

THE ENEMY IS AT HOME!

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Labour
Party

Socialist Organiser

Against all bans and proscriptions!

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THATCHER'S BLOODBATH!

SOME 8,000 Argentinian troops in the Falklands face a British force of some 25,000 men. Both governments have publicly pledged themselves to continue battle to the last drop of blood for control of the islands. Thatcher declares there will be no truce before military victory.

Hundreds or thousands of conscripts and 'economic conscripts' will be killed or maimed. The 1500 islanders, if not slaughtered in the cross-fire, face the prospect (whichever side wins) of their farms and villages being a small suburb of a huge military garrison.

And the workers of Britain and Argentina stand only to lose from this war.

The recent publication of the two governments' positions at the breakdown of negotiations shows conclusively that neither is sending its troops into battle for any great principle. They are fighting for military glory and to assert and defend their power at home and in the world.

Neither the islanders — whose (valid) rights are used by Thatcher as a pretext — nor the workers of Argentina and Britain had any say in the negotiations or the launching of this military showdown.

Thatcher is sending the troops into battle to boost the prestige and military power of the British ruling class, both in Britain and in the world.

British workers have no interest in seeing Thatcher's fleet triumphant. Our main enemy is at home — it is our warmongering, profit-hungry, world-exploiting, ruling class, and the Tory government which represents it. Our interest is in pursuing the class struggle, blacking work for Thatcher's war, forcing immediate withdrawal of the fleet, and stopping this war.



On the streets, June 6!

The Falklands Ad Hoc Committee is not calling demonstrations of its own on Sunday May 30 or June 6, but is calling on supporters to put all their efforts to get the maximum turnout of marchers carrying anti-war placards and banners on the 'Reagan Reception' demonstration on June 6.

The main rally on June 6 is at Hyde Park at

1.30pm, and feeder marches assemble at Belvedere Road, Hampstead Road, and Ladbroke Grove at 11am.

Socialist Organiser calls on all readers and supporters to be there with their placards and banners, calling for immediate withdrawal of the fleet, blacking of war work, and class war against Thatcher's war.

NHS: ACT ON NUPE STRIKE VOTE

By Anna
Lunts

NUPE Conference this week voted for a serious struggle for the NHS 12% pay claim.

An emergency resolution demanding that the EC call indefinite strike action from June 4 was passed unanimously.

There is no doubt this has given the EC a clear mandate to call its members out.

The task now is to get the resolution translated into action. From what Alan Fisher has said it seems the NUPE leaders are not going to take all-out action alone,

but will stall on the excuse that they need other unions to support first.

There is no sign of such support. Indeed GMWU official Charles Donnet has launched a scandalous attack on the NUPE vote which is likely to be more or less openly echoed by other right wing union bureaucrats.

Under these conditions hospital workers must keep up the pressure on the NUPE leaders to call action — then argue from a position of strength that other unions should follow NUPE's lead.

If this does not occur there are real dangers. There was a magnificent response on May 19, but many members now have mixed feelings about more 24-hour strikes. They realise that more is needed to win the 12% claim.

Already health workers in Edinburgh and Rotherham are on all-out strike. They must be strengthened and not isolated. Wherever possible other sections should come out before June 4.

The potential for solidarity action has already been shown with miners in Yorkshire and South Wales; the same solidarity must be shown by NUPE members in the water industry and local government.

And we need to link the NHS pay fight with the fight against Tebbit. A fight for strike action on June 10 — the TUC's 'Union Day' — is doubly important to make it a day of mass action — for our pay claim and in defence of our unions.



Time to challenge Foot

THE last Socialist Organiser delegate meeting decided to open a discussion in our columns on whether the time has come to start a new campaign for a challenge to Michael Foot this year for the Labour Party leadership.

As part of this discussion, we reprint part of the editorial from the current London Labour Briefing.

The Labour Party leadership over the last few weeks of the Malvinas crisis has revealed itself to be totally bankrupt.

Not a single voice in the Shadow Cabinet has been raised against Thatcher's war. Those who now call for negotiations but supported the sending of the fleet are hypocrites. For no one can be surprised that a "show of strength" results in death and bloodshed. And the blood that has been spilled is on the hands of those Labour MPs who supported the government as much as it is on the hands of Thatcher and Nott. The fleet has merely done the job it was sent to do. No one who supported its sending is now entitled to complain about the result — least of all those closet imperialists on the Labour front-bench.

Regrettably, Michael Foot's position has been the most pathetic and hypocritical of all. Apparently, he is in favour of war, but against bloodshed. "I am an inveterate peacemaker", he told the Labour Party Annual Conference only eight months ago. The

qualification which it appears he omitted to add was "except when there's a war".

Many may now feel, quite justifiably, that Foot is not the right man to lead Labour into the next General Election. His role in this whole affair has been hugely damaging to the Labour movement. This year's Annual Conference will be the last opportunity to replace him before that election, and pressure is bound to grow for someone to come forward and challenge him for the leadership.

For such weak, decrepit and clapped out leadership is an electoral liability. This was apparent in the council elections where Foot's 'national unity' stance actually encouraged those who felt that they had to use their vote to express support for the Government and its 'national war effort'. It also alienated that large and growing section of the British public which is totally opposed to the loss of life over islands to which we have no claim to sovereignty.

PHOTO: JOHN HARRIS



Foot — peacemaker except when there's a war on

Hornsey 'yes' to Tariq Ali

from London Labour Briefing.

THE HORNSEY Labour Party General Management Committee voted by a huge majority to endorse Tariq Ali's membership at its March meeting — despite continual baying, points of order, and disruptive tactics by a right wing rump including the New Statesman's chief pontificator on the Labour Party and Andrew McIntosh (well known to readers of LLB).

Copy

During the Borough election campaign a series of newspaper reports appeared which quoted heavily from a report to the NEC by David Hughes and George Page. Requests for a copy of this report to both George Page and David Hughes at regional and Head Offices of the Party met with a flat refusal, despite the suggestion that many of its comments were of a personal

nature against Jeremy Corbyn as Party chair and Pauline Ashbridge, a Co-op delegate.

The report has now been seen by the officers of the Hornsey Party and it is a couple of pages of hysterical and totally inaccurate criticism of the Party and its officers. It also shows an extreme bias against the Party locally by a paid official and a desire to attack the decisions taken. Nowhere does it state the expressed reasons for Hornsey taking a decision to admit Tariq Ali, or the way the NEC acted on reports in the Daily Mail by instructing Hornsey Party not to admit Tariq Ali.

Card

The local Party Executive voted by 10 votes to 7 to hand Tariq Ali a card on Wednesday May 12th, and visit from David Hughes and Eric Heffer is now awaited



Tariq Ali

where they will be asked to explain the irrational behaviour of the NEC and their continued witch-hunt against activists in the Party.

Hornsey has now voted on four occasions in support of Tariq Ali's membership, and seven of the nine Branches have passed motions expressing support for his membership.

Against witch hunts

Campaign for



Democracy

unity:

1. For the party to carry out policy there must be agreement to abide by decisions arrived at through existing policy-making machinery.

2. For the party to develop policy, party members must have the right to express dissent.

This Conference therefore calls on the party leadership to show tolerance for dissent, and in particular to respect:

a) the constitutional right of CLPs to select parliamentary candidates of their own choice, and for the NEC, in accordance with customary practice, to overrule this right only in

cases of technical infringement of the rules;

b) the customary right of CLPs to decide on the eligibility of those applying for party membership;

c) the customary right of party members with similar views to form groups to advocate these views more effectively.

Deplores

This Conference therefore deplores recent attempts to interfere with these constitutional customary rights. Policy or constitutional disagreements should be resolved in a spirit of tolerance and not by bureaucratic vetoes."

OUR AGM

THE Socialist Organiser Annual General meeting is scheduled for Saturday/Sunday, June 26-27, at the Lanchester Polytechnic, Coventry. The deadline for resolutions from local SO groups is June 8; the deadline for amendments is June 22. To help in organising this conference we need as soon as possible details of how many children are likely to be using the crèche, and indications of the requirements of disabled people attending the AGM. Please write to SO, 28 Middle Lane, London N8 8PL.

Next Socialist Organiser delegate meeting: Sunday June 6, 10am to 12.30, at the Keskids Centre, Gifford St, London N1.



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Patrick Spilling

PRESS GANG



THE PAPER that supports our boys recently commissioned a poll which showed Thatcher's war party had a 22% lead over Foot's camp followers.

That piece of news was published as you might expect, prominently in the Sun. But some other questions asked in the same poll have not so far found space in its pages.

Pollsters asked Mr and Mrs Cross Section "Who is standing up best for Britain in reporting the Falklands crisis?"

The good news for the Sun was that its response rate beat the Daily Mirror by 4%. The bad news was that the Mirror's 5% and the Sun's 9% scores were dwarfed by those who opted for the BBC which gained 38% of replies and easily topped the poll.

The Sun trailed behind almost everyone else including ITN, 26%, and Don't Knows, 11%.

There is no truth in the rumour that the Admiral of the Fleet is vainly seeking volunteers for an "Our Boys that Support the Sun" group.

However, in the spirit of unity, let us look at those things which unite the media, not those things which divide them. And nothing

unites the media more thoroughly than the conviction that the Argies are a push-over.

It was summed up in the News of the World headline last week "We've got 'em on the run" and in the Daily Mail the next day even more categorically "Victory in a week!"

The picture that emerged was of frightened conscripts left without food or training, trembling at the inexorable advance of British forces — whose major problem would be in travelling over soggy ground without getting their socks wet.

(Ironically the Argentine press was conveying a similar picture of British troops at exactly the same time.)

Stories of inferior opposition are as old as war itself and are certainly an integral part of the history of British imperialism. British troops are invariably cheerful, humorous, and folk philosophers.

Foreign troops are emotional, cowardly, and liable to panic at the first signs of battle. As Corporal Jones from Dad's Army was fond of saying: "They don't like cold steel, sir. They don't like it a bit."

The BBC is just as guilty as the Sun. Reports continually play on low morale

amongst Argentine troops and reports of rows within the airforce — always from unnamed sources. Censorship exaggerates this tendency. Eye-witness accounts are broadcast describing Argentine planes being shot down. But the same reports do not mention direct hits on British ships which the reporters have seen, until that news is released, little by little by the Ministry of Defence up to two days later, on a pattern of first of all saying there has been slight damage, then that the slight damage has got a little worse; and finally that the ship has sunk.

It is true of course that Argentine forces are largely conscripts who are poorly trained compared to the British invasion force. But they are still a professional and highly motivated army. Their pilots have shown themselves skillful at flying through the enormous barrage of missiles and anti-aircraft fire. The mounting toll of British ships gives the lie to the basically racist description of Argentine forces being displayed for the British public.

Above all, there is perhaps this in the Argentine forces: a sincere belief that the islands are home territory, at last being liberated.

That opinion has been held all their lives, unlike the British forces who for the most part have had only seven weeks acclimatisation to the concept of the islands being inalienably British.

Finally it is amazing how all the "technical problems" about sending pictures vanished as soon as a picture of the Union Jack being raised on the Falklands was taken.

Funny, too, how reminiscent those pictures of British troops being offered mugs of tea by the Falklanders have proved. They call to mind scenes in Belfast and Derry in 1969, when troops were welcomed by Catholics in working class areas.

The circumstances are totally different and no insinuation should be drawn from them that there will be 13 years of hard struggle ahead with little to show. After all, the Falklands are much more straightforward than Northern Ireland. Even the hills look like Scotland, we are assured.

Maybe that's why these ill-trained Argies can't stand the pace. At this rate it will be all over by Christmas!

NUPE MUST CALL OUT ITS OWN

by John Bloxam

NUPE Conference has unanimously passed the following resolution from Middlewood Hospital, Sheffield:

"This Conference recognises the success of the one-day stoppage on May 19 by health service unions and the support given by six collieries in South Yorkshire and several steelworks.

This Conference recognises however the futility of two-hour stoppages and the limited effect of one-day stoppages in breaking the government's 4% offer.

This Conference therefore resolves to call for an all-out indefinite stoppage, commencing on June 4, involving all health service unions, with accident and emergency cover only, until the government agrees to pay the 12% claim in full."

The need for all-out action as soon as possible and to involve other sections of workers caught the mood of the conference.

All-out

The question was not whether all-out action was needed, but when it should take place.

This feeling was rooted in what was happening in the areas. Many delegates heard for the first time of the all-out action already taking place in Edinburgh and Rotherham and the commitment to all-out action in Sheffield.

From calling for arbitration, this feeling had shifted Alan Fisher to calling for war. "Now the war has begun we are looking for victory".

But even while he spoke Fisher had seen his get-out clause. The Middlewood motion spoke of the need for united action - and the EC saw this as a means to evade an immediate call to action from June 4.

HEALTH Workers for the Full Claim: Next meeting Sunday May 30, 1pm to 5pm, Labour Club, Bristol St, Birmingham. All health union activists welcome.

Contact HWFC: c/o Anna Lunts, 78 High St, Atherton, Lancs. (0942 877296).



Fisher hinted as much during the debate - stressing the need to wait for the COHSE conference - which does not start for another two weeks.

He made it very plain to the press afterwards that NUPE leaders will hide behind the other unions

refusing to give a lead in action.

The fight to prevent these moves to rip up the resolution began on the Tuesday morning.

Meanwhile for all the calls for support, it is obvious that the only way NUPE will get other sections

of workers to give practical solidarity is to call out its own members in other branches of the public services.

The conference heard telegrams from Arthur Scargill and from civil service unions in Fowler's own department - but these



pledges can be turned into action only when health workers take all-out action.

And as water worker Ray Grey pointed out: "Why doesn't the EC bring out its own 'big battalions'?"

Water

"We should be saying to the government, give the health workers 12% or you will have a national strike by water workers."

Water workers' delegates lobbied the NUPE section conferences on Tuesday morning carrying placards with the slogan "pay up or water workers will dry up".

Their task now is to get a special delegate meeting to call strike action.



Hants walk-out

Basingstoke health workers of the GMWU, TGWU and NUPE had already chosen Wednesday 19 May weeks in advance of the TUC for a 24-hour stoppage, with a rally in the town.

We had pickets on all five gates from 6am through to 9pm, supported by delegations from the local busmen's union, NUR No. 2 and the local post office workers in UCW.

Many COHSE nurses were crossing the picket line. A lot said they had wanted to come out but their branch had decided against it.

Throughout the day it was obvious that most of the organising for the picket and the demonstration was done by GMWU workers in the psychiatric division. There were 300 of us on the march, supported by the postmen and busmen, and the AUEW ex-shop stewards committee from Haskins, the local engineering firm which made all its shop stewards redundant.

There were other banners from the Trades Council, Constituency Labour Parties,

Labour Party Women's Councils and even one local Labour Party ward banner as well as Socialist Organiser.

The leaflets and stickers put out by Socialist Organiser supporters were eagerly grabbed and distributed.

At the park the rally heard UCW Secretary Allan Fraser, a supporter of Socialist Organiser, say that the UCW was with the NHS workers all the way and how they would be doing themselves an injustice if they didn't go all out for the full claim.

Two other Socialist Organiser supporters made the same point from the platform later in the rally.

But the show of solidarity proved too much for management to stomach. On Friday morning the senior steward of the TGWU at the General Division Marianne Jones and three other domestics were suspended without pay for working to contract, that is to say they refused to collect their equipment which has been work-studied as supervisor's work.

Within 15 minutes a mass meeting called for a walk-out, which was virtually total. Emergency cover was arranged for porters at the General Division but their head porter said that if they wouldn't work normal duties, they could piss off.

They did, and joined the picket line outside.

Within a short time busmen and postmen had joined us out there. The police were called to inform us of what we already knew - there were more than six on the picket line.

Two bus inspectors arrived after buses had refused to cross the picket. This time they rode like shot-gun guards from the bus doors making the buses drive through and threatening to sack any driver who didn't cross.

A deputation of pickets was sent to the bus station manager who then removed the offending inspectors.

Most of the pickets were women - some of whom had to leave the picket line for a while in the afternoon to do shopping and cook meals. Some things don't seem to change!

The action lasted till Friday night and on the Monday morning the mass meeting reassembled while the suspended stewards presented themselves for work. When their equipment was not put out for them the 250-strong meeting marched off to see the hospital administration.

By 11.20 the stewards came out victorious.

We need a lead!

"I earn £74 per week as a ward sister and I look after 32 acutely ill patients.

2-hour stoppages won't win me 12% - when you come back you end up doing the work that piled up while you were out.

We need all-out action from June 4, with accident and emergency cover.

That cover must be under our control - not management's.

We must take out our own members now, and let the other unions follow our fighting lead.

Call on your local industries, especially where workers are well organised, and get them to strike on our behalf."

"We need more encouragement from the union to nurses who for the first time are taking strike action - in the face of victimisation and harassment from ward sisters and tutors.

We need advice - some nurses are afraid of losing their registration. Show nurses the way forward!

We can organise adequate emergency patient care. Let's face it - we do it often enough anyway!"

Socialist Organiser supporter Mary Ireson, speaking at the NUPE conference

ELLEN TAYLOR



May 19: Miners back NHS workers

Wednesday's strike was a fairly unbelievable success in Sheffield. Not only was nearly every hospital solidly out, but as a result of speaking to workplace meetings, 3,000 miners came out in our support. Steelworkers agreed to lobby for more wages for our strike fund and joined our picket lines and demonstration and students provided free transport for our flying pickets.

At Middlewood we had a strike committee for all

the unions involved and late on Tuesday members of the committee were contacted to get health workers to Maltby pit to ask for support. This meant setting out at 3.30 to catch the morning shift. When we arrived union representatives were immediately contacted and they organised a mass meeting.

The management weren't too happy and called the police to remove us from the premises. We put our case,

the union officials didn't call for a strike but left it to the individual consciences of the men.

When the police arrived they were able to escort us and 300 miners from the premises.

After this the strike committee organised a mini-bus to take as many of us as possible out to speak to the afternoon shifts.

They had already heard about Maltby and everywhere the support was won-

derful. We went back again to speak to the evening shifts. By this time the men knew they wouldn't be going down, and some of them turned up in their suits, just to hear us put our case and then go to the pub.

Obviously we had missed some of the early shifts so they came out Thursday morning. We were out 24 hours, so were they.

From this miners joined our picket lines in Sheffield and Rotherham and it has

been officially announced that all South Yorkshire miners will cooperate with health service workers in their dispute.

Last Wednesday we realised that all-out indefinite strike action could be the only option open to us and it was urgent that we got an emergency resolution to the NUPE national conference, calling on NUPE to call for and organise this.

WHERE NEXT FOR IRANIAN WORKERS?

Iran has announced the recapture of the town of Khoramshar — a major victory in the long war with Iraq. Mary Corbishley examines the prospects for the workers facing the newly-strengthened Islamic regime.

AS the Iraqis battle to hold on to the oil port of Khoramshar, the 20 month-old war between Iran and Iraq is reaching a critical stage.

When Iran was invaded in September 1980, Saddam Hussein had planned for a quick victory which would secure a place for Iraq as the strong state of the Gulf.

Against all expectations the war has dragged on and in the recent operations there has been a dramatic turnabout in Iran's fortunes and the outcome of the present battle is being anxiously watched by the other Gulf States.

What has become clear is the extent to which the Iranian regime has consolidated itself over the last year.

The army, which at the outset of the war was a fragmented force reflecting the different elements within the political scene, has been systematically purged and a new leadership has emerged loyal to Khomeini.

Rivalry and mistrust which existed previously between the army and the pasdaran (revolutionary guards) has been overcome — many of the new breed of army officers are drawn from a similar background to that of the pasdaran.

A bloody purge of the opposition through arrest, torture and execution has succeeded for the time being at least in driving the organisations underground.

A major opposition force, the Mojahedin e Khalq estimate that 10,000 people have been executed.

Since the killing of their military leader Khomeini in February this year they have been forced into increasingly disparate and clandestine activity.

Severe blows have been suffered by all left organisations. And even the Tudeh Party and the Fedayeen Majority who with slavish adherence to the regime (in the name of the 'anti-imperialist' struggle) condoned the attack on the opposition, are now themselves increasingly victims of this attack.

Clergy

More recently the political elimination of Ayatollah Shariat Madari, the spiritual leader of the Azerbaijanis indicates the preparations being made to ensure the appropriate successor to Khomeini and the continuation of the principle of Velayet e Faqih (rule by the clergy with the final say on all matters spiritual and temporal resting in the hands of the supreme guardian — at present Khomeini).

In the absence of any obvious successor it is planned to appoint a 3 or 5 person council of guardians.

But amongst the six grand Ayatollahs in Iran there is a long and



The Shah was toppled — but a new despotism has consolidated

concept of Velayet e Faqih, one of its staunchest opponents being Shariat Madari.

He believes that the clergy should concern themselves only with spiritual affairs and that rule by a supreme guardian leads to the dangers of a dictatorship. However, the public

apology by Madari for being implicated in an 'uprising against the government', would indicate that even the remnants of opposition within the clergy are being quietly controlled.

Where Iran lacks military hardware, it has compensated by the regime's cold-blooded ability to sacrifice

huge numbers of the population for 'the cause of Islam'.

During the February operations in which Bostan was recaptured, 14 and 15 year old school students ran Kami Kaze style into the minefields of the Iraqi defences. This suicidal heroism reflects the deep rooted tradition of martyrdom which runs through the Shi'ite brand of Islam.

Rationing

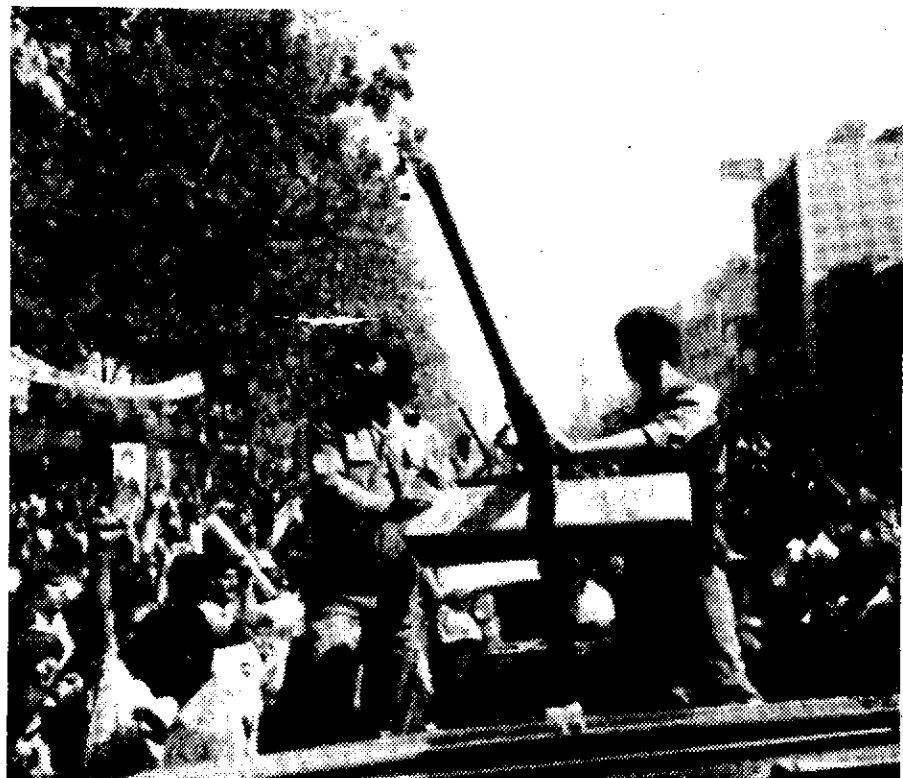
Families have willingly handed over their sons to be trained by the local Mullahs to die for the faith. To date about 60,000 people have been killed in the war with as many wounded. Tributes to these martyrs of Islam adorn the walls and streets of Teheran and other towns.

Such heavy casualties, have however been coupled with the severe rationing imposed to maintain the war effort as well as the phenomenal cost of the war to the extent that Iran has literally run out of money.

The regime recently tried to sell their equivalent of the crown jewels in order to raise hard cash and succeeded in selling 150 tons of gold to Britain. This economic plight makes a prolonged war difficult for the regime.

Devastating

Despite the proclamations of the more fanatical elements of the clergy, insisting that the war will continue Saddam's downfall and the establishment of an Islamic Republic in Iraq, the signs are that in expectation of a victory plans for peace



Islamic faith helped Iran to victory — but it won't last forever

The more conservative elements in the government around the President Khomeini are less concerned with Saddam's downfall and more concerned to ensure that the devastating effects of the war will not spark off mass discontent.

Refugee

They are aware that even among the most loyal Khomeini followers, support will eventually wear thin, and that families will not continue to give up one member after another to martyrdom.

Nor will victory sustain the thousands living in makeshift refugee camps. A central part of Iran's peace conditions is the demand for war reparations, badly needed to carry out reconstruction work in the war zones.

In addition a hasty attempt to rebuild the economy is being made. Food and raw materials are badly needed. Factories are currently running at only 30% of their full capacity.

In the absence of money, Iran is using its oil supplies to barter with other countries and are now supplying oil to New Zealand in return for meat.

The price of Iran's oil has been reduced to \$30 a barrel, \$4 below the OPEC prices, another factor concerning the Gulf states.

Revenues

More recently they have signed a prestigious contract with Brazil, which has broken its long-standing allegiance to Iraq, in return for cheap oil and a contract to carry out reconstruction work in Iran.

Recognising that a strong Iran may emerge victorious out of the Gulf war, the firm support for Iraq from the Gulf and other Arab states is beginning to falter.

A hastily-convened meeting of the Gulf states has been postponed to the end of the month to await the outcome of the recent fighting. Without their support Iraq is in no position to continue.

Saddam Hussein has borrowed heavily from the

Gulf states in order to finance the war. The loan of £13.6 million is already running low and there is no sign that the amount will be increased. In addition revenues from oil have been severely curtailed following Syria's decision to stop carrying Iraq's oil through the trans-Syrian pipeline, as part of its support for Iran.

If the war is to continue Hussein will have to exact a heavier toll on the Iraqi people. However the war effort in Iraq lacks the strong ideological motivation of Iran's war and it is by no means certain that Saddam can command a great deal of support for prolonging it.

Heavy price

Even with increased funding it seems clear that Iraq is not in a strong position militarily. In recent days they have called on other Arab states to send their armies to the aid of Iraq.

Whatever the outcome of the war the people of Iran and Iraq will have paid a heavy price for it. A defeat for Iraq will be a severe blow to Saddam and could open up the way to a struggle to remove him.

A victory for Iran will further strengthen the regime, at least temporarily. For the left it may seem that they have been thrust back into the same position as they were under the Shah, but the grievances of the working class, the peasantry, of the national minorities and of women can no more be answered by this regime than they could by the Shah's.

Take stock

Islamic faith alone will not sustain the urban and rural poor indefinitely. The mass discontent that brought down the Shah will yet remove this regime. Forced back into a clandestine situation it is vital that the left take stock of their struggle over the last three years.

The sham anti-imperialism which for so long fooled the present opposition into continued support for Khomeini has in practice

been exposed many times over.

The recent sale of oil to the US through an intermediary in Switzerland is just one more example.

For the Iranian working class the next period will be a test of their ability to forge a path independent of the Islamic regime.

Imperialism

One step in this direction would be the development of the fight for the opening of the books of the dislocated and ravaged Iranian economy to uncover the links between the major enterprises and the imperialist banks and monopolies.

Since Khomeini's regime has made so much of its struggle 'against imperialism' the demand must be raised for the expropriation of the remaining major imperialist holdings without compensation, and for these to be developed, under workers' control, as part of a planned socialist economy.

The post-war reconstruction offers a further opportunity for agitation around the question of unemployment — with the demand for a programme of public works to create new jobs for the unemployed.

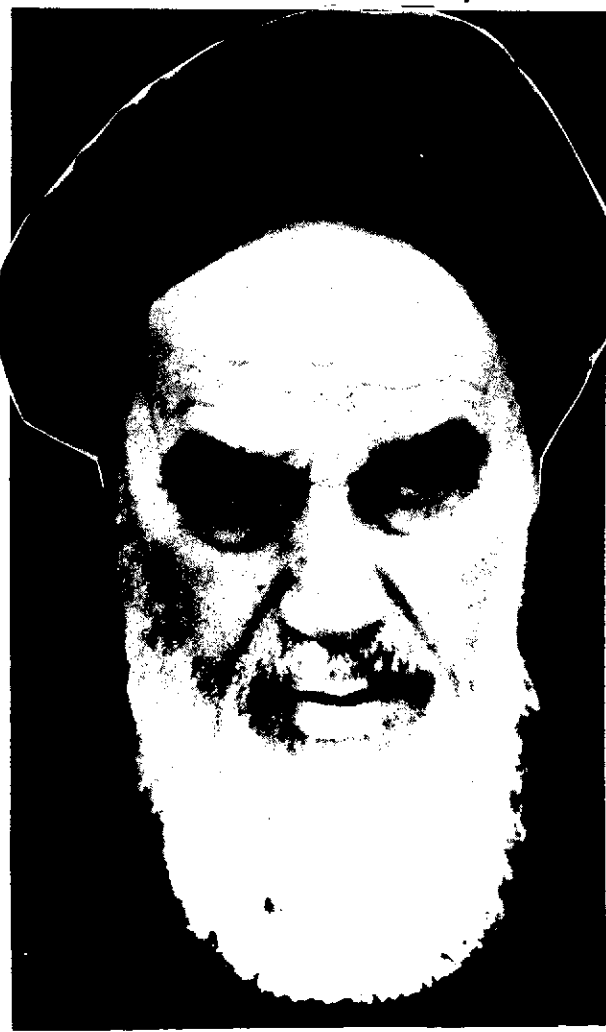
Workers

And the defeat of the so-called 'fascist' Saddam Hussein must be followed up by intensified propaganda and agitation for the democratic rights of women, gays, the oppressed minorities, the labour and socialist movement in Iran itself.

If these demands were to be pressed home they would quickly expose the hollowness of Khomeini's 'anti-imperialism' and point to the common cause of Iran's working masses in fighting for the overthrow of the vicious Islamic regime.

But the last period has taken a heavy toll of the Iranian left — and the repression has further isolated the small forces of revolutionary socialism.

The end of the war may be in sight — but the struggle for workers' power in Iran is once again only in its early stages.



For a sliding scale of wages - across the EEC!

by Martin Thomas

BY A vote of the EEC states on May 19, food prices were increased by 16p for a kilo of cheese, 5p for 250g of butter, and 3p per kilo of sugar.

Drama was added by the fact that the EEC was overriding Britain's use of a veto power which, though based only on custom, is usually respected.

No doubt the EEC states felt, after the support they have given through economic sanctions to Thatcher's war in the South Atlantic, that Britain was in no position to ask further favours.

Budget

Indeed, a few days later, obviously in exchange for a decision to extend sanctions indefinitely, Foreign Secretary Pym agreed a figure for Britain's budget contribution far higher than had been sought.

Underlying this crisis is the inability of capitalism to develop a rational system of agriculture. The EEC agricultural policy is based on fixing prices to support the incomes of small producers like the French peasants. It thus creates high prices, thumping profits for big capitalist farmers, and huge unsold surpluses amidst want and poverty.

Despite all that is claimed for it, the EEC in no way surmounts the contradictions of capitalism, but reproduces them at a new level. It does not transcend national rivalries, and the reactionary obstacles set by those rivalries to the development of society, but gives them new forms of expression.

Today, as they wallow in a slump, each capitalist class looks to its own profits, and the bright talk of international cooperation fades away. A Europe-wide economic plan, restructuring agriculture on the most efficient basis while safeguarding the livelihoods of the small peasants and providing new useful jobs in industry, can



Italian workers face the same price rises as British workers

only be the work of the working class.

A Europe-wide working class struggle is needed, to sweep away the EEC, the capitalist states on which it is based, and the Stalinist states of Eastern Europe, replacing them by a Socialist United States of Europe.

And an immediate step towards this should be a fight for a sliding scale of wages - an agreement guaranteeing regular cost-of-living wage increases in line with a working class price index - across the EEC, in response to this EEC-wide price rise.

Such demands will obviously in most cases arise first in particular firms in individual EEC countries. But many of the major firms - particularly in the automotive, electronics, engineering and chemical industries - are themselves part of multinational combines with subsidiaries across Europe.

A fight on wages in any one branch of such a firm should be extended in scope to draw in active support and common

struggle on a European basis.

Millions more workers throughout the EEC - particularly public service workers and those in nationalised industries - face the same problems of soaring prices. They, too, should be drawn in to the struggle to defend living standards.

If Europe's feuding capitalist classes can eventually find agreement on price rises throughout the EEC, is it too much to demand that the European trade union movement combine to put forward a common demand for a sliding scale of wages to protect their members?

Solution

Though the fight for such a policy will have to take place in diverse countries under varied conditions, the objective must be the same: to defend the independent interests of the working class.

Many on the Labour Left, however, have drawn different conclusions. For

them the May 19 vote confirms the validity of the call for Britain to get out of the EEC.

Whether this would be a British solution to the price rises is doubtful. (The British government was not opposed to the price rises, but only wished to use its veto as a bargaining counter to reduce its budget contribution). But certainly it is not a working class solution.

Reversal

The price rises affect workers throughout the EEC. How can British withdrawal be an answer for French, or German, or Italian workers?

Should they then demand that France, and Germany and Italy all withdraw? That would hardly reduce food prices - the same

irrationalities of capitalism would continue to operate in the newly walled-off states.

And in any case a socialist attitude to the reversal of the limited economic integration achieved by the EEC cannot be centred on the question of the price of butter.

That workers in each EEC country must fight first for the overthrow of their own ruling class, and that a victorious workers' government would have to cut through the Treaty of Rome as through all the capitalist property safeguards of its own nation-state, is one thing. That socialists should campaign for the withdrawal of the existing EEC states from their limited agreements to cooperate is quite another.

Our complaint against the capitalist classes is not that they try to organise economic integration, but that they do so inadequately and at the expense of the working class.

The development of monopolies, cartels, and multinationals has simply reproduced, in new forms, the vices of the old capitalism of relatively free competition. Yet the answer of socialists is not to break up the monopolies and multinationals, but to go forward, through the monopolies and multinationals, by struggle against them, by expropriating them and seizing control, and by building on and transforming the economic integration achieved by them, to socialism. Our attitude to the EEC must surely be based on the same method.

Begin lives to fight another war

by Jim Benson

AFTER a boisterous five hour debate, Begin scraped home in a vote of confidence by 58 votes to 57 with two abstentions in the Israeli Parliament (Knesset).

His struggle for political survival can be seen as a direct reflection of the instability of the heterogeneous Likud coalition since its formation at the last election. The Likud acquired 61 out of 120 Knesset seats after five weeks of negotiations and compromises, and after conceding to most of the religious parties' conditions.

These conditions impos-

ed certain limits which the government cannot overstep without risking collapse.

The latest political crisis was triggered by the ever-worsening economy. Inflation has reached unprecedented levels. In the month of April alone prices rose by 10.7 per cent.

The massive US aid has been engulfed by a foreign debt exceeding \$20 billion, and has failed to redress the deteriorating state of the economy.

The ostensible reason for the no-confidence motion - inflation and the state of the economy - was however pushed aside in the debate, where the opposition 'Labour Party' played no significant role. On the contrary, Peres, the 'Labour' leader, although in favour of fresh elections, stated that "Labour would not act as an aggressive opposition, harassing the government to defeat".

"It would", he added, "behave responsibly on the merits of the case".

Faced with his fragile majority, Begin will try to strengthen the base of his coalition by winning the support of other small parties. Horse-trading is reported under way with Telem (Moshe Dayan's party) and MPs of the extreme nationalist group Tehya. If he fails to attract their support, then Begin will have no alternative but to go for an election next winter.



Unions must back SAAWU

A week of action has been called by Anti-Apartheid for June 16-26

THREE black leaders of the workers' movement in South Africa have been brought to trial by the bosses' apartheid state. Thozamile Gqweta, Hisa Njikelana and Sam Kikine, leaders of the militant SAAWU have been charged with three other activists under the vicious Terrorism Act.

They have already been held in detention for months by the brutal security police. Now they face massive jail sentences. In the eyes of the bosses' state they have committed the crime of fighting for workers' needs. In the eyes of the working class they have committed no crime at all.

Already, before the SAAWU leaders were brought to trial, the AAM called for a week of action from 16-26 June in solidarity with the 500 SAAWU strikers victimised over a year ago by the South African subsidiary of Rowntree Mackintosh.

The week of action will end with a demonstration in York, site of the head-

quarters and biggest plant of the Rowntrees empire. Other meetings and demonstrations will be held in the same period to mark the sixth anniversary of the uprising of the black working class that began in Soweto.



We must immediately fight in trade union and Labour Party branches for support for blacking action, for large contingents on the York demonstration and for delegations to the Rowntrees shop stewards conference. The following model resolution should be put wherever

possible.

"This branch/ward:

1) condemns the arrest of the SAAWU leaders and their trial with three other militants under the Terrorism Act.

2) Expresses its total support for the workers' movement in South Africa and calls for the unconditional release of all workers and militants jailed for opposing the South African government and employers.

3) Agrees to mobilise the largest possible contingent for the June 26 demonstration in York.

4) Calls on the Executive to organise a full national mobilisation for this demonstration.

5) Calls on the Executive to call on the TUC to support solidarity action by organising total blacking of goods to and from South Africa during the action period June 16-26.

6) Calls on sponsored MPs and the Parliamentary Labour Party as a whole to campaign on these issues in the constituencies and in Parliament.

Socialist Organiser Alliance

Get Organised!

SOCIALIST Organiser fights to act as a real campaigning paper which can organise workers in the struggle for new leadership.

To do so we need consistent support and money. Socialist Organiser Alliance groups have been established in most big towns.

Why not join with us? Supporters are asked to undertake to sell a minimum of 6 papers per week and contribute at least £1.50 per month (20p for unwaged).

If there is no group in your area why not help us to build one?

To 'Get Organised', write at once to us at 28 Middle Lane, London N8.

Name

Address

Women in struggle



Spokesman for oppression

"John Paul II - on sale here" blaze the posters in newsagents' windows. This Pope certainly knows how to sell himself. And it's not just on the tacky level of the multi-million pound papal souvenir industry.

John Paul II has set out, and to a large extent succeeded in re-establishing the papacy as a real power in the world. The flashy world tours and international political interventions mark a radical break with the de

facto "live and let live" philosophy of his predecessors.

Within the Catholic Church, the line has come down firmly. "Keep out of (radical) politics. Stick to spiritual matters" while the

man himself takes an increasingly active role in world politics - on behalf of the Right.

Last summer, the Jesuits were hauled strictly back into line by the imposition from the Vatican of a hard-

line successor to their ailing head of the order.

They were given to understand in no uncertain terms that identifying too closely with the Left in Latin America, where they predominate, was not acceptable.

Siding with the oppressed against their murderous governments was not part of their mission, they were told, even if the government-backed assassination squads had claimed the life of an Archbishop, Romero, in El Salvador.

Morality

It's not just that kind of liberation struggle that has been clamped down on. The tacit liberalisation that had been proceeding for more than a decade in the sphere of sexual morality is stopped.

Abortion and contraception are not to be tolerated. There are to be no compromises with the forward march of women's liberation.

It's tempting to see the whole show surrounding the papal visit as at worst quaint, a nostalgic return to soothing mystical nonsense when times are hard. Especially when the most vocal opposition to the visit has come from unsavoury and irrational bigots, it would be easy to dismiss the whole caper as a harmless giggle.

That would be a mistake. Behind the sumptuous medieval trappings lies an equally medieval, but vicious ideology. Women will die hideously in backstreet abortions thanks to the Pope.

Mock

The bloodbath in Central America may well be prolonged by the Church throwing its weight against the revolutionaries.

This visit is part of a calculated attempt to reimpose irrational solutions on the real material crisis that is wracking the capitalist world. The Right is on the offensive, not just politically but ideologically.

It will be an index of how far the left has failed to get through, when millions turn out to hark to the mystical mumbo-jumbo solutions and dismiss the only rational answer as "extremist". Don't mock, organise.

From the dole queue to the altar

Gerry Byrne examines the latest statistics on marriage and divorce.

PERIODICALLY, the guardians of public morality and social hygiene raise an outcry to the effect that marriage and the family are being destroyed, civilisation undermined etc. On the other side, socialists and feminists wistfully scan the same horizon for evidence

that the institution (as in penal institution) of marriage is disappearing.

So the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys' Population Trends gives an opportunity to assess how far our hopes/fears are realised.

Is marriage disappearing? In the '50s and '60s the

marriage rate generally increased and people married younger. But now there is a steady downward trend in the marriage rate, particularly for the under 25s.

In 1966 the marriage rate for unmarried men between 16 and 19 was 22 per thousand. By 1980 it had dropped to 13.5 per thousand. For women in the same age group the fall was even more dramatic from 83:1,000 to 43:1,000 - i.e. barely half the rate of 15 years previous.

However, this seems to be due more to later marriage than to its disappearance. It is still true that over 90% of people born in any given year will marry eventually.

The reasons for later marriage are interesting. One US survey found that fewer women tended to marry in areas where the job opportunities for women were better. In other words, marriage, despite all the razzamatazz of romance and true love, is still fundamentally an economic arrangement.

Divorce

What feminists have argued for years, that women are pushed into marriage because of the lack of job opportunities and the near impossibility of surviving on "women's wages", is now being borne out by the statistics.

Divorce statistics reinforce this. Divorce is on the increase all over the West. In France and this country it has doubled over the last 10 years, and it's still rising. In 1980 there was an increase

of 7% in decrees absolute here over 1979, and a 5% increase in new petitions filed.

US research again indicates a link between the rise in divorce rate and in women's jobs. One study which looked at families in 1968 and then again in 1972, found that the higher the woman's income when first interviewed the more likely that the couple would have separated by the second study.

This might be seen as ammunition for the reac-

tionaries who believe women should not have jobs because it breaks up the family. More sensibly it underlines the view that financial independence is a prerequisite for women who want to escape intolerable marriages.

This has alarming implications for the present. With women losing their jobs at an appalling rate, the reality is that more and more women will be trapped with violent or unreasonable men.

If that sounds alarmist it's worth looking at the grounds on which divorces are granted. Three-quarters,

of divorces last year were granted to wives and of these, 39,000 (out of a total altogether of 148,000) were granted because of spouses' behaviour, as against 3,640 to husbands on those grounds.

In other words, it is predominantly women who now wish to end marriages and ten times as many women as men have cause to do so because of the intolerable behaviour of their spouses. So how many more would do so were it not for the fear of being unable to support themselves.



Training for motherhood - and housewifery?

Why no Sunny periods?

IF you thought there was no depths to which the Sun couldn't sink, no subject, however intimate, that could not be pawed over by the prying mitts of its fearless exposure merchants, you'd be wrong. There is still one area which for the Sun is "unmentionable": sanitary towels.

Sanitary towels are rated as luxuries for the purposes of VAT. A campaign calling for the removal of VAT on sanitary towels, has already collected 31,000 signatures for its petition.

Yet when it approached national newspapers for write-ups, pointing out that it is a subject which immediately interests at least half their readers, the response was chilly.

The Sun: "Sorry the subject is quite unmentionable". Times editor Charles Douglas Home decreed "No items about sanitary towels in the paper". Even Guardian Women, which receives frequent complaints that it is overly gynaecological, refused space.

The only mention the campaign got was in the Guardian Diary which reported an hilarious reply to the campaign from Islington's Social Democrat MP, Michael O'Halloran.

He pointed out that women did have a choice not to use sanitary towels: in the good old days women used "washable nappies" as he so

quaintly put it.

So women who chose to avail themselves of modern sanitary protection should pay VAT at the luxury rate, just as men who chose to shave with razors should.

This little gem aside, the national press has shown itself startlingly reluctant to admit the existence of a biological process that's a regular and tedious reality for a large chunk of the population. Just as once upon a time, nice girls didn't have sex, and virgin birth, apparently, was the order of the day, now it seems nice people don't menstruate.

It may seem ironic that the Sun which achieved its present circulation on the strength of an obsessive focus on selected, and previously taboo, portions of female anatomy, should balk at it. But when you think about it, the two go together.

The Page 3 (or 5 or 9, depending on how things are going in the South Atlantic) Girls are not real and are not meant to be. They are not subject to physical functions any more than they are supposed to possess a mental life of their own.

They shall not bleed, neither shall they have pubic hair. They are distilled essence of sex object and anything that suggests prosaic humanity is ruthlessly excised.

May

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WHAT'S ON

Paid ads 5p per word, £4 per column inch. Send to Socialist Organiser (What's On), 28 Middle Lane, London N8.

SOCIALIST ORGANISER MEETINGS & FORUMS

SHEFFIELD. Every other Wednesday, at the Brown Cow, The Wicker. Business 7.30, discussion 8.30. Next meeting June 9: 'Women's right to choose'.

LEICESTER. Sundays 7.30 at the Socialist Centre, High St.

ISLINGTON. 'Islington Council - under rank and file control?' Introduced by Cllr Pat Longman, member of the Council's Policy Committee. Sunday May 30, 3pm, at Thornhill Neighbourhood Project, Orkney House, Caledonian Rd. Coffee, tea, and sandwiches provided. For babysitting ring 607 5268.

REAGAN Reception Committee festival in Islington. Saturday May 29, from 11am at North London Poly, Holloway Road. Including discussion on the Falklands war. Followed at 8pm by 'Rock Against Reagan' at the 'Pied Bull', The Angel.

HEALTH Stewards all-London meeting. Wednesday June 2, 7pm, Prince Albert, Wharfedale Road, London N1.

WOMEN. Politics and Trade Unions: beyond June 5. Dayschool for women organised by Manchester Industrial branch of WEA. Saturday June 19, 9.30 to 4.30 at 8411 Community Education Centre, Moss Side Precinct, Manchester 16. £1/50p unwaged!

WORKERS' March against Racism: FROM Brick Lane through Brixton to TUC conference in Brighton. September 4 to 8. Sponsors include: Jayaben Desai, Anwar Ditta, Nasira Begum, Tony Benn, Ted Knight, Ken Livingstone, Paul Boateng. Details 01-274 3951.

WORKERS' Socialist League London classes on basic Marxism. Next one: Stalinism and Bolshevism. Friday May 28, 7.30pm. For details of venue, write to PO Box 135, London N1.

POLAND

Contact: Solidarnosc Trade Union Working Group, 64 Philbeach Gardens, London SW5. 01-373 3492.

Glasgow Polish Solidarity Campaign. Ian McCalman, 18 Mossiel Rd, Glasgow G43. 041-632 1839. Edinburgh PSC. C/o Edinburgh Trades Council, 12 Picardy Place. Oxford Labour Committee on Poland, 468 Banbury Rd, Oxford. 0865 58238.

Coventry PSC. John Fisher, c/o ASTMS, 26 Queens Rd, Coventry.

Labour Poland Solidarity Fund, c/o Cooperative Bank, 110 Leman St, London E1.

LUTTE OUVRIERE fete: international festival of revolutionary Socialism. Saturday to Monday, May 29 to 31, at Presles, Val d'Oise, France. A delegation of SO supporters will be going over to the fete: all comrades interested, please write to SO, 28 Middle Lane, London N8.

POLISH SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN bulletin: new issue out now.

Individual copies, or sale-or-return bundles, can be obtained from Marion Pitman, 29 Hampton Road, Twickenham, Middlesex (01-898 7165), at 30p per copy.

Subscription [six issues] £2.50.

Solidarnosc badges, posters, and T-shirts available

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Class Fighter, paper of the National Left Wing Youth Movement of the LPYS. NEW ISSUE OUT NOW! 10p plus postage from BM Box 5277, London WC1N 3XX.

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Women's Fightback special on the NHS pay fight. 10p [5p for strikers] plus postage from Women's Fightback, 41 Ellington St, London N7.

ALL OUT FOR THE FULL

HELP TO HELP

FIGHTING ...



against the war

WHAT TO DO

*Put a resolution through your trade union or Labour Party branch.

"This ... condemns Thatcher's war in the South Atlantic and resolves to campaign for the immediate withdrawal of the fleet and blacking of work for the war effort".

*Send copies to the Labour Party NEC or your union executive - and to Socialist Organiser so that we can publicise it.

*Send anti-war letters to the local press signed by local labour movement activists, Labour councillors, or people from your workplace.

*Set up a local ad hoc committee - with the single slogan "Withdraw the Fleet Now!" Groups within the committee should be free to have their own slogans in addition.

*Get the committee solidly based in the local labour movement. Draw in other groups like CND and Latin American solidarity groups.

Visible

*Make the committee active and visible, with mass street leafleting, pickets out-

side Army Recruiting Offices, maximum distribution of anti-war posters (use this week's SO centre page), and public meetings.

*Where you have contacts in unions which could take industrial direct action against the war, produce special leaflets and resolutions arguing for such action.

*Mobilise for all the anti-war demonstrations. Mobilise for anti-Reagan demonstrations with placards and banners against the South Atlantic war.



PHOTO: JOHN HARRIS
The labour movement resolutions need to be translated into action

Campaign round-up

FIGHTING THATCHER'S LABOUR LIEUTENANTS

by Martin Thomas

"If it is necessary to split the Labour Party, then it should be over the issue of war and peace", said Les Huckfield MP, angrily denouncing the Labour Party leadership in a speech to a local anti-war meeting in Coventry last Friday, 21st.

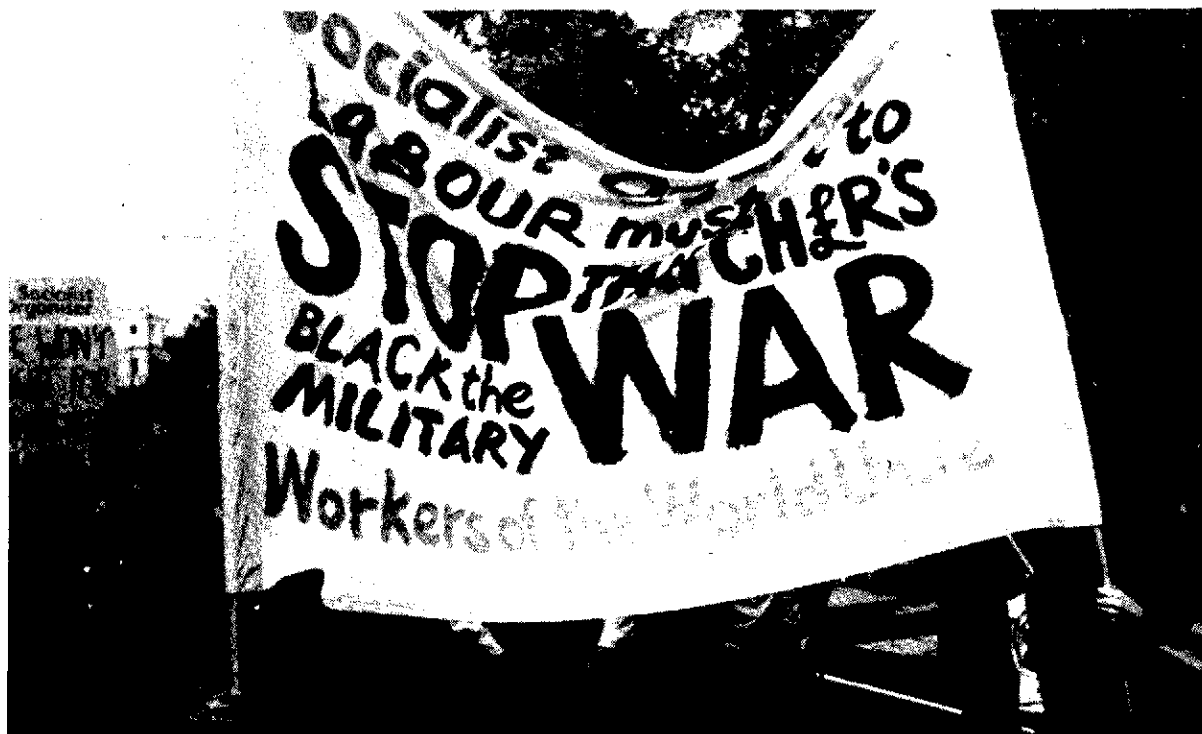
Since the British invasion of the islands, the Labour front-bench has sunk its quibbles with the Tories and turned on Labour's anti-war wing. 33 Labour MPs voted against the war last week, three were sacked from front bench jobs, and another has since resigned in protest at Labour's pro-war policy.

Anti-war

In the ranks of the labour movement, however, anti-war feeling is growing. The problem, as with the strong tide in the labour movement last year against Britain's military occupation of Northern Ireland, is translating resolutions into action.

The demonstrations last weekend were the biggest yet, but still far too weak in terms of labour movement mobilisation.

5,000 marched in London, with a scattering of trade union and Labour Party banners. 600 marched in Leeds, where 20,000 leaflets and 1,000 posters had been distributed by the local anti-war committee.



5,000 marched in London - but the union banners were still too few

1,500 marched in Edinburgh. The local 'Stop the War Committee' which includes CND, IMG, SWP, Socialist Organiser and others, is planning to follow up with regular public leafleting.

In Glasgow there were 1,000. Although the proposal for the march had been initiated by a local

Socialist Organiser supporter, the strength of the local Communist Party ensured its control over the organisation and the slogan of the march: 'Stop the war, negotiate'.

On the 200-strong Manchester march there were banners from Manchester City Labour Party, Ardwick Labour Party, and Salford Trades Council. Central Man-

chester Labour Party has passed a resolution calling for withdrawal of the fleet and blacking of war work, and committing itself to organise street meetings.

Councillor

Local Labour councillor and SO supporter Pete Keenlyside is putting a resolu-

tion to the Manchester City Labour Group condemning the war.

In Nottingham 400 came out against the war last Saturday.

Anti-war committees are being formed, and activities started, elsewhere too.

In Coventry the ad hoc committee is calling a street meeting on Saturday 29th

and a public meeting on June 11. In Leicester the Trades Council has resolved to campaign for withdrawal of the fleet and for working class action (including strikes) to disrupt the war effort.

In Bristol 200 attended a public meeting called by Bristol West CLP on Friday 21st. In Oxford the Trades Council has come out against the war and will be sending a speaker to an anti-war public meeting on Wednesday 26th.

Islington South and Central CLPs have voted for withdrawal of the fleet, and a resolution has been put down in Islington Council Labour Group.

Unions

At the Open University 270 of the staff signed a letter to the press against the war.

A number of unions nationally have come out for withdrawal of the fleet. And in unions supporting the war minority voices have been raised against it.

APEX conference passed an Executive motion backing the Task Force by a five-to-one majority. But a composite emergency motion from N.W. London, Preston and Holborn, calling for an immediate ceasefire, return of the task force, and the intervention of the UN, was moved.

And Socialist Organiser supporter Richard Paine put

a motion from the Coventry GEC (weekly) branch calling for withdrawal of the fleet and solidarity with the Argentine working class against the war.

Some unions are directly involved in the war. The National Union of Seamen has members on the requisitioned merchant ships in the fleet. TGWU members on the docks handle war supplies. A cable ship with the fleet has a volunteer crew of Post Office Engineering Union members.

Before this cable ship sailed, the POEU National Executive went aboard to wish the crew good luck. But some POEU members are arguing that trade unionists should refuse to cooperate with the war effort.

To divide the trades unions and Labour Parties in Britain from the pro-war line of their leadership is the only way of fighting for unity of the labour movement internationally. Only by opposing Thatcher's war can British workers lay the basis for unity with the Argentine working class.

An appeal from members in exile of the Argentine CGT union federation to the TUC, proposing discussions on common action for a peaceful settlement, still remains unanswered. But unity with Argentine workers, not unity with Thatcher, should be our slogan.

'Both governments are using the war'

THE Committee for Human Rights in Argentina, a group including political refugees from the Galtieri regime, has come out against the war. They headline their statement: "This war has nothing to do with the interests of people of any nation".

They support Argentina's claim to the Falklands Malvinas. Socialist Organiser would argue that the rights and wrongs of 150 years ago cannot justify imposing that claim on the islanders by force. The Committee insists that it was not the Argentine people who decided on the invasion.

The Committee concludes that "all democratic people" should "put

pressure" on the government to stop the war.

Socialist Organiser argues that the way to give this effect is a working class struggle to stop Thatcher's war and kick out the Tories, coupled with solidarity with the Argentine workers against Galtieri.

Contact: CHRA, c/o CARILA, 29 Islington Park St., London N1 9QB. [01-359 2270].

A HISTORIC claim to the territory of the Falklands by the Argentinian people has been used by the Military Junta to divert the attention of the opposition to the regime from the internal social problems when they were at their highest point.

The very difficult economic situation is no longer accepted by Argentinians. The questions of the 'Disappeared' people, and the freedom of political prisoners, are still present and go together with the people's struggle for better conditions of life.

Throughout the past six years, the country's military rulers have never wanted to hear the views of the Argentinian people, and have even silenced those who dared to make their voice heard.

The Argentinians have always considered the islands a part of their territory. Since they were occupied by the British in 1833, every government,

and political party has claimed sovereignty.

That has been ratified recently by the Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos Humanos, Madres de Plaza de Mayo, Familiares de Desaparecidos y Presos Políticos [human rights groups] and the Nobel prizewinner Perez Esquivel.

The Junta, taking advantage of this belief, will try to use it as a means to gain consensus from some political sectors, offering participation in the process, in order to silence them on the major political problems: the orgy of killing, kidnapping and torture by official and unofficial security forces before and after the coup.

No one can speak in the name of democracy if the 20,000 disappeared are forgotten.

To justify the military aggression, the British government have suddenly "discovered" the Argentinian regime to be one of the most bloody dictatorships in South America. But they were selling arms they knew were going to be used for internal repression.

Business

They were more interested in making business than defending human rights.

At the same time they are getting closer to the

other equally vicious dictatorship, Pinochet, with the aim of gaining some help against Galtieri.

Britain also refers to the self-determination of the islanders, when they, as employees of the Falkland Islands Company, have never had any kind of consideration and their position is similar to that of medieval serfs: they live in tied cottages belonging to the company, which they have to leave when they reach retirement age.

Two months ago Lord Carrington, in his talks with the Argentinian government seemed to have been prepared to concede sovereignty for now, the British government has sent the task



Carrington

force to defend the islands.

In no way can this bellicose campaign, followed by a real military confrontation, be justified.

We are definitely against the war. Both governments are using it to solve their internal problems. The war has entered a new phase, one of direct military confrontation, served by war.

WITHDRAW THE FLEET!



A victory in the Falklands for the British Fleet – that is a victory for Thatcher and the British ruling class – will be nothing but a defeat for British workers.

It will leave the Tories cock-a-hoop, strengthening their hand against trade union struggles at home, rallying workers behind the flag of British imperialism, and creating conditions where Thatcher might win an election.

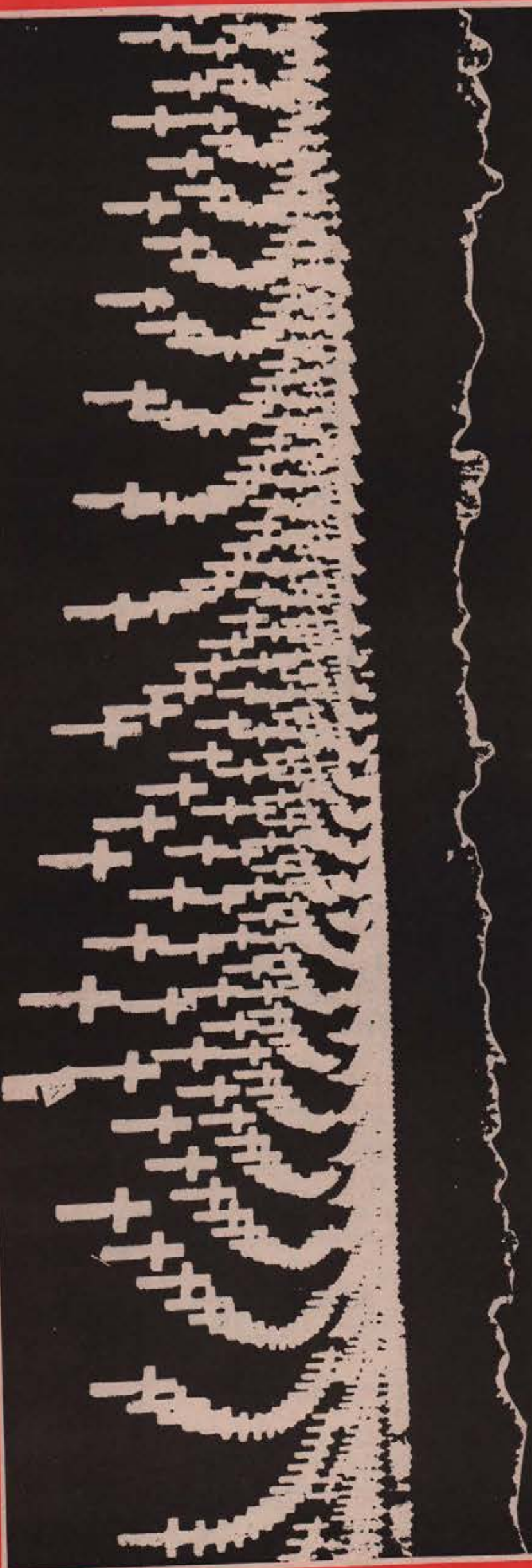
It will strengthen militarism and the arms drive in Britain and the USA, encouraging Thatcher and Reagan to use armed force against the opponents of imperialism.

In this war, our enemy is the Tory government here at home. We must fight this enemy with all the means at our disposal.

*Withdraw the Fleet!

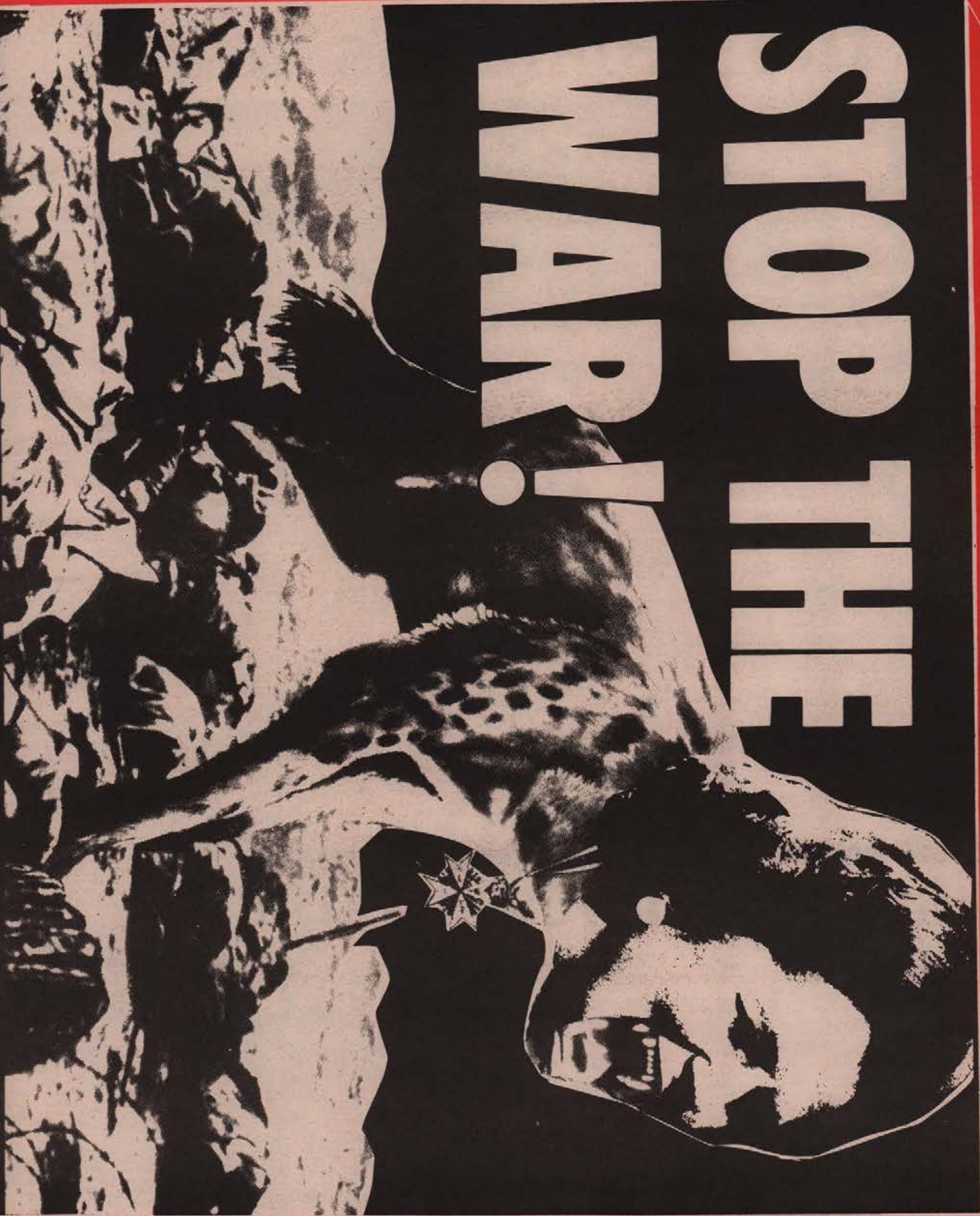
*On the streets against the war!

*Black all supplies and work for Thatcher's Fleet!



**Socialist
Organiser**

STOP THE WAR!



Revolutionary defeatism and the Falklands war

by Martin Thomas

ALL THE talk in the press and TV — even when the war is criticised — is of "our" fleet and "our" troops. Yet that little word "our" begs all the questions that socialists should be asking about the war.

There was a time when "patriot" meant "radical", and the creation of unified nation-states by the bourgeoisie was a tremendous historic step forward from the rule of feudal kings and princes. Those times have long since passed.

Capitalism has developed the working class as an international class, subject to the same exploitation (often by the same exploiters) world-wide. It has created a closely inter-linked world economy, in which established national boundaries, rivalries, and protectionisms are a reactionary factor.

The working class can act as a progressive class only by setting itself the objective of the international reorganisation of society on the basis of planned production for need.

Thus the workers of Britain, of Argentina, and of every other country have a thousand times more in common with each other than any of them have with their "own" capitalist ruling classes.

The working class needs to see itself, not as part of a "national unity" under the ruling class, but as a separate "nation" — which takes an attitude to the wars of its "own" ruling class just as independent and suspicious as to those of other ruling classes.

British workers should look on the British ruling class's war in the South Atlantic with the same critical eye as we should look on a similar war waged by the US, or by Chile, or



Lenin: 'Learn the military art. The proletarians need this knowledge not to shoot their brothers, the workers of other countries... but to fight the bourgeoisie of their own countries'.

by any other power.

The fundamental policy of the British ruling class, now as for decades past, is to establish itself as an exploiter and oppressor world-wide.

The Tories are seeking to entrench their prestige and to boost their arms drive. Britain, despite its declining strength over recent decades, is still economically a major imperialist power, drawing big profits from investments overseas, and playing a central (and profitable) role in international finance.

The Tories aim to back up that economic role with a demonstration that Britain is still a big military power.

Britain has no rights in the South Atlantic — and no-one can now believe it is there just to help the Falk-

land Islanders.

So we must oppose Britain's war — though that does not necessarily mean support for Argentina's war.

In 1915 Lenin explained, "Only a bourgeois who believes that a war started by the governments must necessarily end as a war between governments and wants it to end as such, can regard as 'ridiculous' and 'absurd' the idea that the Socialists of all the belligerent countries should wish for the defeat of all 'their' governments and express this wish".

Militant pursuit of the class struggle despite the war and against the war was in fact a policy for the defeat of all the governments.

Karl Liebknecht summed it up with the slogan:

"The main enemy is at home". For every working class, the main enemy is its own ruling class.

Lenin was writing about the First World War, which he viewed as a war between the imperialist great powers, each trying to grab as many colonies or semi-colonies as possible.

But he also outlined the general principles which, he argued, should govern the attitude of socialists towards wars.

"Socialists have always condemned war between nations as barbarous and brutal". But that does not exhaust the question. Every war must be assessed concretely.

"War is the continuation of politics by other means." Therefore wars must be assessed on the basis of the politics they

"continue" — and on the basis of the fundamental line of those politics, not of individual atrocities and injustices which a bourgeoisie might cite to prove that its war was a just war.

"In China, Persia, India and other dependent countries", Lenin wrote, "we have seen during the past decades a policy of rousing tens and hundreds of millions of people to national life, of liberating them from the oppression of the reactionary 'great' powers. A war on such a historical ground can even today be a bourgeois-progressive, national-liberation war".

But the world war of the great powers continued a decades-old "policy of plundering colonies, of oppressing other nations, of suppressing the working

class movement".

We should apply the same method to the present war.

Even though Britain is not out to conquer Argentina, on its side the war continues a policy of an arms build-up, of trying to reassert Britain as an imperialist big power, and of attacking the working class.

Reactionary

Argentina is not an imperialist big power like Britain, but on its side too the war continues reactionary policies both nationally and internationally.

Basing itself on the most developed economy of the sub-continent, the Galtieri junta has built itself up as a pillar of capitalist and imperialist control — spon-

soring the Torrelío dictatorship in Bolivia, giving material support to the military in El Salvador. It has planned for a 'South Atlantic Treaty Organisation' including itself, South Africa, and the US, with the Falklands as a military base.

Nationalism

The invasion was intended to strengthen the hand of the junta in such plans and to use nationalism to divert the growing workers' struggles in Argentina. Evidently Galtieri calculated on little response from the British ruling class; but the ferocity of Thatcher's reactionary war, and the consequent rupture between Galtieri and the US, cannot convert the junta's war to defend its invasion into a "bourgeois-progressive, national-liberation war".

Nor can historic claims dating from 1833 make the junta's trampling on the islanders' rights progressive.

Vigour

Thus the politics, and therefore the war, on both sides are reactionary. The politics of the working class must be opposed to the war on both sides. On both sides socialists should pursue the class struggle with all their vigour, not fearing to undermine the national war effort.

This class war policy of defeat on both sides is not the same as the policy of opposing the war on both sides simply in the name of peace.

Lenin explained: "Marxism is not pacifism. It is necessary, of course, to fight for the speediest termination of the war. But only if a revolutionary struggle is called for does the demand for 'peace' acquire proletarian meaning. Without a series of revolutions, so-called democratic peace is a philistine utopia".

Simply to appeal to the warring governments (or to the governments assembled in the UN) for peace, is to confine ourselves to plaintive pleas until they exhaust themselves and present us with their peace — shaped by their reactionary politics, and containing the basis for new wars.

An independent working-class approach, unlike the pacifist one, thinks matters through to their conclusions. This war is the continuation of Thatcher's politics by other means. Our fight against this war is the continuation of our fight against Thatcher's politics.

Solidarity

The line of defeat for both Thatcher and Galtieri in this war is a continuation of the international working class policy of solidarity with the workers' fight against the junta.

We want the defeat of our ruling class and we want the defeat of their war. Force the withdrawal of the fleet! Black military supplies! Bring down the Tories! Those should be our slogans against the war.

Militant massacres Marxism

THE Militant newspaper has misused the Marxist arguments against pacifism in order to justify a very equivocal position on the South Atlantic war.

Militant does not actually "support the war" as Socialist Challenge (May 13) has alleged. But it certainly does not campaign vigorously against it.

It is as much against Thatcher's war as Thatcher's peace — but, it seems, no more so. John Pickard writes: "Workers can give no support whatsoever to Thatcher's government in war any more than in peacetime" (May 14).

Though saying that "workers will win nothing" from the war (headline, April 16), Militant opposes the call to "withdraw the fleet".

"Such a demand", writes Ted Grant (May 21), "is completely unrealistic and futile. It is only necessary to ask the question, 'How can the fleet be brought back? By asking Thatcher'.

"Only a general strike... could stop Thatcher by bringing her government down".

Grant continues: "The lefts, by putting forward a negative pacifist position, cannot gain the support of the mass of the working class... Once hostilities take on a more intense character there will be a feeling among a big majority of the Labour Party and trade unions that there is no other course but to support the war, out of solidarity with the British workers in uniform, not for chauvinist reasons".

The answer therefore is to call for a general election and a Labour government pledged to socialist policies, which will solve the Falklands problem by a "class appeal" to the Argentine workers.

The whole argument, culminating in a description of the "undreamed-of prosperity" to be achieved by a socialist federation of Argentina, Britain and the Falklands, is an elaborate evasion — an exercise in the method of avoiding today's sharp struggles by pointing to tomorrow's glittering prospects.

To understand it we need to look at the classic Marxist

arguments it (mis)uses.

In the First World War, Marxists rejected calls for ceasefires, withdrawals, or disarmament because these would just be empty shouting into the holocaust, evasions from the task of "turning the imperialist war into a civil war".

In the Second World War Trotskyists in countries like the US and Britain developed an adaptation of the slogan "turn the imperialist war into a civil war".

They saw the war as fundamentally one between imperialist robber powers to re-divide the world. However, they had to relate to the concerns of workers who wanted to fight Hitlerism. So they put forward the slogan: "Only a workers' government can fight Hitlerism", developing it to demand military training under trade union control, election of officers, workers' control in war industries, etc.

"Only a workers' government can fight Galtieriism"? That is what Militant's line would be, rendered rational. But it is ridiculous. The bold Leninist line of "civil

war" has come down to a general election! The tactical shifts forced on the British and US Trotskyists in 1939-45 are welcomed by Militant, which almost looks forward to mass support for the war.

Galtieri's petty conquest is compared to Hitler's rampage across Europe, Thatcher's arrogant deployment of the fleet with what British workers saw as desperate self-defence.

The Trotskyists' line in World War 2 was an international line. Yet Militant's line now is a purely national one. It tells the Argentine workers: overthrow the junta — and wait for a general election in Britain, after which Militant may argue for a Labour government to withdraw the fleet standing off your shores.

In truth, the "realism", the scholastic arguments, the schoolmasterly contempt for "the lefts", the generalities about socialism being the only answer to war serve only one purpose — to evade a struggle against this war, now.



PHOTO: JOHN HARRIS

Why I changed my view

Socialist Organiser nos 80 and 81 carried two articles expressing my opinion on the Falklands or Malvinas conflict. In them, my opinion was in accordance with the standpoint of the paper, which can be summarised in the expressions "No to war" and "Let the Falklands people decide".

I am now of the opinion that that standpoint was the result of a confusion, taking into account unilaterally the dictatorial character of the Argentinian government but forgetting the imperialist nature of the problem (a territorial occupation).

There was a deflection in character, opportunist, and objectively pro-imperialist.

Now, I strongly hold that Socialist Organiser ought to modify its standpoint to be unconditionally in favour of Argentina, in support of the downfall of British imperialism and the immediate withdrawal of its fleet.

The fact that the existing political regime in Argentina is a blood-thirsty military dictatorship and that the government of Galtieri has wanted to divert attention towards a territorial problem, secondary in importance to the imperialist exploitation in the country, ought not to let us forget that this is a real problem.

The Malvinas Islands, the Georgias and South Sandwich are Argentinian for reasons of geography, history and militarily. The inhabitants of British stock were transplanted (as in Northern Ireland) to strengthen and justify that possession, in those days of great use to control the Magellan straits. The resources of the islands and of the surrounding sea are of value and belong naturally to Argentina.

On the other hand, the British government is not defending the islanders (whose livelihood has depended essentially on the relationship with Argentina, and whom the British government does not recognise as British subjects); and it is defending more than the resources — expressly, the juridical (imperialist) British world-wide order.

Under orders of Galtieri the repossession of the Malvinas has been a strategem, but on this occasion it coincides (but is not identified with) the national interest exploited by imperialism. Objectively the repossession of the Malvinas has been totally correct.

And it is on this account precisely that Galtieri is playing with fire: the military government and the Argentinian bourgeoisie are unable to sustain the resulting struggle, including that relating to the Malvinas, because the Argentinian bourgeoisie is structurally bound up with imperialism.

When the masses demonstrate, they are at

the same time shouting down the military dictatorship; and as the conflict is protracted, they will tend naturally to attack the knot of the imperialist exploitation of the country.

Running through this secondary contradiction (between British imperialism supported by the United States and the Argentine bourgeoisie which is structurally its agent) there emerges a quite real contradiction between the Argentine masses and imperialism.

When Galtieri's government appealed to it, manoeuvring to contain the rise of the masses, it had to seek support from the bourgeois parties which it had suspended and the outlawed directorate of the CGT.

And if the front-line sectors of the working class which retreat before the manoeuvre of the dictatorship unite with moderate sectors which took to the streets to demonstrate for the Malvinas, then the working classes can in fact impose democratic rights, take the initiative in the defence against the imperialist attack, extend the war to the expropriation of imperialist capital and depose the military dictatorship.

There is however another aspect which has already given to this conflict a great international repercussion: and that is the direct action to settle the repossession of the Malvinas, ignoring the resolution of the United Nations and with it the world imperialist juridical order. This step encourages the remaining colonial possessions in the British Empire to follow in the footsteps of the struggle.

Polarised

This is what the British government has to face and which prompts the United States to join forces with it.

But besides all this, the repossession of the Malvinas and the defence put up against the piratical attack of the British has polarised the mass of the Latin American nations, even including the bourgeoisies, which, in the OAS, (with opposition from the US, and the exceptions of Chile and Colombia) have supported Argentina and have condemned Great Britain and the EEC on account of its measures.

The international consequences brought about by the confrontation in regard to the Malvinas demand more than ever a categorical definition. As regards all this I am in full agreement with the attitude of the IWL (Fourth International).

The two main battle cries might be "Argentinian Malvinas" and "Immediate withdrawal of the fleet and let us destroy British imperialism".

CARLOS GARCIA

Reply to Reg

Reg Race's remarks on the South Atlantic war in Socialist Organiser no.83 should not be allowed to pass without comment.

Firstly, Race argues that the fleet should be called back to Ascension or South Georgia "to enable a negot-

iated settlement to be concluded".

The war is being waged over a relic of the British Empire, and Race argues that the navy should be pulled back to two other relics of empire. Moreover, Ascension and South Georgia are

the keys to naval strategy around the Falklands, from which a renewed attack could be launched.

Race's demand is thus consistent with the notion that Britain should be able to 'negotiate from strength'.

We should be for withdrawing the fleet and troops all the way back to Britain and for unilateral repudiation of British claims in the South Atlantic and Antarctic — including the Falklands/Malvinas, Ascension and South Georgia.

Secondly, Race twice calls for economic pressure to be applied to Argentina. However dressed up, this means economic warfare by the imperialist powers to show the economic muscle they can exert over the rest of the world.

Denounce

This is a shade to the left of Foot, who wants war without bloodshed, but we should denounce economic warfare — EEC sanctions etc — as categorically as we denounce the shooting war.

We must work with all shades of opinion in the labour movement who oppose the war, but we do nobody any service by avoiding the differences. It was therefore disappointing that the interviewer did not take these points up with Reg Race. At least Socialist Organiser should have made some comment: on such a crucial issue this would not have been sectarian, but a service to the labour movement.

Excuse

On the broader issue of our attitude to the islanders' rights, Race says that "We have a responsibility to ensure that the Falklanders are not physically assaulted". Who does he mean by 'we'? 'Britain'? That simply gives the right wing their excuse to support the Tories.

We cannot consistently call for unconditional withdrawal and renunciation of British claims, while we talk without qualification about the islanders' rights to decide their own future. This would have to include their 'right' to remain a part of the British Empire. Indeed, given the present situation it is almost certain that they would make such a choice.

Alliance

In this respect — though not in others — the analogy with the 'Unionist veto' on Irish unity does hold good.

We should spell out quite clearly that the only possibility of a lasting, democratic settlement for the islanders lies in an alliance with the Argentine working class.

TONY GARD, Lewisham.

Open fire on smokers

WE WOULD like to raise an issue which we as socialists feel is very important, but which remains conspicuous by its absence from your pages.

The issue is health. Obviously in the limited space of the letters page it is impossible to do any justice to this major socialist issue, so instead we choose to outline one small but important facet of capitalism which affects the health of every person in the community. This is smoking.

If a fairly expensive new product was put onto the market tomorrow, an addictive drug whose major effect is bad health through clogging up the lungs with toxic substances, obviously socialists would point out this 'con', this easy way to make massive profits out of the health and livelihoods of the working class.

However, the fact remains that while this product has been marketed for some time, far from pointing out the evils of tobacco, socialists of all shades seem drawn to the 'profit weed'.

For all their analysis of the decaying capitalist system, they seem unable to see through this simple 'con'.

Unfortunately the caricature of socialists huddled in smoke-filled backrooms is not so far from the truth.

The problem would not be quite so bad if the smokers kept the effects to themselves. However the effects of 'secondary smoking' are well documented. Those of us who make a conscious effort to avoid the 'profit weed' are not spared its effects when others are so inconsiderate as to practise their deadly deeds among us.

We feel that smoking is a political issue, and primarily a socialist issue, which ought to be brought to the forefront. To this end we believe that your paper should take up the issue of banning smoking in all public places.

As a first measure you should start by banning it at all your meetings, or at least make sure that the issue is voted on at each meeting.

BRIAN LUCAS and CINDY JAMES

Writeback



We invite readers to send us their letters, up to a usual maximum length of 400 words.

Send to 'Writeback', Socialist Organiser, c/o 28, Middle Lane, London N8.



Wrenching quotes from Trotsky

CERTAIN groups like the IWL and the IMG (SO83), Socialist Challenge No. 241) are wrenching quotations from Trotsky out of their specific context in a frantic attempt to justify siding with Galtieri against Thatcher.

The quotations are taken from Trotsky's Writings 1937-8 and 1938-9 — collections of shorter pieces, conversations, etc. without any of the finished polish Trotsky applied to weightier works.

Trotsky held a discussion with an Argentine militant about the impending war in Europe. He argued against the tendency to see the coming war as one between fascism and democracy and side with the latter.

He was particularly concerned that in South America "The agents of the US, England and France try to substitute struggle against fascism for the struggle against imperialism".

To illustrate his point that revolutionary socialists should not critically support one nation against another in war simply on the grounds of the liberality or otherwise of the regime, Trotsky used a hypothetical example of a war between England and Brazil in which he said he would support Brazil despite its semi-fascist regime.

He gave no more detail, no explanation of the situation in which such a war would be fought, or the concrete issues involved. But clearly he was not intending to lay down general laws for application 40-odd years later. He was referring to the concrete situation of the time, when the Vargas regime in Brazil was pursuing vigorous nationalist/populist policies and Britain was a flourishing imperialism, extremely powerful in Latin America.

If we have to base or justify our analysis of a complex situation half a century later on such a relatively cursory and abstract aside, then we are very, very hard up indeed.

If we have to use such inadequate examples, then the more likely explanation of the context would be that Trotsky was envisaging a war of aggression by England against Brazil, and that his basic point was that socialists should not allow the horrors of fascism to avoid a more detailed analysis of real underlying issues of national rights versus imperialism.

Legitimise

This can be seen from another example from Trotsky's writings currently being used to legitimise the presence of Sergeant Morceno and Private Grogan

in Galtieri's military camp.

This is Trotsky's argument that workers should support China against Japan in 1937. It is clear from this (which precedes and should inform the latter hypothetical example) that Trotsky was not basing himself simply on dependency, but on the fact that Japan was invading China and was intent on enslaving the Chinese nation.

Britain has not invaded Argentina. It is Argentina which is bent on oppress-

ing the Falklanders.

We should see clearly that ordinary gringos and greasers have no interest whatsoever in siding with either John Bull or Juan Gaucho in the quarrel between these two piratical gentlemen.

The main enemy for British workers is Mrs Thatcher! The main enemy for Argentinian workers is Galtieri! Turn the war into a civil war!

DONNIE BROOK Rochdale

IMPERIALISM THE CAUSE OF CONFLICT

IT seems to us that the confused and varied positions which SO has adopted in relation to the war are due to its failure to understand the most fundamental contradiction that is in operation here. That is to say, as a result of the intensification of the class struggle in Argentina the Argentinian ruling class has been forced, objectively, into taking an anti-imperialist position.

Our role as revolutionaries is not to discuss the cynical motives of the Argentinian ruling class in

taking this action (and the motives of the Argentinian ruling class in taking this action (and the motives, we agree, are cynical), but to develop and encourage this objectively anti-imperialist action of the Argentinian masses.

We do not believe that SO is doing this with its demands for the withdrawal of the Argentinian fleet and for the defence of a colonial settlement (which is what, objectively, the Falklands Islanders are).

These demands, along

with the utopian demand of 'Joining up with Argentinian workers' (presumably on the basis of a revolutionary defeatist position — a position that is totally inapplicable here), have left SO with a thoroughly empiricist analysis of the situation because of its apparent failure to grasp the imperialist cause of this conflict.

ROB BROOKS
ROB HOLMES
GRAHAM USHER
Brighton

IS TROTSKY'S THEORY OUT OF DATE?

Clive Bradley reviews 'The Politics of Combined and Uneven Development', by Michel Lowy.

Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution has always been regarded as one of the central political and ideological breaks between Trotskyism and Stalinism. Yet the development of revolutionary movements in the post-war period would appear to contradict some of its central claims.

In certain parts of the world, national bourgeoisies have carried out some of the tasks of the bourgeois revolution, at least partially (or the post-colonial state has substituted for the bourgeoisie to this end). And none of the post-war social transformations were carried out by working class movements along the lines of the October Revolution.

Does this invalidate Trotsky's theory?

Evasion

This book, by a leading academic of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International (in Britain, the IMG), is an important attempt to confront this problem — or more specifically, to defend, with qualifications, the value of Trotsky's theory for today's 'Third World'. Unfortunately, Michael Lowy reiterates all the confusions and half-truths characteristic of his tendency for the last thirty years. His book is thus a masterpiece in evasion.

Lowy's approach is to define the problems themselves in such a way as to effectively eliminate them at the outset. In place of Marxist analysis we are given a scholastic exercise in formal logic.

Hence, for Lowy, one of the central questions to be answered is whether these revolutions (Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam, Cuba) occurred 'under the leadership of the proletariat... and more precisely, under the direction of a proletarian (communist) party' (p.107). It is clear from this presentation of the issue what the answer will be, at least in three of the four cases.



Trotsky: an unwavering proletarian orientation

The logical identifications that he makes are simple: 'communist' party = proletarian party = proletariat. Peasant armies can be called 'workers' parties' by virtue of CP leadership.

Of course, Lowy stipulates that these were bureaucratised workers' parties. But his logic leads him to make some extraordinary claims:

"The parties were the political and programmatic expression of the proletariat, by virtue of their adherence to the historic interests of the working class (abolition of capitalism, etc)... the parties' ideologies were proletarian and the membership and periphery were systematically educated to accept the values and world view of the international working class movement." (pp.214-5, *emph. in original*)

For a Trotskyist to concede that Stalinist parties were politically, programmatically and ideologically proletarian calls into question the entire purpose of the existence of a Trotskyist movement. For the sake of sliding round theoretical problems, Lowy quite happily throws overboard any kind of understanding of Stalinism whatsoever. Self-defence rapidly becomes ideological suicide.

Stalinism

Yet an understanding of Stalinism as an international force should be a key to a fuller understanding of these revolutions.

Having so disastrously 'defended' the conception of permanent revolution, Lowy stumbles from one ignorant assertion to another. Central to the weakness of his whole argument is his misunder-

standing of the precise value of that aspect of Trotsky's theory that is nominally at the centre of Lowy's analysis — the concept of combined and uneven development.

Imperialism

Though there is no systematic exposition of a theory of combined and uneven development in Trotsky's work, this simple idea was able to give enormous depth to his analysis of Tsarist Russia. What Lowy's book lacks is precisely what is most needed: a full development of Trotsky's remarks into a coherent and detailed theory, and a serious study of contemporary imperialism.

For Lowy there is no incompatibility between the notion of combined and uneven development and post-war theories of dependency. Presumably basing himself on Ernest Mandel's eclectic analysis of 'underdevelopment' Lowy insists on the use of terms such as 'dependent' and 'peripheral' capitalism — terms which in fact have a precise meaning for particular conceptions of world capitalism that have little, if any, common ground with Trotskyism.

Dependency theory focuses on the problem of 'national development', is the product of Latin American intellectuals disillusioned with both bourgeois development theory and Stalinism, and is influenced by nationalist politics. It cannot be 'borrowed' by the Trotskyist movement but needs to be ruthlessly criticised.

In place of the petty-bourgeois nationalism of such theories, Trotsky's analysis provides a focus on the international movement of capital on the one hand, and on the precise nature of the social contradictions of capital (i.e. on the revolutionary potential of the working class) on the other.

Dependency

But Lowy fudges the issues, as if unaware that there is any problem. Consequently, his excellent critique of Bill Warren's recent book, 'Imperialism, Pioneer of capitalism' focuses only on Warren's 'Kautskyism' and ignores Warren's valuable (if unoriginal) attack on dependency theory. Lowy's book is most disappointing in the particular area in which it could have had most to say.

A number of different tendencies are evident within post-war 'Trotskyism' regarding its attitude to the theory of permanent revolution. Some have

effectively ditched it. Others have interpreted it not as a guide to action, but as a sort of historically inevitable law, or process. Lowy falls into the latter category, not so much because of what he says, but of what he doesn't say.

The central value of Trotsky's theory is the unwavering proletarian orientation it provides — not because the working class is the only class that can carry out certain tasks at particular times, but because its framework, that of the international social relations of capital, enables us to understand the nature of particular developments. Central to it, therefore, is the strategic orientation of an international revolutionary party.

It is not a question of ticking off 'proofs' that the historical process has gone, according to plan, but of building an international movement with a unified strategy for working class power.



The Cuban revolution: calls for serious analysis, not logic-chopping

Lowy's book, failing to grasp the strategic conceptions that underlie Trot-

sky's analysis, offers not 'the politics of combined and uneven development',

but a great deal of logic-chopping.

CLIVE BRADLEY

Need to combat fascist threat

by Aly Mir

A RISING tide of fascist violence, the recent regroupment of the fascists and the concerted efforts by the state and the Tories to criminalise and isolate blacks provided the background to Searchlight's memorial meeting in London on Saturday 15 May to mark the first anniversary of the death of Maurice Ludmer, the founding editor of Searchlight.

All the speakers agreed

with Searchlight's October editorial which had commented on "the desperate need for a nationally coordinated organisation that would inspire and inform anti-fascists and anti-racists and provide the tools for the tasks ahead."

The weakness of the anti-fascists was indicated by the very poor attendance of less than 70 people.

David Edgar from the

Institute of Race Relations (IRR) argued that the result of their economic policies had prompted the Tories to adopt an authoritarian law and order and aggressively anti-immigrant stance. In the Tory Party, including prominent MPs, there is the growth of a repatriation lobby and a growth of organisations like Tory Action and WISE (Welsh, Irish, Scottish, English).

This had been accompanied by the "black muggers" and "ethnic criminality" campaign of the police and the media.

Veronica Ware, Ludmer's successor as Searchlight editor, explained how this "respectable" racism of the state, the police and the media, had been matched by the recruitment of the fascists.

She argued that while the fascists had recovered since their General Election setbacks, the anti-fascist movement was uncoordinated. For example, while the memorial meeting was taking place, local anti-racists were marching in Guildford against racist violence and yet there was nobody able to coordinate anti-racists and mobilise nationally.

Anwar Ditta's account of her struggle to keep her children provided a clear example of how organised campaigns can fight racism.

She stressed the need for unity, not only against fascists but also against the racism of the state. She cited the example of the Bradford 12, one of whom was the chairperson of her defence campaign, as an example of the state attacking blacks.

Anna Sullivan, active in Islington ANL, was clearly disturbed at the absence of a national anti-fascist movement. She was, however, able to provide an example of how local anti-fascists had fought to get the NF out of Chapel Market.

She stressed the need to mobilise support within the labour movement.

Socialist Organiser, the only left wing grouping to send a significant number of supporters from outside London, took up the call for a national anti-fascist movement.

A Socialist Organiser supporter told the meeting of the gains made at the Coventry conference against racism in setting up a local labour movement committee against racism. She said that one of the main tasks of the committee was to fight and mobilise for a national labour movement conference and organisation against racism. This was well received by the meeting with many people committing themselves to active support at the end.



Anwar Ditta: stressed fight against state racism

LOOKS, SMILES, BUT NO JOB

Harry Sloan reviews Ken Loach's film 'Looks and Smiles', shown last Wednesday (9.45pm, ITV).

SHAPELESS — but not accidental; mundane — but significant; interminable and inconclusive; colourless but compelling.

These descriptions apply equally to the film 'Looks and Smiles' and to the situation the film sets out to depict.

Shapeless is the life of Britain's thousands of unemployed youth and adults, denied a reference point for their lives or the sense of identity and achievement a job can offer to them.

Yet their plight is not inevitable or accidental. It flows from the priorities of a capitalist society in which the profits of the exploiting capitalist minority are the decisive factor in shaping the lives of millions.

The film's apparently haphazard construction, with its bewildering variety of themes, seems deliberately to echo this shapelessness.

In the same way it vividly portrays the daily, unremarkable experience of being young, capable man; neither particularly intelligent nor stupid; neither down-and-out nor well-to-do; unemployed in a world of mass unemployment.

This may seem commonplace; but such reality is rarely featured on TV screens, which are more generally monopolised by the everyday life of millionaire folk (Dallas); by the concerns of the middle class; by American cops, or occasional voyeuristic forays into extremes of oppression presented in skin-deep liberal documentaries.

Idealistic

Loach and Hines make no attempt to idealise or to denigrate working class youth. They are shown sympathetically in the world which makes them the way they are.

They may steal motor-bikes and cars they can't afford for joy-rides; young males lie to each other, fight over possession of silent women and learn the techniques of oppressing them. But they also find themselves struggling against the odds to live up to impossible stereotype ideals of masculinity in the eyes of their mates. The camera captures these moments — but does not rush to condemn.

For a youth fresh from school, seeking a job with a

trade in the 1980s can seem a never-ending chase. Many never find one and eventually settle down with crushed hopes and wasted talents to a life in meaningless menial jobs or long-term unemployment.

Loach and Hines echo this side of youth unemployment in the sheer scale of what is a dauntingly long but captivating film — and one which denies the viewer the easy escape of a neat "conclusion". Its central dilemma remains unresolved at the end.

Life without work, without structure, without hope, becomes life without colour or relief — a life for which it scarcely seems worth getting out of bed. Looks and Smiles heightens the drabness and monotony and acquires a kind of timeless quality by its deliberate use of black and white rather than colour film, combined with compelling photographic technique painting stark images of depression and neglect.

Compare

The main line of the film is in comparing and contrasting two young school-



Robert, Mick, Karen: facing the bleakness of Tory Britain

leavers, Mick and Robert. Mick, a bright young would-be apprentice, has stayed on at school for his exams but still cannot find a job.

Robert has gone into the army. When he comes back on leave he spins yarns of his physical prowess, and flaunts fat pay packets. This adds further pressure to Mick, whose own unemployment and envy of the glamour he sees in the army are in any case pushing him towards this as a means of escape.

Against this pressure to enlist there is only the class-conscious warnings of Mick's father (who points to the strike-breaking role of the forces) and the emotional pressure applied by Mick's girlfriend, Karen.

Her hostility to him signing up stems both from her own need for support and affection, but also from revulsion at the increasingly brutal behaviour of Robert.

Indeed while Mick can

be seen throughout the film to be marking time, unable to find himself, Robert can be seen to be rapidly changing under the influence of army life.

Before he joins up, he and Mick get into a fight in a disco — and come off worst. On his first leave, he picks a return fight with the same youth — and wades viciously into the attack with boots flying.

Miserable

The army has taught him how to steal cars; new ways to abuse and exploit women; and by the time of his second leave, has given him a taste of violent, chauvinist hatred for the Irish, and the experience of putting that into practice on the streets of Belfast.

In the eyes of socialists, Robert presents a pretty miserable spectacle. But in Mick's eyes — and the eyes of many youth like him — he has status. He has a job in which he can prove his

"manhood"; he has pride in himself; he has money in his pocket.

Instead of this, all Mick can see is endless, fruitless applications for apprenticeships in which hopes can ever be raised only to be dashed at the last minute in the fierce competition for every job.

Young people caught in this trap also face the search for their own independent sources of emotional stability and support.

Even here unemployment intrudes: on his first date with Karen, Mick runs immediately into a major blow to his self confidence. His dole money won't pay for two seats in the cinema: she has to pay — and his role as the dominant male in any relationship appears threatened.

Karen has a job and her problems are portrayed as more personal than economic in origin. Her mother's marriage has broken up, her father has gone off to Bristol: her

mother has found a new bloke — and she finds it difficult to come to terms with this.

Her attempt to escape her problems — along with Mick — and find refuge with her father in Bristol prove abortive.

The film — with its main theme being that of "economic conscription" — does not attempt to deal with the problems of unemployed young women, for whom the option of the armed forces are not open as a comparable last resort.

Yet it shows beyond doubt that the bleak situation facing working class women is defined not only by the situation of the class as a whole but also by that of the men to whom they relate.

Looks and Smiles is no moralistic, didactic film. If anything, its remorseless realism and deliberate avoidance of a conclusion presents a rather too pessimistic picture. It gives no hint or guide as to what to do.

The final freeze-frame sees Mick, still undecided over the question of the army, in the endless line of the unemployed — like so many desperate youth today in Thatcher's Britain.

It is an irony of programme planning that Looks and Smiles should be shown virtually on the eve of the Falklands invasion.

But if the labour movement is not to see thousands of youth like Mick sucked from the dole queues into the armed task forces of imperialism, then it must organise its own offensive against the Thatcher government.

Weed for social need

by Les Hearn

IN last week's issue of Socialist Organiser I wrote about the US government's campaign of chemical warfare against cannabis growing in Mexico.

This week, I will deal with another aspect of the illegality of cannabis — the restrictions on its use as a medicine.

Cannabis has been used as a medicine for thousands of years. This could be dismissed as "superstition" by those who condemn it as an "assassin of youth", but modern research has indicated many medical uses for it.

For instance, it is proven that cannabis relieves draucoma? (a painful condition of high pressure in the eyeball which can lead to blindness); it helps relieve muscle spasms and spasticity; it helps relieve the symptoms of epilepsy and asthma; and in the 19th

century it was the standard treatment for migraine.

It is proven to be effective in relieving the suffering of some cancer patients.

Anti-cancer drugs are nasty substances — they frequently harm healthy tissues as well as the tumours they are used against, and some cause uncontrollable nausea, and vomiting, adding a further misery to the lives of those dying from cancer.

Cannabis is the best drug known to treat these side-effects.

So, of course, doctors can prescribe cannabis for the various complaints mentioned above, can't they?

Well... yes, but they can't legally obtain it.

In one case last year, Dr. Michael Rose of St. George's Hospital, Tooting, wanted cannabis to treat nausea in cancer patients. Under pressure, the Home

Office issued him with a licence to possess cannabis, but would not provide it, referring him to the DHSS.

Here, officials indicated that supplying cannabis for therapeutic purposes was out of the question. In their desire to preserve the image of cannabis as a drug with vicious social effects, they were unwilling to allow investigation of its medical potential.

Finally, last October (after his Home Office licence had expired!) Doctor Rose was given permission to use tincture of cannabis (a liquid extract rather than the herbal or resinous form) but only in healthy volunteers, not in cancer patients!

In other words, the DHSS was treating it as an untested drug with potentially dangerous side-effects or long-term effects, though no study has ever found such

effects.

The DHSS were also refusing to allow it to be smoked in this research (this is the most effective way of getting it into the blood stream, particularly as patients suffering from vomiting might find it difficult to keep down). This restriction is doubtless due to the fact that smoking is the usual method of taking cannabis for enjoyment... and the DHSS wouldn't want cancer patients enjoying their treatment!

Capitalism can usually find a way to benefit from the restrictions it places on our lives — so now British and US drug companies are trying to develop synthetic drugs based on the active constituents of cannabis, but made without using it.

So soon the NHS may be paying large sums for a copyright to synthetic drugs

SCIENCE



when the natural substance is readily and cheaply available — the NHS could even grow its own!

Socialists need to work out a policy for all the chemicals we fill our bodies with. Too often, bourgeois propaganda is accepted i.e. booze and fags are quite OK, LSD, cannabis and heroin are the devil's work. (Somewhat ludicrously, Militant sees cannabis as a bourgeois plot to sap the revolutionary vigour of our youth).

In fact, cannabis is remarkably safe for a drug, while even heroin taken

hygienically and in moderation has few if any long-term effects (and that is on the authority of an expert on opiates), while the proven hazards of alcohol and tobacco (or even valium) are horrific.

Over-indulgence in any drug is likely to be harmful or dangerous, but the way to make over-use unlikely is to remove the sort of pressures that lead people to seek such psychological crutches.

Information: The Guardian and British Medical Journal.



Turkey Solidarity Bulletin — new issue out now. 30p from TSC, Box BM 5965, London WC1N 3XX.

1982 Conference Gallery

Challenge to APEX right wing

by Richard Paine, APEX delegate from GEC Coventry B109 (weekly) Branch.

THE right wing domination of the clerical union APEX continued at this year's conference but it did not go unchallenged.

Many delegates were angered by the April 1982 APEX Journal editorial in which General Secretary

Roy Grantham had argued quite clearly for a coalition with the SDP.

Strong words against such a betrayal came from the floor of the conference, backed up by an overwhelming defeat of a resolution in effect proposing political de-affiliation from the Labour Party.

APEX committed itself, with Executive support, to

opposition to the Tebbit Bill. This includes calling on the TUC and Labour Party to organise a day of action on the day the Bill becomes law (included in an amendment from the Preston branch).

Further amendments, however, calling for the TUC to break all relations with the Tory government (Leicester General) and for

a refusal to comply with the new laws (Holborn, Thorne House and Leeds) were defeated on the advice of the Executive Council.

The Executive recommendations were overturned however, on three occasions in the course of the conference. Particularly in relation to sanctions against South Africa and the role of APEX in the debate on Labour

Party democracy.

The 1981 APEX Conference had agreed to support the Labour Manifesto being drawn up by the NEC and the PLP "with final approval to be made by the NEC".

At Party conference the APEX delegation had voted against this mandate! A resolution attacking the delegation's action was passed at APEX conference despite Roy Grantham's opposition, by a 53,000 to 45,000 vote.

The right did, however, strengthen its position in some respects. In doing so it continued to pave the way for a merger or possible federation with the EETPU.

Whilst the resolution calling for postal ballots for branch officers (not opposed by the Executive) was defeated by a large majority, the interim supplementary report on union structure was passed, giving the green light to branch meetings once every three months. This move is seen by militants within APEX as another erosion of democracy within the branches... towards the situation in the EETPU.

Merger has been long on the cards. With membership now only 110,000 it is becoming an even more central question. The lack of a full debate this year, despite the Executive's protestations, that a special conference would be called if a merger was proposed, did nothing to allay members' suspicions as to whom the Executive have their eye on - the EETPU, the GMWU or possibly both.

Unfortunately the expected debate on Ireland fell foul of the time factor. A resolution with progressive amendments from Euston Trade Union and Political Staffs and Coventry GEC (weekly) were down for discussion quite high on the agenda. However, it was not taken with the appropriate paragraphs of the EC report (despite at least one branch Bristol No. 1, asking for a debate to be held) and no discussion therefore took place.

Discussions did take place on women's rights and APEX is now committed to support the Women's Right to Work Festival and March. Whilst criticism was levelled at the page in the Journal now specifically on women's issues, the discussion is continuing.

ASLEF stands firm on roster

THE TASS conference has called for "strike action where necessary" against the Tebbit Bill - unfortunately without saying when this action will be necessary.

TASS General Secretary Ken Gill also called for the TUC to withdraw from tripartite committees with the government and the bosses, like the NEDC.

The GMWU conference accepted an executive recommendation and opposed withdrawal from the NEDC. But it did call for increased powers for the TUC to instruct individual unions to take strike action.

The FBU Conference called for a 24-hour TUC general strike against the

Tebbit Bill - but did not say when. It called for a ceasefire in the South Atlantic and negotiations, and union president Bill Deal spoke at last Sunday's anti-war demonstration.

The FBU will answer emergency calls only from May 31 unless there is progress in its dispute over representation in the national negotiating council for the FBU as against the non-TUC "National Association of Fire Officers".

Meanwhile the ASLEF conference unanimously rejected flexible rostering. British Rail bosses have said they will offer no pay rise to any union unless ASLEF accepts flexible rostering and

the NUR accepts BR's planned workshop closures. (This year's pay settlement falls due at the end of May).

This sets the scene for a major industrial showdown on the railways. NUR General Secretary Sid Weighell, under pressure from his own Executive, has called for industrial action from June 7 on pay and the closures.

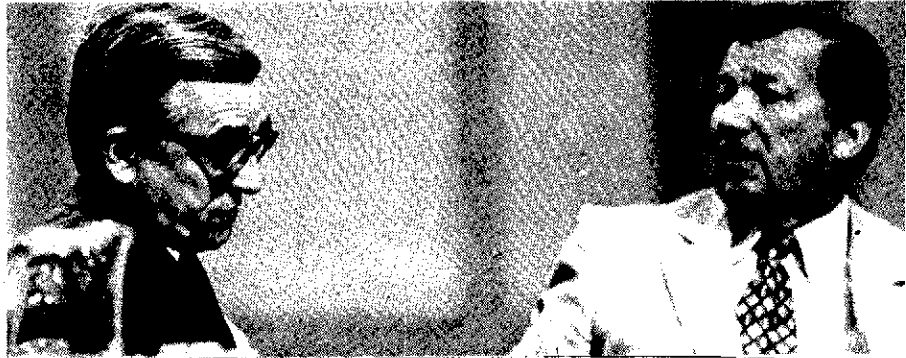
NUR members should be demanding that the 'industrial action' is an all-out strike. And ASLEF members should be calling for their union leaders, too, to go for strike action from June 7 - demanding a pay rise without any acceptance of flexible rostering.



Gill - strike 'where necessary'



Grantham - for coalition with SDP



British Rail bosses have thrown down the gauntlet to Weighell (left) and Buckton

NUPE - vote for occupations to halt cuts

A FORCEFUL lobby of Wandsworth council workers turned out to press for their emergency resolution, which called for:

*All possible support to the action in Wandsworth against the privatisation plans.

*Urge branches to take action in support of the Wandsworth dispute.

*Instructing the EC to make official all forms of supporting action; to contribute £1,000 to strike funds; to produce a national leaflet on the dispute; organise for Wandsworth speakers to attend meetings around the country; call on the TUC to back Pritchards - the private firm which has moved in to take over Wandsworth street cleaning.

Also unanimously passed was a resolution calling for occupations, backed by

50 delegates attended a lively meeting of Health Workers for the Full Claim and heard a platform of speakers consisting of Anna Lunts (NUPE nursing steward, Prestwich Hospital), Martin Barclay (NUPE secretary, Cardiff RI) and Dominic Johnson (NUPE convenor, Churchill Hospital).

The meeting took place after the resolution for all out strike action had been carried.

Many militants at the meeting added their names to the list circulating, and pledged to take copies of the Health Workers for the Full Claim bulletin for sale, and contribute reports to it.

The bulletin will now be appearing on a regular basis.

John Bloxam reports from the NUPE conference

sympathy strike action and blacking, to prevent hospital closures.

It was stressed that this should be organised on day one of the occupation - and not left until the hospital was raided.

Also on Monday, NUPE

conference carried a long composite on pay policy for 1982-83, rejecting any form of pay policy whether imposed by Tory or Labour governments, and instructing the national negotiators to submit wage claims to include a basic minimum rate

of two-thirds the national average male earnings for the lowest paid NUPE members, with the same flat rate rise for all members, a 35 hour week, and a minimum of six weeks holiday.

A strong anti-racist resolution was carried on a card

vote insisting that no nazis be allowed in the union.

The major setback in the conference was the defeat of a composite motion on Ireland, but the EC is now committed to organising a discussion on the issue during the next year.



Fisher

STEP FORWARD FOR WOMEN

LET'S HOPE that the proposals for action on women adopted in Composite 17 are taken up by the union.

We need the demanded substantial increases in women's wage rates and improvements for part-timers.

If we as a union are going to fight for women's jobs, we need to make sure children are provided for - nursery provision is essential.

Women need to be more active in the union to make sure these policies are carried out.

It was shameful that NUPE school meals women on strike against the cuts were given only five minutes while the Wandsworth dustmen were given 1½ hours of conference time. We must take women's struggles seriously.

The appointment of a women's officer came up at last year's conference and

still we've had no action on the resolution that was passed. We've heard rumours that a man will be appointed!

Worse still, the women's officer will not, it appears, have any real powers. S/he will be subordinate to a national officer.

We need more full-timers who are women - but again the officials argue that not enough women who are good enough come forward.

Perhaps if the officials took the resolution seriously they would.

Finally NUPE has affiliated to Women's Fightback. The resolution has committed the union to circulate a trial copy of the paper.

I hope women in other unions will note this example and fight for the same policy as part of the fight for their rights.

Mary Ireson

Slump boosts ASTMS right wing

THE low key debates and lack of leadership at the ASTMS conference last weekend had a very demoralising effect on delegates.

There were a lot of potentially lively topics for discussion - Tebbit, cuts, women's rights, unemployment and Ireland. But the level of debate showed a very clear change in the balance of forces in the membership of ASTMS.

Unemployment has dramatically cut the size of the engineering membership in the union and the lack of redundancies has left the remaining engineers very demoralised.

The only increase in numbers has come in the finance and insurance sector which is predominantly right wing, leaving the public sector technicians, particularly those in the

health service who are in the middle of a pay dispute, fairly consistently on the left.

In spite of the issues, like an amendment calling for strike action over Tebbit, the debates were non-controversial with the bureaucracy heading off action whenever it was mentioned.

But on Sunday morning the heated feelings came out and the conference took off over an emergency motion tabled by the West Midlands division calling for the resignation of the National Executive Council over their handling of the union finances and the branch levy.

This internal wrangle aroused more feeling than any other debate and the NEC were in trouble for a while. But eventually after a long procedural struggle the motion was defeated. This, initially left dele-

gates feeling that they had worried and chastised the National Executive and the motion had served its purpose. But as time wore on the NEC reasserted its confidence and demoralisation set in among the delegates.

Low key

The conference ended with a very low key debate on Ireland and a motion calling for the eventual withdrawal from Ireland and a united Ireland was remitted to the Executive so no decision was taken.

The contradictions in the rightward turn of the mem-

bership was the massive vote for Sue Lister, a Socialist Organiser supporter, to elect her to the conference Standing Orders Committee. This, plus the number of people who voted for the National Executive to resign shows that people are looking for a lead and not just over the internal union structures.

But the left must find a way to give that lead and not allow the NEC to continue to head off debates and decisions and the very necessary actions to defend jobs, services and union rights, at conference.

ELAINE SMITH

Industrial News

Rulecan women scent victory

by V. O'Brien

THE three-month long strike by 60 women at the Run-corn clothing factory of Rulecan Ltd looks likely to end in a victory.

Following weeks of intense pressure, Rulecan have agreed to enter into a written agreement giving a date for reinstatement of the strikers on alternative premises in the town. The agreement also includes union recognition and a guaranteed wage.

The strikers see this as a breakthrough but are refusing to lift the picket of the factory until they are able to recommence work. They are also refusing to withdraw their applications to an industrial tribunal which are currently being considered.

A vital factor in forcing the company to retreat has been the picketing of C&A department stores who are major customers of Rulecan. Large-scale leafleting of C&As calling for a shoppers boycott brought Rulecan to the verge of losing their contract.

A socialist women's group who organised much of the leafleting, have been served with a High Court

injunction by Rulecan in an effort to end picketing.

Originally the leafleting had been started locally by the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers. But when Rulecan threatened an injunction over this and the union's successful appeal to USDAW members to black the company, the Garment Workers Executive called off all blacking and ordered an end to all C&A leafleting.

All the cowardly Executive has achieved is to stir up a protest movement within the Garment Workers Union. The strikers are now questioning the accountability of their Executive members.

While the strike has revealed the desire of the Executive to put a brake on events, the strikers have openly called for a confrontation with the law over blacking and picketing.

The strike, which is the longest in the history of the Garment Workers Union, next to the Lee Jeans sit-in, has raised many important issues. Besides the question of the Executive's role, the dispute is a significant

one because of the lack of any tradition of militancy amongst clothing workers.

The question of women and low pay has also been highlighted by the strike which began when the company withdrew its guaranteed wage. Some women then stood to earn as little as £30 a week.

When the women called in their official to deal with the problem he was escorted off the premises by management who refused to negotiate.

This started the strike which has lasted over three months.

The women have nailed the lie that they just work for pin money. Throughout the dispute they have toured union branches, and collected money at factory gates. Workers at Ford Halewood have given over £500. A march through Runcorn was also organised.

Until they are fully reinstated, the women continue to be in dispute. They desperately need money. Send donations to: NUTGW, Local Fund, Imperial Chambers, 62 Dale St., Liverpool 2.

KEYS CALL TO BREAK LINKS

by Wendy Mustill



Keys: his union says break links, his committee says keep them

THE Tebbit Bill received its Third Reading in the Commons on 19 May and now goes on to the House of Lords. It will probably become law either at the end of the present session or before the start of the next Parliamentary session, depending on the Falklands situation.

Meanwhile protests are growing with some union leaders calling for strike action.

BREAK LINKS WITH TORIES NOW!



CALL 1-DAY STRIKE!

Bill Keys of SOGAT told the union's conference that the TUC should pull out of talks with the Government in the NEDC, and said that SOGAT members would be in breach of rules if they obeyed the new law, especially regarding closed shop ballots.

Keys is chairperson of the TUC's influential Employment Policy

Committee which is co-ordinating the TUC's 'campaign' against Tebbit.

Jim Slater of the Seamen's Union said last week that he was pushing for an all-out strike led by the transport workers, miners and seamen, either on the day the Bill became law or on the day before. He failed, however, to propose that the seamen should give a lead themselves.

Councillors must fight the Bill

by Gerry Byrne

The Mobilising Committee for the Defence of Trade Union Rights is seeking support for this statement from Labour councillors. Signatures to the Committee c/o 28 Middle Lane, London N8 8PL.

WE, the undersigned Labour councillors, view the Tories' 1982 Employment Bill as the greatest threat made in recent years to the trade union and labour movement, used in conjunction with the 1980 Employment Act it will:

- *Outlaw virtually all forms of effective industrial action in the public sector taken to defend jobs and living standards, and to promote trade union membership;
- *Undermine the closed shop by imposing disrup-

tive ballots and bribing anti-union workers to smash union membership agreements;

*Endanger the health and safety of thousands of people including council tenants and ratepayers by the use of scab and lump labour on council works. Only 100% trade unionism can ensure the implementation of building and other vital safety regulations;

*Outlaw traditional sympathy action to large sectors of poorly-organised exploited workers including women, blacks and overseas workers.

We therefore commit ourselves to fight the Employment Bill before and after it becomes law by:

*Publicising what the law will mean and organising together with our employees and constituents to fight the Bill, calling for

strike action on June 10 and on every future day of action against the Bill;

*Refusing as employers to implement the Act, especially clauses relating to the use of non-union subcontract labour;

*Supporting totally any action our employees take against the new law;

*Fighting for the return of a socialist Labour government committed to repealing the 1980 and 1982 Acts and any future legislation the Tories may introduce to further impoverish the working class and smash its organisations.

Tebbit's law is part and parcel of the Tory onslaught against local and central public services which has led to massive cuts, job losses, reduced services, privatisation and increased state control of local council spending. It must be resisted at all costs.

Wandsworth - the fight widens

"It's not just about privatisation now. It's about sackings and a whole attack on trade unions" - Bill Peacock, Chair, Wandsworth Manual Workers Strike Committee.

Last Friday, Wandsworth Council started issuing letters to the dustmen and other manual workers on strike against plans to privatise whole areas of the Council's services.

The letters called for a

return to work by Monday 24 May or they would be seeking authority at the Council meeting on Thursday 27th to sack the strikers.

A mass meeting on Monday with representatives from all the unions voted for all-out strike action if the council went ahead with its threat. By Tuesday some sections of the boilermen and estate caretakers (on the Battersea and Tooting

estates) had come out. The rest of the boilermen are due to come out to join the dustmen who have been out for six weeks now.

Complain

This will leave several estates without heating and hot water. Many tenants pay for their heating in with their rent and the union (GMWU) is publicising the telephone numbers at the Town Hall where they can complain and demand a refund of their heating allowance.

A coach load of strikers, paid for by the GMWU General Branch, is lobbying their conference for support. Already the GMWU Executive Council has issued a statement calling for the council to enter "meaningful negotiations" and to withdraw the sacking threat.

If not, they will authorise all GMWU members in the Borough to come out on strike (including in the social services, meals-on-wheels, home helps and homes).

On a card vote, NUPE conference carried an emergency resolution from Wandsworth.

Escalated

By their provocative actions, the council have now escalated the dispute to one of national importance. The strikers are particularly angered by the fact that Pritchards, since Friday,

have been taking out council dustcarts and using council pumps to fill up on diesel.

This, with the sackings, is seen as an open attack on the right to strike and an attempt to destroy the trade union organisation in the borough.

If the council don't withdraw their threats, and if the unions nationally stand by their mandate for industrial action, then the whole of the council's services should grind to a halt by next week.

"It's unfortunate if some people have to suffer because of this action. But if Chope (the Council leader) wants to play games, we'll show him that we've only just started", said Stan Bush, GMWU Branch Secretary.

Lobby

Even before the Tebbit Bill becomes law, Wandsworth is leading the way in sacking strikers and trying to smash trade unionism in the borough.

"Chope got an OBE for cutting back services even more than the government asked for. If he succeeds in this, he's probably hoping for a VC. We've got to make sure he doesn't get it."

*Lobby of Council meeting: Thursday 27 May at 6.00 pm, Wandsworth Town Hall.

*Donations, messages of support to: Wandsworth Manual Workers Strike Committee, c/o 347 Garrett Lane, SW18.

KIGASS BLACKING BITES

by Bryan Edmands

THE determination of the 140 or so women at Kigass Engineering, Leamington, and the smaller Abex Ltd, Warwick, remains strong after eight weeks of official strike action over AUEW union recognition, better pay and facilities.

So far, the boss, Arthur Wardman has refused to meet the strikers' demands.

But since the 150-strong demonstration on Saturday 15 May through Leamington in solidarity with the women, called by the local AUEW and supported by the local Labour Party, Coventry Trades Council, Talbot and Rolls Royce workers, he has pursued a policy of trying to divide the strikers.

He has offered to allow ten women to go back to

work alongside scabs at Kigass, with an £8 a week rise, whilst the rest could go over to Abex at Warwick with the same rise to replace women strikers there.

The women strikers have received little help or strike pay from the local AUEW officials, despite the token demonstration led by two AUEW officials, while Kigass strikers were told to walk a little way behind them!

Fortunately the response from the local rank and file has been more supportive.

Workers from Rolls Royce in Coventry have blacked Kigass products which has led to an outcry in the local press since some of these consist of tiny but apparently vital parts for

Harrier jump jet engines, needed so "vital" for the "national" war effort around the Malvinas.

Other support has come for instance, from the Coventry Committee for a Woman's Right to Work, which held a public meeting on Friday 21st with Kigass women and a speaker from the strike committee there.

Blacking of products is still essential to help the strikers and so is physical and financial support.

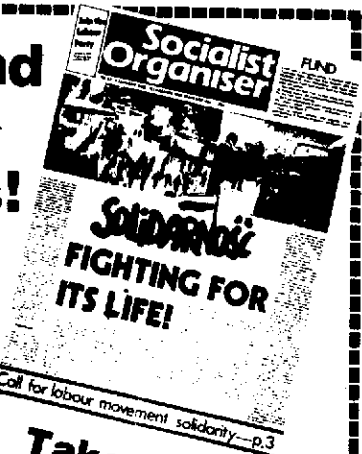
Day-long pickets continue all week at the factory where support would be welcome, and contributions/messages of support can be sent to: c/o J. Patson, 13 South Terrace, Witnash, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

Spread the news!

We're offering bundles of five each week for £1 post free, and bundles of 10 for £1.75 post free. That's £12 for three months for bundles of 5, and £21 for bundles of 10.

Regular subscription rates are £5 for three months, £8.75 for six months, and £16 for a year.

From: Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8. Please make cheques payable to Socialist Organiser.



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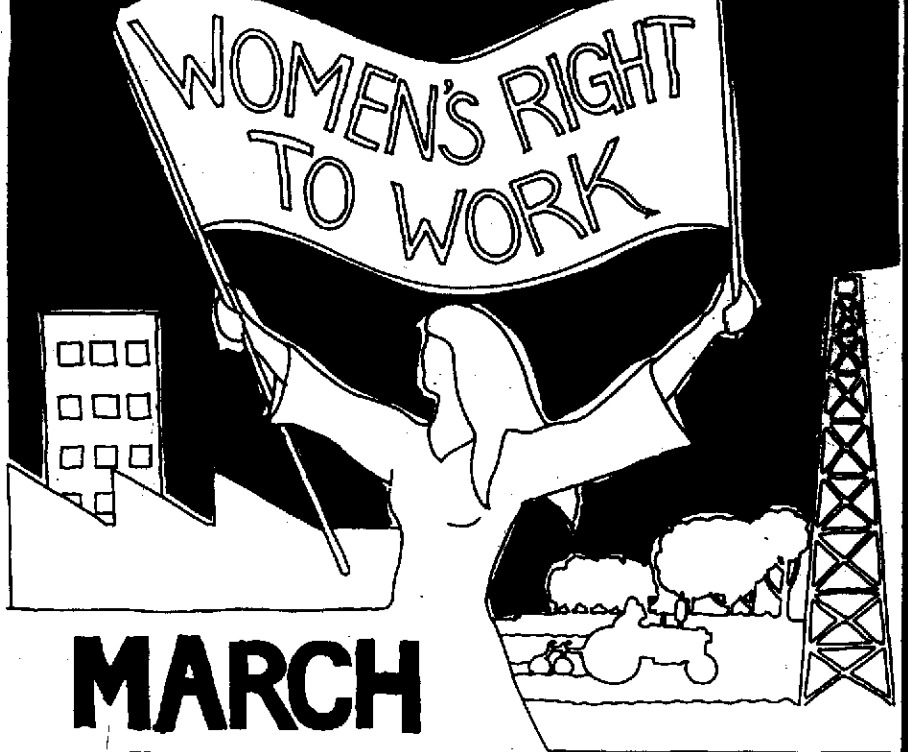


JUNE 5:

ON YOUR FEET AND MARCH

NUPE affiliates to Fightback

DEMONSTRATE



MARCH

JUNE 5

10-30 FROM COUNTY HALL
TO BATTERSEA PARK

It's all go on the Women's Right to Work front this week!

APEX conference voted to support the march and the Labour Party Women's Festival on June 5. And NUPE conference voted to affiliate to Women's Fightback, which has spent the last year organising and building for the Women's Right to Work March.

We need to turn these votes into bodies on the march. The march is going to make women's unemployment visible again and show that women have as much right to a job as men. It'll point out that women's unemployment isn't just about job vacancies.

It's also about the lack of nurseries, hospitals and old people's services, low pay and sexual harassment at work. And that women are then expected after all that, to cheerfully do shopping, cooking and cleaning as well.

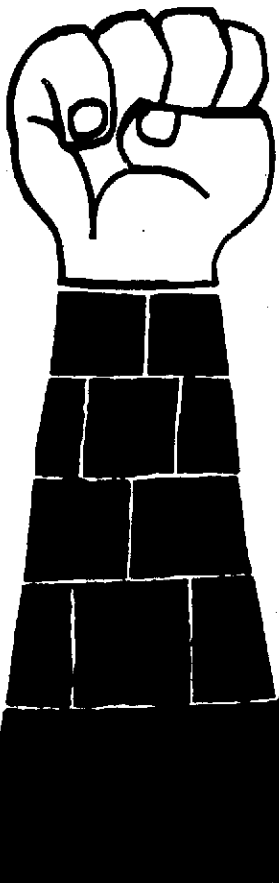
The march is gaining support all the time; make sure you, your banners and all your mates are there!

The march assembles at 10.30 at County Hall, Waterloo, London on June 5.

Leaflets and posters can be obtained from the Action Committee, c/o LSO, University of London Union, Malet Street, London WC1, tel: 01-637 5892.

'UNION DAY'- STRIKE AGAINST TORIES!

£6000 fund



A Leeds supporter £8; Cambridge readers £2; the Glasgow group £10 — that adds up to only £20 for the special fund this week. The total so far is £1798.80, shown by the red patch below.

We need to see an acceleration in the flow of contributions now, not a slowing down. Remember: the target is £6,000 by the end of July.

Individual donations, jumble sales, book sales, fund-raising socials — we need them all.

Send contributions to Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8 8PL.

THE TGWU national docks delegate conference has called for a dockers' strike on June 10, linking their fight on jobs with the fight against Tebbit.

Health service workers have already planned strikes on June 4 and 8, and NUPE conference has voted for all-out strike from June 4. The NUR has set June 7 as the starting date for industrial action on the railways over pay and jobs.

Strikes

The TUC's plans for June 10 — its official 'Union Day' — go no further than public leafleting.

But both the Fire Brigades Union and the National Union of Seamen conferences have called for 24 hour strikes against Tebbit. They didn't name a date but militants in those unions should use the conference decisions as a basis for getting local strikes on June 10, alongside the dockers.

Joint action by dockers, railworkers, NHS workers, firemen, and seafarers, even in one or two areas, would be a massive blow to turn the



Murray addressing Confed members on the April 29 lobby of Parliament against the Tebbit Bill

tide against the Tories.

We should demand that the union leaders co-ordinate action for a united blow — and work for that locally whatever the national leaders do.

The Mobilising Com-

mittee for the Defence of Trade Union Rights is putting out tens of thousands of leaflets calling for action.

Trades councils, Labour Parties and Labour Councils can add

their weight to the protest on June 10 by organising local demonstrations and rallies.

But we have to get working now! There's only two weeks to go.