

Socialist Organiser

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Paper of the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory

**This is
their
law
and
order**

SOUTHALL was the Tories' programme of law and order in the flesh. In many countries it is considered nothing out of the way for the police to kill people when putting down a demonstration or a strike. The Tories' plans for more police power would be a huge step towards bringing that to Britain.

But it was under a Labour Government that Blair Peach was slaughtered by Tory law and order. And the Labour Ministers hurried to declare that they were on the side of the police, blaming all the violence on their victims.

Former police chief Robert Mark denounced 'union power' only a few days before Southall. Mark's successor McNee certainly has the same views, probably in a cruder, more right-wing form: brutal, anti-union, racist.

The Labour Government has just allowed men like Mark and McNee to build up their forces, and supported them in every move against pickets and protesters.

The labour movement has to stop this sinister build-up of repression — for the sake of the black communities, for the sake of picket lines, for the sake of the whole future of the movement. That's why we say: Deny the Tories the mandate they want for even more police power. Vote Labour. But fight to mobilise the labour movement against former Police Federation spokesman James Callaghan and his cronies. Demand Labour disbands the SPG and orders an open public inquiry into the police action in Southall.

★ The Tories and law and order: see centre pages.

Also see
pages 2,
3 and 8

SOCIALIST BEATEN TO DEATH IN SOUTHALL

DISBAND MCNEE'S ASSASSINS

Blair Peach: socialist, trade unionist, anti-racist campaigner



POLICE COMMISSIONER McNee's blue-uniformed army started its operation in Southall on Sunday, taking 23 prisoners in that battle.

On Monday their invasion went ahead full-force. They killed Blair Peach. They bludgeoned dozens of others. They arrested hundreds. They blockaded the area. Victorious, they established a reign of terror on their field of battle — the streets of Southall.

In quiet times the police seems to have the main function of keeping the streets safe. The huge invasion of Southall gives the lie to that. The aim of the police in Southall was to make the streets unsafe for anyone who objected to the race-hate thugs of the National Front being given a public hall in the middle of the Asian community. Unsafe for all — deadly for Blair Peach.

Yes, the police will keep the streets safe for the normal business of capitalist society. As soon as the pickets and the anti-fascist protests threaten that normal business ever so little, the police reveal themselves as the paid thugs and killers of the established order.

For workers resisting exploitation, for black communities refusing to submit passively to race-hate taunts and violence, the police are nothing less than the invading army of an alien social power — the social power of the capitalist bosses whose interests exploitation and racism serve. The state is just the monopoly of legal violence.

Once we step outside narrow limits, 'the law' does not protect. It threatens and it kills. That's what it was like in Southall on Monday. It wasn't a mistake. It was the logical, sooner-or-later inevitable result of the police rallying their forces — as they would never do for ordinary 'crime control' — in order to try to teach the Asian workers of Southall who is boss.

To make the streets safe for us we must disarm, curb, and break the power of McNee's army.

★ Disband the Special Patrol Group, the elite anti-protest storm troop which, according to eye-witnesses, murdered Blair Peach.

★ Mobilise against the Nazis. We must be ten times more numerous, ten times better organised. That's the only way to forestall racist violence and police violence.

★ Defend the black communities.

SATURDAY 28th: Protest march in Southall. 2pm Dominion Cinema.

SUNDAY 29th: 'Stop the NF' march in East London. 12 noon, Shoreditch Park, New North Road, Hoxton.

Prentice's apprentices

ONE of the features of this election campaign has been the trundling out by the Tories of Labour Party defectors who announce their new allegiance to the Iron Lady and her policies. In succession we've seen Richard Marsh, George Brown, Eddie Griffiths, Lord Chalfont and Paul Johnson wheeled around to explain their conversion.

Pride of place, however, goes to Reg Prentice, former Labour cabinet minister and candidate for a safe Tory seat at Daventry.

Prentice represents a whole era of right wing social democrats who got rich on the back of the labour movement with lucrative positions in nationalised industries and public institutions, commissions, quangos and the like, with a knighthood or lordship thrown in along the way.

But hand in hand with the elevation of these people went a growing demand among those who had worked to put them there for greater accountability and for an end to the life-tenure system of MPs and union officials. In recent years this tension has grown and surfaced in battles in constituencies like Lincoln, Sheffield Brightside and Edgely.

The demand for greater democratic control and more rights for the rank and file membership is diametrically opposed to the elitist concepts of Prentice. The fuss around his late constituency of Newham North East really boiled down to these simple choices.

During this campaign Prentice has been used at many Tory meetings to make the flesh of middle class voters creep with tales of Marxists taking over the Labour Party and of Britain plunging towards a totalitarian state where trade unions behave like the secret police and small businessmen are hounded to extinction — though to most workers the case of Prentice is more likely to personify the rotten pro-capitalist turncoat careerists and bureaucrats that crowd the top echelons of the labour movement.

Little wonder there has been a deafening silence from the Labour leadership, crammed as it is with people just as committed to self-aggrandisement and as little interested in the working class as Reg Prentice.

There is another reason why Prentice has been rewarded with an embarrassed silence

in reply to his red-scare ravings.

When Prentice was making frantic attempts to cling to his seat in Newham, he got open backing from Callaghan,



Reg Prentice

Healey, Rees and Shirley Williams. The Labour left gave tacit backing, and Michael Foot was among those who sent telegrams wishing him luck in his battle against the rank and file party members. They can hardly come out now and say that his actions since then show how justified were the people who chucked him out!

How many more Prentices are we harbouring? How many others on the gravy train would repeat the exploits of the former Labour Minister if they were pushed off it? How many MPs now in the PLP think they know best and that they can blithely ignore the wishes of both their CLPs and Party conference?

The answer is that a great many of our candidates fit this description only too closely. O'Halloran in Islington North, Sandelson in Hayes and Harlington, McNally in Stockport South, are only the tip of a big blue iceberg. And up where the gravy is thickest, among the governmental careerists, sit those most likely to follow Prentice rather than lose their fat salaries.

We should give the Tory candidate for Daventry a very rough ride indeed — and demand that the Labour leadership repudiate Prentice for the turncoat that he is.

Raise this issue with your candidate: it is above all the issue of accountability to the labour movement.

KEITH VENESS

GPO: Stamping on the NF

THE NEWS that the Northern District post office, in Islington, London, has collected £1350 for the National Front election campaign raises the question: what are the leadership of the Union of Post Office Workers (UPW) doing about Nazis in the union? The UPW nationally has failed to support the Anti Nazi League, and despite protestations of anti-racism by UPW General Secretary Tom Jackson no campaign has yet been launched against the NF.

Under election law, election addresses are delivered free of charge by the post office. This means that postal workers will be expected to deliver NF election literature. The union leadership has done nothing about this.

The branch secretary of the Northern District Office, Brian Stovell, commented that he and the UPW were totally opposed to the NF and their policies, but they could not be banned as they now appeared to be a legitimate political party.

The London District Council of the UPW and Post Office Workers Against The Nazis (POWAN) have not been prepared to accept this as an excuse for doing nothing against the NF in this election. The London District Council has come out openly in support of the Anti Nazi League and has distributed both ANL literature and the book 'Blood on the Streets' produced by Bethnal Green and Stepney Trades

Council. POWAN argues that 'Blood on the Streets' provides evidence that racist propaganda leads to racist violence. In a leaflet it points out that under the Race Relations Act it may be possible to challenge and prevent the distribution of NF election material. (In Stepney the Post Office has already forced Martin Webster to re-write his address because an advert on it contravened the Representation of the People Act).

POWAN is calling on postal workers not "to be stooges for the NF", and asking them to think carefully about the distribution of racist literature (to call simply for a refusal might lead to prosecution).

It is time the union leadership took a clear and unequivocal lead in opposing the NF presence in the Post Office and supporting all moves to ban the handling of NF election material. They should mount a campaign to eliminate the fascist presence in the union and to tackle the racism of white workers.

No more token speeches, must be the message to people like Tom Jackson. Use your position to effectively oppose the racists and eliminate the NF. The Northern District Office should be a warning to us all.

ALAN CRISP
(Secretary, POWAN, Asst. Branch Secretary, UPW LOT 2 — in a personal capacity).

Vote Labour, fight racism

TRADITIONALLY, Asian and West Indian voters in Britain support the Labour Party. A February 1978 survey found that 95% of West Indians and 92% of Asians preferred Labour to the Tories, while the figure was only 44% for whites.

It is not difficult to see why. Racism underlies the entire Tory policy on immigration, even if it is usually painted over to look respectable for public consumption. During the election campaign Thatcher has publicly defended last year's notorious speech where she spoke of 'fears' of areas of Britain being 'swamped' by 'alien' cultures.

Even middle class Asians and West Indians tend to vote Labour, despite Tory attempts to appeal to them as being natural allies of the bosses. When fascist thugs attack you in the street they go by the colour of your skin, not by your social origin. And Thatcher's speeches, which suddenly made respectable the open racism associated with Powell and the National Front, gave a massive boost to the racist thugs.

But the Labour Government has not been much better. They have policed the racist 1971 Immigration Act, and watched on as police harassment of Asians and West Indians has been stepped up under

the guise of looking for illegal immigrants.

Last year's Select Committee Report on Immigration and Race Relations, which called for quotas against Asian immigrants, apartheid-style pass laws and stricter enforcement of the already brutal 1971 Act, was signed by five Labour MPs. One of them was Sid Bidwell, 'left-wing' Labour MP for Southall. What better encouragement could the racists have than to see even the people they denounce as 'communists' pinning the blame for racism not on the racists, but on the Asian and black community.

Despite traditional support for Labour, and especially in the light of last weekend's events (21st-22nd), feeling is running high in the Asian community against a vote for Labour. Many people are asking why on earth they should vote for the people who send the police to attack them, or for a disgusting hypocrite like Bidwell in Southall.

Socialists have nothing but sympathy for this feeling. The record of the Labour Government is racist, and we can have nothing but contempt for people who do absolutely nothing to combat racism and then turn on black and white anti-racists when they take matters into their own hands.

But the problem is poli-

tical. The Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory calls for a Labour vote — not to support Callaghan and Healey, but to eliminate everything they stand for from the labour movement. The best way to do that is to have them in office, where they cannot hide behind a screen of left wing opposition to the Tories.

Labour is supported by the working class, even if the politics of its leaders are those of the bosses. A vote for Labour is a class vote against the Tories — the open party of the employers.

But just to vote Labour is not enough. That is why we

organised the SCLV — to use the election campaign to fight the right wing policies of the leaders, to get the arguments over to as many workers as possible.

An abstention in the election cannot do that. It does not organise against the racists, it merely reacts against them.

We need to organise against the racists, to hammer home to every worker in Britain that racism is the problem, not race, and to wipe out the smear of racism that stains the labour movement.

GORDON BREWER



Southall's Labour MP, Sid Bidwell, denounced the NF meeting in Southall... but he signed a report calling for the racist immigration laws to be made stricter.

What we are fighting for

★ No more wage curbs! No more strike-breaking by Labour!

Wage rises should at the very least keep up with price increases. The same should go for state benefits, grants and pensions. Demand immediate wage increases backdated to make up for the drop in our living standards over the last three years.

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

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

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

★ Make the bosses pay, not the working class! Millions for hospitals, not a penny for 'defence'! Nationalise the banks and financial institutions without compensation. End the interest burden on council housing and other public services.

★ Freeze rents and rates.

★ Scrap all immigration controls. Race is not a problem; racism is. The labour movement must mobilise to drive the fascists off the streets.

Purge racists from positions in the labour movement. Organise full support for black self-defence.

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★ The capitalist police are an enemy for the working class. Support all demands to weaken them as the bosses' striking force: dissolution of special squads (SPG, Special Branch, MI5, etc.), public accountability, etc.

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

★ The Irish people — as a whole — should have the right to determine their own future. Get the British troops out now! Repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Political status for Irish republican prisoners as a matter of urgency.

★ The black working people of South Africa and Zimbabwe should get full support from the British labour movement for their strikes, struggles, and armed combat against the white supremacist regimes. South African goods and services should be blacked.

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★ It is essential to achieve the fullest democracy in the labour movement. Automatic re-selection of MPs during each parliament, and the election by annual conference of party leaders. Annual election of all trade union officials, who should be paid the average for the trade.

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★ The chaos, waste, human suffering and misery of capitalism now — in Britain and throughout the world — show the urgent need to establish rational, democratic, human control over the economy, to make the decisive sectors of industry social property, under workers' control.

The strength of the labour movement lies in the rank and file. Our perspective must be working class action to raze the capitalist system down to its foundations, and to put a working class socialist system in its place — rather than having our representatives run the system and waiting for the crumbs from the table of the bankers and bosses.

WE SET UP the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory so that the left would not be foot soldiers for Callaghan in the general election campaign.

An election victory for the Tories would be a defeat for the working class. But votes for Labour on the basis of approving Callaghan's record would also represent a defeat.

Too often Labour left wings have put forward their militant (or not-so-militant) policies but shelved them when the call came: all pull together against the Tories. They have contented themselves with vague hopes that the policies they plead for will percolate through somewhere, somehow, some time.

The SCLV aims to fight for its policies, in debate within the labour movement and in action, now. We press for CLPs (four of which have sponsored our Campaign) to throw themselves actively into the class struggle. We organise local groups, meetings, leaflets, posters. We fight for the Party democratically to decide its election manifesto, and for CLPs de-

mocratically to decide their election addresses and leaflets.

This activity provides the only forthright working-class answer to the capitalist principles so aggressively preached by the Tories. And it ensures that the voice of socialism is not drowned out by Callaghanite pro-capitalist 'moderation'.

We ask for support and cooperation from those who agree with our platform — and also from those who, without accepting the full platform, are willing to campaign with us round specific issues.

Support us by selling Socialist Organiser, by joining your local SCLV group or starting a new one, by inviting SCLV speakers to your CLP, LPYS or trade union branch and getting them to sponsor the Campaign.

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FASCISTS ON THE RUN IN LEICESTER

LEICESTER WAS seen as a stronghold by the National Front three years ago. In the 1976 council elections the fascists got 20% of the vote and almost won one ward.

In 1974 they were actually able to lead white workers at the Imperial Typewriters factory into opposing a strike led by Asian workers.

The NF's influence has declined since 1976, their electoral support fell by over a third in 1977, and anti-fascists and Asian youth have vigorously opposed their attempts to keep up a public presence.

The NF planned their march in Leicester on April 21st as a way of showing they still had a 'stronghold' and to intimidate the black community.

The fascists' plan did not come off. Despite a 5,000 strong police guard, their march got only 50 yards before being attacked by anti-fascists and black youth

who had broken through the police cordons. As the fascists and their police bodyguards faltered in panic under a hail of bricks and stones, their plan to march through the Highfields area (where many Asians live) was scrapped. The Front were forced to scurry along a half-mile route straight to the school where they planned to meet. There they were surrounded by almost all the police who had been drafted into Leicester.

The anti-fascists succeeded in disrupting the Front's plans despite a split-off march organised by the Leicester Council for Community Relations and the Communist Party which marched in the opposite direction.

Police hemmed anti-fascist demonstrators into back streets and unprovoked 'snatch squad' arrests soon brought retaliation. As anti-fascists held off the police attacks with stones, riot

shields were used in charges to push demonstrators back. Police vans were driven at high speed through the crowds trying to surround the Wyggeston school where the fascists were meeting.

At the end of the day, the police unleashed half a dozen police dogs onto a crowd. The dogs gave at least two demonstrators leg wounds needing stitches before a mobile TV crew began filming one of the injured and the dogs were called off.

There were over 40 arrests, the majority anti-fascists charged under section five of the Public Order Act with threatening behaviour. The chairman of the magistrates' court where they appeared on Monday 23rd was George Bromley JP, the TGWU negotiator who worked with the racist-led white workers at Imperial Typewriters in 1974.

NIK BARSTOW



The NF's 'public' rallies

ON FRIDAY 19th April the National Front got their long-proclaimed wish to hold a meeting in Islington Town Hall on the day of Hitler's birthday.

The NF owe their victory to Gerry Southgate, leader of Islington's Labour-controlled council. Islington normally has a policy of refusing council meeting rooms for the NF, but Southgate said that — because of the Representation of the People Act — he could not refuse the National Front the use of the Town Hall during an election period.

About 1000 anti-fascists turned up to show their disgust, and were met by many thousands of police surrounding the hall protecting the fascists. 29 Labour councillors issued a statement condemning Southgate's decision.

Only about 30 counter-demonstrators were allowed into the meeting, even though there were 150 empty seats.

About 100 National Front supporters were present, mostly rabidly racist young thugs. National Front bully boys lined the rows, shouting abuse, particularly at one black comrade in the audience.

Unfortunately, I'm unable to report on the star speaker of the evening, John Tyndall. At the sight of their leader, the NF were unable to restrain themselves any more.

A group of Front thugs, including well-known Hackney fascist Derek Day, attempted to physically assault and remove one comrade from the hall: a punch-up followed in which most of the anti-fascists had to leave.

A campaign is now being mounted to get Southgate to resign and to make sure that Islington town hall is never again used by the NF.

CLARE RUSSELL

★ ★ ★

TO THEIR credit, Brent's Labour Council have decided to continue their policy of banning the National Front from council premises during the election period.

Despite advice from the Wembley police that the NF meeting would be 'open to the public' and should go ahead, the Council decided to challenge the Representation of the People Act on the basis that entry would be restricted to fascists and a few token members of the public.

The fascists have threatened to take the Council to court and get the election declared null and void, but the Labour Group is determined to stand firm.

FRANK HANSEN

Army vans at the Town Hall

SCLV supporter Satnam Gill told Socialist Organiser:

"The local Asian community and organisations like the Indian Workers' Association had made an agreement with the police for a peaceful demonstration to Ealing Town Hall to protest against the Tory council's decision to give the NF a platform.

"Shortly after the demonstration started in the afternoon, it was confronted by a police cordon. It became clear that virtually every access point to the Town Hall had been sealed by lines of police with horses and dogs. Obviously, frustration and tension ran high.

"The police had reneged on their agreement. Then they began trying to disperse the demonstrators, who were mostly Asian and of all ages. Violence flared.

"I saw an Asian woman in her fifties pushed to the ground after being told to move on outside her own house. Her husband, who protested, was given a bloody nose and dragged into a police van.

"Callaghan and others claim that the demonstration and the violence was the work of 'outsiders'. Well, in this case the demonstration was overwhelmingly Asian in composition, with only a few hundred white anti-fascists.

"It was difficult for people to get into Southall because public transport had been halted, partly through the strike,

partly through the streets being blocked. The nearest access point to my knowledge was Hanwell, some two miles away.

"Truncheons and riot shields were wielded freely. Stone throwing and smoke bombs were a legitimate response to this violence. The crowd was also angered by the unprovoked attacks on the demonstration held the previous day to protest against the fascists being given a platform to spew out their race-hatred in a predominantly Asian community.

"The NF are the real cause of the violence. In this case they were backed up by the forces of the state. In fact I even saw three army vans arrive near the Town Hall early in the morning".



THE POLICE IN FULL FORCE

continued from back page

clearly out to show who wields the power. Vishnu Sharma of the Indian Workers' Association (Southall) has said that Monday's events foreshadowed the police state; more accurately, they tore away the veil concealing the repressive hard core of capitalist power in parliamentary Britain.

Revealed, too, was the seething anger of a ghetto population who, deprived

of effective political leadership and organisation, reacted as the oppressed have done across the world from Notting Hill to Watts — by rioting on a massive scale.

Black and white youth, young women and young workers bearing the brunt of state repression; the elders, the shopkeepers and the community leaders preaching calm and wishing that it all might not be happening; fascists skulking behind police cordons: there in all their bold relief

were the contours of many battles to come.

More than 300 persons were arrested on that day, and we can expect reprisals in the courts. *Socialist Organiser* is launching an emergency appeal to help cover the costs and fines of the victims of Southall and Leicester. Since the '30s and beyond the state has tried to bankrupt the anti-fascist fighters. They failed before, and they must fail again. Rush all you can to SCLV, 5 Stamford Hill, London N16.

continued from p.8

fear on their faces, that would have been an incitement to the bloodthirsty bully-boys of the National Front.

Balraj Singh, of the Southall Youth Movement, speaking at a press conference called immediately after last week's Southall events, summed up the importance of driving the fascists off the streets: "We did it for our community in other parts of this country. If the National Front can come here, there is no safe place for our community".

And far from what the *Evening Standard* says, and far from what the Prime Minister and others say, it was the Asians of Southall who above all fought to stop the National Front holding its meeting and who bore the brunt of the police frenzy on Monday.

In reality there were three demonstrations in Southall.

There was one by the National Front — they were trying to demonstrate that they can screech their race-hatred with impunity in Southall, one of the biggest concentrations of Asian immigrants.

There was the demonstration of the anti-racists — they were trying to show that there is only one way of dealing with the Front, and that is by organising the working class and the black community to defend itself by driving the fascists off the streets.

And there was the demonstration of the police. They were trying to prove (after they were made to look foolish at Leicester) that only a strong police force can protect the system from its enemies, and that that police force will not tolerate any other organised force.

The police were not 'just defending free speech'. Anti-fascists in the NF meeting at Islington Town Hall the previous

Friday, or 'Troops Out' marchers in Glasgow on Saturday, did not get thousands of police protecting them when they were attacked by right-wingers.

At Islington, Leicester, Southall and Plymouth, the fascists have suffered defeats. They have been easily outnumbered by anti-fascists, although their numbers were boosted in each case by busing in the faithful from long distances away. But the other people who have been defeated are the pacifists and conciliators — from the Church to the Communist Party. These people have been urging 'restraint' and 'moderation', 'good will' and 'impartial policing', prayer or whatever else heaven is based on. Along with conservative-minded community leaders they all counsel steering clear of the fascists.

Yet every time there is an incident like that at Southall or at Leicester, or in 1977 at

Lewisham and in Haringey, more and more people come to see the need for militant workers' and black self-defence. And the more there are of us, and the better organised we are, the more racist violence and police violence will be curbed.

At the press conference given by the Joint Co-ordinating Committee of Southall Organisations, Balraj Singh of the Southall Youth Movement put forward four demands:

■ Blair Peach's murderers must be brought to justice

■ All charges against demonstrators to be dropped.

■ An independent public inquiry into the police action on the 23rd.

■ Support for Saturday's march through Hoxton.

We should also demand the immediate dissolution of the Special Patrol Groups, and defend our right to demonstrate, against any state bans on marches.

Dissolve the SPG now!

The law...

— BY ANDREW HORNUNG —

THE POLICE Federation is spending £21,000 on newspaper advertisements. Under big 'Law and Order' headlines, the advertisement calls on all General Election candidates to 'uphold the rule of law and support the police in their efforts to apply it'.

The Police Federation wants a restoration of powers to the Juvenile Courts and improvements in police manning, equipment and training.

For young people who fall foul of the law, the cops want more courts and punishment, less care and counselling.

The advert went into every big-circulation paper except the pro-Labour *Daily Mirror* on April 20th. The previous day, the papers carried reports of Sir Robert Mark's article in *Security Gazette*.

The ex-Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police — these days better known for his idiotic tyre advertisements — denounced the unions.

'Not only do they enjoy a high degree of immunity from the law' he stated, adding his voice to the chorus of Tory union bashers, 'in any critical situation in which the law does not support them, the Govern-

ment of the day — their partner or their puppet, according to your view — declares its intention to change the law in their favour.'

'This is not unlike the way in which the National Socialist German Workers' Party achieved unrestricted control of the German State between 1930 and 1938.'

The Anti-Nazi League gave the briefest and best answer to this nonsense: 'The German Nazi state was a police state, not a trade union state, which seems to have escaped Sir Robert'. Indeed the Nazi state smashed and then outlawed the trade unions, imprisoning trade union officials and activists.

According to Mark, socialism was alright years ago, but now 'its original intention to eradicate poverty and to achieve equality of opportunity has given way to a deliberate policy of egalitarianism...'. And what are the evil methods of this evil policy? Income tax, the National Health and the erosion of private schooling.

The only force capable of stopping this slide into egalitarianism is the police. 'The police are now the most important public service of our time; not simply thief-takers but, more importantly, the

shock absorbers by which the impact of social change is alleviated'.

None of this rubbish about the police being non-political here: Mark advertises the Tories as blatantly as he plugs tyres.

The next day, a similar message came from top judge Lord Denning.

Denning, who over the last few years has been doing his best to twist the law against pickets and strikers, claimed in a speech in Ontario that 'the trade unions represent the greatest challenge to the rule of law'.

Mark's whacky notions rather embarrassed the Tories. But both Denning and Mark gave a boost to the anti-union and police-power themes of the Tory hustings.

Speaking on 19th April, Margaret Thatcher said her aim would be a 'barrier of steel' on law and order — directed first and foremost against pickets. When the Tories talk about law and order, their aim is not to protect the weak and vulnerable. Their aim is to strengthen the arm of Tory judges (like Denning) and Tory policemen (like Mark) against workers fighting for their rights. Their aim is to protect upper class privilege.



Robert Mark, former top cop now advertising the Tory union bashing policies.



Lord Denning: anti-union judge on the warpath

...and union wreckers



by
GORDON BREWER

THE TORIES started their union-bashing election campaign with a spate of attacks on the 'small minority of wreckers' who terrorise the good people of Britain by picketing, demonstrating, going on strike and engaging in sundry other anti-social activities.

But who are these wreckers? Are they a tiny band who have it in for everything decent in our civilisation, or were Thatcher and her cronies merely making a veiled attack on every worker who dares to take action against the bosses?

Thatcher spilled the beans in a speech at Gravesend on April 17. In the course of a speech on Tory policy on the unions, she got so upset by

the thought of the wreckers lurking in the pores of society that she departed from her text to express her woes.

'There are a few wreckers in society. They are the ones, so many of them, who do go on strike, who do indulge in secondary picketing and have demarcation disputes.'

Well may Thatcher be worried. These wreckers increase their numbers in the course of a single sentence!

But there was worse to come. For not only can the wreckers cause havoc, they can do it quite legally. 'Some of these wreckers even have the law on their side and we cannot get at them.'

So, who does Thatcher want to 'get at'? She answered the question herself. Not a 'small minority', but every member of a trade union, everyone who 'does go on strike', who pickets and who

takes on the boss.

Of course Thatcher will not openly say that she wants strikes to be made illegal. The simple reason is that the power of the unions prevents her even daydreaming about forcing that through. But the Tories are out to attack the unions, as much as they can get away with. And that is what is behind all the claptrap about 'a small minority of extremists'.

Stand fashion

by
GEOFF BENDER

THE campaigning speeches of Margaret Thatcher reveal the mentality of the Tory leadership and the grim prospect of a future Tory government. Despite the flowing phrases, full of moral uplift for the flower-hatted Tory ladies, the underlying tone is one of threat.

For Thatcher, the country is going to the dogs. Trade unions and the state have robbed individuals of initiative, money and rights. She and the Tory party will halt 'the slither and slide to the socialist state'.

This slithering and sliding is being presided over by Callaghan — who is guilty of 'a summons to apathy, a clarification for inertia and indolence', and at the same time 'at the mercy of forces within the Labour Party

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COLIN FOSTER

ACCORDING to George Gale in the *Daily Express*: 'Those without ancestrally firm party allegiance will split two ways: the brave and intelligent will vote for Thatcher, the fools and cowards will cleave to Callaghan'.

'She is passionate about her politics', writes Mr Gale, 'and men are frightened by passionate women'.

Mr Gale reckons himself brave enough not to be frightened... and intelligent enough to spin out this sort of pro-Tory razzamatazz into an *Express* front page article without once mentioning any of the Tories' policies.

It should earn Mr Gale some sort of 'Tory Hack of the Year' award. He managed to suggest that women voting Tory would be striking a blow for the rights of their sex, that men voting Tory would be courageously rejecting stick-in-the-mud complacency, and all without any tiresome troubling with facts or political issues.

Not all the press succeeds so well in packaging the Tory message of elitism, exploitation and privilege and pretending that any attempt to change the system is soft-headed nonsense.

They say another Labour Government would mean Britain becoming 'like Communist East Germany' (*Mail*, 19th). As Margaret Thatcher explained to the *Mail* (17th): in 'an entrenched Socialist Britain in 1984', 'the House of Lords would have lost what powers it still has... That is the whole of their tactics. Leave the facade of democracy and remove the substance...'

So the substance of democracy, for the Tories, is the House of Lords! No wonder they think socialists will do away with democracy.

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held back by old loyalties" she attacks "the officious, jargon-filled, intolerant socialism practised by Labour... from flying pickets, the kangaroo courts, the merciless use of closed shop power, and all the other ugly apparatus which has been strapped like a harness on our people and our country..."

She imagines hordes of Labour supporters ready to defect to the Tories because of Labour's 'extremism', rather than thousands who will stay at home because of Callaghan's 'moderation'.

In Birmingham, invoking the memories of Disraeli and Joseph Chamberlain, she offered the Tory's 'wind of change' as the answer to industrial decline. Tax cuts, the restoration of incentive, these are her magic formulae. "No blueprints, no planning agreements, no strategies, no working parties — just that revolutionary idea — private enterprise",

says Thatcher on unemployment.

Funny how many firms based on 'private enterprise' have gone broke and been prepared to accept state handouts... even under Tory governments.

Thatcher's concern for freedom seems to take a nose dive when she broaches the subject of law and order. The only areas in which public spending and the extension of state power is acceptable, it seems, is in its repressive role. While other forms of state intervention are wasteful and stifle individual initiative, the police and army apparently guarantee our freedom.

She attacks the Labour ministers for attending picket lines, Labour backbenchers for criticising the police, and both for their silence "when confronted with flying — and violent — pickets". This, she says, "gives the green light to lawless methods right through in-

dustry".

Warming to the subject, Thatcher told a Birmingham audience: "In their muddled but different ways the vandals on the picket lines and the muggers on our streets have got the same confused message. 'We want our demands met — or else'..."

She struck the same note in Cardiff: "At least they'll never attack the judges, people said. But they have. ... At least they won't support violent mass picketing. But they did. At least they won't let militants close hospitals... But they did that too. Five years ago these things would have seemed incredible".

Five years ago, when the miners had thrown out the Heath Government — moderate in comparison to what Thatcher promises — the prospect of a future Tory Government with Thatcher at its head also seemed incredible.



Thatcher's speeches: moral uplift for Tory ladies in flowery hats, threats against the unions

Ian Smith's kith and kin

'ONE man one vote' elections where whites vote twice, where white votes secure ten times as many MPs as black votes, where one densely populated area recorded a 108% turnout — and all conducted under martial law conditions. It hardly seems a model of democracy.

But observers from the British Tory party — a group of lords led by a former Colonial Secretary responsible for imprisoning African nationalists in concentration camps in the 1950s — seem to have thought highly of Rhodesia's 'internal settlement' elections.

They were flown round the country by courtesy of the South African Air Force, and heavily guarded by the Rhodesian Army which had mobilised almost all whites between the ages of 18 and 65 to 'protect' the elections.

Rhodesia's whites are pinning their hopes on a Tory victory to secure British recognition for the new regime in which they will keep the whip hand. Ian Smith's Rhodesia Front has 28 of the 100 seats, able to block any changes to the constitution. It will have 5 seats in the new 20-man cabinet, and keep complete control over the army, police, judiciary and civil service.

Muzorewa and Sithole, Smith's black partners in the regime, have gone along with all the military effort to push the elections through. During the elections, Rhodesian army raids into Zambia and Mozambique continued, in an effort to weaken the guerrillas fighting for genuine majority rule, while in Rhodesia private armies set up by Muzorewa and Sithole assisted the army in dragging two thirds of the black population to the polls.

The guerilla war of the Patriotic Front forces is continuing. (The regime could only produce two guerillas who had surrendered in order to vote.) The full-scale mobilisation that gave the regime control of the whole country for one week's duration will now have to be abandoned: Smith and Muzorewa have 'won' the elections, but they are far from being in control of the whole of the country they pretend to rule.

NIK BARSTOW



Muzorewa, front man for continued white rule.

press barons' red scare

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On Sunday 8th the Social Democratic Alliance, a tiny crackpot right-wing Labour group, attacked 43 supposedly left-wing MPs as extremists. The *Express* (9th) put it on their front page: 'Labour's Danger Men'. On the 11th their front page was 'The Red Face of Labour', claiming the Labour Manifesto was a "carbon copy" of the Communist Party's.

And on that basis the idea that Labour is almost in the grip of 'extremists' becomes an obvious truth for the Tory press — just stated as such, or backed up with such authoritative evidence as Chinese government statements (*Sun*, 20th) or "common knowledge". But the idea is always kept just vague enough that no-one will take it literally enough to look at the "evidence" closely.

As Keith Waterhouse pointed out in the *Mirror* (19th):

"It's curious that when the Tories look back with nostalgia it's never at their own golden age — when, as I understand it, you could get a day's work out of a miner and still have change out of half a crown — but at Labour's."

"They are forever talking about how jolly it all was when the Labour Party was run by moderates instead of Marxist rabble like Jim Callaghan."

"Older readers will remember those moderate days — when Labour did nothing more radical than nationalising the railways, the coal mines, the Bank of England, Cable and Wireless, the steel industry, and road haulage."

The picture that comes together from the Tory press is of a Labour Party led by self-seeking muddlers, controlled behind the scenes by ruthless extremists, which will lead us to Quangoland and/or to Stalinism.

The blurring in the picture

is essential: the aim is to combine Trotskyists, Stalinists, militant strikers, State bureaucrats, and union leaders all in one composite image of the would-be Socialist Tyrant. And no account of what the Reds actually want, let alone any argument as to why it should be a bad thing if Britain went Red, is ever presented: the issue is 'moderate' versus 'extremists', and it is to be taken for granted that these 'extremists' are bad.

Just as the reds are almost overrunning Parliament, union power is almost overrunning industry. For the *Mail* (12th), "union tyranny and union abuse of power" is the big issue of the election; Paul Johnson explains that present-day society is "possessed by devils" — "wage-claims, destructive strikes, union power".

Like the Red Bogeyman, the trade union devil is invisible. But it's there, hiding behind the apparently not-so-sinister activity of trade

unionists on the factory bench next to you. If you don't stick strictly to the narrow path of virtue, the Satanic impulse to demand higher wages could even possess you.

The *Sun* rammed the point home with a full-page rant (18th) against idle workers — Britain's "biggest bugbear". Old machinery, lack of investment — that, according to the *Sun*, is due to profits not being fat enough. For the *Sun*, there can't be any real investment without fat profits, any more than there can be real jobs. To set unemployed engineers to make new machines, under a socialist plan of production, would violate the laws of nature.

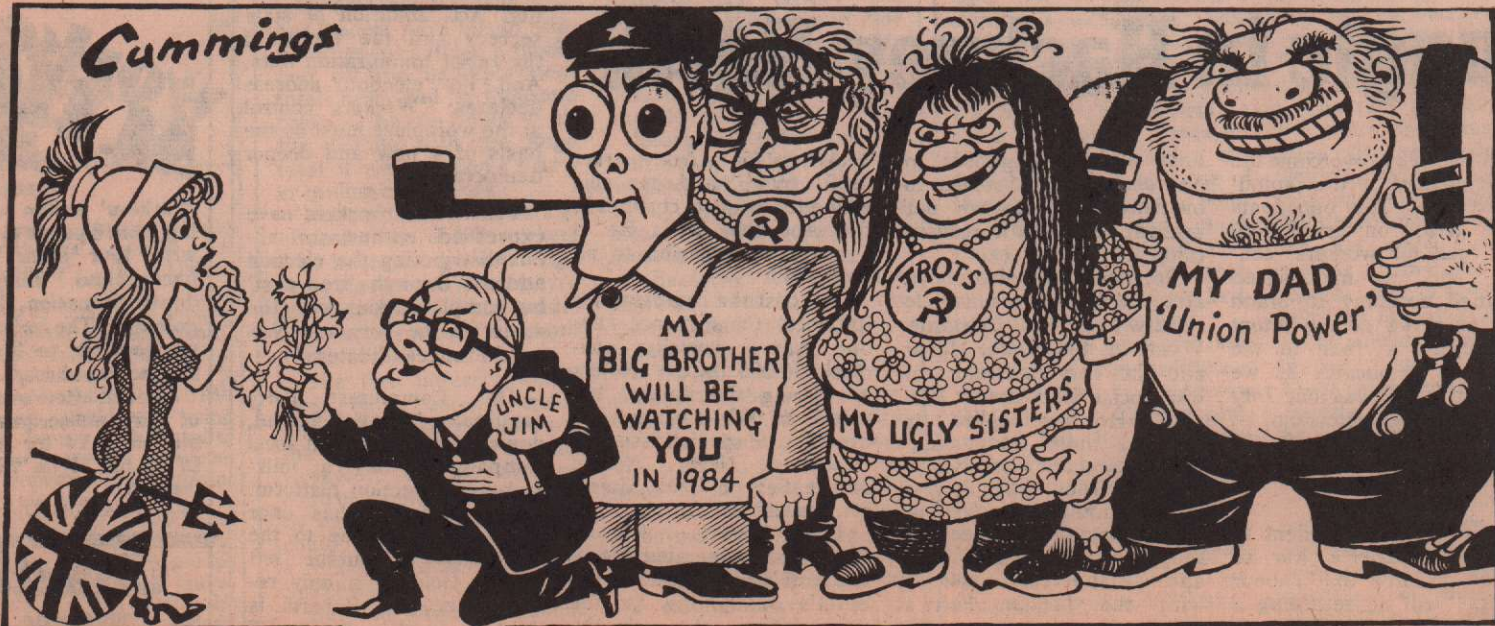
It did not need much insight on the part of the *Daily Mirror* for it to be able to publish an editorial (17th) explaining why the rest of the big-circulation dailies are so keen on Toryism and profit-making. The *Sun* is owned by Tory profiteer

Rupert Murdoch. The *Express* is run by Tory profiteer Victor Matthews. The *Mail* is the property of Tory profiteer Lord Rothermere.

The *Mirror* is also owned by big business — Reed International — and there is nothing very left wing in its stand. It backs Labour, but on the grounds that the Government has been "standing up to the unions, in one dispute after another".

The *Mirror* is a good deal less zany than the Tory press. On the face of it, it has a more sensible view of politics even from the bosses' point of view. But the red scare stories do have some logic to them.

A Tory victory will be a victory for open union-bashing. A Labour victory will increase the pressure on the conservative Labour leaders from the labour movement. By denouncing a mythical red menace now, the press barons hope they can stop a real red menace in the future.



The Daily Express's view of the Labour Party

Litterick in full retreat

WHEN TOM Litterick defeated ageing Tory Harold Gurden and took Selly Oak for Labour in 1974 he lost no time in establishing himself as one of the most outspoken of the government's left wing critics in parliament. The Westminster lobby correspondents dubbed him the 'Midland red'.

As well as opposing the Social Contract and public sector cuts, Litterick set himself apart from most Tribunites by voting against the Prevention of Terrorism Act and publicly supporting the call for troops out of Ireland.

Until the summer of 1978, when a general election seemed imminent, Litterick and his agent and close confidant Albert Bore were promising a 'strongly anti-government election campaign'.

In fact one of Bore's arguments against affiliating to the SCLV was that Selly Oak was already committed to most of its positions and actual affiliation was unnecessary.

But as the time for them to put their words into action came closer, both Bore and Litterick noticeably began to soften on the Government's record. Increasingly Litterick began to come out with the standard Tribunitary excuses 'we daren't risk bringing the government down by voting against it' and 'remember, we haven't got a majority'.

When the election date was announced Selly Oak CLP was immediately dissolved and control of the campaign passed into the hands of Litterick, Bore and an election committee 'selected' from the CLP executive. Since then, criticism of the government or alternative policies have been absent from any of Litterick's leaflets and speeches.

Litterick was one of the Birmingham MPs on the platform at a rally in the city who loudly applauded Callaghan's reply to a heckler protesting at army atrocities in Ireland — 'How on a day when four policemen have been killed dare you criticise our policy'.

Litterick has been out-

spoken on just two issues: the Common Market (which he seems to hold responsible for every problem workers face) and the demand for import controls, which he seems to think has magical properties for dealing with unemployment.

In a constituency very much dependent on British Leyland's giant Longbridge plant Litterick has made full play of the Tories' noises about disbanding the National Enterprise Board and carving up BL. A leaflet put out by the Austin Joint Shop Stewards echoes Litterick's argument: 'The minority Labour government have pursued a policy of saving jobs through the NEB and trying to prevent the UK's industrial decline. Leyland owes its existence in the short term to the action of the NEB and the massive investment that private industry ignored is now taking place. Here at Longbridge there is investment that will drag us from the stone age and help us underpin the future.'

Like Litterick the CP-controlled stewards conveniently forgot that much of that investment is intended to slash jobs at Longbridge.

An SCLV Longbridge leaflet pointed out 'The first point to be made about that argument (that Labour saved Leyland) is that it won't cut much ice with the workers from Speke No.2, AEC Southall or any of the other 10,000 workers who lost their jobs at BL in 1978 alone — under a Labour government'.

SCLV supporters are not alone in Selly Oak in being disappointed in Litterick's campaign. Nevertheless, we are actively supporting him and have helped organise several meetings at Longbridge — while arguing forcefully against much of what he says.

What we are telling BL workers now is not to believe the story that 'a vote for Labour is a vote for job security' — but to re-elect Litterick and demand that he acts on his promises if he wins and Edwardes starts chopping jobs again.

JIM DENHAM

Hornsey

On Sunday 22nd April, Hornsey in north London was given a mass canvass from Labour supporters who came in from Haringey, Islington, Hackney, Brent and places even further afield. SCLV members responded in a big way to the call to make Sunday a 'Hornsey Day'. Altogether as many as 130 canvassers converged on the area.

Hornsey is in many ways the key marginal in London. The sitting MP is Hugh Rossi the Tory spokesman on housing, who has distinguished himself by his support for small landlords and for anti-abortion groups like SPUC.

Standing against him is SCLV sponsor Ted Knight, who is attacking a Tory majority in the last election of 1972. A very small swing would land the seat for Knight — and local election results since 1974 have in fact shown such a swing.

The canvassing returns are also encouraging and indicate a clear Labour lead. And campaigners feel that the frenzied attacks by Rossi on Knight and the SCLV, and the accompanying publicity in the local press, have rebounded against the Tories.

The crucial battle will be to get the Labour vote to the polls, in spite of the Labour government's dreadful record.

All offers of help to the agent, Jeremy Corbyn, c/o 28 Middle Lane, London N.8. Tel: 348-7362.

Nottingham

JOAN BLACKMOOR, an SCLV sponsor who is standing for the council in Gedling (Nottingham) described to *Socialist Organiser* the red-baiting campaign being run by Labour's opponents.

'Our Ratepayers' candidate has got a big notice in his window that says 'A vote for Labour is a vote for Communism'. Two Ratepayers' candidates in my ward are ex-Labour Party members. One of them walked out in a huff three years ago when he wasn't reelected as a Labour council candidate.

'A Tory candidate has been going round telling old people that we're 'communists' to try and get them scared. But the Tory's attitude to old people is getting a lot of backs up.'

'One Tory councillor called old age pensioners 'greedy' for complaining at

having to pay £3 for bus passes that used to be free. After all, £6 for an elderly couple is a lot of money.'

'Obviously we don't want to make a big fuss about 'smear campaigns'. We don't want to be seen as anti-communist. I find it difficult to say 'No, I'm not a communist'. We're socialists in the Labour Party, what else can you say?'

Falmouth

'We don't want a Tory government, but we do want a Labour government that will fight for working people' is a common response we've got canvassing in Falmouth. People feel let down by the Labour government but the only alternative is voting Tory, and working class voters aren't going to do that. In fact our campaign has got a lot of support, people are coming and asking for posters to put up.

Wages are so low in this area that when people say 'we'd be better off on the dole' they really mean it. A new Tesco store opened in Truro a year ago with a blaze of publicity. Now there's hardly one person working there who's been there since it opened, the wages are so abysmally low.

The threat to jobs at the nationalised Falmouth dockyards hasn't been a big issue — there's a mood of just accepting the redundancies. That's also the result of the low wages and depression in the whole of Cornwall. When Tony Benn did a meeting here he talked to the union committee at the Yard and said 'You don't nationalise a company just by changing the name on the door. There should be investment in the Yard, investment in skills not investment for profit'.

We need to get a Labour government back to push them into putting those sort of words into action.

For the local Tory candidate even the threat that the Labour Party will put up a fight has started him off talking about 'Marxist infiltration'. So far he hasn't got round to a personal attack, but I'm expecting it.

Unfortunately the regional Labour office seem scared by this sort of witch-hunting. I'd promised to speak at a Militant meeting and pressure was put on to try and stop me. I support *Socialist Organiser* rather than *Militant* but I'm prepared to speak on any socialist platform.

Socialists fighting this election shouldn't be pushed about by these red scares.

We've got to go all out to get our views over.

PETER TEBBUT
PPC, Falmouth

Kilburn

KILBURN, one of the biggest Irish areas in London, is divided between two constituencies, Brent East and Hampstead. In Brent East, Labour canvassers report that many Irish voters are planning to abstain, but in Hampstead the Labour vote seems solid.

The reason? In Hampstead, the Labour candidate is Ken Livingstone, an SCLV sponsor who is a well-known and active campaigner for British withdrawal from Ireland. His election leaflets say: 'Troops Out!'



In Brent East, the Constituency Labour Party voted to support the SCLV, and it is on record as backing political status for Irish prisoners and withdrawal of troops. But when the CLP's Manifesto Committee met and voted to put out a 'Troops Out' leaflet, the election agent flatly vetoed it.

As a result, Irish Republicans are distributing their leaflets calling for abstention in Brent East, but have agreed not to put them out in Hampstead.

The SCLV also had a contingent on the Easter Commemoration march through Kilburn on April 15th, organised by the Irish Republican Socialist Party.

Northampton

NORTHAMPTON's two constituencies are both marginal. The South is held by the Tories by 200 votes, the North by Labour with a margin of just over 1000.

But despite this the campaign is not producing any fireworks. In the south, the Labour candidate Graham Mason prefers to win votes through personal charm rather than by any socialist fight. In the North, Maureen Colquhoun is trying to keep her seat in Parliament by cutting herself off from the most energetic activists in the

Constituency Labour Party.

At the same time as raising issues like withdrawal of troops from Ireland and support for women's rights and low-pay struggles, Colquhoun has become aligned with the right wing of the local party, particularly with four dubious councillors who are all self-employed and refuse to reveal their business interests.

But the campaign against Colquhoun inside the party is being carried out in a very wrong way. Although Colquhoun's four right wing friends had been selected by their wards as candidates for the council, the district Party overruled their selection.

To fight the right wing on the 'rules' is pointless. Not just because you generally lose, but because it obscures and distorts the fight for a democratic labour movement. That is the lesson of what has happened in Northampton over the past few months.

ROSS CATLIN

Islington

LAST year Islington North CLP was suspended for five months for refusing to re-admit Keith Veness after the NEC had ruled that they should. In late January they still refused but in March they finally climbed down and re-admitted Veness after pressure from Transport House to comply.

The ward AGMs were held in early April and a sharp swing to the left recorded in many wards, including some of the larger ones. Then came news of the general election.

We awaited news of the adoption meeting scheduled for the start of the campaign — and waited... and waited. Finally someone rang up Transport House and was amazed to find that the papers for adoption had already been filled in and that the sitting MP, Michael O'Halloran, had been listed as already adopted.

More phone-calls to the outgoing party secretary (he is not standing for re-election) revealed that he had been advised that no meeting was needed and that it was a formality anyway. Aghast, we rang the regional organiser, who confirmed that this was indeed his advice.

We are left as the only constituency to not even formally adopt its candidate. To date no meetings at either ward or constituency level have been organised to plan any sort of campaign and no public meetings are scheduled. The posters are still apparently at the printers and canvassing is theoretically planned, but it is now rather late in the day.

Worse still, no plans are envisaged to help in either of the neighbouring marginals, Hampstead and Hornsey, and it seems we must rely on the loyalty of traditional Labour voters to return our MP in this safe seat.

JAMES RYAN
GMC delegate, in personal capacity

Class struggle in Hackney North

'THE CLASS struggle in North Hackney', was how the local *Hackney Gazette* headlines its introduction to the local Parliamentary candidates. Labour candidate and SCLV supporter Ernie Roberts has pulled few punches in his campaign to defend the 1974 Labour majority of 10,500.

His election address, written democratically with the local Constituency Labour Party Propaganda Committee, declares that: 'The Tory party is the representative of Big Business, supporting the haves at the expense of the have-nots. They are the business Millionaires against the working Millions'.

The address calls for soc-

ialist policies to overcome the crisis created by the capitalist economy. Tory opponents have seized on Ernie Roberts' call for workers' control and a nationalised planned economy to brand him as a red demon intent on putting a 'nail in the coffin of democracy as we know it'. That was lone Tory councillor Joe Lobenstein.



Another correspondent in the local paper's war of words declares that Labour voters 'will be returning a far left wing revolutionary of unprecedented proportions; a man who openly nurtures the ambition to turn neigh-

bour against neighbour in our society as a means to overthrow and destroy our present democratic constitution'.

Roberts has also been attacked by Labour renegade right-winger Woodrow Wyatt in the *Sunday Mirror* and the Tory infiltrators of the Social Democratic Alliance. He has replied by dubbing them 'mud-slinging character assassinations'. 'They [the Tories] have to indulge in such pernicious propaganda because they dare not compare their anti-working class policies with the Labour Party's policies'.

Tory candidate Nicholas Bennett has echoed Thatcher's policies on housing,

declaring for a free market profit binge, and has also called for 'radical changes in the Abortion Act'. He is 'personally opposed to all abortion'.

To boost the campaign for the local Constituency Labour Party's socialist policies, 30,000 SCLV leaflets are being distributed, besides 45,000 election addresses, a special issue of 'Hackney North News', and leaflets in Urdu, Gujarati, Turkish and Greek.

Ernie Roberts holds out his founding membership in the Anti Nazi League as credentials in fighting for the democratic rights of the trade union movement and ethnic communities. He is calling for an end to wage

curbs, a Freedom of Information Act, abolition of state secrecy and the repeal of the racist Immigration Acts. And his election address declares: 'Workers' control at the workplace must be the basis of a new and deeper democracy'.

Post Office workers have expressed enthusiasm about distributing the election address through 'free post' but complain about doing the same for the Tory and National Front candidates.

The Communist Party candidate, Monty Goldman, depicted as a veteran local campaigner, has a milk-and-water election platform. His candidature has once again given the lie to the CP's claim to pursue 'left unity'. Goldman's only response is that Roberts is 'not a local'. Many CP members have refused to work for their candidate.

MIKE DAVIS

Workers' Action

Revolutionary socialist weekly. From May 19th, *Workers' Action* will be going from 8 pages to 12 pages, with four extra pages of background analysis, in-depth discussion, debate and polemic. The price will go up from 10p to 15p to meet the increased costs.

Special offer: until the end of May, subscriptions at the old rate, £4 for 25 issues, £7.50 for 50 (in Britain and Ireland).

WA:PO Box 135, London N10DD

Chartist

In magazine format. 32 pages for 35p plus 15p p&p from 60 Loughborough Rd, London SW9.

'Troops Out' against the Red Hand

OVER 1000 demonstrators marched through south Glasgow last Saturday, 21st, in the biggest 'Troops Out of Ireland' demonstration for seven years. The demonstration was organised by the United Troops Out Movement, and supported by Provisional Sinn Fein.

Despite constant intimidation and attacks by gangs of Loyalist thugs, the march reached the bridges over the Clyde into central Glasgow before disbanding.

The march received massive press coverage. The *Glasgow Herald* gave Chris Bamberg, the march organiser, half a page to explain why the march was being held. And the demonstration made front page news in the Scottish press on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Bruce Millan, Labour's Scottish Secretary, appealed publicly to the Glasgow Chief Constable for the march to be banned. But the police allowed it to go ahead — presumably

because they have already authorised an Orange parade for later on in the year and have no intention of giving a pretext for that to be called off.



And although the National Front threatened to stop the Troops Out demonstration, only nine people turned up for their 'march' from the city centre to Queens Park to

meet the UTOM demonstration.

Police efforts to defend the march once it got underway were minimal. As the demonstration assembled in Queens Park, four or five hundred Loyalists — firm supporters of Protestant supremacy in Northern Ireland — massed on either side of the road waiting for it to start. As soon as the head of the march set off they attacked, showering the front of the demonstration with

rocks, bottles and tin cans.

As the march moved on, Loyalist thugs waving a red hand of Ulster flag followed. When a group of them attacked a Sinn Fein flute band, the thin line of police moved out of the way to let them in — then arrested the Sinn Feiners.

And the police presence was obviously more concerned with intimidating the demonstration than protecting it. It was reported that armed Special Branch men were in the streets around the march. Police with dogs walked along the side of the demonstration — the side that faced into a Catholic area but not the side where the Loyalists were attacking.



Despite maximum provocation by the Loyalists and minimum protection by the police, the march had grown larger by the time it reached Gorbals, and many people waved support as it went through the outskirts of the Gorbals.

But as it reached the bridges into central Glasgow, the police set up the marchers to be attacked by the Loyalists. Herding the march under a railway bridge they told it to disperse, enabling the Orange gangs to block

the far end of the bridge. As the Troops Out demonstrators tried to move back, the police moved to block them off.

Only a clash between the two sides as the Loyalists blocked off a second bridge forced the police to intervene between the two sides, letting the demonstrators return to the Gorbals without a full-scale battle.

The fact that the march could be held at all was a victory. Coming in the middle of an election period, and following the exposure of British torture in Ireland and the build-up of the military struggle in the north of Ireland, the march showed the increasing support for the demand to get the British out of Ireland.

Last time such a march was held in Glasgow, after Bloody Sunday in 1972, it was severely mauled by Orange thugs. This time, despite the declared intention of the UDA and the UVF to stop the march, the Loyalists were outnumbered by two to one, and for all their efforts to provoke a riot they failed to break up the march.

But there is still a huge amount of work to be done to eradicate the sectarian poison which pollutes the workers' movement in Glasgow.

GORDON BREWER



An injured 'Troops Out' demonstrator in Glasgow

Duffy breaks a strike

THE TWO-week British Leyland craftsmen's strike was called off on Saturday 21st April. They were defeated not by the BL production workers (most of whom passively supported the action) or by the management. They were forced back by the leaders of their own union, the AUEW, who organised systematic scabbing throughout the action.

As well as calling for a widening of demarcation in the plants, AUEW leaders both nationally and at district and plant level permitted BL managers to do the skilled men's jobs. Now the craftsmen's leader, Roy Fraser,



Roy Fraser

faces a union investigation into his activities outside his 'constituency', the Oxford district.

In theory this could lead to Fraser losing his union card, and his job in the Pressed Steel Fisher plant at Cowley. It seems unlikely that the AUEW leadership would risk going that far, having been forced to withdraw their expulsion threat from the SU Carburator strikers last year.

However, any action must be fought by all AUEW members, and several groups (including Longbridge craftsmen who didn't join the strike) have already pledged themselves to strike action if Fraser is victimised.

JIM DENHAM



How not to save jobs

UNEMPLOYMENT is a big issue in the election. The Tories look forward with glee to restoring good old-fashioned cut-throat competition with good old-fashioned long dole queues. The Labour leaders have lots of little schemes for cutting a thousand off the unemployment total here and a thousand there — but no policy at all for dealing with the huge total of over one and a quarter million out of work.

Neither has any answers to offer for the 2,400 workers who have just gone through the gates at the Dunlop tyre plant in Speke, Merseyside. The factory closed on April 19th.

The tyre industry worldwide is in serious crisis, and only a fight to share out the work among all Dunlop workers, under workers' control, could save the jobs by cutting hours. That fight could have been started by a mass occupation of the Speke plant.

But the union leadership in the plant — despite its left wing reputation — never put forward that perspective.

They kept on promising that they had plans for militant action up their sleeves, and they were still promising as they walked through the gates. A huge gap remains between the 'official' left wing policies of import controls, alternative viability plans and so on, and socialist policies for a fight at rank and file level.

Rearguard action is still continuing. After a mass meeting at Speke on the 19th, engineering trades convenor Arthur Todd told *Socialist Organiser*:

"Basically, today's meeting was to reiterate that the men should not take the redundancy money.

"We still have pickets and support at the main engineering plant in Coventry, at Fort Dunlop (Birmingham), and at the docks entrance, in Skerries St, which supplies the Walton factory with materials for the production of sports products.

"Whilst this is happening we will continue to picket Speke to stop the machinery and plant being taken out".

Where the Border wins the vote

ONE THING is certain about any election results in the six counties of the northern Ireland state: the 500,000 people of the Catholic community will be voting for parties or individuals who favour links with the rest of Ireland, while the million-odd Protestants will be voting for parties or individuals supporting continued union with Britain.

On the strength of these figures this should mean that nine of the twelve returned MPs will be from the three main Unionist formations (the Official Unionists, the United Ulster Unionists, or the Democratic Unionists). The three MPs from Catholic-majority seats should be two Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) representatives plus

Frank Maguire, the Independent Republican from Fermanagh and South Tyrone.

However, in some constituencies the small Irish Independent Party and the Republican Clubs may split nationalist votes, and this may mean that SDLP leader Gerry Fitt loses his seat in West Belfast to a Unionist.

And the contest between the Paisleyite DUP candidate and the sitting MP William Craig in East Belfast might produce a gain for the more moderate Unionists of the Alliance Party.

But irrespective of the shifting sands of northern Ireland's electoral politics the people can be sure of one thing — no matter who they vote for a government committed to

maintaining the union with Britain will be formed at Westminster on May 4th. The fact that none of the major British political parties have come forward to defend the beleaguered minority community stamps this election as a matter of total irrelevance in terms of democracy, civil rights and the future of the Irish nation.

In the meantime, the resistance of the Provisional IRA to the military occupation of north east Ireland remains by far the most important thing in Northern Ireland politics today and for the foreseeable future. They have marked this election with a series of very successful actions against British military occupation and its police and security stooges.

DON FLYNN

PUTTING IRELAND ON THE ELECTION AGENDA

TRY AS they may, the major parties could not keep Ireland out of the election campaign altogether. First came the wave of attacks on military-political targets by Irish liberation forces. Then US Senator Tip O'Neill, a close advisor of President Carter, denounced the British Government's use of Northern Ireland as a 'political football', and Hugh Carey, Governor of New York State, demanded US sanctions on Britain to force British troops out of Ireland.

The British press and both Labour and Tory politicians were quick to denounce O'Neill's and Carey's comments, but they have done their level best to suppress public discussion on the issue. The established Labour left is no better. For instance the Bennite *Labour Activist* contained no reference to Ireland in its alternative manifesto.

While Callaghan was dismissing 'Troops Out' heck-

lers for their 'effrontery' a few Labour candidates have been speaking out. In London at least four constituency parties have included a 'Troops Out' platform in their election propaganda.

The real problem lies in the left's usual inability to even raise the question of the British presence in Ireland, and its consequences, as a legitimate item for discussion. Yet, when the wave of actions against the security forces, and O'Neill's intervention, forced a comment, the *Guardian* agreed in its leader that 'Britain and Northern Ireland are not one country as they pretend to be. They are not and never have been administered in the same way.'

The administration of an artificial Northern Ireland statelet can only survive by suppressing the national aspirations of the Catholic community. The utter failure of the Labour government, like all before it, to alleviate

the social and economic conditions of that community testifies to the legitimacy of those aspirations.

Before, during and after the election the *Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory* calls on the labour movement to raise these questions. In particular, as many branches as possible should send resolutions to this year's Labour Party conference denouncing the squalid deals made with the Unionists and the bipartisan policies of the Labour leaders.

The massive abstentions promised in this election by the Irish community in Britain, in protest at Mason's regime, reveal the depth of opposition to the continuing policy of repression and military occupation by Britain in Ireland. The massive demonstrations in support of the Provisionals held in northern Ireland over the past couple of years prove that the 'Irish Question' will not go away.

PETER CHALK

Socialist Organiser

THE POLICE IN FULL FORCE

by JAMES RYAN

A LARGE scale rebellion of the Asian population in Southall was crushed last Monday in the most violent exercise of police power seen in Britain for many years. The death of East London teacher Blair Peach lies at the door of Metropolitan Police Commissioner David McNee and of the council that allowed a National Front meeting to be held in Southall Town Hall.

Sunday had seen a demonstration of some 7,000 people, overwhelmingly Asian, in protest against the provocation. There were 23 arrests. From midday on Monday shops were boarded up and workers left their factories in response to a strike call from the Indian Workers' Association.

From 1pm crowds began to gather in the High Street; police coaches moved in, and the confrontation began. Throughout the afternoon and early evening countless skirmishes occurred, youths were arrested, and houses were stormed, as police cleared the town centre and imposed their curfew.

Around six the horses, vans and personnel were assembled, and as a helicopter circled overhead police smashed into a crowd around Southall Park, scattering resistance and hunting down as many demonstrators as they could net. By this time arrests were in the hundreds and injuries were commonplace.

Then came a lull, as anti-fascists tried to regain contact and regroup. Around 7.30 1,000 or more Asians and a smattering of whites had concentrated in the Broadway, a wide shopping street leading towards the centre of town. Their route was blocked by a line of police, in places six deep, and behind them the cavalry. Leaderless by now, the crowd retained only the ambition to hit and run.

Shop windows were pushed in, attracting screaming convoys of Special Patrol Group vans. The people would flee, leaving the uniformed thugs to go berserk on the backs of the slow-footed. But for a few moments, as they arrived and as they made to leave, policemen would feel the rain of bricks and bottles.

And now there were no prisoners: inside the vans boots and truncheons had their moment before a demonstrator would be kicked back into the street. So eventually 'law and order' were restored.

After the humiliation of Leicester, Commissioner McNee and friends were

continued on page 3

Anti-fascist killed in police strong-arm operation

Dissolve the SPG now!

ON FRIDAY April 20th, about 1000 people demonstrated outside Islington Town Hall in North London against a National Front election meeting. The next day about 5,000 tried to stop the fascists marching through Leicester to an election meeting.

On Sunday, thousands of Asians marched through Southall in West London, angered at the local council permitting the National Front to use the Town Hall.

The next day saw a mini-general strike of Asians in the area. At mid-day they streamed out of factories and shut up shops so that they could gather to stop the NF Nazis from holding their meeting. After hours of fighting between the police and demonstrators, with the police running amok, there were hundreds injured and hundreds arrested. And one anti-fascist had been killed by the police.

On Tuesday evening, anti-racists in Plymouth packed the Town Hall there and stopped NF Führer John Tyndall from holding a meeting.

To the press and the politicians of the major parties, the actions of the anti-racists are undemocratic. If anything, they say, they play into the hands of the National Front and help it spread its doctrine of race-hatred.

Socialist Organiser, when it first appeared last October, made its position clear on the question of the National Front. We said then: "Recent weeks have shown that on the streets of East London, fascism and racism are not just political theories; they mean murder. The labour movement can no more allow free speech to the fascists of the National Front than we would to an avowed Murder Party".

But we are not in favour of state bans against fascists. Many people in the labour movement think we should call on the state — in practice, on the police — to ban the National Front's marches, or call on the government to outlaw these race-hate mongers.

State bans are dangerous for three reasons, however. Firstly, they preach reliance by the working class on the state rather than on their own strength. The state is the enemy of the working class, and the police will be one of the staunchest defenders of the capitalist system against any attempt by the workers to undermine or overthrow it.

Secondly, any strengthening of the police means a strengthening of our present and future enemies. We don't want the police to have more powers, but less. Thirdly, if the police can pick and choose which marches can be held and which can't, it is the working class movement that will be the most frequent loser.

But wouldn't it be enough just to picket the NF's meetings? No. History shows us that the fascists draw strength and encouragement from their ability to strut about as if their opponents are afraid of them. The boldness that comes from this strutting arrogance leads them to murderous attacks on trade unionists, socialists, and racial minorities.

That arrogance has to be humbled. In practical terms, we have to stop the murderers before they kill us. Southall was where Gurdip Singh Chaggar was murdered three years ago. If the Asians of Southall had failed to respond to that attack, if they had gone about with

continued on page 3



BLAIR PEACH

BLAIR PEACH was killed while opposing the National Front and helping Asians defend themselves in Southall. Eye-witness reports tell the tale: "We were not demonstrating, but going home... then a transit came... the police, who were SPG, were wielding truncheons and riot shields. It was a case of the boot going in... There was no attempt to arrest anyone. Blair Peach was hit twice on the head with police truncheons".

Blair Peach's record in East London was that of an active trade unionist and a leading activist in the anti-racist struggle. Recently he completed his year of office as President of the East London Teachers' Association [NUT]. Last year at Loughborough School, Brixton, he was arrested for opposing the use of schools for National Front meetings.

He was a member of the Socialist Workers Party. Some years ago he started a campaign against a local racist landlord at the 'Railway' pub in Mile End, who was sacked as a result of the pickets that were organised. Because of this and because of his role in the Trades Council and the Anti Nazi League, Blair Peach had been threatened, harassed and beaten up by the NF. To the NF he was a marked man.

At work he confronted racism day in day out. He led a fight to ban one racist textbook.

In Southall on April 23rd, the police did to Blair Peach what the East London National Front have been itching to do for years.

SUE CARLYLE
[East London Teachers' Association, NUT].

'The police were beating him'

As the police rushed past, one of them hit him on the head with the stick. I was in my garden and I saw this quite clearly, and I saw the policeman who did it. My mother was watching from a window — and she saw it too...

When they all rushed past, he was left sitting against the wall. He tried to get up; but he was shivering and looked very strange. He couldn't stand. Then the police came back and told him like this: 'Move! Come on — move!'

They were very rough with him and I was shocked because it was clear he was seriously hurt...

Parminster Atwal, who picked up Blair Peach outside his house as he lay dying.

The police were beating that man like anything. I saw two of them hit him. He wasn't doing anything; but they hit him as they went past. It was too much.

Yaqoob Bhatti, another local resident.

We were on our way home but a number of policemen forced us into a side street. Blair was with us and he was hit twice on the head with truncheons and left unconscious...

Martin Gerald, a teacher who was with Blair Peach in Southall.

Accounts from the Evening Standard & Evening News.