

Big Flame

for Socialism

No. 74 May 1979

15p

WE'LL HAVE TO FIGHT ANY GOVERNMENT

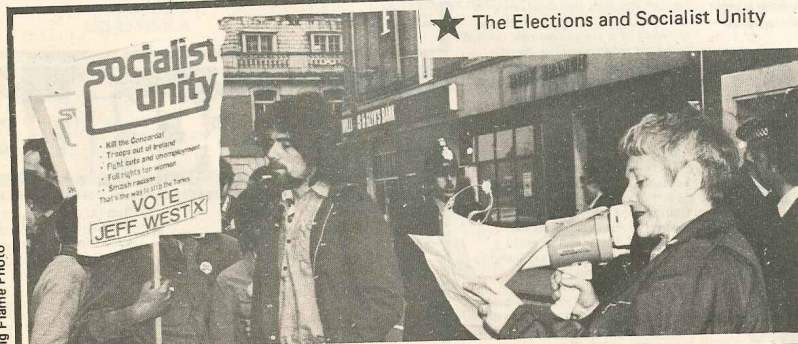
Vote Labour - Keep the Tories Out



Big Flame Photo



(Andrew Ward, Report)



Big Flame Photo

★ The Elections and Socialist Unity

★ FRENCH STEEL WORKERS: two page photo feature.

★ GRENADA — exclusive interview with new envoy.

★ Do we need a Men's Movement?

★ Nuclear Power at Torness?



★ Plus lots more in the new 16-page Big Flame.

Inside this issue

Editorial

NO MATTER who wins the General Election, the working class will have to face wage controls, cuts in our services and restrictions on the rights of immigrants, Irish people and trade unionists. If it is a Tory government that carries out these attacks on our living standards and rights, the responsibility will lie squarely with the Labour Government. Despite the ravings of the Tory press, it will not be a "failure of socialism," but of Laobur's own imitation Tory policies.

In our understandable desire to keep the Tories out, we cannot forget that it is Labour that has presided over the near-tripling of unemployment from 545,000 to 1,455,000 that has slashed public spending on health and education, allowing numerous hospitals and schools to close, and is responsible for the obscenity of 'H' Block, the torturing of Irish prisoners at Castlereagh and the ever-increasing restrictions on the rights of immigrants, including the notorious 'virginity tests' at Heathrow. By failing

to produce socialist policies to meet peoples' needs at a time of social and economic crisis, they have paved the way for the return of a Tory government of the most viciously reactionary nature.

BUT VOTE LABOUR TO KEEP THE TORIES OUT

Socialists cannot remain indifferent to the return of a Tory government. Their policies will extend every attack carried out by Labour and open up new and worse ones. They will massively increase cuts in spending on our schools, hospitals and other services to finance their money tax cuts. Slashing of employment subsidies, job creation schemes and other industrial aid, will put many more on the dole. It is likely that they will end the indexing of pensions and welfare benefits to the cost-of-living. To weaken our resistance to these and other measures the Tories have pledged to limit the right to picket, to the closed shop and they

will cut or stop supplementary benefits for strikers' families.

The majority of working class people will choose to vote for a Labour Government not because of any illusions in Labour, but because of the Tory alternative, and the lack of any other credible possibilities. Big Flame rejects the return of the party of the ruling class, whose share prices are already leaping at the prospect of a Tory victory. Therefore we call for a Labour vote, to keep the Tories out. This doesn't mean that we want to let Laobur off the hook, giving it the space to pretend to be more socialist in opposition. It may be easier to develop struggles under the Tories but socialists must convince working people and Labour activists that the Labour Party is a willing prisoner of this system and one which will have to be fought every step of the way.

AND BUILD THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE

Socialist alternatives to the Tory policies of Labour are at the moment fragmented. But they exist. They are present in the

Lucas Workers' Plan for alternative production to combat redundancies and in the development of rank and file organisation like the Fordworkers Group, in the Women's Movement struggle for the right to choose on abortion and sexuality, in the anti-racist, anti-fascist struggle against the National Front, immigration controls and state harassment of black people, in the vitality of youth organisations like the National Union of School Students and School Kids Against the Nazis and in the emerging opposition of the anti-nuclear movement to capitalism's latest death machine.

Socialist Unity is standing a small number of candidates to put across these alternatives by linking the policies and building the campaigns to win them. Big Flame is active in building support for Socialist Unity and calls for a vote for these candidates as a small but important step in building a socialist alternative. But regardless of the election results, Labour or Tory — the fight goes on.

March 31st was the day called by women internationally to demonstrate for abortion facilities. In many parts of the world, women demonstrated, and in London, our ranks were swelled by a contingent of women bearing banners and singing songs from all over the world.

Compared to other abortion demonstrations, particularly those called to fight the James White and Benyon bills, the turnout was poor. Maybe this was because there were other demonstrations that day, but it is also true that an international demonstration on abortion was not seen as being urgent and important by a great many people.

One of the things that came over most clearly in the speeches at the rally in Trafalgar Square is that abortion is an international question. A woman comrade from Spain spoke of how difficult it was to get not only abortions but also contraceptives in her country, where both are illegal. She described some of the terrible things women do to themselves there to prevent having unwanted children. She told us in no plain terms that for women in Spain, and for women in a great many other countries in Europe, it is really important that the right to legal abortion in Britain should not be lost. Many thousands of women come to this country every year to have abortions, to avoid police harassment and damage to their bodies at the hands of backstreet abortionists.

If a Conservative government comes to power after the election, there is no doubt that our rights to abortion in this country will be attacked. So next time we take to the streets to fight for free and legal abortion on demand, let's remember that we're fighting alongside our sisters abroad.

*Not the Church, not the state
Women will decide their fate.
With a nicknack scallywag give a dog
a bone,
Margaret Thatcher piss off home!*



Contraception — so that we don't need abortions: abortion on demand — so that we don't have to die. Italian feminists on the demo in London. (Big Flame photo)

Prisoners of Europe

DUBLIN — 21st April: As part of the 'For a workers' Europe' campaign around the European elections a meeting, attended by 250 delegates, was held in Dublin to draw attention to Europe's political prisoners. The meeting was organised by Provisional Sinn Fein and attended by delegates from organisations from France, Brittany, Corsica, Belgium, Flanders, Denmark, the Basque country and Portugal. From England the United Troops Out Movement, the Prisoners Aid Committee and Big Flame were

represented.

Amongst the speakers were Ruari O' Braudaigh of Provisional Sinn Fein, who spoke of the 2,000 political prisoners in Ireland, Jackie Kaye (PAC) who drew attention to the 80 Irish prisoners in Britain, and Des Warren (of the Shrewsbury Two) who spoke of his experience in prison resulting from picketing in the 1972 building workers' strike and who criticised the English left for not taking seriously the issue of prisoners.

On Easter Sunday London saw two demonstrations commemorating the Easter uprising of Irish rebels in 1916. The largest, which attracted about 700 people was organised by Provisional Sinn Fein and marched to a rally in Kilburn. The smaller Irish Republican Socialist Party demonstration also marched to Kilburn where an earlier rally was held.

The speakers at both rallies drew attention to the urgency of campaigning on behalf of the Irish prisoners of war fighting for political status. Big Flame had members on both demonstrations.

Facelift

Last September we boldly announced in this paper "Coming this autumn — our new improved paper". Our Australian readers, having suffered a summer as hot as our winter was cold, will be pleased to see that we have kept to our promise.

REASONS

The reasons behind the facelift are many. We have improved the design, and hopefully made the contents more interesting. The back page, when folded, becomes a display for bookshops and conferences, but normally our paper sales will be with the front page showing as it always has been.

FEEDBACK

We rely on contributions from you, news from your local activities and features reflecting your thoughts. If the paper is to be a success we will have to be 'stricter' than in the past, news stories should be no longer than 350 words and features 800 words. We also need to be told in advance that you're sending something in.

DEADLINES

For the June paper we must receive features by Weds. 9th May and news by Weds 15th May. Exceptions will only apply to news that happens after this date and then you must write and tell us.

Articles must be double-spaced and typed if possible. Lastly, our bank balance isn't too healthy. We need regular donations — if you think the paper is worthwhile then this is the best way to show your appreciation. How about a big response this month? Can BF groups selling the paper make sure that their paper money is sent promptly — otherwise we'll have to take guerrilla action!

This month's donations:
BF Women £5
£1 from GS, Middlesex.
£5 London member
£5 Norwich comrades
£17 standing orders.
A total of £33

subscribe

I want to subscribe to the paper Sub rates: £2.75 per year, Britain & Ireland. £1.40 for 6 months. Abroad: £3.50 & £1.75.
I want more information about Big Flame

NAME

ADDRESS

ROYAL PARTY going 1: Princess Anne went out to dinner by helicopter recently. Although her engagement was only 50 miles away from her home, she chose an RAF helicopter instead of an official limousine. "because it is not comfortable to wear evening dress in a car" said a Buckingham Palace spokesman. (Daily Mirror, 23.11.78)

ROYAL PARTY going 2: The Queen's cousin, Lord Lichfield, decided to celebrate the birth of his son with a little party. Amongst the 500 guests were Princesses Anne, Margaret, Alexandra and Michael of Kent. The do, held at the Hyde Park Hotel, cost £30,000. (Daily Mail 28.11.78)

BIG FLAME will probably not be attending the one day conferences in Liverpool and Coventry on "Keeping the tax man at bay." For £43.20, they promise to take us through the whole gamut of the tax system since the 1978 Finance Act. All the latest loopholes in the Corporation, Capital transfer and Capital gains tax will be explained. Sounds like a bargain for the over-burdened businessman.

ARTHUR SCARGILL'S been defending the practice of his union newspaper, The Miner, of featuring pin-ups on page three. Called to account at a debate in London recently, he repeated his line about it being a harmless and pleasurable feature of modern life.

Here's a piece from a new biography of Marilyn Monroe by Lena Peitonne and William

AWAYDAY

MICKY WAS on the InterCity back from London the other day. He'd been down to see the family. All courtesy of a firm of personnel consultants in the City. Micky explained, "I went down for an interview." He often goes down for interviews. In fact, every time he fancies a trip to the Smoke he opens the paper at the Appointments page and scribbles off a couple of job applications. The secret, it seems, is in aiming high enough to be a credible proposition. The expenses are more lavish that way, too.



Marilyn began to see a lot of other things she had never noticed before. She decided her breasts were getting flabby, and discovered tiny stretch marks there and on her backside. Probably from the gaining and losing of so much weight. Marilyn began to sense she was growing older, it terrified her.

"I still can't act...not really."



"SOME ONE-parent families go without food and clothing in trying to pay fuel bills according to a survey by the National Council for One Parent Families... the survey covered a random selection of 31 families who had asked the council for help. Five out of six said that they went without food or clothing to pay for fuel. Ten suffered from bronchitis and other illnesses related to cold conditions and most lived in old, damp property. (Guardian, 20.11.78)

En och Powell, the man of the people (God save us from the Sun), has produced the working man's argument for making the closed shop illegal.

"I have long concluded that trade union action is, over time, not only non beneficial but marginally harmful to the maintenance and increase of the real remuneration

LYING LIKE A TROOPER EVERYONE KNOWS that the press works on the principle in the case of Ireland — that the less the public understands about the situation in the North the better.

David Attenborough has done his celebrated Life on Earth and David Dimbleby has carried out his dissection of the Boer mentality, but when have we ever had a documentary series on Irish history?

The chances now are probably slimmer with the BBC's latest recruit to its Belfast current affairs team. Their new producer, Bob Crooks, has just given up a job editing Visor, the official army magazine. Crooks is an officer in the Territorials.

and conditions of labour."

Presumably Enoch has been helped towards this startling conclusion (after all, the unions are growing at a staggering rate considering his reasoning) by that statistical flair with which he periodically proves that white people have become all but a minority in Britain.



news

Police Harrassment Enquiry

BRIXTON BLACKS TAKE THE BRUNT

It is unlikely that any of the candidates in the Lambeth Central constituency will mention during their General Election campaign the consistent police harassment that is part of everyday life for large numbers of Lambeth's residents — particularly in the black community.

The month-long visit by the Special Patrol Group last November was just one example (see *Big Flame*, January 1979) when thousands of people — predominantly young blacks, but also including squatters, council tenants in the most rundown estates and many others (including two Lambeth councillors and a local vicar) — were virtually terrorized off the streets with a frightening mixture of raids, stop and searches, roadblocks, arrests on 'sus', and sheer bloody-minded harassment.

The visit prompted an angry response in the area and a protest march of 250 people was successfully organized at very short notice. Black organizations and individuals formed the group Blacks Against State Harrassment (BASH). Its base is in Brixton, and it demands an end to all racist and repressive legislation (for instance on 'sus' and immigration), an end to the racist practices of the judiciary, to all forms of police harassment of black people, and to 'special police squads designed to operate against the black communities' (such as the Special Patrol Groups).

DIPPING

At more or less the same time a second group, Lambeth Against Police Harrassment, came into being, mainly involving activists from the local anti-racists (AIL-Lambeth Against Racism — ALARM — and the Lambeth Anti-Nazi League) and from the labour movement; but it also drew in teachers, parents, youth workers, and playground workers who had previously been uninvolved. Their demands followed those of BASH quite closely. A dossier currently being prepared by them for publication has its three main demands: 'Scrap SUS Now', 'No Return of the SPG and For a Popular Watch Committee', and 'A Public Enquiry Into Police Behaviour In the Borough'.

On February 12th, following an incident in the 'Two Brewers' pub in Clapham, in which several youths were arrested for alleged 'dipping' (picking pockets) and the stabbing of a plain clothes policeman, the police took the extraordinary step of marching into the offices of the Council for Community Relations in Lambeth (CCRL) and lifting three of the Council's black employees 'in connection with the incident'.

Herman Ouseley, one of those arrested, tells the story:

'It seems they were looking for someone with a sheepskin coat. When Mr. Meghie said he had one, they arrested him. I told him that I also had a sheepskin coat and was arrested too'.

The qualifications for arrest were simple indeed: if you were black and wore a sheepskin coat, you were under arrest, as Lloyd Douglas discovered when they picked him up on the way out the door with the other two. As soon as the news got around, representatives of several local black organizations and white supporters mounted a picket outside that remained there all day, until the last of the three was released eight hours later. None of the three was charged.

One immediate effect of this incident was the breakdown of the police-inspired community liaison committee, which, for just over a year, had operated as a rather transparent public relations front for the police. It talked about things a lot, and achieved absolutely nothing. Since that time public pressure has pushed Lambeth Council to set up an enquiry in the immediate future into police-community relations.

STUFFED

The composition of the enquiry has yet to be finalized. Some members of the working party to set up the enquiry have fought for the sort of panel that will be both accessible and credible to the black community. A bunch of retired lawyers and stuffed shirts pontificating and finger wagging simply will not be enough.

Colin Murray
Lambeth Against Police
Harrassment (LAPH)

RESOURCES

Over the last 18 months, support has been growing for the project among residents, trade union and community activists in this fiercely parochial textile and engineering town in West Yorkshire.

The aim of the project is to provide resources for local people to use in their campaigns, express their views creatively or get information on aspects of everyday life: housing, industry, health, welfare. Several activities are already in progress: a cheap print service, a study of local industry, a start to the information service, fund raising events and arts workshops in the communities.

The enquiry takes place in Keighly Town Hall on 15th May. You can contact Keighly



Brixton Police Station Picket; Union Place Collective.

DUNLOP, SPEKE, CLOSED

Talks lead to dead end

THE 500 MEN who attended that last mass meeting inside the Dunlop plant in Speke could be excused for being cynical. They were told that the fight was just beginning to save their jobs but they and everyone else knew that the majority of the 2,400 workers had accepted the redundancy money and the fight would be continued by very few.

Already ex-Dunlop workers have used the redundancy money to pay off arrears in the Housing Office in Speke. Other workers interviewed on TV were saying they'd taken the money because they expected to start a new job in a few weeks. A familiar tale to the many Standard workers still on the dole after a year.

WHAT WENT WRONG?

The one we can't afford to lose. That's what we were all saying on Merseyside when the 90 day redundancy notices were issued. For those of us watching the men filing out of the gates for the last time, the question was, what went wrong?

The civil disobedience tactic succeeded in bringing the closure to the attention of the public, but never really involved the community or even more than a minority of the workers themselves. The hope that it would force the government to come to the workers' aid was a non-starter and became more unlikely once the no-confidence vote took place.

The action committee's desire to get the company round the negotiating table set the tone from the beginning. No talk of occupation, no action which would make the company reluctant to talk.

THE "ACTION" PLAN

What was it the Committee wanted

the final weeks of the Campaign was a gift for Dunlops management. They must have been rubbing their hands together in glee. The plan accepted a loss of 1,000 jobs and gave the Company a blank cheque on productivity and manning. It also was a guarantee that an occupation would not take place. By stringing the Committee along with hints of talks, management knew that the day of closure would go by without a hitch.

EXPERTS

Blaming the bankruptcy of the workers plan on Tony Lane, a Communist Party member who researched it, is too easy. Its reformist politics are an accurate and direct reflection of the Labour majority on the Action Committee. Nonetheless, it's worth questioning the emerging role of the experts who advise shop stewards committees, especially when they reinforce militants' distrust of the far left without providing any revolutionary lead to the struggle.

WHAT NOW?

The flying pickets which have been organised throughout the country on Dunlop plants are beginning to bite — workers at Fort Dunlop in Birmingham are being laid off. It's ironic that the most effective action against the company should

Teachers Vote for Action

DELEGATES at the National Union of Teachers' National Conference in Scarborough in April voted almost unanimously to immediately embark on a campaign of withdrawing 'good will' in pursuit of our salary claim. Members are asked to refuse to carry out voluntary activities outside school hours and to stop using their cars on school business.

Last year these sanctions were extremely effective. Split site schools had to close as teachers were unable to ferry themselves from one building to another, and withdrawal from dinner duties led to school kids going on strike in response to their being locked out of schools in the lunchtime. It was the latter which really won us an increase.

DISCIPLINE

This year the situation is different. The claim is much larger as teachers' salaries have fallen so far behind those of other non-manual workers during the years of incomes policy. The nine per cent already offered has only been won on the backs of other public sector workers who have already taken action. In the large secondary schools in urban areas many teachers will think twice about withdrawing 'good will' when the result may be more school kids' strikes, which they see as undermining their own authority and classroom discipline.

Unfortunately, the left-wing motion for no cover action, a half-day strike, and longer strikes in selected areas, was overwhelmingly defeated.

One unsatisfactory aspect of the current claim is that it widens wage differentials with teachers lower down the scale — overwhelmingly women — who stand to gain much less than Heads and others at the top. Demands for a flat-rate increase barely received a hearing.

CANING

One good feature of the conference was a lobby of school kids demanding an end to corporal punishment and recognition of the National Union of School Students (NUSS). This was one of the issues which the left prioritised, but we were not given the chance to debate it. Now that the EIS (the main Scottish teachers' union) has come out against corporal punishment, teachers in England stand almost alone in Europe in wanting to keep it!

In the debate on racism, there was a clear majority in favour of positive discrimination — both in recruiting ethnic minority teachers and in re-orienting the exam curriculum. Yet again, affiliation to the Anti-Nazi League was rejected.

The mood of the conference was positive and I got the feeling that many of the delegates were prepared to fight if the new government attacks their wages and education standards. On how to fight, precious little guidance came from the executive. But there's nothing new in that.

The excellent bulletin, Women in the NUT, can be obtained (30p, including postage) from Carol Regan, 23 Kenilworth Gardens, London S.E. 18.

mass fight are almost certainly over. The other problem about the picketing is that it could present a severe test to the solidarity of the other Dunlop workers — especially when the plan is rather ambiguous about exactly how Speke jobs can be saved without at the same time hitting jobs at the other British plants.

Hopefully though, it's still too early to write the obituary on this struggle. Several hundred Speke workers are determined to save some jobs at Dunlops and they could still succeed. It's hard to think that they would have done worse if they had occupied

Keighley Aid Centre

A 2,500 petition from local residents has helped to force officials to call a public enquiry into the demolition of Temple St Sunday School in Keighley. The Council only decided to demolish this large Victorian building when they were faced by a growing

FRENCH STEEL: The Towns That Won't Die

(All photos on these pages and on the back page are by Pol Gornek and Helen Banberger militant photographers met in Longwy. To them - thanks.)

Lost jobs or joint struggle internationally. Those are the options facing steel-workers throughout Europe. Below, Peter Anderson reports on the recent explosive struggles against mass redundancies in France - struggles which involved workers from the European steel industry, not just from France itself. And next month Big Flame will take a further look at an industry in which such different issues as new technologies, import controls and state racism are all day-to-day problems facing worker militants. The British Steel Corporation is by far the largest steel company in the EEC. It was also, until recently, the management that was most ruthless about cutting jobs, not least because of out and out collaboration by British steel union 'leaders'. But by now all the European steel companies are united in a cartel called 'Eurofer' and backed by the EEC Commission: their aim is to slash a quarter of a million jobs - one in every three! - throughout Europe. And the joint fightback of French, Belgian, and German workers sets a shining example for their colleagues in other countries...including our own.

Until the end of the last century, all workers at the Usinor steel-mills had to begin their workday with a prayer. By now, some of that paternalism has disappeared but from providing jobs, Usinor still owns most of the houses in the towns where its plants are and is closely involved in the running of the local schools and hospitals. Towns like Denain and Longwy in North-East France are steel towns; if the steel mills close, they will die. Usinor wants to centralise its steel production in Dunkerque, a coastal site, better located to use imported ore and coke which comes by sea. They want to close steel production totally in Denain and partially in Longwy - with 6,000 redundancies in each town.

VIOLENCE - PART OF A TRADITION

The extremely militant and violent fightback of the Denain and Longwy steel-workers has taken the Usinor management and the French government by surprise - they expected the trade-union leadership to be able to sell a package which included retraining grants, £7,000 redundancy payments, early retirement and a £1,500 repatriation bonus for all immigrant workers who in any case can be deported by force. Denain and Longwy are tight-knit communities with a long tradition of working class resistance.



SUPPORT THE STEEL INDUSTRY
LONGWY WILL LIVE

And although the Communist Party gets the votes of the steel-workers and their families, its ability to hold back the struggle is limited. As a militant told me:

"Yes, the violence of our struggle was useful - though we regret that two of our members were seriously injured. It made sure that we were recognised and we were able to get the forces of law and order removed from the streets of the town. The police have been told to stay in their stations, you won't see one in the streets. In fact, the street fighting wasn't much to write home about. After the four years of the last war, the Liberation, resistance from the roof-tops, the tanks - last month was pretty small beer..."

FIRST ROUND VICTORY

The first stage of the struggle of the Usinor workers of Denain

and Longwy - which included stopping trains, smashing up the town halls, blocking the motorway - is now over. It has been a success in that the government has been forced to announce that there will be no redundancies in

1979 (instead of 7,000 in the original plan) and that the future of steel production on Longwy and Denain is "under review". But the militants realise that they need a different strategy to build a wider unity amongst steel workers. Their immediate plans are:

- To bring the struggle back into the workplaces. To have a series of rolling stoppages which will cripple output without losing pay for the workers. Whilst I was there, an important piece of equipment was kidnapped from the Longwy plant as another means of stopping production.
- Rank and file links are being built between militants from the different Usinor plants. Since the company's strategy is to transfer production to the Dunkerque plant - it is essential to get the support of the Dunkerque workers. And in fact (surprise, surprise), the Dunkerque section of the CFDT trade union has been suspended by the union's executive for supporting the March demo in Paris and establishing links with other CFDT branches!
- International links are being built with steel workers from Belgium and Luxemburg. A Committee of the Three Borders meets regularly and has trade-union delegates from steel plants in the three countries. An important meeting is planned to take place in Luxemburg on May 19th as part of the "For a Workers Europe - Against the Bosses Europe" campaign for the elections to the European parliament and an international demonstration of steel workers will take place later this year outside the head-quarters in Luxemburg of the European Steel Community where the infamous "Davignon 'plan'" was hatched - the blueprint for the redundancies now taking place in steel plants throughout Europe.

Steel workers in Longwy and Denain have won the first round in their opposition to the 27,000 redundancies the French government and the steel companies want to implement by 1981. Their strength comes from the total support of the communities where the plants are located. Now, Longwy and Denain have to build the struggle on a national and a Europe-wide basis; and that's a different story.

NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL LINKS

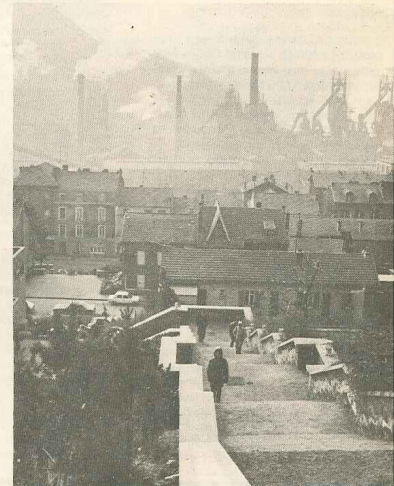
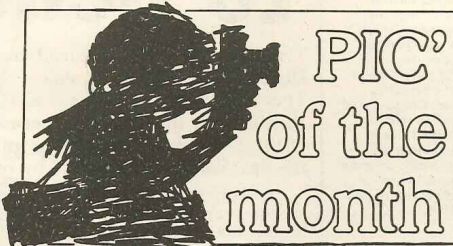
Steel workers in Longwy and Denain have won the first round in their opposition to the 27,000 redundancies the French government and the steel companies want to implement by 1981. Their strength comes from the total support of the communities where the plants are located. Now, Longwy and Denain have to build the struggle on a national and a Europe-wide basis; and that's a different story.



The sacking of the steel employers' headquarters in Longwy. The offices were pillaged and all files burnt.

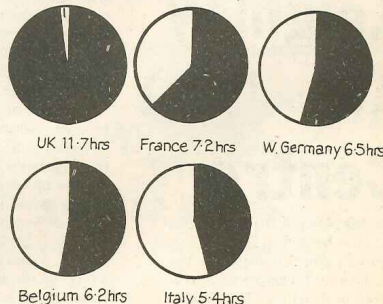


A road-block near Longwy. During this period all traffic in and out of the town was controlled by the strike committee.



Longwy: atmospheric photo.

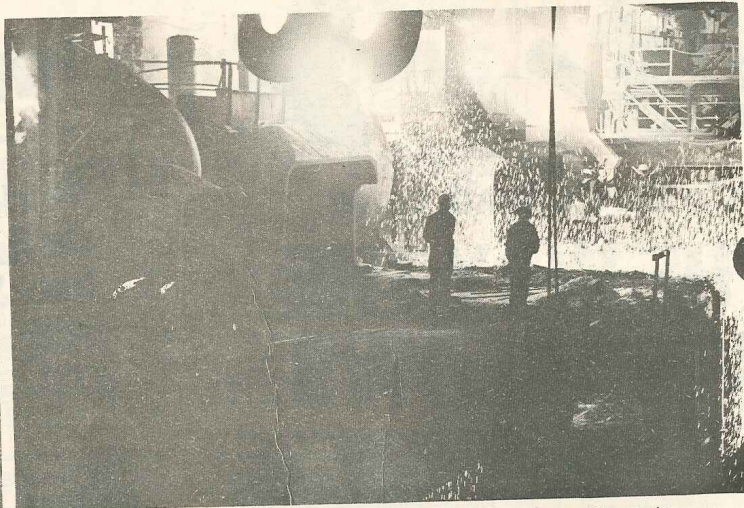
Hours to produce 1 tonne of steel - 1977



British government graph which 'proves' how it takes longer to make a tonne of steel in Britain than in other countries. Only problem is that the French government puts out a chart which has the same figures except that French steel-workers



Inside the steel mill at Longwy: closure has now been postponed till 1980.



Discussion between French, Luxemburg and Belgian steel-workers at an occupation of the frontier post in February.

The radio station with a heart of steel

FREE RADIO stations have an essential contribution to make to a struggle. And because there are two unions involved in the struggle in Longwy, there are two free radio stations. The politically independent CFDT has Radio "S.O.S. Jobs" which is small and clandestine and the CGT, the trade union arm of the Communist Party, has "Radio Heart of Steel" which is large and has a studio in the town hall, since the CP is in power there.

The radio stations do not compete with one another; they transmit at different times. Most of their programmes are "round table" discussions or phone-ins. One of the most popular programmes is a militant "What the Papers Say" where reports from the national gutter press are read out and workers discuss what a load of crap the reports are.

HEATED PROGRAMMES

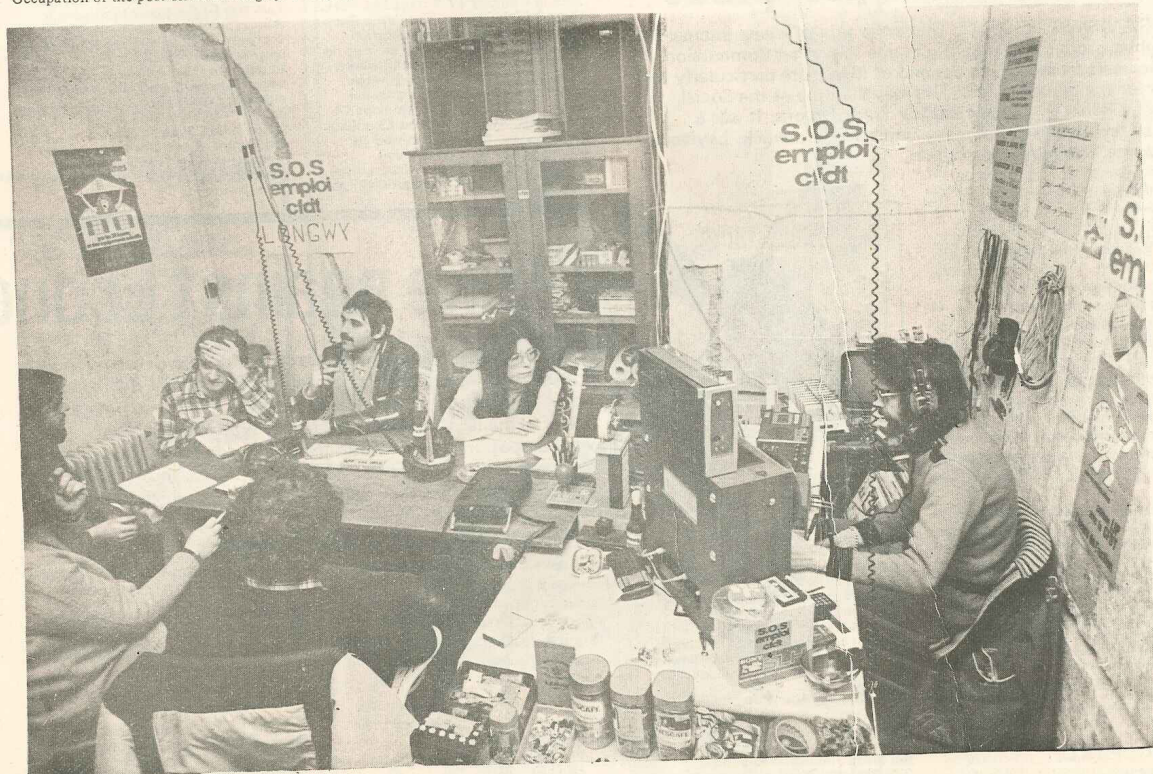
When I was there the two most heated programmes were about the election of "Miss Steel" and the treatment doled out by the local hospital. The youth section of the CGT had organised a ball in which there was to be a "Miss Steel" election. Women members of the CGT phoned in to make it clear that such an event was an insult to women and should have no place in a CGT organised event. The next day there was a "round table" discussion and the organisers of the ball admitted that they had been wrong to include the election — a compromise was reached whereby the election would go ahead but the candidates would be normally dressed and judged by their knowledge of the class struggle! In a phone-in to local doctors, many people complained about the treatment they and their families had got at the local hospital. The doctors' bureaucratic reply: "I'm afraid I haven't got the details of the case you refer to with me..." angered everyone and many listeners suggested an occupation of the hospital to wake the doctors up!

The radio stations have been going a month and in that short time have been vital in uniting the whole town round the struggle of the steel workers. Their popularity is such that according to surveys they have taken viewers away from the telly. Not that French telly is much cop anyway.

For information about the struggle of steel workers in this country read 'Real Steel News', available from Joe Herbert c/o 89 Southgrove Rd. Sheffield 10.



Occupation of the post-office at Longwy: February 1979.



A round-table discussion at 'Radio SOS Jobs'.



Derbyshire's death cloud THE WAY THE WIND BLOWS

THE CHEMICAL industry of N. E. Derbyshire has always had a very poor record over health and safety. Firms such as Coalite Chemical, Vintex, and Stavelly Chemicals are often in the headlines with a new horror story.

Only last month an explosion at Coalite caused the release of a cloud of toxic chemicals leading to the closure of the nearby M1 motorway. Fortunately, the wind didn't blow the cloud either into the local town of Bolsover or into the ventilation system of the nearby colliery at Markham.

There are even more serious long-term problems. Investigations in Japan show that people working on processes like that of the DCA plant of Stavelly chemicals can develop liver damage. A similar plant in the USA was closed several years ago because it was considered 'too dangerous'.

Recently after pressure from the unions at Stavelly there were tests on the men's livers. Already the men were suffering from a disease called chloracne, caused by exposure to the chemical TCAOB.

Chloracne is characterized by crops of black-heads across the face which recur year after year. It now seems that chloracne is linked with the more serious problem of liver damage, as well as to high levels of blood fats, which increases the likelihood of angina and heart attacks.

Fortunately, so far there are no signs that the men at Stavelly have heart disease caused by exposure.

Management is now sufficiently concerned about the problem to have removed the worst affected men from the DCA plant. They have also instructed the men to reduce the chances of heart attack by stopping smoking and drinking, reducing their weight if they are fat, and eating less cholesterol containing food (meat, cheese, butter, eggs, etc.).

The men, of course, find these instructions impossible to follow; instead, the instructions only increase anxiety.

KILLERS

Even more worrying is that these toxic chemicals are found literally everywhere - in certain plastics around the house, in wood preservatives on wood used in building, in weed killers that contaminate vegetables and fruit, etc. The government agency, the Employment Medical Advisory Service (EMAS) is sufficiently worried to finance several large studies of these problems. To ensure that the results of these studies are

It is important for workers to join and participate in the struggle for the African National Congress fight for national liberation in South Africa.

The industrial class in the following: both explicit and implicit, expressed. The African workers are to carry out their duties, without any regard for their own health and safety. The African workers are to lead in the defence of the right to elect their own government of their country.

SEVESO

With pollution around the factories a serious problem, there is considerable potential for organising a campaign linking activity by unions and community groups. After the explosion at Seveso in Northern Italy caused the release of a cloud of the deadly chemical dioxin, there was a public outcry against the similar plant at Coalite in the local community. The men then refused to work on the process and it was closed down.

New Big Flame pamphlet

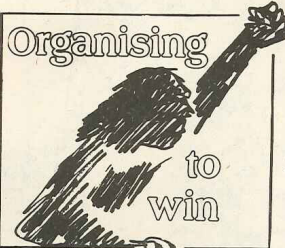
"ORGANISING TO WIN". That's the title of a new discussion pamphlet produced by the Big Flame Industrial Commission. The years from 1975 to the end of 1978 were particularly bad years for the working class. This was the time of the Social Contract between Labour and the Trade Unions. It was a time of few struggles and many defeats - Grunwick, Leyland, Lucas, the Firefighters and so on.

This pamphlet is an attempt to learn from those years. What went wrong? It's in two parts. Part One is an analysis of why from 1975 we were losing so often: the increasing incorporation of the trade unions into state economic planning; the attempts to undermine the offensive side of the shop stewards' movement; the role of the Labour Government and incomes policy; the economic recession and the increase in unemployment; the growing divisions in the working class and the use of new production methods to undermine the stronger sections of the working class.

Part Two is organised as a manual - a theoretical and practical guide, packed with examples, on how to win struggles.

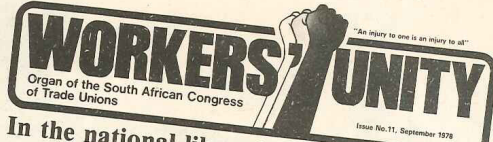
It has sections on fighting unemployment, closure, manning cuts, productivity and bonus deals. A long section is devoted to the struggle for better wages and the shorter week. It deals with organising on the shop floor, building a rank and file movement for socialism, organising in the trade unions, fighting racism and sexism at work, struggling for better health and safety, and fighting for more unity and against divisions.

START DEBATE



to write down systematically everything we've learnt over the past nine years about the politics of organising at work. But it's not the definitive, once and for all political statement of Big Flame's "line". We recognise that our experience is limited, and that some of our ideas are based too narrowly on the experience of one industrial sector.

So the aim of the pamphlet is to start a debate among militant socialists about how best to organise for socialism and working class power at work. That's why it's in a duplicated format. "Organising to Win" 35p plus 20p postage and packing Cheques and postal orders should be made out to Big Flame Publications. Available from Big Flame (Industrial Pamphlet)



Workers are the driving force!



Strikes sharpen crisis for the ruling class

Since March, there have been black workers' strikes in the industrial class in support of wage demands, of credit funds for the ruling class threatening the profits which the Our opponents are filled with their fear of the workers' strength. Some of them hope, through a few petty reforms, about the national demands of the working people. Even the cost of the resistance and buy time by

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

Power
Now, after seeing the great power of the black working class in action

A clear message to British workers from South African trade unionists: help us to wipe out low pay and the anti-union apartheid regime and you will help yourself to stop redundancies in Britain.

SOUTH AFRICAN UNIONS TOUR Support African Dunlop workers

In the meeting with GEC (Trafford Park), TASS and ASTMS members had several ideas on how to develop solidarity. One was to produce a broadsheet and pamphlet on GEC's operation in South Africa, as was done for Leyland by Rover stewards and the Coventry Workshop. Another was to push for TASS policy at a national level. Another was to link with other GEC workers, in Preston and elsewhere, to build effective solidarity. It was stated that one obstacle to solidarity work was the separation of GEC workers in Britain, who are in different plants and different unions. A further idea was to make use of SACTU to try to contact the relevant African trades unions for engineering workers.

CONTACT
In trying to develop the ideas, information, and contacts from the tour, the North West Anti-Apartheid Trade Union Committee will continue to meet. Contact: 59 Tintern Avenue, West Didsbury, Manchester - tel. 061-236 6953.
Workers Union, the excellent newspaper of SACTU can be got from left-wing bookshops or from SACTU, 38 Graham Street, London N1 8JX (20 pence + postage).

Strike against Economisers

FOR SIX months there has been a strike for union recognition at the Economists' Bookshop, London. This shop is owned by the London School of Economics, and the Economist magazine. The manager, Gerald Bartlett is a typical anti-union petty despot, infamous within the booktrade for his presidential speech to the Booksellers Association in '76. In that speech he launched into a tirade against trade unions which he called the "modern robber barons"

by Helen Miller, an ACTSS Strike Committee member
Last October eleven assistants (out of a shop workforce of 17) came out on strike to improve holidays (at present two weeks in the first year) and pay (less that £40 a week take home) and gain union bargaining rights.

We have organised a successful boycott of the shop, cutting their retail sales by 60%, and estimate they've lost £200,000 in turnover in

solidarity action from the L.S.E. unions, i.e. porters (T & G) librarians (NALGO) and NUS.

Dahrendorf told me that we should go to A.C.A.S. and the fact that we didn't, proved we had no cause. All it proves is that we have no faith in ACAS and so called "independent" arbitration bodies which are under pressure from Government.

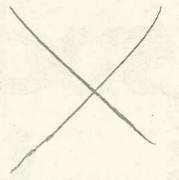
His role is to try to keep the situation under control and hope we are starved back to work while his liberal reputation stays intact. We are of course determined that we will win. We are organising events at the L.S.E. to raise money and gain publicity, as well as picketing the bookshop and organising a "blacking" campaign among the publishing unions.

We would appreciate any help in raising money and increasing support for us, especially in ASTMS, SOGAT, NUJ, whose members work in publishing. Their support in our blacking campaign would be crucial. Contributions to our strike fund should be sent to Helen Miller,

The L.S.E. Court of Governors has kept out of the dispute with the backing of Ralph Dahrendorf, LSE Director, who apparently fears that the

A CLASS VOTE AGAINST THE TORIES

Socialists
and the
ELECTION



MANY COMMENTATORS on both left and right are saying that this is the most important general election since the war. Yet in many ways it is a re-run of 1970, where a discredited Labour Government carrying out anti-working class policies was defeated by Conservatives, standing on a right wing platform similar to Thatcher's current policies. What has crucially changed, however, is the *context*. Today a Tory victory would represent a different and significant event. It would be a consolidation of the right-wing shift in capitalist societies that exists as much on the intellectual as economic and political levels. And in crucial ways it fits in with a "popular mood."

LABOUR PAVES THE WAY FOR THE TORIES

We should not be surprised at this. The social-democratic version of managing capitalism; without changing its basis or solving its contradictions, is bound to leave a sour taste in many peoples' mouths. By pursuing imitation Tory policies it whets the appetite for the real thing. If the mass of people are not turning to socialist alternatives, it is partially because those alternatives are completely absent within the orthodox Labour politics that Callaghan represents. The 1979 Labour Manifesto is a pathetic collection of meaningless platitudes. It does not even have the series of "socialist" policies that the 1974 version contained — which weren't carried out. Its conservatism has allowed the Tories to present themselves as the radical party of change!

DEATH OF LABOUR LEFT

This rightward drift has in no way been halted by the Labour Left. Foot, Benn and other heroes of the Left have gone along with it, keeping silent about any miserable policy, incorporated by the trappings of Ministerial power. The Tribune Group has made the occasional noise, but stunned by the defection of many of its leading figures in the party and unions to pro-Government positions and unwilling to organise opposition outside parliament, it is a declining and toothless force. What little opposition there is inside the Labour Party has been restricted to a handful of what the press likes to call the "hard left" MPs like Skinner

and Maynard. At times courageous, they are however, still prisoners of their party.

ENTRISM NO ANSWER

The most recent developments of the Left inside Labour has been the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory (SCLV), made up of some "hard left" parliamentary candidates and various Trotskyist groups. Scornful of developments outside Labour like Socialist Unity they continue to trumpet the virtues of working to transform Labour from within. But while they are willing to engage in extra-parliamentary campaigns, when it comes to the crunch they cannot effectively combat Labour's policies. At election times they find themselves pushing defences of the Labour Government's record through peoples' letter boxes. At Edge Hill some of these comrades defended this by saying it was necessary to gain credibility inside the party. But telling lies for Labour will not win socialist credibility where it ultimately counts with the mass of the working class.

LABOUR NOT A "LESSER EVIL"

When assessing the overall attitude of revolutionary socialists to Labour and elections, it cannot be determined by the formal programme and policies. If it was, we would have to seriously consider the Liberal Party, whose manifesto on many issues is more radical than Labour's! Our attitudes are



determined by the relationship of the parties to the class forces in society. When we rightly say that the Tories will be worse, it is not because we believe that Labour is a "lesser evil." This lets them off the hook and disarms militants by giving Labour a permanent excuse for anything it does. Labour is a different evil, but one whose success for the ruling class is precisely because of its link with the working class. Although a bourgeois party in terms of its programme and leadership, the Labour Party rests on working class support. Although such support shows signs of declining in voting terms, it is constantly re-produced through the trade unions and the whole network of Trades Councils and other institutions of the labour movement. In contrast, The Tories are the party of the ruling class and despite their voting support across social boundaries, are seen to be by the majority of working people.

CLASS VOTE

It is this reality which of necessity determines the tactics of revolutionary socialists on the question of Labour and elections. When we say vote Labour, it is because it is a vote of class against class, not a vote for Labour. Until we can develop a powerful socialist alternative producing alternative political formations and opportunities

that situation will remain. It cannot be wished away by a policy of abstention.

TORY BASHING NOT ENOUGH

There is also the opposite danger that election periods become an excuse for simple "Tory-bashing". Aside from not forgetting what Labour has done, we should avoid a repetition of the 1970-4 period when the perspective of many militants was limited to "Heath Out." In this sense having Labour in government is better for developing a socialist alternative. Building an opposition under Labour may be harder, but in the long term it will be politically clearer and more durable. It is not that Labour needs to be endlessly "exposed", but that we must carry the uncompromising message to Labour supporters that if the struggle of the working class is to continue then its likely enemy is going to be their own government and party. Ultimately they will have to choose.

SOCIALIST UNITY

That choice is helped at this election by the standing of ten Socialist Unity candidates and the two independent campaigns of Brendan Gallagher against Mason and Pat Arrowsmith against Callaghan. Whatever the limits of the

size and nature of the Socialist Unity interventions, it will be the only one fighting for a genuine socialist alternative rooted in the whole breadth of working class struggles. Other candidates to the Left of Labour do not do this. The Workers Revolutionary Party carries on its usual manic sectarianism, does not support initiatives like the Anti Nazi League or the campaigns of the women and black movements. The Communist Party programme is not sufficiently different from Labour's to provide an alternative. This was graphically illustrated by the Daily Express whose front page story argued that point by point. The Labour and CP manifestoes were the same. So Big Flame does not advise a vote for these candidates, except where local campaigns go beyond these political limits. The SU intervention is a small start in bringing the politics of class struggle on the electoral terrain, as our comrades in Europe have been doing on a larger and more successful scale.

We believe the SWP were wrong to miss this political opportunity. The electoral alliance initiated by the International Marxist Group and Big Flame was inevitably weakened by their absence. Whatever the results of SU, the prospects for interventions in elections by revolutionary socialists must be a key future debate.

The Right to be Unequal

● The pursuit of equality is a mirage. What is more desirable and practicable than the pursuit of equality is the pursuit of equality of opportunity. And opportunity means nothing unless it includes the right to be unequal (Thatcher 16.9.75)



GUY FAWKES

The only person
to enter Parliament
with honest intentions

A WOMAN who grew up with Thatcher in Grantham remembers the following episode from their days in the sixth form. A natural disaster had struck somewhere in Africa and some of the school-kids wanted to raise money to send to the Red Cross. Thatcher was opposed to this on the grounds that "it interfered with the right of Africans to eat less."

Now this theme of the right to be unequal marks the Tory 1979 manifesto from the first page to the last "the balance of our society has been increasingly tilted in favour of the State at the expense of individual freedom." The manifesto then goes on to set out how "individual freedom" will be increased — at the expense of collective victories of the working class:

- making illegal secondary picketing
- abolishing the closed shop
- wider use of the secret ballot
- cut back in social security for strikers
- cash limits for public spending and
- no-strike agreements in "few essential services."

- a reduction in the top rate of income tax and an increase in taxes on spending like VAT which obviously hit working people who spend most of what they earn.

- the re-introduction of pay beds in the NHS

CREAM OFF

Underlying all these measures is the familiar Tory philosophy of giving a bump up to the people who already enjoy the advantages in life. Mrs Thatcher wants to bring about an irreversible change in the distribution

of the goodies, in favour of the middle and upper classes.

Frequently the Tories can be found proposing policies which are straightforward lunacy, such as the retreat from comprehensives. They argue that the bright kids aren't being given a fair chance since the abolition of the grammar schools. Yet recent research makes it clear that in good comprehensive schools, less "bright" kids are helped by being in contact with "brighter" kids without this in any way affecting the brighter kids. The research also shows that the quality of the school can make an enormous difference to how a kid develops. Tory proposals will make sure that direct grant schools cream off many of the academically best pupils and teachers and take us back to a grammar/secondary mod. situation that is not in the interests of working class kids. The only point of this and the other measures is to re-inforce middle class advantage.

ECONOMIC POLICY

The Manifesto gives the impression of a very poorly thought out economic policies. Maybe this is because the next government's economic policy

will to a large extent be determined by factors outside its control — the international situation, the IMF. Some of the Tory policy is just a joke — e.g. the re-sale to private enterprise of the ship-building industry (who's going to buy that lemon?). Since the Tories want to put back on state expenditure and increase defence spending (to match the Communist bloc threat), this will mean large cuts in spending in welfare and education. They have already said they would cut between £400 to £500 million on education

And there will be equivalent cuts in health — whatever Thatcher says in the election campaign. Patrick Jenkin, a likely Minister of Health in a Tory government, made this clear in an article in the Daily Telegraph:

"Is it really so unthinkable that people might be expected to pay towards the cost of their keep when in hospital? With hospitals unable to finance desperately-needed improvements, must we cling dogmatically to the concept of a service always free at the point of use?" No they won't!

A section of the Tory manifesto makes clear that "the welfare of animals is an issue that concerns us all" A point rubbed home by Thatcher's televised trip to the farm. The truth is that there is an old tradition in the ruling class of being more concerned with pets than people. After all capitalism has always worked on the law of the jungle, so it pays to look after the animals.

socialist unity

ELECTING TO FIGHT BACK

Paying for the crisis

Labour's main achievement has been to bring about a massive shift of wealth to big business. Six billion pounds were transferred in handouts, two thirds of the total fixed investment in industry. This has been financed by:

- Increasing personal taxation from 38.8 to 46.6%
- Holding down wages — between 1974-77 real earning fell by 7%
- Cutting services and public spending.

TAX

Even this is not enough for the Tories. They want to shift more wealth to companies. Tax cuts are central to the public image of their economic policies. Yet it is a myth that Britain is "over-taxed." 37% of gross domestic product is taken by tax and social security contributions. West Germany, France, Sweden and seven other countries all take more (see graph). The truth is that average wage-earners are taxed heavily, but companies are not. Corporation Tax has almost collapsed as a source of revenue and the figures for estate-duty and capital-transfer tax show a decline from

£1,055 million ten years ago to £370 million today, despite inflation.

UNEMPLOYMENT

To finance tax cuts the Tories will have to cut spending on education, and all social services and benefits. These will particularly hit women, putting an ever greater burden on work in the home and shedding jobs in the public services, where many women have jobs. Housing is also bound to suffer heavily. Building starts have fallen from 351,000 in 1972 to 267,000 in 1977, while 200,000 building workers remain unemployed. To add insult to injury the Tories and Liberals aim to sell off council housing, reducing the chances for decent housing of families on the waiting list to zero.

It's the enormous burden of interest payment which lies behind the cuts in public spending. In Islington, North London, 90% of council rents go in interest charges.

So, Islington Socialist Unity calls for the ending of such payments and nationalising the banks and finance houses without compensation. But the practical thrust of SU campaigns is to build action to stop the

	53%	Sweden
	47%	Norway
	47%	Netherlands
	45%	Denmark
	43%	Belgium
	42%	Finland
	40%	Austria
	39%	France
	38%	West Germany
	38%	Italy
	37%	UK

cuts and for better services. In Hull SU is fighting for abortion facilities against the Tribune anti-abortionist MP, Kevin McNamara. In Nottingham, SU is leafletting hospitals to help build the base that CAN (Campaign for Action in NUPE) developed during the recent strike

Attacking our rights

Labour's 'Concordat' continues the Social Contract tradition of using the Trade Union leadership to police workers use of strikes, picketing and any other form of effective action. Labour's own record on legal rights has been disgusting, highlighted by their prosecution of the journalists Aubrey, Berry and Campbell. But the Tories propose far tougher measures. In their fight against crime—which actually fell last year, they want a strengthening of police powers.

It is a weakness that SU has nothing to say about crime directly, but we are highlighting the struggle against the existing battery of repressive laws. We fight for the scrapping of the misnamed Prevention of Terrorism Act, the 'Sus' Laws, the Official Secrets act. We support

CACTL (Campaign Against the Criminal Trespass Law Act) and we call for the disbanding of the Special Patrol Group and other new weapons in the State's armoury against the working class.

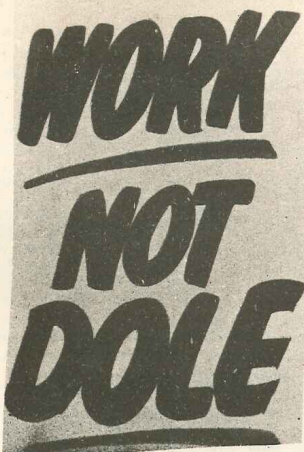
HARRASSMENT

Fighting for such policies is vital in areas where black people live. SU Candidate for Liverpool, Toxteth, Paul Adams spoke on the local radio recently against the widespread police harassment of black youth and called for democratic accountability of police to the community. We also actively campaign for the rights of gay people. A spokesperson from Gay Links recently spoke at a Liverpool SU rally, emphasising how much they welcomed our support and the chance to speak SU supporters have also been active in building "Reclaim the Night" marches, calling for the right of women to live without violent attacks and supporting the need for Battered Wives and Rape Crisis Centres.

Destroying our jobs

Labour should hold a competition for the sickest slogan — 1974's "Back to Work" with Labour, or 1979's "A vote for Labour is a vote for your Job." Tell that to the Dunlop workers — now swelling the 100,000 unemployed on Merseyside. We've seen nothing yet, the Cambridge Economic Policy Group, predicts 2.7million unemployed by 1985 and 3.7m by 1990. Labour's boasts about saving jobs refer mainly to their massive cover-up through the Youth Opportunities, Job Creation and Employment Subsidy schemes. The aim and effect has been to keep 180,000 people off the unemployment records.

The Tories will dispense with much of this, along with the National Enterprise Board. After all most of them think it's workers' own fault anyway. Sir Keith Joseph recently said that



rising unemployment occurs "partly because self-discipline, numeracy and literacy have deteriorated."

REDUNDANCIES

Socialist Unity has prioritised the need to fight for the 35 hour week and work sharing, with nationalisation under workers control of all firms threatening redundancies. Alongside workers plans for alternative production, these are the only practical means of saving jobs. Even then occupations are a necessary defence against closure. These are the perspectives Liverpool Socialist Unity has been fighting for around the Dunlops campaign and in Manchester, where the SU candidate, unemployed boiler-maker, Jeff West has challenged Industry Minister Gerald Kaufmann to debate his "redundancies will have to come" statements.



Youth

The non-parliamentary nature of SU is shown by the emphasis given to youth. Not only have most young people got a dead end future, but they haven't even got a vote to get politicians going with. As a Manchester SU leaflet put it "Old enough to be unemployed, too young to vote." SU groups like Nottingham have been helping to build SKAN and NUSS groups. Past election campaigns have produced enthusiastic "Revolution" youth groups in Glasgow and Edge Hill, Liverpool. A "School kids for Stanton" group has been formed and Pat Stanton, the candidate defeated Labour to win a 'mock election'. It's nice to think we've got a future,

WHERE SO

- BIRMINGHAM Small H Candidate: Chris Adams
- GLASGOW Queens Park Candidate: Walter McLe (assistant secretary, GlasNALGO)
- HULL Central Candidate: Pauline Stanton Hull Trades Council Executive
- LIVERPOOL Toxteth Candidate: Paul Adams
- LONDON Deptford Candidate: Janet Maguire (branch secretary)
- LONDON Islington North Candidate: Mike Simpson

THE 1974 Labour Election Manifesto committed itself to "Bring about a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people and their families," as well as to "eliminate poverty....increase social equality, improve the environment and....take power in industry genuinely accountable to the workers and community at large."

Although few on the left expected the Manifesto's promise to be translated into reality, many underestimated the extent to which Labour would implement fully-fledged Tory policies. Labour's sharp move to the right has underlined the need for a socialist alternative, and one which has no illusions that socialism can come through parliament. The election address of the Socialist

Unity candidate for Ardwick, Geoff West, puts it well:

"Whatever the result of this election, working people will still need to continue the fight. We don't believe that the issues can be solved by putting an X next to someone's name once every five years and then letting them get on with it. The policies Socialist Unity stands for can only be won by mass action based on the max-

imum involvement of working people in the crucial decisions that affect our lives."

As well as the ten Socialist Unity candidates in these elections, socialist alternative candidates have stood in two other constituencies: Pat Arrowsmith against James Callaghan in Cardiff and Brendan Gallagher, opposing Roy Mason in Barnsley.

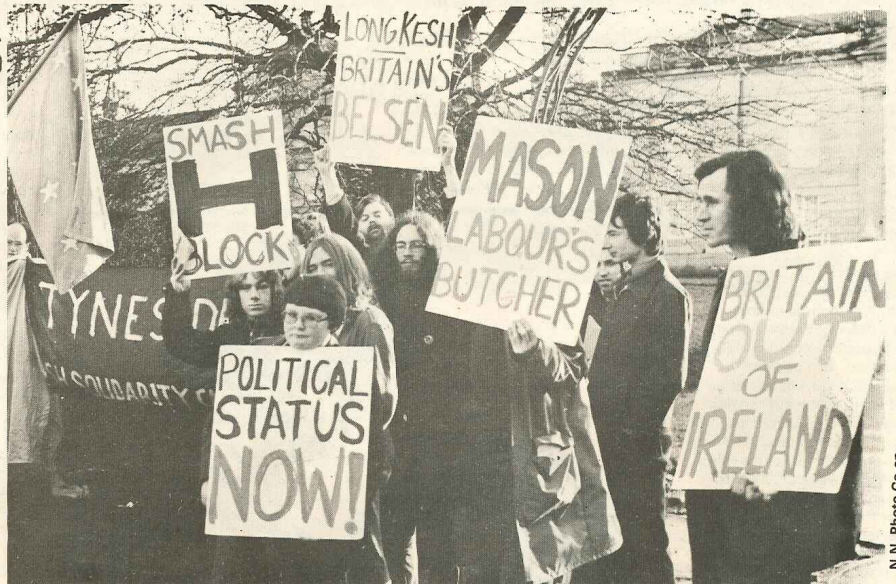
Fighting fascists and the state

There are four black candidates of the major parties, one Labour, two Tories and one Liberal. All are conveniently in hopeless seats. But race is an issue, even for these parties. The Tories are going after the National Front vote: Mrs Thatcher has repeated that "people feel swamped by immigration".

Labour is trying to say nothing, apart from conceding to pressure to scrap the 'Sus' laws. Their record in introducing ever-stricter immigration controls has put off many black people. The Liberals are prepared to say openly that numbers are falling, so stuff about 'swamping' is rubbish.

SU refuses to play the numbers

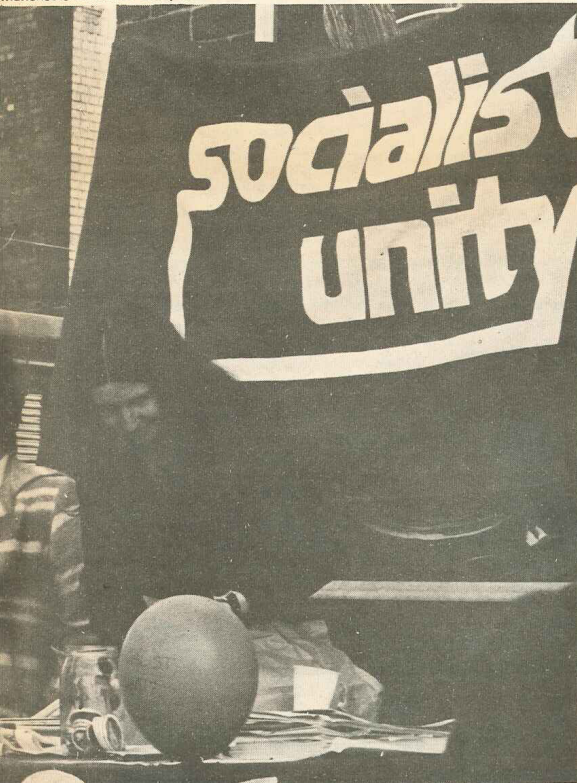
game. The need to fight the Immigration Controls is central to Tariq Ali's campaign in South-hall. His opponent is Sid Bidwell, who helped prepare the document dished up by the Select Committee on Race and Immigration that was too racist even for the last Labour Government. In Toxteth, Paul Adams, SU's candidate, shares the position of most black youth: at twenty two he's been on the dole for four years. As well as immigration controls, the campaign stresses the need to fight for positive discrimination in housing and employment, and building the local Merseyside Anti-Racist Alliance. All SU campaigns have been supporting Anti-Nazi League Activities



N.I.N. Photo Co-op.

25 pickets outside Durham Jail in support of 7 Irish prisoners held there in December.

Manchester Socialist Unity market stall



Big Flame Photo

Ireland- breaking the wall of silence

If you were reading about a foreign country where all of the parties were fighting an election without mentioning a war that country had been involved in for ten years, it would seem scarcely credible. Yet that is precisely the situation in Britain. Irish organisations, the Left and UTOM are trying hard to break through that wall of silence by making Ireland an issue. SU has been prominent in supporting the independent campaigns of Brendan Gallagher (whose son was falsely imprisoned by a rigged court) and Pat Arrowsmith.

H- BLOK

Along with UTOM we have organised and supported "blanket pickets" of Labour meetings to

highlight the position of political prisoners in the notorious 'H' Block. As well as leafletting in support of Troops Out and Self Determination for the Irish People, most SU groups have organised meetings for Gallagher and Arrowsmith. For many SU groups, Ireland is an obviously vital issue, especially in Islington where the MP is Michael Halloran, elected on the "Irish vote", but who has done nothing to oppose Britain's bloody repression in Ireland.

ARMY

The Committee to Elect Brendan Gallagher in Barnsley has been especially imaginative in its policies and activities. A success-

ful anti-recruitment picket and leafletting was held outside the Army Shop, forcing it to close, while churches have also been leafletted. The campaign has emphasised how the increased repressive measures and decrease in legal rights could be used in Britain against struggles here, and pointing out the similarities of the 'B' specials and Riot Squads to the SPG and other British police units.

SU has also been linking Ireland to Britain's other imperialist policies and calling for support for the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe as well as pointing out Britain's abject support for the Shah of Iran, and the need for workers and peasants to carry on the revolution there.

LEICESTER DOG DAY AFTERNOON

500 National Front marchers and 5,000 police turned Leicester city centre into a battlefield last Saturday 21st April.

Local people, especially the young, both black and white, joined with well over 1,000 Anti-Nazi League supporters to try and stop the fascists marching through the centre.

DOGS

For the police it was a major military operation. They were drafted in from all over the country. A helicopter directed a force including dogs, horses and men with riot shields, batons, masks and enough pure police savagery to make any football terrace seem like a picnic. All this plus an estimated £250,000 of public money just so a straggle of fascists from far and wide could parade their message of hate and violence on the streets of this city with a 20% black population.

It was all a sharp contrast to Glasgow where on the same day the police allowed an ill-protected Troops Out of Ireland demonstration to be attacked by young loyalists. Many demonstrators ended up seriously injured in hospital

SAVAGERY

The police's orders were obvious - to stop at nothing to protect the Front. They diverted our coaches away from the ANL meeting place

be seen to be believed. Indiscriminate kicking and punching from the word go. By the time of the Front meeting in a local school a whole main street was full of ANL demonstrators and local people. The police vehicles were accelerating up the road at breakneck speed and people were literally jumping for their lives. Luckily no-one was hit.

Police tactics were notable for the first use of dogs against demonstrators in living memory in Britain. Coming at the end of a week that included Sir Robert Mark's comments on the unions and the Police Federations barely disguised pro-Tory law and order adverts in the national dailies, it's easy to see the way the police handled Leicester as a boost to their campaign for wider powers.

PROFESSIONALS

Looking back it was a success for the anti-fascist and anti-racist movement. The ANL said it would keep Leicester city centre 'Nazi-free' and we did. The police had to divert the fascist march. There were many more of us than of the NF and together with some of the local community we gave the Front the welcome they deserved. But at the time it was very chaotic and in part demoralising, completely lacking any visible direction or organisation. In fact, we must learn from Leicester and organise better.

Finally, taking on the fascists in this country

SOCIALIST UNITY IS STANDING

- LONDON Tower Hamlets
Candidate: Ray Varnes (ILEA district secretary, NUPE)
- MANCHESTER Ardwick
Candidate: Jeff West (Boilermakers Union)
- NOTTINGHAM East.
Candidate: Ian Juniper (ASTMS)
- BARNSELY
Candidate: Brendan Gallagher (father of H-Block prisoner)
- CARDIFF South-East
Candidate: Pat Arrowsmith.

District

(ASTMS, ve)

STMS

socialist unity

ELECTING TO FIGHT BACK

Paying for the crisis

Labour's main achievement has been to bring about a massive shift of wealth to big business. Six billion pounds were transferred in handouts, two thirds of the total fixed investment in industry. This has been financed by:

- Increasing personal taxation from 38.8 to 46.6%
- Holding down wages — between 1974-77 real earning fell by 7%
- Cutting services and public spending.

TAX

Even this is not enough for the Tories. They want to shift more wealth to companies. Tax cuts are central to the public image of their economic policies. Yet it is a myth that Britain is "over-taxed." 37% of gross domestic product is taken by tax and social security contributions. West Germany, France, Sweden and seven other countries all take more (see graph) The truth is that average wage-earners are taxed heavily, but companies are not. Corporation Tax has almost collapsed as a source of revenue and the figures for estate-duty and capital-transfer tax show a decline from

£1,055 million ten years ago to £370 million today, despite inflation.

UNEMPLOYMENT

To finance tax cuts the Tories will have to cut spending on education, and all social services and benefits. These will particularly hit women, putting an ever greater burden on work in the home and shedding jobs in the public services, where many women have jobs. Housing is also bound to suffer heavily. Building starts have fallen from 351,000 in 1972 to 267,000 in 1977, while 200,000 building workers remain unemployed. To add insult to injury the Tories and Liberals aim to sell off council housing, reducing the chances for decent housing of families on the waiting list to zero.

It's the enormous burden of interest payment which lies behind the cuts in public spending. In Islington, North London, 90% of council rents go in interest charges. So, Islington Socialist Unity calls for the ending of such payments and nationalising the banks and finance houses without compensation. But the practical thrust of SU campaigns is to build action to stop the

53%	Sweden
47%	Norway
47%	Netherlands
45%	Denmark
43%	Belgium
42%	Finland
40%	Austria
39%	France
38%	West Germany
38%	Italy
37%	UK

cuts and for better services. In Hull SU is fighting for abortion facilities against the Tribune anti-abortionist MP, Kevin McNamara. In Nottingham, SU is leafletting hospitals to help build the base that CAN (Campaign for Action in NUPE) developed during the recent strike

Attacking our rights

Labour's 'Concordat' continues the Social Contract tradition of using the Trade Union leadership to police workers use of strikes, picketing and any other form of effective action. Labour's own record on legal rights has been disgusting, highlighted by their prosecution of the journalists Aubrey, Berry and Campbell. But the Tories propose far tougher measures. In their fight against crime—which actually fell last year, they want a strengthening of police powers.

It is a weakness that SU has nothing to say about crime directly, but we are highlighting the struggle against the existing battery of repressive laws. We fight for the scrapping of the misnamed Prevention of Terrorism Act, the 'Sus' Laws, the Official Secrets act. We support

CACTL (Campaign Against the Criminal Trespass Law Act) and we call for the disbanding of the Special Patrol Group and other new weapons in the State's armoury against the working class.

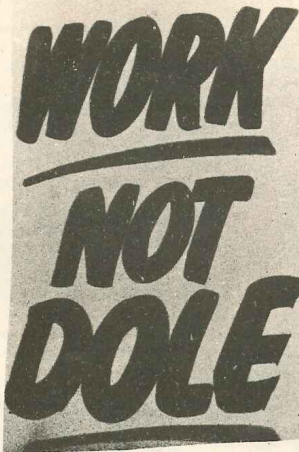
HARRASSMENT

Fighting for such policies is vital in areas where black people live. SU Candidate for Liverpool, Toxteth, Paul Adams spoke on the local radio recently against the widespread police harassment of black youth and called for democratic accountability of police to the community. We also actively campaign for the rights of gay people. A spokesperson from Gay Links recently spoke at a Liverpool SU rally, emphasising how much they welcomed our support and the chance to speak SU supporters have also been active in building "Reclaim the Night" marches, calling for the right of women to live without violent attacks and supporting the need for Battered Wives and Rape Crisis Centres.

Destroying our jobs

Labour should hold a competition for the sickest slogan — 1974's "Back to Work" with Labour, or 1979's "A vote for Labour is a vote for your Job." Tell that to the Dunlop workers — now swelling the 100,000 unemployed on Merseyside. We've seen nothing yet, the Cambridge Economic Policy Group predicts 2.7million unemployed by 1985 and 3.7m by 1990. Labour's boasts about saving jobs refer mainly to their massive cover-up through the Youth Opportunities, Job Creation and Employment Subsidy schemes. The aim and effect has been to keep 180,000 people off the unemployment records.

The Tories will dispense with much of this, along with the National Enterprise Board. After all most of them think it's workers' own fault anyway. Sir Keith Joseph recently said that



rising unemployment occurs "partly because self-discipline, numeracy and literacy have deteriorated."

REDUNDANCIES

Socialist Unity has prioritised the need to fight for the 35 hour week and work sharing, with nationalisation under workers control of all firms threatening redundancies. Alongside workers plans for alternative production, these are the only practical means of saving jobs. Even then occupations are a necessary defence against closure. These are the perspectives Liverpool Socialist Unity has been fighting for around the Dunlops campaign and in Manchester, where the SU candidate, unemployed boiler-maker, Jeff West has challenged Industry Minister Gerald Kaufmann to debate his "redundancies will have to come" statements.

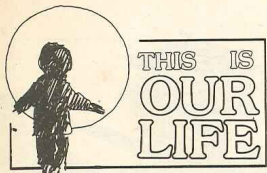


Youth

The non-parliamentary nature of SU is shown by the emphasis given to youth. Not only have most young people got a dead end future, but they haven't even got a vote to get politicians going with. As a Manchester SU leaflet put it "Old enough to be unemployed, too young to vote." SU groups like Nottingham have been helping to build SKAN and NUSS groups. Past election campaigns have produced enthusiastic "Revolution" youth groups in Glasgow and Edge Hill, Liverpool. A "School kids for Stanton" group has been formed and Pat Stanton, the candidate defeated Labour to win a 'mock election'. It's nice to think we've got a future,

WHERE SO

- BIRMINGHAM Small Candidate: Chris Adair
- GLASGOW Queens Park Candidate: Walter Mc (assistant secretary, G NALGO)
- HULL Central Candidate: Pauline St. Hull Trades Council E
- LIVERPOOL Toxteth Candidate: Paul Adam
- LONDON Deptford Candidate: Janet Mag (branch secretary)
- LONDON Islington N Candidate: Mike Simp



Socialist Feminist Conference— Need to build the regional network

Last month's national socialist feminist conference was both exciting and confusing. Exciting because there were so many women from all over the country discussing wide ranging topics and activities. Confusing because there was no plenary session during the conference, which made it impossible to get an overall picture of what had happened over the weekend and how the socialist feminist current is developing.

When workshop themes ranged from alternative technology to childcare provision in the EEC, from struggles in the health service to a discussion on whether sexuality is still a political issue, some form of overview is important. There is a discussion in London as a follow-up to the conference. But how can a small meeting hope to come up with a comprehensive evaluation of the conference and an assessment of where the socialist feminist current is going, what are its strengths, and what are its weaknesses?

IMPERIALISM

Judging from the papers produced and many of the discussions, there is a growing feeling that a crucial aspect of socialist feminist theory and practice has to be directed against British imperialism and a recognition that women's struggle is international. While sections of the women's movement, particularly the Women & Ireland group, have consistently argued for a feminist policy against British imperialism and for a recognition of the oppressive nature of the British state, this perspective is often ignored.

At times this has meant that the Women's Liberation Movement has been unaware of, or reluctant to come to grips with the oppression of women who are directly affected by the legacy of British imperialism and the chauvinism and racism which go hand in hand with it.

Women's groups, particularly in London, are working around immigration, racism, police harassment, and in anti-fascist activity. They are trying to find ways to involve more women in the community, as well as develop a theoretical understanding of the relationship between British imperialism and women's oppression.

At the follow up meeting it was agreed that next year's conference will be on this theme of imperialism: it was also felt that it had been wrong not to have plenary sessions this year.

SCARLET WOMEN

The women's movement has discussed for years how to organise meetings and conferences that will allow everyone to participate. But all too often this results in chaos. The socialist feminist current is meant to organise throughout each region with regular conferences. However, few areas do this effectively. This would be the best way to develop along with using the newsletter *Scarlet Women*. A national conference like this year's is fine for those in the movement who are used to crowds and have lots of friends to meet and greet. But they are alienating to the vast majority of women who attend them. So it is essential that local and regional meetings are organised.

LOW EBB

At a time when relations between the women's movement and the 'traditional' revolutionary left are at a low ebb (see, for instance, the dismissive, sectarian article about the conference in *Socialist Worker*), there is a great need to discuss organisational possibilities for socialist feminists. *Big Flame* welcomes contributions on this theme for publication.

NEW ANTI-FASCIST PUBLICATIONS

Sexuality and Fascism

THIS PAMPHLET consists of the three main speeches given at the BF Day School on "Sexuality & Fascism". The Day School was prompted by debate over the issues raised at the Campaign against Racism and Fascism Conference (June 1978) where antifascism, antiracism and anti-sexism were presented as in competition with one another for top priority. Despite the eclipse of CARF as a national organisation by the ANL, these issues still echo through the movement. More now, in fact, because that movement is larger and broader based.

The documents in the pamphlet set out to tentatively throw some light on these issues. *Women and Nazi Germany* outlines how nazism took sexual politics very seriously and explains various policies towards women made by the National Front. The second, *Men and Fascism* follows on with the particular roles

that men, as men, played in Nazi Germany and looks at men today. *Women and the National Front* examines in detail some statements about women made by the National Front.

A general theme is the central importance of fighting against fascist Master Race theories. In action

these theories unite the fascist attitudes to racism and sexism, explaining at the same time why the NF, for example, are against white women having abortions, black women having children and multiracial sex. They also give a great deal of insight into policies of repatriation and violence against immigrants.

Big Flame is against the politics of simply attacking fascist organisations, and argues that the white-dominated left (including ourselves) fails to take either fighting racism or sexism seriously enough. It is an informed and controversial pamphlet. well worth reading.

(20p including postage, from *Big Flame*, 217 Waverley Road., Liverpool 7)

A Searchlight on Racism

SEARCHLIGHT ('Britain's Anti-fascist Journal') has excelled itself in the April 1979 issue. Tracing "15 years of racism: from Smethwick to Brick Lane", and therefore Searchlight's own history, the leading article give us often forgotten details of the Smethwick Parliamentary seat won, in 1964, for the Conservatives on openly racist ticket.

A persistent criticism of SEARCHLIGHT has been that it's strength is also its main weakness: the whole anti-fascist movement is indebted to Searchlight for their years of painstaking research on the organisations and individuals of the far right, both in this country and all over the

world. However, until recently this meant SEARCHLIGHT's emphasis often implied that modern forms of fascism like the NF can be dealt with by simply exposing their Nazi roots. In fact, what is needed is to pull up the roots of fascism in the many soils where they flourish — nationalism, racism, authoritarianism, sexism — in the general conditions of capitalist society. Searchlight has increasingly taken up these themes and despite the Editorial of July 1978 incorrectly blaming the failure of the previous month's CARF conference on 'certain women, Gay and Left groups' for seeking to "continuously confuse issues" by

seeing sexism as a dominant theme have even recently reversed their position and produced an excellent pamphlet on the very issue of sexism: 'Women and the NF'.

Returning to the April issue, read it and subscribe to Searchlight for its regular feature 'What THEIR papers say' as well as an interview with Joshi (the General Secretary of the Indian workers' Association), extracts from 'Police against Black People', John Plummer on immigration controls as well as news and reviews.

Individuals: £4 12 issues, cheques to A&R Publications, 21 Great Western Buildings, 6 Livery St., Birmingham 3.

Racist threat to blacks

The recent publication of *POLICE AND BLACK PEOPLE* by the Institute of Race Relations as evidence to the Royal Commission caused a considerable stir in the media. The pamphlet details in meticulous detail police malpractice towards black people including policing against the community, such as over-manning of black events and 'fishing

expeditions', and failing to protect the community from racist attacks. It documents police violence used on arrests and in the police station. Then it goes on to show how it is that black people cannot expect to find justice in the courts.

BLOOD ON THE STREETS is concerned with the East End of London.

Published by Bethnel Green and Stepney Trades Council it again in massive detail outlines the racism experienced by the mainly Bengali community of that area on the streets in terms of violence, the failure of the police to take up complaints of the Bengalis. It documents the situation in education, housing, the trade union movement, jobs, the media and far right groups like the NF.

Both of these informative pamphlets come out of a background of rising state and fascist violence against black people while on the one hand peace of mind living in this country is shattered and the possibility of living here at all undermined by the immigration and nationality laws. Two major forces have taken on this racism. The first, and most important, is the self-organisation of the black community which, especially since the Hot Summer of 1976, has taken many steps forward in developing its own organisations and demanding support from the white community. The second force is the increasing number of white anti-racists and anti-fascists organised through many organisations including the trade union movement and the ANL.

We are in no position to comment on the problems and successes of the black movement in this period, whites just need to get on with the work of taking up the issue of racism with white working class people. Both of these pamphlets give us the hard information to do so. One is left wondering, however, of the value of submitting such detailed evidence to the Royal Commission and making demands such as the accountability of the police to the community as a whole.

Similarly, although *BLOOD ON THE STREETS* provides so much information it calls on the police, the Commission for Racial Equality and the government to take action to restore the confidence of its citizens. Neither of these pamphlets offers a strategy for effectively dealing with the institution of racism but they should leave no-one in doubt of its existence.

Blood On The Streets (Sept '78) £1. 58 Watney St., London E1.

Police Against Black People: Race and Class Pamphlet No.6 from IRR, 247 Pentonville Rd., London N1. 95n.

...regarding lies of all time.

Cimino made it all up!

What happens is that by making something that never took place one of the central themes of the movie, the makers are able to say left and right, liberation fighters and oppressors, are all the same. If our boys hadn't come up against this sort of thing, they wouldn't now be finding life so difficult. Never a moment to consider the thousands of Vietnamese permanently disabled or deafened or the napalmed areas where it will be impossible to grow anything for generations. Just about the only left-winger or critic to speak out against the film has been John Pilger, who himself reported the war. He commented:

'The backers and makers of this film are reported to have spent 14 million dollars sifting the ashes of one of history's most documented atrocities — in order to repackage it and re-sell it as a Hollywood 'smash' that will make them fortunes; to reincarnate the triumphant Batman-jawed Caucasian Warrior and to present a suffering courageous people as sub-human Oriental brutes and dolts; to convert truth into lies.'

SLICK LIE

though. In the first part of the film, we are lulled into the quiet normality of a small immigrant community celebrating the wedding of one of its favourite sons, who, as a volunteer, is shortly to leave with his two buddies for Nam. They live and work in a small, shitty working class steel town where life is already brutalized. They (the men) get their kicks, drinking and backslapping, spending as little time as possible with women and going hunting in true frontier style, where if you're tough and hard, you can kill the enemy with one clean pristine shot, and then celebrate. Two shots to kill a stag, we are told, is 'pussy'.

Not that even this section of the film is accurate: it's an idealised immigrant community that only exists in Hollywood romances.

The action then abruptly switches to Vietnam where killing the enemy is a messy, maddening and foul business, because the enemy fights back and wins — though we would never know that from the film. Of the trio, one loses his legs, the second loses his mind and finally blows his brains out (playing the 'allegorical game'), and the third, Robert de Niro, comes through scarred but dripping with medals and machismo.

See this film if you must, but miss it if you can!



New Jewel for Socialism

A BIG FLAME INTERVIEW

At dawn on the 13th of March, 80 armed members of the New Jewel Movement (NJM) went into action against the regime of Eric Gairy. They closed the airport, arrested government members and supporters, and burned down the barracks of the Grenada Defence Force. Within hours of the armed action, the entire apparatus of the Grenadian state had collapsed, leaving the NJM in complete control of the island. Gairy, who was in New York attending to his favourite hobby of UFOs, at a United Nations committee on the subject, was out of power.

A successful armed insurrection like this is without precedent in the British speaking Caribbean. The new government, which has declared itself socialist, faces the unenviable task of constructing a new society in an island of just 110,000 people, which is heavily dependent on agricultural exports and tourism. And although the government enjoys the support of the masses, it must tread carefully to preserve both its newly-won power and its independence. **Big Flame interviewed Fennis Agustin, a Grenadian and long-time black activist in London, who is now the High Commissioner Designate in Britain for the Revolutionary Government.**

Could you briefly explain what the situation was under Gairy?

Gairy came into power as a result of widespread labour unrest, which started about 1950. He made his mark by leading the 1951 General Strike. From this point he became the undisputed leader of the country. The problem though is that what Gairy wanted was not in fact the same thing as the people were fighting for. Any people who expressed their differences with Gairy were quickly crushed. Gairy believed that the revolution was in fact made. This ties in with a statement he made some time later on, during the black power era. He said, 'They talkin' about black power, but look at me, I'm a black man, they have black power, that's what they want'. Although he became increasingly repressive from 1952 onwards, he first used directly repressive measures beginning in 1967. This was most apparent in the period surrounding independence negotiations. He set up groups of people who would go around not only intimidating, but physically assaulting people. Then he moved towards independence, but it was clear that his move towards independence was not one of any plan or concern for the island's people. Riding on the natural feeling of the colonial peoples to be independent, he saw

independence as one step towards tightening his grip on the island.

GAIRYMANDERING

The other area in which there was increasing repression was the attempt by younger elements in the community to express some degree of opposition. The moment this started Gairy appointed a new group on whom he relied, the 'Mongoose Men'. Without a doubt these were all ex-criminals - the records can prove that. Some had as many as 37 previous convictions, ranging from assault to grievous bodily harm. And he relied on these people to maintain himself in power.

Another area to refer to is that of elections. As the outside world sees it Gairy was elected as prime minister. But when it is seen that about 10,000 names on the elec-

toral register of 40,000 are either dead or have not been in the country for years, then gerrymandering is too nice a word to use to describe what went on. And apart from this, he has refused to register the younger element - people under 25 - 5000 of these names have simply been left off the register.

What local and international interests did Gairy represent?

Gairy was not only corrupt. Increasingly as opposition to his regime developed he moved dramatically to the right. So whilst on the one hand there have been well-known connections between Gairy and the Mafia and numerous criminals, on the other he has established relations with right-wing political leaders such as General Pinochet of Chile. In fact, Gairy is on record as saying that Pinochet is one of the world's greatest democrats. He sent members of his defence force to Chile for training. Arms caches from Chile were found by the NJM when their armed forces took control.

ORIGINS OF THE NEW JEWEL MOVEMENT

The NJM came out of the black power movement in the early 1970s. It was the coming together of two different groups: Joint Endeavour for Welfare, Education and Liberation (JEWEL), a cooperative and farming venture, and the Movement for Assemblies of the People (MAP), a group led by the NJM's present leader, Maurice Bishop. In 1972 there was a conference of the two groups and it was felt that their aims were not far apart. Out of this came the New Jewel Movement.

From the very beginning the question of taking power by arms was seriously considered and not ruled out. But the tactics employed by the NJM varied from time to time, according to circumstances. At particular times a high emphasis was placed on mass action and the use of mass demonstrations.

As regards the trade unions, the NJM decided around 1974 that they could not place any faith in the existing trade union movement. This was dominated by the Grenada Manual and Mental Workers Union, the vehicle Gairy himself had created in the early 1950s. Gairy did have an element of support through this union, but it was support based on patronage. In an island of massive unemployment, you did not get a job unless you were a member of the union.

NJM had some success in their attempts to create their own unions. One branch of this - a bank employees union - entered into a conflict with Barclays Bank in August 1978 over the question of recognition. The union branch was immediately recognised after the revolution.

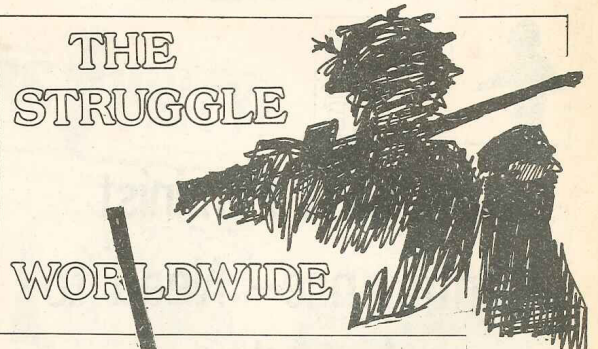
Spain: Cities go Left

THE APRIL local elections produced a sizeable shift to the left. Most cities and towns over 50,000 population have voted in left wing administrations and mayors in the first free elections since the 30's. The results represent a swing to the left compared to the outcome of the general election in March, which merely confirmed the pattern established in the previous elections in June 1977.

The moderate socialist party, PSOE, did well in the local elections but in some places lost votes to the left. The Communist Party fared better than in the general election. Many towns will now elect Communist mayors, above all in the Barcelona satellite of Santa Coloma where the PCE won a massive 45% of the votes.

INDEPENDENCE

The greatest triumph has gone to



Photos by Angus Thompson (from Race Today)



Could you say something about NJM's programme?

In so far as this is concerned, and it has been stated publicly by the leaders of the revolution, it is the NJM's intention to establish in Grenada a socialist society. This is the intention, but as it is said, we are a practical people. To develop socialism, on an island of 110,000 people, requires a particular degree of skill. And we have to be aware that there are major forces around who will not hesitate to jump in if they become convinced that you are challenging in a

direct way what they consider to be their rights and privileges.

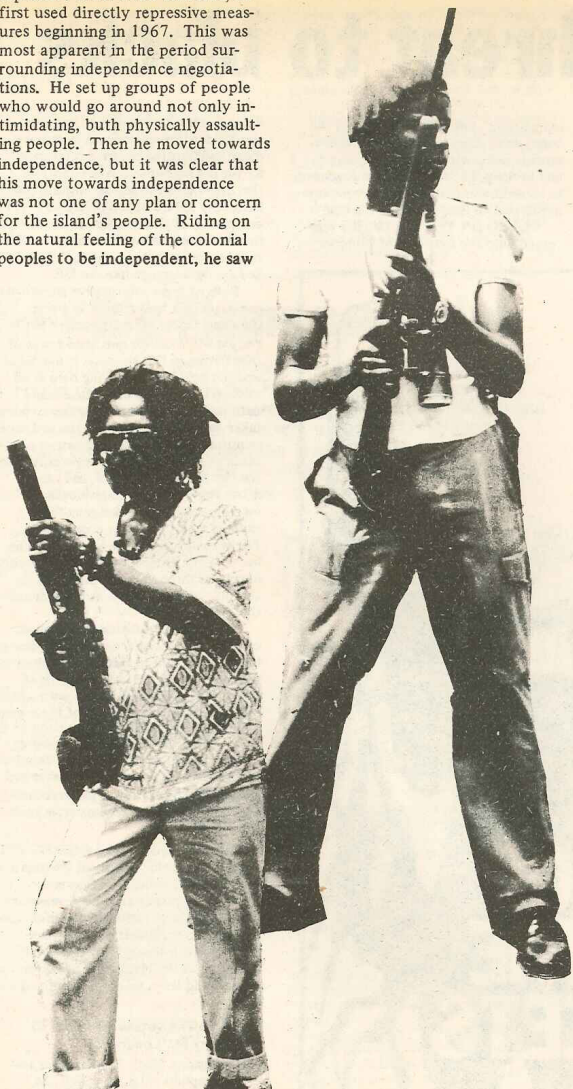
Given this danger, we think it extremely important for all of you who are sympathetic to what is happening in Grenada to publicise it - because we certainly aren't going to get unbiased coverage from the regular press.

country, whatever Madrid thinks.

ESTUPENDO!

On the far left, the best results have come in for the ORT-PTE coalition. In Estepona, a tourist resort on the Costa del Sol, these two marxist parties will form the biggest bloc on the council. The Communist Movement (MC-OIC), which is distinguished by its advanced positions on women's questions (it stood more women candidates than any other party), called for and got a limited but committed vote which entitles it to the odd seat here and there.

The shift to the left in the town halls suggests that the voters expect the workers parties to be more effective locally than nationally. The problem for



NUKES: INHUMAN ERROR



THE DISASTER at the nuclear plant at Three Mile Island in America has focused a lot of attention on the question of nuclear power, its dangers and the alternatives to it. In the past opposition to nuclear power has been a relatively fringe activity supported by what are sometimes referred to as the "brown rice people".

One group which has been organising for some time against nuclear power is the Keystone Alliance in Philadelphia. Philadelphia is near enough to Three Mile Island for people to feel directly threatened. In fact if the winds blew their way from Three Mile Island they'd have just six hours to get out. The Keystone Alliance are experiencing a massive increase in support as a result of this.

Mark Breslow, a member of the Alliance, is interviewed for us here by Noel Ignatin of Urgent Tasks magazine.

"The Keystone Nuclear Alliance has been going for about a year now. Trying to stop nuclear plants, to turn to solar energy and renewable energy technology. We think that this would be more conducive to full employment and safe conditions for workers.

Since the disaster at Three Mile Island we've been organising vigils to demand immediate evacuation of an area of 20 miles around the plant and 50 miles downwind. This still has not happened.

It's taken an accident of this magnitude for groups like ours to get the attention to publicise information. For example no one knew that the Three nuclear plants run by Philadelphia Electric are more dangerous than Three Mile Island. It was public information but no one seemed to know it.

RADIATION

But there is still a lot that is not coming out. Dr. Sternglass, one of the country's leading experts on low level radiation says that the methods used for monitoring radiation only measure

1/10th to 1/100th of radiation. But what people breathe is just as dangerous but people don't know this.

The major effect of Three Mile Island is that a large spectrum of progressive groups which previously had not been much interested in the nuclear issue are much more aware of it. Our base is increasing enormously as this has meant people are aware of the government's lies.

It is important for the Anti-nuclear movement not just to focus on the fact that you can get killed but to also emphasize the alternatives. A lot of people are drawn in due to the immediate danger but we don't know how long they will remain.

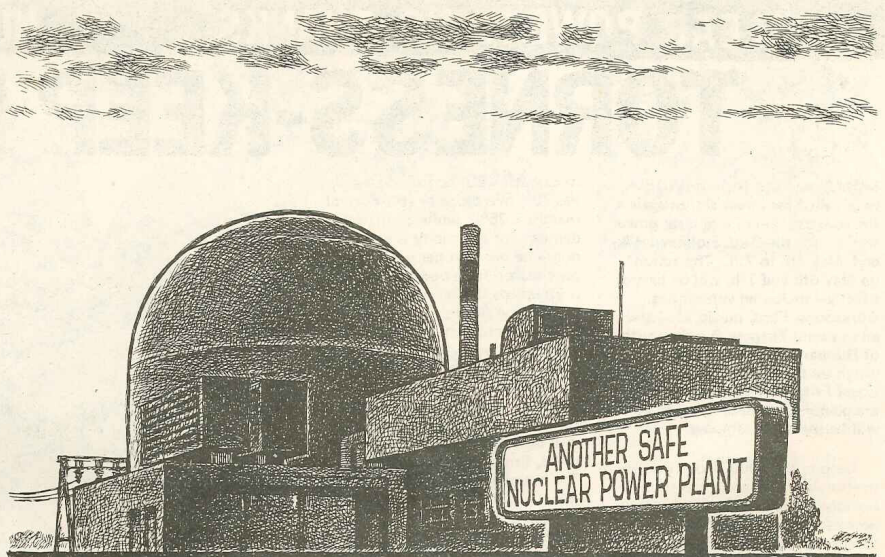
One of the important things about the anti-nuclear movement is that it has been decentralised. Each area will make its own decision but will contribute to the success of the movement.

We are now working with broader groupings of people and hope to have anything up to 100 groups sponsoring our demonstration. These would include trade unions, church groups, community groups and others."

ISOLATION

One of the problems facing the Alliance must be its isolation from the black community in Philadelphia.

On the day of this interview, black organisations were demonstrating for better housing. The question for groups like the Alliance — composed in the main of whites — is how they relate their concern about nuclear danger to the other social problems people are dealing with every day.



BUT WOULD YOU WANT YOUR SISTER TO LIVE NEXT TO ONE?

ROBB
©1975

IRELAND_ TEN YEARS ON



THE PEACE Movement was a total failure. That was the lesson of the article in the March issue of Big Flame.

But what has happened since? What are the chances for peace now?

Peace is a long way off. The British administration, the Northern Ireland Office, and Roy Mason, is going all out to crush the rebellion in the Catholic community.

As the Bennett report, and the police surgeon, Dr Irwin, have revealed, torture is used to extract confessions from prisoners in the absence of other convicting evidence. Up to 90% of prisoners are convicted on the sole basis of these "confessions". In the special courts there are no juries to doubt the lack of evidence.

In this way Roy Mason can claim that British justice is fair. According to him "terrorists" are just ordinary criminals convicted in open court.

To confirm this, since March 1976 no political prisoners in Long Kesh prison camp are allowed "Special Category Status", unless they were convicted before that date.

Three years later the British administration are still insisting that over 300 prisoners — arrested under the Special Powers Act — forced to confess in the special interrogation unit at Castlereagh — convicted in the Special courts — and sent to the notorious H-blocks of Long Kesh, specially built for them — are not special at all — just ordinary criminals.

RESISTANCE

It's the British treatment of the prisoners that has aroused most resistance in Ireland. The prisoners them-

self, the camp guards, that they now won't even "slop out" their chamber pots in the morning. After having the contents regularly thrown over them by the guards, many now leave the pots overflowing in the cells, that way the guards leave them relatively in peace.

Outside the jails, thousands of people have marched for the restoration of political status for the 370 prisoners who now wear only their blankets rather than the uniform of a criminal. The protests are organised by the mainly female Relatives Action Committees.

Though largely ignored by the British media, the actions of the prisoners and their supporters, have attracted international interest.

DELUSIONS

Mason is finding it increasingly difficult to hide the reality of British-occupied Ireland. His claims that the IRA is beaten look pretty pathetic after recent attacks in the Six Counties where a RUC base at Kinewley was practically demolished, 8 mortar bombs were dropped into the army base in Newtown-Hamilton and banks and offices were blasted in 18 towns in one evening alone.

The British administration can no longer rely on the Irish government in Dublin remaining silent about their methods. The old Fine Gael government has been replaced by Jack Lynch's Fianna Fail party. Lynch does little of practical value to change British policy but he has been forced to criticise conditions in Long Kesh. His party is committed to calling for British withdrawal. So is the Social Democratic and Labour Party in the north. For years the SDLP has agreed with everything the British did or said, in the hope of obtaining government positions. But now the British are ruling directly without SDLP help. So the SDLP, out in the cold, has been

What Now?

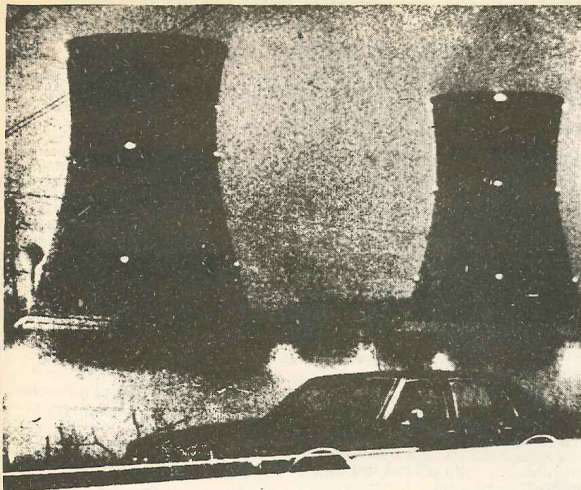
NO FRIENDS

On paper at least, Mason and the Labour government have run out of friends in Ireland, (except, of course, for Powell and the Ulster Unionists). So 15,000 British troops, 8,000 members of the Ulster Defence Regiment and another 8,000 armed policemen keep him in power. It's the British military presence that prevents real progress, or indeed, change of any kind. And it's the hard line adopted by Mason that prevents peace.

BRITAIN

August this year marks the tenth anniversary of British troops being sent onto the streets of northern Ireland. Already the state is preparing for that anniversary. "Light-at-the-end-of-the-tunnel" articles, assuring us that all is well, have already begun to appear in newspapers, TV and radio will not be far behind.

They shouldn't be allowed to get away with these cover-ups. The war in Ireland won't go away until British interference is ended. The United Troops Out Movement in this country should be supported in its campaign to withdraw British troops. Already a number of Labour MPs followed by Smith and Pardee of the Liberals, have called for withdrawal. The Young Liberals have called a demonstration for withdrawal in August. We need to expand such movements until the pressure on the government becomes too great to ignore.



The disaster at the nuclear plant at Three Mile Island near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania (above) led to protests all over America including New York (below).



NUCLEAR POWER? NO THANKS.

NUCLEAR POWER? NO THANKS.

TORNNESS-KEEP IT GREEN



SCRAM and the Tornness Alliance have called for direct action against the construction of a nuclear power station, for the Bank Holiday weekend, May 4th to 7th. The action, on May 6th and 7th, will be part of a festival including exhibitions, workshops, films, music, etc., and all in sunny Tornness, 5 miles south of Dunbar, 30 miles east of Edinburgh on the rocky Firth of Forth. Local Friends of the Earth groups are planning transport, and there will be space for camping.

Despite the 4000-strong demonstration last May and a tractor procession in June, by September the Secretary of State for Scotland (Bruce Millan) had approved the capital investment for two 660 megawatt Advanced Gas Cooled Reactors (AGRs). The official cost estimate is £742 million, which will create less than 2000 temporary jobs and 600 permanent ones. Not many local people will be employed, and of course the Scottish electricity consumers will pay over £500 each. Another AGR, at Dungeness B, has already cost over twice the original estimate.

The South of Scotland Electricity Board plan a total of eight AGRs at Tornness, to generate 5280

megawatts. But Scotland already has 70% overcapacity (the normal margin is 25%), while Scotland's demand for electricity is growing at only one per cent per year. The only reason for a new reactor is to prop up the British nuclear industry for 'the future'.

The reactor which blew up in Harrisburg was water cooled, while the AGR is gas cooled. So 'it can't happen here', claims Tony Benn.

But in June 1977, the AGR at Hinkley Point B (Somerset) was shut down after a water main fractured, flooding the pumphouse. The maintenance workers had to spray the reactor with fire hoses to keep it cool. During the shutdown, which lasted six months, it came out that the boiler tube was corroded, from 'causes unknown'. In October 1977, the AGR at Hunterston B (West of Glasgow) was shut down for repair when suddenly 2000 gallons of salt water from the Clyde seeped into the pressure vessel. As in Harrisburg, officials blamed it on 'human error'. Repair work costing eight million pounds is still unfinished; replacing the lost electricity supply will cost £28 million. The design of Tornness is modelled on Hunterston B.

All AGRs produce plutonium;



Tornness will generate several hundred kilograms per year. As well as increasing the potential supply of nuclear weapons, it will add to the unsolved problem of disposing of nuclear waste. The long-term effects of low level radiation on masses of people are unknown. The known risks of nuclear accidents are kept officially secret. As many people are coming to

realize, the need for increasing electricity supply is not desperate. Instead, we can conserve energy through 'combined heat and power', district heating, and insulation. And we can generate electricity through wind, water, and solar systems. Developing and producing technology could provide many more jobs, even within the current labour force of the nuclear industry.

These arguments are developed in the current issue of *Undercurrents* magazine.

The Tornness reactor is opposed by local farmers and Scottish coal miners. We should join them on May 4-7.

For more information on the Tornness reactor, see *Tornness, Keep It Green*, by Mike Flood (a Friends of the Earth pamphlet).

U.S.S.R.-no friend of oppressed people

Dear Big Flame,

There are two important points raised by your interview with Anthony Barnett (April Big Flame) on the China-Vietnam war that must be taken up.

One of them concerns his attitude to a potential withdrawal from Kampuchea (Cambodia) by the Vietnamese. Nowhere in the whole interview (as you print it) does Anthony Barnett address the question of whether or not the Vietnamese intervention in Kampuchea was correct or incorrect. As I argued in an accompanying article, because of the dangers of a regime propped by foreign bayonets being unpopular with the Kampuchean themselves, recent Vietnamese actions have to be classified as a serious mistake, and at that one which will very likely also lead to (further) bureaucratisation within Vietnam itself. Given that the Vietnamese mistake is already history, simply to demand its 'immediate' reversal would be to neglect its important consequences, including the overthrow of the oppressive Pol Pot regime. But it remains necessary to state openly that the invasion was a mistake, and to work for the perspective of prompt Vietnamese withdrawal, so that the working masses of Kampuchea have a genuine chance of running their own affairs and of allying with others by choice and not by force. Barnett is silent on the original invasion, and simply opposes 'immediate' withdrawal without hinting at the desirability of the Vietnamese pulling out as soon as possible. Such a position all-too-closely resembles the self-serving apologies of Moscow and Hanoi: it has very little to do with the real interests of the working people of Indochina.

What's more, the second point where Barnett must be challenged makes the resemblance to Moscow apologies even closer! He talks of 'quite generous support to revolution' on the part of the USSR, and cites Brezhnev's 'emphatic insistence' on support for national liberation struggles.

Frankly, this sounds like a sick joke. Leave aside the question of the just struggles against Brezhnev's regime for national rights or national liberation, such as exist in Czechoslovakia and inside the USSR, from the Ukraine right through to Soviet Central Asia. Leave aside Soviet opposition to all popular and progressive struggles in such countries as Argentina, Iran (before the Shah was ousted), Eritrea and Somalia. The central issue which Barnett buries in silence is that of the objectives of Soviet foreign policy. Does the Soviet Union basically want to further the liberation struggles of the oppressed, or is its essential objective to seek diplomatic, military and economic accommodation with the imperialist West?

Whilst from time to time the Soviet regime may do things of which the oppressed - in Angola or South Africa, for example - can take advantage, its basic aims are opposed to the interests of working people.

To suggest that such temporary support is 'quite generous' is to suggest that it is reliable. There are tens of millions of people, in Latin America, Eritrea, important parts of Asia, who have learnt from bitter experience just how wrong that is.

Comradely,
Chris Marshall
(Norwich Big Flame)



LAB-CON TRICK

Dear Big Flame,

It's breathtaking how little information is buried in the hours of election programmes and phone-ins broadcast everyday. I'm sure I'm not the only one who feels none the wiser - just a bit number for it all.

One question interests me above all. We know that Thatcher wants to rob from the poor for the sake of giving incentives to the rich, and so her tax cuts are going to mean bad news for most of us. Labour, using different methods, also intends to cut our living standards. Will there be any difference between Labour and Tory in the end?
D. Patterson, Carlisle.

Law'n'order

Why the silence?

Dear Big Flame,

I have been watching eagerly the space reserved in your paper for the Great Debate on the issue of Law 'n' Order which you described as 'the Left's Silence'. So far, the Silence is stunning, and will no doubt appear less than useless to the Socialist Unity candidates in the forthcoming general election. On the one hand you are seeking to provide an alternative explanation of crime that can satisfy the electorate, and on the other hand, satisfy the Marxist criteria for the establishment of the material conditions that would lead to the eventual eradication of crime and other forms of anti-social activity.

We live in a society where the basis of our social relations was founded on deception - crime and disorder are the manifestation of the continual capitalist accumulation of wealth. Crime and all other forms of anti-social activity can only be grasped and analysed in the knowledge that our social relations in a commodity society are in general anti-social, i.e. our social relations are upside-down. Crime, as understood here, is no minority activity - crime is apparent everywhere, it is the necessary feature of capital. To seek to explain otherwise is to perpetuate the "crime" and in the face of it, taking "two steps back."

I accept that it is not enough to point out the failure of the existing theory and practice of crime and punishment, though it's a beginning; we must see the various forms of anti-social actions within the overall framework provided by Marx's work on Alienation and Commodity Fetishism. The socialisation of society will not come about by proffering the slops of the bourgeois mentality on doorsteps, even if it is dressed up as the "alternative criminology."
David MacDonald, Manchester

Sexism & Masculinism

Dear Big Flame,

Your reviewer posed the question, "what is men's politics?" The question, used as a starting point for a look at Achilles Heel, was never really explored and an opportunity to examine Men's Groups in general was completely missed. The cursory review that followed didn't provide any analysis of the role of men in sexual politics.

As a member of a men's group, I neither want to retell men's history (just another kind of chauvinism) nor act as protector to my feminist friends (warding off the wicked sexist in typically "male" ways). What I do want to do is probe my own sexism and the sexism that is so imbedded in the culture around me. To understand the "masculinism" that as a man is embedded in all my social interactions. Most of all to actively challenge the role playing and its accompanying ideology that underpins the oppression of women.

The most practical important example of which is child care. I want changes in all these things to come about through a revolutionary that is socialist. For some this will mean reconceptualising socialism. Sexual politics (the politics of the personal) is the micro end of the micro-macro continuum. But

Dear contributors,

We hope you will write us enough letters to make the letters page a regular feature of the paper. Length of letters should not be more than 400 words - though shorter ones are very welcome. We would like to make it clear that you should not feel obliged to write in a dense, complicated style.

Because we do not answer a letter does not mean that we agree with it.

We want feedback on articles that appear in the paper on the 'Worth Talking About' page - they will take up issues that are controversial from a revolutionary point of view.

The Editorial Collective.

LIBERTARIAN SPAIN No 2, bulletin of Libertarian Spain Committee on workers and students trade union elections etc. 20 p, from LSC, Box 3, 73, Waingate, York, YO2 2TZ

FIGHTBACK CONFERENCE on Health and the Cuts, 30 June, Conway Hall, London, 10 am start. Evening social.

"Fighting the cuts - fighting for a democratically run health service: the way forward."

More details from Fightback, 30 Camden Road, London N.W.1. 01.560.3431 x 679

THE SECOND annual charabanc to Scarborough will take place on 29th April. This historic event is part of Leeds Big Flame's relentless effort to prove to the masses that politics is not just demos and smoke filled rooms. It is also donkey rides, fish and chips and the company of friends. £2 for

LONDON BIG FLAME Community Commission Public Meetings: "The State as Class Practice" Speaker: John Holloway (CSE) Friday 4th May 7.30 pm

"Understanding the State for Local Action and Organisation" Speaker: Cynthia Cockburn ("The Local State") Sunday 20th May 2 pm. For venue phone 01.735.6123

MANCHESTER BIG FLAME Public Meeting, May 10th The Chilean Experience, a third road to socialism? May 10th 7.30 pm, The Ancoats, Great Ancoats St.

COVENTRY BIG FLAME public meeting "Whose Law and Order?" Speaker Stuart Hall Tuesday 8th May 7.30 pm Swanswell Tavern (nr Old Fire Station) Pool Meadow.

NOTTINGHAM BIG FLAME

Advertisements

NATIONAL 'REVOLUTION' RALLY, Sat. 5th May Noon - Midnight. Speakers: Bernadette McAisley, RAR, Soweto student. Films. Exhibitions.

Meetings this month of the international campaign 'Against the Bosses Europe - for a Workers' Europe' include:

- * an international meeting on the steel industry in Arthus (Luxembourg) on May 18th/19th
- * a meeting on European trade unions in Copenhagen (Denmark) on May 27th/28th
- * a meeting on 'immigration in Europe' in London on June 2nd.

PUBLICATIONS

A new publication 'An Introduction to Big Flame' is available for 20 p including postage.

REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM SOCIALISM No. 3. Includes: 'Barcelona Tenants Up In Arms'; 'Shop - a New Politics'; 'Stoop Stewards as Full-Timers'.

From BF Journal, Room 265, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1.

40 p (£1.50 postage) and from all good left wing bookshops. 'SEXUALITY AND FASCISM' Documents from Big Flame, including: 'Women and Nazi Germany', 'Women

Classified Ad. rates: 3p a word

UTOM LABOUR MOVEMENT conference on Ireland, Sat May 19th. Goldsmith's College, Lewisham Way SE14. Social in the evening.

WHY A MEN'S MOVEMENT?

In circles even smaller than those normally inhabited by the revolutionary left, the developing Men's Movement is causing a bit of a stir. There are even signs — such as Jill Tweedie's heart-fluttering review of the men's magazine *Achilles Heel* in the *Guardian* — that the movement is coming out of its closet, and may have some important things to offer the socialist movement.

This article looks sympathetically at the men's movement, and examines the criticism of it made by socialist feminists and the orthodox left. It is written from the point of view of one who wants revolutionary organisations to adopt these new insights into sexuality. Our aim, writes Paul Holt, should be to destroy capitalism without destroying ourselves in the process.

The seriousness of the men's movement is probably best demonstrated by the two issues of *Achilles Heel* — 'a magazine of men's politics' — published by a collective in London. The magazine covers a wide range of issues, from fairly theoretical topics like 'masculinity and fascism', 'sexism and male sexuality', and 'the problem with patriarchy', through to more personal notes on 'men's health', 'the diary of a male househusband', and a discussion of experiences in men's groups. It also includes cartoons, poems, and photos, and the whole thing has a lively and creative feel to it, thanks partly to the original and bizarre design of the magazine. It has sold like hot cakes — yet hardly anyone seems to know what the men's movement is about, and most of those that do are either enthusiastic members of men's groups or are in varying degrees critical of the movement.

WHY A MEN'S MOVEMENT?

It is far too early to try and give a definitive set of reasons why men started, in 1973, and then again a year or two ago, to meet in groups all over the country. We would probably all agree that we felt various pressing needs: to learn how to express our emotions and make real relationships with men, to understand and try and change our sexist and exploitative attitudes towards women, to try and deal with our sexual repressions...to name but a few. For a lot of us, a major stimulus forcing us to try and deal with these problems was, and is, the influence of the women's liberation movement in general, and our personal and political relationships with feminist women in particular.

But my impression from the people I met at the Manchester Men's Conference is that plenty of men have identified with the men's movement without this political kick in the pants from feminists. They've come from a general awareness of the limited nature of their emotional lives, and, in some cases, from an extension of the insights they've gained in therapy or from contact with eastern religions.

Some men have a history of work in the socialist movement, and have come to reject the movement as irretrievably sexist and/or because they feel that the only realistic thing one can do is to change oneself. Some still regard themselves as socialists, but are fundamentally critical of orthodox socialist activity.

Yet another set of men in the movement, surprisingly well represented at the Manchester conference, are those of us who identify with the socialist movement, are active in trade unions, political groups, and united fronts, but who believe that socialism has to be filled out by the practical and theoretical insights of sexual politics.

SOME OF THE ISSUES

Because there are so many strands of thought in the men's movement, some of the criticisms

outright hostility which comes from the most orthodox of the left — best put to me as 'I don't need men's groups, I've been in men's groups ever since I was in a gang. I haven't got any problems, it's Margaret Thatcher and Jim Callaghan who've got all the problems'. Such people neglect the major insight of the sexual politics movement — that we are all fucked up living under the yoke of capitalism, and that we are going to have a hard time creating a better world unless we begin now to deal with the sexism, racism, and authoritarianism which is deeply ingrained in everyone's personality.

Another line of attack is to be found in a remark by David Widgery: 'Quite a lot of people who couldn't see what [the left] was all about anyway pushed off to have kids, lick their wounds or do their horoscopes' (*Time Out*, 9-15 March 1979). True, there are plenty of men in the movement who have rejected the left, and they've made the classic liberal individualist step of assuming that they can get their personal lives into a healthy state without any revolutionary change in society. Where the hippies believe in LSD, they believe in men's groups for personal therapy.

But the blanket criticism misses the mark. The fact is that many, if not all of us on the left are 'wounded'. Some of the wounds are inflicted by an oppressive social system, in which men comply with those massive influences making us pretend to be tough, resourceful, rational, and unemotional. But some are self-inflicted in the left-wing movement itself. This movement too is dominated by tough, rational, unemotional men, and they insist on structures and activities which require just those qualities — and a lot of us are being burned out, finding ourselves unable to sustain relationships with women and children, becoming depressed and ill, because we blindly follow the dictates of orthodox Leninism.

Men's groups can be a place where we examine these hierarchical structures and masculine methods, and where we try and find ways of making revolution without making ourselves into human computers.

ARE MEN OPPRESSED?

The most important criticism of the men's movement comes from socialist feminists. It is important because it comes from people who have a deep understanding of sexual politics, and aren't blinded by the myths of the traditional male left that sexual movements are divisive and that only capitalists have personal problems.

In the second issue of *Achilles Heel* Vic Seidler argues, 'As men oppress women, but this doesn't

within capitalist society'. He then goes on to describe this oppression in terms of men having 'to turn our bodies into machines which we can control' in order to live up to the 'competitive, ambitious, strong man' we are supposed to be. The first issue of *Achilles Heel* strongly implies that, because men are oppressed, they have the right to organise autonomously in the same way as women do.

This is where the socialist feminists begin their criticism, and many of us in the men's movement agree with them. They argue that men are not oppressed in the same way as women are, since, by and large, men are the agents of the oppres-

ion of women. They agree that men have real problems in playing the violent game of pretending to be a man, but they say men should be described as 'deformed' (or some such word) rather than as 'oppressed'. And they are hostile to the idea of men developing an autonomous movement, since this would be, in practice if not by intention, another institution guarding and extending the power of men over women.

There isn't space here to say why I agree with the socialist feminists. It isn't however, because I am guilt ridden and trying to make a good impression with the socialist feminists.

They quite rightly point to the

MEN AGAINST SEXISM CONFERENCE 'Relating our personal and our political selves'

Last month 300 men converged on Manchester for a 'Men Against Sexism' (MAS) conference. It was a resounding success. A warm, affectionate and trusting atmosphere was generated, free from the competitive and often haranguing postures men are familiar with when we come together to talk politics and make decisions.

I went to the conference expecting conflict, confusion, mistrust, and disappointment. If these were present, they were not apparent, and credit must be given to the Manchester Men's Group's success in creating a conference structure which enabled the maximum possible interaction in the short space of time available.

Different interests and 'tendencies' were given space to develop alongside each other. Perhaps the predominant common factors were that most men there had had experience of belonging to men's groups had had their sexism challenged in friendships and sexual relationships with women, and had found difficulty in relating their personal lives to their political and work selves.

FILMS

The conference included a cliche, a disco, and two films, and was structured by two sets of groupings: home groups and workshops. Everyone was allocated randomly to the former and left to get on with whatever arose. The latter arose spontaneously from individual and collective suggestions.

A man who had worked with

in Santa Cruz emphasised the need for a personal understanding prior to action against rape. Discussion went on to the relationship between male sexuality and power. Two of the group had experiences of being raped by men and were able to talk from this about the devastating effect the violence inflicted on their sexuality and their emotions.

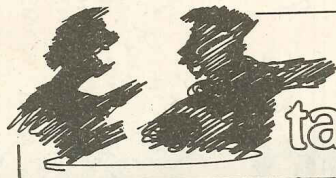
This moved us to consider the ways in which rape is a ritual expression of establishing domination over men in institutional settings such as schools, prisons, and the forces, as well as over women in a patriarchal society.

LEFT GROUPS AND MEN AGAINST SEXISM

Although I describe myself as non-aligned, I have been close to Big Flame in Liverpool for about six months and was therefore attracted to the workshops concerning the Left and sexual politics. A feature of these workshops was their openness and tolerance of experience which in other contexts would provide ammunition for criticisms by left organisations. Questions were posed more than answers given. How can anti-sexist men relate their consciousness to left politics?

A huge gap was recognised between anti-sexist socialist men, often highly educated with professional or 'sub-culture' life styles that enable them to have personal time sufficient to develop a consciousness to support women struggling against patriarchy, and working

The most important thing we can do is to "come out" with our sexual politics in all our dealings with people. This involves countering the superman images, the anti-women and anti-gay attitudes we meet every day.



worth
talking about

danger of men in the men's movement simply drawing support from other men and even becoming complacent and smug about our personal 'anti-sexist' development.

The most important thing we can do, it seems to me, is to 'come out' with our sexual politics in all our dealings with people. This involves countering the superman images, the anti-women and anti-gay attitudes we meet everyday. It also means creating structures and activities which will carry forwards the movement against sexual oppression, not separate from, but part and parcel of the general political work we do. Not least, we have to work out ways of creating a revolutionary organisation which is informed by the insights of sexual politics, so that it can help destroy capitalism without destroying its members.

Information about Men's Groups, and all the publications mentioned in the article, can be obtained from:
Men's Free Press
7 St. Mark's Rise
London E8 2NJ

oppression that prevent such a consciousness from developing. It was suggested that demands for a shorter working week plus a decent living wage would provide one condition — personal time — necessary for such a consciousness.

CRITICISM

The conference ended with a plenary which supported the idea of a permanent Men Against Sexism newsletter organised in rotation by different local men's groups and open to contributions from both men and women. A criticism from gay men that the conference structure had not encouraged them to meet separately early on was accepted. A further conference was proposed in the autumn in Bristol.

What is the future for MAS? My own view is that any claims for MAS as an autonomous movement akin to the women's or gay movements, should be viewed with the utmost suspicion: men do not experience the material oppression of these groups, just the opposite.

However, men's emotional make-up and sexuality are repressed and distorted by capitalism and the patriarchal nuclear family, and we have much to gain personally from the struggles of women.

The possibility of collective action by MAS seems to be still far off, if a possibility at all, without prior initiatives from the women's movement to involve men's groups in action on behalf of their demands. It is time, therefore, for an analysis and critique of MAS from the women's movement to help nurture — or kill off — the

**GOOD KING
NEVER
GAVE UP
ON THE
GREAT CRUSADE**

ELECTION TIME!
WE WILL MOUNT
A SOCIALIST
CRUSADE....
THE CRUSADES
DID NOT
STOP FOR
US!
THE RIGHT
MAN

THE GREAT DEBATE - PART I
MORE CUTS!
WAGE LIMITS!
MORE FOR
PENSIONERS!
INCENTIVES
TO INDUSTRY

**THAT'S OUR
POLICY!**
WE'VE
REMAINING
O.K.?

THE GREAT DEBATE - PART II
THIS DANGEROUS
RADICAL WILL
UPSET THE
STATUS QUO
DRYS OF
SOCIALISM
GONE?
WHERE
HAVE THE
GOOD OLD
DRYS OF
SOCIALISM
GONE?

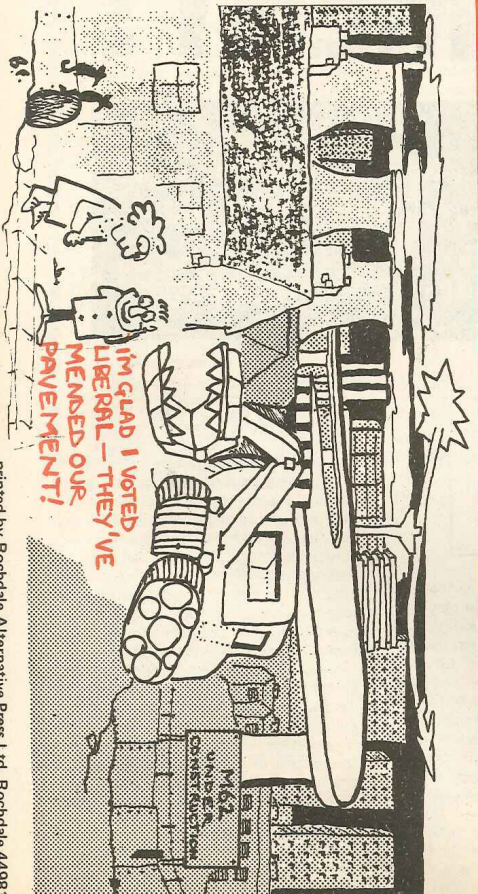
**THAT WAS
OUR POLICY**
AT LAST ABANDONING THE
MODERN PART OF BULLSHIT, HE
TURNS TO THE ANCIENT ART
OF MAGIC !!!.....

**EYE OF ROG... LIVER OF
LEFT-RINGER... H.P. SPOUCE...
A PRICE FREEZE... LEG
OF NEMT... WINNING
SMILE... POLICE
COMMISSION**

**AND THE MAGIC WORD!
HELP!**

**WHAT BREADFUL
POWER HAS
GOOD KING
CALLAGHAN
UNLEASHED?
DON'T BELIEVE
THOSE OPINION
POLLS! WAIT
TILL NEXT
MONTH'S
AMAZING
EPISODE!!!**

ANGLE ON:
EDGE HILL:
The cartoon
was first
published
in June 1973. It
still holds true
today.



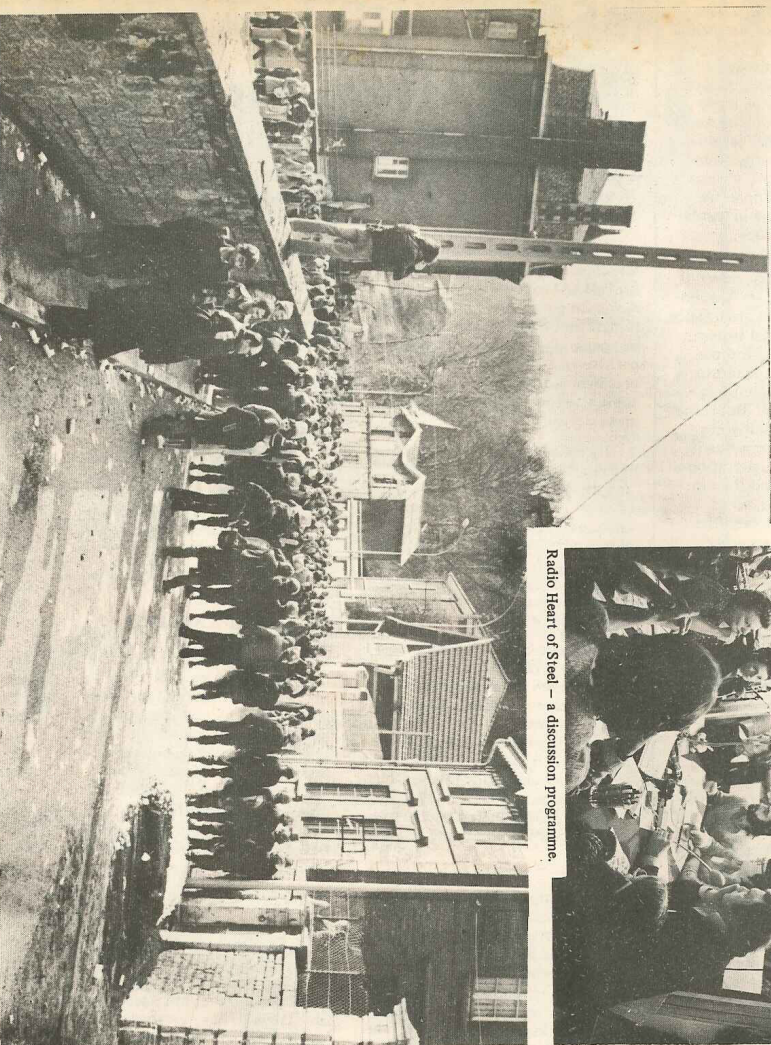
printed by Rochdale Alternative Press Ltd. Rochdale 44981

Big Flame

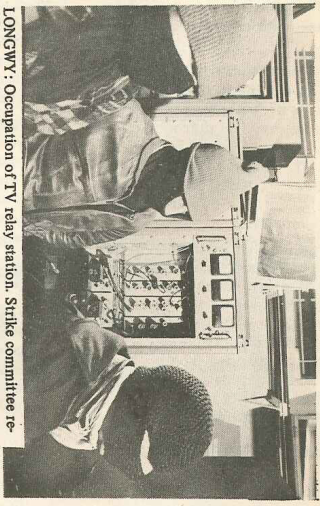
for Socialism

No 74 May 1979

15p



LONGWY: the attack on the police station



LONGWY: Occupation of TV relay station. Strike committee re-transmitted its own programme.



Radio Heart of Steel - a discussion programme.

French Steelworkers: Militant Action Saves Jobs

Photo report-p. 4&5