

9 JUNE 9 JUNE

VOTE  
LABOUR



# A Socialist ACTION

24 May: International Women's Day for Disarmament

# NUCLEAR FREE IN '83



## Defend Greenham

ONLY A few days after Thatcher announced the election, the peace camp at Greenham Common was attacked in an attempt to evict the women campaigning to stop the siting of cruise missiles.

The police and bailiffs stormed into the camp last Thursday. At least ten women were arrested and one woman taken to hospital.

The bailiffs also removed cars from the site and are demanding £2000 for their return to pay for legal costs and for the cost of the eviction. The Greenham camp is already in financial difficulties and is appealing for funds.

As Helen John, one of the Greenham women said, 'it's no coincidence that the first 47 US trained personnel are shortly due in Greenham'.

- 'We won't go!' — interview with Helen John and why Socialist Action is supporting the 24 May International Women's Day of Action for Disarmament, page 13.
- 24 May events, page 12.

## How to stop Thatcher

By the editor

THE TORY manifesto published this Friday shows what Thatcher has in store if she is returned. She must be stopped.

That means harnessing the tremendous enthusiasm and political potential of the peace movement, together with the People's March, to produce a resounding call for 'Jobs not Bombs', supporting the miners fighting the closure of Cardowen pit.

### Linking

It means linking up with black people and youth to stop the moves towards a police state contained in the temporarily-shelved Police Bill.

The Labour leadership have chosen the opposite course. Everywhere political activity is being called off under pressure from Walworth Road. The Labour leaders are actually hampering the fight for a Labour victory.

### Insisting

• Denis Healey is being allowed to set the tone of the manifesto by insisting that the national economic assessment means a quick route to a new social contract and incomes policy

• Labour's leaders are dividing the party again in Bermondsey-

style through imposing Reg Freeson as a candidate on the Brent party when it clearly wants Ken Livingstone

• The Labour right wing openly and proudly manoeuvred to force Tony Benn into a marginal seat in Bristol

• Walworth Road is discouraging parties from building the People's March as a way of making unemployment the main issue

### Forcing

• The TUC bureaucrats are likewise forcing the People's March to have a 'non-party' character and disciplining those who want to put the blame for unemployment where it lies — with the Tories and their backers.

The ruling class press know what they want to get out of this election. They want Thatcher as prime minister and Denis Healey as leader of the Labour Party. The left has to defeat them on both counts.

Campaigning on socialist policies and on the basis of mass action is the way to do it.

### Peoples march for jobs



'83

■ Turn to page 16 for reports on Tony Benn's battle for selection and the latest developments on the People's March for Jobs.

In these two articles JOHN ROSS shows in WHO'S TO BLAME that the economic stagnation and crisis of the British economy is completely attributable to the Tories not lefties, the unions, womens liberationists, black people and all the other 'subversives' Mrs Thatcher likes to blame.

In the article THE ENEMY he makes it very clear that the Tory Party is dominated by financial power and privilege and that beneath a Tory's hard exterior lies a financial calculating machine.

# The Tories

## party of reaction and privilege

### Who's to blame?

THATCHER SAID IN 1979 that her goal was to regenerate the British economy and arrest Britain's decline. Seeing that the Tories had been in office three times longer than any other party in the last 100 years it was only right they should get us out of the mess they had created.

The biggest and most decisive damage had already been done when the Tories dominated politics and government in this country.

From 1886 to 1945 the Conservatives got the biggest vote in 11 out of 12 general elections. From 1918 to 1939 — a time of crisis and recession — they held office for 18 of these 21 years. Prior to the election of the Labour Government in 1964 the Tories had held office for 60 out of the previous 78 years.

As Britain declined and its power deteriorated no other party was in office long enough to have caused this crisis. The responsibility lies four square with Toryism. Of course in Tory mythology it is naturally always someone else who is to blame. And who better than for the role of scapegoat than the Labour Party?

So it all gets put down to the socialists and the 'increasingly Marxist' Labour Party. There is however a snag in that argument. Unfortunately the decline in the British economy was out in the open in 1870 and at that time the Labour Party did

not even exist. Perhaps the dozen or so then existing Marxists caused that problem.

The crisis of the British economy accelerated in the inter-war years when the Tories were in office almost continuously. Labour's leadership for 13 of those years was headed by Ramsay MacDonald who makes Callaghan and Healey look like red subversives. Clearly you can't put that crisis down to the Conservatives. They just happened to be in office at the time.

### Stop-Go

By the 1950s the economy was in an even worse state. Yet in that period the Conservatives held office right from 1951 until 1964 and through those years Churchill, Eden and Macmillan wrenched Britain through the 'Stop-Go' cycle.

Now the crisis has reached catastrophic proportions. But don't worry, Mrs Thatcher is going to rescue us all from the mess her predecessors landed us in. You can tell how well she is doing by the fact that over three million of the



This quartet from left to right Howe, Whitelaw, Parkinson and Thatcher are going 'to defend freedom against marxist socialism. This is good news for the rich but a message of doom for the poor.'

population are officially out of work.

Another candidate for responsibility is the trade unions. They have never been too popular with the Tories. William Pitt was the first Tory prime

minister to come across the trade union trouble-makers so he solved the problem in 1799 by banning them.

By the time the modern mass trade union movement came into existence in 1889 the economic decline was well under way. From the deportation of the Tolpuddle Martyrs and the Taff Vale decision, the Trades Disputes Act of 1927, Heath's Industrial Relations Act and now Tebbit's anti-trade union legislation, the Tories have done everything in their power to curb the unions.

### Crash

By clobbering the trade unions the Tories have defended the economy. That's why we had the great crash of 1929. That's why we had the mass unemployment of the thirties. That's why whole sections of the British economy have been laid to waste. Without doubt all these things are attributable to the excessive power of the unions and have nothing to do with the employers and their government which is running the show.

Another alleged cause of our economic problems is black immigration. Of course some smart aleck will point out that in the thirties when there were three million out of work there were hardly any

black people living here. What such people don't understand is that the threat of a wave of immigrants arriving 20 years later precipitated a crisis in the economy which forced all those white workers on to the dole.

### Aliens

Also there was another scapegoat around at that time. On 9 March 1933, less than six weeks after Hitler came to power, the Tory MP for Tottenham demanded to know: 'Will the Home Secretary take steps to prevent any alien Jews entering this country from Germany? Hundreds of thousands of Jews are now leaving Germany and scurrying from there to this country, now that other countries are closed against them; as regards the Aliens Act, you can drive a carriage and pair through it and aliens are coming here on three months and six months leave to get naturalised.'

To protect the economy the Tory Home Secretary obliged and few Jews got into Britain. Instead they were exterminated in Dachau, Auschwitz and Belsen.

The Tories have always been anxious to preserve 'racial purity' and none more so than W.P.C. Greene the Tory MP for Worcester who warned way back in 1923 about the

dangers facing Britain.

He said: 'The old Nordic type is absolutely changing and becoming the Alpine or Mediterranean type — a type far inferior to the fine old English and Scottish colonist type. It is absolutely essential to preserve the purity of our race and to prevent contamination with the riff-raff of Eastern Europe, the stiffs of the Mediterranean and the dead beats of the world.'

Despite gallant patriots like Mr Greene fighting to keep us pure and to stop us getting contaminated with riff-raff the economic decline still went on.

Anuerin Bevan once called the leaders of the Tories 'vermin'. When you read quotes like those above it's not hard to know who he had in mind. And the above are only a tiny sample.

### Decline

The list of disrupters of the economy and causes of the decline is endless. All of them — Irish, Communists, demonstrators, trade unionists, welfare scroungers, 'queers', women liberationists — have their place in the Tory hit list. And they all have the advantage of never having been in power unlike the Tory Party.

The Tory Party repres-

ents wealth, power and privilege. Its job has been and still is to rule on behalf of capitalism and it has been doing just that for 300 years. It is the oldest mass right-wing political party in the world.

When Thatcher took office it was the 300th anniversary to the year of the term 'Tory' first being used in Britain. No other major capitalist party can compete with the Tories in longevity.

The American Democratic Party is 155 years old the Republicans 129. The majority of the right wing parties in France and Germany are not even 50 years old. Without doubt the British Tory Party is the granddaddy and grandmother of them all.

In its 300 year history Toryism has developed a unique relation with British capitalism quite different to that achieved by any other party. For one hundred years it has dominated government. Its supporters dominated the economy, the civil service, the armed forces, the legal system and the church.

These are the rulers of Britain. These are the people who have ruled, and still do rule Britain. The Tory Party is totally integrated into the capitalist system and its structures.

The failure of Britain is the failure of capitalism and the failure of British capitalism's party — the Tories.





Sir Alex Douglas Home, former Tory leader. Just a simple country lad who happens to own a large estate and does the odd bit of fishing in his own waters.



# The enemy



Photo: GM COOKSON

Keith Joseph was chair of Bovis Holdings and Premier Investment Trust besides being a mad monk.

**THE WISEST SAYING** in law is 'who profits?'. That means if you want to find out who committed a crime, find out who gained from it.

The Tory Party in parliament and the constituencies may be only a small part of those who gained from Thatcherism and its policies, nevertheless it provides an interesting insight into who the labour movement is fighting in this election.

We will start our survey of the Tory Party at the top, with Margaret Thatcher's Cabinet, and work downwards.

## Thatcher's Cabinet

Those who have served in Margaret Thatcher's Cabinet since 1979 provide an interesting and atypical cross section of the population. They also have one big advantage over Labour in understanding the question of unemployment. They are mainly directors of the firms that created it in the first place.

Of Margaret Thatcher's original 1979 Cabinet members, 71 per cent were company directors, 14 per cent large landowners, and 10 per cent lawyers — with the categories of landowners and company directors overlapping. One of the landlords, Carrington, of course later had to resign over the Falklands.

\* William Whitelaw — director of family landed estates and of the William Blair steel mills

\* Sir Geoffrey Howe — director of EMI, Sun Alliance and London Assurance

\* Sir Keith Joseph — former chair of the family firm Bovis Holdings and then director of Drayton Premier Investment Trust

\* Francis Pym — managing director of George Holloway and Webb

\* Lord Carrington — director of Barclays Bank, Cadbury, Schweppes and Rio Tinto Zinc

\* James Prior — director of United Biscuits and Norwich Union Insurance

\* Michael Heseltine — chair of the Haymarket Press

\* George Younger — director of Tennent Caledonian

\* Nicholas Edwards — ex-director of British Steel

business backgrounds as executives, managers, bankers, stockbrokers or farmers. A further 1.4 per cent were from small business.

The 'professional' layers which made up the rest of the Tory MPs also had a very definite character. Of those elected in 1979 overwhelmingly the largest group were lawyers who comprised 21.3 per cent of all Tory MPs.

## Apparatus

Accountants formed 2.2 per cent, some 2.6 per cent were from the armed forces and diplomatic services, and 2.8 per cent from the apparatus of the Tory Party or employers' organisations. Nearly seven out of 10 of Tory MPs went to public schools, 14.7 per cent of these from Eton.

The Tory Party in parliament and government is totally dominated by company boards, professions closely tied to business such as accountancy and law, and some sections of the state apparatus such as the armed forces and diplomatic services. These together with the apparatus of the Tory Party and the employers' organisations form the backbone of the Tory Party.

all constituency chairpersons of Conservative Associations were large or medium owners of business, company directors or executives. A further 16 per cent were small businessmen/women and 9 per cent were farmers or landowners.

More than half of Conservative constituency chairpersons came directly from business or management occupations. A further 14 per cent were lawyers or accountants.

In the wider membership of the Conservative Party the same situation prevails. A 1964 survey indicated that 40 per cent of Conservative Party members, 42 per cent of activists, and 85 per cent of constituency chairpersons were made up of employers, managers and 'higher professional' layers.

## Backbone

Educationally the only major difference between Conservatives in parliament and senior people outside was a distinction between constituency chairpersons and activists.

The distinction between constituency chairpersons and activists is a reflection of the fact that the latter are more likely to be drawn from the ranks of the middle and upper middle classes, while the former are more likely to be drawn from the ranks of the lower middle and working classes.

# IRELAND UNFREE

## Election battle for the nationalist vote

WITH fourteen Sinn Fein contesting the 17 North of Ireland constituencies the battle is on for the political leadership of the nationalist community.

No doubt the British and Southern Irish ruling class along with the media will desperately attempt to bolster the fading morale of the middle class pro-British Social and Democratic Party (SDLP) and to discredit Sinn Fein.

The Catholic Church hierarchy has been forced to intervene in the election more directly than it has done for forty years. Bishop Daly from Down and Connor called a journalists' briefing to express the Church view that Catholics should not allow their vote to be associated with 'the men of violence'.

The other Bishop Daly from Derry (or Londonderry as the SDLP now prefer to call it) last week launched a campaign of clerical denunciation of Sinn Fein from the funeral of a soldier's wife.

### Steps up

While the army steps up its campaign of civilian murders to discredit the IRA, Sinn Fein's views will be 'interpreted' on the media by dubious 'experts' and reactionary politicians like Gerry Fitt. After all Sinn Fein is far too dangerous to present its own views on British or Southern Irish TV!

Irish socialist organisations like Peoples Democracy argued for a unified anti-imperialist electoral slate for the North. Now they are joining their efforts to build the largest possible anti-imperialist vote through support for Sinn Fein's campaign and for resistance to Prior's Northern Ireland Assembly.

There is no doubt that Sinn Fein's decision to stand can strengthen anti-imperialist organisation just as did the victories of Bobby Sands and Owen Carron.

Despite the split voting of the nationalist community created by the SDLP and government propaganda departments which will reduce the number of winnable seats, Sinn Fein expect a massive vote of support.

### Labour left

As John McNulty, Peoples Democracy councillor from Belfast says:

'Whatever government is returned in Britain the Labour left will find itself with a government wedded to the continuance of the sectarian Northern Ireland Assembly in a situation where the nationalist opposition to that Assembly is stronger than ever before.

'Unless Labour breaks its support for the Assembly it will find itself once again cheering on a new wave of repression aimed at quashing opposition to British rule. Labour must prepare for this and reject the Assembly and all other trappings of British rule.'

For or against the Assembly is the key political line of divide in the elections in the North. This is clear to everyone, except it seems the Irish Militant supporters. They claim that the struggle is a simple anti-Tory one.

The recent 'anti-Tory' conference they prompted was a complete flop, which is hardly surprising given the memory of Labour leaders like Callaghan, Rees, Mason and Concannon in perpetrating some of the worst military excesses against the people of the North.

This Militant line is identical to that of the right wing and trade union leaders. The same leaders who would be only too happy to do deals with the Unionists just as they did in the 1970s.

Socialists need to remember that the election is being fought wherever the British state has planted itself. In Ireland the opposition to Tory policies is coming from Sinn Fein. The Labour left should support the anti-imperialism of the Sinn Feiners and demand that Britain gets out of Ireland.

### Thatcher's Britain

IN LINE with our general editorial policy we wish to make it clear that by printing extracts from Thatcher's Britain: A Guide to the Ruins, published last week, we were not endorsing its arguments — particularly those relating to Ireland.

# Sinn Fein: A voice for Irish freedom

FOURTEEN candidates in the election arguing for radical policies and troops out of Ireland will be largely ignored by the media pundits. Not because they are fringe candidates with little chance of success, some of them are very likely to be elected. It is because they are the candidates of Sinn Fein.

Following the success of Bobby Sands and Owen Carron in parliamentary elections in the North, and of Gerry Adams, Danny Morrison and Martin McGuinness in elections to the Assembly, Sinn Fein are standing 14 candidates in the general election.

Almost alone among parliamentary candidates their voices will spell out a way to stop the war in Ireland: to get Britain out.

That's the Sinn Fein message to the next government whoever is elected. It's the message you probably won't hear unless you live in the North of Ireland where the regional TV has agreed for the first time to give Sinn Fein candidates TV time.

But the rest of the electorate will be lucky to hear the Sinn Fein message through the media. They are certainly unlikely to get to hear the Sinn Fein candidates. Gerry Adams and Danny Morrison were barred from entering Britain to discuss with the GLC last December despite their election as genuine representatives from the North.

They were barred by the Tories but with the support of the whole Labour front bench, and under the

Prevention of Terrorism Act introduced by a Labour government.

The PTA has been consistently used not to stop 'terrorism', but to prevent the truth about Ireland being known in Britain, to harass Irish people living in this country, and to threaten those trying to build a movement for the withdrawal of British troops.

By Martin Collins

While the Labour Party manifesto now calls for the repeal of the PTA, the rest of its Irish policy is abysmal — full of vague calls for Irish unity, but no call for withdrawal of the troops Labour sent in 14 years ago, and no policy to end the war. So much for Labour's radical manifesto!

The election campaign could be an ideal opportunity for the Labour Party to campaign for an end to the war in Ireland. Yet Ireland scarcely figures as an election issue for Labour. The Labour left seem to have dropped the Irish issue as too 'dangerous' to Labour's election chances.

The Labour Commit-



PROTESTORS picket the Irish tourist board office in London on 14 May. They were demanding the release of Nicky Kelly — on hunger strike and serving a 12 years prison sentence for allegedly robbing the Cork to Dublin main train in 1967.

Nicky has always protested his complete innocence, backed up by a

statement from the Provisional IRA which claimed responsibility for the robbery and insisted on the innocence of the three accused. Nicky's two co-defendants have not been acquitted but Nicky is still in jail. Since 1 May he has been on hunger strike to demand his release.

● Contact the Release Nicky Kelly Committee by phoning 01-250 1293.

Photo: HELEN DADY

tee on Ireland will be campaigning to make Ireland an election issue. In particular it will be arguing that the best way to fight for Labour's conference policy against the PTA is to challenge the PTA now, by Labour giving platforms to Sinn Fein representatives during this

election.

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last December despite their election as genuine representatives from the North.

They were barred by the Tories but with the support of the whole Labour front bench, and under the Prevention of Terrorism Act introduced by a Labour government.

# Disarming CND in the election?

Up and down the country CND groups are organising to the issue of a 'nuclear free' Britain a major feature of the general election. But the CND leadership are preparing for an election defeat and unilateralism is being withdrawn as a campaigning slogan to become a long term aim.

The election committee of CND met on 14 May with representation from the majority of CND regions. Delegates gave encouraging reports of activity in local areas.

In Manchester on 4 June CND have organised a rally with the Labour-controlled City Council in Albert Square with publicity calling 'vote nuclear free in '83'. EP Thompson, Mike Harding and several bands are expected to draw 10,000 people.

Birmingham CND are organising a city-centre march on 4 June and are planning a mass die-in. On the same day a three week

long South West March culminates in a final demonstration in Exeter.

In Scotland a full time press officer has been appointed to complement a massive leafleting and poster campaign.

In Newcastle, public meetings are being organised and leaflets for youth being printed. In York, Youth CND is holding a 'Jobs not Bombs' demonstration with the support of the local Labour Party and LPYS.

But the discussion on CND's campaign revealed a shift to the right in the thinking of some delegates.

One delegate said that he agreed with Bruce Kent that unilateralism had become an albatross round the neck of the campaign.

James Hinton, leading national council member on the elections committee argued against campaigning for a unilateralist government. Instead, he said the aim should be a hung parliament, after which CND's lobbying of MPs would help form an alliance of anti-cruise, anti-Trident representatives.

For him the key issue was 'armers versus disarmers — unilateralism didn't figure.

Julian Harlow, European Nuclear Disarmament member spelt out the electoral tactics he thought necessary — throwing CND's weight behind anti-

cruise, anti-Trident Liberal candidates.

The major event nationally remains the 24 May International Women's Day for Disarmament. CND are organising a major post-election event in Trafalgar Square on 12 June, following by a running lobby of Parliament. The May CND election pack explains the need for lobby because 'it is our responsibility to ensure that no pro-nuclear alliances are formed'.

What emerged from the campaign meeting was that the CND leadership are preparing to throw away the gains of the movement over the last four years.

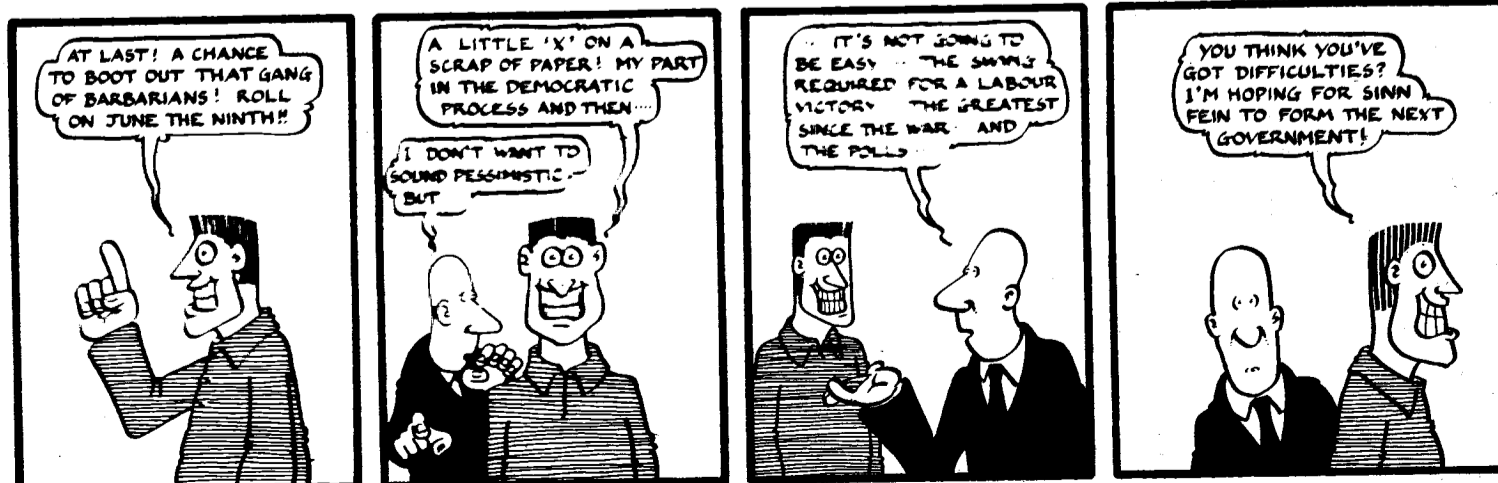
Instead of building the peace movement and arguing a clear unilateralist case during the election the leadership are preparing to

**In the nuclear election**

**vote for them.**  
You can influence the Nuclear Arms question. On June 9... It's your choice

CND election leaflet  
waterdown their policies in the name of fighting for an anti-cruise, anti-Trident parliament.  
However the leadership should take note that they are going in an opposite direction to the CND activists on the ground.

## A PIECE OF THE ACTION by CORMAC #10 5/85



# Kill the Police Bill!

The National Campaign against the Police Bill Conference last Sunday launched a series of activities to make police powers a major issue in the general election.

Over 400 delegates, mainly black, voted to go ahead with a national 'Kill the Bill' demonstration in London on 22 May and nationwide pickets of police stations on 4 June.

The delegates rejected the arguments of some, like the GLC, that action should be postponed during the election.

By Redmond O'Neill

They took the opposite view that the election provides a tremendous opportunity to explain to millions the threat of a new Tory government bringing Northern Ireland style policing to the streets of London, Manchester and Glasgow.

As George Guy, a member of the TUC General Council, put it: 'We should not stop the campaign because of the general election. The Police Bill has been put aside — not defeated.'

'With less than 4 weeks to go the Labour Party is the only hope we have of breaking the rule of the Tory class enemy. I say: Kill the Bill and remove the government which introduced it.'

'This Bill has to be put on the platform of every election campaign in the country.'

Trudi de Hane, a full time official of the GMBATU pointed out that a campaign would be necessary even if a Labour government were in power.

She explained that the Tory campaign for law and order is in reality a campaign to defend the capitalist social order. And she warned delegates not to be sidetracked into demands for 'community policing'.

'The police did not come into existence to serve the community of working class men and women. They were used against the working class and still are today.'

## Revolt

Ernie Roberts, Labour prospective parliamentary candidate for Hackney North, explained worsening police/community relations.

'When people are more and more oppressed, they revolt. When they revolt, they revolt against the state. The police are part of the state. So the revolt

of oppressed people inevitably results in bad relations with the police.'

John Fernandes, a teacher recently sacked from Hendon Police College, read out selections from essays by police cadets whose publication had resulted in his sacking.

'Blacks in Britain are a pest.' 'They seem to exist by sponging off the Welfare State.' 'They are by nature unintelligent.' 'It makes me cringe when I see a black man going out with a white woman.'

Summing up the conference, Patrick Kodakara, a Hackney Councillor, criticised the GLC for its statements that actions would be called off in the election period.

He introduced a resolution which was unanimously passed establishing an ongoing national campaign which 'seeks to build an action alliance of the black community, CND, the labour movement, the women's movement, gay and lesbian movements and all other forces opposed to the Bill'.

The campaign will seek to bring together and support the various local defence campaigns. Now the task is to extend it to organise similar campaigns throughout the country.



COLIN ROACH'S parents at Saturday's demonstration to demand an independent inquiry into the death of Colin Roach. Six hundred protestors marched without incident from Bethnal Green to Hackney. The police densely surrounded the march, followed in mobile units and took photos from their spy helicopter. The demonstration stopped outside Stoke Newington police station, where Colin Roach died, for two minutes silence. The inquest into Colin's death is planned to

resume on Monday 6 June at Clerkenwell County Court, 33 Duncan Terrace, Islington N1. (Jeff Charlton).

● The Roach Family Support Committee (RFSC) are holding a benefit on Friday 20 May, 8pm at Chats Palace, Brooksbys Walk, E9. A video of the RFSC campaign 'Who Killed Colin Roach?' is now available for meetings from RFSC, 50 Rectory Road, London N18 7PP, 01-254 7480.

## David Avondale freed

A young black from Southall, jailed nearly two years ago for a robbery he did not commit, was freed last Thursday at London's Court of Appeal.

### Cheers

Seventy people from Southall who were picketing the Court in support of David whooped and cheered in jubilation as supporters poured out from the public gallery with the news.

Avondale has been in Brixton prison since July 1981 when he was sentenced to thirteen years for taking part in an armed robbery. The conviction was made purely on the evidence of two coppers. Constables Tucker and Caesar picked Avondale out of an ID parade after they had already jointly chosen his picture from a police photo album. No other witnesses identified David.

Once again a campaign against police racism has drawn a big response from within the

black and Asian community of Southall. Last week hundreds of youth picketed the local police station in protest against the treatment doled out to David Avondale.

He briefly became a symbol of the hostility of local people to state harassment. It is no accident that oneplacard on the police station picket read 'We remember Blair Peach'.

With Avondale out, discussions are taking place on how to react to any provocation by the fascists during the election.



## Misogyny prize

THE Northern Ireland Abortion Campaign (NIAC) was set up in May 1980, following the death of a young woman who had been forced to resort to a back street abortion.

Last year alone, the Ulster Pregnancy Advisory Service referred over 1000 women for terminations.

The 1967 Abortion Act doesn't apply in the North of Ireland, and the only choices open to

most women with unwanted pregnancies are either the dangers of a back street abortionist, or an expensive trip to England. The British Labour Party is committed to extending the '67 Act to the North.

NIAC have just completed a survey of doctors which revealed that many GPs are in favour of a reform in the law.

But 14 per cent of the GPs that replied were against abortions in any circumstances.

Some of the comments they made are truly horrific — this one

wins Male Order's 1983 misogyny prize:

'To take a life is murder — I'm out. Should a woman gratify his animal desire — in many instances to degrade some fine male — she should answer for it. Girls, the sweet children, are taught what is forbidden: if they rebel, why should they add murder to their sin and involve another or others in this satanic scheme.'

● NIAC can be contacted c/o 16/18 Donegall Street, Belfast. Tel: 243363.

## Gentle mystification

'A MORE gentle mist designed to cover a wide area'. No, this is not a description of a new subtle version of the defoliant Agent Orange, but of vaginal deodorants!

Adverts for vaginal deodorants are due to reappear again in the



The non-corrosive deodorant spray for those problem areas that make you a MAN.

pages of glossy women's magazines.

The Boots company, Crookes, is relaunching a range of Femfresh 'women's body care products' including vaginal deodorant. Their publicity campaign —

and is totally unnecessary. The sprays don't mask vaginal odour and aren't hygienic. But there's nothing so simple and useless that someone with a little imagination can't make a profit out of it.'

(from an article by Annette Gartland in City Limits).

## Action against Pornography

● Pornography is Violence Against Women are coordinating the formation of a Women's Action Group. The group will include full coverage and discussion on the campaigns against pornography and male violence).

## Straight stars

HOW much reactionary clap-trap can be packed into the popular daily tabloids?

Here is an offering from the Sun's 12 May edition, courtesy of their Sunshine stargazer:

★ ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20): If you are planning a short journey or have not finalised summer holiday arrangements then do it today! It's a good time for it. Emotionally you're free and you continue to be attracted to the opposite sex.

THE SUN'S 12 MAY EDITION...  
SOCIALIST ACTION...  
arrive not later than Thursday a week prior to publication.

# El Salvador conference major success

**SALVADOREAN PEASANTS and workers through their clandestine radio stations received a telegram of solidarity from the highly successful labour movement conference on El Salvador in London on 14 May.**

Three hundred and forty delegates and 100 observers crammed into County Hall — this included 183 delegates from

**By Celia Pugh and Pete Briggs**

over 20 unions and 105 from the Labour Party.

The biggest union contingents came from the mineworkers, transport, engineers and teachers unions and the local government and civil service associations.

All rose to their feet with emotional applause after hearing Juan Martinez of the Salvadorean trade union federation CUS and Salvador Moncada, the UK representative of the Salvadorean liberation movement the FDR-FMLN.

Martinez explained the history of his people. 'It is ridiculous to say that our struggle is imported. It started centuries ago when the Spanish arrived on our shores. I doubt whether the Soviet Union existed then! ... Popular and armed struggle are not imported, because it is the response to a national situation that the people live through day by day ... We will fight against any force that violates our right to self determination.

'That's why our workers are in the liberated zones, in the mass organisations, in the neighbourhoods and the factories. That's Reagan's mistake. He thinks the whole thing is just a military affair, that the problem for him is merely a military stalemate. But we understand that it's political power that makes the difference. We understand that we have to build a political-military force that can combine the military offensive with an insurrectional general strike ...

'We have Nicaragua a free country defending itself with arms in hand. We have an obligation to ask for your solidarity with the just cause of Sandino. The only way that Nicaragua and El Salvador will be able to thank you for your help will be in the definite triumph of our people.'

Salvador Moncada underlined these points, 'We come to you with the knowledge that the main, long lasting support for our struggle comes from working people throughout the world.

'Only one thing can reverse the aggression against us and that is the joining together with working people throughout the world. We need

your help and not just in our present struggle but also when we take power, when we are subjected to the same kind of disinformation directed against the people of Nicaragua'.

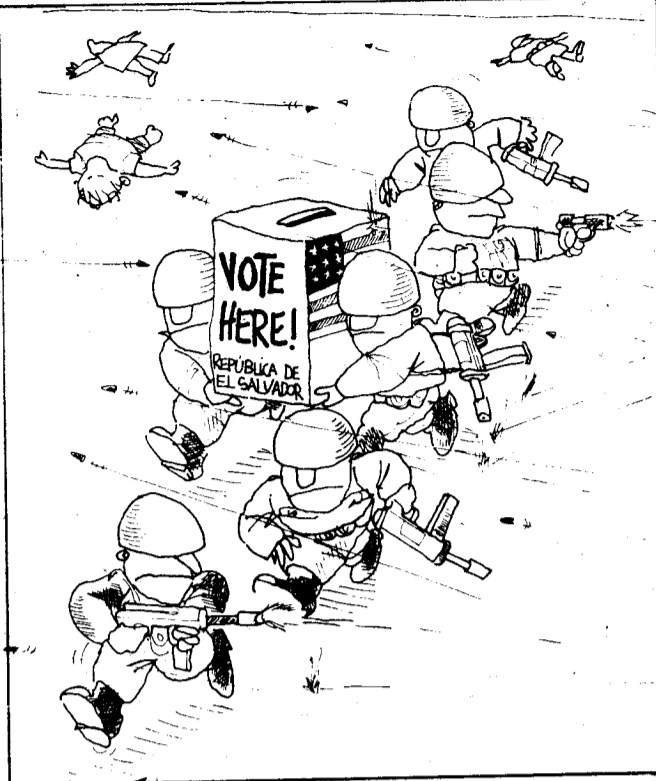
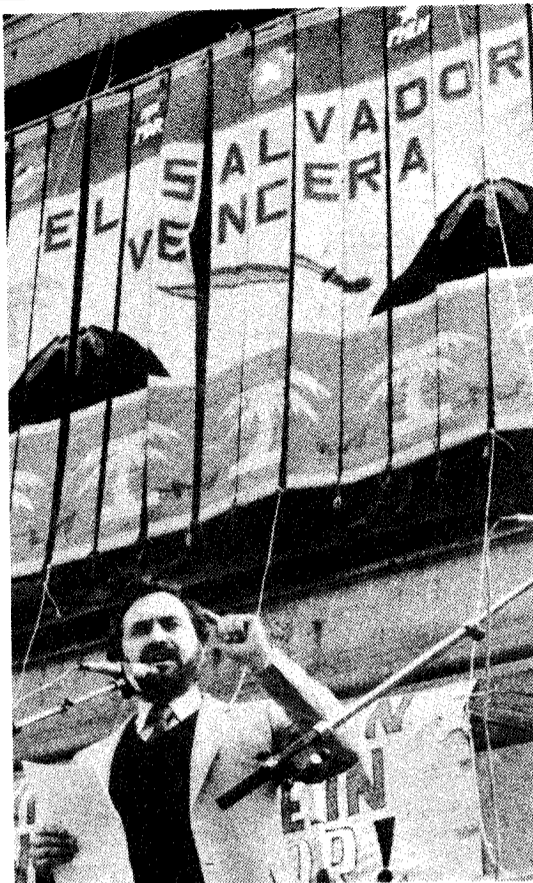
These links were stressed in greetings from Nicaraguan ambassador, Francisco D'Escoto.

Other platform speakers outlined the pressing solidarity tasks — Jenny Pearce author of *Under the Eagle*, John Fraser MP and Terry Marsland, assistant general secretary of the Tobacco Workers union. A message from Michael Foot pledged backing from the Labour Party.

## Victory

But as Terry Marsland pointed out 'Getting resolutions through the TUC is one thing. Going out into the factories, the workplaces and the streets is another. Victory is imminent in El Salvador. We must be behind them in that struggle and when they win we must be sure we are behind them in their attempts to build a new society'.

With this she drew attention to the declaration, launched from the conference to be taken deep into the labour movement. This pledges 'to publicise the situation in El Salvador to do what we can to assist Salvadorean political prisoners and refugees and to support



FDR representative in Britain, Salvador Moncada speaks to the March 1982 demonstration against the phoney elections. 1983 will see more elections and more demonstrations against British complicity.

Photo: GM Cookson

the reconstruction of the country in areas freed from government repression'.

A special appeal for aid for the zones controlled by the FDR-FMLN was launched from the conference. The second declaration pledge is 'to campaign against any government support for the present government of El Salvador or for the United States intervention in Central America'.

An appeal was made for the labour movement to build for the 11 September demonstration on the tenth anniversary of the coup in Chile. In a speech which raised £500, chair of the conference, ACTT general secretary Alan Sapper explained 'There must be no more Chiles. We must take to the streets on 11 September to say US

hands off Central America'.

Delegates outlined practical examples of solidarity like the report from the NUT executive delegate about their work to raise funds for schools in the controlled zones. Others explained the importance of challenging British government backing for Reagan, in particular the Tory pledge to send observers to the phoney elections in December.

## Unity

Juan Martinez's call for a trade union delegation to El Salvador was taken up as a demand on the TUC.

The mood of optimism, unity and defiance at the 14 May conference can now be used to deepen the roots for solidarity in the labour movement.

The contribution from Tyrone O'Sullivan, secretary of the Tower lodge of the South Wales Miners union shows the potential. He received thunderous applause when he brought greetings from the NUM. 'We had someone from El Salvador to speak to our members.

'Then the miners asked us "What the hell are you going to do on El Salvador?" We said we'd been writing letters and they said that's not enough. You've got to mobilise the rank and file. Power lies with the rank and file, they can move mountains. I'll tell you this, we'll go from here and make sure we fight'.

For copies of the labour movement declaration or aid appeal write to El Salvador Solidarity Campaign, 29 Islington Park St, London N1.

**New Socialist Action pamphlet.**

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# Mitterrand under seige

**THE CRS riot police are fighting students in the Latin Quarter again. There are strikes in the hospitals. Many different groups march in the streets in protest against the government.**

The present turmoil in Paris has echoes of 1968, and of the student demonstrations of 1973. But there is a difference.

**By Tony Brown**

The student demonstrations are much smaller. They are led by right wing Gaullist and Giscardian students, backed up by the fascist 'commandos'. The overwhelming majority of students, who are either apolitical or who sympathise with the left are not on the streets.

The other groups are mainly middle class, and they are protesting against a left wing government. Why have events reached this stage? Why does the right wing have the initiative? The answer lies in the growing unpopularity of Mitterrand's austerity measures, and the response to these of the major left wing parties and unions.

The problems of Mitterrand are the problems faced by all left wing reformist governments who take their plans seriously. There is no doubt that the Mitterrand government has achieved some successes in the field of social

reform. The retirement age has been lowered to 60, and the statutory holiday for workers has been increased to five weeks. The SMIC, the minimum wage, has been raised in real value.

But the strategy of the government has been to try to beat the world capitalist recession by government spending. Without effective control over the major monopolies, and without effective price control, this has led to a massive loss of business confidence and a flight of capital.

It has meant destabilisation of the franc on the international money markets. The result has been the need to introduce deflationary austerity measures like higher taxes and a tough attitude to strikers along with wage restraint. Unemployment still keeps going up.

## Support

Mitterrand is supported, albeit grudgingly by the Communist Party and the main trade union federations. Now the right wing has launched a big

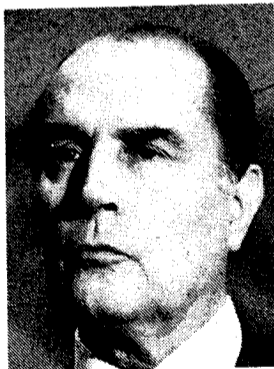
mobilisation of the enraged small business people and students. The passivity of the left plays into their hands.

Among the students, the initiatives of the right wing are most striking. The reform of the university admission system proposed by education minister Savary stems directly from the economic crisis. He proposes more selective admission, and an emphasis on science courses, because of the inability of French capitalism to employ the number of graduates being turned out.

## Protest

Both right wing and left wing student unions opposed the measures. But the right wing took the initiative to mobilise protest. The Socialist and Communist Party students organised only a small token protest. The situation has echoes of the 1930s when the fascists in the Latin Quarter demonstrated against the Popular Front government.

It also has nasty parallels with Chile under Allende, when the students at the Catholic University were able to link up with the copper



miners, in a reactionary mobilisation against Allende, inspired by the fascists.

May 1983 will not turn into a May '68 in reverse. The huge majority of the French workers are not about to be mobilised by the chic middle class fascists from the law faculties. But the situation is a dire warning for the left.

## Important

To seize the political initiative from the right it is not enough to 'defend' the existing government.

It is only by ensuring that the interests of the working class are championed by the left, if necessary against the SP-CP government, can the offensive of the right wing and the bosses be checked.

## Greet Weinberger

● Casper Weinberger (US defence secretary) invasion of Oxford. Friday, 27 May. Be there to protest.

6-7pm meeting in Oxford Town Hall with EP Thompson.  
7pm, picket outside the Oxford Union.

Transport from London leaves the Nicaraguan Solidarity Campaign office, 20 Compton Terrace, off Upper St, London N1, 3pm 27 May. Tel: 01-226 6747.

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# Socialist Woman



WE ARE NOT AMUSED

# VICTORIAN VALUES AND THE TORY OFFENSIVE



**FOLLOWING** the riots in Britain's inner cities two summers ago Margaret Thatcher was quick to take up the ideological offensive. Failure of parental responsibility was the cause, greater supervision and discipline for youth was her answer. The campaign for a return to Victorian values had begun, and at the centre of that campaign — defence of family virtues.

Thatcher explains what every

housewife knows: that you can't spend beyond your means; that children should learn at an early age the advantage of putting pennies in the piggy bank or they'll never be able to 'get on' in the world. Central to this election campaign will be the Tory contention that they are the Caring Party, the Party that values what is 'good' in the world. It has taken some time for socialists to begin to realise how, at a time of economic and social crisis, how appealing the traditional rallying cries of the right can become.

In this first supplement of

*Socialist Woman* JUDITH ARKWRIGHT looks at the reality behind the rhetoric of the Tory Party. She takes up the challenge of the Tory Party as the party of concern and reveals the hypocrisy of a philosophy that rails against the 'busybody' social workers, urging people to welcome cuts in state provision in welfare, and instead builds up the powers of the police to play a much busier role in every aspect of people's lives.

The alternative being offered by the Labour Party is also critically examined and a basis for a socialist policy explained.

'You've really outlined an approval of what I would call Victorian values.' Brian Walden

'Oh exactly. Very much so. Those were the values when our country became great'.

(Weekend World January 1982)

Margaret Thatcher

## Women and the family in the firing line

### Jobs

FROM 1979-81 the average percentage of unemployed women almost doubled. 71,000 women have been dropped from the unemployment register because of the new way of compiling the unemployment figures. Over 860,000 women are officially registered unemployed, but more than a million more would like to work, most of whom are married women.

### Pay

WOMEN'S pay as a percentage of men's is steadily declining. Women's pay rose from 63.1 per cent of men's in 1970 to 75.7 per cent in 1977 and then fell back to 73.9 per cent in 1982.

Nearly 60 per cent of women workers' earnings today in Britain are below £80 per week. The government is abolishing fair wages resolutions in government contracts.

The Tory government was compelled by the European Court to update the Equal Pay Act. By using the Order to amend the Act the Tories avoided debate and rushed through a cosmetic amendment which accepted the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, but erecting hurdles at every stage discouraged women from making any use of the legislation.

### Part-Time workers

BETWEEN September 1980 and 1981 alone 197,000 part-time workers were sacked. Two out of five women are

part-time workers.

### Maternity Benefits

FIRMS employing fewer than six people, where many women work, are now exempt from the duty to reinstate women who have just given birth.

Procedures for gaining maternity leave are now much more complex. Women must state in writing when they intend to leave, giving the assumed date of confinement and when they will return to work. All employers do not any longer have to keep the job open for women when they return, but can get away with offering a similar job.

### Education and training

THE GOVERNMENT has done nothing to halt the trend towards greater job segregation of women under the impact of the crisis. In post-school education the approaches which help women most are the first for the chop: mature student places, the Open University, day release, TOPS — all essential to those who have missed out on education or need retraining. Student loans and voucher systems further threaten women.

### Social Security

WOMEN excluded from the labour market are more and more forced to live below the poverty line. Women account for two-thirds of pensioners,

most of the seven million recipients of child benefit. The notorious co-habitation rule is policed rigorously under the Tory administration. Young single mums are particularly vulnerable.

### Nurseries

NURSERY education under the Tories meant that the three and four year old's contingent in full time education between 1979 and 1981 rose by 4 per cent and then fell by 5.4 per cent between 1981 and 1982.

By 1980 child-minders accounted for 57 per cent of full day-care places in Great Britain. Estimates of the numbers of unregistered child minders range from 100,000 to 300,000 in England alone.

### Abortion

DESPITE the defeat of legal attacks on women's abortion rights under this government the attack on facilities continues. As the NHS share of abortions has failed to keep pace with demand the share of the 'market' has increased in the private profit-making end of the market.

### Black women

UNDER the new immigration rules of 1980 and 1983 women who are British citizens have the right to bring in a husband but only if they satisfy immigration officials that they have met and that they intend to live together permanently.

## GREETINGS

'GAY YOUNG Socialists greets the arrival of *Socialist Woman*. There aren't enough women's voices on the left, let alone young lesbian ones! We hope to see regular coverage of issues from Gays and Lesbians and how they effect 'straights' as well. No Gay liberation without socialism! No socialism without Gay liberation!' GAY YOUNG SOCIALISTS

'WE HOPE Socialist Woman succeeds in bringing confidence and strength to women working to end all forms of male violence from Cruise missiles to pornography. Women together are strong. May the 24th be with you.' LAURA AND CARMEL. Brighton May 24th Planning Group.

'THE NATIONAL Abortion Campaign sends greetings for your

first issue and urges your readers to support our campaign for a woman's right to choose whether or not to continue a pregnancy. We still need financial support too!' NATIONAL ABORTION CAMPAIGN

'YOUNG WOMEN have been at the sharp end of the last four years of Tory misery, but have also led the fightback — at Greenham, in Youth CND, at work and in the Labour Party. *Revolution* stands with these young women in their struggles, and we welcome the 'Socialist Woman' supplement as a new form for discussion and debate that will map the way ahead.' REVOLUTION

'THE STRUGGLE of women in the west and the east as women is a common struggle and we would like to extend our greetings to the first issue of *Socialist Woman*.' KUMUDINI, *Revolution*

tionary Marxist Party, Sri Lanka

'FORGET the differences between women of colour. Let's unite together to get rid of Margaret Thatcher.' RAJES BALA, Tamil Women's League of UK.

'MARGARET THATCHER is a disgrace to womanhood. Let all women unite against her and her government in the coming election and support the only other significant party with a proper policy on jobs not bombs.' PAT ARROWSMITH, CND National Council

'A WARY feminist welcome to *Socialist Action* from *Spare Rib*. May the *Socialist Woman* supplement rise (and bite the hand that feeds it wherever necessary). Women are revolting!' SPARE RIB collective

# The Tory for the fa



The families that the Tories conveniently forget — battered by their social and economic policies.

# The family today

**DURING** the last twenty years the family has undergone many changes (see chart). The family unit is difficult to identify. In particular what is supposed to be the 'typical' male with a non-working wife plus two children — only makes up eight per cent of the labour force today.

The number of single parent families has doubled in recent years to the extent that the model of the nuclear family is not the typical household unit.

Still, most people pass through some kind of nuclear family unit during their lives, the Family Commission found that the vast majority of people aspire to that model.<sup>1</sup> In particular the institution of marriage shows a massive durability. Only 14 per cent of men and 8 per cent of women never marry. Ninety per cent of young people expect to get married.

Nevertheless the family is in crisis. One in three marriages end in divorce. As many as one in five children born today will have parents who divorce before the children are 16 years old.

Violence against women and children constituted 25 per cent and 4 per cent respectively of all violent crime according to a 1981 study.<sup>2</sup>

This has to be seen against the backdrop of economic and social deprivation which are the consequences of the Tories' attacks outlined above. Today nearly 1,300,000 children are in families where the head of the household is out of work. Means-tested benefits interacting with falling income tax thresholds sets the notorious poverty trap into motion: income increases, a family begins to lose its entitlement to different means-tested benefits, and simultaneously pays higher taxation and national insurance contributions.

Cut backs in health care for the elderly mean that today one in two women can expect to look after an elderly or disabled relative at some time in their lives.<sup>3</sup>

The Tories' response to this crisis of the family has been the type of strategy outlined by the Think Tank, leaked to the press at the beginning of this year. And behind the Think Tank lie the ideas of Tory advisors like Ferdinand Mount.

Households: by type		1961	1980
Great Britain.		%	%
One person			
— under retirement age		4	8
— over retirement age		7	14
Two or more people			
— one or more over retirement age		3	1
— all under retirement age		2	1
Married couple only		26	27
Married couples with 1 or 2 dependent children		30	26
Married couple with 3 or more dependent children		8	6
Married couple with independent child (ren) only		10	8
Lone-parent with at least one dependent child		2	4
Lone-parent with dependent child (ren) only		4	4
Two or more families		3	1
Total households		100	100

Source: *Social trends*, 12, HMSO, 1981, Table 2.2.

**IN PREPARATION** for the general election the Cabinet's Central Policy Review staff (the Think Tank) produced a radical list of proposals for restructuring the welfare state.

These proposals were put before a committee of senior Cabinet ministers (all men) who were to refine them to provide the strategic backdrop for the Tory manifesto. Many of the proposals deal with the strengthening of the family.

According to the report in the *Guardian* (17.2.83) they include:

- **Women and their families.** Encourage mothers to stay at home. 'Encouraging families — in the widest sense — to reassume responsibilities taken on by the state, for example, the responsibility for the disabled, elderly, unemployed 16 year olds'.
  - **Parental rights and responsibilities.** Encourage more parental involvement in schools and find 'ways of encouraging the development of children ... into self-reliant, responsible capable, enterprising and fulfilled adults'.
  - **Training children.** Train children to manage their pocket money and encourage banks and schools to look for further ways to promote savings; change the culture so that business and wealth creation become more acceptable.
  - **Encouraging private provision of social needs.** Define minimum safety net for welfare needs, encourage voluntary contributions to both state and voluntary services by permitting PAYE deductions for charitable purposes, consolidate and extend use of surrogate families.
  - **Caring for the elderly.** Adjust tax and benefit allowance to see if families looking after their elderly might be better rewarded; give more encouragement to community-based services like day or short term care.
  - **Preventing crime.** Make parents responsible for some of the anti-social behaviour of their children.
  - **The moral environment.** Consider the desirability of more active government role in dealing with pornography, sex shops, television and press violence.
- The philosophy that underlines these proposals is, according to a prominent member of the Cabinet committee Patrick Jenkin, the idea that:

'The family has been the foundation for every society known to history. It possesses the strength and resilience not least in adversity. Loyalty to family ranks highest of all, higher than loyalty to state.'

Ferdinand Mount, head of Margaret Thatcher's personal policy unit, has explained these ideas in some depth in his book *The Subversive Family*.<sup>4</sup>

Mount's argument rests on four main planks. Firstly, that the nuclear family is the universal family form. Secondly, that the values of the family are for individualism as against the collectivism of socialism or even the church. Thirdly, that the family is subversive because it has always fought a battle against those forces which attempted to supplant it. Finally, he suggests that the main source of power and control for working class men and women is within the family.

Cursorily dismissing any evidence to the contrary, Mount argues that the present family form is universal and has been a constant factor in human development, only qualifying this by limiting his conclusions to Western civilisation and to the last 1000 years! But not only has this institution stood the test of time, Mount tells us, but it has positively resisted all challenges.

## Opponents

The family is subversive because it consistently puts private before communal good and thus is in permanent antagonism with those who wish to bring about change in society as a whole — utopians, feminists, Marxists, Hitler and even Jesus Christ are opponents of the family says Mount.

'It is the essence of marriage that it is private and apart from the rest of society. Its "selfishness" or "exclusiveness" is not its undertone but its heart and soul.' But on the other hand 'fraternity permeates both the Christian and Marxist hope'.<sup>5</sup>

For Mount such ideologies place too much emphasis on the public sphere of life and devalue the private sphere and achievements within it: they are obsessed with economics and politics and ignore the power of natural ties such as love and caring. For him the family endures because it is unaffected by political and economic develop-

# Labour's fami

**THE IDEAS** of personal liberation and freedom which are the main targets of Mount and the Tories do not inform the thinking of the present leadership of the Labour Party.

'The family is the most important unit of our community. That is why for the first time in our country our government is putting forward what amounts to a national family policy. Our aim is straightforward — it is to strengthen the stability and quality of family life in Britain ...'<sup>7</sup>

While the rhetoric is Mount's, Jim Callaghan was actually providing a rationalisation for the cut required from his own government by the International Monetary Fund. But it would be facile to assume an identity between Mount's views and those of the leadership of the Labour Party's.

Underlying current Labour Party policy on the family, and in particular Labour's manifesto, are the ideas of Lord Beveridge, architect of the

welfare state now so bitterly attacked by the Tories.

At the core of Beveridge's philosophy was the notion that married women would stay at home and that a man's earnings should be sufficient to keep her — the concept of the family wage.

## Income gap

This concept was buttressed by three tenets. First, that the aim of the welfare state was to provide aid and help to individual families, not a move towards social responsibility and redistribution of wealth through benefits and tax concessions. Secondly, 'the gap between incomes, in and out of work should be as large as possible' — in other words state benefits were not intended and should not provide a living wage for their recipients.

Finally, the welfare state should be used to consolidate a traditional role for women. Indeed Beveridge's recommendations were based on his division



# future family

ments in any fundamental sense and is a haven from them.

From this Mount draws the conclusion that what the family needs is to be left alone. He claims that the working class family has carried out a 'permanent revolution' against all those forces which have tried to interfere with it.

The most dangerous enemies of the family today are 'those who claim to come with the best intentions, but come armed all the same with statutory powers and administrative instruments; education officers, children's officers, architects, planners ...' These people Mount accuses of 'intruding into our private space.'

## Services run down

The consistency of approach between this position and the Think Tank proposals can immediately be seen. The net result is a continuation of the present policies of the Tories and a further running down of the services which most families depend on to one degree or the other. The family and not the state 'must be in the front line when Gran needs help' according to Patrick Jenkin.

The notion that the family can exist independently from the state, is of course, a sham, as are the Tory declarations against state interference. The government stands on its 'libertarian' principles in refusing to intervene to save a factory or mine on which the livelihoods of thousands of workers depend, but will readily mobilise all its resources against a strike.

The Think Tank proposals themselves are the most shocking and extensive intervention in the heart of private and family life. Its proposals amount to a massive programme of social engineering to achieve its nirvana of 'a culture in which business and wealth creation becomes acceptable.'

The double standards also apply to the position of women. Mount argues in favour of basic civil rights for women as enshrined in recent legislation. But there is a class bias to the way in which the Tories extend these rights: namely to those who can afford to exercise them. Abortion is readily available to the rich in private clinics, while cuts in the NHS restrict the same right for working people.

At the same time the Tories have

been forced to promote 'law and order' type demagoguery against rapists, pornographers, in order to more clearly demarcate the boundaries of the family. Such rhetoric, the bag and baggage of the 'Victorian' approach, creates a more favourable climate for the growth of right wing forces such as the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child whose growth has a reciprocal effect on Tory policies.

However the kernel of the Tories' policy on women is the campaign reflected in the Think Tank proposals to drive women out of the workforce and into the home. This policy has met with considerable success as we have shown — albeit with some unexpected results. For example in South Wales it is estimated that women will soon outnumber men in the workforce because the structure of industry favours keeping women in low paid but profitable industries. Nevertheless women are currently being expelled from the workforce at three times the rate of men.

## Nurseries & creches

Again the double standards of the Tories are shown through the new regulations introduced into the unemployment benefit system by the Rayner Report, requiring women to prove that they have the means to look after children in order to be eligible for work. So at the same time as the Tories remove the possibility of working women having their children cared for through nurseries and creches they demand that women provide evidence that they have access to these same facilities.

But the hypocrisy of the Tories does not make their policy inconsistent. The catalogue of attacks on the family outlined above, has taken its toll in families broken up and violence within the family. But these failures are represented as individual instances which only prove the general rule that the family is a haven of happiness in a grim world.

The starting point of the Tories is not defence of the family, but the promotion of policies which put profit before social need. The aim of the Tories is to bolster the family as a buttress against the effects of their own policies.

# ly philosophy

of society into six groups: employees, other gainfully employed, those of working age not gainfully employed, those below working age, those above it, and housewives — married women of working age. It is in this context that the granting of family allowances has to be seen, not to give women economic independence, but to encourage 'larger families without which the British race cannot continue'.

The concept of the family wage informs regulations on most state benefits; justifying keeping women's wages at a low level and the idea that women do not need to go out to work since men are the bread-winners.

Likewise it informs aspects of the labour movement's policy. For example, the local authority unions' claim to the Clegg Commission after the Winter of Discontent used in negotiations the fact that almost half their full time workers earned less take home pay than a typical family on social security.<sup>8</sup> By using the family in this way as a comparative yardstick for the purposes of

wage bargaining women will lose out.

But of course the myth of the family wage applies to all those in the family. It is estimated that if wives did not work the number of families on the poverty line would quadruple — adding enormously to the seven million people already dependent on state benefits. In fact the Tory policy of driving women back into the home resulted by 1980 in a drop of disposable income available to families of six per cent.

## Assumptions

The weakness of Beveridgism therefore lies not only in its fundamental assumptions. In the context of the economic crisis of the '80s the progressive measures it supports have become utopian without a thorough going transformation of the economy putting social need before profit. This contradiction is nowhere more evident than in the policies and programme advanced by the Labour Party's manifesto *The New Hope*.



A Victorian housemaid — the rich object to socialisation of housework, but have always found their own way around domestic drudgery.

# Marxism and the family

FOR MOUNT there is only one coherent alternative to his own philosophy of the family — that provided by Marxists and socialist feminists.

He accurately describes this view that the nuclear family is not the natural and universal way to organise personal relationships, but an institution with a definite historical role in the context of given economic, social and legal relations.

Socialists do not deny that the family offers limited shelter from the ravages of capitalist society, and that love, care and genuine affection take place within its framework. But socialists also insist that the functions of the family, in particular the welfare and reproduction of the working class through the family takes place on the basis of the subordination and oppression of women.

To Tory notions of individualism socialists argue the need for cooperation; to self-help the notion of collective responsibility; and to notions of nominal equal rights we put forward the prospect of a real choice and power for women and children in determining their lives. But while Mount correctly sees these notions as counterposed, he

is also forced to distort socialist conceptions. He accuses them of not being interested in 'loving, caring relationships' and having a rigid schema into which they want to organise all personal relationships.

The irony is that Mount and his colleagues' policy is to impose a schema on society through discouraging women from going out to work and forcing them into the home, while preaching the evils of maternal deprivation increasing family poverty, cutting education, and taking away children's futures.

Marxists do not believe that there is one way to bring up children. We do not think that women can have a real choice in society until they are liberated from the constraints of domestic drudgery and responsibility.

At present only the very rich are liberated from the bulk of these tasks. Ironically a large number of examples of non-nuclear family arrangements — boarding schools, nannies, domestic servants and the like — are the prerequisites of a class that enforces a different model of family life on the majority of the population.

In proposing the notion of the abolition of the family, Marx and

Engels exposed the hypocrisy of the ruling class who preached one thing and practised another; not to limit peoples' choice about how they lived, but to enhance it. It is ironic comment on Thatcher's appeal for a return to Victorian values that her ideologues should preach the same Victorian humbug.

The fact that the ruling class have no principled objection to collective responsibility to the functions of the nuclear family is shown by measures such as 24-hour nurseries introduced during the Second World War to free women for the war effort. Tory objections apply only to the liberation of women and humanity.

The first steps towards such freedom of choice lie through state provision of socialised child-care through 24-hour nurseries, complete socialisation of health and welfare through the expansion of a free and comprehensive health service; socialisation of education that allows people of whatever age access to education; care of old people through an adequate pension and provision of suitable accommodation.

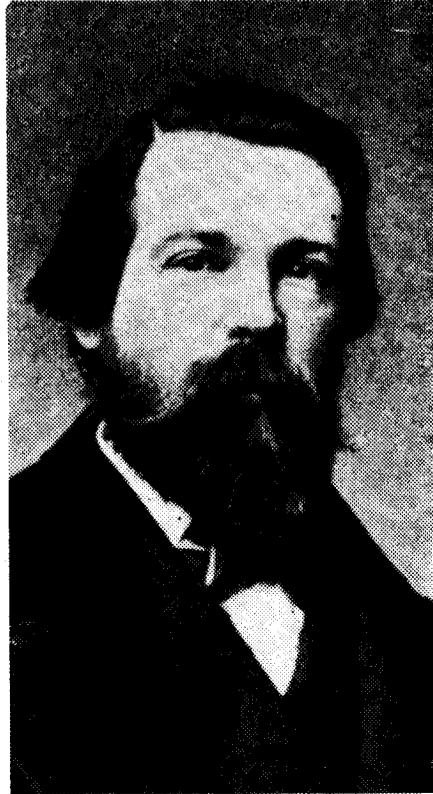
All these necessary steps towards freedom of choice are those which the Tories are undermining.



Thatcher — double values



Joan Lestor — Labour's spokesperson on women



Friedrich Engels — for liberation

# New hope for the family?

THE PUBLICATION of *The New Hope for Britain*, the document on which Labour's general election manifesto was based, was greeted with predictable hostility by the media and their Tory allies.

The sections of the document on the family and women's rights did not escape their critical attention and for good reason since on certain issues it represents a definite advance, reflecting the hard work of women activists within the party and the growth of women's organisation (a doubling of the size of the Labour women's conference last year).

But there is no break with the type of thinking represented by Beveridge and no radical measures proposed that could qualitatively change women's role in society, and thus provide a real alternative to the Tories' view of the isolated family unit.

The document explains that: 'Women should have a genuine choice between staying at home to look after the family or going to work. Men and women should be able to share the fights and responsibilities of paid employment and domestic activities.'

The problem lies not so much in these sentiments but in the lack of measures within the document to realise them. While it is progressive to suggest that men share responsibility for domestic work the document does not explain how this is going to be achieved.

## Swapping

As Sue Himmilweit has explained this cannot be through men and women swapping roles, but for these roles to be changed through a transformation of society.

'Although men may be beginning to do just a little more domestic labour and most married women are by now part of the paid labour force ... the division of roles itself has only arisen in the context of a gender-divided society.

It is not ... that the roles of breadwinner and houseperson were there

first and men and women got allocated to them, but that that division only grew up on the basis of their being specific to men and women respectively.

'It therefore seems unlikely that we could strip them of their sexist content giving men and women equal opportunities to step into either role ... without fundamentally changing the roles and breaking down the division of labour between the two sorts of work.'

## Policy

It is precisely the failure of the document to challenge this framework which leads into weaknesses in specific areas of policy. The antithesis of the family wage concept is to treat the components of the family as responsible individuals with individual rights not subordinate to those of the family as a whole.

But while the manifesto proposes the abolition of the married man's tax allowance it does not situate this correct reform within the context of an overall strategy for a guaranteed independent income for women.

In this the notion of equal pay for work of equal value is an indispensable concept which the document takes on board, but this is meaningless without a statutory minimum wage which deals with the low pay ghettos into which women are forced.

As the document points out there were three million low paid workers in 1982, of whom two million were women: if part time workers, young workers, and homeworkers are added it totals nearly 6 million of whom the overwhelming bulk are women.

But the categorical commitment to a statutory minimum wage in Labour's Programme '82 has gone in favour of a discussion with the TUC on the possibility of such a measure.

As the TUC is overwhelmingly hostile to the idea is an interference with its role in the free collective bargaining process (with the honourable exception of the National Union of Public Employees) this is tantamount to



Labour leaders only give in under pressure.

dropping the idea.

Another important advance in Programme '82 not present in the manifesto is the relation to single parent families. Programme '82 explained: 'We will introduce the only realistic answer to the poverty in which many one parent families live; an adequate one parent family benefit which will reflect the fact that until universal child care is provided by the state the allowance must be sufficient for the child's needs and those of the caring parent.'

This commitment, along with the promise of mandatory provision of nurseries, represented an important break with Beveridge: a firm commitment for the state to extend its sphere of duties and in the meantime to provide a decent living rather than a 'supplement' for one parent families.

However this commitment does not appear in the campaign document and the promise of mandatory nursery care is hedged with the proviso that this should be 'as soon as possible'. But nowhere is the retreat

from the advances in Labour Party policy over the last three years more pronounced than in relation to fertility control.

Three Labour Party conferences have endorsed free abortion on request. Yet the document, clearly indicating pressure on all wings of the party from reactionary forces in society, states that:

'While continuing to defend and respect the absolute right of individual conscience, we will improve NHS facilities for family planning and abortion, including counselling and day care; and we will remove barriers to the implementation of the existing right of choice for women in the termination of pregnancy' (our emphasis).

This refusal to move further than the limited and vulnerable provisions of the 1967 Act signals a worrying timidity by the Labour leadership to advance the interests of women. However such timidity is consistent with the limited scope of the document in relation to the amendment of the laws of consent, on prostitution

and of rape.

On the issue of rape the document suggests that in power Labour will: 'Give more support for victims of rape and provide urgent review of police and court procedures in cases of rape and violence against women.'

Basic steps such as making rape within marriage a criminal offence as moved by John Tilley MP in the last parliament are not even discussed.

The sum effect of these deficiencies within Labour's programme is a retreat from any fundamental effort to come to grips with the crisis of the family. While this is true to Labour's decades-old strategy, it corresponds neither to current problems nor to the responsibility that Labour has to champion women's rights to liberation.

A policy has to be developed which, rejecting the principles of Beveridgeism accepts the need for an alternative to the nuclear family if women are to be truly liberated from the ties and burdens experienced within its confines.

## Households not families

THE FIRST STEP towards such an alternative should be to introduce in law and custom the notion of households rather than families. Less than one third of the population live in a traditional family unit.

Family law should be changed to be based on households and the different types of personal arrangements within households. This is already the case with the Domestic Violence Act which applies both to married and common law couples.

Laws of this kind should be extended to take account of all type of relationships. This should cover property laws, taxation and benefits which currently take as their starting point a married couple. But it should also mean that violence within the family and particularly rape, be treated as a criminal offence.

## Home responsibility and social provision

DIRECT PAYMENT to elderly people and children cared for in the home should be made where possible. Likewise payment should be made directly to the women in acknowledgement of home responsibility. This should not be seen as inducement for women to stay at home, but as the creation of independent relationships within the family. Neither should it be seen as a mechanism for the redistribution of wealth within the family.

This erroneous view is current within certain sections of the women's movement. Bea Campbell and Anna Coote urge such a strategy in their book *Sweet Freedom* when they say: 'Much turns on the question, in particular the

redistribution of wealth within the family. It does not eclipse the aim of redistributing wealth between labour and capital; but in our view it is the appropriate context in which that aim should be set.'

This argument is fraught with danger. Increased benefits and allowances should not be seen as being paid for through the abolition of the married man's tax allowance or some such (although such a reform would be independently desirable) but through a punitive wealth tax.

The aim must be to throw out the Beveridge notion that benefits are merely state aid and introduce the principle that they constitute a collective and social right instead.

Nurseries, collective laundries and eating facilities mandatory on local authorities are not outlandish as the Tories pretend. Such facilities were provided throughout the Second World War and still exist in some areas — although too few to change habits of domestic work.

So while home responsibilities of women should be recognised, this is merely a step on the road towards their collectivisation and the release of women from those duties.

## Economic independence and women's right to work

SUCH CHOICES as outlined above can only really become a reality by ensuring the economic independence of women throughout the system. As well as adjusting inequalities in benefits and taxes — fundamentally this means enshrining in law and in practice the right of women to go out to work, to equal pay and for a guaranteed minimum wage.

# TOWARDS AN ALTERNATIVE

In addition, a guaranteed minimum income for all women has to be ensured. This would mean getting rid of the cohabitation rules on supplementary benefit and all availability tests including those recently introduced by the Rayner report.

Again this policy would have to be linked into demands for a wealth tax — but no policies for women can be effective on the basis of sharing out the existing cake. The notion of the family wage has to be challenged through this mechanism through establishing women's absolute right to work on the same terms as men.

## Breaking down the division of labour between men and women

A FIRST step toward this would be the introduction of positive action programmes at work and in training. But this should not be geared towards enhancing the opportunity of individual women — the concept of class action and quotas for women in certain jobs and industries to break out of low pay ghettos should be guaranteed in law.

Such a policy will need to be fought for in the unions both through collective bargaining and through political action if working patterns and the position of women in the labour market are to change.

The division of labour between men and women will start to be over-

come through the combination of measures described above. Persuading individual men to take more responsibility outside this framework is utopian.

## Right to choose and fertility control

ANY FORM of coercion in sexual relationships must be eradicated from law and custom, whether this be expressed through lack of contraception and abortion facilities; through the age of consent laws or laws against homosexuality.

Abolition of such restrictive laws should go hand in hand with the principle of mandatory provision of contraceptive and abortion facilities for all ages under local community control.

At the same time violence against women and children must be tackled, not through strengthening the forces of the state, but through self-defence being taught in schools, through expansion of battered wives refuges, through community control of all police operations and through rape crisis centres being established in all areas.

This programme of democratic and partial demands will not resolve the problem of how to counter Thatcher's offensive against the working

class and oppressed under the banner of Victorian values. Neither does it provide an answer to the social and economic crisis that is the context for the crisis of the family. A socialist programme is needed to put the cost of the crisis where it belongs — on the bosses. But it's only if we start to take up the measures outlined that women, upon whose subordination Thatcher's plans for the family rest, can be mobilised. A fight by the labour movement around these policies will begin the process of winning women who have the most to lose from Thatcher's plans into a mighty force against them.

## References

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- 2 *House of Commons Hansard*. 8 December 1982
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- 4 *The Subversive Family*. F. Mount. Macmillan 1982
- 5 *Ibid*
- 6 *Ibid*
- 7 Jim Callaghan quoted in *The Family in the Firing Line* J Conosus and A. Cock
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# Zionism in the Age of the Dictators\*

**THERE WAS a time when a book about Zionist collaboration with anti-semites, Nazis included, would have been dismissed as a sick joke by a self-hater (as anti-Zionist Jews are invariably denounced).**

But last year's invasion of Lebanon so tarnished Israel's image that there is growing scepticism about the unimpeachable authority that Zionists have always falsely assumed on the 'Jewish Question'.

reviewed by Pam Singer

With the massacres at Sabra and Chatila refugee camps, even the trump card of the Holocaust is losing effectiveness as a means of gaining sympathy and silencing opposition.

In this context, Brenner's book should get the serious attention it deserves as a thoughtful, well-researched and invaluable book.

Brenner's starting point is that Zionism as an ideology leads logically to co-existence and collaboration with anti-semites. He does not try to score sensationalist points by making glib equations between Zionism and Nazism. Rather, he shows how Zionists sought the aid of anti-semites to achieve their goal and accommodated to them.

Zionism has always postured as the sole defender of the Jews against anti-semitism. However the Zionist movement and indeed the state of Israel were founded and maintained not out of intransigent struggles

against anti-semitism, but out of an acceptance of anti-semitism as endemic and 'natural' to gentile society.

The Holocaust was an extreme example of this undeniable 'fact'. The consistent Zionist argues that Jews, as a distinct nation with immutable characteristics, in perpetual conflict with gentile society, have no option but to create a separate Jewish nation state.

Fighting anti-semitism is seen as a futile gesture. Pragmatic use of and accommodation to anti-semitism, therefore, has always been a central strategy of the Zionist movement. This cynicism arises from defeat. Just as the Zionist movement was born out of defeat of the Jews in late 19th century Europe, the state of Israel was born out of the defeat of the Jews in the Europe of the '30s.

Zionists came to accept the inescapable conclusion of European anti-semitism, whose main slogan was 'Jew, go back to Palestine'. It is not surprising, then, that the Zionist movement would have collaborated with anti-semites to achieve the common goal of a Jewish ghetto in Palestine. The early Zionists however were not fussy about location.

Zionists, left and right alike, subordinated every-

thing to the goal of creating and maintaining the Jewish state. Brenner shows how they consistently failed to build movements against fascism and anti-semitism. This is still true today. The goal of Zionists is not to improve the lot of Jews everywhere, but to bring them to the promised land.

Much has already been published about Zionist cooperation with Germany during World War 2. Brenner gives us a more rounded picture by including lesser known material about the Jewish communities and Zionists in China, Spain, Italy and Hungary. He goes through the records of all Zionist political currents up to the pro-fascist Stern gang, once considered the lunatic fringe of the lunatic fringe, whose operations commander Yitzhak Shamir is now Israel's foreign minister.

Brenner strengthens his convincing case by letting Zionists from all factions speak for themselves, and then situating them within a wider political and social context.

Brenner's conclusion is that Zionism is totally incorrect. That it is not, and never has been, identical to Judaism or the Jewish peoples. He insists that Jewish and Arab progressives must unite to defeat Zionism.

Read the book and see who are the real 'self-haters'.

\* *Zionism in the Age of the Dictators* (Published by Croom Helm Ltd, £9.95.)



Rita, played by Julie Walters.

# Educating Rita

**EDUCATING RITA** is about a working class woman who takes an Open University course in English Literature.

Rita, a hairdresser played by Julie Walters, isn't willing to accept her role as just a wife and childbearer. She knows she is intelligent and intends to prove it to her husband, her tutor and most importantly, to herself.

The film is about a woman who decides she wants to make her own decisions, her own choices.

life. He realises that most of what he teaches his students is pretentious, irrelevant, rubbish.

By her very presence there Rita blows apart the myth of university students being more intelligent than other people.

Her sharp wit and realistic attitudes to life and literature expose the other student's artistic pretensions as bullshit. After a discussion on 'Macbeth and Tragedy', Rita says, '... and I thought Macbeth was just a bloody good story!'

Because Rita refuses to obey her husband — he burns her books and essays to try to stop her — they split up. She finds herself ostracised from her own working class com-

munity because she refuses to fulfil their expectations of women, and she cannot fit into the society that Frank is a part of — polite, comfortable, middle-class ... and completely dishonest.

She instead turns to a 'student lifestyle'. She becomes friends with people she thinks have everything — 'style', 'literary talent', and so on.

It is only when the woman she lives with tries to commit suicide that she realises this way of life is also a fraud.

Rita again realises that she's going to have to make it on her own — the only person she can consistently rely on is herself.

## Education

*Educating Rita* is not about a working class woman being 'made good' by an education. It is a story of a working class woman who decides she has to make her life her own.

Rita is no different after she has learnt how to criticise Ibsen and Chekhov — it has merely reasserted her belief that she can lead her own life independent of her husband and enforced motherhood.

## Enjoyable

When she has to choose between her husband and her education, Rita chooses her education.

Similarly when Frank gets sacked for being drunk and disorderly and asks her to go with him to Australia, she again remains adamant about her right to choose. 'No, I may continue my studies, I may go to France ... I may even have a baby.'

*Educating Rita* is a really funny, enjoyable, and in parts very moving film.

Julie Walters makes what could have been a somewhat predictable film into one I really enjoyed and one well worth seeing.



Israeli soldiers on patrol

By Sue MacDonald

As she says to her husband who wants her to give up her course and have kids, 'I don't want a baby until I have a choice'.

From the minute she totters across the Oxford cobbled courtyard (do all working class women really wear shoes we can't even stand up in?) she brings a hilarious breath of fresh air into the life of her tutor, Frank (played by Michael Caine).

Frank is permanently drunk and totally disillusioned with his job and

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**TV CHOICE**

**On Your Bikes**  
Saturday, 21 May, 4.35, Channel 4.  
NO, NOT the Norman Tebbit Show or a Tory election broadcast, but a new series for cyclists, the first ever on TV even though there are eight million in Britain.

**The Witness**  
Saturday 21 May, BBC2.  
HUNGARIAN FILM banned there for nine years. A satirical comedy about the attempts of the state to turn a man into the star witness in a show trial.

**Vietnam**  
Monday 23 May, 9.00, Channel 4.  
THIS WEEK is the Tet Offensive and features some of the best film of period from 10,000,000 BC until now is a bit of a tall order, even if it is spread over 26 episodes.

The series is based on the Times Atlas of World History and has all sorts of computer graphics and maps. The trouble with this sort of thing is that it goes all over the place politically trying to explain massive developments in the short time it can devote to each event.

**Britain in the Thirties: For King and Country?**  
Thursday 26 May, BBC2.  
IN 1933 the Oxford Union voted for the famous motion that they wouldn't fight for King and Country. Some of these former daring young men are asked if they would vote the same way again.

**Nuclear Week**  
Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Sunday, Channel 4.

CHANNEL FOUR seems a bit embarrassed that its long-planned nuclear week has fallen in the middle of the election campaign.

On balance, it will probably end up aiding CND more than anyone else, partly because the most attractive programmes are the anti-nuclear ones.

It kicks off on Sunday with a *Weekend World Special*. Brian Walden looks at the history of Britain's nuclear arsenal and then chairs a discussion between representatives of the major parties.

If any of the 'unilateralists' of Labour's front bench are putting our side, this will probably make the score 1-0 to the opposition so far.

The more interesting stuff is during the week. Three programmes on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday described as 'provocative entertainment', feature Jonathon Dimpleby and others in a mixture of songs, sketches and more serious contributions called *It'll All Be Over in Half An Hour*.

Following each one, an edition of *Opinions* has Michael Howard, Lord Cameron and Lord Zuckerman in that order, whining on about the need for deterrence. The week ends with a debate on Sunday 29 May.

**DIARY**

(These listings are free for all major labour movement and campaign 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).

● **'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.

● **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.

● **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.

● **End racism in schools and police harassment!** Public meeting, Wed 25 May, 7.30pm, Church Hall, 4 Algernon Road, Lewisham, SE13.

● **Labour Committee on Palestine** public meeting, Wed 18 May, Lambeth Town Hall, 7.30pm. Speakers from PLO, LCP, Palestine Solidarity, Labour Middle East Council and open discussion on preparations for LP and trade union conferences.

● **Labour Movement Conference on Ireland** 16 July, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Starts 10.45am. Delegates £3, observers £2. Further details: LMCI, Box 189, 32 Ivor Place, London NW1.

**MAY 24**



**Events**

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

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

● **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.

● **Public meeting on Chile** in support of the Committee for the Defence of the People's Rights (CODEPU) project. Sat 21 May, 7.30pm, Swan Hotel, London Road, Liverpool. Chilean speaker plus film and folk group. Admission free. Organised by the Latin America Solidarity Front, Merseyside, 70 Huskisson St, Leeds 8.

● **'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.

● **Walk for Life** from Faslane nuclear submarine base to Greenham Common, 19 May to 6 August. When the march arrives at Tornes nuclear power station a festival will greet them on Bank Holiday Monday (30 May) with music, theatre, stalls etc. For more details of events contact the Scottish Campaign to Resist the Atomic Menace (SCRAM), 11 Forth Street, Edinburgh 031-557 4284.

**Local action**

● **24 May is International Women's Day for Disarmament** For more information, trade union leaflet and national poster contact the Greenham Office, 5 Leonard Street, London EC3 01-251 3133.

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

● **Swansea** March to County Hall and die-in. For details of all actions in Wales: Liz Forder 0222-566548.

● **Nottingham** Rally in Market Square, 12-2pm. Called by Nottm Trades Council Women's Committee.

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

● **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**. For details of all activities in the central part of England ring Andrea Heath on 0533 555466.

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

● **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 cuts in welfare and jobs and expenditure on arms. For details ring Maggie Weatherby on 01-340 2715.

● **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** 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.

● **Peoples March** Women's Day of Action called for 24 May. Festival taking place as part of IWDD in Warwick. The Leamington Employment Action Move-

ment 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.)

● **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.

● **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 peace picnic in Highbury Fields.

● **Tower Hamlets/East London** The East London Greenham support group is planning to leaflet the London hospital at lunchtime.

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

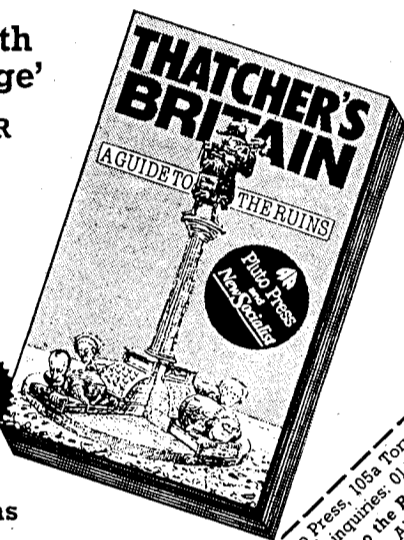
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**MICHAEL FOOT**

● **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.

● **Fred Tonge Memorial Lecture** given by Ralph Miliband on 'Marxism and the Labour Movement'. Postponed due to election to Wed 29 June, 8pm, Douglas Hyde Hall, Irish Centre, Camden Square. Organised by St Pancras and Holborn Labour Party.

A great little badge for 20p. Orders of 50 or more only 15p each. Make cheques/POs payable to Hackney Book Group (payments with order) to HBG, c/o 328 Upper Street, London N1.

**Rock the Bomb**



**Socialist Action Forums**

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

**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 Thurs 19 May: 'Fighting for socialist policies in the election'. Speaker Val Coultas (SA). 7.30pm, Cttee Rm 3, Town Hall, Treaty Road. For further information phone 01-577 3429.

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**Election fever**

**GOOD news** for some this week.

As the capitalist class gears itself up for the election effort, it is calculated that £15 million is floating into jam jars in the Tory Headquarters.

It all comes from our pockets. It is taken and offset against tax profits from some of the biggest companies in Britain.

Good news for some on the wages front too. Agents of the repressive apparatus (or as the Sun would say, 'our boys') got a lovely 7.2 per cent increase.

Unfortunately the parliamentary review was badly mis-timed. Take the judges for instance, if they can last out that long, they will have to wait until after the election to pick up their £6,000 or £7,000 increase.

How much do you reckon Thatcher earns for being Prime Minister? £38,200. Because of the election she had to recommend parliament didn't approve the increase of 41.4 per cent that was planned. Maybe husband Dennis (who is a millionaire) will help out.

Cabinet ministers like Norman Tebbit were in line for a 51.9 per cent increase on their basic £28,950.

We are not asking for anything like the increases these people have had to turn down.

During the election campaign we want to produce a pamphlet, badges and posters, all arguing why we need socialist policies, and why socialist policies are the best way to win a Labour Victory.

We are asking readers

of the paper to give a tinner to help us fight the Tories.

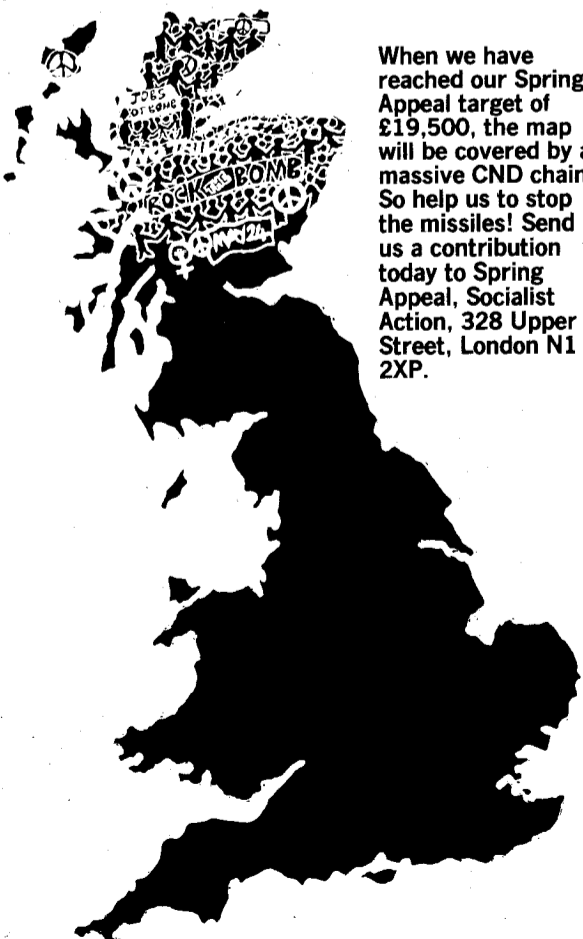
We want to have reporters covering the rest of the People's March, and the fight in Bristol to keep Benn in Parliament.

The hacks from all the gutter press will be around digging up slanders and scandals to keep the left out.

We want to send our reporters out to write the workers' side of the story.

Cash, postal orders or cheques, we're not fussy — make them out to Socialist Action. Thanks this week to:

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I Aronovsky	12.00
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Total so far	£4858.74



When we have reached our Spring Appeal target of £19,500, the map will be covered by a massive CND chain. So help us to stop the missiles! Send us a contribution today to Spring Appeal, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP.

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# 'We won't go'

## says Greenham Common camper Helen John

'CHEERIO LADIES', said the *Sun* on 9 May to the Greenham Common campers. The election, it said, will decide whether or not the country wants the missiles — and the Greenham women can pack up and go home, where no doubt they belong.

The campers have a message for the *Sun* and for the bailiffs, who seem to have slightly less respect for the democratic process than the *Sun's* editors: 'We will not be moved until we can live in peace'.

HELEN JOHN, who helped found the camp and is speaking up and down the country for a Labour vote in the coming election, told us why:

UNLIKE Michael Foot we are not watering down our policies. There is a straight choice: either we ban cruise from this country and get a breathing space to get full nuclear disarmament, or they'll be here for good.

I am very alarmed at the way Foot is talking. If they arrive, he says, then we will send them back. And then he says we mustn't be despondent if they arrive.

But once they're here, people will say we can't send them back because the Russians will misinterpret it.



They'll be in place and Reagan will be one step nearer to what he really wants, which is to start a nuclear war in Europe.

We have to stop them coming. That means the Labour Party has to get together with the unions to exert enough economic pressure to make sure they can't put them here.

**What should the Labour Party do during the coming actions on 24 May against cruise missiles?**

LABOUR will have to drop some of its traditionalism. We have to link all the local issues to disarmament. Every single penny spent on bombs instead of hospitals or services should be an

issue, and it's worth taking a day off canvassing to do that. It'll make the next day's canvass much better because it will show people in real terms how their lives are threatened.

How many people now know, for example, that their parks and gardens — their 'green oasis in the concrete desert' — are designated burial grounds after a nuclear war? If we can get that message home, bring home just how immediate is the threat to life, we will ensure that people have their priorities right when it comes to the vote.

That's why I'm disturbed that there seems to be some idea we should downplay disarmament and highlight unemployment. Clearly the two issues are desperately linked. I'm sure, for example, the Timex workers understand very clearly that money should be spent on their jobs instead of weapons.

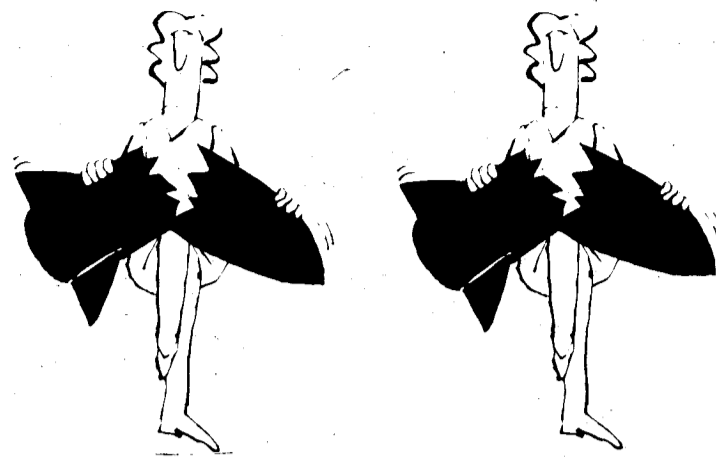
Unfortunately some people in the unions are trying to protect their jobs rather than their lives, and if you're dead a job isn't much use.

**What should CND be doing in the election?**

I'M GOING to be calling for a Labour vote. Everyone in CND knows the election is a vital time to get our issues across, and we should do just that. I depart totally from some people in CND who go for 'tactical voting'.

The SDP or the Liberals aren't what we want at the end of the day. Only one major party has unilateralist policies ready to put into practice.

We should be calling for a Labour vote, but demanding Labour sticks to its unilateralist policies.



## 'Fancy a bunch of women achieving all this!'

'FANCY a bunch of women achieving all this!' remarked a delegate to Helen John at the Scottish TUC.

Every woman I have spoken to in the last three months in CND, the trade unions and the Labour Party seems inspired by the authority and initiative of the women's peace movement and the Greenham Common women.

But Lady Olga Maitland is not the only person in Britain to disagree. Many different voices have been raised in criticism, from Janet Radcliffe Brown in the *Guardian* to the Socialist Workers Party. All, in their different ways, are worried by the 'divisive', 'women's only' character of the women's peace movement.

What they all fail to grasp is that women have made peace a women's issue, not by the theories that link the fight for peace with 'women's values' as opposed to 'male values', but because they have aroused women's pride by taking such a militant lead in the fight against the missiles.

### Capture

Why does Greenham capture the headlines every time an event takes place there? Because when thousands of women surrounded the base on 12 December they made the whole of Britain aware that the cruise missiles were a real threat. That 96 missiles would be sited at Greenham and 64 at Molesworth in December '83.

Women were saying no, and getting arrested for a cause that many people supported. Women have moved in where the CND leaders had failed to tread — to give a clear lead as to how to oppose the missiles in '83.

This was what Socialist Action meant when we talked about the 'suffragette spirit' that the Greenham Common women had re-awakened.

Janet Radcliffe Brown and the Socialist Workers Party alike are transfixed by the ideology and theory of the women's peace groups. They take no account of the diversity of women's views on this question.

They fail to grasp that some women approach the issue from an explicitly feminist commitment, that see male power and violence linked from cruise missiles through to pornography. There are others who see it as something that they can identify with as mothers, or as a very successful way of involving more women in the peace issue.

What is crucial is that whatever the motivation the women's action is aimed at the discomfiture of the Tories and has met with greater success than many other more powerful sections of the movement.

Lindsay German argued in *Socialist Worker* on 26 March that the

women-only character of the mobilisations has discouraged men from participating, making it 'more difficult to mobilise working women'.

Where is she living? Union branches that have discussed and voted on strike action on 24 May would never have done so without a call coming from the Greenham women.

To deal with the question of male power and male values is vital from a Marxist framework. We don't believe that the sex battle causes war, rather it is the class battle and the drive of the imperialists to expand their spheres of influence.

But that doesn't mean that women and men experience war in the same way. It doesn't mean that men aren't victims of the militarism in our society from a very early age.

Today we have a women's peace movement in Britain, a progressive movement that is opposed to the plans of the imperialists.

Not all peace movements are progressive. The women's peace movement in Ireland wasn't because it directed its fire at the oppressed nationalist movement, not the oppressor, the British army of occupation.

What's divisive about appealing to women's experience when society is normally so geared to men? When men go off to fight, women have traditionally stayed at home.

But women are still used by their governments in a war. They are conscripted into factories, they may be drafted into the army of nursing corps to do the lowest of jobs.

The values that predominate in the army and the military establishment are particularly reactionary. 'Boys will be boys' and nationhood are linked to stop men themselves really understanding what they are fighting for. The ageless prize of conqueror, where women's bodies are part of the spoils is still a feature of the modern warfare of capitalist armies.

So what's wrong with talking, explaining, agitating and organising as women against this nuclear war drive? If the goal is anti-capitalist why should socialists complain?

But I must strike one note of caution about the Greenham Common peace camp. I think some women, and many men peace campers, do believe that when cruise arrives if everyone puts their bodies on the silos they'll be stopped.

Non-violent direct action on its own, by women or men will not stop the missiles. The trade unions and the working class are the only force in society that has the power to alter the course of the British ruling class on this issue. And this is true whether or not a Labour government is returned on 9 June.

The actions at Greenham have started a movement that has won the sympathy of many working people far more profoundly than the passing of resolutions at TUC conferences.

On 24 May the first steps will be taken to cement that alliance between the women's peace movement and the ranks of the unions. But to stop the missiles the TUC and the Labour Party have to be forced to call the action. This time round CND can win if it adopts this approach.



On 6th December 1981 2,500 Japanese women, many of them Shibokusa who have been protesting since the second world war at the use and abuse of their land by the military, marched through Tokyo's commercial centre behind a banner that said 'We will not allow the way towards war'.

Heva (*Women for Peace*) were their slogans. Six months later half a million people were to demonstrate in the very same place against the war drive in Japan, where the population knows first hand about the experience of the use of the hydrogen bomb on their people.

● Pictures and cartoons from *Keeping the Peace*, ed. Lynne Jones, *The Women's Press*, £3.60.

No more Nagasaki! No more Bikini! Onnanatade



## Metal Box strike

METAL BOX is a multinational company with tentacles spreading from Chile and Jamaica to the heart of London's East end.

Hard on the heels of a defeated struggle against redundancies, the workforce at the Clapton plant in Hackney have again been forced into dispute.

When 137 workers were moved from shift to day work on 3 May, they lost their shift premium. Management refused compensation and are now trying to drive through changes in manning levels.

The workers responded with a sit-down strike in two departments for two days. The meeting of Transport and General Workers members on 12 May voted by a four to

one majority to walk out on strike, with a 24 hour picket. The strike has been made official by the Transport union and the membership of 250 are out solid.

Backing has come from the Metal Box Combine, the local trades council, Ernie Roberts MP, Brian Sedgemoor prospective MP, Hackney North and South Labour Parties and the Centre for Alternative Industrial and Technological Systems.

● *Metal Box workers need active support on the picket line, messages of solidarity and funds. Send to: Jim Wills, Strike Committee Chairperson. Donations to Dave Rowley (treasurer), 22 Thomas House, Morning Lane, London E9 6LB (Frank Gorton)*

## Picket against sexual harassment

WHEN Audrey White, manageress of the Lady at Lord John store in Liverpool stood up for young women assistants being sexually harassed by the area manager, she was sacked.

Audrey is a member of the 6/612 branch of the Transport and General workers union, which tried to negotiate her reinstatement.

Management refused to take her back and attempted to pay her off. She has stood firm and a picket of 20 or more

union members in the area has been set up outside the shop. Thousands of signatures have been collected in the street and many shoppers are now boycotting the store.

On 14 May, eight pickets were arrested, including a young woman who was humiliated in the police station by a strip search with the door left open. Still, the picket remains.

● *Support to TGWU, Transport House, Islington, Liverpool 3. (Pete Kennedy)*

## Aire Valley Yarns

THE AIRE Valley Yarns strike for union recognition and against victimisation is in its tenth week.

Solidarity has been stepped up with a packed public meeting in Leeds on 7 May and the decision of the ruling Labour group on Leeds city council to support the strike and visit the picket line.

The police have har-

assed the pickets and strikers' families. Riasat Ali, the brother of shop steward Liaquat Ali was arrested and kept in custody for five hours without charges being brought.

Support is needed for the picket line at the 7pm evening change over.

● *Messages and donations: Aire Valley Yarns strike committee, 34 Dirkhill St, Bradford 7*

## Hackney dole office strike

MANAGEMENT at Tebbit's Department of Employment have stepped up attacks on trade unionists, through the national introduction of the facilities agreement for union lay officials and the lock out of 70 unionists at Hackney benefit office.

The Hackney dispute is over the badly overcrowded premises. Local union leaders believe this could have been resolved if management were not so determined to prove their 'right to manage'.

Management action is an attempt to pick off strong offices — the Hackney CPSA branch has shown militancy in the past over racist ethnic monitoring and gained concessions over premises. It follows a similar attempt in Brixton.

In solidarity the workers at the local DHSS office have boycotted work done by imported scab labour. This led to suspensions, so the strike has spread to DHSS members.

Solidarity is called for the picket between 7.30 and 9.30 am. There is a mass picket every Thursday.

● *Donations and messages: Phil Newby and Ken Davison, Strike Centre, Hackney Trades and Labour Club, 96 Dalston Lane, E8 (By a striker)*

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

# Occupations spread

WHEN Thatcher came to office she promised to make British industry 'leaner and fitter'. This has meant speed up, rationalisation and less workers producing more, through higher productivity. The result, factory closures and mass unemployment.

But, after four years and in the middle of the election campaign workers are still fighting back.

The Cowley workers challenge to changed work practices was followed last week by a strike of BL workers at Albion Motors in Glasgow. They are resisting compulsory redundancies.

the factory. Shipyard workers have already promised to mobilise a mass picket outside the factory if this takes place.

## Factory

Scotland could see another explosion of action against the closure of the Cardowan pit outside Glasgow, with the loss of 1100 jobs. These workers are not persuaded by arguments that their action should be played down because of the election.

## Sharks

Many are demanding a government that comes behind their demands, taking their companies into national ownership, reversing Tory plans to sell their firms to private sharks and ensuring sufficient investment to stop closure and redundancy

Support the occupations:

- Timex: Treasurer John Kydd, 81 Brownhill Rd, Dundee, Fife, Scotland.
- Firth Derihon: D Michie, 21 Mather Rd, Littledeale, Sheffield S9 4GN.
- Greenings: JSSC Strike Fund, c/o L Blood, 26 St John St, Newton-Le-Willows, Merseyside.
- Unit Superheaters: Fred Evans, 8 Bishopston Rd, Bishopston, Swansea.

By Celia Pugh

This battle against compulsory redundancies has produced occupations throughout the country. This happened to subsidiaries of the Johnson Firth Brown group of companies — Greening Ltd in Warrington and Firth Derihon in Sheffield — when management tried to drive through forced redundancies. These occupations still need support.

## Action

The five week occupation at the Dundee Timex plant continues this week, despite a new management offer. The company agreed to the immediate reinstatement of all those dismissed, retraining of workers and the abandonment of court action to end the occupation.

But they insisted on their right to enforce compulsory redundancies. This has been rejected by the 450 occupying workers who are now preparing to resist any management attempts to forcibly enter

## Unity on the agenda

IN 1971, the national postal workers strike was defeated by the Heath government. Memories of this have dampened confidence in the Union of Communication Workers for many years.

But this year's annual conference should see gains for the left as members make the connection between opposition to the government and the Post Office and British Telecom management.

Many conference resolutions deplore the failure of the executive to vigorously campaign against privatisation, in particular the absence of national support for the Telecom union's day of action against privatisation in October 1982.

By Steve Bell (Cardiff Uniform Branch, personal capacity).

Last year's conference passed a resolution, against executive committee advice, committing the union to amalgamation. This involves rank and file grades in post and telecom, covering members of the UCW, POEU and CPSA (post and telecom group).

As the campaign against privatisation reveals, this unity of rank and file communications workers could be a powerful force. The executive fears this power and has manoeuvred to reverse the conference decision by prioritising amalgamation with the CNA, the

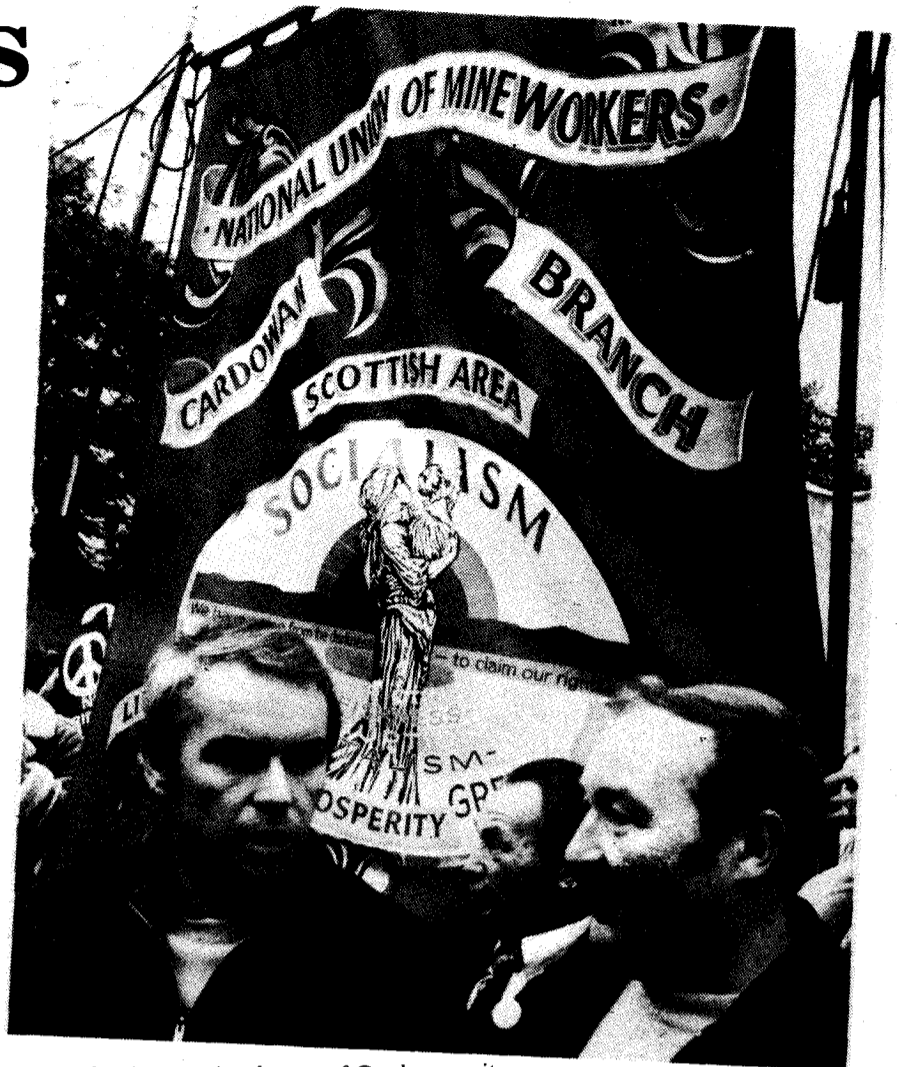
management staff association. This will be challenged at conference.

The membership are pushing political issues to the fore. Last autumn the rules revision conference pushed the executive committee to support CND. Resolutions to conference seek to step up the activity of the union around CND, including support for the Greenham Common women.

Other resolutions call for the reinstatement of the Militant supporters expelled from the Labour Party.

The executive committee has long supported incomes policy. It will interpret the national economic assessment in Labour's manifesto as a new social contract. But the membership will challenge this in the conference debate on the joint Labour Party-TUC statement. With four pay settlements below the rate of inflation, they will not be so passive.

The Broad Left in the union must make sure this resolve of the members is given leadership.



Scottish miners resist closure of Cardowan pit.

## Swansea sit-in

One of the occupied factories is the British Steel subsidiary Unit Superheaters in Swansea. Engineering union members have been fighting for three weeks against forced redundancy.

BSC dirty tricks

department is on a war footing against the occupation. Management threatens to close the plant completely and letters have been sent out warning of dismissal. A packed mass meeting on 13 May voted by a big majority to continue the action.

By Graham Atwell

Convenor Pete Thomas told how management is trying to split the strike by pushing cheques and cash of up to £6000

through the letterboxes of workers facing forced redundancy.

Management also threatens court action over the publication of 'secret' documents found at the factory which expose the presence of dangerous asbestos and high noise.

Support is flowing in, but the AUEW has still to make the occupation official. Branches of the union should follow the Cardiff branch in demanding that the strike is made official.



# Gains and Setbacks

THE ANNUAL conference of the Civil and Public Service Association marked up policy gains for the Left.

But these were overshadowed by a major setback in the members' ballot for the national executive committee. The Broad Left representation was cut to six, reversing the balance and giving the right a large majority.

But this defeat is coupled with growing militancy on jobs and conditions. Industrial action over conditions at the Hackney unemployment office has now spread to Islington and Hackney. Liverpool DHSS members are also in conflict with management.

## Dispute

This militancy was reflected in the censure of the outgoing executive for its handling of the Oxford and Birmingham DHSS disputes last year.

The conference re-

affirmed its fight for a 35 hour week and against privatisation. It also rejected the executive committee recommendation to endorse the introduction of government youth training schemes.

The NEC was also instructed, by a large majority, to mount a vigorous campaign against cruise missiles.

## Women

But affiliation to CND and the National Abortion Campaign were defeated as were resolutions on positive action and women's rights. With women making up 70 per cent of the union membership, women delegates were justifiably angry at these defeats.

Such setbacks, with the swing to the right on the new NEC, highlight the failure of the Broad Left to organise and fight for its policies among the CPSA members.

They have been tied up in the election effort to get a majority on the NEC with the result that they lost that too.

The Broad Left must

now build on the policy gains at conference inside the branches. The conference overwhelmingly agreed to launch a campaign in the union for a yes vote for affiliation to the Labour Party. The Broad Left should actively campaign for a Labour victory in the general election and link this with disputes like the one in Hackney and the Peoples March for Jobs.

In this way they can build up the confidence of the union ranks, challenge the national leadership to act and reverse the left losses on the NEC.

● *Gains were made last week by the Broad Left in elections to the executive of the National Union of Public Employees.*

*The moderate executive member lined up to become president of the union was ousted by Jenny Webber from Tower Hamlets, who has been in the forefront of militant campaigns against government cutbacks.*

*Another Broad Left candidate Frank Fallon won an executive seat for the Scottish area.*

# More on the march

AS THE MARCH leaves Lancashire this week the feeder marches are beginning to converge and ultimately all the marchers will pour into London for 5 June.

That is the day the labour movement must give its answer to Thatcher in the mightiest of all the anti-Tory rallies of this election campaign. Here are some reports from these feeders.

## From Lands End to South London

Most of the march so far has been a trek through uninhabited countryside and sparsely populated villages. The people we have met have been warm and friendly, the response has been positive.

Representatives of the labour movement in this area have been few and far between. This has meant that they have had to work doubly hard to give us a decent reception, and find us accommodation and get us all fed. In Truro the NUPE official had organised the local hospital (Trelisk) to feed us and give us accommodation. Two days before we arrived they withdrew their offer, because they couldn't be seen to be political this near a general election!

The marginal support we have received has not demoralised a single mar-

cher. People are rising to the challenge and enjoying themselves, the blisters and sore feet are shown off like battle scars! It's a tremendous feeling marching through a part of the country which hasn't seen a march for seventy years.

The response of the Cornish kids has been amazing. This leg of the march is just warming up: The labour movement in this area is particularly weak. This has been reflected in the numbers turning out and supporting the march. But the march is having an impact on the local inhabitants.

The people that we've talked to and those who have come to talk to us have shown a great affinity with the march as they watched their own children moving away from their native Cornwall to find jobs in the major industrial centres.



## Northern leg

Into Leeds the march was a big success. It showed that when the trade unions and the Labour Party get their act together something can be done. The march through industrial South Yorkshire

was partly criticised by local Labour Party members who felt that the Party had not been sufficiently involved.

The reception in Chesterfield and Clay Cross was fantastic — it

put the bigger towns to shame. The march has been progressive in terms of explaining the issues of unemployment to working people.

The People's March

obviously won't convince Thatcher and Tebbit of anything. Socialists must explain the issue to the one-third of the working class who vote Tory. Despite opposition from

stewards we have had regular meetings of marchers on our leg of the march to decide the direction and orientation of the march. This is a crucial step in the right direction.

## Telecoms workers say: 'Be prepared'

THE BILL to privatise British Telecoms has fallen because of the general election. In response the national leadership of the Post Office Engineering Union has called off all industrial action against privatisation.

The action had been taking place in Whitehall, the Bank of England and the Stock Exchange where engineers had been called out only days before.

John Golding, the right wing MP sponsored by the union, is presenting the Bill's failure as a triumph of the NEC's parliamentary strategy. But of course the threat is still very much alive.

If re-elected the Tories will immediately reintroduce the legislation and ensure its rapid passage through parliament by the new year.

Unfortunately the limited scope of the industrial action sanctioned by the POEU leadership has meant that Labour has lost an electoral asset. The continuation and extension of industrial action through the election period by the national leadership, demanding that the Tories drop their plans, could have made privatisation a central election issue.

By Pete Cooper POEU

Labour has promised to maintain both British Telecoms as a nationalised industry and to integrate Project Mercury the private business only network into BT. The cabling of Britain, for cable TV, will also be integrated into BT.

The SDP Liberal Alliance is against privatisation of BT, but has nothing to say on these vital issues for the future.

BT workers therefore have every interest in a Labour victory, and supporters are organising for a Labour vote.

The Tories' campaign for privatisation ('Even when we're talking rubbish, we're talking sense!') needs to be countered by Labour explaining how denationalisation attacks jobs, conditions and union organisation.

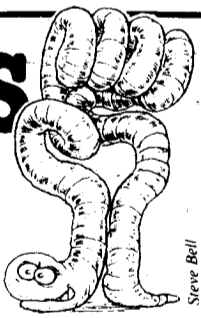
Emergency resolutions for the unions upcoming conference are critical of the Industrial Strategy Actions Committee. The two branches involved in the action, Westminster and City, are calling a second national meeting on 17 May in London's County Hall to discuss the campaign.

## Serious

The national executive comes up for re-election at conference and it is certain that the Broad Left will make a serious challenge for an alternative to the present leadership.

Delegates for the conference should be mandated to back emergency resolutions such as the one from Westminster calling for national action, should any future government seek to threaten jobs with privatisation.

## WORM'S EYE VIEW



### Electrical fault?

WEST MIDLANDS police — that's the lot that keep breaking in the wrong houses — are obviously bright.

A caller tipped them off that a safe had been abandoned in Halesowen. Immediately the ever-alert force put a uniformed man on to guard it.

For a full hour this eagle-eyed lad protected this vital evidence. Then the detectives who are the bright boys with the high IQs arrived. They carefully dusted the safe for fingerprints. They tried to move it. But it just would not budge.

Not to be daunted they sent for a Land Rover and some towing

gear. Then they found the cause of their problem. It was not a safe, it was a Midland Electricity Board junction box cemented into the ground.

I hope the rest of the police are as bright as the West Midlands ones.

### Surviving

DON'T DESPAIR about your chances of surviving the 'big bang'. If you live in an area likely to be nuked then the government's advice is evacuate.

At first they were going to evacuate 12 million people, then they upped it to 35 millions. But that would take a lot of trains

and buses. Anyhow who fancies standing at a bus stop when the road is melting before your very eyes.

To simplify things it's everybody for themselves. So when the three minute warning goes off start running for the nearest motorway. If you can get from Peckham to Cornwall in three minutes you might have a chance.

Then there are the deep bunkers. To get in one is a simple matter. You just need to be a Cabinet member, a very high civil servant, a top cop, or a general.

The reinforced shelters are for district councils so if you are not chairperson of the police committee or boss of the housing committee don't bother turning up there. If you can't run to Cornwall or in a shelter don't despair.

Lie in a ditch. The nice gentlemen who published *Protect and Survive* have kindly drawn a diagram showing how to lie in a ditch. Alright, there are no dit-



This postcard and many others can be bought at the Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St. London N1 or 137 Digbeth, Birmingham B5

### God in red weather shock

THE SUN means that whilst we have been getting rain for weeks: 'Moscow has been basking in a mild heatwave.'

It asks: 'Have the Russians found some way to control the weather?' Adding 'We don't accept that — but wouldn't it be a typically dirty Red trick!'

The Sun knows that the Russians already control Monsignor Bruce Kent, God's man on earth. But at least they are not entirely convinced that the Reds have got their hands on that great rainmaker in the sky.

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.

### Keep your act clean!

On Saturday afternoon there was a Jobs for Youth festival in Wythenshawe. The marshalls of the march told one of the performers, John Cooper-Clarke to keep his act clean!

As John Cooper-Clarke said, 'that would mean a three and a half minute set'. Not surprisingly in this kind of atmosphere a group of marchers outside the hall ritually burnt a

copy of the *Morning Star*.

Tension mounted when later in the day, three marchers from the TGWU delegation were kicked off the march for shouting 'Maggie, Maggie, Maggie — Out! Out! Out!' One of the three was Pete Cashman, from Liverpool who organised the Birkenhead People's March Committee.

The marchers have now been re-admitted.

### Agreeable

THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH is a bit worried about all those Trots on the People's March for Jobs.

As we know it is a paper with the interests of the working class very close to its heart.

However the *Sunday Telegraph* did find a little ray of sunshine in all this Trotskyist darkness. It landed on 46-year-old Peter Lenahan which it calls 'one of these

agreeable old-fashioned communists ...' who kindly told the newspapers that the Liverpool TUC and the North West regional council both had been infiltrated.

Soon the capitalist press will not need to employ Tory reporters to attack the march. They will get their slanders written by 'agreeable old fashioned communists.'

# Socialist ACTION

## A Marcher's journal

When we left Preston on Monday 9 May the reception was fantastic. Workers from three factories on strike lined the road. It was a solid crush of blue overalls, smiles, cheers and applause.

What a chance for the march and we missed it. No speeches. No rally. No mixing with the crowds. Instead we hit the road for the open country.

At Leyland Vehicles a lunch-time mass meeting of 2000 workers heard the ex-convenor Len Brindle call for a Labour government after the general election had been called for 9 June.

Again the next day at the Horwich rail works their convenor Denis Green spoke about the political nature of the march. As more and more workers get involved with the march it helps to break down the dead hand of the TUC approach.

The TUC leaders see it as a moral gesture, which is supposed to influence 'all parties' and 'any government', not a mass political struggle aiming to sweep the Tories out of office.

That's why in Salford

the car with the loudspeaker was stopped from saying: 'Since the Tories came into office unemployment has grown by 2½ million.' Instead it was told to just say 'the present government' and cut out any reference to the Tories.

But you can't keep politics off the march. More and more slogans were raised as the Liverpool and Glasgow contingents joined us in Eccles. Then as we marched into Manchester city centre the shouts: 'Tories Out' and the song 'Solidarity for ever' echoed through the streets.

The previous Tuesday in Chorley rumours had swept through the march that the TUC were thinking about calling it off because of the election. They knew that once an election was called the non-party, non-political approach of the organisers was a dead letter.

They could hardly be consistent with their line and invite the Tories and the SDP/Liberal Alliance onto the rally platforms which would turn the whole thing into a joke. At every rally from Leyland to Stockport Labour MPs called for a Labour government.

Of course a lot of us know the record of the last Labour government on unemployment and we

don't trust that bunch to sort it out for us. We have to break out of the straitjacket of apolitical moral gestures on the streets combined with hollow electioneering at rallies

We have to be part of a mass active campaign for a Labour victory. This means the march has to reach out to the factories, the shop stewards committees, the unemployed centres, the youth clubs and to strikes and disputes. It must mobilise them all behind the 5 June demonstration so that it can be a gigantic anti-Tory rally.

Every major Labour rally should have a speaker from the march, not just as window dressing but so that they can demand action and support. They should insist Labour supports all workers fighting redundancy. They should raise the need to throw back the threats of privatisation and rationalisation and end the wasteful concentration of productive resources in the arms industry.

A marchers' meeting last Friday came out with a demand on the first point. It also wanted regular marchers' meetings and regional delegation coordinators to be elected to make sure this happens.

5 JUNE

# ALL OUT AGAINST TORIES

## Peoples march for jobs

83



Photo: Morning Star

On Friday at the Brinnington Labour Club. Kerry, a young woman marcher from Manchester rushed forward to speak but the marshalls tried to stop her speaking. To a great round of applause she said:

'I am on this march as a Greenham Common woman. It's true Margaret Thatcher is a woman but she's from the ruling class. The working class are oppressed and working class women are particularly oppressed.'

Kerry pointed out the Greenham women have been leading the fight back against Thatcher. As she said 'I never want to hear anyone get up on a platform again and say it's women who have brought this country to where it is now. In fact it's women who are leading us out of it.'

# Peoples march for jobs

83

## Socialist ACTION

### Rally Against the Right:

### for a Labour Victory

County Hall Wed 1 June 7.30pm

Alain Krivine, French Trotskyist, leader of student revolt 1968 on how to beat the Right in France

Helen John, speaker from Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp on defeating the missiles in '83

John McNulty, Peoples Democracy councillor from Belfast on getting Britain out of Ireland

Peoples Marchers from the '83 Jobs March And speakers from the Police Bill campaign and the Labour Party.



Krivine

## MODERN TIMES



None of you are moving another step until the person who whispered that they didn't like Mrs Thatcher owns up ...

## Rally to Benn!

BRISTOL EAST CONSTITUENCY Labour Party is fighting for the Labour left's political life. At the local elections 23,240 people voted Labour in Bristol East, 22,961 voted Tory and 12,290 voted Liberal.

And the dirty tricks have already started. Within hours of the election being announced, Bristol East voters were getting anonymous phone calls — which later turned out to be from the *Sun* — asking their 'opinions' on Tony Benn.

Labour voters were asked 'do you know Tony Benn backs unilateral disarmament?' and 'would you prefer to vote Labour if Peter Shore

were standing?'

We are sure a disproportionate amount of Thatcher's £20 million election spending will go into stopping Tony Benn getting back in the Commons.

By Phil Vowles, Chair, Bristol East

But the whole labour movement is fighting back. We've just been set up but we've been flooded with offers of help. The South Wales miners and the Steel union are sending flying teams over. The Bristol Transport and General Workers Union have donated their Bristol office as a permanent headquarters and seconded fulltimers to the campaign, as have the National Union of Public

Employees.

We are pulling no punches. We've agreed to put a Young Socialist and a woman speaker on every platform. Nuclear disarmament will be up front. We'll be out in force when the People's March comes to Bristol on 28 May and Tony will be in London to welcome the marchers when they get there.

But the rest of the time he will be fighting in Bristol. We aim to find out the shift changes and meal breaks at every factory and visit them all, any time of the day or night if necessary.

The labour movement is solidly behind Tony Benn and the media is solidly against him. We need your help now!

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