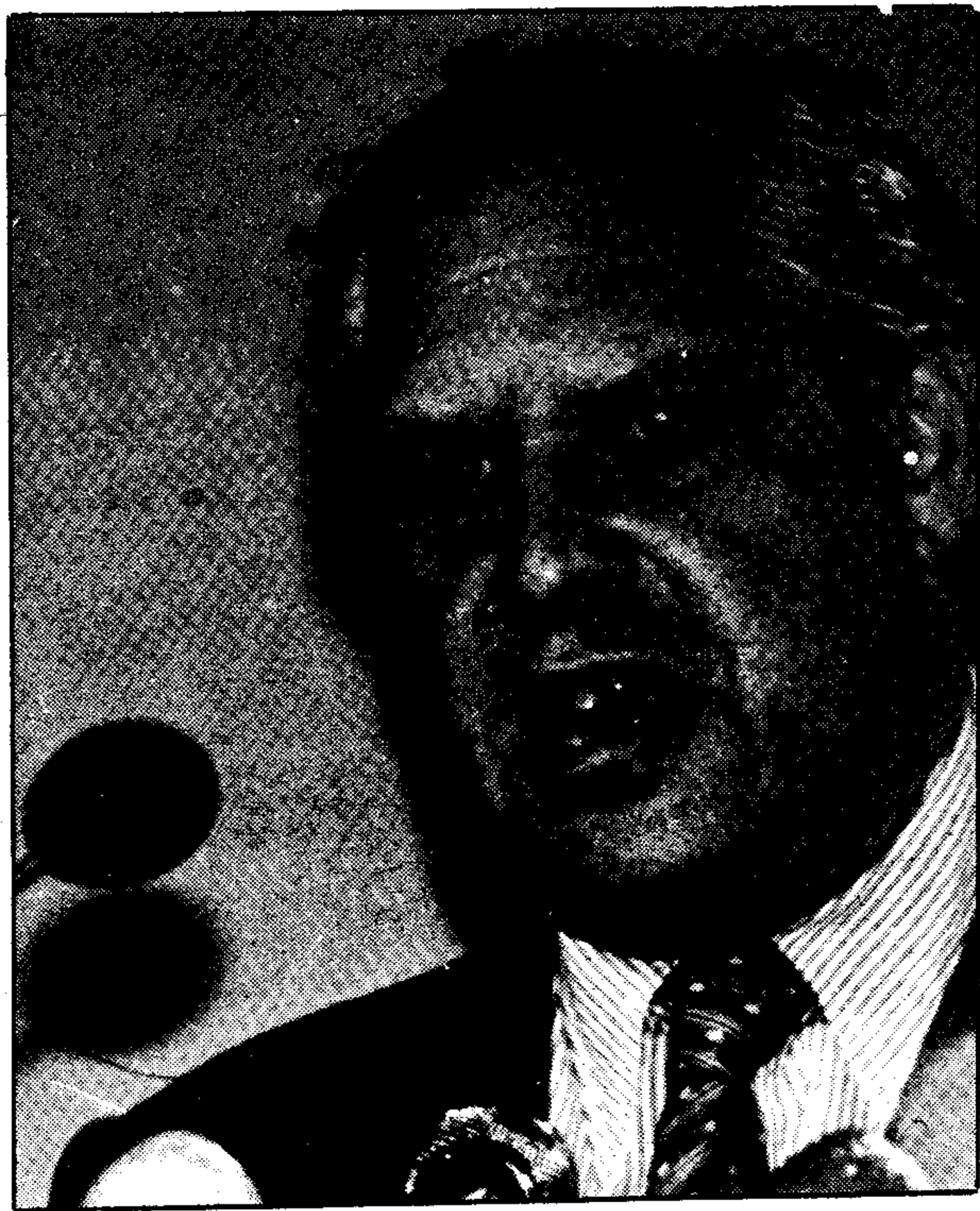
"Tony Benn is the only candidate committed to the democratic reforms."

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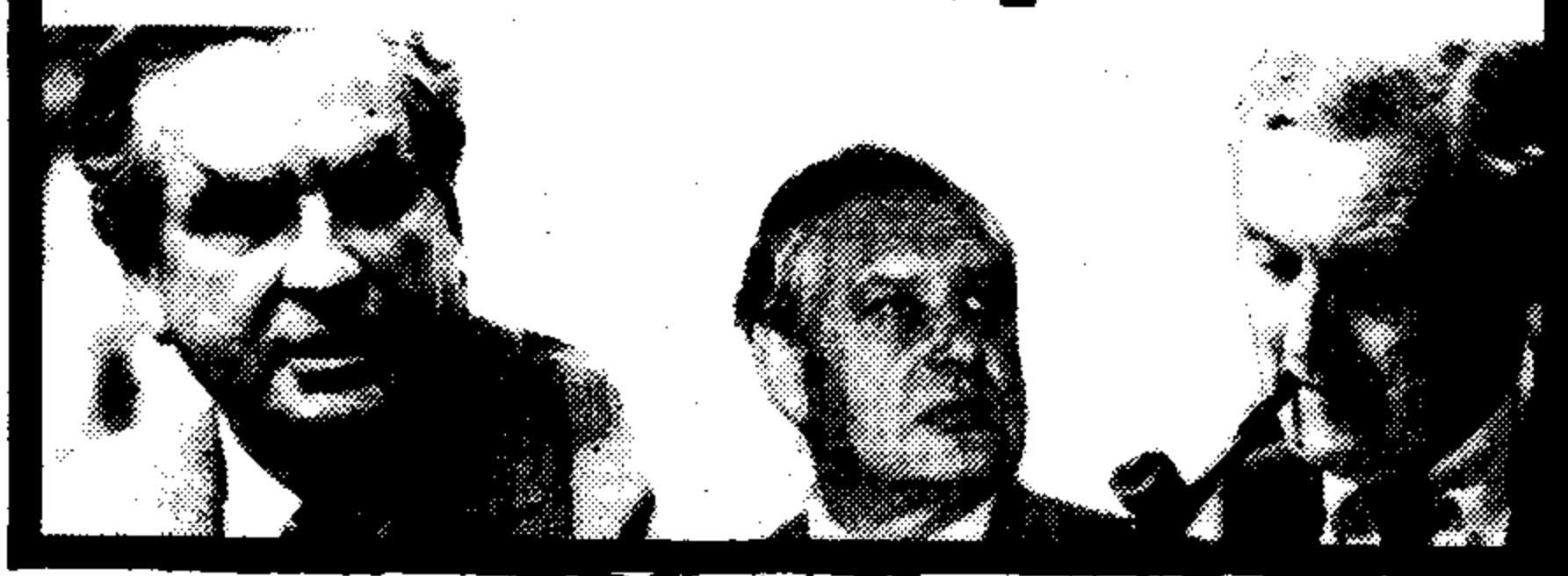
though the strident nationalism contained within his anti-EEC stance has been a consistent feature of his politics as Minister of Agriculture and since Labour's 1979 defeat.

He is at present a trusted member of Foot's leadership, serving as Shadow Leader of the House of Commons.

Silkin's candidacy would seem little other than a sick joke if it were not for the desperate search of certain union leaders and Labour MPs for a means of ensuring the defeat of Tony Benn while avoiding the embarrassment and aggro of casting votes for Healey.



Election Special



Economist's plan for Healeyites

"IF, SAY, 60-80 Labour MPs were prepared to break away and form their autonomous parliamentary grouping they could change British politics.

"Such a group could announce they were not prepared to accept an election manifesto imposed by an unrepresentative national executive committee of the present Labour Party... and present themselves to the electors under some label designed to appeal to traditional Labour supporters, by implication labelling their official Labour Party opponents as left-wing extremists

"... It might eventually prise away a substantial chunk of the trade union edifice..."

That's what the editors of the bosses' magazine, *The Economist* — thinking Tories, contemptuous of Thatcher's dogmas, and strong admirers of Healey — advise right wing Labour MPs to do if Tony Benn wins the deputy leadership.

Split

Whether the MPs will do that, or try some other splitting tactic, or join the SDP, we don't know. But one thing is certain: the Healey faction will not carry out Labour policies on the Bomb, the EEC, or incomes policy. If they hold leadership positions, they will use

those positions to thwart and combat Labour policy.

The power of the Healey faction should not be underestimated. They have the press, they have the dead weight of bureaucracy, and they have a thousand positions of influence.

To defeat them, and then to win a majority for left wing policies and implement them against all the entrenched power of Toryism, we need an active mass membership in the Labour Party.

Broad

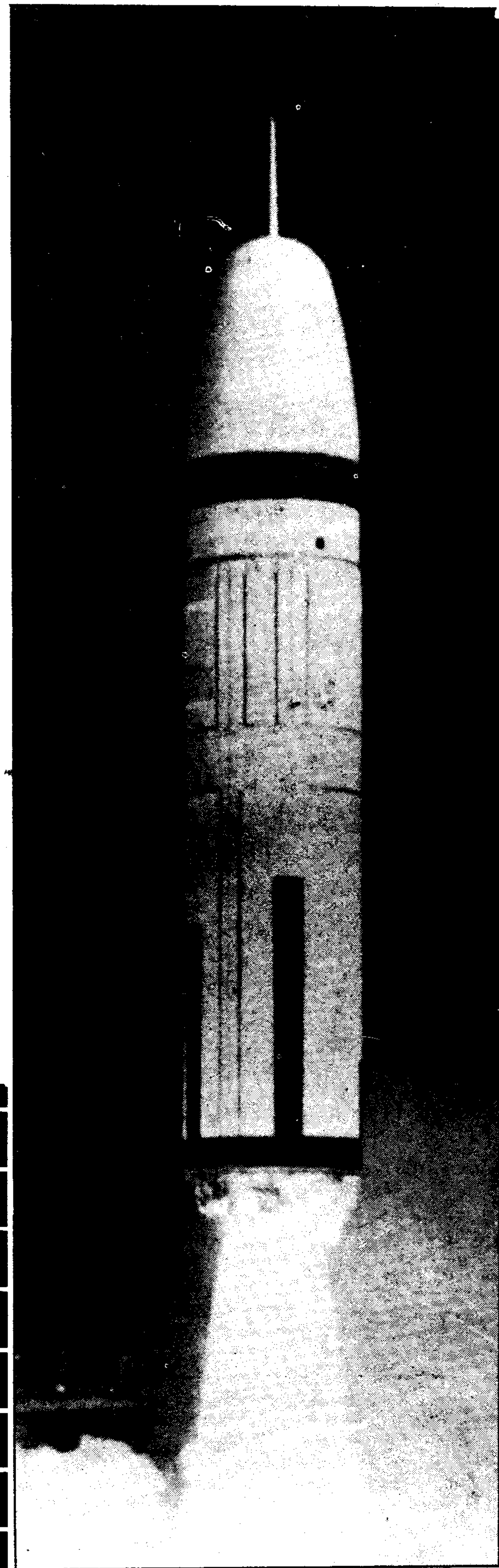
The Labour Left must organise itself, on a broad and democratic basis, to build a mass campaigning party and win a leadership accountable to that party.

Anywhere in the country now, Tony Benn can draw enthusiastic audiences of hundreds of labour movement people. Those hundreds must be organised, so that they are not just audiences but activist forces.

Socialist Organiser is trying to organise the Left, both in our local *Socialist Organiser* groups and by taking the initiative for broader Mobilising Committees and Labour Lefts.

But what's most needed now is a call from Tony Benn himself, as the leader of the Left, for a national conference to organise a left-wing movement in the Labour Party and the unions.

THE ISSUES AT STAKE



June 1945: Healey speaks at Labour conference on foreign policy: "Its crucial principle must be to help the social revolution in Europe... The upper classes in every country are selfish, depraved, dissolute and decadent."

1946: Healey takes a job as secretary to cold-war Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin.

October 1980: Tory Party chairperson Lord Thorneycroft tells the BBC: "Actually Denis Healey is my candidate... he is in fact much nearer to me and Mrs Thatcher than he is to Wedgwood Benn... he is a worthy leader of any party... There is enormous common ground between Denis and the Tory Party..."

"Now there's a man after my heart."

Nuclear Disarmament

LAST month, all five of Labour's front bench defence spokespersons signed a letter to the unions opposing Labour defence policy.

They called for no nuclear disarmament and no cuts in defence spending.

These are the allies of Healey, and of NATO.

NATO's plans are now geared to starting a nuclear war — a 'limited' one, they say, costing perhaps only 20 million dead if it does not spread too far. A single nuclear bomb can kill millions and cover huge areas with deadly radiation. And

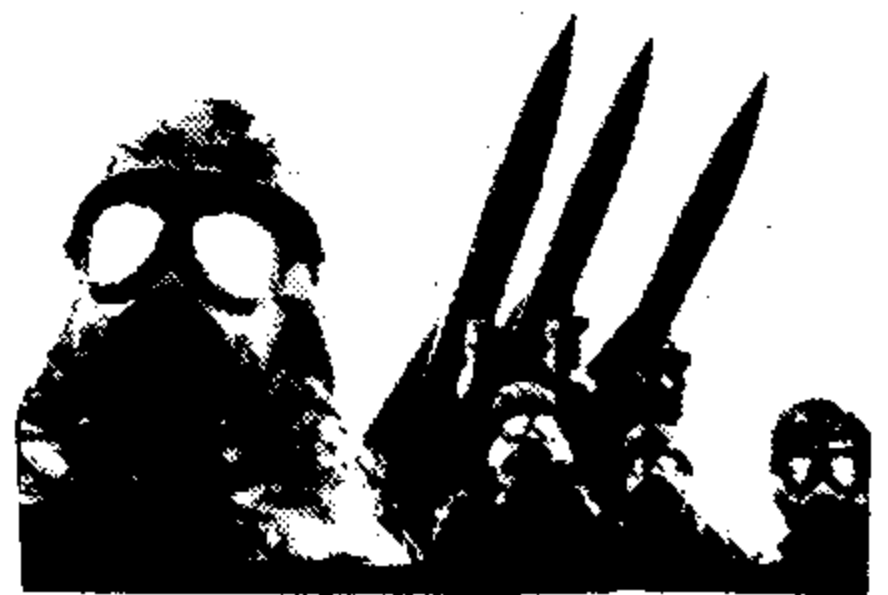
there are thousands of them stockpiled.

As Tony Benn has pointed out, it would be no help to the workers of Poland in defending themselves now against threatened Russian invasion if Poland had nuclear bombs.

Likewise, nuclear bombs — or any other weapons — in the hands of Britain's generals (hard-bitten Tories, all of them) are a danger rather than a defence for British workers... and also a danger to workers elsewhere in the world.

That's why it is vital that Labour and TUC policy, for the next Labour government to get rid of Britain's nuclear arms and US nuclear arms in Britain, is implemented without fail.

And US nuclear arms in the US or in continental Europe are no less a risk to the world than nuclear arms in Britain. British Labour should also give a lead to the world-wide fight to disarm and overthrow the warmongers, by withdrawing from NATO.



The EEC

THE TUC and Labour Party conferences want immediate withdrawal from the EEC. Denis Healey is 100% for staying in.

He scarcely even bothers with the "internationalist" phrases which some EEC supporters use. He is for the EEC because the majority of the capitalist class is for the EEC, that's all.

He is for the EEC for the same reason as most left-wing activists are against it: because it represents, and organises, multinational capitalism.

Most people on the Left believe that withdrawal from the EEC would be a blow struck against multinational capitalism.

Some (including some *Socialist Organiser* supporters) think that it would counterpose national capitalism against multinational capitalism, and yield no advantages for the working class.

But that's an issue to be debated in the labour movement. For now, the policy of the labour movement is for withdrawal. And the movement has the right to demand a leadership that will carry out that policy.

Cuts under Labour?

EVERYONE knows that the Tory government is monetarist. Not so many people know that Denis Healey pioneered monetarism in Britain, and is still a monetarist.

He paved the way for the Tory cuts, with a £2400 million package in 1976, introduced on the orders of the IMF.

All he offers now is the same policies.

The argument is that "we can't afford" decent public services any more. But there is plenty of wealth in Britain — in the pockets of the top 10% who own 60% of the wealth, 90% of the company shares, and 84% of the land. The banks are turning in record profits.

And there could be a lot more wealth produced — if only the chaos of capitalism had not thrown three million on the dole.

Feudal

Indeed it won't. But if the Labour Party, after 80 years' opposition to the House of Lords, can't summon up the will to scrap it overnight, then how can we hope to do anything bigger?

Socialism without abolishing the House of Lords is an absurdity, like workers' control in a factory with the workers tugging their forelocks to the manager.

The monarchy, another remnant of feudalism, also needs to be abolished.

And Tony Benn points out that the civil service bureaucrats have more real power than elected governments. Through them, "most real power in Britain still resides outside Parliament, with those who control finance and industry."

Dismantle

The Freedom of Information Act proposed by Tony Benn should be a start in dismantling this undemocratic power. The top civil servants should be replaced by elected and accountable officials, and the existing armed forces, dominated by class warriors like the notorious General Frank Kitson, should be disbanded.

Tony Benn also says: "It is strange that we should accept as normal that the electorate can hire and fire a Prime Minister but that workers can't hire and fire their management." Nationalisation needs to be combined with workers' control, through regularly elected and recallable delegates.

GET ORGANISED!

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.

Local supporters' groups have been established in most big towns to build a real base for the paper.

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

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

Fill in the form below and send it to: *Socialist Organiser*, c/o 28 Middle Lane, London N8.

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

Name

Address

Phone

CLP TU

O Brave new Party... to have such creatures in it!

THE SDP are rejoicing over the defection of a further 16 councillors in Islington, North London, making 22 in all, and over their recent council by-election victory there. But they're not so happy at the defection of Islington North MP Michael O'Halloran.

The Observer, for instance, gloomily headlined, "O'Halloran casts shadow over SDP".

What's this about? And are the 22 councillors really any better?

O'Halloran was selected as the Labour candidate in November 1968, on the sudden death of a previous Wilsonite MP. By the time of the selection, Labour's policies in power had driven many activists out of the Party. Moreover, in those days, in many areas of Islington, it was practically impossible to join the Labour Party if you wanted to.

Questionable

A Sunday Times investigation established that at least ten of the delegates to the GC that chose O'Halloran (who by that time had been a councillor for a few months and constituency secretary for about a year) were questionable, and that nine of the 21 delegates who had been admitted just in time to be eligible to vote didn't live at the addresses they had given.

Among the signatures in the attendance book on the night of the selection was that of Eddie Dwyer. Eddie Dwyer at the time was in Ireland, and he wasn't an O'Halloran supporter.

Impersonated

But the man who impersonated him was. He turned out to be living in the home of Tony Murphy, a local councillor and O'Halloran supporter. (Murphy it was who in an interview some time later said that he felt the role of Islington North Labour Party should be to impart Catholic social teaching).

For most of the '70s the Labour Party in the North and some other parts of Islington was dominated by a tight knot of extreme right-wingers around Bill Bayliss together with the O'Halloran mafia — or 'Murphias' as it was locally known because of O'Halloran's connections with Murphy's, the building firm recently busted in the courts.

Good service

O'Halloran (whose successor at Murphy's is presently doing time) was doubtless, as some strike pickets' placards once put it, "the MP for Murphy's". While Islington North quietly decayed, O'Halloran's previous employers got good service.

The MP even wrote to the Chief Executive, recommending that Murphy's be given building contracts, after the firm had been struck off the council's list because it was one of the worst employers of 'lump' labour in London.

And the 22? What is the record of these paragons of 'Social Democracy'?

For years many of them have played a leading role on the Council.

Between 1968 and 1971, the Tories briefly ruled Islington, and in some periods since then there has been a strong reforming influence in the Council. But recently — until a few months ago — the right wing regained control.

And what has their

Andrew Horning reviews the sordid history of Islington's new 'Social Democrats'



O'Halloran

record been, over the years?

In 1976, the Recreation Committee gave several thousand pounds to a play scheme on a local estate. The play-leader, it turned out, was the son-in-law of the committee chairman.

An investigation into the scheme established that several items including a van — later found abandoned in Southern Ireland — were missing. So was the play scheme: according to the kids, it didn't exist, and when the 'play-leader' was tracked down he calmly said he had abandoned the play scheme and was working elsewhere.

Because of the Poulson scandal, which broke shortly before this, the Labour Party had established a code of practice in cases of suspected corruption. According to this, the police should be called in immediately there was a whiff of fraud.

Suspicion

The right wing was opposed to this, as the finger of suspicion pointed to their ranks. They were supported by Gerry Southgate (recently council



Williams — good news?

leader), who until then had not been counted as part of the Right.

The Labour Group breached the Party's code of conduct by insisting on a whip on all councillors to reject a police investigation. (Whipping was unusual, as there were no non-Labour councillors).

Expulsion

When twelve councillors refused to be whipped into line, they were slated for expulsion from the Labour Group, and only saved by the intervention of Transport House. Having lost the expulsion motion, Gerry Southgate stormed out of the meeting.

(And now it is the likes of Southgate that are ranting on about the intolerance of the Left!)

But the story doesn't finish there. After the vote had been taken, one of those slated for expulsion collapsed. With this councillor on the way to hospital and another looking for her husband, Southgate returned and reconvened the meeting, removing his opponents (including the now hospitalised one) from all positions.

In the opinion of Keith Veness, a leading left-winger in the Party then and now, "That was the turning point. That's when Southgate passed into the ranks of the Right".

That same year, Keith Veness was expelled from Islington North party for an interview he gave to a local 'alternative' paper, attacking O'Halloran.

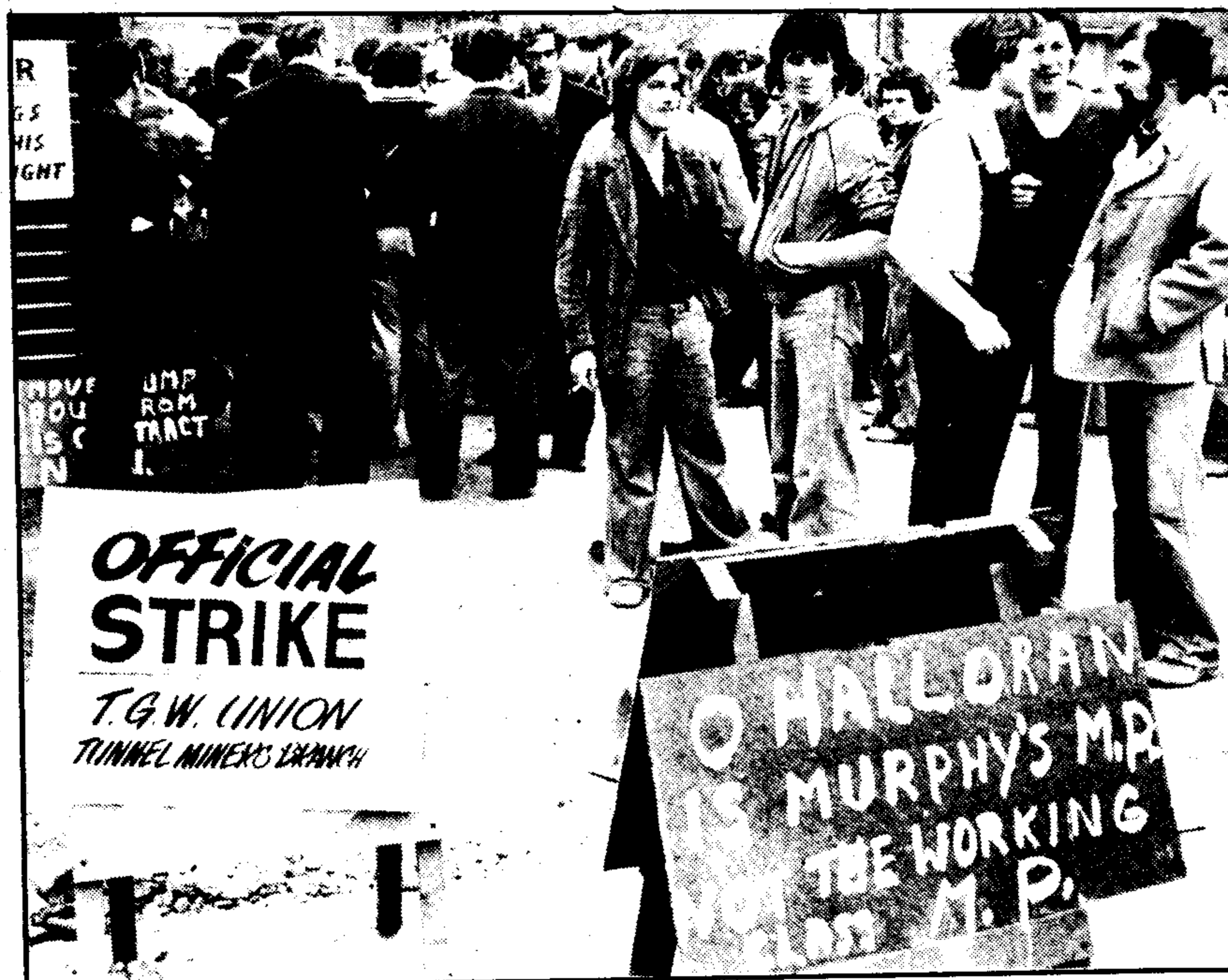
Dinner

The right wing were delighted, as they had been trying to expel Keith and other leftists for a long time.

(They failed once before when they tried to expel all those Party members who refused to stand for the National Anthem at a Party dinner organised by O'Halloran in his personal stronghold, the Gresham, the local Irish ballroom. Although there was a majority for expulsion, the chair, under pressure, ruled that a two-thirds majority was necessary and that the vote had therefore been lost).

Veness, of course, appealed against his expulsion and finally won, but the appeal was held up for over a year by another issue that sheds light on O'Halloran and his fiefdom.

In June 1977, as part of the campaign against James White's proposed abortion bill, a group of local people, most of them women, decided to picket O'Halloran's surgery.



Tunnel miners protest at role of O'Halloran during their strike in 1977

O'Halloran, of course, is 100% against abortion. He promised to see a deputation from the lobbyists, but reneged on the promise and tried to get away without seeing them.

Scuffle

Some of the women, seeing this, tried to intercept him. A minor scuffle followed: the women insist that O'Halloran hit out at them.

O'Halloran then wrote to the NEC, claiming that he had been beaten up by an anti-Catholic mob, and implicating Keith Veness. Veness and others accused were forced to take out a writ against O'Halloran.

Clearly O'Halloran was trying to poison the NEC against Veness so that his appeal would be turned down.

Delayed by this ploy, the appeal finally won in 1978. But it made no difference to North Islington: they simply refused to take Keith back. Eric Heffer came down, but he couldn't get the GC to comply with the NEC's instructions.

Amid bedlam he suspended the Party for two months. After this period the suspension was re-imposed, as the GC still would not accept Keith as a member of the Labour Party. There were no meetings for six months.

Finally, in April 1979, seeing a NEC inquiry into the Party looming, enough of the right wing backed down and voted for reinstatement.

The right wing and the Murphias managed to build up an alliance against them, in the North especially, stretching from the revolutionary Left to middle of the road people (but all alike denounced by the Right as 'Trotskyists', 'Communists', and 'anti-Irish').

Activists

And the Left recruited strongly, bringing hundreds of new activists into the Labour Party, as well as new trade union delegates.

The crunch came this year. The Left proved strong enough to block the right wing's nominees for the Islington North seat on the GLC. Finally the London Labour Party intervened and chose left-winger Steve Bundred as the candidate.

For six councillors, this was the last straw. They left the Labour Party and put up their own candidate for the GLC, the manager of the Gresham Ballroom. Steve Bundred won with a massive swing to Labour.

The Local Government Committee was already under the control of the centre and the Left, and indeed had formally broken off relations with the council Labour group in protest at the Right's behaviour. It was now clear to the Right that they would not be re-selected.

If they couldn't be councillors, they wouldn't stay: they weren't interested in local politics, just in local governing.

Timing

The sixteen made sure their defection would have maximum impact by timing the announcement two days before the Hillmarton by-election. That way Labour had no way of responding to the charges thrown around by the new SDPers.

But many people in Islington know what they are: a bunch of greedy, vindictive, narrow-minded, tyrannical right-wingers — and also people with an appalling record of neglect where they have run local affairs.

One recent case was an attempt by a pro-Bayliss councillor to ban relatives from putting flowers on graves in council cemeteries. When the Bayliss clique were in charge of housing, the situation was so bad there was a threat that the commissioners would be called in. And in the years of cuts voluntary organisations have been the favourite target of this fistful of reactionaries.

To them, voluntary organisations were hotbeds of middle-class revolt, footholds in Islington of dangerous interlopers from distant lands carrying with them the disease of radicalism.

Left to right

As councillors, they stood for decent people... from Alf Garnett on the left over to themselves on the Right.

Notwithstanding the announced dedication of some of them to 'Catholic social teaching', the local Catholic Bishop found himself writing to the council complaining about the way their cuts were ravaging the living standards of the poor.

Rarely could a bunch be found who were more anti-social and anti-democratic. The Social Democrats are welcome to them.

Thanks especially to Keith Veness and Jane Andrews for help in the preparation of this article.

Part 3 of our feature on Tony Benn's analysis of 'Britain as a colony' has been postponed to next week for lack of space.

WHAT'S ON

RANK AND FILE MOBILISING COMMITTEE

LEEDS LABOUR LEFT 'Mobilise for Labour Policies'

Tuesday September 22
7.30 Leeds Town Hall
Speakers: Tony Benn
Dennis Barry, Convenor
Laurence Scotts
Lorna Cohn, Leeds City Councillor
Peter O'Grady, Regional Chair, UCATT
Chair: John Trickett, Secretary Leeds Labour Left

SOCIALIST ORGANISER

Labour Party Conference Fringe Meeting

'Forum on Labour's Strategy'
Speakers include
Hilary Wainwright
Dennis Barry, Convenor
Laurence Scotts
Thursday October 1
7.30 pm at
'The Hungry Years'
8 Marine Parade
(Opposite Palace Pier
Followed by a social
with Irish singer until
midnight

Namibian Support Committee BENEFIT

Islington Town Hall
Saturday 19 September
7.30 pm
Bands include Split
Rivitt and the
Enchanters
Tickets £3.50 on the door

Coventry North-East LPYS

Public meeting
'The Bradford 12 frame-up'
Thursday September 24
7.30 at Edgewick Community Centre

LABOUR PARTY MARCH FOR JOBS

Saturday 19 September
Birmingham
SO supporters please
assemble 10.30 am at
junction of Pershore
Road and Edward Rd

BIRMINGHAM SO

Classes
September 20, 7.30
America's leadership of
the advanced capitalist
world
Oct. 4 at 7.30
The American working
class.
Contact 021-429 4166
for venue

Public meetings
to launch
the weekly Socialist
Organiser

SHEFFIELD
Sunday September 20
7.30 pm
Brown Cow, The Wicker
Sheffield

LAMBETH
Friday September 25
Lambeth Town Hall
7.30 pm

OXFORD
Monday 28 September
8.00 pm
next to East Oxford
Community Centre
Princes St., Oxford

COVENTRY
Monday September 28,
7.30pm at the Whetstone
pub, City Centre.

MALT SHOVEL
SPON END

Letters

WHY BLOCK VOTE SHOULD BE OPPOSED

Writeback to
Socialist Organiser
28 Middle Lane
London N8



MAY I thank Vladimir Derer for responding to my contribution on the block vote which Socialist Organiser printed on August 11.

As the debate over Labour Party democracy gets more intensive it is a pity that no serious discussion on the block vote has taken place among those on the Party's left.

This is ironic, as it is the unions' block vote which could seriously retard Tony Benn's election chances and consequently the aspirations of the left.

Marxist members of the Labour Party must take some of the blame for failing to initiate a debate on the block vote and the structure of the annual conference. Indeed I understand that the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, of which Vladimir Derer is secretary, defeated a resolution at its annual meeting which called for a restructuring of Labour's conference.

Other than last week's contribution by comrade Derer, the only other article on the block vote that I've read by a CLPD member was by Rachel Lever. Writing in Workers Action No. 182, she states, "Mostly what's wrong with the block vote is that the unions' delegations are often dominated by non-elected officials..."

Whilst this is true, such a position completely misses the crux of the matter, which is the nature of the block vote not the way in which it is cast.

Let me illustrate why the

block vote must be replaced by summarizing the reasons why I oppose it.

Firstly the block vote makes the Labour Party the virtual property of the unions, instead of it being the Party of all sections of the working class such as the unemployed, pensioners, blacks, youth, tenants, etc.

Responsibility

Secondly, the sheer weight of the block vote not only produces the unjustifiable position where a single union can out-vote all the constituencies put together, but it means that the unions can get what they want without the responsibility of taking part in the day to day activities of the Labour Party.

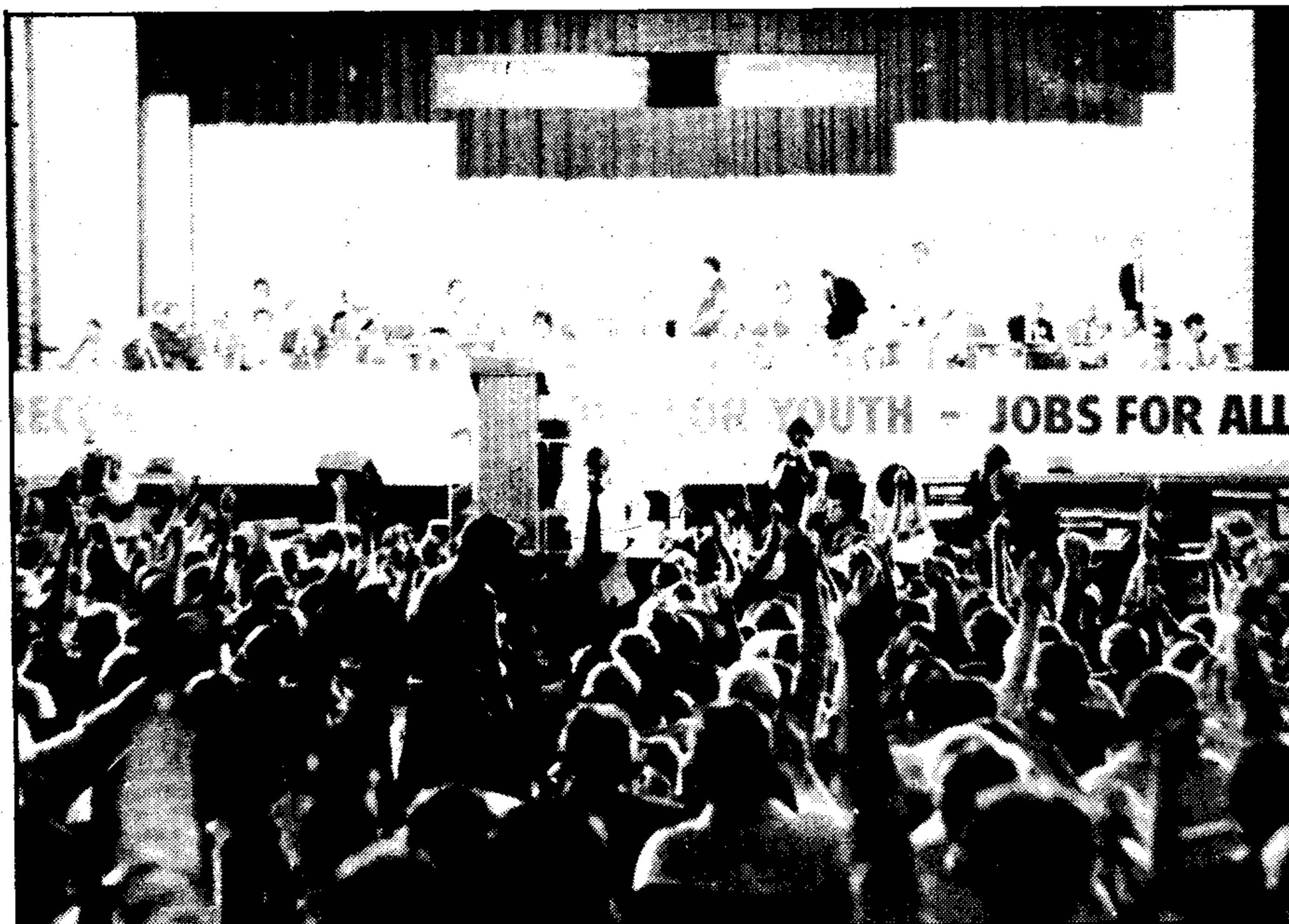
Consequently, it is harder to encourage trade unionists to be active in the Party whilst the block vote exists.

The block vote reinforces the historic separation between the industrial and political wings of the movement.

We should see the question of democracy as a means to winning the Party to new policies which will turn it outwards to the struggles of the working class.

Comrade Derer implies that by placing the question of democracy in this context I am relegating the issue to a minor role. In fact he says that what I advocate is "ineffective", "propagandist" and "empty radical rhetoric".

How he arrives at this



Block vote encourages passivity

conclusion baffles me. We will have to agree to differ.

Vladimir Derer accuses me of being in league with the Tribunes, Labour Coordinating Committee and the Clause 4 groups who believe that the "democratic battle has been won". It would appear that comrade Derer overlooked my statement that the Wembley conference decision "must be seen as part of a process of moving towards the supremacy of the annual conference. Having conference decide who is to be leader and what the manifesto will be, must mean abolishing the block vote."

This statement makes it clear that I do not believe that the democracy debate has been won. There is much work to be done. One thing is certain, merely calling for a defence of the electoral college will not inspire those activists who are seeking a fundamental re-appraisal of what the unions' relationship to the Party should be.

On the question of the relationship between the unions and the Labour Party it is worth taking the opportunity to comment on an attempt to rewrite history by comrade Derer.

He states, "far from initiating policies of wage restraint, for example, trade unions had to be persuaded by Labour's parliamentary leadership before (in the mistaken belief that these were part of a socially just policy) they accepted them."

Architect

If my memory serves me rightly it was Jack Jones, the then General Secretary of the TGWU who was the principal architect of the Social Contract. The unions didn't need much persuading to reach an agreement on pay as firstly they were politically incapable of seeing any alternative, and

secondly they were anxious to defuse the rising tide of militancy in their ranks which had grown under the Heath government.

My article was not meant to be a blueprint for replacing the block vote. It was an attempt to open a debate on the options before us.

I did state that the block vote needs abolishing, but as this seems unlikely at present I would at least welcome a reform of it.

Reform

Comrade Derer seems to favour a position of reform by balancing the weight of the unions' vote with that of the constituencies. In the short term this would be an advance, but our ultimate goal must be to replace the electoral college by the supremacy of conference. At a conference vote (as opposed to a college one) MPs would only be able to vote if elected as delegates by their CLP or trade union.

Democracy and Party discipline can only exist on the basis of a programme. One cannot separate the two. The bulk of Labour's Left see democracy and accountability as being necessary to see through the programme which includes import controls, planning agreements with capitalists, worker directors and a more vigorous National Enterprise Board.

We must see democracy as a means to a different end, i.e. the development of real socialist policies, coupled with the turning of

the Labour Party into an interventionist force in working class struggles.

Socialist policies will not automatically emerge from the democracy debate. It is essential that the battle for Party democracy is linked to the battle for a socialist programme and does not become a substitute for it.

DEREK CATTELL

Bans and the ANL

AS A participant in the Fulham anti-fascist contingent I would like to raise several points in relation to 'Ban weakens anti-nazi demo' (SO 51).

Firstly the article explains the poor turn-out by the ANL as being due to the Home Office ban on marches.

However the real reason is the obvious weakness of the ANL, and the fact that it no longer represents the serious anti-fascists. The counter-rally was more like a 'liberals with a conscience' picnic, than an assembly of militants prepared for street fighting.

Many people had brought children, and others just lay about sunbathing, hardly anything of a force to frighten tough racist skins.

Violence

The anti-fascist turn out was also weakened by the now normal high level of racist violence. Many youth who did not attend expressed the sentiment that 'we've got enough trouble on our estate, without going looking for it'.

The left generally, and the labour movement as a whole, must shake itself and realise that the nazis can now operate and march virtually unopposed by the organised workers' movement.

Unless the left realises the pacifism and diversionary nature of the proven misleaders of the one-issue ANL, it will suffer serious defeats. Those who call for 'rebuilding the ANL to its previous strength' are misleading and wrong.

The ANL has proven that limiting the struggle to popular frontist apolitical pacifism won't work.

Crush

As communists we need to build a real mass movement based on the black and labour movements to drive the racists off the estates, out of the gigs, and crush their organisations.

Today, the task is to develop and link the spontaneous reaction "black self-defence is no offence" to building genuine workers' defence guards.

This policy must be linked to a struggle of mobilisations by Socialist Organiser supporters against the racists, not just in the official workers' movement, but by independent work amongst the kids on the estates.

Yours fraternally,
EVERTON WILLIAMS

One-sided comment on IRSP

WHILE ANY discussion of the politics of the Irish Republican Socialist Party is well overdue in the pages of Socialist Organiser, I feel that the brief and onesided footnote by John O'Mahoney has not contributed much to developing discussion or links with Irish socialists.

The first point that must be drawn from comrade O'Mahoney's comments is his hazing over of the distinction between the nationalist and republican movements in Ireland.

Historically, nationalism in Irish politics has based itself on the hierarchy of the Catholic church and the (pale) Green Bourgeoisie.

Republicanism is a revolutionary movement of the workers and small farmers with a history of armed revolt against imperialism whose members and organisations have linked up with and actually built the labour movements in both Britain and Ireland.

To judge the IRSP as "just nationalists" (and militarists to boot) shows an Anglo-centricty few Socialist Organiser supporters would expect from comrade O'Mahoney.

Gut

The IRSP was formed as a basic gut reaction against Stalinism and spent its first year in a struggle for survival against the Official IRA. Since then most of its leader-

ship has been assassinated by the UDA/British Army, and the organisation has been forced to take up arms to defend itself and the community it is based in.

As far as the charges of "recklessness" are concerned INLA has never engaged in sectarian killings (even in reprisal). Any socialist prepared to condemn the attempted assassination of Paisley (or the successful assassination of Airey Neave) as sectarian while H Block campaigners and Republicans are being

gunned down should re-examine their priorities.

While I agree with many of Comrade O'Mahoney's points about the confusion of the IRSP on the links between the national struggle and socialism, I feel that an organisation in the forefront of the anti-imperialist struggle in Ireland deserves a more serious examination than what has been written so far.

MICK WOODS
Kilburn

Why no book list for new comers?



My overwhelming feeling on the Women's Fightback conference was that it was well worthwhile, particularly the workshop on trade unions.

I did feel, however, a lot of what was decided at the planning meeting in London was missed - specifically women's history throughout Britain and Europe and procedure in the Labour Party, Unions, etc.

A number of other items were also missed. To me the most important were the arguments on positive discrimination and on sexual harassment in unions, Labour Party and at work - and how to discuss with

people (both male and female) on these subjects.

I do realise that time was the difficulty here. I therefore agree that the AGM should be totally separate from any residential schools in the future.

I also feel that it would be helpful to the less experienced sisters, like myself, if a booklist of some sort could be drawn up, relating to basic Marxism, etc., including obviously books relating to women specifically, with the book list and a small description of what a particular book concentrated on.

JILL FEATHERS

LOOK AGAIN AT TACTICS

I THINK we need to examine in more detail some of the tactics we must employ if we are to successfully expedite the difficult business of robbing the rich to help the poor.

For example, John McLroy (SO 48) raises the problems of capitalist viability, the trade union bureaucracy and the necessity for wide blacking and picketing but don't we need to go further.

It seems to me that there is no point in using the most effective demand in a closure situation under a Labour government, nationalisation under workers control, when we are faced with Thatcher.

For both Lee Jeans and

Laurence Scotts work-sharing may have been 'a good idea'. The real problem was getting the workers outside the directly threatened plant to strike for it.

Cowed by three million unemployed, conditioned by the practices of the boom and confronted with a hostile bureaucracy, the majority of workers are not prepared to take action where their own specific and direct interests are not at stake - and their vision of these interests is an extremely limited one.

Work sharing on full pay still leaves us arguing through the basic question of solidarity and long term interest and unity and we

cannot underestimate the difficulties here.

'Opening the books': In practice, isn't this all too likely to be interpreted in the way that McLroy warns against? Isn't the disclosure of the individual firm's plight likely to have a demoralising impact on workers conditioned to sectional enterprise-based fights. Doesn't any educational impact depend on a higher level of socialist consciousness than exists in the working class movement today?

Idea

Isn't the demand for the books to be opened to

elected workers' committees again a fine idea likely to stumble in reality on what has yet to be overcome, the power of the bureaucracy vis a vis the rank and file.

And what about the other type of situation in British Leyland or British Steel where collapse is threatened every time the workers defend their rights? Do we believe for example that the Thatcher government would not allow these enterprises to collapse given the massive impetus they would give to unemployment? Do we say Thatcher and Edwardes are bluffing? Or do we say 'No they are serious but strike anyway

and hope for solidarity from the rest of the class'?

Doesn't this bring us up against the Lothian/Lambeth/Scargill syndrome? 'Why should we run risks to start a class fight which we doubt will occur anyway'?

Discuss

These are some problems that I think we have to discuss further although I have no doubt that we can find the answers.

We won't find such debate in the Simple Simon pages of the terrible twins Socialist Worker and Socialist Challenge so let's hear from Organiser readers.
JACK DUGGAN

-Review- PERILS FACING OFFICE WORKERS

"Office Workers' Survival Handbook" - reviewed by John Plant.

This very useful book is published by the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science and in the main represents the work of their 'Women and Work Hazards Group'.

In only 200 pages, and at a reasonable price (£2.35) it presents nearly all the relevant information on hazards of office work in a clear and readable way.

The image presented by the capitalist press of office workers is one of cossetted, tea swilling, unproductive, time wasters. While everyone who works in a large bureaucracy will be aware of examples of this kind of thing, just as surely everyone who works in an office will tell you that these are isolated cases and far from being the general rule.

Although the scale and severity of office hazards do not come close to those in heavy industry, they are none the less real. About

5,000 injuries a year occur to office workers which are severe enough to cause at least 3 days absence from work.

Almost half of these are caused by trips and falls, three quarters of which can be directly attributed to defects in office safety.

The second most common cause of injury is strain from lifting or moving heavy items of office equipment or packages.

Office machines also present a range of mechanical and electrical hazards.

One area where office work ranks highly is stress. The Handbook quotes an American survey of heart disease among women workers which established that office workers suffer twice the incidence found in the rest of the female population.

Stress

The Handbook emphasises that stress from work is not an individual weakness

in the worker, but a result of the job being wrongly designed and organised. Stress symptoms such as headaches, bad nerves, persistent indigestion and so on, are far from trivial matters, and frequently are only the beginning of more serious conditions.

The Handbook marshals the scientific evidence about the extent to which these symptoms are the result of doing boring work in inadequate conditions.

The main sections of the Handbook are on noise, lighting, body strains ('writer's cramp' etc), dangerous substances in the office, temperature and ventilation, and the provision of basic facilities for welfare and hygiene.

Each section contains a check list for shop stewards or Health and Safety Representatives on the main risk areas. Special attention is given to the problems of microelectronics and their introduction into the office.

The section on action

against hazards covers the various Acts and Codes of Practice which stewards and safety reps can make use of in arguments with management over Health and Safety matters. It goes on to look at questions of organising for safety, and stresses the importance of joining a strong effective union and working actively in the union for action.

Every shop steward and safety rep should own this handbook.

There were one or two areas I felt the Handbook neglected, and which would be valuable in any future editions. There is, for example little or nothing about the problem of threatened or actual violence from members of the public to office workers. This is a growing problem for local authority employees who increasingly bear the brunt of public anger about the cuts.

Secondly, in the section on ventilation, the problem of smoking is diplomatic-

ally avoided. In my view there should be a right to work in a non-smoking office, since other people's cigarettes are at least as dangerous and pervasive as many of the other hazards described in the Handbook.

Weak

In one or two places I thought the Handbook was a bit weak on technical matters. For example the checklist on new technology asks: 'Is the user safe from electrical hazards?' without describing in the text how this can be ascertained.

I felt that the book also failed to deal with some of the real questions of organisation which arise for union activists when Health and Safety questions arise. Some branches try to encourage all shop stewards to become safety reps, partly because of the greater flexibility of operation it gives them.

However, there are likely to be dangers in having two



Not as dangerous as a coalmine - but bad enough

different levels of representation for two sets of tasks which overlap so much. It is disappointing that the Handbook did not discuss the experience of this in other areas.

It only mentions in passing the difficulty of integrating Health and Safety matters into already overburdened branch agendas, and does not give any attention to the question of whether separate Health and

Safety committees are needed.

Hopefully, the publication of the Handbook will generate discussion on all these points, and future editions will be modified in the light of experience.

However, don't let this deter you from using the Handbook here and now.

*Abridged from the GLC (GLC/ILEA NALGO branch bulletin.)



Johannes Baargeld, 1920

The 'shock of the new'

Andrew Macdonald reports on 'futurism', past and present

ROCK 'culture' is one vast spectrum, a world of tangled up contrasts, like the ecstatically good Au Pairs and The Beat, and the vomit-retching, indescribably bad Nolans and Starsound.

Then there are the household names like the one-band-multi-million-multi-national-corporations, Abba and The Jacksons.

Or the unobtrusively obscure who for a laugh and something to do make their own music and records (people like myself).

But what it boils down to is that basically there are two brands of rock which have evolved over the last 25 years or so. It's just like realism and abstract art.

On the one hand we have the pro-status quo, pro-capitalist rockers, and on the other we have the cultural rebels, the avant-garde.

Vogue

For the former, it's more or less a question of bourgeois economics. For the latter, the 'shock of the new' is as much in philosophical vogue as it was in the 'roaring twenties' and the 'swinging thirties' with the abstract art movements.

In place of surrealism, dada, constructivism and cubism, today's youth have heavy metal, rockabilly,

punk and ska. So, instead of oil paints, sculptures and canvases, today's youth take up drum kits, synthesisers and saxes.

I think the parallel is quite remarkable. A lot of groups sing about identical subjects to those which the cubists painted and made collages of.

Record sleeves have often incorporated the same art styles.

The punk fanzines had the same idealistic calls for a 'cultural revolution' (not the Maoist sort, incidentally) as the Dada Manifestos of the '20s did.

A couple of groups have even made the link directly and have gone so far as to adopt the name of their cultural forebears lock, stock and barrel - Bauhaus, Cabaret Voltaire, Futurists.

Modigliani, the Italian artist who painted people with the long necks, drank too much and took too many drugs, and killed himself at an early age, Jim Morrison of the Doors, Jimi Hendrix, and many other 'rock stars' did exactly the same thing half a century later and were subsequently immortalised by an obsessive cult following.

Anyway, early last year a new cultish fad emerged from trendy London nightclubs. It was chiefly characterised by loud dressing, synthesisers and indulgent hair-styles.

It was spearheaded by the now very respectable Spandau Ballet and Duran Duran. It was to be known as futurism.

Trendy

Previously, around 1910, a new artistic circle emerged from trendy cafes and studios in Paris and Rome. It was chiefly characterised by loud colours, and indulgent abstractions on canvas. It was led by Filippo Marinetti and Umberto Boccioni. It was known as

futurism, too.

The futurists (the first bunch) had a strange fate. Many renounced their old beliefs and jumped onto something a bit more popular. Others were killed in the First World War.

Worst of all, Marinetti joined the Fascist Party, spoke on the same platform as Mussolini and ended up as a Minister in the fascist state.

Straight

To put the record straight, I'm not insinuating that Spandau Ballet, Duran Duran, etc are neo-falangists. They're not. Instead they appear almost consciously non-political, if there is such a thing.

Searching through the lyrics printed on the sleeve of Duran Duran's album, I couldn't find a single social or political remark.

Mind you, I still think it's a palatable album even quite tuneless - maybe a bit pretentious, but OK on the ears.

Not like much of the so-called futurist records which are either souped-up disco junk or whining space invader machines.

Yes, you are a 'swinger'

MORE ON evolution this week, following a couple of articles in New Scientist by Jeremy Cherpas and John Gribbins, who are usually interesting, and often challenging writers.

It concerns the origin of humans and their degree of relatedness with apes. This has been a touchy subject since Darwin's days when his supporter T.H. Huxley told a meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science that he would prefer an ape to Bishop Wilberforce for an ancestor.

Humans like to feel that they are unique and this may explain why, though we recognise that we are related to apes, palaeontologists (people who study fossils) generally agree that our line split off from the ape line between 14 and 20 million years ago (mya).

The available fossils however give little support to this idea and comparison of the anatomy of modern apes and humans reveals a different story.

All modern apes are brachiators, that is, they can get around by hanging from tree branches and their arms and shoulders have a different development of bones and muscles from non-brachiators.

But modern humans (and all extinct hominids [means "human like"] so far dug up) have similarly constructed arms and shoulders - we are brachiators and, as readers will know from watching gymnasts or trapeze artists, we can get pretty good at it.

This suggests either an amazing coincidence or that our common ancestor with the apes was also a brachiator.

Now there are no fossils

of brachiating apes before about 10 million years ago, and Rampithecus (14mya), often claimed as a forerunner of humans, was not a 'swinger'.

Unfortunately the fossil record is very patchy and we must turn to biochemistry for further evidence.

Ancestor

Related creatures have similar proteins and DNA and the degree of similarity can be used to calculate how far back their common ancestor is.

For proteins, this is done by making antibodies to a protein from one species and seeing how much the antibody reacts with the same protein from another species. The difference in the amount of the reaction is called the "immunological distance".



Science

For blood albumin, the distance between Old World monkeys and apes for albumin is 2.3 units. From the fossil record, we know that apes and Old World monkeys split from each other 30 mya.

The distance between humans and African apes (gorilla and chimpanzee) is 1.12 units. This corresponds to a split some 5 mya (the scale is not a linear one).

This explains why we and the modern apes are brachiators - it is not a coincidence but the result of our having a common, brachiating, ancestor a mere 5 mya.

Identical

Using a different technique to compare DNA, it is found that chimp DNA is 99% identical to human DNA.

By a similar argument

this points to a split between human and chimp ancestors some 4 1/2 mya.

What's more, we are as closely related to chimps and gorillas as they are to each other and more closely related to both than orangutans or gibbons (the other branch of the apes).

Humbling though it may be to some of our number, we are apes and there is no justification whatsoever for classifying ourselves as Hominidae and the apes as Pongidae.

COMPETITION: A new logo for SO Science. Send your entries now, as many as you like. The successful entrant will receive "Einstein For Beginners" (or equivalent).



Grace Jones, 1981

Blacking key at Glencroft

by Stan Crooke

1½ months of picketting at the Glencroft Knitwear firm in Glasgow has failed to make any significant impact on the firm's operations, a fact which underlines the need for fresh initiatives to be taken to win the dispute.

The picketing began when Leon Newman, the firm's owner, sacked 15 women and refused to recognise their union, the National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers. Postal workers and most TGWU drivers making deliveries or picking up finished goods have refused to cross the picket line.

But this has been countered by Newman's nephew making deliveries and despatches himself. Last Friday morning (11 September), for example, the pickets stopped a delivery of yarn going in. A few hours later, Newman's nephew left and returned with a van-load of yarn.

Another problem facing the pickets is the 60 out-workers employed by Newman. He has put some of the scabs in the factory on the work normally done by the sacked women and farmed out the scabs' usual work to the out-workers.

This manoeuvre, together with taking on seven trainees, has enabled Newman to maintain a normal level of production.

But there have been some positive developments. Newman had been advertising for scab labour in the Glasgow Evening Times and Hamilton Advertiser, but a week last Friday the West of Scotland branch of SOGAT voted to black all Newman's adverts.

But the union officials have dropped any idea of getting Glencroft products blacked at the washing plant, and there seems to be no progress made in getting TGWU members at airports to black Glencroft products (most of which are for export). The pickets are very much in the dark as to what, if anything, the union is up to.

When NUHKW full-timers came up from England last week, they just told the pickets that they had "a very hard job on their hands" (a fact which the women had already established for themselves) and said that they had never known a situation like it. They then headed back for Leicester.

Help

Readers can help by:

-Raising donations on a regular basis where possible in your union or Labour Party branch and send them to Glencroft Knitwear Dispute, c/o NUHKW, 44, Kelvingrove St., Glasgow G3 7RZ.

-Organising and building more support for the picket lines again on a regional basis.

-Effective blacking is central to winning the dispute: this means withdrawing union cards from any TGWU members who cross the picket lines and organising blacking of Glencroft products at the washing plants and airports.

Glencroft Strike Support Committees need to be set up in Glasgow and elsewhere run by the women themselves to coordinate and build further support for their fight.

Laurence Scotts must become centre of resistance to closures

by Carol Hobbs

RESOLUTIONS, messages of support and financial donations for the Laurence Scott strikers are continuing to roll in. The number of AUEW branches and districts supporting the strikers is now approaching the century and the number of Labour MPs, seventy five.

AUEW boss John Boyd, fresh from a rather unsatisfactory TUC, has written to Labour Party chief whip Michael Cocks expressing his concern over the MPs' actions and enclosing copies of Boyd's apology for a sell-out which he has already circulated to 2,600 AUEW branches.

The irony is that Boyd's two-page justification of the executive's action is a damning indictment of his leadership and can only further increase support for the strikers.

Boyd's arguments that the settlement was an honourable one, the best that could be obtained in the circumstances, an agreement which saved jobs in other LSE factories at the expense of Manchester, clearly establishes its author as either determined to drive the strikers into the Labour Exchanges at the first opportunity or as a man who couldn't negotiate his way out of a paper bag.

Most workers who know John Boyd's career will prefer the first explanation.



Gardners: relieved last year, now has 500 jobs at risk

Other workers specially need to support the Laurence Scott strike because it could be their turn next.

In Thatcher's Britain everybody's job is at risk.

Last week 250 workers at Kay Metzeler's Goyt Mill in Marple, Stockport, occupied their cushion factory after the bosses declared that the site would be closed. The employer's reply was to repeat that owing to the effects of the depression on the car industry, which they supply with foam cushions,

there was no possibility of keeping the mill open or improving redundancy terms.

At Barnes Flexible Packaging in Cheetham Hill, workers are now in their third week of a sit-in which having started on the shaky basis of a struggle for more redundancy pay, now holds the possibility of developing into a genuine fight.

More redundancies are looming at Gardiners Diesel Engine works at Eccles, where management has asked the unions for a

formal meeting on September 28 and warned that 500 jobs could be at risk.

Groups like the SWP and the IMG lightmindedly hailed the conclusion to 1980's long occupation at Gardiners as a great victory but Socialist Organiser pointed out that an agreement by which the unions presided over the destruction of 300 jobs through voluntary redundancy was no such thing!

We argued that, while gains had been made, the factory remained open and

the workplace organisation intact with many militants having learned the lessons of struggle, jobs destroyed are jobs destroyed.

We also stressed the need to analyse the agreement as a tactical truce, involving a reverse and argued the employers would be back for more!

Now Gardiners have been working a two-day week for months and September 28 may unfortunately prove us right.

Earlier in the Laurence Scotts struggle a support committee of local trade unionists was established but it faded away through inertia.

It is time for this committee to be reconvened and transformed into a Manchester Jobs Fight Committee, with delegates from union branches and shop stewards committees.

Such a cross-industry, cross-union body could provide the focus for a determined drive to unite the various struggles which have erupted and will erupt against the attempt by Thatcher and the capitalists to swell the North West's dole queues.

Meanwhile we would urge all trade union bodies to take up the LSE model resolution - but warn once more: unless the strikers themselves summon up all their energies to reimpose their picket on Mining Supplies as a first step to extending their struggle, all the paper resolutions and five pound notes in the strike fund will not save them from years of standing in line for unemployment benefit.

CAROL HOBBS

Lothian: 5,000 on protest march

by Joe Baxter

Lothian Region Labour Party has advised its councillors to resign the administration if George Younger won't accept the £25 million package of cuts which the Labour Group have offered him.

This was the outcome of a stormy meeting of the Regional Labour Party on 6 September.

The right wing, led by Alastair McRae - chairperson of the Regional Party and a prominent LCC member - moved unsuccessfully that the councillors should be advised to remain in office to 'carry out decisions, which would be, as councillor Phyllis Herriot put it, "complete anathema" to them.

Councillor Herriot was also in favour of remaining in office.

Alarm was so great at the prospect of the Labour Group being asked to resign that both the STUC and the Scottish Council of the Labour Party had representatives at the meeting.

Drop

Mick Connarty, for the Scottish Council of the Labour Party - complete with tape recorder to ensure against being misquoted - advised the Party to drop the idea of resignation.

We needed to be more realistic and practical. While implementing £30 million of cuts might not be very good "that is what representative

democracy is all about".

John Lambie from the STUC also wanted the councillors to stay in office.

Local trade unionists could work out with a Labour Council which cuts could be made with the least harm. With a Tory council it could only mean disaster.

Despite all this, the resolution calling for resignation was carried by a large majority.

However, the major motivation behind this move seemed to be to wash the Labour Party's hands of responsibility in the whole affair. At no time except when a Socialist Organiser supporter spoke was there mention of fighting the cuts that had gone through already, which would go through if Younger accepted the offered £25 million or which would result from the

Tories taking office.

A resolution from Militant supporters calling on the council to rescind the cuts that had been made and stay in office till the council went bankrupt was overwhelmingly defeated.

Yet despite all this, 5,000 people, from all over Scotland, turned out for a march in Edinburgh on Saturday 12 September.

It was a protest against

the attack on local government democracy carried out by the Tories through the Miscellaneous Provisions (Scotland) Act.

Rally

The march was followed by a rally in the Usher Hall, where 2,500 people heard 7 platform speakers, including Tony Benn.

Not one of these speakers

(not even Tony Benn) made any proposals for the defence of Lothian against the Tory attacks. Not one of them spoke about the council resigning, despite the fact that every one of them, except perhaps Benn, has publicly said the council should continue in office to make the cuts.

An open letter to Lothian councillors

THE LOSS of the labour movement's stand against the cuts in Lothian is as severe a setback for the movement as the decision to fight the cuts was an advance.

It is certainly true that the carpet was swept from under the feet of the Labour group by the downright scabbing of most of the local union officials, who did nothing to develop the obvious potential of events like the magnificent turnout on June 30th.

Yet, surely, no-one can really express any surprise at the role the trade union leadership, local and national, have played.

Once the Rate Support Grant was withdrawn, all-out strike action was the only basis on which to build a successful campaign. It



still is!

However, the trade union leaders twice prevented a vote on this question at the Joint Shop Stewards conferences, and in the union branches they argued for 'selective action' - or, in some cases, didn't even hold meetings of their membership.

But you, as councillors, and the Regional Labour Party with its network of local branches, also had, and could yet have, a vital leadership role to play. Time-worn ideas about non-interference in union affairs are utterly misplaced when they give cover to officials confusing and demoralising their members.

Listening

When you [and the Regional Labour Party] decided to take on a no-cuts position, you became campaigners and thousands of public sector workers were listening.

We in the Labour Party, whether councillors or ordinary members, had, and still have, a duty to say clearly to the movement

what is required if we are to start winning.

Resignation will only not be a cop-out if, having renounced and attempted to rescind the cuts already made, you publicly make it clear that you are continuing the campaign against redundancies and cuts in services and will play no part in the sort of administration that entails these attacks on workers' living standards.

Encouragement

If, however, you decide to sit with union leaders deciding which cuts and redundancies will be made, you will only be providing encouragement to the Tories to go further and further. The working

people of Lothian will be left either passively accepting the attacks on them - or we will be fighting... against you.

Socialist Organiser supporters pledge themselves to building this fight against cuts. It will be more easily built if there is not a Labour administration in the Council carrying out the cuts and instead, the Labour councillors are in the forefront of the campaign against the Tory attacks, helping to link up with those in other regions who are still prepared to fight.

EDINBURGH SOCIALIST ORGANISER GROUP

• This is an abridged version of the Open Letter distributed on the demonstration last Saturday, 12th.

Donations to: JSSC, c/o George Fryer, 20 Round Croft, Romilly, Cheshire.

Norwich sackings

JOHN Boyd's one excuse for his sell-out of the Laurence Scott and Electromotors strikers in Manchester is that his proposed deal, though it was little help to the Manchester workers, saved other LSE plants from cutbacks.

Now even that has been shown up as a lie. LSE has announced 400 redundancies at its Norwich plant, to which orders from Manchester have been transferred.

Vauxhall vote to strike over pay

by Tony Cashman (TGWU, Vauxhall Ellesmere Port) and Lol Duffy

"WE demand from the company a substantial increase on their offer of 10 September 1981. Failing that we call for support from all plants for an all-out stoppage of work from 28 September."

"We call on our own union to stop imports of all General Motors components and vehicles from that date. Failing support from other locations we would hold an immediate stewards meeting and a mass meeting to assess the position."

That was the decision, by an overwhelming majority, of a mass meeting on Monday 14 September of the 3,000 TGWU members at Vauxhall, Ellesmere Port.

Stewards denounced Vauxhall's offer - 4% with strings - and told the meeting that the Astra kit-car is being phased in at Ellesmere Port over the winter period with the aim of reaching half-production by March, with resulting loss of 1,500 jobs at a conservative estimate.

Crisis

If the night-shift is reintroduced, the jobs could possibly be saved by producing more Chevettes and Astras but as there is a crisis in the car market this is very doubtful.

Lay-offs are bound to become more frequent and the company is giving no guarantee for the workers' future.

So a united fight back by all Vauxhall workers throughout the country is especially urgent.

The unions are asking for a substantial pay rise to bring Vauxhall workers' standard of living up to what it was a few years ago.

They also want guaranteed work for a year, since Vauxhall workers have been laid off on 50% pay so often over the past few years.

We need either full pay on lay-off or a guaranteed year. At present we get five days full pay per quarter for

lay-offs due to external causes. The union wants to extend this to 20 days.

We want longer holidays and a shorter working week, to try to create more jobs but also because we want more leisure time.

We think it unfair for millions to be on the dole while we work a 40 hour week. The 39 hour week should be brought in this year and a 35 hour week achieved by 1984/5.

We also want a better deal on holiday pay, pensions, and sick pay.

Basically we want staff status. That is our claim.

The company has offered 4% with strings. For track workers it means about £3.80 per week - or £2 or less after deductions, which is totally ridiculous.

The company say they can't afford to pay us any

more, but we can't turn round to the rent collector and say we're only paying part of the rent because Vauxhall's is doing badly.

They've offered a 39 hour week from November 1 1981, which means finishing 3.15 Friday if (and it's a big if!) we lose all our afternoon tea breaks.

They also want to take away the three minutes clocking on grace.

On guaranteed lay-off days, the company has offered an extra day if the workers pay their own pension contributions in full while on lay off.

Productivity

They have offered productivity payments but as the company owes us about £230 each for the last productivity scheme, which

they stopped, we have decided not to enter any talks on the issue until this is paid.

The other Vauxhall plants have also agreed to this stance.

Other strings attached to the company's offer include putting all hourly paid workers under time and motion study.

They also want us to agree to time and motion issuing times for jobs without us having any say in the matter.

They want to introduce German times without German rates of pay. The German workers' times are faster but they have better equipment, about twice our wages and much longer holidays. Production is being pushed all the time.



The body shop at Ellesmere Port

SCHREIBERS FIGHT ON

OVER last weekend letters were sent to all employees on the redundancy 'list' at Schreiber's Astmoor plant in Runcorn stating that they were redundant from the date on the letter.

Workers who were 'safe' got a letter saying:

"We are now writing to inform you that you are required to report for normal working at your usual starting-time from Monday 14 September 1981."

"If, however, as a result of continuing industrial action, you fail to report for work you will be dismissed with effect from 14 September 1981."

On Monday 14th, expecting the more weak-willed ranks of the work-force to believe the threatening letter, pickets occupied the plant and chained the gates.

No-one came in to work, and after consultation with management and police we decided to unchain the gates, walk out of the factory and resume normal picketting.

Return

But workers at the White House plant decided on Monday, by a narrow vote, to return to work after reading their threatening letter.

Mr Schreiber has indicated that he will now call a meeting of all the strikers' families, to increase pressure on the Astmoor workforce to return to work.

But Astmoor is still solid despite some trouble last week with apprentices.

On Tuesday 8th, a group

of apprentices, led by a so-called socialist, decided that they wanted to go into work.

After being stopped by the pickets they went to the office of the renowned anti-union local paper - the Runcorn Weekly News - and gave a statement containing lies and misquotes, to the effect that they wanted to work, the strikers were only fighting for their own jobs and only two apprentices (two SO supporters) were active on picket duties (in fact, there are four or five apprentices involved).

Scum

These scum should be blacked on return to work (and that seems quite likely) and the two ring leaders should be disciplined by the union.

The would-be scab apprentices also started complaining after they turned up late to get their strike pay on Friday.

At 4 o'clock on the Friday, a meeting was convened with the personnel manager by the two ring-leaders of the scab apprentices. The meeting concluded with nothing settled except that they now knew that they had no chance of entering the Astmoor plant.

Donations have started coming in but we still need more. Send messages of support and financial donations to Barry Poynton, 15 Baxter Close, Mordishaw, Runcorn, Cheshire, (cheques made payable to Schreiber Workers' Welfare Fund).

Discussing the coming selection of candidates for the 1982 local government elections, last weekend's Socialist Organiser Delegate Meeting decided that a national meeting of comrades involved was urgently needed.

The urgency means that a meeting after Labour Party Conference would be too late - so the Socialist Organiser secretariat has organised a gathering at short notice for Sunday 20 September.

Place: Room 324, Polytechnic of Central London, Marylebone Road (oppos. Baker Street underground station).

Time: 11 am.
The agenda will be:
1) SO councillors' experiences.

2) Taking policies out to the working class;
3) Accountability;
4) Drawing up the Manifesto.

All councillors/prospective councillors and other interested comrades are welcome to attend.

*For London comrades, next Target 82 meeting, 7.30 pm, Monday September 21, at County Hall.

Strike call to back St Mary's

A district joint shop stewards committee met last Monday 19 September and voted to organise strike action in defence of St Mary's London W9, and to support the day of action on October 3.

Oxford Trades Council has already decided to send a

coach to support the day of action, which will consist of a march from St Mary's past the AHA headquarters, to St Mary's Praed St., and back to St Mary's W9, where a meeting and exhibition is being held.

There will be a social event in the hospital in the

evening.

Messages of support to Alison Bunn, c/o Ward 15, Woodfield Wing, St Mary's Hospital, Harrow Road, London W9.

Donations to Mick Woods, c/o TGWU office, at the same address.

Hospital walkout

ST STEPHEN'S Hospital in Fulham Road, London, has been on strike since Friday because the House Governor Howard Lyons, assaulted a porter. Before the porter could start a grievance procedure he was given a first and final warning - "refusing a legitimate management instruction".

Lyons has attempted to write the statement for his witness - the Deputy Head Porter - alleging that the porter waved an afro comb

under his nose.

300 members of ancillary and maintenance unions are on strike, and are stopping all but essential supplies. A mass meeting on Monday morning overwhelmingly supported the strike when they heard management was unprepared to budge from the position.

The strike is biting so hard that Lyons stated on an

LBC interview at the weekend that there might be cause to evacuate the hospital. Workers are picketing 24 hours, and only a few students and student nurses are doing the work of the ancillaries.

Although the Royal College of Nursing has a no-strike rule, one RCN steward walked out rather than do an ancillary's job.

MICK WOODS

Shipyards jobs fight

by Lol Duffy, Cammell Lairds delegate to Confed Conference.

At a national shipbuilding lay delegates conference called by the Confed on 9 September in Blackpool, it was unanimously agreed that all yards would oppose enforced redundancies and that any attempts to close Robb Caledon, Dundee or Clark-Hawthorn, Hartlepool, against the workers' wishes would lead to national indus-

trial action.

Unfortunately it was not spelt out what type of action would be taken, and instead it was left in the hands of the Shipbuilding Negotiating Committee of the Confed.

Their response to the last set of enforced redundancies was a national overtime ban.

Despite a lot of wriggling the Shipbuilding Negotiating Committee has not been able to make a deal with British

Shipbuilders and Robb Caledon is due to close on Friday 18 September. The SNC has even lined up talks between British Shipbuilders and Kestrel Marine, a private off-shore production company, in an attempt to sell off the yard.

There should be another lay delegates conference called when the final plans are announced by British Shipbuilders, to decide on what action we take.

THE Yorkshire Area NUM has agreed that by June 1982 every branch must have on its branch committee someone under 21. This is an important step forward for youth in the industry and hopefully something other areas will follow. Prior to Yorkshire's decision only Scotland had a similar policy.

Fords

FORD shop stewards meet in Coventry on Sunday 20 September to discuss the £20 wage claim recently formulated by the national union officials.

No campaign for this claim has yet started, and even many stewards are unfamiliar with the details of it. But the conference will be a chance to launch a campaign to build support for mass action.

Not only pay is at stake, but also jobs. The claim includes the 35 hour week, but Ford have put proposals to the TGWU for a combination of early retirement and voluntary redundancy, to cut jobs.

STEPHEN CORBISHLEY

At the time of going to press we are still waiting for some concrete facts.

This disgusting stab in the back for the Orgrave men and all those miners who stood by them earlier in the year should be roundly condemned. If Bell wants to persuade the miners that he is the right candidate for the job, let him come out in the open and argue his politics.

So far one of the few honest things he's done is to declare himself for Healey - nuff said!

JOHN CUNNINGHAM

Bell scrapes barrel

TREVOR BELL, the right wing candidate for the presidency of the NUM, is obviously getting desperate about his already very slim chances of beating Arthur Scargill for Joe Gormless's seat when the latter at long last retires.

Given that Bell has about as much chance of beating Scargill as a Blackpool donkey of winning the Grand National, this is not surprising. Even so, he's really been scraping the bottom of the barrel lately.

Shortly after his outburst about the actual mem-

bership of the Yorkshire NUM being smaller than claimed, he has announced that the coal reserves at the recently saved Orgrave Colliery are much smaller than thought.

So small, in fact, that Bell claims that there is only one year's reserves in the new areas to be exploited, and that Orgrave should therefore close.

It may well be asked why Bell, who as a 'back-room' boy for the NUM has all the information at his fingertips, didn't come out with this earlier in the year

Advertisement

Full details from WSL, PO Box 135, London N1

Rally

of Trotskyist unity

BRING DOWN THE TORIES! FIGHT FOR A WORKERS' GOVERNMENT!

BUILD A REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP!

Public launching of the Workers Socialist League from the fusion of the WSL and I-CL. Saturday 10 October, 10am-5pm, Digbeth Civic Hall, Digbeth, Birmingham.

Admission £1 [50p unwaged]

With guest speakers and workshops/debates/exhibitions on: Poland, the H-Block struggle, the coming wages round, rank and file movements in the unions, Women's Fightback, fighting the cuts, National Left Wing Youth Movement, the Labour Left, Trotskyist International Liaison Committee, etc.

VICTORY!

Socialist Organiser

AS WE GO to press, news has just reached us that in negotiations on Tuesday evening, 14th, between millionaire printing and publishing boss Robert Maxwell and the National Union of Journalists, striking NUJ members at Pergamon Press, Oxford, have won a major victory against victimisation.

On strike for improved pay and conditions since March, they were arbitrarily sacked by union-busting Labour Party member Maxwell, and have fought a tough and difficult battle for their reinstatement.

This has now been achieved, with all nine chapel members being returned to their old jobs within an enlarged journals department following amalgamation with Maxwell's recently purchased British Printing Corporation.



Maxwell: defeated

In addition arrangements have been made

NUJ strikers win after 6 months

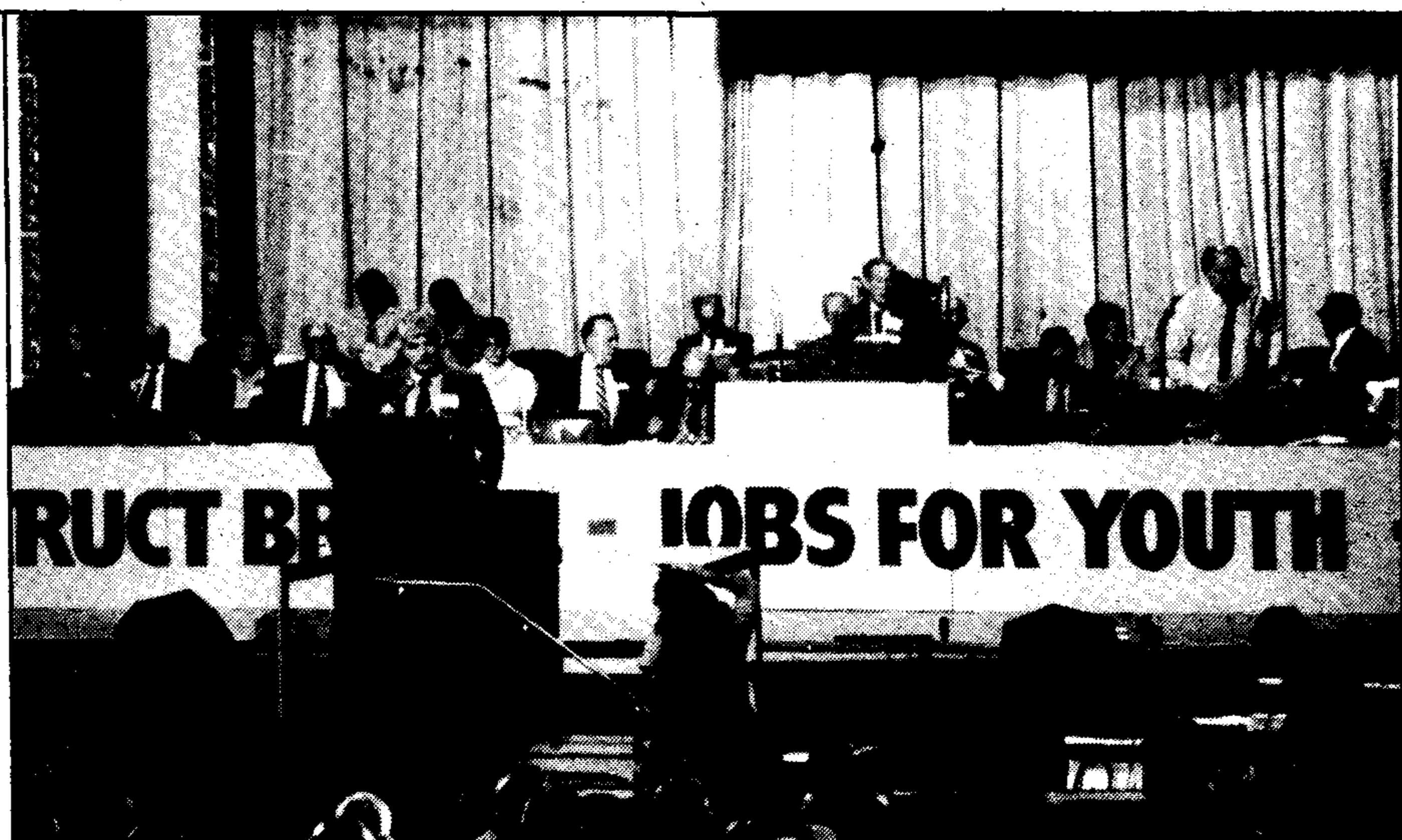
for lengthy discussions on a new House Agreement following a return to work.

Tenacity

The tenacity of the nine strikers, and their continuous fight to enlist

the support of NUJ colleagues in Maxwell's other operations and of the print unions in their struggle for union rights has set an example to the whole labour movement.

Socialist Organiser will carry a fuller assessment of the dispute next week.



Fight the Tories! they said - but not on the Irish question!

MURRAY MOVES - TO BLOCK IRISH SOLIDARITY

by Ian Swindale

A VOICE seldom heard at TUC Congress spoke up in support of the hunger strikers last week, to the acute embarrassment of the TUC leadership.

Moving the only resolution on the agenda on Ireland - supporting the 'Better Life for All Campaign' - Frank Miller of the AUEW Construction Section took the opportunity to call for an end to Labour's bipartisan policies with the Tory government on Northern Ireland.

He went on to urge "a breakthrough in the situation around the H-Block and hunger strikers". He pointed out that support for the prisoners' five

demands was justified and did not imply support for the IRA, and called for an end to the British presence in the Six Counties "and for the Irish people to be allowed to determine the future of their own country".

Stifle

So anxious are the TUC leaders to stifle any real debate on the question of Ireland, that a number of them, including Len Murray, immediately rose to condemn the speech.

That this situation still prevails in the TUC twelve years after British troops went onto Northern Ireland's streets is an indication of the massive task facing us.

Meanwhile, another H-Block prisoner, 21-year old Gerard Hodgkins, has joined the hunger strike, and later this week 100 relatives of the H-Block prisoners will arrive in London, accompanied by Owen Carron MP, to lobby leading politicians in support of the hunger strikers' five demands.

Owen Carron will return at the end of the month to address a Labour Committee on Ireland fringe meeting at the Labour Party conference.

While the struggle in support of the hunger strikers may be making greater headway in the Labour Party than in the trade unions, it nevertheless remains true that the failure of the organised working class and its mass party to rally to the support of the Long Kesh prisoners is a major factor in allowing Thatcher and her government to defy the courageous hunger strikers and deny them their demands.

Every effort must be made in the run-up to the Labour Party conference to begin to reverse this state of affairs.

- Victory to the hunger strikers!
- Troops out of Ireland now!
- Self-determination for the Irish people as a whole.

Next week: an analysis of the Labour Party NEC Working Party report on Ireland.

Call for strike against racism



THE 'Coxon' affair in BL's Cowley Assembly Plant - the issuing of a racist circular by the plant's chief security officer - remains unresolved.

It has, however, been the focus for an important struggle against racism in the factory. Last week there was a further meeting of blacks and anti-racist militants on the plant who are demanding the removal of Coxon.

Following this, the convenors called a joint meeting of shop stewards to recommend support for a 24 hour token strike to demonstrate hostility to racism and to press Coxon's removal.

Such a strike would be very important both for the

fight against racism in general and the fight against racism in BL.

The debate on the stewards' committee was very sharp. T&G convenor Bob Fryer and the militants at the meeting fought very hard for a strike decision to be put to the workforce at a mass meeting. The right wing, however, headed it off.

They moved an amendment calling for the outside

officials to be involved prior to strike action being taken. The amendment was



Fryer: fought for a strike

BAN MAINTAINED

ALL 3,500 TGWU members at BL's Cowley Body Plant are continuing with an overtime ban, imposed after their bonus dropped from £11 to £7.

A mass meeting decided three weeks ago to fight on the issue and to keep the issue of the bonus out of the annual pay review.

Up to now the overtime ban has caused only small losses of production on the Honda, Rover and Rolls Royce, but the effects are expected to be cumulative. Last week, in a move to get round the ban, management put a gun fitter on nights. But all 50 gun fitters in the plant immediately stopped work, followed by stoppages or threats of stoppages throughout the plant.

The company backed down - and the ban continues.

by Patrick Spilling

54 IRANIAN students in Britain were due in court, as we went to press, fearing they could be deported back to Iran, and to certain death at the hands of Khomeini.

The students, members of the Muslim Students Society, occupied the Iranian Embassy in London last week in protest against the wave of executions of left wingers in Iran. Most of the students are members or supporters of the Mojahdeen.

During the 1½ hours they were in the Embassy the students discovered thousands of opened letters

and photographs of Iranians taken during demonstrations. They had placed notices in the windows of the Embassy proclaiming it as a peaceful occupation with no intention to take hostages. This did not stop the armed police of the Diplomatic Protection Corp bursting in large numbers through the windows of the embassy, and arresting all 54 students who range in age from 18 to 25.

Bail was refused after the Iranian Embassy claimed that £15,000 worth of damage had been done during the occupation. All the students are charged

with criminal damage and breach of the peace.

They have been told by the police that the authorities in Britain will press for deportation. Whilst in custody the students have been split between four prisons. The nine women are being kept in Holloway and the 45 men have been put in three prisons, including Brixton.

Executed

A spokesperson for the Muslim Students Society in Britain said: "There is no question they will be executed if they are deported."

Some students who occupied a university in Germany were deported back and executed."

The Muslim Student Society has already contacted a number of left Labour MPs, appealing for support in keeping the students in this country.

All supporters of Socialist Organiser, especially those in student unions and unions involved in further and higher education should be demanding that the leadership of those unions makes immediate protest and demands that the students are not deported.

Iranian students face deportation and death

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