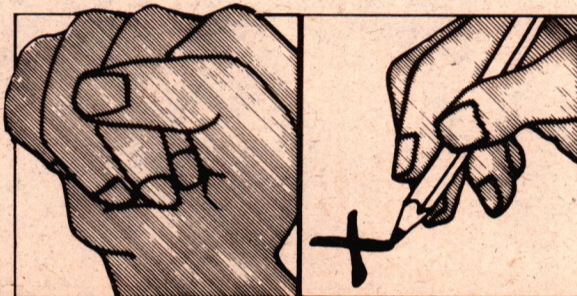


A Socialist ACTION

9 JUNE 9 JUNE
VOTE
LABOUR



KICK OUT THE TORIES



Boost Socialist Action in the election

THATCHER has not given us much time to prepare the election campaign.

We want all our supporters out on the streets fighting for a labour victory: building the May 24th women's day of action against the bomb, the campaign against the Police Bill and making sure that the greeting we offer to the People's March for Jobs turns into a massive rebuff for everything the Tories stand for.



To help do this, and to help build a socialist campaign, we want to produce loads of extra publicity.

We want to produce a pamphlet, explaining Socialist Action's views on why socialist policies are needed.

Posters

We want to produce posters and thousands of badges saying 'Jobs Not Bombs! Vote Labour!'

We will be holding rallies in the big cities with international speakers.

To do this we need more than our usual Spring Appeal. We are asking supporters to make a special effort this week to send us money to help fight the Tories.

Quick

We would like to get at least a tanner from each of you to help kick Thatcher out. And just as we want Thatcher out quick, we need your money in a quick!

Surely it's worth a little extra to boost Socialist Action through the election? Dig in deep. Get those tanners pouring in!

THE TORIES have opted for a 9 June cut-and-run election before their policies result in more electoral unpopularity.

By the editor

But the labour movement should welcome this opportunity to deal a blow against the Tories and their Liberal/SDP allies. There are three steps to this goal.

Kick out the Tories! The Tories must be defeated! Another term of office for Thatcher would mean:

- the implementation of the Police Bill — a further step towards a police state.
- a new round of Tebbit's attacks on the unions
- the stationing of cruise missiles and the beginning of a new generation of nuclear weapons with Trident

● continuation of policies that put profits before people — continuing mass unemployment, cuts in services and selling off profitable parts of the public sector.

tion around the People's March, the campaign against the Police Bill, the industrial action against redundancies in British Leyland should not be called off but stepped up.

**Thatcher's Britain:
a guide to the ruins
pages 8 & 9**

For a Labour victory! Labour can win! That's the lesson of the local government elections. Where the Labour Party waged a determined and principled campaign against the Tories and Alliance, as in Liverpool, victories can be won.

The Tories can be defeated through mass action as the water workers showed this year. That's why ongoing ac-

tion These issues have to be put at the centre of the election campaign.

Labour should link up with these campaigns — with the women's movement, black movement and workers in struggle.

Socialists for Labour Victory have produced guidelines for local Labour Parties to help them to do just that.

Fight for socialist policies! There must be no retreat by the Labour Party on the socialist policies passed by Labour and trade union conferences over the past year!

In particular there must be a clear pledge from all sections of the Labour Party leadership and from their trade union backers that coalitionist pacts with the SDP/Liberal Alliance won't be used to junk those policies.

The national economic assessment mustn't be allowed to be used as a Trojan horse for a new social contract as Denis Healey has already threatened.

By fighting for socialist policies we can prepare to meet whatever government emerges from the general election.

Sales

In the weeks ahead, we want the sales of Socialist Action to rocket.

We hope the extra interest generated by the election campaign will result in hundreds of new regular readers who will go on fighting for socialist policies whatever the eventual outcome of the election.

● All out for the People's March 5 June

24 May Events



Local action

*** Glasgow.** Women for Peace are organising a lunchtime rally in George Square from 12-2pm, plus a festival and vigil in the evening. For details of all actions in Scotland ring Ann Kane on 041-423 1485

*** Swansea.** Swansea WONT and Labour Party women are organising a march to County Hall with die-in. For details of all actions in Wales ring Liz Forder on 0222-566548.

*** Manchester.** The Manchester Greenham Support Group is organising actions in the centre of the town where a human web will be formed. For details of all actions in the North West ring Marion McNaughton on 0532-670289.

*** Oxford.** The East Midlands 24 May Committee, Oxford Labour Party Women and Oxford Women's Peace Action are joining together to plan non-violent direct action on the day. For details of all activities in the central part of England ring Andrea Heath on 0533 555466.

*** Hornsea.** Families Against the Bomb are planning a 24 hour fast and vigil from 12 midnight on 23 May to highlight the money spent on arms that could be used to pay for food for those without it in the semi-colonial world.

*** Haringey.** Women for Disarmament plan to picket local factories and hospitals drawing the links between arms, welfare and jobs and expenditure on arms. For details ring Maggie Weatherby on 01-340 2715.

*** Lambeth.** Lambeth Women for Peace and Labour Party women plan a peace camp on Clapham Common near to the threatened South London Women's hospital to draw the links between women's fights for jobs and healthcare and their fight against militarisation.

*** South East London.** South East London Greenham Women are assembling at 11am on Peckham Rye to cover the common with white crosses. A creche will be provided. At 12 noon they move off to the Imperial War Museum.

*** Newham.** Newham CND and NALGO are organising a lunchtime rally and leafletting hospitals about government civil defence expenditure. Newham NALGO has voted to strike on that day.

*** Camden.** Camden Labour Party women are planning to leaflet Euston station at 11am where the North London line carries the nuclear waste across London. They are to be joined by the London North Central branch of the POEU who are sending representatives to join them. They hope to greet the railworkers from the Horwich workshops in Manchester who will be protesting that day against the proposals in the Serpell report. Camden Labour Party women plan to join activities planned in Islington.

*** Islington.** Islington Labour Party women and the North London Greenham Women will be setting up a peace camp at Highbury corner, where the North London line carrying nuclear waste also travels followed by a picnic in Highbury Fields. Men are asked to support with the picnic and will be welcome to support the march, allowing women to lead it.

*** Tower Hamlets/East London.** The East London Greenham support group is planning to leaflet the London hospital at lunchtime and events will also be taking place in Bow.

*** Trafalgar Square.** Pensioners for Peace and Women for World Disarmament will be on the steps of St Martin's-in-the-Fields church getting signatures for the freeze on arms expenditure from 1pm onwards. Later at 6pm women from all over London are being asked to assemble together at the end of the day.

*** Enfield.** Enfield Greenham women are going to destroy a cruise missile in the shopping centre and a die in will be staged around a bunker site.

*** Dalston.** Dalston WONT taking action outside army recruitment office.

*** Woolwich.** Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society giving out peace badges in shopping centre.

*** Greenwich.** Greenwich CND are setting up a stall in Woolwich market.

*** Brighton.** Where it all began. Brighton Women for Peace are planning lots of action ring 0273-553466.

*** Peoples March Women's Day of Action** called for 24 May. Festival taking place as part of IWDD in Warwick. The Leamington Employment Action Movement has sponsored a meeting with local women trade union speakers and women speakers from CND and Greenham Common. Local END has evening entertainment planned. (LEAM meets every Tuesday 8.00pm, Oddfellows Hall, Leamington.)

National unions supporting.

*** NALGO** strike action being looked upon favourably by national executive — Newham, Camden, Islington discussing action. Poster and stickers have been produced.

*** ACTTS** National executive taking similar attitude to NALGO.

*** NUJ** Information being circulated to branches.

*** NUR** Information being circulated to members, delegations promised for a peace train along North London line goes ahead.

*** ASTMS** Information being circulated.

*** NATFE** Local branches considering strike action and information being circulated.

*** NUPE** National executive raising day of action from platform at national conference, information being circulated to delegates. Greenham Women speaking at fringe meeting in Scarborough. 5.45 Monday 16 May.

*** Other unions** who have contacted the Greenham office include the London region of the T&G who are organising three coaches to visit Greenham on Sunday 15th. Ring Fred Higgs on 01-534 4187 for details. Kings Cross and Westham NUR are sending greetings on the day and so are several branches of the POEU on a special green Women and Telecoms postcard.

• For more information and special trade union leaflet and national poster contact the Greenham Office, 5 Leonard Street, London EC3 Tel 01-251 3133.



The women of Greenham Common have been an inspiration for the whole labour movement in the battle against the missiles.

A Labour victory for disarmament

THE FOUR WEEKS to the general election mark the best and possibly the last chance for CND to stop the missiles in '83. While CND has correctly not tied itself to one party's fortunes, CND leaders have a responsibility to explain that the only party that will stop the cruise missiles is the Labour Party.

There have been worrying signs that this is not understood in the higher reaches of CND. Some have indicated that CND has to anticipate a Labour defeat and find a new alliance with both the Labour Party and the SDP/Liberal Alliance.

There has also been a reluctance in some quarters for leading CND figures, in particular Bruce

Kent, to speak on the same platform as Labour candidates without candidates from all other parties being present.

This is a self-defeating and conservative attitude. CND should welcome participation on any platform to explain their policies of unilateralism and NATO withdrawal but in particular it should demand to have a speaker

on every single relevant Labour Party platform.

Let us just recall what a second term of Thatcher would bring us:

- retention of our existing nuclear weapons and the 100 or so American bases in this country
- the stationing of cruise missiles at Greenham Common and other bases from December 1983
- the introduction of a new generation of nuclear missiles with its current estimated cost of over £10 billion

Neither is the Alliance any alternative. In an article in last Monday's *Guardian*

Wayland Kennet of the SDP explained that the main theme of his party would be to fight for the dual key on the cruise missiles.

But as Tony Benn has observed if there's one thing more frightening than Reagan with the only finger on the trigger, it's Reagan and Thatcher.

CND must seize the opportunity of the election to press its case. The 'peace canvass' of CND can be used to build support for the meetings and demonstrations that will be held in every town by

CND to build the campaign against the missiles.

The International Women's Day for Disarmament on 24 May will be a national focus for CND activists to make their voice heard before the election.

'Jobs not Bombs' contingents can be formed by CND on the monster 5 June march against unemployment in London at the end of the Peoples March.

- For a Labour victory!
- Stop the missiles in '83!

Take CND into the unions

By Dodie Weppler (NUR)



LABOUR movement conferences have begun to highlight the need to take CND into the unions. Conferences have already taken

place in Brent and East London and others are scheduled in South London 21 May and Greater Manchester on 28 May.



The East London conference two weeks ago attracted over 100 delegates from over 20 unions, Labour Parties and CND groups. Jo Richardson MP, opening the conference, said that the issue of cruise missiles should be central in the coming general election.

A striking London docker told CND members, "Jobs not Bombs" must be at the heart of the message that CND takes to workers defending their living standards and jobs."

The need for CND to develop their links with the unions was emphasised by

Jenny Edwards, the trade union organiser of CND. She revealed that out of 1000 CND groups less than 10 per cent, have had trade union committees.

Reports in workshops from Ford Dagenham and Fire Brigade Union members showed what response CND could get in the workplaces.

Conference decided that the most urgent task was to mobilise support in the labour movement for the Women's Day for Disarmament on 24 May, in particular the rally planned by the Greenham Common Women's sup-

port group outside the London Hospital in East London to highlight the links between welfare cuts and arms expenditure.

Delegates also agreed to return to their branches to call on their unions to get the TUC moving on its 1982 decision to coordinate European-wide action on Hiroshima Day 6 August.

- Since the conference two NUR branches have decided to send greetings to the IWDD rally in Trafalgar Square on 24 May.

60,000 ROCK THE BOMB!

TWO DAYS before Thatcher's election announcement, young people from all over Britain made Youth CND's message loud and clear — stop the missiles and kick out the Tories.

By Jim Coutts

The festival was the first ever national event organised by Youth CND.

Over 60,000 youth turned up, filling Brockwell Park to overflowing. The march of 20,000 took one and a half hours to come into the park.

Values

The demonstrators joined thousands more to listen to the bands — Style Council, the Damned, Madness and Hazel O'Connor included. They came to hear the bands, but also to demonstrate their hatred for the Tories.

The tremendous success of the festival needs to be followed by many more national events bringing together the hundreds of thousands of people who want to stop the missiles.

Together we can stop the missiles in 1983!

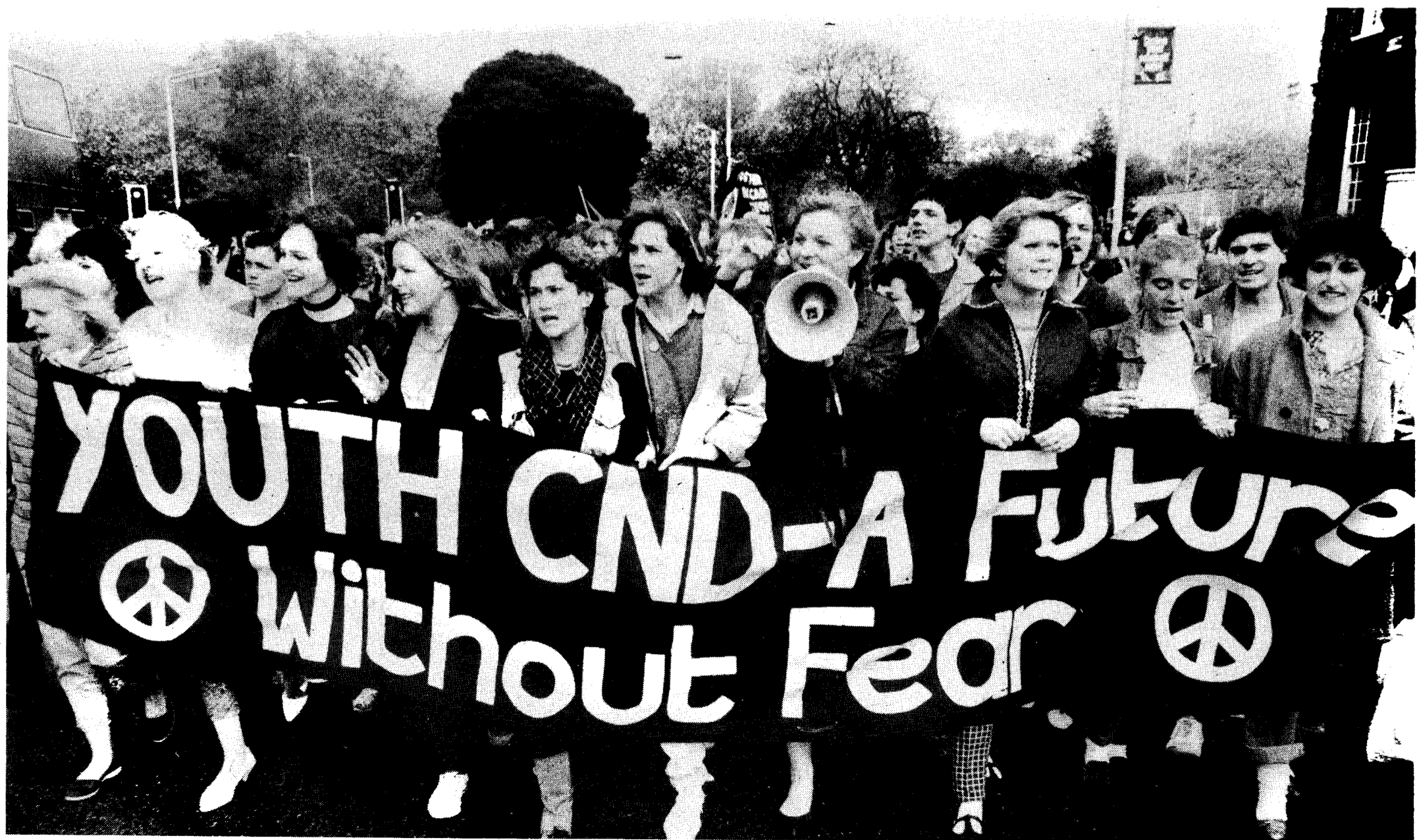
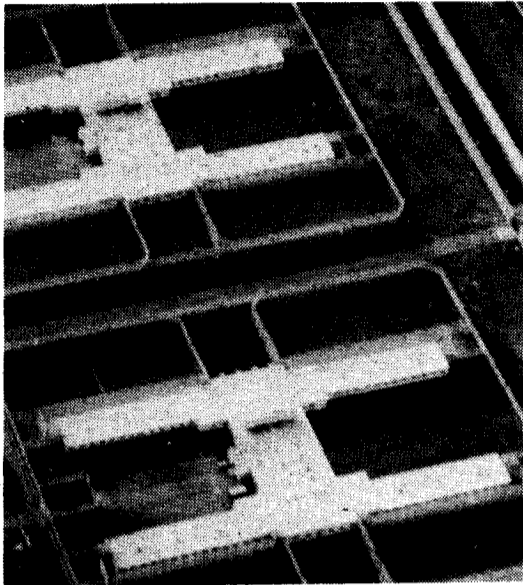


Photo: GM COOKSON

IRELAND UNFREE

H Block Revisited



By Martin Todd

A VISIT to the H Blocks of Long Kesh near to the second anniversary of Bobby Sand's death proved to be a grim yet heartening experience.

Passing through the gates, the doors and the checkpoints is a long and laborious procedure: it requires no provocation on the part of the prison warders to make the whole process a daunting and oppressive experience.

Locked in the back of a blacked-out mini bus to be shuttled into 'The Blocks' themselves, you have plenty of time to recall the haunting images of the dying hunger strikers and the long struggle of support waged by those relatives crammed into the seats alongside you.

We are all thoroughly searched. Strip searching is now less common in Long Kesh than it is in the women's prison at Armagh. All of us are stripped of our identities, the only things we can take in other than the clothes we stand up in is a prison envelope into which our paper money is sealed.

We have been lucky today; no road blocks on the way, only average obstruction in the prison. It is not always like this for those who regularly make the long and arduous journey to Long Kesh. Today we even get 12 extra minutes, the visit lasts 42 minutes!

Finally, into the room where the prisoners sit in cubicles waiting. Despite knowing that the dirt protest is long over and that prison life is something like it was before the men were forced to go on the blankets, it is almost a shock to see how well the men look.

Easter and the celebration of the Easter Rising of 1916 is always a high point for those involved in the struggle to free Ireland but in these men seems to be the spirit of today and the future just as much as respect for the past.

We get the impression that the struggle in the prison has moved on, just as it has outside. In practice the fight for political status was won, the prisoners have now achieved one way or another what they set out to during the blanket protest and the hunger strikes.

Their energies are now turned to self-organisation within the prison, mainly political and cultural education. The simple reason is because the nationalist community is slowly but surely winning. These men, some in prison for life on the basis of a signed confession obtained after days of police 'interrogation', can see ahead of them a time when Britain will be forced to leave Ireland.

We wanted to know what the prisoners and their relatives thought about Labour Party policy on Ireland. While none of them had any illusions that the likes of Rees, Mason and Concannon still have a grip on Labour policy, they were all aware of the gradual but important changes taking place amongst the membership.

The point made by Ken Livingstone at the time of the GLC invitation to Sinn Fein leaders that it is the duty of British socialists to meet with Sinn Fein, to discuss their policies and to look for ways to support them, was re-emphasised by people we spoke to.

We were also assured by the prisoners and this was confirmed by the huge rallies to celebrate the 1916 Rising, that the support for the armed struggle is not lessened but strengthened by Sinn Fein's turn to electoral politics.

● Martin Todd visited Long Kesh with Callum Macrae, both members of the Edinburgh Labour Committee on Ireland.

No Gay News is bad news

COMPARED to the banner headlines that revealed the lesbianism of MP Maureen Colquhoun and the hundreds of pages that gloated over the homosexuality of the Queen's bodyguard Michael Trestrail, the national newspapers recorded the closure of *Gay News*, a life line communication for Britain's gay men and women with two paragraphs, one in the *Guardian* and one in the *Observer*.

A paper that had battled its way to a 20,000 circulation, been hauled through the courts in a famous blasphemy trial by Mary Whitehouse, helped several important legislative changes and whose guide, diary and classified ads almost provided the cobweb that kept its community together, was snuffed out and the straight press deemed it unnewsworthy.

By Bob Workman

In one way the collapse of *Gay News* was a good thing. The selfish greed of private ownership was revealed behind the facade of public caring.

For although most of its readers thought the

paper was run by a collective, early on in the paper's history the ownership had been assumed by one individual. And it was the money grabbing nature of the recent change of ownership that did for *Gay News* what the bigots, the police and the law courts had failed to.

As *Gay News* collapsed into liquidation the staff calculate that the ex-owner, Dennis Lemon, and the new owner, Robert Palmer have debts of a staggering £220,000, figures that they had been anticipating from the future profits.

The efforts of a new co-operative to relaunch a national homosexual periodical may fail as both public and private finance

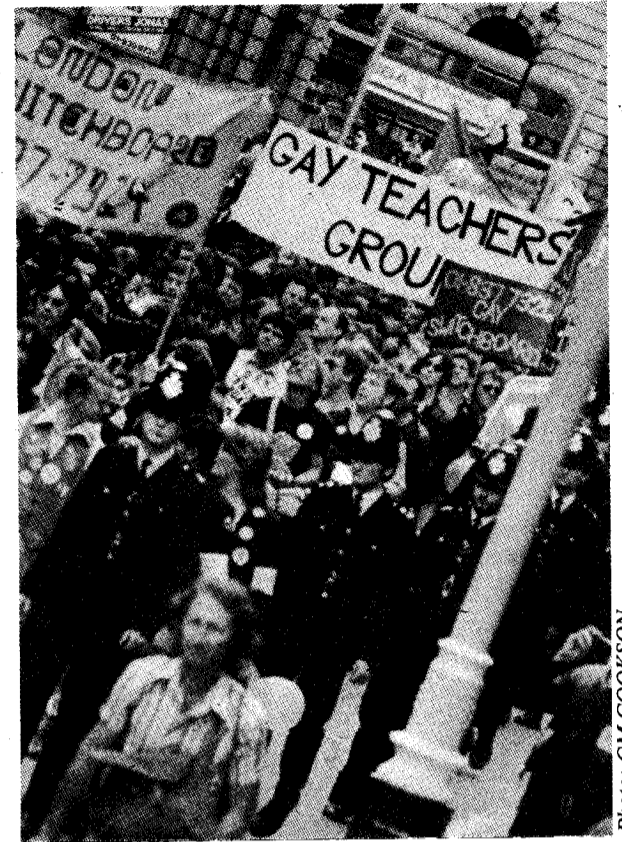
are hard to come by. Although the venture makes sound business sense, elected politicians draw back from approving the project because of the hot potato of homosexuality.

Private investors have doubts about the communal nature of the organisation.

Certain

However one thing is certain. The gay and lesbian community needs a new democratically owned national publication. As *Gay News* went into liquidation its only competitor in the field, a publishing concern owned by Alex McKenna with a clutch of 7 male nude magazines to his credit, announced the launch of a new newspaper called *Gay Reporter*.

Its aims are to be 'fun, fun, fun, non political, and for men only.' If you want anything else in life you can forget it.



Gay Pride march

Photo: GM COOKSON

Labour Committee on Ireland meets

AT ITS recent Annual General Meeting, the Labour Committee on Ireland adopted growth plans for the year ahead. As a Labour Party pressure group, the LCI is in the best position to build on support for the nationalist struggle in Ireland gained by publicity for Ken Livingstone.

The recent Plastic Bullets Conference seems to have given it the confidence to step up its profile in the party and in the unions.

Opposition

Having made it clear that the LCI was in opposition to the witch hunt being organised by the right wing in the Labour Party against the left, the AGM took two major discussions on building itself in the unions and relaunching its magazine *Labour and Ireland*.

It was pointed out that more people had been attracted to the Plastic Bullets Conference through union mailings than by any other source

of publicity. The LCI approved of the controversial decision to invite Sinn Fein MP Owen Carron to Britain and urged more dialogue with the nationalist movement.

Resolution

This year's model resolution being promoted by the LCI for Labour Party Conference is aimed at pinning down the Labour leadership to conference policy for a united Ireland by making clear its opposition to the Unionist veto exercised at the moment through the sham Northern Ireland Assembly.

Delegates from as far away as Glasgow reported on the growing interest in Irish politics in Britain, particularly amongst the youth. A fringe meeting organised by the LCI at this year's Labour Party Young Socialists Conference was attended by almost one hundred YS members.

About 80 members attended the AGM which elected plastic bullets conference organisers Nial Power and Martin Collins as secretary and magazine editor respectively.

Fighting the cuts in Ealing ...

EALING's Tory Council was intent on saving £120,000 by cutting school cleaners' hours and getting caretakers to do 'handymen's' jobs.

For some cleaners it meant a drop from 20 to 14 hours a week — not only a loss of wages but of sick-pay and pension rights.

NUPE together with the general and municipal union demanded negotiation, which the council refused. With the teacher's union, the NUT, they organised picketing of schools to stop scab contract cleaners recruited by the Tories from getting into schools.

The pickets were successful, and soon NUT members were involved in widespread unofficial action.

Pressure on the NUT executive produced an official one day strike last Wednesday. Eight hundred teachers, cleaners and caretakers marched to the Town Hall.

The council caved in and agreed to let the cleaners return to work

under their old contracts pending negotiations.

But the pressure is being kept up to make sure a new agreement will be acceptable.

A meeting of the strikers voted unanimously to resume picketing after 11 May and to seek national support from public sector unions if Ealing don't deliver the goods.

(John Kreeger, Ealing NUT)

... and Hounslow

WEST Middlesex Health Authority is attempting to make deep going cuts in the local hospitals.

They include the closure of the babies', ante-natal and gynaecological wards at the West

Middlesex hospital — a loss of about 50 beds out of 750.

At Ashford hospital the men's surgical ward is to be shut, and at the South Middlesex the ward for infectious diseases.

The Health authority are claiming that the closures are only temporary, which means they have no obligation to consult with the unions involved. But once they're shut, it's likely they'll stay shut.

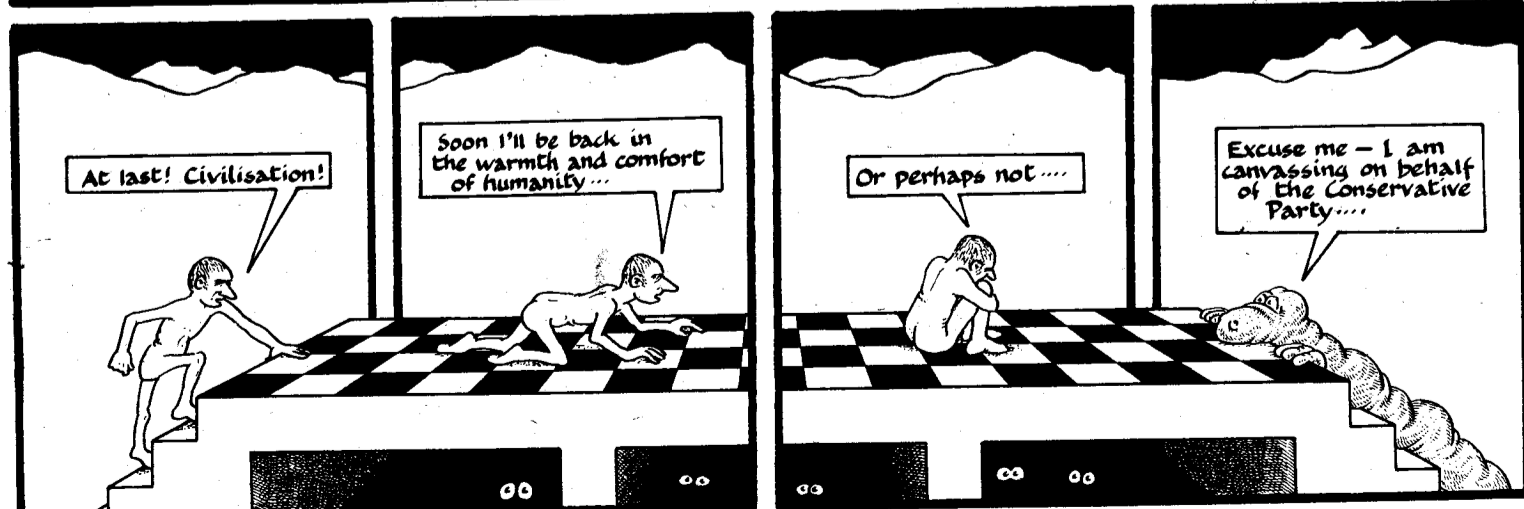
The unions are leaf-letting visitors to the hospitals and Hounslow Trades Council will be holding a public meeting against the cuts on 16 May, 7.30pm at Isleworth Town Hall.

(Chris Potter, NUPE West Middlesex Hospital)



A PIECE OF THE ACTION

by CORMAC



Kill the Police Bill!

THE TORIES tried to ram through the Police Bill before the election. Last week 78 pages containing 269 amendments and 20 new clauses went to committee of the whole house. This is a means to speed up legislation.

There's little doubt that if Thatcher wins in June the Bill will be top of her list.

The Tories have been forced to retreat on clauses covering powers to enter premises and searches of confidential records.

But Labour Party amendments were rejected which would have created powerful local police authorities and imposed regulations covering interviews of suspects.

Thatcher is determined to strengthen the hand of the police to prepare for future assaults on democratic rights, working and living conditions.

COURTENAY GRIFFITHS of the Campaign to Curb Police Powers and a member of the Greater London Council Police Committee Support Unit explains some of the issues.

The Police Bill is partly a response to the resistance police have been facing from black kids for the last ten years or so, particularly because these kids were the first victims of a changing economic order, a new industrial revolution. As such it is a portent of the resistance working class people are going to put up to the frustrations of having their skills made redundant by microchips and microprocessors.

It's also about the police seeing themselves as more than a law and order agency, and as some kind of moral arbiter in the sense of what laws and powers they should have. The Bill was written by Commander Sewell of Scotland Yard, so many of

the provisions contained in it come from a shopping list submitted by Sir David MacNee to the Royal Commission of Criminal Procedure.

So it's very much a police bill in the sense of being written by the police and being about police powers.

By Tim Wright

This is a necessary corollary of Tory economic policies. There's no way you can return to the misguided wisdom of the market place and not expect some kind of fall-out with disturbances on the street and they expected that.

If you're going to dismantle the welfare state and tear apart the so-called safety net that provided, and impose upon that some rigid misguided economic philosophy, then you're going to have to expect tension in the inner cities.

We should fight back against the Bill by marching, demonstrating, lobbying MPs en masse, taking those kinds of extra-parliamentary actions which working class people have used historically to wrest the few rights from the ruling class which

they currently enjoy.

We have to re-educate working people about their own history and the way those rights and privileges, for example trades unions, actually were the end product of a long period of resistance and struggle.

A large part of the campaign will be about informing people of what the Bill contains, its social and economic significance and what abuses are taking place currently. The campaign as a whole must be accessible and acceptable as with the ANL campaign.

Debate

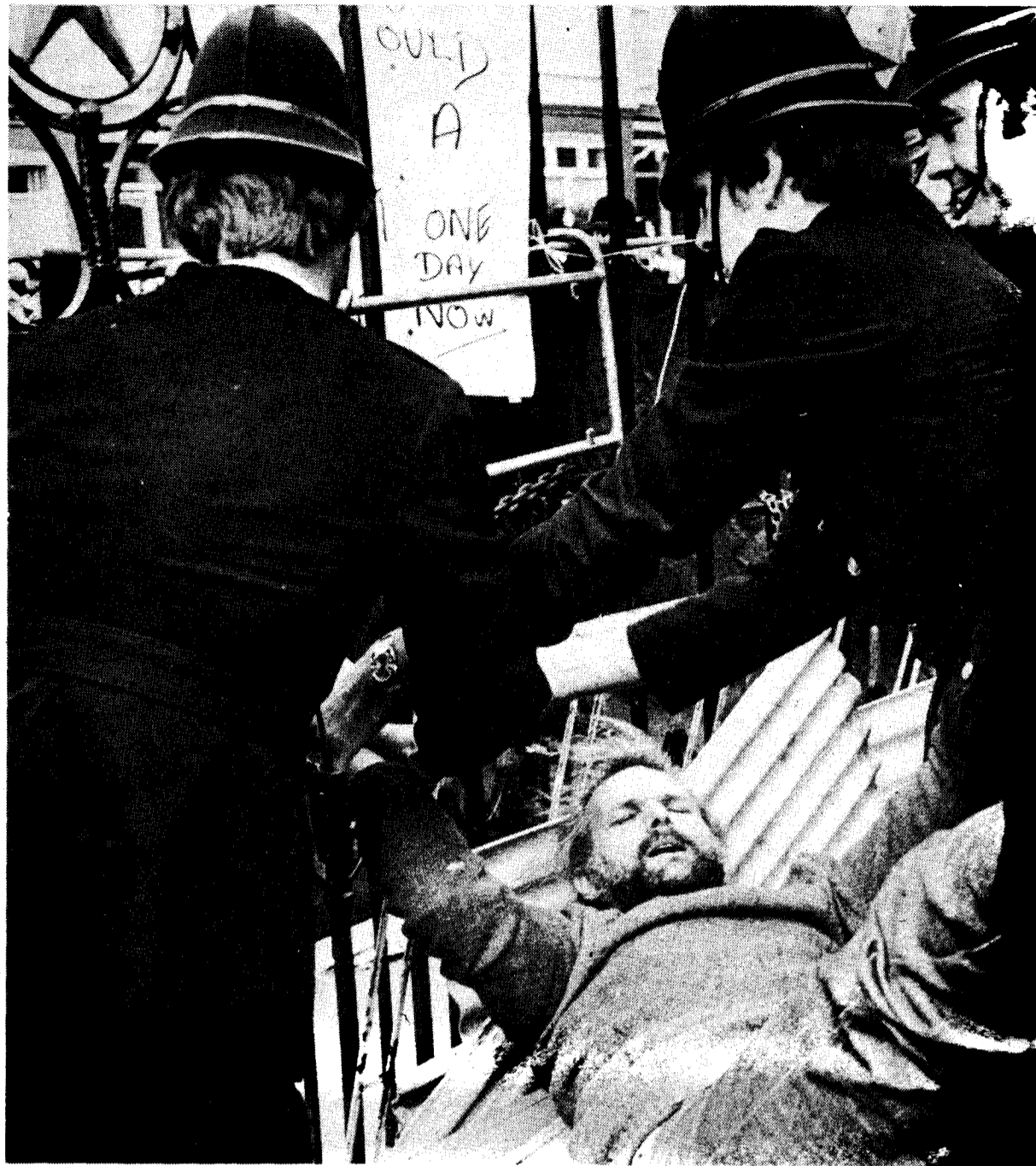
My concern has been the lack of input to the law and order debate by the trade unions. When you consider how police intervention in strikes and pickets have taken a completely new form over the past ten years — look how Grunwick was policed — and how many of the powers contained in the Bill could be used effectively to prevent trade unions from exercising their rights to picket, to demonstrate and so on.

Look at the way 'stop and search' could be used to intimidate workers picketing outside factory gates, or the way trade union records could be laid open to police surveillance.

Act

I think they've got to get their act together pretty quickly because a lot of people are becoming increasingly disenchanted with the way they're acting on that level.

Although there have been criticisms by Roy Hattersley and other MPs, the Labour Party record on policing and law and order is as bad as the Conservative Party.



Police riots on picket lines given sanction by Police Bill

We mustn't forget that the Royal Commission was actually commissioned by a Labour Home Secretary, Merlyn Rees in 1977. The Royal Commission set the tone for the Police Bill. Also the trends which have been taking place date from a continuous period of Labour

government under Wilson and Callaghan.

Report

If the Labour Party's not to sell out the working class completely they've got to come out up front and start protesting

vigorously against the Bill, Roy Hattersley has said they'd repeal it and replace it with some other Labour measures but that's not good enough.

Basis

What we want is curb-

ing the abuses which are currently taking place, and that's what they should be talking about.

● For details of the conference and demonstration against the Police Bill see page 12.

BLACK TRADE UNIONISTS SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT
1st CONFERENCE
 COUNTY HALL LONDON SE1
 INTERNATIONAL SPEAKERS FROM USA ■ SOUTH AFRICA ■ GRENADA
 APPLY FOR DETAILS FROM 32 ELLERY ROAD LONDON SE9
4 & 5th JUNE 83

MALE ORDER

General selection

JUNE, or not, the outcome of the next general election is certain to have little effect in terms of the number of women in parliament.

Currently there are

only 20 women MPs, fewer than at any time since 1951.

The state of the parties? Labour will be putting up 70 women candidates in the general election, the SDP/Liberal Alliance a close second with 64 and the Tories only 30.

Incest survey

CHILDREN as young as four are at risk of being sexually abused by members of their family, according to a survey. Some 3,000 readers of the teenage magazine 19 took part in the survey and more than a third (36%) said they had been attacked as children or

adolescents — one sixth by family members. One in 12 was the victim of incest before reaching puberty. (Irish Times)

Compiled by HILARY DRIVER. Send contributions to 'Male Order' Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP to arrive not later than Thursday a week prior to publication.



Children's militia in Segeneti, Eritrea. (Photo Mike Wells). Postcard available at 15p plus 12p p&p from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, London N1 or 137 Digbeth, Birmingham B5.

Stop Hackney police violence!

THE POLICE and coroner have won against the Greater London Council's request to transfer the inquest into Colin Roach's death — allegedly from a self-inflicted gun blast in Stoke Newington police station — from the tiny St Pancras coroners court to a large room in Hackney town hall.

This move would have allowed 200 people from the area to attend.

But despite police obstruction the Roach Family Support Committee, the GLC, Ernie Roberts MP and others are campaigning to reveal the background of police harassment of black people in the area. Many cases have already come to light, like that of Mr. Dudley McDermott.

By Jeff Charlton

On 28 May 1982, two police officers ordered Mr McDermott out of his car on the grounds that he was drunk. In fact he was on his way home from work.

Test

The breathalyzer test was negative but he was taken to Stoke Newington police station for further tests. Without provocation he was hit from behind by one officer in the station and punched in

the face by another. Mr McDermott panicked and broke free.

Punched

He was chased by six officers who caught and handcuffed him.

They then punched and kicked him to the ground. They then threw him against a wire fence. After being kicked unconscious he was driven back to the station.

Although he was bleeding heavily from the beating and the wire fence, a woman police officer's advise that he should be hospitalised was ignored and he was not seen by a doctor.

After five days of proceedings at Snaresbrook crown court the jury took under 15 minutes to clear Mr McDermott of assaulting PC's Martin and Spencer.

The prosecution called nine witnesses, six police

officers and two doctors. The defence had one witness, the defendant.

Such cases show beyond doubt the importance of granting the demand of the Roach family for an independent inquiry into Colin Roach's death.

That's why we ask you to support the demonstration demanding an independent inquiry into Roach's death on Saturday 14 May.

Roach Family Support Committee
MARCH and RALLY

FOR AN INDEPENDENT PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO THE DEATH OF COLIN ROACH IN STOKE NEWINGTON POLICE STATION

Saturday 14th May
 Assemble 12.30p.m.
 Bethnal Green Gardens
 Near Bethnal Green Tube Station
 London E2

● Assemble 12.30p.m. Bethnal Green Gardens London E2. For information contact: RFSC, 328 Upper Street, London N1.

Photo: TESSA HOBBS AND BILL

WORLD IN ACTION

Left victory in Portugal

THE Portuguese general election has ended with a big victory for the left. The Socialist Party won 36 per cent of the vote, and the Communist Party vote increased to 19 per cent. A suitable case for an SP-CP government, you might think. But socialist leader Soares has no such intention.



Mario Soares

The right wing Social Democrats won 27 per cent of the votes, and it is to them that Soares is looking for a coalition. The political platform for such a deal would include the privatisation of sectors of the economy nationalised during the 1974-5 revolution.

A poll inside the SP revealed less than 5 per cent in favour of coalition with the CP — a product of the sectarianism of the ultra-Stalinist PCP.

Hot Spring in France



Fascist students in Paris

A wave of demonstrations against government austerity and proposed educational reform is sweeping France.

The student demonstration started with protests against the introduction of more rigorous selection among medical and other students.

The protests have spread to include a series of strikes in hospitals and of small businessmen against government price control. For the left, the problem is that rightists are cashing in on the protests against a left wing government.

The demands of the people who run small businesses are reactionary — but they stem from the effects of the government's austerity measures.

Among students, both the left wing and

right wing student federations have opposed the selection reforms. But for the first time in fifteen years, the Gaullist students have made the running — in alliance with the fascists, who made up the 'commando' groups fighting with the police last Thursday.

The Mitterand government has only itself to blame. By refusing to take measures against big business, and imposing strict austerity measures, they have handed the right wing a campaigning issue on a plate.

An indication of the complexion of the main student demonstrations is that instead of the slogan of May '68 — CRS-SS — they chanted 'CRS-Gauchiste'. More in *Socialist Action* in future issues.

Bomb Test

Britain has recently carried out a nuclear test of a 20-kiloton bomb, 870 feet below the Yucca flats in the Nevada desert. The explosion is thought to be part of the Trident missile programme.

Irish Supreme Court rules on gays

THE IRISH Supreme Court has turned down an application from the National Gay Federation to change the illegal status of homosexuality. Giving the majority verdict Judge O'Higgins said that an open and general increase in homosexuality had many serious consequences of a harmful nature.

It threatened the family, spread all sorts of venereal disease and caused great distress and unhappiness for the individual.

Very serious harm might come to the mildly homosexual person, who might be led to a way of life from which he might never recover (!).

The verdict is almost certain to be overturned at the European Court of Human Rights.

If only they could fly



Reuter reports that 300 pigs living on the Fakofo atoll in the South Pacific have learned to swim and fish. They live on a diet of seaslugs, small molluscs and fish.

Building solidarity with Central America

THIS WEEKEND's El Salvador labour movement conference is an important step in swinging the British labour movement around active support for the people of Central America.

The backing which even the right wing of the labour movement gives to the struggle of the Salvadorean people is useful — but more formal than active.

The difference between Central America and Vietnam is that in Indo-China hundreds of thousands of US combat troops were deployed, something which dramatically highlighted the aggressive character of the war. This made building a solidarity movement easier. In Central America the US intervention is more concealed — but no less real for that. What is needed is a campaign which bases itself on mass mobilisation and labour movement action.

The key demands of such a campaign are 'US hands off Central America', and 'an end to British complicity'. The British government has been one of the few to give the US intervention any support whatsoever.

Britain alone in Europe sent observers to last year's phoney elections in El Salvador. Britain sabotaged EEC economic aid to Nicaragua. And Britain is currently engaged in a US-inspired deal with Guatemala, by which

Guatemala will drop its claim to Belize, in return for a corridor to the sea. The British government will then sanction the use of Belize by the US and its allies for anti-guerrilla operations.

A series of initiatives give labour movement activists a chance to greatly step up activity on this question this year.

● The El Salvador labour movement conference will adopt a declaration of solidarity with the people of El Salvador. This should be taken widely into the Labour Party and the trade unions for endorsement. Labour-controlled councils should adopt this statement.

● US defence secretary Caspar Weinberger is visiting the Oxford Union on 27 May. A demonstration against US nuclear policy and intervention in Central America has been called for that day.

● In September the Chile Solidarity Campaign is holding a demonstration to mark the 10th anniversary of the military coup.

The demonstration should be built on the slogan of 'No more Chiles — US hands off Central America!'

● The Salvadorean FDR-FMLN has appealed for money for the controlled zones, to help the project of reconstruction. Labour movement bodies must be approached to contribute to this fund.

● Rallies will be held at the time of the anniversary of the victory of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua.

As Reagan escalates his war, calling the counter-revolutionary gangs 'freedom fighters' it's up to British socialists to escalate their solidarity with the real freedom fighters — the revolutionaries in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala.

Labour movement conference, 14 May, County Hall. Last minute delegations ring ELSOC, 01-359 2270

Labour Movement Conference on El Salvador

County Hall 14 May 1983 10am-5pm

Speakers include: Judith Hart, Alan Sapper, Jenny Pearce, Salvador Moncada (FDR/FMLN representative in Britain).

Trade Union, Labour Party, and LPYS branches are invited to send two delegates each. Fee £2 per delegates: send to El Salvador conference, 29 Islington Park St., London N1 (359 2270).



FMLN freedom fighters

Solidarity shows its strength

POLAND's underground resistance is very much alive. That is what the action of tens of thousands of Polish workers over the last week has confirmed, puncturing the bureaucracy's boast that it was finished.

On 23 March, after a meeting between the Temporary Co-ordinating Committee of Solidarnosc (TKK) and Lech Walesa, an appeal called on Polish workers to demonstrate on May Day. They said that the regime feared 'that our celebration will show the world the truth about Poland...'

Tens of thousands of Poles came into the streets with major demonstrations in at least 20 towns. According to the *Times* 'Official estimates say that 40,000 demonstrators took part ... Unofficial estimates put the figure much higher'.

Gas

The largest demonstrations took place in Gdansk, Warsaw and in the southern steel producing town of Nowa Huta. Clashes there are reported to have continued until 7.00pm with baton wielding police using water cannon and tear gas to disperse thousands of protesters. The body of a worker was subsequently

found — beaten to death by the police.

This did not stop thousands of Solidarity sympathisers marching through the streets of Warsaw on the evening of 3 May chanting 'Bravo militia' at the assembled units of riot police.

The response to the appeal is even more remarkable after the efforts of the regime to head off any mass Solidarity demonstration. A government communique promised ... 'firm and effective action' to assure respect for '... the established legal order.'

The decision of the TKK to call for public protests on May Day has met with increased repression. National leaders of Solidarnosc such as Andrzej Slowik from Lodz, Wladyslaw Frasnyniuk from Wroclow and Zbigniew Romaszewski from Warsaw have already been sentenced to terms of four to six years in prison. A renewed effort to break up the regional leaderships has involved dozens of additional arrests.

A reported 1310 seizures of printing equip-

ment have occurred. Fifteen clandestine radio stations have supposedly fallen to the police. Heavy hints were dropped that trouble on May Day would lead to the cancellation of the scheduled papal visit in June.

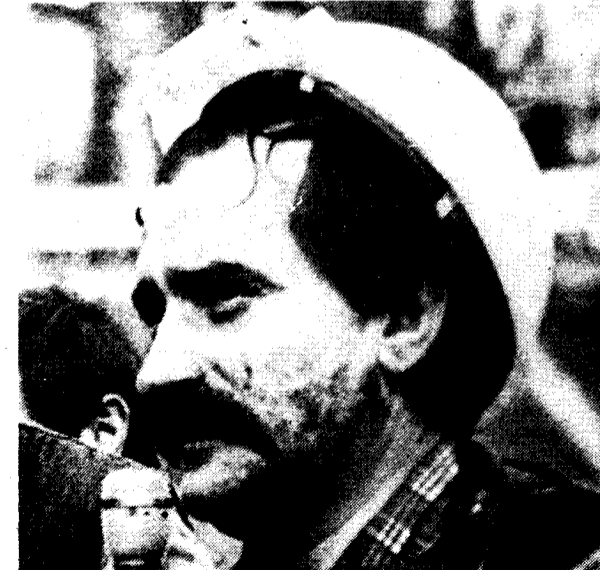
Miners

Initially the Catholic primate, Archbishop Glemp, came out in opposition to demonstrations. Finally a week before the May Day deadline military operational groups were deployed throughout the country ostensibly, according to *Time* magazine, to '... inquire about living conditions and investigate complaints.' These units were last deployed in this manner in preparation for the military clampdown.

The dismissal of the film director Andrzej Wajda as director of Warsaw's 'X' film unit is merely the latest example of the extension of this policy into the cultural sphere.

Yet despite these measures the events of May Day have confirmed the junta's total failure to achieve its much desired 'normalisation'

Despite massive attacks on the living standards of the working class



Lech Walesa — back at the Lenin shipyard

the economy remains in a critical state. Only in coal has a significant increase in production, (100 per cent in the first quarter of 1983 compared to the previous year) been recorded and a good part of this is officially acknowledged as the gains of reimposing a six day work week for miners.

The fate of the new puppet unions has been little better. Inaugural meetings have frequently been abandoned due to lack of support. Today, 15 months after the imposition of martial law, less

than half the party members have actually joined them.

Fresh confrontations with the bureaucratic regime are inevitable. Decisive to their outcome will be the support of the international labour movement.

In their May Day appeal TKK acknowledged the support they received from workers throughout the world from the first days of August 1980. It is essential that support stands firm in the clashes to come.

“THE ACTION INTERVIEW”

BEATRIZ DIAZ is 18 years old. Her parents had traditional ideas of women's place within the family. From the age of seven she was taught to do the housework, preparation for a future where she would have to sustain her own household and family.

Both parents were involved in the struggle against the Salvadorean military regime. Beatriz wanted to participate in the activities of the secondary students association but her parents prevented her — they wanted to protect her.

Beatriz rebelled. Her contact with other students made her aware that there was a need for her participation in the struggle.

Her own struggle with her parents showed her that her involvement was not only for the benefit of the Salvadorean people as a whole but also specifically for the benefit of women.

At the age of 14 Beatriz joined AMES, the Association of Salvadorean Women. At 17 she was put in charge of AMES' work in the ParaCentral front of the Farabundo Marti Liberation Front — one of five fronts which the FMLN has established for the conduct of the war.

Within the ParaCentral AMES had set up a specific women's front — 'Ana Maria Gomez', named after one of the founders of AMES who 'disappeared' in 1981. Women's fronts are formed in the zones which are under the control of the FMLN and they group together all the women's committees from the zone.

When and why was AMES formed?

AMES was formed in 1978 as an autonomous organisation to put forward women's specific demands. It was formed because, although the existing mass and military organisations took up the struggle for the people as a whole, there was also a need for an organisation which would take up women's own demands.

We are an independent organisation but we recognise the FMLN-FDR as our vanguard in the struggle against the Salvadorean regime.

Within AMES there are a wide range of Salvadorean women from housewives to trade unionists and student women.

Was there a high degree of involvement by women in the mass and military organisation? We have recently witnessed the tragic deaths of Marianella Garcia and Comandante Ana Maria, prominent leaders of the struggle in El Salvador. Would you say that these women were exceptional individuals?

Working class women and teachers have a long tradition of participation. It was the women who were already active in the trade unions and the teachers associations who first became involved in the armed struggle.

These women were more politically aware and understood that changes in El Salvador would not take place through elections.

They became part of the struggles and mass mobilisations, participating in street demonstrations, seizure of land and so on.

Companeras Ana Maria and Marianella are clear examples of how women are an important part of the struggle. In that sense they are not exceptions. But at the same time they are also a very clear example of what

'As a woman I am not prepared to take a single step backwards'



Photo: CARI OS AGUSTO GUARITA (Photom)

BEATRIZ DIAZ, representative of AMES, Salvadorean Women's Association

women everywhere are capable of achieving.

We have many more examples. One was an attack on an enemy army convoy. In the department of Usulután, a women's battalion, 'graduates' of the politico-military school 'Emma Guadalupe Carpio', completely destroyed the convoy.

The authorities wanted to keep the event secret, but journalists gave it a lot of publicity and in the cities people spoke about the action for days. To be defeated by a women's battalion was considered a double defeat.

Another action was the requisition of seven thousand hens from a large farm near one of the controlled zones. Supported by militias from the zones, the women carrying sacks, went to the farm in the early hours of the morning. They managed to take the farmyard by surprise. The hens were sleeping.

Today in the zone the population has poultry-runs and the eggs are feeding the fighters. We have also requisitioned cows. This is more difficult because sometimes the animal resists.

What kind of work does AMES do and where does it work?

At this moment there is a large part of the countryside under the control of the FMLN. AMES works both in these controlled zones and in the cities. In the controlled zones we carry out political consciousness-raising with the peasant women, women who have never had access to education in

their lives.

We try to explain to these women that they can come out of their homes and take part in the struggle and we have set up a system of committees to organise the work of women, especially in the literacy campaigns and in the medical brigades. One of our first steps was to organise collective child care to allow women to be more involved.

Some women who could already read and write have formed cultural groups which put on theatrical performances in which they show women how they can become involved.

AMES is also represented in the system of local popular power in the controlled zones. How does this system operate?

Local popular power is the new government which exists in the controlled zones. Local assemblies elect 'Farabundista councils' composed of comrades, men and women, who have proved themselves capable of dealing with all the problems that face the population in the controlled zones.

It is a reflection of the degree of women's activity that we are represented in the councils. We have shown that we are capable of carrying out the tasks required. We are part of the councils because of our capacity as leaders.

AMES has won much respect in the war fronts because the conscious involvement of women has advanced the process of the struggle very rapidly.

This experience is also a new school for the men since today they have to participate more actively in the house and in the care of the children and the domestic work.

What is the work of AMES in the cities?

The work in the cities is clandestine because of the weight of the repression. Nevertheless we have seen a significant increase in the activity of women in the organisation in the cities. We have given solidarity to women trade unionists when they have gone on strike. During the strikes last year when the salaries were frozen we demanded shorter hours and opposed inflation.

We are working with market women in their campaign for an end to the militarisation of the markets. We are also working with housewives, women in the sewing trade and teachers.

We organise collective women's workshops to produce clothes, food and shoes to help with the struggle. For example, a group of women will collect together all the bits of beans and rice they have spare and make these into meals for the women political prisoners.

Other groups help to meet the needs of the comrades in the popular liberation army and the population in the controlled zones.

Collecting medicines is becoming more and more difficult each day. We have to organise ourselves to collect them because — as a result of the

defeats that the army has been suffering — the army has limited the sale of medicines and takes all that is available for its own use.

The civil hospitals have been militarised. Even the maternity hospital has been taken over. We need medicines like anti-biotics, alcohol, cotton and analgesics.

Are people in the cities more confident today, despite the repression, because of the defeats that the army has suffered?

We have strong support from women in the cities now and it is true that the enemy is being defeated in many parts of the country. But that same defeat has meant an increase in the repression in the cities — because they have been defeated in the countryside they are desperate to prevent the participation of people in the cities. This would be the end for them.

Women from the working class cannot wear jeans, low-heeled shoes and no make-up without being immediately picked up as suspected members of the guerrilla movement. The government has decreed that all women should wear make-up so they can easily distinguish those women who are part of the guerrilla movement from those women who aren't.

But we are confident of our women and we know that we will change all these things when we change the whole structure of our society.

They close off streets and search everyone caught there. But all this achieves is that the anger of the population grows against the degradation and the attempts to stop the participation in the mass organisations.

How close are you to the changes that you talk about? What ideas do you have about a future government?

We are very close to the triumph of our people but we are also very aware of the massive economic and military aid to the regime from the United States government. We are confronting the most powerful enemy of humanity, North American imperialism.

Our future government will be a democratic, revolutionary government that will protect the rights of the whole population, where the people will elect their own leaders, where all the wealth will be divided equally, where women will have an equal opportunity to be part of the economic, cultural and social life of the country without discrimination or exploitation.

This government has already been elected. At a local level it already exists in the controlled zones as I explained earlier. At a national level the leaders of our future government have already been elected within the FDR-FMLN.

For this government to take power we understand that a political-military struggle is necessary and that is what we are carrying out.

We are also very aware that US imperialism won't cease its intervention with our victory and that what is happening today to Nicaragua will also happen to our country.

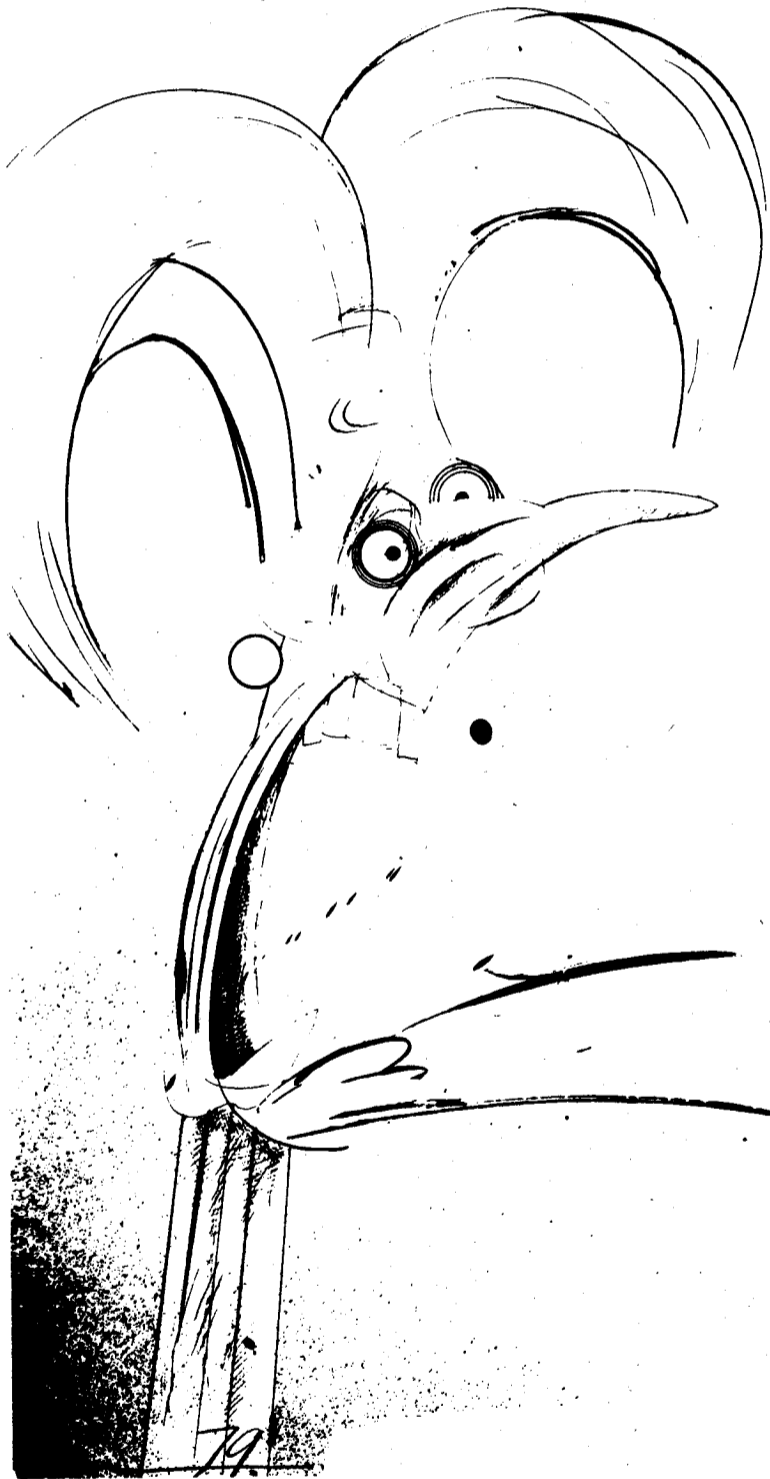
I am confident of victory because we are conducting an heroic struggle. We have many proofs of our advance. We have created the FMLN-FDR, we have a large part of the country under our control, we have inflicted defeats on an army trained in the best schools in the USA. We have won political recognition for the FMLN-FDR by governments like France and Mexico.

The massive advance in the work of the women makes me very confident that very soon we will get victory for our people. As a woman I am not prepared to take a single step backwards. We are prepared to follow the example of all those women who have given their blood for the struggle.

I am in Europe at the moment to build up solidarity. This is just one more front in the war. Your solidarity will help us achieve a revolutionary, democratic government in El Salvador and liberation for our people.

THE general election is on 9 June. Up and down the country in offices, factories and on the doorsteps arguments will begin in earnest for a Labour vote. The real facts and figures of the Tories record since May 1979 are essential to win the argument.
Thatcher's

Britain: A Guide to the Ruins is a new handbook which provides those facts and figures on everything from privatisation to prescription charges. Below, we reprint selections from the book which graphically illustrate the real face of Thatcher's Britain.



Ralph Steadman

THATCHER

a guide to the ruins

Introducing Thatcher's Tories

'The Conservative government's first job will be to rebuild our economy and reunite a divided and disillusioned people.'

Conservative manifesto, 1979

The Tories came to power in May 1979 on a promise of lower taxes, more jobs and new opportunities. Their record in office is one of unparalleled failure.

In 1979 the country had a chance to make good. Unemployment had been falling for two years. Inflation was below 10 per cent. Living standards had risen by 17 per cent in two years. Industry was growing steadily and was more competitive than it had been for years.

Above all, we had black gold in the North Sea. We were about to become self-sufficient in oil — giving us an advantage over countries dependent on energy imports. We had a real chance to make the 1980s a decade of prosperity.

Instead:

- Unemployment has risen by two million.
- Production of wealth has fallen by 4 per cent.
- Output of manufacturing industry has fallen by 19 per cent.
- Investment in manufacturing has fallen by 36 per cent.
- Industry has become at least 20 per cent less competitive.

Jobs to the slaughter

There are now 3.2 million people officially out of work in the UK — one in seven of the labour force, two million more than when the Tories came to office. The real jobs shortage is even worse than the official figures show. When those on special

government schemes and those not claiming benefits are counted, five million people who want a job have not got one.

Even on the official figures, the scale of long-term unemployment is horrific. By October last year, 1.2 million people had been out of work for more than twelve months. For young people under twenty-five, long-term unemployment has risen from 74,000 to 312,000 in the space of just two years.

The number of people still in jobs has fallen dramatically. Manufacturing employment has plummeted 22 per cent since mid-1979. Jobs in metal manufacture have fallen 37 per cent; in coal and petroleum products, 35 per cent; textiles, 33 per cent; vehicles, 28 per cent; and mechanical engineering, 24 per cent.

Young people under twenty-five make up 40 per cent of the jobless total. Two out of three school leavers cannot find work. 460,000 will enter the new Youth Training Scheme this year; half will go on the dole at the end.

Over 860,000 women are counted as unemployed. More than a million more would like to work, but are too discouraged to register as unemployed. 'Last in' during economic expansion, they're the 'first out' in recession.

One in six black people are out of work (1891 figures) compared with one in ten white people. This has been exacerbated by a significant increase in discrimination in

IF PARTY POLITICAL BROADCASTS WERE LEGAL DECENT HONEST



Steve Bell

white-collar jobs since the mid-1970s.

Job losses have hit hardest among the low paid. Over three-quarters of unemployed men were in jobs paying below the national average. These workers haven't 'priced themselves out of jobs'.

Tory ups and downs

Up
Unemployment from 1.219 million (May 1979) to 2.199 million (February 1982) — up 162 per cent.

Company liquidations from 4,537 (1979) to 12,039 (1982) — up 165 per cent.

Prices from 216 (May 1979) to 326 (January 1983) — up 51 per cent.

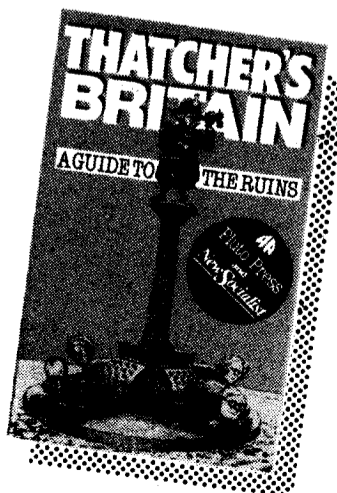
Down
Employment from 23.107 million (June 1979) to 20.974 million (September 1982) — down 9.2 per cent.

Output from 112.2 (second quarter 1979) to 107.6 (last quarter 1982) — down 4 per cent.

Industrial output from 115.1 (second quarter 1979) to 100.9 (last quarter 1982) — down 12.3 per cent.

Manufacturing output from 107.4 (second quarter 1979) to 86.9 (last quarter 1982) — down 19.1 per cent.

Manufacturing investment (1975 prices) £987 million (second quarter 1979) to £636 million (third quarter 1982) — down 2.7 per cent.



Thatcher's Britain: A guide to the ruins
Published by Pluto Press and New Socialist

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'S BRITAIN:



Don't call me

The number of telephones disconnected due to non-payment of telephone bills has increased by over 60 per cent since 1979 — around 147,000 disconnections in 1979 compared with around 237,000 in 1982. Telephone terminations are also believed to have risen — from around 33,000 in 1979 to an estimated 60,000 in 1982.

Onto the streets

In the first three years of Thatcher's government, court orders for recovery of rents rose by 847 per cent to 2,253, evictions rose by 19 per cent to 19,072 and residential property possession orders rose by 26 per cent to 88,000 (1981 figures).

Schools

582 state schools, including 135 secondary schools, were approved for closure by the Thatcher government in the three years 1980-2. Falling school rolls are not the only factor. Government cuts are a major cause.

Spending cuts are also having a serious effect on standards in schools. In 1980, the government Inspectorate found four LEAs in breach of their minimum statutory duties as set out in the 1944 Education Act. In 1981, the inspectors reported a reduction in levels of provision in 71 LEAs (almost three-quarters) compared with 1980 and an ever-widening gap in provisions between LEAs.

Health as a privilege

The Tories have not made actual cuts in health service expenditure. But they have con-

sistently undermined the basic principles of the National Health Service (NHS) — a service free at the point of use and funded out of general taxation — and its ability to provide good quality, comprehensive care and treatment for all.

Not only are the Tories threatening the NHS's ability to provide good services — they now require those who work in it to subsidise it.

- The NHS is the country's biggest employer, employing about one million people. In 1982, 40 per cent of them earned less than the government's 'poverty line'.

- Over the Tories' first two years, health workers' wages were drastically reduced, both in real terms and relative to other public sector workers. In 1980, nurses accepted a 13 per cent rise when inflation was 18 per cent; in 1981, they were awarded 6 per cent when prices had risen 12 per cent. The 1982 pay settlement forced upon the health workers will mean a further reduction in their standard of living.

Crisis in housing

Housing in Britain improved steadily over the last fifty years. Slums were cleared. Local authorities built up a stock of homes allocated to meet needs. New houses were built faster than old ones decayed. Homes without amenities were improved. That was until the Tories took over. Since 1979:

- Housebuilding has fallen to its lowest level since the 1920s — except for the war and immediately after — while nearly 400,000 building workers are on the dole.

- Housing is not being properly maintained — problems are being stored up for the future.

- Council rents have more than doubled — while subsidies to home-owners have increased.

- House mortgage payments have risen by a quarter.

- Councils have sold off their best homes — only the better-off can be sure of a decent home in the future.

Northern Ireland

Tory government has been a disaster for the people of Northern Ireland:

- Talks between the British and Irish governments on closer co-operation between Britain and Ireland have effectively ended.

- No progress has been made towards the establishment of an agreed devolved government.

- A toothless Assembly has been set up, boycotted by representatives of the minority community. This is lowering respect for constitutional politics.

- The economy, with unemployment over 20 per cent and living standards drastically cut, is in tatters.

- Since May 1979, unemployment has almost doubled — from 10.7 per cent to 20.6 per cent. In some areas, like Strabane, it approaches 40 per cent.

- Draconian security powers, such as the Prevention of Terrorism Act and Emergency Provisions Act, have restricted civil liberties and proved largely ineffective against terrorism.

- Since 1979, seven people, including four children under the age of sixteen, have been killed with plastic bullets sanctioned by the government

Defence

The Tories have taken crucial decisions which will turn Britain into the densest nuclear arsenal in the world. Far from making Britain safer, their defence policy has brought war closer. Far from reassuring the country, six out of ten people now believe nuclear war to be possible where four out of ten did only twenty years ago.

- Britain spends more of its income on war and preparing for war than any major country apart from the USA and the USSR: 5.3 per cent compared with 4.1 per cent in France, 3.4 per cent in Germany and 2.6 per cent in Italy.

- This year, the Tories plan to spend £16,000 million on the military — £20 a week for every family of four.

- The Tories are spending 33 per cent more on defence than on education — under Labour more was spent on education than on defence.

- In five years, the Tories will have upped real military spending by 23.3 per cent. At the same time, they have cut spending on housing by 55 per cent, on education by 6 per cent, on overseas aid by 20 per cent, and they have presided over the biggest drop in output for sixty years.

Women

'I don't think that mothers have the same right to work as fathers. If the good Lord had intended us to have equal rights to go out to work, he wouldn't have created man and woman.'

Patrick Jenkin, Secretary of State for Social Services, 'Man Alive', October 1979

'The battle for women's rights has been largely won.' Margaret Thatcher speaking to women in London, 26 July 1982.

Though the Tory 'model' family with Dad as breadwinner and Mum at home looking after two children accounts for only 5 per cent of all households, government policies are based on the view that married women — except for the privileged few like Margaret Thatcher — have no right to paid employment. So the married women who make up one-quarter of the labour force and especially those — about half — who are caring for at least one dependent child have done particularly badly in Thatcher's Britain. They have had to face:

- A large increase in unemployment. Female unemployment is well over two million.

- Greater difficulty in claiming unemployment benefit. Mothers must show they can make arrangements for their children while out at work before they are eligible.

- A worsening in pay compared to men. The progress made as a result of Labour's Equal Pay Act has been reversed. Women's earnings as a percentage of men's rose from 63.1 per cent in 1970 to 75.7 per cent in 1977, and then fell back to 73.9 per cent in 1982.

- Low pay. Women, who form 40 per cent of the workforce, now make up three-quarters of the low paid.

Black people

'People are really rather afraid that this country might be rather swamped by people with a different culture. People are going to react and be rather hostile to those coming in.'

Margaret Thatcher, giving the green light to the racists, 30 January 1978

Four years of the Tories have meant:

- Worse unemployment. In 1981, when 9 per cent of white people were out of work, joblessness among non-white groups was twice as high, at 17 per cent. A recent survey by the Commission for Racial Equality found that 53 per cent of teenagers of West Indian origin compared with 37 per cent of white teenagers are now out of work in inner-city areas.

- Continuing discrimination and disadvantage in jobs, housing and schooling. Black applicants for white-collar jobs are less likely to be successful than white applicants with similar qualifications. In many local authorities, black families are likely to be allocated worse housing. Building societies are more reluctant to lend to black people. Children from ethnic minorities do not achieve their full potential in schools. The Tories have done nothing to strengthen the Race Relations Act or to eliminate racial inequality.

- Harassment with official approval. New NHS charges for overseas visitors mean that 'foreign-looking people' are asked to prove they are eligible for free treatment. Police raids in search of illegal immigrants have led to the detention of lawfully settled citizens.

- Families divided. The Tories' 1908 Immigration Rules and the 1981 Nationality Act have separated husbands from wives, children from parents and elderly relatives from families.

- Reduced citizenship rights. Commonwealth citizens who came to Britain before 1973 no longer automatically acquire British citizenship. They must apply through an expensive procedure. Wives of British citizens and children born in the UK are also deprived of automatic citizenship. People who previously had rights as 'citizens of the UK and colonies' but who were not classified as 'patrials' have had most of these rights taken away. Some 1½ million people, now given 'third-class' British overseas citizenship, are left effectively stateless — they have no legal right to live anywhere.

Socialist Action

Labour right prepares election

CALLING the general election for 9 June is a 'cut and run' tactic by Thatcher. She knows full well that by October both inflation and unemployment will be up substantially.

The Tories also know that Labour is narrowing the gap in the opinion polls — one poll last Saturday showed the Tories at 46 per cent with Labour at 38 per cent, at a time when the opinion polls are continually over-estimating the Tory lead by 5-6 per cent.

Gaining

But at the moment Labour appears to be gaining more ground from the SDP/Liberal alliance than from the Tories. Despite the narrowing of the gap, the Tories are odds-on favourites to win. Certainly, there must be a very good chance that Labour will not win outright.

Labour's right wing has responded to this situation by deepening its drive towards coalitionism. Last weekend's joint NEC-trade union conference at Woodstock produced 'unity' and substantial amounts of cash from the trade unions — but at a price.

That price, demanded by people like David Basnett and Terry Duffy, was 'a more realistic attitude towards parliamentary alliances'. Put simply, this means a coalition with the Alliance if the Tories don't get an overall majority, and some kind of parliamentary pact if the Tories win outright.

Manoeuvres

The price of such coalitionist manoeuvres has been spelt out clearly by Duffy — abandonment of Labour policy on disarmament and the EEC, and the acceptance of incomes policy. Any coalitionist manoeuvre must be fought bitterly at all levels of the labour movement.

The Labour left must prepare its election campaign along socialist lines. The first thing that must be said loud and clear is that more and better canvassing won't win a Labour victory on its own. Labour's radical alternative to Thatcherism must be put up front, but by linking up with mass protest actions.

Mass protest

Four days before the election, on 5 June, the Peoples March ends with a mass protest in London. A huge turnout from the labour movement will make more impact against Thatcher than any amount of last-minute door knocking. On 5 June we need 250,000 people on the streets.

The second issue on which labour has to make its mark is disarmament. On 24 May — just two and a half weeks away — the Women's Day of International Action for Disarmament takes place. It has been backed by both the TUC and the Labour Party.

Mass action will aid Labour's campaign and not hinder it. Action against the temporarily shelved Police Bill and action by Telecoms workers against privatisation should go ahead.

Linking Labour with the mass campaigns and arguing for radical conference policies is the objective of Socialists for Labour Victory.

The Labour right wants to cut and run from all that. Socialists must make sure that they're not allowed to get away with it.

Editor: ALAN FREEMAN
Published weekly except two weeks in August and the last week of December.
Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent Socialist Action's views. These are expressed in editorials.
Send all correspondence regarding subscriptions, sales and receipts to Socialist Action Distribution, 328 Upper Street London N1 2XP. (Tel: 01-359 8180)
Send all material for publication (including advertising) to Socialist Action Editorial at the same address.
We regret that due to the high cost of postage we cannot return or acknowledge unsolicited copy or photographs unless accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.



Anwar Ditta campaign was a signal of rising black militancy

Black struggle and the labour movement

THE QUESTION of racism and police harassment are of increasing importance for the labour movement in general and the black community in particular. But recent developments indicate that the response of the labour movement moves far short of what is required for an adequate unified answer.

- the recent discriminatory rejection of Russell Proffitt as a parliamentary candidate
- the fact that there is a very small number of blacks active in the Labour Party (for example in Toxteth, black community activists are coming to the conclusion that in order to gain adequate representation they have to stand their own candidates)

- anti-racist campaigns are usually peripheral to the labour movement and therefore tend to lack significant social weight; this results in many cases in a sectarian attitude to the Labour Party
- the marginalisation of anti-racist issues such as

I like you!

I LIKE Socialist Action's kind of open forum for those on the left, even Mick Gosling's letter of invective against Stuart Holland et al.

The labour movement need not tear itself apart in coping with the frustrations of working class support for anti-working class ideas, but a way will have to be found to overcome this main obstacle to advancement.

Old ideas around this problem have been tried and tested only to be found wanting. New ideas are needed and I await them.

Socialist Action's publicity around militancy and action seems to me to be in contradiction to its support for the Labour Party, albeit to a Labour government committed to socialist policies (shades of the CP position).

My own opinion is that we are heading for a 'phoney' election and whoever wins will be unable to make any positive contributions towards solutions to take us out of the crisis, Labour Party conference decisions notwithstanding.

JOHN P. MATHIESON, Glenrothes.

positive action in the labour movement.

This indifference to the struggles of black people is a product of the historically determined racism of British society from which the labour movement is not immune.

There has been a rise of the black struggle — the riots of 1981, the anti-deportation campaigns, the Colin Roach incident, the Deptford campaign, Bradford 12, Newham 8 — in response to the increased attacks of the ruling class.

This indicates that the left wing of the labour movement must seriously take up these issues if it is to present itself as a credible alternative to black workers.

Positive steps have been taken, around the Police Bill for example, but this does not deal with the general question of racism in the labour movement and therefore the attitude of the labour movement to black people.

These considerations lead irresistably to the

need for a general labour movement campaign for black rights, which would actively take up issues both internal and external to the Labour Party.

The conditions for such a movement now exist with the groundswell of interest around the Police Bill and the emergence of a small new layer of Labour Party black activists (mainly around London).

Such a movement would be necessarily rank and file based and would draw in those black activists who at the moment feel excluded, or on the periphery of the labour movement.

Great steps forward have been taken around women's and gay rights, however the movement lags behind on the black question.

A labour movement campaign for black rights must be launched now as a vital component of working class strategy for the future.

M. WONGSAM
T. WONGSAM
Manchester.

People's March for Jobs 1981



Jobs March

ANY focus against unemployment always seems welcome. To that end I can appreciate the forthcoming Peoples March for Jobs.

However I must retain serious criticisms. As one who has been unemployed for a considerable period

with family I do not welcome being made an object of charitable status.

Even if I were delegated to the march, what is the point of being made to feel the conquering hero, when you know damn well at the end of the day, you are back to zero, eating dirt.

The 1981 March for

LETTERS

A thirteen year frame up

I WANT to draw your readers attention to the case of David Avondale.

David was sentenced to 13 years after being found guilty of armed robbery in January 1982.

It is a tragic but not unique case of the state's continual contempt and harassment of black people.

David Avondale was arrested and convicted solely on the evidence of the two policemen who chased and cornered the getaway car and scuffled briefly with the three men involved in the robbery. There was no forensic evidence offered.

The witnesses from the Gas showroom in Southall that was robbed did not identify him. A witness of the scuffle stated that he could identify the man who the police said was David out of a million people and it wasn't David.

Nine days after the robbery David was arrested — originally for another offence and subsequently charged with the robbery.

It is interesting to note that not only has no one else been arrested for the crime that three men participated in but David Avondale had been subject to continual police harassment.

The evidence against him was flimsy enough but

the working of the legal system showed how they discriminate against the working class in our society.

The judge would not allow the court to adjourn to be able to hear the witness of the scuffle whose evidence disagreed with the police, but was content to have read a doctored version of this to the jury.

He emphasised the ability of the police to make their recognition and played down the conflicting evidence.

The sentence that David received of 13 years was out of proportion to people convicted of similar crimes bearing in mind that no one was hurt in any way.

Just as the show trials of the Southall 342 four years ago carried a message to the community of Southall, so does this.

If you're black, you're inferior — you can expect to be treated like third class citizens.

ED COLEMAN, West London

- The Free David Avondale campaign has been set up to publicise David's appeal.

Send donations and messages of support to; Free David Avondale Campaign, c/o Southall Rights, 54 High Street, Southall, Middx.

Write to us!

This is your page. Send us your comments, criticisms or even congratulations. But please be brief — letters over 300 words will be cut. Write to: Letters, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP. (Tel: 01-359 8180)

Photo: PETE GRANT

Politicise the event giv-

ALEX WARNER, Tameside.

Family problems

TWO books on the problems of feminism are the first in a series commissioned by the Socialist Society entitled 'Crisis in the Eighties'.

What is to be done about the Family includes contributions ranging from academic reviews of critiques of the family to memories of communal living.

The book attempts to place the 'present-day' family within the context of the developments over the last two decades.

But with few exceptions, the contributions ignore or dismiss the relationship of the family to the productive forces and hence how women are affected by the family.

The exceptions are Susan Himmelweit's *Waged Work and the Family and The State and Welfare and Women's Independence* by Fran Bennett.

Both of these take a serious look at the role the state plays in the family and women's lives and the role the state *should* play to help break down the division of labour that exists under capitalism.

But overall conclusions by Lynne Segal reduce the answer to the question 'What is to be done about the Family?' virtually to one of 'women challenging and confronting male power, and demanding that men confront each other.'

What is to be done about Violence Against

Women by Elizabeth Wilson gets to grips with the family much more than Segal's collection.

Reviewed by Tessa van Gelderen

It is an extremely readable book that takes a serious look at the different aspects of violence that women face, and confronts in a number of instances some of the views inside the women's liberation movement.

Throughout the book Elizabeth Wilson is not afraid to raise both thorny issues like 'love' and 'morality'.

She argues that everyone's life (women, children and men) is distorted by the kind of

These two books and Jericho are available from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper Street, London N1, and 137 Digbeth, Birmingham B5.

society we live in. She tries to analyse why men have such a deep fear of women that they will not only perpetuate the most horrific acts of violence against women but they are completely freaked out by pictures of male nudes on the office wall.

The book concludes that nothing will really change 'so long as our society is run on the profit motive' while at the same time, rightly supporting campaigning now for reforms that might help women.

The book's one weakness is its failure to link such campaigns to how society itself might be changed. But read Elizabeth Wilson's book and you will learn more about what we should do about the family than in Lynne Segal's.

What is to be done about the Family Ed. Lynne Segal. *What is to be done about Violence Against Women*. By Elizabeth Wilson. Both published by Penguin. £2.50.



Imperialist barbarism in Vietnam

Is El Salvador spanish for Vietnam?

BY ONE of those ironies of life, BBC1's *Panorama* on 25 April featured Ronald Reagan making his doom and gloom speech in which he warned that if El Salvador were lost the whole of Central and South America would fall into the hands of the Communists.

On Channel 4, in the third of a competent series on Vietnam, President Eisenhower was saying: 'Some-where along the line

something must be blocked'.

That 'something' was Vietnam, with its rich resources of tin, tungsten etc. His successor in the White House, John Kennedy, was to echo these sentiments: 'If we withdraw from Vietnam, all SE Asia would be under the control of communism and the domination of the Chinese.'

By Charlie van Gelderen

The series, so far, gives a remarkably honest survey of the build-up to

American intervention in Vietnam.

It was the British, after Japan's defeat, who prepared the way for the return of the hated French rule to Indochina. Churchill was fearful that if the French colonial empire collapsed, the British would follow.

When the French began losing to the Vietminh, under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh, the Americans rushed in to help. By the end of 1950, US aid — including napalm — totalled \$150 million.

In the North the Vietminh had consolidated their rule. South of the 16th Parallel, the French

managed to retain shaky control from which to launch their assaults. This finally came to an end with the decisive defeat of 12,000 picked French troops at Dien Bien Phu in November 1953.

The 1954 Geneva Agreement divided the country at the 16th Parallel with the promise of unification after 'fair and free' elections in 1956. These were never held.

Eisenhower frankly declared that the communists would win 100 percent of the vote. America began to escalate its intervention, culminating in full-scale war after the Tonkin Bay provocation.

A novel of yesterday for today

WRITTEN in Holloway jail in 1964, and based on Pat Arrowsmith's experiences of a 1958 Aldermaston peace camp organised by the Direct Action Committee Against Nuclear War, *Jericho* has weathered well.

In the words of the author: 'despite the book's old-fashioned features ... all too many of the matters hotly debated by the characters are still argued about today; many of the pickets' goals are the same as those peace activists are still trying to achieve'.

Reviewed by Carol Turner

Parts of the plot are overblown and unbelievable — like camp-organiser Charles's interview with Ben, a local lout who has ransacked and burned the peace camp, and raped one of its inhabitants. After a brief discussion, Ben is not only persuaded to confess his crimes, but also to support banning the bomb, and encouraging his fellow apprentices to do likewise.

Despite such overdramatic episodes, the relationship between the peace campers and the Aldermaston workers, whom they try to persuade first to quit their jobs and then (more successfully) to take industrial action, are used to draw out the political conflicts of a non-

violent direct action philosophy.

The protagonists are still recognisable: Mr Johnson, the Labour councillor torn between personal ambition and his commitment to helping the peace campers; the Communist union officials who renege on support for a blockade when the line comes down to boycott it because it's outside the political control of the CP.

In her introduction, Pat says that it was clearly written well before the advent of feminism. Nonetheless, the best developed character is Iris, an Aldermaston clerical worker.

Her progress — from apathetic unconcern, to giving up her job to join

the camp — not only ties together the story, but coincidentally tells the tale of a young woman discovering her own strength and self-confidence. In fact, Iris is very much the heroine of the piece in all her stages of political development.

Schools

Jericho is not a work of literary art, but is probably more convincing than a hundred pamphlets. It's the sort of book that should be used to introduce CND into schools and to young workers — as well as being a sentimental read for those who went through the Aldermaston experience of the '50s and '60s.

Jericho. A novel by Pat Arrowsmith. Heretic Books. £3.95.

TV CHOICE

Kill or cure? Eraldin — the forgotten drug disaster.

Friday 13 May, 10.30, Channel 4

THIS PROGRAMME in the series on drugs, their ruthless marketing and side-effects, examines Eraldin which damaged at least 2650 people in the seventies.

The following week, in *Too Many Drugs?* the series looks at the enormous number of drugs — 6500 — which can be prescribed on the NHS. Many of them are the same as dozens of others, a lot are just useless.

But they all have one thing in common — they cost the NHS a fortune and make huge profits for the drug companies.

Vietnam — America's enemy Monday 16 May, 9.00, Channel 4

YOU MIGHT have read about last week's episode being 'toned down' by the American side of the production team. As a consequence, what was more or less irrefutable proof of a previously unknown US massacre was cut out.

This week's episode concentrates on the organisation and tactics

of the NLF. In particular, how the largest bombing campaign ever mounted failed to break the Vietnamese fighters morale or halt the flow of supplies to the south.

Union World.

Sunday 15 May 5.00, Channel 4

SLIMY Gus Macdonald returns with a new series of the show 'especially for trade unionists', timed for when most people are probably still having their Sunday afternoon kip. This series kicks off with the Peoples March.

Weekend

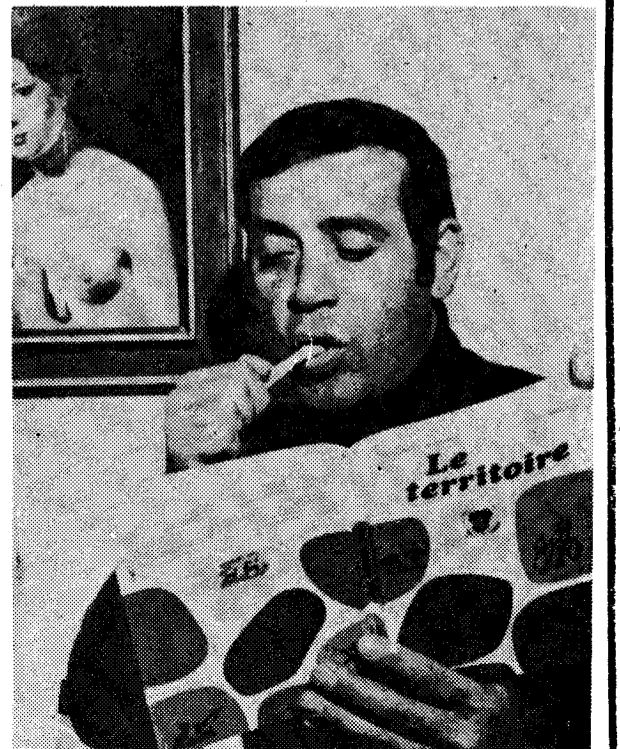
Wednesday 18 May, 9.00

JEAN-LUC Godard has made some pretty awful, pretentious films, and a few good ones. *Weekend* is one of the better and it's the last in this Godard season.

Obsession

Friday 13 May 11.15, Channel 4

WHILE we're on the subject of movies, try and catch C4's late Friday series, 'The Bad Guys', and excellent collection of mainly forties thrillers. *Obsession* is about an acid-bath murder and stars Robert Newton.



DIARY

(These listings are free for all major labour movement and campaigns activities. Semi-display advertisements cost 5p per word and must be paid in advance. Send to: *Diary, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP* to arrive not later than Thursday, one week prior to publication).

MAY 24



- **International Women's Day for Disarmament** — 24 May. For more information please contact 'May 24th', 16 Arundel Rd, Brighton, E. Sussex.
- **24 May — Glasgow Women for Peace** are calling a Scottish Day of Action. Rally in George Square and Festival. For details contact Glasgow Women's Centre, 57 Miller Street or ring 061-221 1177 Saturdays after 1pm.
- **'Ireland and Labour'** public meeting with Ken Livingstone (GLC leader) and Clive Soley (LP deputy spokesperson on N. Ireland). Called by Islington South Labour Party. Tues 7 June, 7.30pm, Islington Central Library, Holloway Road.
- **Labour Movement Campaign for Palestine:** recalled first national conference. Sat 21 May, 11-5pm, County Hall, London SE1. Open to members and delegates from affiliated organisations. Membership £5 (£1 unwaged), conference fee £2 (£1 unwaged). M'ship deadline 19 May. For information write to LMCP, c/o 28 Carlton Mansions, Holmleigh Rd, London N16.

- **Britain's Longest War** second of four forums organised by the Irish Freedom Movement to discuss its new *Anti-imperialists guide to the Irish War*. Speaker Guy Ross. University of London Union, Malet St, WC1 (nr Goodge St tube). Wed 18 May, 7.30pm. Students, trade unionists, unemployed welcome.
- **Socialist Republic** — newspaper of People's Democracy in Ireland. Latest issue out now — includes report from PDs conference articles on the Labour Party & unions and on the Anti-Amendment Campaign and more. Price 25p (plus 15p p&p) from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, London N1 (226 0571) or 137 Digbeth, Birmingham B5 (021-643 5904).

- **Defend the NHS!** Socialist Health Association action pack against private medicine containing information on all aspects of private medicine and how to fight it. Includes pamphlets and factsheets. Copies from SHA, 9 Poland St, London W1V 3DG, £2.50 (includes post). £1.50/75p unwaged.
- **'The Fight against the Police Bill'** Day Conference to launch a national campaign and establish a broad, nationally representative committee. Speakers from LP, trade unions and ethnic organisations. Sun 15 May, 10.30-5, Hackney Town Hall. Further details from National Campaign against the Police Bill, c/o Room 50, Hackney Town Hall, Mare St, E8 (01-986 3123 ext 280).

- **Popular Planning for Social Need conference.** 21 May, County Hall, London SE1, 11-5. £2.50/£1 unwaged, creche available. To develop a democratic Alternative Economic Strategy. Organised by CAITS, Poly of Nth—London. Holloway Rd, N7.
- **Resistance to Racism Social Fri** 20 May, 8 to midnight with bands, food, bar etc. Haringey Community Centre, Brabant Rd, Wood Green N22. Tickets £2, unwaged £1. In support of the Haringey defence campaigns.
- **'Turkey — a people in chains'** Hounslow Socialist Forum discussion led by a member of the Turkey

Solidarity Campaign. Sun 22 May, George IV pub, 185 Chiswick High Rd, W4, 7pm.

Roach Family Support Committee MARCH and RALLY



FOR AN INDEPENDENT PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO THE DEATH OF COLIN ROACH IN STOKE NEWINGTON POLICE STATION

Saturday 14th May
Assemble 12.30p.m.
Bethnal Green Gardens
Near Bethnal Green Tube Station
London E2

- **Colin Roach** — a London-wide demonstration has been called for 14 May calling for a public inquiry into his death. Assemble 12.30, Bethnal Green Gardens, E2. Further details from RFSC, c/o 50 Rectory Road, London N16 (01-254 7480).
- **Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador Briefings** are produced by the Central America Information Service, 14 Brixton Rd, London SW9. If you would like to receive them regularly, please write enclosing your name and address.
- **Oppose the Police Bill** GLC Police Cttee information pack on the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill. Available from: GLC Police Cttee Support Unit, Rm-567, County Hall, London SE1 (01-633 5944) — free to Londoners.

● **'Ballots and Bullets'** a new and powerful documentary from the Salvadorean Film Institute — available for hire on VHS video cassette for £10 plus carriage. 30 mins, colour. Contact SFI support group, 36 Jackson Rd, London N7, Tel: 01-609 3925.

● **El Salvador — another Vietnam?** Norwood Labour Party public meeting. Speakers include John Fraser MP; Jaimie Lopez (FDR representative); plus speakers from El Soc and local trade unions. Film show, bookstalls and exhibitions. Thur 12 May, 7.30pm, Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton SW2.

● **International Arguments for Peace** Ealing/Southall Labour Party public meeting. Speakers: Dennis Bartholomew (Grenada High Csn); Fred Halliday; Joy Hurcombe (Sec, Labour CND); Wolfgang Rudolf (on the West German Peace Mvt). Mon 16 May, 7.30pm, Labour Rooms, 2-4 King St, Southall.

● **No Pass Laws in the North West Campaign** conference on pass laws, passport checks and police raids. Sat 14 May 10-5pm, 8411 Centre, Moss Side, Manchester. Free admission, creche available — please book. The campaign can be contacted c/o 593 Stockport Rd, Longsight, Manchester 12 (061-225 5111).

● **Stoke Newington and Hackney Defence Campaign** public meeting: Defend the right to demonstrate! Drop the charges now! Thurs 12 May, 7.30pm, Stoke Newington Library, Small Hall, Edwards Lane

Socialist Action Forums

MANCHESTER 'Coalition and Proportional Representation' — a debate. Thur 19 May, 7.30pm, Millstone Hotel, Thomas St, Manchester 4 (off Oldham St).

'How socialists should fight for a Labour victory'. Thur 16 June, 7.30pm, address as above. Speaker Cllr John Nicholson, Gorton CLP. EDINBURGH Socialist Action readers forum is on the last Thursday of every month. Phone 031-667 9630 for further information and details of venue.

HOUNSLOW Socialist Action readers forum every other Thursday. For further information and details phone 01-577 3429.

CAMDEN Socialist Action Forum: Discussion on Middle East. Sunday 15 May 8pm. Cock Pub, Phoenix Road (Nr Euston Stn).

Entrance, Stoke Newington Church St, N16. Speakers include Hugo Hunte, Jillian Whitelock and other defendants; Brynley Heaven (Chair Hackney police cttee); Socialist Action.

● **Fred Tonge Memorial Lecture** given by Ralph Miliband on 'Marxism and the Labour Movement'. Organised by St Pancras Labour Party, Weds 25 May, 8pm, Douglas Hyde Hall, the Irish Centre, Camden Square (Camden tube).

● **Free David Avondale!** Support the picket of the Court of Appeal, the Strand, London WC2, Thurs 12 May at 9am.

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For red books, black books, peace books, feminist books, left books, story books, labour books, cook books, kids books, Irish books, African books, Asian books, American books, gay books, soviet books, old books, new books... Mail order (including overseas) and bookstall service provided.

LABOUR MOVEMENT CONFERENCE ON EL SALVADOR

COUNTY HALL LONDON MAY 14

SPEAKERS Judith Hart, Jenny Pearce (author of 'Under the Eagle'), Salvador Moncada (FDR Representative), Salvadoran Trade Unionists

DELEGATES invited from Trade Union & Political Party branches

FURTHER INFORMATION from:
El Salvador Solidarity Campaign
29 Islington Park Street
London N1 Tel: 01-359 2270

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Money and elections

SO NOW the cat is out of the bag. It is going to be 9 June. All the fuss about Maggie May and Maggie may not! If you ask me, the thing that finally clinched it for a June election was watching Michael Foot on the box the night of the local elections.

The first question was on disarmament so he put Denis Healey's line. The second was from Alf Filer, complete with his People's March badge. 'What would Labour do if it didn't win the election outright?'

Poor old Michael almost fell off his chair trying to duck the question of whether or not he would be going for a coalition with the Alliance. No wonder we are doing so bad in the opinion polls.

More positively, the Socialist Action tent in Brockwell Park was a

huge success. Hundreds were milling in and out all afternoon. Badges and T-shirts sold well and literally gallons of drink poured down thirsty throats despite the rain.

The paper sold well both at the Festival and on the Troops Out demo ('IRA Marchers of Hate' as the *Sunday Express* described it).

With the centre spread on Bobby Sands, and the pages of coverage about CND and the Peoples' March, it was no wonder sales were so good. There is one sneaking thing that worries us. We hope Thatcher hasn't been hobnobbing with her mates in the Metropolitan Police and sneaked a look at our Spring Appeal figures in their subscription copy of Socialist Action.

We would not like to be blamed for the June election, if it was because she saw how much we

still had to collect and thought she should get in quick.

Those marchers have got a long way to go before they can link right across the country and stop the cruise missiles that Ronnie 'Raygun' Reagan wants slapped on the US bases.

If you have got some money sitting in your bank account that you were planning on giving us in a couple of weeks time, write out a cheque today.

Help us to stop the missiles and fight the election with a socialist campaign for a Labour Victory!

Thanks this week to:

From LP in Scotland	£ 30.00
York	12.00
E. London Cabaret	192.00
Preston	62.00
Brent	327.00
Total this week	£ 623.00
Total so far	£4,487.74



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Please do not send the Bankers Order direct to your bank. Thank you.

Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica...

LAST AUGUST I was in Guatemala. Together with a journalist friend I was travelling from Cahabon to Guatemala City. The scenery was mountainous and quite breath-taking. Nobody travels in the interior of Guatemala today because of the war. The road was empty, there was a chill in the air — it felt quite sinister. Half way down the road we stopped at an inn. Six people came in laughing and shrieking almost hysterically.

As they were sitting down I noticed that one of them had a hand grenade in his belt. All the men were heavily armed. As we listened to their conversation, it became apparent that they were in fact military dressed up as civilians — a death squad which had just come back from an operation.

This incident made me think about the relationship between individual violence and the violence of the state in Central America. The United States claim that it's the violence of a few 'extremists'. But what you have in Central America today is the systematic violence of a ruling order in decay. A Guatemalan sociologist put it this way: 'The last two generations in Guatemala have been born in and brought up in a society in decomposition, slow and uncertain at the beginning, inevitable and profound at the present. The symbol of that decomposition is terror'.

The Reagan regime is committed to a military solution in Central America. All his policies since January 1981 have been directed towards that end. I don't just mean committed to the military defeat of the guerrilla movement in El Salvador, but the military pacification of the whole region.

Objectives

The objectives Reagan has been pursuing since he came to power are:

- the downfall of the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. In the forefront of this policy is strengthening the military apparatus in Honduras
- restoration of US military influence in Guatemala, which has declined since Carter's aid cut off in 1977
- a resolution of the conflict between Guatemala and Belize, to ensure that the United States has a base of operation and influence in Belize
- recruitment of Costa Rica to the ranks of US influence and bringing about the rearmament of Costa Rica.

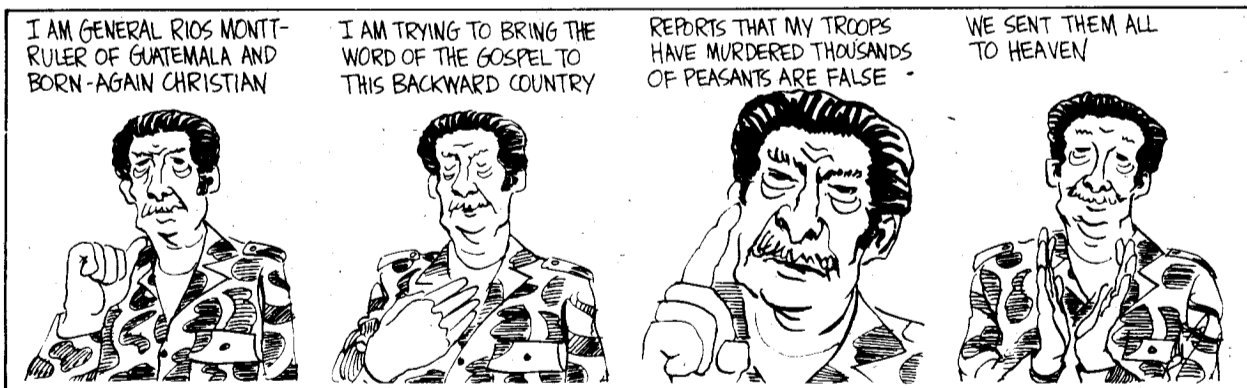
I think that the overall aim of these policies is to pacify the region and to re-create the regional military alliance (CONDECA) which existed in the 1960s — and to bring into that alliance Guatemala, Honduras and the Salvadorean army.

This military strategy goes hand in hand with a propaganda and military offensive. During Reagan's trip last December he met Rios Montt in Honduras, and shortly after that we heard that the White House was resuming arms sales.

The US government needs to convince congressional opinion that progress towards 'peace' and 'democracy' is being made. I think that US pressure for the elections in Honduras in November '81, the election in Salvador in March '82 and the formation of the Central American Democratic Community in January '82 are all part of this. This latter

'Systematic violence of a ruling order in decay'

By Jenny Pearce (author of *Under the Eagle*)



organisation disappeared mysteriously when the Guatemalans joined it, to be replaced by another organisation in October, the Forum for Peace and Freedom.

All these organisations are political aspects of what is essentially a military strategy. In this strategy Honduras is the key country militarily and Costa Rica the key country politically.

Today in Honduras the real power in the military. Even before the presidential elections in November '81, the candidates of the Liberal and National parties had made a pact with the military to ensure that the real power of cabinet appointments and control of internal security lay with the military.

The military has subsequently reinforced its control over key areas of political and economic life. General Alvarez is the real source of power in that country today. Key in

his promotion from colonel to general was the pressure of the US ambassador in Honduras, John Negroponte.

Since the elections the military has become much more important with the stepping up of US aid, and the forcing of Alvarez's opponents into diplomatic exile.

The strengthening of the army and Alvarez represents the view of the US and Alvarez that other governments in the region have acted too late to deal with the upsurge of the popular movement.

Another part of the Alvarez strategy is the attempt to decapitate that movement by murdering popular leaders. Last year 100 or so 'disappearances' took place in Honduras. Many of them were peasant leaders and union leaders.

Over the past year the popular movement in Honduras has not grown much because of illusions in

the Liberal Party government. But now that is starting to change. When I was in Honduras last year there was a big teachers strike — the teachers are one of the most radical unions. In January there was a strike of 50,000 workers in San Pedro over the sacking of 48 workers in the public sector.

These are examples of how the popular movement is beginning to be radicalised by what is happening in the rest of Central America. As the economic crisis gets deeper the popular movement will grow.

In Costa Rica, the country is being pulled into the Reagan camp through economic crisis. Unemployment has rocketed from 6 per cent in 1980 to 15 per cent in 1982. The external debt is \$4 billion, one of the highest per capita totals in the world. The only way out is loans from the IMF, and this means getting American approval.

The stringent austerity measures

have heightened social tensions. Last year there were important strikes among banana workers and public sector employees. Reagan wants to use Costa Rica in his regional strategy because it has a strong tradition of democracy, it has a 'clean' image abroad. Officially the Costa Rican army was abolished in 1948, but in the last few years we have seen a big increase in its security apparatus, under US pressure. Reagan has been giving assistance in 'defending' the border with Nicaragua — Israel is supplying an electrified fence for the border. The prospect is thus for increasing social and political conflicts in Costa Rica.

Offensive

Guatemala is the most important country in the region, both in terms of the economy and the size of the population. In March last year the guerrilla movement was growing considerably in strength and it looked as if it would lead to an offensive. But it never came. Why not?

Since Rios Montt came to power last year the US has been trying to persuade world public opinion that he is a democrat. When Reagan met Rios Montt last year, Reagan said Montt had got a 'bum rap' from the world's press and that in fact he was a 'very true democrat'. This at a time when the Guatemalan armed forces have been engaged in slaughter and torture on an unprecedented scale.

The point is that the Rios Montt dictatorship has the most coherent anti-insurgency strategy in the whole region — what they call the strategy of 'guns and beans'. Put simply, as I heard it from an army officer, if you support the government we'll feed you — otherwise we'll kill you.

The Guatemalan army designates certain villages where it knows that the guerrillas have a certain base of support. They go in and massacre people. If villagers flee into the hills, they are eventually forced to give up because of lack of food. The army sets up strategic villages, which are defended against the guerrillas. Sometimes to make an example the army just lets the villagers starve.

Starved

I met an international aid officer who told me of a camp of 6000 people — mainly women and children. 60 died during the first day at the camp. They were so starved that they could only be fed intravenously. He told me that he thought that half of them would be dead within two months. The local hospitals wouldn't even deal with these people because they thought they were guerrillas.

The United States was secretly supplying aid to the Guatemalan regime even before the official resumption of arms supplies. As I said before, for the US it's the key country in the region. Because the regime has a very coherent anti-insurgency strategy it's going to be a long war. There is little prospect of a quick revolutionary victory. We have to build a very strong solidarity movement with Guatemala.

What we are seeing today is the Central Americanisation of the war — all the countries of the region are being drawn into it, under US tutelage. We have to say that the US has not just a policy for El Salvador or Nicaragua. Reagan has a strategy for the region.

In the countries I have mentioned there is a strong popular movement, and in Guatemala a very advanced guerrilla movement. When we campaign on El Salvador and Nicaragua, we have to make that clear and build solidarity with the peoples of the whole region — so that in the future we don't have to start on solidarity with a country like Guatemala from the very beginning.

● *Under the Eagle*. Published by LAB £4.50 Available from the Other Bookshop, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP (add 20% for p&p).

PICKET LINE



Occupation link up

OCCUPYING workers from the Dundee Timex factory are on a tour of South Wales workplaces this week to gain support. They will meet other Engineering union members occupying the British Steel subsidiary, Unit Superheaters in Swansea.

These unionists have seen thousands lose their livelihoods in the avalanche of closures that have hit Wales and Scotland in recent years. But now they are saying enough is enough.

The Timex workers are defiant in the face of management attempts to break the sit-in. On 6 May the company sacked the 200 workers who refused to participate in a management ballot. Another 500 occupiers will be taken to court.

Similar threats lie in store for the sit-in at Unit Superheaters and the workers at Firth Derihon in Sheffield and Greenings in Warrington.

There too, workers have taken over the factories to fight forced redundancies in steel related industries.

SUPPORT the occupations. Send messages and money. Organise solidarity tours.

● **Unit Superheaters.** Fred Evans, 8 Bishopston Rd, Bishopston, Swansea.

● **Timex.** Treasurer John Kydd, 81 Brownhill Rd, Dundee.

● **Firth Derihon.** D Michie, 21 Mather Rd, Littledale, Sheffield S9 4GN.

● **Greenings.** JSSC Strike Fund, c/o L Blood, 26 St John St, Newton-Le-Willows, Merseyside.

Cowley fight goes on

WORKERS at BL Cowley Pressed Steel Fisher plant returned to work with confidence after the four and a half week assembly plant strike.

They are still resisting management attempts to take away five minute washing up time. The Rover Ambassador line are refusing to work the five minutes along with many sub assembly workers.

The management have backtracked in the face of another major dispute. They have said that while talks continue

with Transport and General Workers Union branch officers, no action will be taken against the workers finishing early.

Management now plan to impose audited plant status. This would be a blow to conditions. The strength to stop APS exists but the union leaders refuse to harness it.

One thing is clear, Cowley workers are still a force to be reckoned with!

Unit Superheaters

WORKERS now in their second week of occupation at Unit Superheaters have discovered plans to sell off the Tube Engineering Division of BSC to the private company, Babcock and Wilcox.

Convenor Pete Thomas explains 'Units is an engineering service company providing high speed quality products. It's an overtime orientated industry and has always had its peaks and troughs. The recession really caught up with us two years ago and since then we've been on a two, three or four day week'.

In common with the rest of BSC the union negotiated redundancies in an attempt to keep the plant open.

'We gave everything, we sold our souls. We accepted full flexibility and the result at the end of the day was redundancies' says Pete.

The pattern was initial voluntary redundancies with older men being happy to accept a pay off. But last November, 45 more jobs were cut.

The redundancies were not accepted and an overtime ban followed. When management came back for more compulsory redundancies, including the convenor, the workers occupied.

A mass meeting last week rejected a BSC management deal and the union is preparing for a long struggle.

Solidarity, moral and financial, will be key to the dispute. BSC is transferring work to outside contractors and this must be blocked.

An emergency motion of support was passed by last weeks Wales TUC and money and delegations have been arriving at the factory.

A delegation will speak at the South Wales miners conference this week and the Labour Party is being asked for backing. The union at Units particularly needs support from other BSC plants.

(Graham Atwell)

PICKET LINES. Short 150 word reports by Thursday before publication. Longer stories, contact the Editorial Board by Monday, the week before publication.

NUPE conference: problems behind militant face



THE NATIONAL Union of Public Employees, Britain's fifth largest union, meets in Scarborough this week.

NUPE, long regarded as the militant face of public sector trade unionism, organises mostly among local government manual workers, health service ancillary workers and nurses, with smaller contingents in the universities and water industry.

Two thirds of its members are women, many of them part-time. A disproportionate number are from the ethnic minorities. For these workers, Thatcherism has been an uninterrupted nightmare.

This militancy is echoed in resolutions on pay which demand that the NUPE executive council launch next year's pay campaign by 1 September 1983 for a minimum wage of £100. They also criticise the EC for not doing this last year, despite clear conference policy.

By Dominic Johnson
NUPE Oxford NHS
(personal capacity)

There are similar calls for mass nationwide action against privatisation. Although this was agreed at last year's conference, little has been done.

Instead individual sections have been picked off, often making deals which undermine national agreements, demoralising

IN THE UNIONS

The problems they face are fully reflected in the conference resolutions — low pay, cuts in jobs and services, privatisation. The issue of low pay was highlighted last year with the eight month NHS dispute.

NUPE members played a leading part. But despite the militancy of the NHS workers, in the end they were defeated and demoralised by a never-ending series of limited strikes called by the TUC health services committee.

Critical

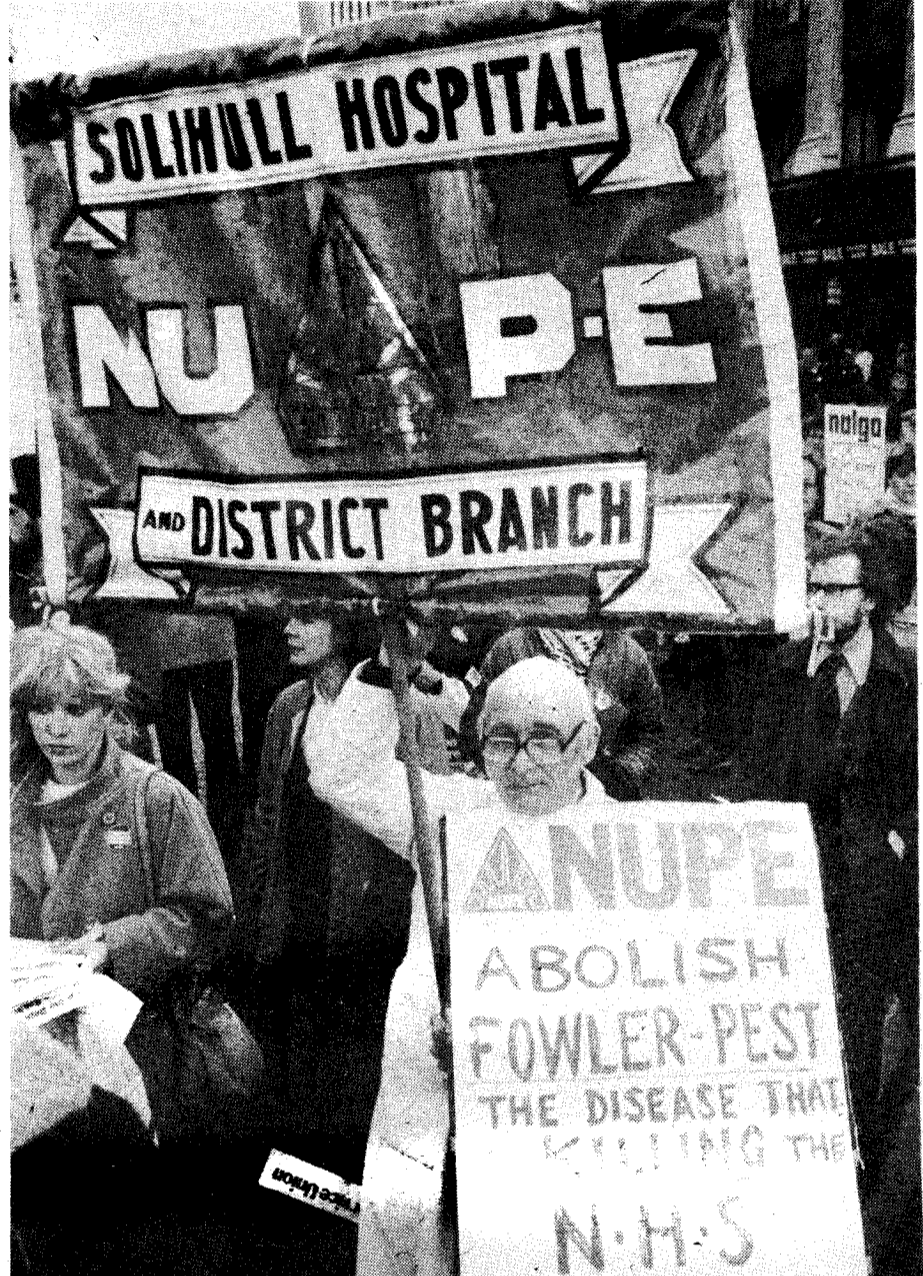
There are several resolutions bitterly critical of the disastrous conduct of the dispute. Some point out that the NUPE leadership did not campaign hard enough for NUPE's policy of all-out indefinite action.

the entire membership in the process.

Since the qualified victory of the all-out water workers strike, which involved NUPE, it is clear that the only way union policies can be won is by resolute mass action. But is this the perspective of the NUPE leadership?

The present leadership is one of the most left wing in the TUC. General secretary Rod Bickerstaffe has been called the Scargill of the public sector. Deputy general secretary Tom Sawyer was the only trade union representative on the Labour Party NEC to vote against the expulsion of the Militant editorial board.

At the same time NUPE has progressive policies on many political issues. It is affiliated to CND. On women, although much needs to be done, steps have been



NUPE members headed the NHS pay strike last year

taken to increase the involvement of the two thirds female membership.

A national women's officer has been appointed, five seats on the EC are reserved for women, and divisional women's advisory committees have been established.

Today the president and vice president are women.

NUPE was easily the largest union to vote against the register at last

year's Labour Party conference and all the conference resolutions on the witch hunt oppose expulsions from the Labour Party.

Problem

The problem is that the NUPE leadership does not have an adequate campaigning perspective which seeks to actively involve the mass of the membership in a fight for NUPE's policies. Defeats

are then blamed on membership apathy.

The NUPE leadership has no plans to build campaigning left wing alliance right across the public sector which could organise militants in unions with right wing leaderships.

So the task of NUPE activists at this conference and beyond is to work out how to organise sufficient pressure on the NUPE leadership to make them campaign on NUPE's policies, both inside and outside the union.

Left gains in AUEW elections

THE SUPREME policy making body of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers ended on 29 April in Eastbourne with right-wing President Terry Duffy getting his way on most questions. But the mood for change from below was shown in the victory of Jimmy Airlie in an election for the national executive committee by a margin of over 3000 votes.

In his pre-conference address, union president Terry Duffy spelt out his backing for the Labour Party right wing. He made a strong appeal to the Labour leadership and to Michael Foot to ditch Labour Party conference policy on disarmament and adopt instead a multilateral approach to nuclear weapon reduction.

He forcefully invited the national committee to overturn the union's long standing opposition to incomes policy. 'It was our failure to talk on wages that lost us the last election. It is absolutely vital

that there is a partnership between the next Labour government and the trade union movement' he argued.

By a Manchester AUEW branch secretary

The 52 delegates at the national committee divided 33 to 19 in Duffy's favour and against the Broad Left to support the Labour Party proposal for a national economic assessment, including on wages.

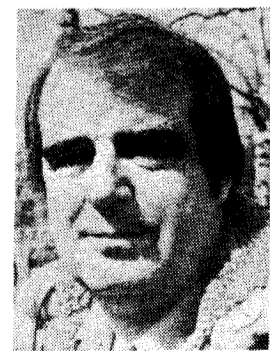
Only on the Common Market was Duffy seriously defeated. The Committee

rejected his proposal for a referendum on the EEC and called instead for a firm Labour manifesto commitment to withdrawal.

Referendum

This followed Duffy motivating the proposal by saying: 'In the event of a hung parliament Labour will not be able to work with the SDP-Liberal Alliance unless we agree to a referendum on the EEC'.

The Committee also took a firmer stand than Duffy on the national pay claim. Duffy did a deal with the employers in 1979 which left hours out of the national claim. This year he went for a vague formulation on hours alongside a vague demand for a substantial money increase.



Jimmy Airlie

But the committee voted for a specific demand of a 35 hour week, for 6 weeks holiday, for earlier retirement and a reduction in overtime.

It will take a mammoth effort to translate these policies into an effective campaign of industrial action. But the mood for change is building up from below. This is shown in the election for the seven per-

son national executive committee. Communist Party member Jimmy Airlie, remembered for his part in the sit-in of the UCS shipyard in Scotland, won the position for Scotland and North West England.

Clique

This is a dent in Duffy's right-wing clique. Other left gains were made in South Wales, Newcastle and Bradford with the election of Broad Left-backed candidates for divisional organisers and district secretaries.

With AUEW members joining the mounting number of factory occupations against redundancies, these elections remind Duffy and company that even with their successes at Eastbourne it's not all going their way.

Import controls — dead end for jobs fight

ONE thousand trade union delegates from some of the best organised parts of industry are expected to pack Birmingham's Digbeth Civic Hall on Sunday 15 May. Jobs will be their concern, but the theme of the meeting is import controls.

Called by the Campaign for Import Controls Committee (CICC), the rally come conference is a 'rank and file' attempt to revive the selective import control campaign of the Transport Workers and other unions which has spluttered to a halt in the past two years. It's organisers are convenors in the motor industry sympathetic to the Labour left and Communist Party.

Nevertheless, despite the more militant anti-Tory rhetoric which will dominate this meeting, it is a dangerous dead end in the fight for jobs. A quick look at the invited speakers reveals the problem. What do Arthur Scargill and Bill Sirs have in common? Or Tony Benn and Michael Foot? Scargill and Benn talk the language of class struggle whereas Sirs and Foot practice class collaboration with the bosses.

Problem

And that sums up the whole problem with campaigns for import controls. They say to British workers that their interests lie in persuading their bosses and the Government to produce domestically what is currently imported. What follows from this is that British bosses and workers have interests in common against workers of other countries.

Even in the 'left' version of controlling multinational companies and preventing the export of capital, this is the rotten chauvinist core at the heart of import controls.

It is not simply that import controls are wrong in principle. They will lead to lower living standards and probably lose more jobs. Import controls have an immediate effect on prices. Forced to buy more expensive 'British' goods, the living standards of British workers would fall. The increased profits made by capitalists enjoy-

ing protected markets would not be used to increase employment or wage levels.

By David Grant (TGWU BL Longbridge) and Mick Drake (TGWU Ford's Dagenham)

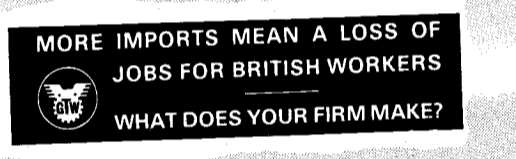
Capitalists produce to make profits not to create jobs. Even if the bosses invest their profits at home they would buy labour saving machinery in order to get a better rate of return on their capital. That way more jobs would be lost. Alternatively, living standards could be slashed. Recent estimates show that for the rate of profit to go up enough to stop the export of capital, wage levels would have to drop by about £1,000 per worker a year.

the engines for European built Escorts. How would the jobs of these workers be protected by import controls?

Fighting for the international unity of workers in multinational companies may be more difficult than spouting nationalistic catchphrases, but in the long run it is the only effective way to defend jobs and start to control the activities of the multinationals. The recent conference of Ford Europe convenors in Spain points the way in this direction.

Message

Finally, workers will view with the greatest suspicion the people who plead for import controls to save jobs. Terry Duffy and Bill Sirs have sat on their hands while the engineering and steel industries have been butchered.

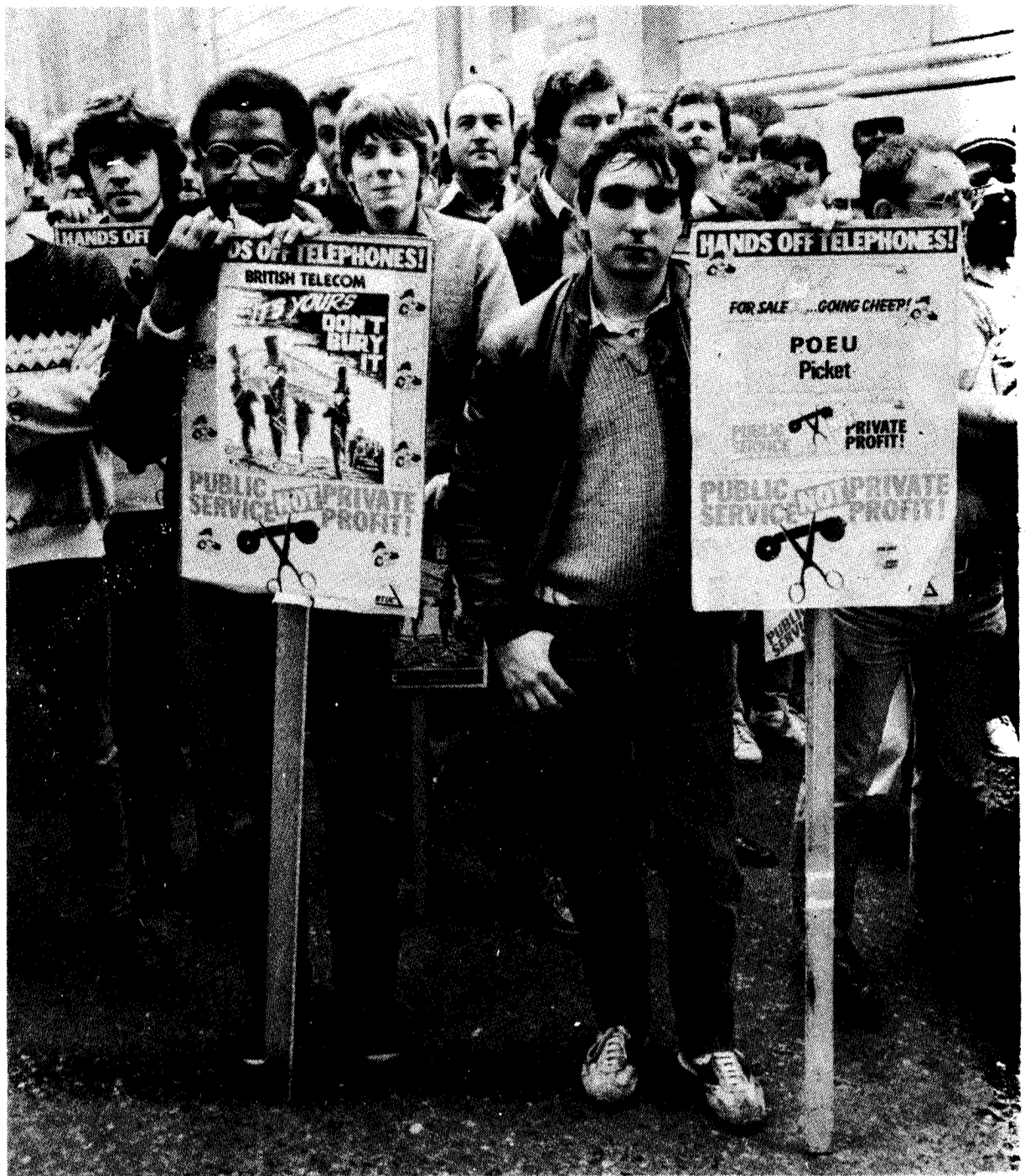


Import controls, anyway, are a two edged sword. In the thirties the protectionism of all the world's major capitalist countries led to a reduction in world trade which prolonged the depression and decimated the economies of the southern hemisphere. Nowadays, the only countries that a second-rate power like Britain could implement import controls against without fear of massive retaliation are the poorest countries of the world.

It is ironic that the companies where import controls are being pushed hardest by the unions — such as Ford and British Leyland — are amongst the biggest exporters of manufactured goods. The jobs of Jaguar car workers are currently secure because of a booming American market. Ford's Bridgend plant supplies all

Duffy is on record as saying that nothing must be allowed to threaten the recovery to profitability of companies like British Leyland. This is a promise he has carried out with a vengeance, from the sacking of Derek Robinson through to the sell out of the Cowley strike.

Bill Sirs' message to the Consett and Round Oaks steel workers was to sit tight and support the steel unions' import controls campaign. Now they are all on the dole. The Communist Party, Benn and Scargill are sharing a common platform with these scabs when they should be mobilising their supporters in the widest possible support for the occupation for jobs at Timex in Dundee, Firth Derihon in Sheffield and Greenings in Warrington. It is with these workers that the fight for jobs lies, not in pleas for import controls.



POEU engineers in the City of London on the picket line.

Action against privatisation stepped up ... and down

IN response to a provocative letter from Dr P Troughton Telecom's City general manager workers have put an embargo on all repairs at the Stock Exchange.

The letter was sent out on 6 May following two days of mass picketing at the back of the Bank of England. This picket is in support of the four week industrial action by British Telecom engineers against the Telecommunications Bill.

This was a lead up to the escalation of selective action in the city area. On 12 May POEU members will down tools for 90

minutes to attend a mass rally on Tower Hill. What has terrified management and the Tories is the threat of action in the financial heartland of British capitalism.

You losing your phone is one thing. Interfering with the capitalist market in the Stock Exchange and the Bank of England is quite another ball game. Troughton in his letter got in a real lather about the threat to the city saying 'Communication is the life blood of the city. Proof that this can be jeopardised at the whim of the union will drive our customers into the arms of

our non-militant, non-unionised competitors.'

In an open call for strike breaking Troughton urges the workers to 'stop it — say "No" to a further strike call ...' Well Troughton got his answer on Monday 9 May when the engineers stopped repair work in the Exchange. Such action if extended can stop the Tories plans for privatisation.

In the run up to the general election this action needs full support from the Labour Party. But the blacking of government phones carried out by the Westminster Branch has

already been called off in response to a letter to the union from Michael Foot in which he argues that such action could be 'represented as an attack on democracy'.

In doing this the POEU NEC has gone behind the back of the Westminster Branch, adopting management tactics and writing direct to striking engineers.

Such a move is not only a stab in the back for the workers but it helps the Tories plunder the economy for private enterprise which is the very thing Labour should be making an election issue.

That white heaven

IN THAT GREAT after-life in the sky there will be two heavens. One is for whites and the other is for blacks.

Mrs Marie Van Zyl who leads the ultra right-wing Kappiecommando which organises protests against South Africa's 'liberal' and multiracial 'reforms' has had an inspired divine revelation about this.

Mrs Zyl has a direct line to the Almighty so she obviously knows what she is on about. However she is determined not to give out God's telephone number so

when reporters asked her for details on the apartheid heaven she told them: 'Talk to my lawyers.'

Mrs Zyl's promise that heaven will be segregated has not upset South African blacks. They do not fancy spending infinity with a load of white racist trash.

But in white-male dominated South Africa even Mrs Zyl is not appreciated. When she argued with Prime Minister Pieter Botha at a by-election meeting he told her: 'We cannot speak at the same time. Has your husband not taught you that?'

Maybe Mr Botha thinks there will be three

heavens — one for white men, one for blacks and one for women like Marie Van Zyl.

Be diplomatic about racism

FIGHTING RACISM is high on NATFHE's agenda. When one of their members John Fernandes blew the gaff about the piglets at Hendon Police Cadet College and their attitude to black people he caused a storm.

The progressive NATFHE's executive were a bit shocked when his local union branch sup-

ported him publishing the police cadet's views on race. It's a bit much exposing the cadets who wanted 'white dictatorship' and wondered whether it was better to burn blacks in oil, or petrol. That sort of thing could damage the public's confidence in the police.

John got the sack from the college and Brent withdrew teaching support from the college. Of the 26 lecturers then left 10 did not go back to the college but 16 did. Brent had promised to re-deploy all the lecturers.

NATFHE might be a bit squeamish about

racism but all out confrontation with the police that's another matter. So they told the lecturers to go into work otherwise they would be in breach of contract which is a lot more important than all those silly anti-racist principles.

NATFHE have acted with great speed to settle the dispute. They have broke all records by setting up a new branch at Hendon in six weeks. Normally it takes a year to do this. The branch represents the 16 still working and excludes troublemaker John Fernandes.

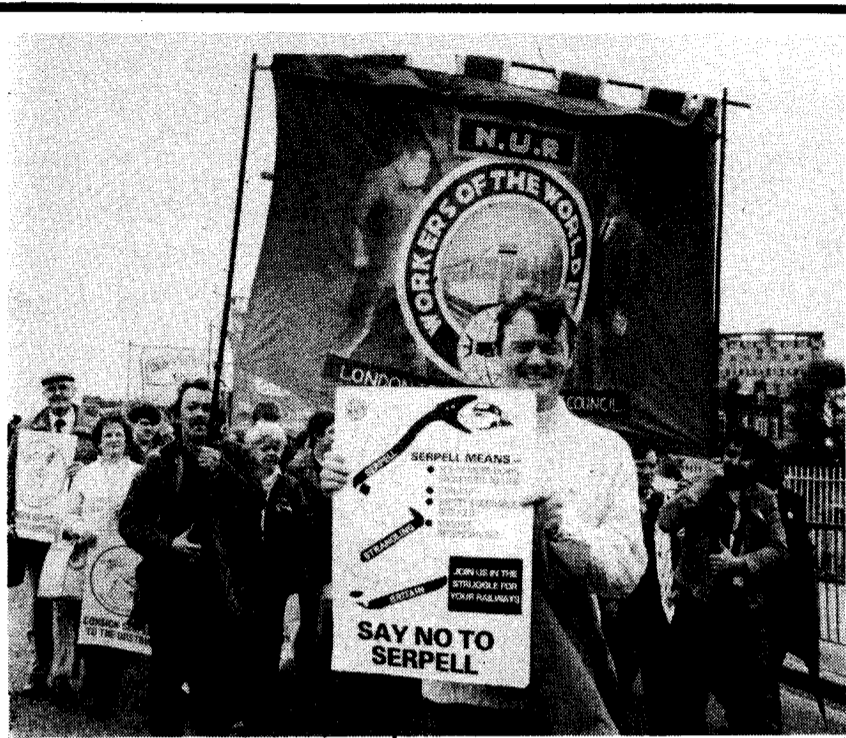
If 'responsible' unions act like this we



will have no trouble about racism in the police force. It will all be smoothed over by common sense and diplomacy instead of being brought out in the open by hot heads like John Fernandes and Brent LEA.

Compiled by BOB PENNINGTON. Send contributions to Worm's Eye, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP to arrive not later than Thursday a week prior to publication.

A Socialist ACTION



Stop Tory slaughter on rail

THE RESULT of the general election involves high stakes for rail users, rail workers and their families.

If the Tories get back into office they are hell bent on implementing the notorious Serpell Report closing hundreds of miles of 'unprofitable' lines in a rerun of Beeching's attacks of the '60s.

By Patrick Sikorski (NUR)

The first step in the Tories plans are being implemented now with the closure of the six rail engineering work shops at Horwich, Shildon, Temple Mills (London), Swindon, Glasgow and Derby.

This week the NUR national conference of railway shop men will be meeting to discuss how to fight the BREL closures. Several resolutions call for industrial action and one demands that the 'full membership be used' to stand and fight the closures.

The second flash

point has been around management's plans to complete closure of branch lines by ripping up the track, thus precluding the possibility of reopening in the future.

The NUR negotiated a ten day truce on the issue after guards had taken action over the March to Spalding branch line in Lincolnshire.

While management is insisting that the issue is a 'local' one it is of vital concern to all rail users and workers, since it is well-known that management have a hit-list of 200 or more branch lines that the British Rail Board want to substitute and replace with a bus service.

In the past, as under Beeching, 80 per cent of rail passengers transferred, not to other forms of public transport, but to private transport.

Union responses to these moves have been weak. The Triple Alliance of the steel, rail and mining unions met on 28 April to plan action, but industrial action — the only way that McGregor and his British Rail counterparts can be

defeated — was relegated to last place in their plan of action.

This has been the tone of recent statements by the NUR Executive who have not used the possibility that exists to build unity in action between different sections of rail workers facing management attacks.

The potential still exists for other actions against cuts — for example against line closures and further implementation of driver-only operation (on both the main line and London Transport) — to link up with the fight in the workshops.

Unity in the union across the grades could be rebuilt after the disastrous sell-outs on pay and cuts last year and a real unity forged with other sections of the Triple Alliance.

* March against the closure of the BREL workshops. Wednesday 11 May, 12.30pm, Malet Street (opp Euston Station), Rally Central Hall Westminster 1.00pm. Speakers Michael Foot, Albert Booth, Jimmy Knapp. Lobby the House of Commons. 3.00pm.

Our day for disarmament

TUESDAY 24 May is International Women's Day for Disarmament. To mark the occasion this year, women's peace groups internationally are calling for actions ranging from full labour stoppages to small scale demonstrative actions.

But the aim everywhere is that women drop their normal activities for action to show that women all over the world refuse to live with the nuclear threat.

By Glasgow Women for Peace

In Britain the women of Greenham Common have led thousands of other women to feel that they can organise positive action against the war drive and in particular against the threatened deployment of Cruise and

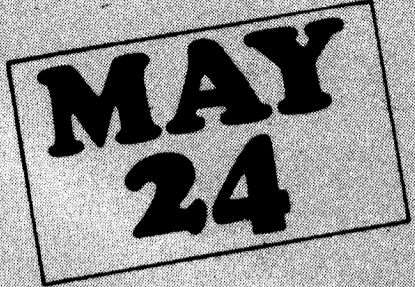
Pershing II missiles in Europe later this year.

24 May has already won the support of the TUC General Council, the TUC women's advisory committee, NALGO equal opportunities committee, ACTT, the Labour Party NEC, the Labour Party women's committee, CND national council, the Greater London Council and many other local Labour councils including Glasgow District council.

In Glasgow the focal point of our day of action will be a rally for peace in George Square between 12-2pm.

Speakers will include not only women from Greenham Common and Faslane peace camps, but also the Scottish TUC and a Nicaraguan representative.

For full details of action on 24 May see page 2.



Occupation plan against shipyard sackings

By Pauline Tierney

COUNTRY WIDE occupations of British Shipbuilders' yards are planned if management refuse to remove the threat to cut 9000 jobs.

In six years 25,000 jobs have been slashed in British shipbuilding. The latest plan would decimate the industry in areas like Scotland and the North West where half of the proposed cuts fall.

On 4 May, 500 delegates from the unions in the yards met at a special national conference in Tyneside. They returned to the 22 yards and seven engineering works involved with a mandate to occupy if management do not rescind the job cuts.

Four hundred and thirty redundancies are threatened at Henry Robbs shipyard in Leith, which is the port for Edinburgh. This is more than half the workforce.

Bill McKenna, outfit trade convenor and

spokesperson for the joint shop stewards committee says: 'This dispute with management is a fight against the loss of jobs for the present and future generations in Leith and against Leith becoming a ghost town. The knock-on effect on allied trades such as coal, steel and wire works would be disastrous for the town.'

'We will support any mass occupations of our ship yards as proposed by the leadership.'

At a meeting with Ron Brown MP for Leith last Wednesday assurances were given that there would be a meeting this week with the Libyan ambassador to negotiate an immediate contract.

In an attempt to run down the yard in preparation for closure, management are stalling on this order.

For more occupation news see page 14.

Labour Committee on Palestine Public meeting Wed 18 May 7.30 Lambeth Town Hall Speakers from PLO, LCP, LMEC, Palestine Solidarity. Open discussion on solidarity work at LP and TUs conferences.

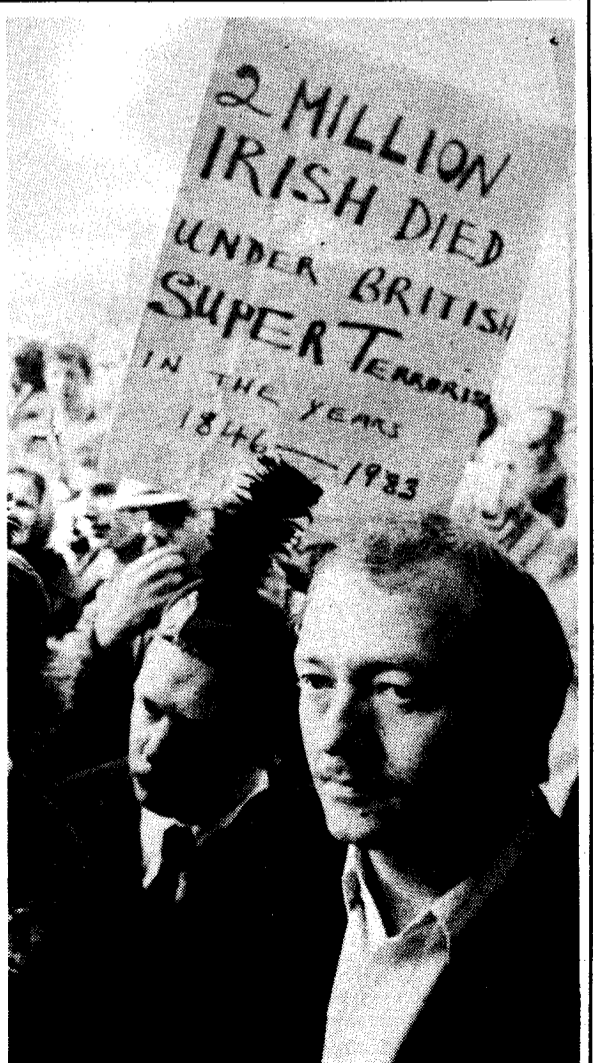
'TROOPS OUT NOW!' was the chant on the 2000-strong demonstration in London last Saturday. The march, commemorating the second anniversary of the death of hunger striker Bobby Sands MP, suffered harassment from the police with the arrest of four marchers and Dave Douglas, Yorks NUM Executive member and a speaker at the rally.

The march drew hostile comment in the Sunday Express and from Tory MPs.

Ken Livingstone addressing the march said: 'The hunger strike of Bobby Sands and his comrades was the death knell of British occupation in Ireland... it brought international recognition and support to the Irish struggle.'

As Livingstone noted, the imminence of a general election and the prospect of Sinn Fein victories at the polls means that socialists must redouble their efforts to raise the issue of troops out now in the Labour Party.

Long Kesh revisited page 4.



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MODERN TIMES



Oh, me dad's just a bit pessimistic. As soon as they announced the election he started digging out a nuclear shelter...