

# A Socialist ACTION

## Hands off Grenada!

The New Jewel Movement and the Grenada Solidarity Campaign appeal for support on pickets every Tuesday and Thursday, 5-7pm. These will take place at:  
US Embassy, Grosvenor Square, London W1  
Eastern Caribbean Embassy, 10 Kensington Ct, London W8  
Barbados Embassy, 6 Upper Belgrave St, London SW1



# Reagan sets course for war

**AFTER GRENADA**, Reagan has set up his next target for attack. The largest US battle fleet since the Vietnam war is now gathering in the Eastern Mediterranean. Israel has called up its reserves.

**The target of the United States and Israel is a military attack on Syria.**

Israel has been itching to attack Syria ever since its invasion of Lebanon last year. The Israeli ex-Defence Minister Ariel Sharon then wanted to fight a war with Syria as well as the Palestinians. Instead Sharon had to content himself with the massacre of Palestinian refugees in Chatila and Sabra refugee camps.

States and Israel — are returning once more to try to achieve their aims by military means.

Britain, under the Thatcher government, is already up to its neck in the United States war drive. British, French, and Italian participation in the peacekeeping force in Lebanon is the camouflage the United State and Israel are using to cover their plans for military action.

### Puppet

Reagan wants to attack Syria because of the collapse of the US plan to set up a puppet government in Lebanon under the minority Christian regime of Gemayel. That failed when Gemayel's fascist Phalange troops were defeated in this autumn's Lebanese civil war. Only the artillery bombardments from the US fleet off the Lebanese coast kept Gemayel in office.

Denis Healey said on Monday that if the United States attacked Syria the British force should be withdrawn.

### No delay

There should be no such delay. Along with the rest of the 'peacekeeping' force British troops must get out of the Lebanon. NOW!

● *Cuba and the Grenada crisis* — see page 3

● *US Foreign policy and the Labour Party* — see pages 8 & 9

MODERN TIMES



Do you think Maggie and Ron are getting a divorce?



# Socialist ACTION

## Once again, the witch hunt

The word on nearly everybody's lips at the Labour Party Conference was 'unity'. Now less than two months later the most divisive thing of all — a witch hunt — is still going on.

The attack on Party members has changed its form. There is no longer the same central assault as with the *Militant* editorial board. But the reality is still the same:

- Tariq Ali has been expelled solely for his political ideas.

- Wythenshawe Labour Party is still suspended.

- Sales of the *Militant* are still officially banned.

In new moves in the last few weeks:

- USDAW regional officers have been informed that the sale of *Militant* is banned from USDAW meetings and that USDAW premises should not be hired to meetings organised by *Militant*.

- Chester branch of the EETPU has put a resolution to the union conference to extend the ban on Communist Party members from holding elected office to include supporters of the *Militant*.

- In Blackburn fifteen *Militant* supporters have been under attack for almost a year. The *Lancashire Evening Telegraph* is now reporting possible moves to expell nine Labour members and the right wing in the Party is proposing resolutions calling for 'extreme disciplinary action' against those named.

No steps whatever have been taken by the the Party leadership to bring to an end this state of affairs.

The only interpretation that can be made of this is obvious. The right wing, with tacit support from Party leadership, is carrying through a series of local and individual witch hunts. These, if successful, will be followed by a national purge.

Unfortunately the one campaign body which the Labour Party should not need — Labour Against the Witch Hunt — is going to have to be very active in the months to come. Only when the witch hunters find that their efforts create more trouble than they are worth will these debilitating purges and trials be brought to an end.

With all the issues and campaigns which face Labour today these witch hunts are not merely an attack on the left but represent a criminal waste of the Party's resources and energy.

Photo: GM COOKSON



Youth are a main target of Reagan's thugs

Eight thousand people demonstrated last Saturday against the US invasion of the island

THE NEW Shadow Cabinet was most definitely *not* what the Labour Party voted for at its conference.

Peter Shore was humiliated in the leadership contest. John Silkin is carrying on a disgraceful legal campaign to crush *Tribune*. John Golding, appointed to be spokesperson on regional affairs, represents witch hunter in chief. No idea of a mass campaigning party in that lot!

The appointments to the Shadow Cabinet posts, and to the front bench places, were Neil Kinnock's first big test in leading the Party. Hardly a success.

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US troops are conducting

# Re lea

THE US military occupation forces in Grenada have rounded up hundreds of supporters of the New Jewel Movement who are being held in so-called 'detention camps'. At the same time, just to show their belief in freedom and democracy, they have released imprisoned members of the notorious 'Mongoose Gang' — the hired guns of former dictator Eric Gairy who controlled the island until the New Jewel revolution in 1979.

The Mongoose Gang thugs are accompanying US troops on thorough sweeps of the island in which all supporters of the NJM are being rounded up and 'interrogated'.

While this reign of terror continues on the island, Bernard Coard and Hudson Austin, former leaders of the NJM, are being held on US ships off the coast of the island.

There are repeated stories from journalists that Bernard Coard and Phyllis Coard — a leader of the Grenadian Women's organisation — have been brutally treated by the US soldiers. What has happened to Hudson Austin, held incommunicado by the Americans, doesn't bear thinking about.

The first demand of the solidarity movement must be the freedom of the NJM leaders and all supporters of the movement.

The US reign of terror on the island is designed to prevent the New Jewel Movement functioning again as the political leadership of the Grenadian people.

The governor general

of the island, Paul Scoon, has announced that he intends to form a 'non-political' interim government, leading to elections. Whether or not the elections will ever take place remains in doubt.

One thing that isn't in doubt however is that the US occupation force intends to stay on the island for a long time. The US claims that there are now 'only' 3000 troops on the island. But on such a small island even this is a massive force.

In the next few months it will be absolutely vital to campaign for the complete freedom of the New Jewel Movement to function as a legal political movement will complete rights of organisation and assembly. Scoon claims that he will 'allow' the NJM to participate in any elections. Whether his American bosses will take





Reign of terror on Grenada

# Cuba and the Grenada crisis

**IN THE WAKE** of the events in Grenada, the United States has despatched another huge battle fleet to the seas off Cuba — to add to the scores of ships and hundreds of planes it has off the coasts of Lebanon, Grenada and Nicaragua. The 'Cuba fleet' consists of an 80,000 ton aircraft carrier, three guided missile destroyers, three other destroyers, a frigate and other ships.

The new threat follows the harassment of Cuban diplomats on Grenada, the ill-treatment of Cuban prisoners — and the deliberate and unprovoked murder of Cuban construction workers during the first hours of the US assault on Grenada.

By Phil Hearse

Ever since the victory of the Cuban revolution in 1959 the United States has tried everything to overthrow Fidel Castro and the Cuban Communist Party leadership. In 1961, at Playa Giron (Bay of Pigs), a CIA-trained mercenary army attempted to land and overthrow the revolution. But the counter-revolutionary attack was easily defeated.

Since that time economic and military blockade of the island has been coupled with bizarre CIA plots to assassinate Castro. Quited rightly, the

United States sees the example of Cuba, and the huge social and economic gains which this country has made as compared with its Caribbean neighbours, as a permanent threat to imperialist domination of the region.

Now Reagan is unleashing a gigantic lie campaign against Cuba. The US is making the absurd claim that Grenada was being turned into a huge Cuban base: that all the resistance against their invasion was carried out by 'hardened Cuban battle troops'; that the Grenadan people were lorded over by Cuban 'supremos' and even that Cuba plans attacks on US installations world-wide. All these claims are transparent nonsense.

## Workers

The 800 Cubans on the island were overwhelmingly construction workers, medical staff, engineers and economic advisors. Cuba, fighting its own battle against underdevelopment and desperately short of resources, nonetheless has sent doctors and economic construction workers to many countries in the 'third world' — not to get any economic return but as an 'internationalist duty'.

Such things of course are seen by Reagan and his cronies as immensely sinister. From their point of view it is: it shows the different and vastly superior morality of a

revolutionary country which in the middle of its own battle for economic development understands the need to fight imperialism world-wide. Of course there were Cuban military advisors in Grenada, and weapons supplied by Cuba — and the US invasion shows why!

## Attack

The attack on the Cuban construction workers at Point Salines airport was recorded by Evaristo Garcia, one of the Cuban workers wounded and repatriated to Cuba. He explained how he and a dozen others had been asleep in quarters at the airport on the morning of the invasion, when they were fired upon. Being unarmed, they ran into the woods. When some of them returned to try to rescue a wounded comrade, two were killed and Garcia received a bullet through the lungs. This is the morality of imperialism: to fire on unarmed workers, and murder those who try to rescue wounded comrades!

The Cuban attitude during the whole Grenada crisis has been exemplary. As the Cuban statements show (see last week's Socialist Action) the Cuban leadership disapproved of, and denounced, the murder of Maurice Bishop and the methods used by the faction that opposed him. But they treated the matter as an in-

ternal Grenada affair. They did not even threaten to withdraw economic and military assistance.

And when the invasion occurred, their workers and military advisors fought side by side with those whose actions they had disapproved of. Moreover, the conduct of the Cubans in Grenada in face of the invasion was principled and courageous. Overwhelmingly civilian workers, they fought to the last against the imperialist invaders.

The Cuban attitude to the division in the New Jewel Movement and the actions of its workers show the distance between the Cuban Communist Party leadership and the Stalinists. The Soviet leadership greeted the seizure of power by an apparently pro-Stalinist faction with barely concealed glee. Despite all the adverse circumstances, despite Cuba's heavy material dependence on the USSR, the Cuban Communist Party leadership has managed to maintain its political independence.

In spite of Reagan's propaganda barrage, the Grenada invasion has only enhanced the prestige and influence of Cuba. With the Cuban revolution directly under threat, now is the time to act, as the Cubans act on Fidel's slogan, which he advanced to the leaders of China and Russia during the Vietnam war: 'division in the face of the enemy was never an intelligent or revolutionary tactic.'

# Release NJM leaders!

the same position is at the very least uncertain.

Last week it was reported that Kendrick Radix, one of the NJM leaders who sided with Maurice Bishop, had taken refuge in the Cuban embassy residence. With the departure of the Cuban diplomats, his fate is unknown. Radix and his supporters must be allowed complete political freedom to fight for their political ideas.

## Scale

Two weeks after the invasion, the real scale of the US attack is becoming clear. While the US has released figures for its own casualties and those of the Cubans, there have been no figures released for Grenadian dead. Some reports from NJM sources speak of 1200 dead and

wounded — getting on for 2 per cent of the population.

The valiant resistance by the Peoples Revolutionary Army brought down on the island the full fury of US military might, including terror bombing raids by the ultra-sophisticated F-15 fighter bombers — which were responsible for the bombing raid on the mental hospital near St. George's in which nearly 50 people were killed.

While US casualties were whisked away to the super-modern medical facilities on board US aircraft carriers, wounded Grenadians were allowed to lie in the sun for hours.

Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe announced last week that British troops would be offered to take part in any interim

Commonwealth 'peace-keeping' force. Thatcher's refusal to support the invasion can now be clearly seen as a purely tactical question. Britain is quite prepared to be complicit in foisting a pro-imperialist puppet regime on the Grenadian people.

## Rebuild

To ensure that the people of Grenada have the opportunity to rebuild politically, to prepare for the next wave of the struggle against imperialism, it is vital that the British labour movement is mobilised around the defence of NJM leaders, for an end to the concentration camps, for complete freedom of the NJM to function as a legal political party, and against any to send British troops to the island.



500 people attended a rally last week in Hackney to protest against the invasion. On the platform Tony Jewel (NJM), Carol Reagan (NUT — personal capacity) and Tony Benn.

Photo: GM COOKSON

# IRELAND UNFREE

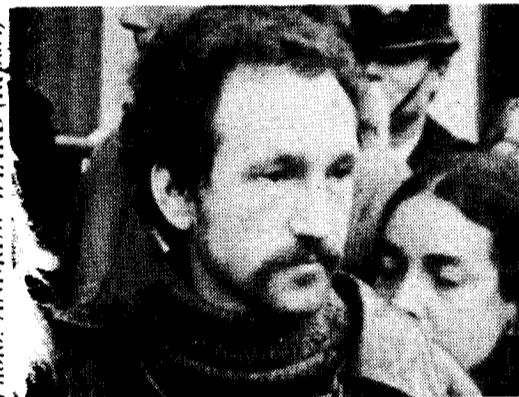
## Socialist Organiser joins Militant camp.

AT THE Debating Socialism weekend organised by 'International' magazine many learned for the first time the consequences of *Socialist Organisers'* new ideas about Ireland.

In a debate between Martin Collins from Socialist Action and Sean Matgamna from *Socialist Organiser* details of their new scheme for a federal Ireland were explained which has crippling and damaging consequences for the left and puts them in the camp of the *Militant* on the Irish issue.

How do socialists look at Ireland? The traditional socialist view insists Ireland is divided by Britain in order to preserve capitalist rule. This division takes the form of the border which created two reactionary clerical states.

One of them in the South is propped up by a puppet regime and pliant trade union bureaucracy, the state in the North was propped up by the most reactionary sector of the British ruling class and is now run directly from London with the use of an occupying army to keep down the nationalist population.



Sean Matgamna

This divides the people of Ireland on every level — economically, politically and socially. Every aspect of popular dissent from CND to the women's liberation movement is divided by imperialism and by the border. Religion plays no more determining role than the flags under which people march. The dominance of religion as an explanation of the strife which has torn the six counties of the North apart since the civil rights movement was batoned down by the pro-British Northern cops is a mythology touted by the British as an excuse for their presence.

It is this that *Socialist Organiser* now backs. It is a fallacy to say the anti-imperialist struggle to free Ireland from British domination is sectarian. Sean Matgamna went as far as calling the civil rights movement a 'catholic revolt'. It is wrong to say protestants have something to fear from a united Ireland.

In our coverage of the recent Abortion Referendum in the South, we explained how the alliance between church and state which shored up the bankrupt Southern regime inevitably means big attacks on women's rights and preservation of the family unit. It is exactly the same in the North where loyalist politicians have vetoed every progressive peice of legislation from Westminster — whether it was the '67 Abortion Act or the Homosexual Law Reform Bill.

*Socialist Organiser* explained the referendum as an attack on Protestants and Jews by religion. The British press and labour bureaucracy use these myths and lies to write off the anti-imperialist struggle of Sinn Fein as 'green fascism' concerned not with ending backwardness and fighting for a socialist republic but extending the horrendous rule of the Southern Tories to the North. In their coverage of the elections, *Socialist Organiser* claimed there was no real difference between the anti-imperialist fighters of Sinn Fein and the class collaborators of the SDLP.

We have made good progress in winning the debate in the Labour Party — to convince a sizeable section of the left that Britain has no role in Ireland and that withdrawal provides the only path to peace. Once *Socialist Organiser* was in the forefront of that struggle alongside us. Now they are moving very fast to the *Militant* position that before you fight imperialism you have to reconcile catholics and protestants in the North.

This is a reactionary pipe-dream. Only when imperialism is removed from Ireland can the diversion of religion be junked. Only then can the way to the unity of Irish workers as a whole be discovered by the struggle for socialism.

# 'Joyful and peaceful demonstrations planned'

Interview with Helen John from the Greenham Common peace camp

Can you tell us about the court action which you've initiated in the United States and the action called for 9 November?

On 9 November we are calling for every American base and installation in this country to have a peace camp set up outside it to demonstrate the opposition to cruise missiles.

The court case suggested itself to us because the evidence — military, medical, scientific and legal — shows that these weapons are not for defensive purposes.

We will argue these points in the court in New York.

The American government is prepared to trample on legal niceties when invading Grenada or backing the people who want to overthrow the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. Surely a government like this won't be too troubled about the legal niceties?

Well the government might not be too interested in the legal niceties. But the ordinary, humane and decent citizens of the United States are. The peace movement is growing in America.

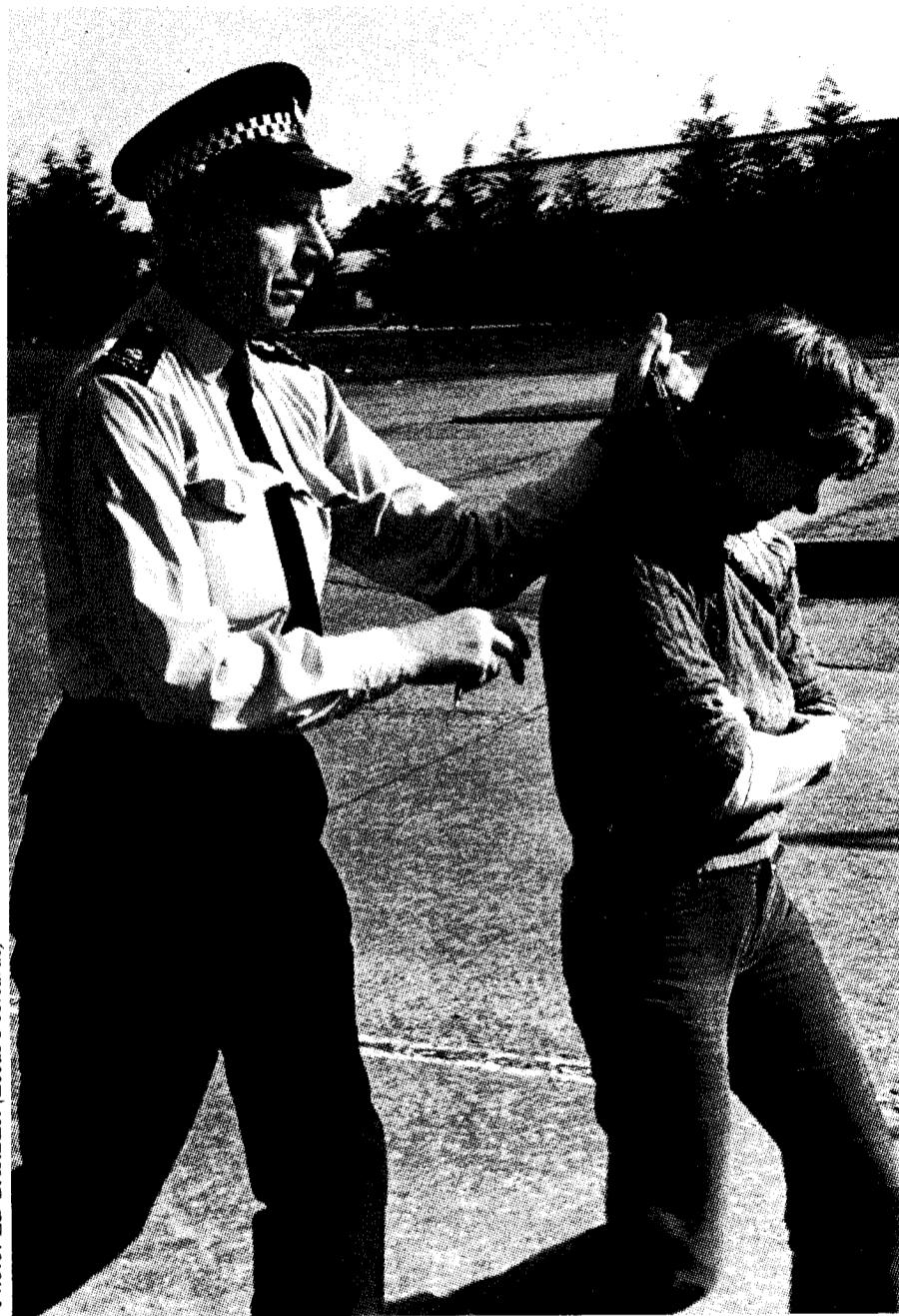
The administration in the United States is a very small unrepresentative group. There are too many of us to allow this policy to continue.

We will win.

Can you tell us about the activities on the anniversary of last year's December events?

Last year we were told that 12 December would be the final date for the decision to put the weapons here.

This year there will be large numbers of women gathering on 11 December, which is a Sunday, for exactly the same purpose as before — to have a joyful, peaceful, demonstration to show our total opposi-



Helen John peaceful protest

tion to weapons that threaten the lives of every single human being in this country.

Are you worried by the statement of Michael Heseltine that troops are

prepared to shoot at Greenham Common women?

Of course Mr Heseltine does not have to order troops to shoot unarmed women. If he does so, then it will clearly demonstrate

that it is the weapons that are there to be protected and not people.

Heseltine has said that the only majority that counts is the majority in parliament. What do you think?

In a democracy it should be the wishes of the people that matter. Seventy three per cent of the people in this country are opposed to cruise missiles.

On the 22 October demonstration, CND used a number of slogans, including the demand for a freeze in the nuclear arms.

What do you think is the significance of the adoption of this slogan and how do you think it is related to the struggle against US bases, against cruise and Trident?

It is related in as much as the Soviet Union has accepted the freeze and has pressed for no first use policy.

Our government and the United States government have consistently vetoed this. But I believe that it is necessary to keep a clear focus on unilateral nuclear disarmament now. Not only is the use of new weapons deplored but we have to think about getting rid of the weapons that already exist.

And to do that we have to take a unilateral step to achieve a multilateral disarmament programme that will ultimately include the Soviet Union and America.

Are you optimistic about the future of the campaign?

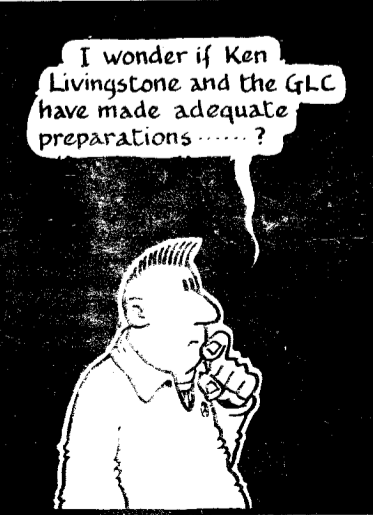
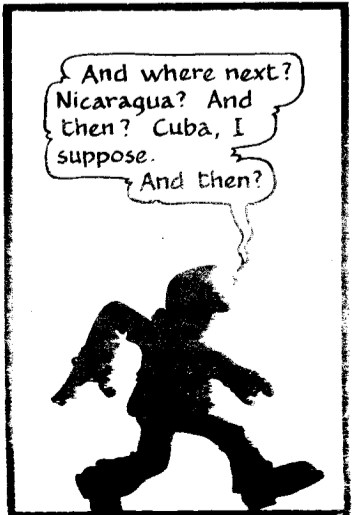
I believe that the peace camps we are setting up and the American court case can give a tremendous impetus to CND.

The degree of attention that will be paid to the American bases in this country will eventually help get them removed along with all the nuclear weapons.

We will start to live in peace, instead of contemplating genocide to solve a problem.

We will have rational means of overcoming the problems between nations.

## A PIECE of the ACTION



BY GORMAC #32



Photo: MARK RUSHER (IFL)



## Black representation in the Labour Party

### Interview with Ben Bousquet

**BEN BOUSQUET** is a black councillor and parliamentary candidate for Labour in North Kensington. At the Labour Party conference he moved a resolution which demanded changes in the Party constitution to allow black sections of the Party to be formed and to ensure proper black representation at all levels.

Socialist Action asked him about the aims of those promoting these proposals.

#### What were the aims of your resolution?

Let's face it, when the Labour Party was formed at the beginning of the century there were not many black people politically active in Britain. Now there are two and a half million of us, and although we tend to support and vote for Labour, we feel that the Party takes us for granted.

For example, at the Labour conference the arrangements committee was very reluctant to put our resolution on the agenda. It wasn't until we threatened to take over the conference that we got it discussed!

What we were demanding was the setting up of a working party to propose constitutional amendments. We want black people represented in the Party, so we can contribute our black socialism to the movement. We asked for black groups within the constituencies so that black people can formulate policies that have a direct relevance to black people which they could feed into the movement.

Some white comrades give us a lot of help — the delegates from North Westminster and Brent East — and Tony Benn. The NEC was split, but Jo Richardson was 100 per cent with us.

In the end we got the motion remitted — in effect we got the working party we wanted. I think we only got it because people didn't want the Party to be seen as racist by turning us down.

#### What's your next step?

In the late Spring we will hold a national meeting for black Party members. We are hoping that a national forum, like our London forum, will emerge from this.

We will be pressing the NEC to come forward with proposals to the 1984 conference. If we don't get positive results we'll have to form a black caucus affiliated to the Party. If they don't like it they'll have to try to suspend us, expel us or whatever.

We're not going away, and if they don't support us they'll just expose their racism. Not only will this movement raise the racist policies of the Labour Party, but we'll try to dictate future policy.

This is a very strong movement, a real socialist radical movement — which is what the Labour Party was and has forgotten.

### AGM suspended

# Wythenshawe promises broken

**DAVID HUGHES**, Labour Party National Agent, has broken the public promise made by the National Executive Committee to this year's Labour Party conference to end the suspension of Manchester Wythenshawe Constituency Labour Party. David Hughes abandoned the recalled Annual General Meeting of Wythenshawe on 4 November when it became clear that the suspended officers would have a majority.

As a result Wythenshawe remains suspended — as it has been over six months. Yet through the period of its suspension Wythenshawe has succeeded in winning both local council and parliamentary elections for Labour!

By **Jude Woodward** (Manchester Central CLP)

At this year's Labour Party conference, Russell Tuck, on behalf of the NEC, promised that Wythenshawe would be 'given' a fair AGM from which no-one would be excluded. Val Dunn the suspended Vice-Chair of the Party explained what this turned out to mean: 'I was quite overwhelmed. When I first went into the AGM I saw a majority for the right-wing. But they were people whom I'd never seen before or who had never been active in the Party. A number of lapsed delegates were allowed to attend.'

How could this be allowed to occur? Quite simply because the first instruction of David Hughes who presided over the meeting was that membership cards were not to be checked. But the right wing attempt to pack the meeting with fake delegates was so blatant that the suspended Wythenshawe officers

were able to challenge a whole series of delegates.

Bill Courtney, a delegate from UCATT explained: 'I challenged one of the delegates from my own branch of UCATT and pointed out that he was not a member of the Labour Party. He didn't know what ward he was in and admitted "I'm not a member of the Labour

Party but I've come to help you out".' The challenges went on for two and a half hours until David Hughes closed the meeting saying that there were irregularities. He said that there would not be another AGM until 'these problems' are solved and pointed to the 'problem' of Manchester District Labour Party.

### Vendetta

What lies behind the vendetta against the Wythenshawe is the increasing success of Manchester Party activists in removing corrupt and

rightwing councillors and replacing them with socialists.

The rightwing Labour Party want to elect Wythenshawe as a warning that Manchester will not be allowed to go the way of London or Sheffield — to the left.

What is at stake is the right of CLPs to have control at all over their own affairs. Neil Kinnock was elected as leader of the Labour Party on the promise of Party unity.

His attitude to the witch hunt against Wythenshawe and left wing councillors in Manchester will be a test of just how much value should be placed on that promise.



Neil Kinnock — elected on a promise of unity

# MALE ORDER

## Tory axe for Women's hospital

**SOUTH** London Hospital for Women is the last general hospital in the country run by and for women. Tory Minister for Health, Kenneth Clarke, obviously thinks that is one too many, as he has taken the final decision that it should go.

The hospital provides a vital service for women, particularly Asian women, who prefer treatment from

women doctors and staff.

Equally essential are the opportunities given by the hospital for training women consultants and doctors — women make up only 15 per cent of consultants and 20 per cent of doctors overall.

South London is scheduled to be closed next April. A massive campaign will be needed to stop the closure and fight the health cuts in London as a whole.

## Falls Road women's centre

**AFTER** two years of hard work and planning, a group of women in the Falls Road area of West Belfast have just set up a women's centre.

The centre, a unique development in an area where the special needs of women have been mostly ignored, has already become a hive of activity. Women are using it for advice on pro-

blems such as social security benefits, housing, health and male violence.

Those who were involved in the project hope that it will become an efficient information and resources centre as well as a place where women can meet each other, share experiences and avoid the isolation they might face at home.

The future of the centre, however, remains precarious because the premises are due for demolition in three years time. Furthermore, with

no government grants forthcoming, the centre is entirely reliant upon donations and money raised through various fundraising activities.

Without this the planned ideas for developing facilities for women in the area will remain in the heads of those that run the centre. (Loretta Loach, Spare Rib)

● The November issue of Spare Rib is out now, including the first section of an A to Z of feminism with information, addresses and facts — essential for all activists.

## Negative action

**WHILE** the majority of women who go to industrial tribunals claiming sex discrimination lose their cases, men seem to have much more success.

Take the recent case of Doctor James Drummond. This poor man was refused a job at Heathrow's health unit because the department had a women-only selection policy.

Hillingdon health

authority had decided this year to take on only women doctors at the airport because many Asian women refused to be examined by men on cultural and religious grounds.

Under the Sex Discrimination Act there is provision for employing only women in such circumstances. But the industrial tribunal knew better, and decided that it wasn't necessary for the job to be done by women.

Dr Drummond was awarded £250 compensation.



Photo: JOHN HARRIS



## Nicaragua

# Reagan steps up pressure

**FOLLOWING** the invasion of Grenada, Reagan is stepping up the pressure against Nicaragua. Rumours from Washington suggest that the American plan is to try to capture a Nicaraguan town from which to proclaim a 'provisional government' of counter-revolutionaries. Reagan wants this 'provisional government' in place by December or January.

The most dramatic sign of the military build-up has been the attacks on oil installations in Nicaragua, which have crippled the country's oil supplies. But the United States is preparing for even more spectacular military intervention.

By Phil Hearse

The huge US fleet sent last July is still in place off the Pacific and Atlantic coasts. Some of these ships are cruising within 12 miles of Nicaragua. Provocations and incursions have been staged into Nicaragua territorial waters. These ships have on board sea-to-land missiles and nearly 200 planes.

There are now 6000 US troops stationed in Honduras, and they will remain in that country until at least July 1984. These troops are not in Honduras to simply carry out training exercises with Honduran troops. Already a sixty-room military hospital has been

established at the US barracks, a sure sign of the possibility of US battle casualties in the near future.

At the same time, the United States has reactivated the Central America military alliance, CONDECA. This process has been facilitated by the overthrow of the Guatemalan dictator Rios Montt, in an American backed coup, after Montt opposed CONDECA.

The total number of counter-revolutionary 'contra' troops is now reckoned at around 8000. Most of these are part of the FDN ('Nicaraguan Democratic Front') mercenary group operating from Honduras. They have failed in the effort started earlier this year to occupy a strip of land near the northern town of Jalapa from which they intended to proclaim a provisional government.

The new tactic is terror

against the health and educational facilities established by the revolution in the more remote parts of the country. Through this the 'contras' hope to subdue and terrorise the local population and disrupt the efforts to raise the material welfare of the people.

Since the failure of the FDN's offensive, the CIA has been giving more attention to the ARDE (Revolutionary Democratic Alliance) forces of Eden Pastora, based in Costa Rica. It now seems that Pastora himself has been ousted from the leadership of this organisation, since he displayed too much autonomy from the aims of the CIA.

A huge counter-revolutionary strike could now be launched from Costa Rica, with US naval and air support, with precisely the intention of capturing a town to be used by a US-puppet 'provisional' government. Following the Grenadian scenario, there could easily be a 'request' for US intervention from neighbouring governments.

Jaime Wheelock, one of the FSLN leaders, has estimated that a total of 600 Nicaraguans have now



Nicaraguans demonstrate against US threats during May Day demonstrations

been killed by counter-revolutionary attacks. To prepare for the fight to come, Nicaragua has now brought in conscription to bolster the armed forces. The first units will be organised on 1 January 1984, and involve between 20,000 and 30,000 Nicaraguans.

Conscription will of course weaken Nicaragua's economic effort. But this is an inevitable effect of having to concentrate so much effort on defence. Without doubt, part of the US destabilisation plan is to try to create disillusionment with the FSLN leadership through economic dislocation and hardship.

The response of the FSLN has been to deepen

the mass mobilisation and mass organisation of the Nicaraguan people, to prepare both politically and militarily for an imperialist attack. The people's militias have been strengthened, as have the other mass organisations.

Now more than ever it is vital to strengthen the movement of solidarity with the revolution in Cen-

tral America and the Caribbean to prevent a recurrence of what happened to Grenada. Even Margaret Thatcher, despite her open support for the US anti-communist hysteria, has come out against an invasion of Nicaragua. Her hypocritical words won't stop Reagan. Mass solidarity world-wide can.

## Lebanon

# Geneva deal threatens Palestinians

**THE 'national reconciliation' talks in Geneva between the contending factions in Lebanon look set to conclude an agreement which gravely threatens the future of the PLO as an independent organisation. While the leaders of Druze, Shi'ite and Sunni Muslim forces talked in the luxury of the Intercontinental Hotel on the banks of Lake Lemman, Syrian and pro-Syrian Palestinian forces were making a huge assault on pro-Arafat forces in Tripoli. Everything looks set for a final annihilation of the pro-Arafat forces.**

The proposed agreement would basically signify the Phalangist Gemayel government recognising Syria as one of the main influences in Lebanon and repudiating its peace treaty with Israel. In return the Syrians bring the PLO to heel, ensure that the PLO stays out of southern Lebanon and make sure that the anti-Gemayel forces in Lebanon agree to some form of joint government with the Christians.

To see how the agreement works, it is necessary to establish what the different contending forces are trying to win. The Israelis want a peace treaty with Lebanon, and either a friendly Christian government or a partitioned, weakened Lebanon — with the Syrians out.

The Syrians on the other hand want to be the major force in Lebanon, through which they establish themselves as the influential power in the region which everyone has to deal with and make con-

cessions to. In particular the Syrians want the United States to recognise them as the crucial power in the region.

By Paul Lawson

To do that the Syrians have to avoid being thrown out of Lebanon, and show that they are the real masters of the anti-Christian forces.

Following last year's invasion of Lebanon, the Israelis put Bashir Gemayel, military leader of the Christian Phalange, into the position of President. When Bashir was assassinated, he was replaced by his brother Amin. Once Bashir had been assassinated, his brother was happy to sign a 'troop withdrawal' agreement with Israel which amounted to a virtual peace treaty.

The project of a Phalangist-Christian and pro-Israeli government however broke down. It failed because a Phalangist



Yasser Arafat with Libyan president Quaddafi in happier days. Now Quaddafi backs alliance against him.

government naturally excluded the Druze, Sunni and Shi'ite leaders and more fundamentally because it failed to take into account the interests of Syria's Assad.

When fighting broke out between Christians and Druze fighters after the Israeli troop pull-back, the Syrians were only too happy to pour arms and ammunition into the hands of the anti-government forces — not because the Syrians give a fig about the rights of the oppressed in Lebanon, but to weaken the Gemayel government, the better to

force it to recognise Syria's interests.

Once the Lebanese army had got a bloody nose at the hands of the Druze and Shi'ite militias — and only US naval bombardments prevented a complete rout — it was obvious that some deal had to be done with Syria and its allies.

Paradoxically, this deal is at the expense of the Israelis in the short term — but even more fundamentally at the expense of the Palestinians.

Assad's regime in Syria has cleverly exploited the divisions in the PLO by

backing anti-Arafat rebel Abu Musa. Syria has given Abu Musa victory on a plate, but at the price of sacrificing the political and military independence of the PLO fighters.

The pro-Arafat forces could now be massacred in the latest conflict, a cynical crime against the Palestinian people.

Behind the diplomatic wheeling and dealing in Geneva lies the hand of the United States. It seems likely that the present agreement has been cooked up directly by the US and Syrian governments

— with the US delivering Gemayel and the Syrians delivering Walid Jumblatt and the other leaders of the anti-Gemayel 'National Salvation Front'.

It remains to be seen how Israel will respond to the attack on its troops in Tyre, and its exclusion from the diplomatic card-game in Geneva. What is clear however is that its attempt to firmly establish its own hegemony in Lebanon has been an ignominious failure. From the ruins of the invasion, Syria and United States imperialism are picking up the pieces.

In one thing only have the Israelis been successful — striking a savage blow at the Palestine Liberation Organisation. If the new blow against the PLO is being struck by the Syrians, then behind it once again lies imperialism.

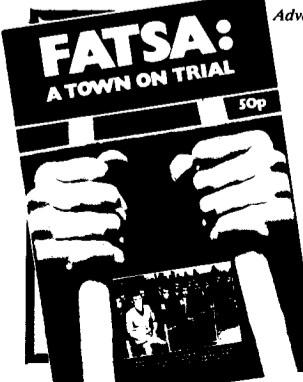
The agreement bet-

ween the different factions in Geneva, if ratified, will once again give the various communal leaders a slice of the governmental action. But working people will get nothing out of such an agreement. It will do nothing to alter the reality of the domination of the country by a ruling class in which the Maronite Christians will always have the upper hand.

The task of defeating the various reactionary forces who do their deals over the heads of the Lebanese and Palestinian masses is made immeasurably harder by the presence of the four-nation imperialist 'peace-keeping force'.

Our task is to fight in solidarity for the independence of the PLO and for the unconditional withdrawal of British and all imperialist troops.

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# THE ACTION INTERVIEW

## East Timor liberation struggle

**EAST TIMOR** is in South East Asia, near Indonesia. Long a Portuguese colony, East Timor was invaded by Indonesia in 1975. Since then, the extreme right wing Indonesian government of Suharto has waged a genocidal counter revolutionary war against the people in that country. Tens of thousands have been massacred.

**ABILIO ARAUJO** is a member of the Central Committee of the liberation organisation Fretlin, and Minister for Social and Economic Affairs in the Government of the Democratic Republic of East Timor, declared on 18 November 1975 in Dili, East Timor.

Many people will be unfamiliar with the struggle of the people of East Timor. What took place prior to the Indonesian invasion in 1975?

We lived under the Portuguese colonialists for 450 years. These were years of harsh repression and exploitation. Many revolts and struggles took place. In particular, I would like to mention the revolt which took place at the end of the century, led by one of our traditional chiefs called Boa Ventura — he succeeded in establishing an independent government and the rebellion lasted for 17 years.

The independent government was only crushed after the Portuguese sent troops from Mozambique. Sporadic resistance continued after, and during the second world war the East Timorese people fought against the Japanese invaders.

After the Portuguese dictatorship was overthrown in 1974, there was a big debate about the future of our country, but we decided to establish an independent state. Fretlin declared independence on 20 November 1975. Tens days later the Indonesians invaded.

**What are the policies of Fretlin?**

Our programme aims at the total liberation of our country. We are fighting not only for political independence, not just to have a flag and an anthem, but for political, economic and cultural independence. That means fighting all colonialists, neo-colonialists and imperialists.

We are organising our people in production, and in campaigns against illiteracy, for health care, for political education — and also to continue to develop our military needs to continue the armed struggle.

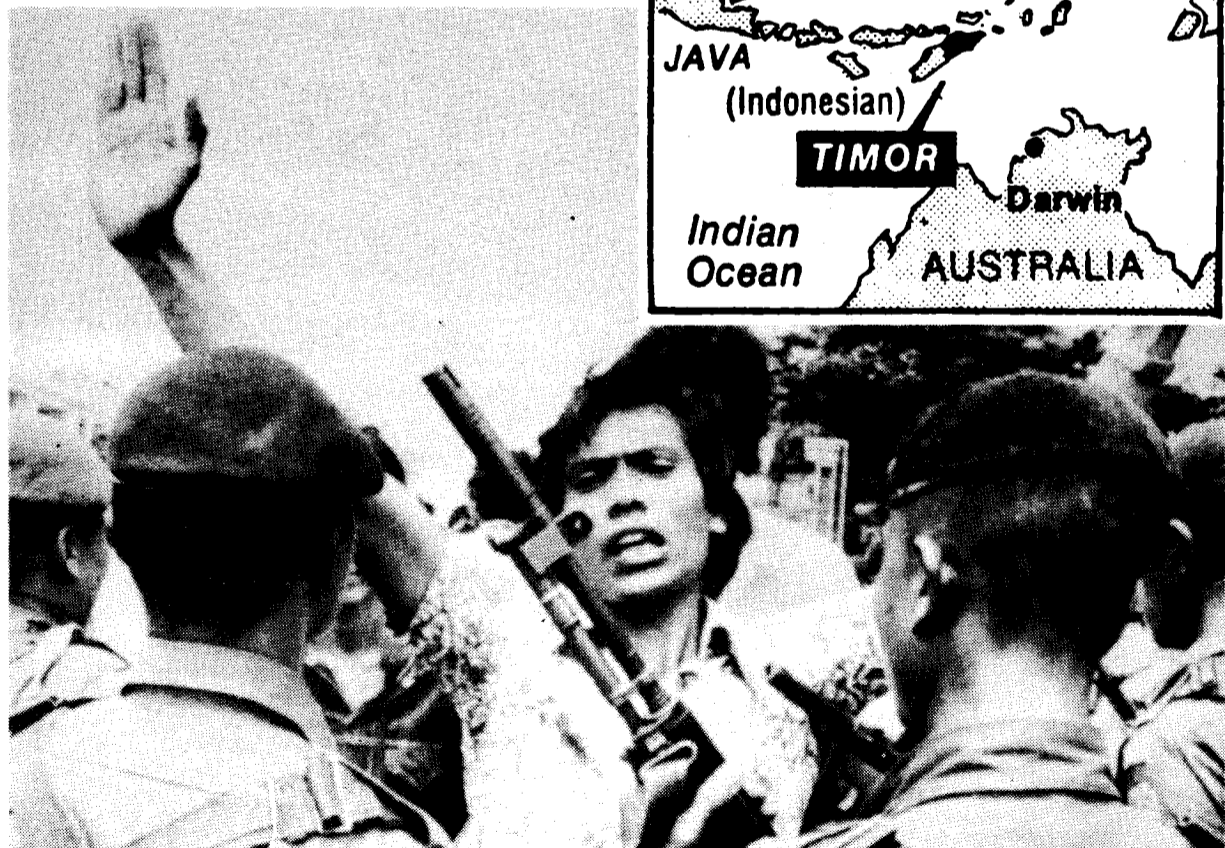
So in the liberated zones we have to organise the social life of the people as well as preparing to deepen the military struggle.

The Indonesians control about 30 per cent of the territory, we control the other 70 per cent. We have a regular army of 7,000 and thousands of irregular guerrillas.

**ABILIO ARAUJO**



Abilio Araujo



Demonstrators battle with Indonesian troops

**The world's capitalist press is saying that Fretlin is finished and East Timor is under Indonesian control. Is it true? And is it true that people have moved back to the Indonesian controlled areas, away from the mountains where the guerrillas are?**

If we were a spent force, then the

Indonesian Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces would not have had to come to negotiate the cease fire agreement which was reached with us in March of this year.

We told the Indonesians that a lasting peace could only be brought about on the basis of

complete withdrawal of Indonesian troops from our territory and respect for the right of our people to self-determination.

Last year our forces captured a military handbook from the Indonesians which gave a very good insight into the way they regard us.

They explain at great length

the self organisation of the people in the areas controlled by Fretlin, the high morale and self-confidence of our guerrilla fighters.

They point out that our fighters have a high commitment to victory, speedy movement and always protect the communication lines between the command and the armed cells. Their approach to the war is a typical colonialist one — they have carried out mass murder, mass bombings, rape and torture.

It is true that only two members of our Central Committee survived after the Indonesian bombings of our country between 1978-79. We also suffered heavy losses among our resistance fighters.

This of course meant that it was impossible to prevent some people from returning to the Indonesian controlled areas, where they were free from the threat of bombing raids.

We responded by sending political cadres into the Indonesian controlled areas to organise the population.

In 1982 we launched a big counter-offensive. We captured masses of Indonesian military equipment, including automatic rifles, heavy artillery and rocket launchers. To date there have been 25,000 Indonesian casualties.

**What is the importance of international support for your struggle?**

The Indonesians' campaign is a genocidal one. They have killed tens of thousands of our people. Now they are preparing another big offensive. They are trying to get this issues out of the United Nations. If they do, they will have a much freer hand. That's why we are appealing to all governments and organisations to raise a voice of protest to aid our struggle.

**Catholicism is the dominant religion in East Timor. What has been the attitude of the Church?**

The majority of priests have supported our struggle. They have seen the violations of human rights and the genocide committed against our people. Between 150,000 and 200,000 East Timorese people have been killed or interned since 1975.

The priests visit the Fretlin guerilla camps. We trust them. They know we are fighting for survival and the establishment of an independent democratic state.

**The Indonesian government has adopted a policy of trying to settle some Indonesian civilians in East Timor. Will this undermine your struggle?**

Well, so far they have transported about 300 Indonesian families to our country, but we have already developed political work among this population. We tell these people that the land is ours, that they are becoming instruments of the Indonesian regime — and that the only way out for them is to go back to their own country. If they don't, then they become our enemies with all the consequences for them that this involves. Some families have already understood this and gone back.





The US invasion of Grenada has re-opened a big debate in the Labour Party on Britain's relations with the United States. BOB CRYER, former Labour MP for Keighly, looks at the record of past Labour governments on US foreign policy.

# Labour and the USA

Clement Attlee complied with Truman in murderous destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Then he ordered Britain's own atomic bomb.

When American people were protesting against murder of Vietnamese children, Harold Wilson slavishly supported Lyndon B Johnson's genocide.

## Lewis Davies Memorial Lecture

LEWIS DAVIES was secretary of Middlesbrough Trades Council until his tragic death in a climbing accident in 1982. As well as being active in his union, NALGO, and the local CND, Lewis was a supporter of the *Socialist Challenge* newspaper and an activist in the Labour Party.

A topical lecture is organised each year in his memory by his friends and colleagues.

The 1983 lecture was presented in Middlesbrough on 27 October. *Socialist Action* is pleased to reproduce an edited version of Bob Cryer's speech in remembrance of Lewis.

**IT IS ABSOLUTELY** ap-  
**posite, as it happens, to talk**  
**about US foreign policy and**  
**the Labour Party. We say**  
**cruise missiles shouldn't**  
**come here but that we're**  
**friends with the American**  
**people, and so forth.**

But the realities of the past few days have intruded very harshly, and demonstrated what my view has been all along. That the Labour Party in the whole of the post-war period, has been far too subservient to United States foreign policy. It has been equalled in that position by the Conservative Party — indeed excelled in that position by the Conservative Party — so that the position reached today by the government is of total subservience to American foreign policy.

Now I just want spend a few minutes setting out where I see the post-war policy failures taking place in relation to the United States, and why we as a Labour Party have got to re-assert our non-aligned view of foreign policy free from entanglement and domination of the United States of America. Nothing less will do.

There are major components of Labour Party policy, such as the rejection of cruise and the closure of US

nuclear bases in this country, which are basic pillars of opposition to United States domination and which must be carried out when we get the next Labour government. Now, in 1945 we had a massive victory by the Labour Party.

So when the bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki it was actually with a Labour government in power. Now we don't know whether the decision was communicated by the American government to Attlee, but there was a very revealing moment and that moment signified much of subsequent government policy. Harold Laski, then a member of Labour's NEC, had suggested that before Clem Atlee actually went to Potsdam, since there was a meeting of the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party, it would be prudent if he actually waited for a discussion so that he knew what the views of the Labour Party were.

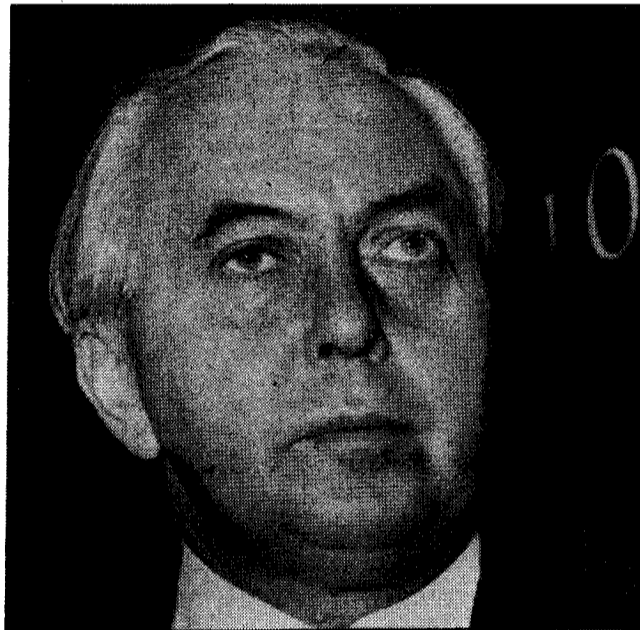
### Words

And Churchill took this up and said: 'It seems that we must refer to an obscure committee which will give orders to the so-called responsible ministers of the crown who have delivered orations upon which they have been instructed from those dim complaints below'. To which Attlee replied immediately: 'I feel I must deal at once with the disgraceful suggestion that cabinet and military secrets will be divulged by Labour ministers to the Labour Party Executive.'

In other words, once they got a government, the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party should keep its position, which was quiet and remote and let *them* get on with making 'high quality decisions'. Because they weren't going to get any information at all, and it was this lack of information which allowed a number of serious errors to be made.

The bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were, for example, the first stages in the cold war. In 1941 the opponents of Japan in Indochina were the communists led by a man called Ho Chi Minh. The American government welcomed their support and actually financed them and armed them. But by 1945 policy changed. Roosevelt was dead, and Harry S Truman had been elected and the cold war was developing. Therefore it was necessary to switch sides.

Ho Chi Minh was no longer the ally, he was the opponent, because he was one of the dreaded species of communists that was emerging in the post-war period. On 15 August, a few days after the nuclear bombs had been dropped on Japan, President Truman signed an order authorising the Japanese to support the allied forces in the suppression of the communist forces — our allies, up to that time, in Indochina.



That's why, when Mountbatten arrived in Indochina, he was somewhat staggered to find the guard of honour which greeted his arrival was composed of fully-armed and uniformed Japanese. He had assumed, somewhat naively that they were our opponents.

And after Dien Bien Phu in 1954, when of course there was a Conservative government assiduously following the same cold war policy, America took total control of the war in Vietnam and carried out a war of the most cruel suppression against a tiny

agrarian country that the world has seen, producing horrors the like of which haven't been seen since the concentration camps of the Nazi regime in Germany. The subordination of the Labour government in 1945 had laid a path which was followed assiduously





by both parties.

This had its repercussions in other affairs as well. Because unbeknown to the citizens who were only paying for it, and who it turned out were actually going to die for it, the Labour government under Clem Attlee were developing an atomic bomb. One of our own. A sort of heroic gesture, if you like, to show that we too were important. We wanted to emphasise our technological parity with the rest of the world. So we embarked on the development of the atomic bomb.

It was not announced until 23 October 1952, when Churchill proclaimed it. This most momentous of occasions was not made the subject of a special statement in parliament, it was simply a reply to an oral question. Churchill said: 'All those concerned in the production of the first British atomic bomb are to be warmly congratulated on the successful outcome of an historic episode. And I should no doubt say my compliments to the leader of the opposition and the Party opposite, for initiating it.' So there was Churchill giving Clem Attlee a pat on the back and saying 'well done'.

American people were opposed to the president, the president was able to rely on a Labour prime minister and his foreign secretary for succour and support in persuing that vicious, nasty and cruel war.

So what about the more modern position which I'll come to swiftly now. The foreign policy position centres on cruise, against which so many people marched last Saturday and provided the biggest demonstration that this country has ever gathered together as a focus of militant objection by the people of this nation. Well cruise again, it is claimed by the government, is subject to an agreement in which there is a right of veto. I'm afraid that I have to tell you now that when Michael Heseltine and Mrs Thatcher and Francis Pym make that claim they are not telling the truth. Technically it's known as lying, and you can get away with it in the House of Commons or indeed anywhere else so long as it's not about sex. If you lie about sex you're in for trouble and your political career will come to a fairly rapid end.

## 'As long as they have a reactionary lick-spittle government prepared to support exploitation and private enterprise, that government can rely on backing from the United States of America.'

Almost identical remarks were to be made many years later when Francis Pym announced that Polaris had been updated at a cost of £1000 million under Operation Cheveline and he said to Jim Callaghan: 'I want to congratulate the leader of the opposition for having carried out this policy'. Jim Callaghan said: 'Well of course we were only carrying out Conservative policy as well' and he was shouted down because it sounded slightly weak.

Churchill also said: 'As for the cost, I have said before as an old parliamentarian, that I was rather astonished that well over £100 million should be dispersed without parliament being made aware of it. I was a bit astonished'. Our policy of subordination to the US has been demonstrated over and over again. I need hardly remind you of the cruel memory of Michael Stewart and Harold Wilson and their attitude towards the United States in Vietnam. Even when the

But if you lie about the 'unimportant' matters: cruise missiles, nuclear weapons, mass extermination — well the establishment will bless you, and say that you're statesmen. The fact that you lie, you cheat, that you contemplate the mass extermination of people as part of international policy is praised. The agreement under which cruise is being brought to this country was reached in 1951.

Even if you accept that cruise is necessary, and I don't, whether you have dual, triple or quadruple keys — the agreement reached in 1951 is wholly inadequate for the sort of highly sophisticated press button technology that cruise represents. The 1951 agreement for the US to use certain bases in this country was for piston-engined aeroplanes to refuel, followed subsequently by jet aeroplanes to refuel, and to maybe have maintenance. It was nothing to do with pressing buttons which provide instantaneous mass ex-

termination on a scale never before known.

So even those who support cruise cannot possibly accept the terms of the agreement which Thatcher so blandly trots out. The agreement reached in October 1951 between Truman and Attlee was a short statement, and it says there should be a joint decision-making on the use of UK bases by US forces. It then uses these words: 'In the light of circumstances prevailing at the time'.

Now what on earth does that mean? Does it mean that the United States can decide the light of circumstances and can take unilateral action? Or does it mean that we can do that? We don't know. Shouldn't we really know this, since these weapons are on our soil, governed by American computer technology, governed by American decision making? Quite clearly there is no right of UK veto in that agreement. Now why was it October 1951? Well, our parliamentary system, which as you know has been imitated by no other country in the world — the mother of parliaments, the apotheosis of democracy — does have its advantages.

You can raise the issues, you can ask questions. But to put the matter beyond doubt, the agreement was reached in October because there was a general election taking place. Parliament wasn't actually sitting. So that grand old democrat Clem Attlee, who we look back on with great fondness and affection for the fighting socialist which people claim he was, actually reached the agreement at a time when this country's people could have no knowledge of it. By the end of the election there was a new government, the thing was pushed to one side and Churchill eagerly took it over, picked it up and accepted it.

### Tiny

America now decides that a tiny government on a tiny island isn't democratic enough. I wonder why they never say this about countries like Haiti, where there has been repression and poverty for year after year after year. As long as they have a reactionary lick-spittle government prepared to support exploitation and private enterprise, that government can rely on backing from the United States of America. Cruise means that we shall be tied ever more closely to American apron strings and we'll be less able to speak out against American imperialist oppression in countries like Grenada. We need to be in a position to condemn American involvement whether it's in Grenada or any other country where we wish to make a judgement about the rights and wrongs of a situation. That's

one of the most important elements in cruise, and that's why we are getting cruise. That's why other European countries are getting cruise.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office. If we're going to have a Labour government that's really going to carry out radical policies, we can't have prime

## 'If you lie about sex you're in for trouble and your political career will come to a fairly rapid end. But if you lie about the 'unimportant' matters: cruise missiles, nuclear weapons, mass extermination — well the establishment will bless you, and say that you're statesmen.'

I'll make a further assertion. That's the basis of the existence of the Common Market. That's why the Common Market exists, as part of the cold war strategy of the US, in order to ensure that capitalism remains supreme in a significant proportion of Europe.

We have in our country over 100 bases which are under the control of a foreign power, the United States of America. Don't forget that Duncan Campbell (who has exposed American 'security' operations in the UK) and Aubrey and Berry were prosecuted by a Labour Attorney General, Sam Silkin. Not by Tories. So we've got to remember that the policy of exposing American workings within our own country has met with hostility by Labour governments and by Conservative governments to an even greater degree.

During that period, when the CIA wanted a victim, then we provided it and Merlyn Rees defended Phillip Agee's deportation — a man who should have been knighted for his exposures of the CIA. That was the sort of thing that was sustained by the Labour government, and it could have done a great deal more. What else could it have done? It could have introduced a freedom of information bill.

### Change

If we are going to change the nature of United Kingdom subservience to United States foreign policy, we have to change this. There's no doubt about it. Because of the influence of the CBI, the City, the ambassadors, all the institutions of senior civil servants and the

ministers saying we can't wet people's appetite for more information. We've got to be wetting people's appetites. It's the only way a Labour government can succeed.

A Labour government only has the strength of the people. In spite of the massive outpouring of invective from the daily press, the Labour Party has undertaken mandatory reselection. Members of Parliament are now more sensitive to the rank and file of the Labour Party than ever before. You'd be amazed how many MPs discovered that they were strong supporters of unilateral nuclear disarmament after close and meaningful discussions with their comrades in the constituencies. We have a leadership system that was so revolutionary that those who had used the Party to get wealth and power decided it was too radical for them and they must leave.

Our leader is now elected on a wider basis and it gives us in the Party a greater right to expect the leader to carry out Party policy. And it breaks down that insulation which has been the salvation of the establishment for so long between the PLP and the rank and file. The position which Clem Attlee outlined in 1945 is no longer sustainable.

If Neil Kinnock said there were to be no discussions on policy, no discussions of cabinet secrets, he would be challenged from the top to the bottom of the Party. Those are great sources of strength.

We suffered a considerable defeat at the last election, but the confidence of the Labour Party and the strength of its ideas has not been diminished.





Nelson Mandela

## Christmas greetings

**THIS YEAR** will be the 21st Christmas that Nelson Mandela will have spent separated from his family because of his continuing incarceration in the dungeons of apartheid.

The trials and tribulations of the Mandela family are not unique. There will be hundreds of families of Namibian and South African political prisoners who will miss their mothers or fathers, their daughters or sons this year.

May I therefore take this opportunity to invite your readers to send Christmas and New Year

greetings to the banned and banished, and to the families of political prisoners, and of those who have been executed or murdered in detention in South Africa and Namibia.

For the hundreds of courageous and brave persons who are persecuted by the apartheid laws, such greetings are both welcomed and appreciated.

Please write to us for a list of names and addresses enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope.

**ABDUL MINTY,**  
Anti-Apartheid Movement,  
13 Selous St,  
London NW1

## Children's rights

ON JOHN Inigo's letter to the Paedophile Information Exchange.

Children are faced with restrictions on their activities both from within and without the family. Whatever the nature of these restrictions, they all emanate from the same source: adults.

Partly because they have not acquired the necessary experience to cope with the world around them, and partly because they have limited legal and civil rights, children are dependant on and vulnerable to adults.

This situation requires the adult to be vigilant in his/her behaviour towards children. In what way are paedophiles likely to benefit children? In 1885 the Victorians raised the age of consent in order to stop child prostitution, which became endemic with the growth of capitalism and its concomitant patriarchal ownership of property and people.

A hundred years later we are still a capitalist and patriarchal society. With the current recession, high unemployment and homelessness among young people, it is not hard to imagine the result of lowering the age of consent anew.

Puberty is a difficult, even traumatic period, hard enough for adolescents to cope with within their own peer group, where they at least have the comfort of sharing the experience.

Added pressures come from school and social activities which increase in scope and tempo.

This is hardly the time for children to cope with the extra attentions of the paedophile, who, using his authority both as an adult and a male, is able to turn an adolescent's confusion, inexperience and sometimes emotional loneliness to his advantage.

Socialists should support all campaigns — especially those initiated by youth groups — which increase children's legal status, rights and protection. Swedish law has made it an offence for parents to beat their children, and this would be an excellent start.

Above all, support must be aimed at strengthening the child's situation and not the situation of one section of adult males whose concerns for children's welfare is not disinterested.

**PAUL RUSSELL,**  
London W8

# LETTERS

## Congratulations!

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Phil Hearse for an excellent analysis of events in Grenada in last week's Socialist Action. May I ask for more details of the background, particularly of the New Jewel Movement, to be published.

While many of us should know all about these developments, nevertheless, I at least am reliant on Socialist Action and such for reliable information that I have time to read.

On an entirely different track, I was very concerned to read Julia Langden's report in last

Thursday's *Guardian* (27 Oct) on Tariq Ali's 'expulsion' on page four. What concerned me was the paragraph beginning 'Mr Ali maintained ... there was no other way to socialism than through the Labour Party'.

If this is a true account of what he said, I regard it as a tragic statement from a comrade for whom I have an enormous respect. If it is mere scurrilous reporting, then I hope it will be hotly denied by Socialist Action et al in print.

**BEN CALLAN,** Hatfield, Herts

## Paraphenalia or process?

**PHIL HEARSE'S** assessment that the People's Revolutionary Government of Grenada had only 'the paraphenalia of alleged participatory democracy' and consequently ended in a shoot out 'the opposite of proletarian democracy', assumes that in any revolution the transition from old forms to new is immediate and that the people are instantly won to them.

It also ignores the pressure that imperialism applies to destabilise at every turn. That

paraphenalia was not a step in the wrong direction, not a sop to the people, but part of a process which was actively debated by the people and which did put the people first.

It would surely have been better at this moment to concentrate on the positive gains that have been achieved in the four and a half years of the PRG, and which are sadly lacking from the bourgeois press.

**DAVE MacPARLAND**

## Will anti-freeze cool support?

**I WOULD** like to take issue with your contributor, Valerie Coultas, on some points in her article 'We don't want to freeze this winter' (SA 21 October).

Her statement that 'all these contributions (regarding broadening CND) promising a new chapter in fact offer nothing new at all. That they repeat the error that was made by CND's leadership 20 years ago' is open to question.

After all, we are not in the same situation that we were 20 years ago. The situation is far more threatening.

It is no longer a situation of mutual deterrence but of one power's intent on world domination. If the nuclear clock was registering four minutes to midnight before, it is now registering two minutes to midnight. By accident or design nuclear war is far more likely now than it was 20 years ago.

It is this desperate situation which has led CND to rethink some of their policies. If we broaden our front and take in more people under a banner like freeze, then this we must do.

One step forward with a freeze campaign is better than no steps forward with a bare unilateralist programme. This is no time for adopting a pure

doctrinaire approach — we need all the allies we can get in the campaign.

Ms Coultas asks 'what is the obstacle to using these demands (No cruise, no Trident) as a bridge to CND's ultimate goal — the scrapping of all nuclear weapons, bases and alliances unilaterally?' The obstacle is first that the British people, whether or not they are misled by the Tory press and television, are not yet ready to accept such a proposition of scrapping all bases etc unilaterally, but might be prepared to accept a freeze on weapons.

CND's strategy is a two-fold one: first there are those areas in the field of disarmament where CND can offer its blessing and support and second, those areas which are the main planks of CND policy. The freeze movement is in the former category, but it does not in any way invalidate CND's primary aims of 'no cruise, no Trident, no nuclear bases on British soil'. It is an adjunct to the main policy, endeavouring to bring in broader support and at this time we need all the support we can get.

I therefore disagree with the main purport of Ms Coultas's article. What she is doing is advocating 'freezing out' valuable support which we desperately need.

**JG CLARKSON**

## Inconsistent

**FOLLOWING** recent excellent coverage of, and support for, the struggles of women at Labour Party conference in their attempt to get proper recognition and representation, I am dismayed to discover in Socialist Action (28 October) that there is no mention whatsoever of 29 October, this day being TUC Women's Day.

Such an omission is not consistent with past practice of Socialist Action in underlining the need to take women's issues and policies in the unions.

Likewise, your pages have substantial reports of the efforts of NALGO, NUPE and POEU members (to mention but a few) in the present disputes .... a good proportion of those involved and being the most

militant are women. So what happened to TUC Women's Day?

We know that the TUC bureaucrats, as is to be expected didn't take the day seriously, did too little too late, but nationally it has not escaped the notice of the women trade unionists who have organised rallies, leafletting, day schools ... It is clear that women are going to be taken seriously in the labour movement

by fighting all the way from the bottom upwards. It is a token concession that the event exists at all. In order to participate in and support the struggles of our sisters we must consistently build such initiatives as TUC Women's Day.

Let's take advantage of it properly in the future!

**TINA YEMM,**  
Nottingham.

CHILDREN EITHER SLEEP ALONE OR WITH SMALL TOY ANIMALS. THE WISDOM OF SUCH BEHAVIOUR



IS UNQUESTIONABLE ...

Fran Lebowitz/FAMS

## No reliance on men

**MALE ORDER** column (28 October) contained Socialist Action's only coverage of the recently-published research on cancer and the contraceptive pill. Such coverage is welcome, but the conclusions are definitely not:

'Male Order says: Panic now before it's too late. If you're on the pill stop taking it. Get the men in your life to take responsibility for contraception, and investigate safe methods under your control like the cap.' (my emphasis).

I couldn't believe what I was reading! I agree that women should not accept the implicit advice of the (male) FPA doctor quoted, to remain complacent about the health risks involved in taking the pill. But really! Can anyone writing for our paper seriously suggest that an 'alternative'

is to rely, even temporarily, on men?

The dangers and difficulties of using the most *contraceptively* safe form of birth control should not be passed over lightly, as they are by the medical establishment and the bourgeois press. But the fundamental problem for women remains that there is *no* method of birth control which is safe from all points of view: as a contraceptive, and for the mental and

physical health and well-being of the woman.

Looked at like this, the *least* adequate advice anyone could give is to get men to take responsibility. Our slogan should be: 'Socialist-Feminist Health Warning: relying on male contraception can seriously damage all aspects of your health!'

**CAROL TURNER,**  
Lambeth

## Write to us!

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



# The Hongkong crisis

THE MALVINAS war concentrated the minds of Britain's rulers wonderfully on the problem of outstanding claims for sovereignty on British colonies. One of the most sensitive of these is of course Hongkong. The treaty by which Britain hold the colony is due to run out in 1997, and the Chinese government has made it clear that it expects sovereignty to be restored by then.

But of course things are a little more complicated in Hongkong than in the Malvinas. If the Beijing government wanted to simply grab control of the colony there would be no problem whatever. The 7000 British and Gurka troops could hardly hold out against the multi-millioned might of the Peoples Revolutionary Army.

But both British imperialism and China have an enormous stake in maintaining the present social structure in Hongkong. For Britain and the Hongkong bourgeoisie it is an enormous source of profits; for China it is one of the main sources of foreign exchange — badly needed for the development effort. Some sort of deal should, then, be eminently possible. But things are not so simple.

When Thatcher visited China in 1982 she insulted her hosts by implying Britain's determination to keep sovereignty — despite the signals being

sent out by the Foreign Office 'wets'. Thatcher got a sharp reply from Beijing. And then there is the question of the people of Hongkong themselves. Is their choice limited to continued colonial oppression or integration with the Stalinist Chinese monolith?

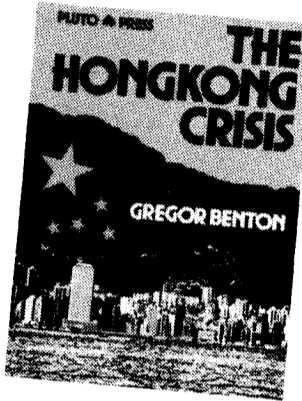
By Paul Lawson

Gregor Benton's timely book gives an admirable account of the history of the colonial domination of the territory, the struggles waged by the Hongkong workers from the beginning of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, the options of the British and Beijing governments, and the radical alternatives which face the people of Hongkong. All socialists will be particularly interested in his account of the Hongkong-based democracy movement.

Despite the fact that the average income of the Hongkong workers is much higher than those in

China, the territory is still rife with poverty, inequality and exploitation. In precisely what sense is a worker in a back street sweatshop, making watches or toys for the West and living in squalor, 'richer' than a Chinese peasant in a commune?

Against the propaganda and mystification of both the governments involved, Gregor Benton's book outlines the problem from the point of view which is the only correct starting-point — that of Hongkong workers.



The Hongkong Crisis  
Gregor Benton  
Pluto Press £3.95



## TV CHOICE

### The Worst of Hollywood

Saturday 12 November, 11.30, Channel 4

This collection of terrible movies has been amusing so far, but unfortunately you have to put up with the nauseating Michael Medved and his stupid captions trying to make the whole thing into an

art form. This week's is 'They saved Hitler's brain' in which a motley group of Nazis store Hitler's head in a glass jar.

### Newsnight special: Central America

Saturday 12 November, BBC2

A special report from

Nicaragua, Honduras and El Salvador which promises new pictures of the fighting and interviews with both sides.

### The great Palace: The story of parliament

Thursday 17 November, BBC2

### New cinema of Latin America

Monday 14 November, 11.00, Channel 4

And more on Central America in the last of C4's interesting series. This is a collection of five short documentaries:

Using models and great technical expertise, the BBC recreate the night when parliament went up in flames in 1834. Could this be taken as incitement to revolution? Surely not, but you can sit back and enjoy it all the same.

# Masterpieces

MASTERPIECES is a play about pornography. It starts with a porn merchant describing with satisfaction the profitability of his company, how harmless his wares are, the good it does 'the public' to be freed from the puritan values of earlier times.

The play then examines the effect of pornography on women's lives and men's reactions to pornography and their attitudes to women, in both public and personal relationships. This is particularly shown through the character Ravena who at the beginning of the play backs up her husband and other men against Yvonne by saying that porn is harmless and possibly beneficial to the frustrated 'man in the street'.

Reviewed by Helen MacDonald

Then she starts realising the connections in the way men see women and the way that they treat women in practice. At the end of the play she is on trial for murder, after she pushes a man who accosts her, under a tube train. *Masterpieces* has been described as an 'uncompromising angry play'.

Well it did make me angry, but a lot of that anger finished up being directed at the play itself. Yes, it is powerful. It does show some positive images of women — both Ravena and Yvonne fight back. But whilst *Masterpieces* showed the horrific situations that women are



forced into its final statement is one of despair.

After the court case Ravena says: 'I don't want anything to do with men that look at pornography. I don't want anything to do with men that cut women up, men that tell women to lie back and relax ... and men who tell misogynist jokes! These are the final lines.

But the point is she has just been imprisoned, presumably for years. The play therefore ends when her choice of her own actions has been

taken away from her. Right through the play I felt individual men were getting away with it.

Yes, they are shown as shits. Yes their actions are seen as inexcusable. Unfortunately I don't believe that method of portrayal would have one iota of effect on any man that saw the play. For me as a woman, *Masterpieces* was a powerful reiteration of how women suffer. It does however compromise in my opinion in the way its statements are presented. Scene after scene had a topping of

witty repartee as though to make sure that the audience got 'good entertainment' value despite the subject matter.

### Mind

Mind you I am not complaining about lines like — 'How do you get three men to paper a room. Quite easily, but you have to slice them thinly.' But time after time it was the old sexist jokes we got.

I know it was supposed to force home the

reality of men's attitudes towards women, but the men in the audience laughed. No doubt they were having their consciences raised at the same time.

A play worth seeing — but I don't advise going along with a man: The horrific bits disturb them, the jokes make them laugh and that lets them miss the whole point.

*Masterpieces* by Sorch Daniels is showing at the Royal Court Theatre, Sloane Square, SW1

## Europe's folly

OWEN GREENE has published a useful little handbook full of information and arguments about cruise and Pershing II missiles.

Nothing is taken for granted. The book includes chapters on what a cruise missile is, the history of the cruise missile program, and the background to the NATO 'modernisation' decision to deploy cruise and Pershing.

Reviewed by A Lenton

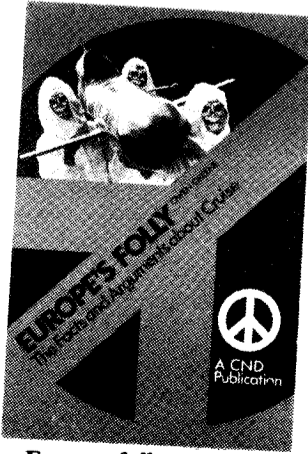
The author also goes through all of the more common arguments used to justify cruise and methodically counters each of them. In so doing the real purpose of the new weapons becomes apparent. From being a solution in search of a problem Cruise has become the first of a new generation of nuclear warfighting weapons. The strategy on which cruise is based is that nuclear war can be fought and 'won' in Europe.

The book is weakest in the political conclu-

sions at the end when the author's lack of political understanding of the motives of the US as the driving force of the arms race are not taken into account, an elaborate and sterile schema for nuclear disarmament is laid out.

At the same time the history of the cruise project almost makes it sound like the whole thing was an accident!

In spite of this, however, the book is a must for all activists in search of coherently organised material about cruise and Pershing II.



Europe's folly  
Owen Greene  
CND £1.95



# 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.

● **Exhibition on plastic bullets** at Islington libraries: Essex Rd 31 Oct-12 Nov; Manor Gdns 14-26 Nov; Finsbury 28 Nov-10 Dec. Organised by Islington TOM with Islington Council.

● **History Workshop 17 Manchester 1983** Industrialisation and after. Manchester Polytechnic, All Saints, Manchester 15. 11-13 November. Registration and enquiries to: History Workshop 17, 47 Albany Road, Manchester 21. Full fee £7. Students and low wage £3.50, unemployed and OAPs free. Cheques payable to 'History Workshop 17'.

● **The Millie Miller Memorial Lecture 1983** 'Socialism and the Third World', a public meeting with Dame Judith Hart MP. Wed 9 Nov, 8pm, Aldborough Rm, Fullwell Cross Library, Barkinside, Ilford, Essex. Organised by Ilford Nth CLP.

● **Yolocamba I-Ta** (direct from El Salvador) and **High Life International: Central America and Africa** meet in concert at Friends House, Euston Rd, London NW1 on Fri 25 November, 7pm. Tickets £3/£2 unwaged from ELSSOC, 29 Islington Park St, London N1, 01-359 3976. Benefit for El Salvador and Chile Solidarity Campaigns.

● **An Evening for El Salvador** Sun 4 Dec, Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, 7.30pm. A cabaret with Julie Christie, The Flying Pickets, The Jokeys, Leon Rosselson, Peggy Seeger & Ewan MacColl, Emma Thompson, Yolocamba I-Ta, Andy de la Tour. Tickets £4 or £6 from ELSSOC (see above).

● **The Isaac Deutscher Memorial Lecture** given by GEM de Ste Croix 'Karl Marx and the Interpretation of Greek and Roman History'. 28 Nov, 7.30pm, LSE New Theatre, Houghton St, London WC2. Admission free.

● **Women and Unemployment** — a conference for unemployed women & women workers at Centres for the Unemployed in the south east. Sat 3 Dec, 9.30am-5pm, Congress Hse, Gt Russel St, London W1. With Jo Richardson MP, theatre, and workshops. Full details from Celia Minoughan, Guildford Unemployed Peoples Centre, The Old Police Station, 3a Leapale Rd, Guildford, Surrey 0483-33942.

● **Concert for El Salvador** with The Republic and Carol Grimes. Fri 11 Nov, 8pm, LSE, Houghton St, London WC2.

● **Central America: Nobody's Backyard.** Programme of meetings organised by North London Central America Group, Tuesdays at 7.30pm, Hampden Community Centre, 150 Ossulston St, NW1, £5 for full course or £1 per meeting (£2/50p unwaged).

15 Nov Liberation Theology: Option for the poor;  
22 Nov 'The First Casualty' & 'Ballots & Bullets';  
29 Nov Viva Centro America! Further info Duncan Green 01-359 3976.

● **Lambeth Lesbian & Gay Action** meeting 15 Nov, 8pm, Lambeth Town Hall.  
● **From War in the Third World to the Third World War** — new pamphlet published by El Salvador Solidarity Campaign, 50p. Order from ELSSOC, 29 Islington Park St, London N1 01-359 3976. ELSSOC have also produced a 1984 calendar showing scenes from life in the liberated zones, £3 from same address.

● **No Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean (NICAC)** is a broad based coalition of solidarity groups, human rights orgs, aid agencies and political parties. More details from NICAC 20/21 Compton Terrace, London N1 01-226 6747.

Advertisement



**For a Reagan-free Caribbean**

Reagan Free Caribbean badges in yellow, black and red. 25p each (plus postage); bulk orders 20p each. Money with orders to PO Box 36, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8. Cheques/POs payable to Hackney Book Club.

● **Labour Group for Human Rights in Sri Lanka** public meeting with Tony Benn, Jeremy Corbyn MP, Rajes Balasubramaniam (Labour Group/Tamil Women's League) John Chowcatt (ASTMS) & speaker from EELAM Solidarity Campaign. Thur 1 Dec, 7pm, Hampstead Town Hall, Haverstock Hill, NW3 (opp Belsize Pk tube).

● **Socialist Action Pie and Pea supper** to celebrate the anniversary of the Russian revolution. Sat 19 Nov, 7.30pm, Vale Rd Community Centre, Mansfield Woodhouse. Food, music, drinks, speakers and raffle. For tickets phone Mansfield 653216, £1.20/80p unwaged.

● **Dumfries & Galloway Youth CND** events: Sat 19 Nov phone protest at the production of tritium at Chapelcross. For information contact Alan Conchar (sec), 13 Cotton St, Castle Douglas, Kirkcubrightshire, DG7 1AJ 0556 2030.

## LABOUR AGAINST THE WITCH HUNT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

26 November 1983

Camden Town Hall

Speakers include: Alf Homes, chair, Manchester Wythenshawe Labour Party  
Audrey Wise  
Jo Richardson MP

Delegation (with affiliation) from CLPs, wards, and all affiliated Labour Party sections, plus individual affiliates of LAW

Apply to: Keith Lichman, secretary, Labour Against the Witch hunt, 11 Wilderton Road, London N16 or phone (01)-802 1709.

● **The Hour of Liberation** — a festival of films, videos music, food, stalls, speakers and discussion, Harehills Place, Harehills Rd, Leeds 8. Including Fri 11 Nov 8-11pm film *The Hour of Liberation* and disco. Sat 12 Nov 11-5pm videos *Awake from Mourning*, *The Cause of Ireland*, *Aire Valley Yarns* plus films, exhibitions, stalls and speaker at 1pm: Tariq Mehmood (Pakistan Workers Association). Sat evening 8-11.30pm film, *The Patriot Game* plus Chilean folk group The Carrascos.

● **Labour Committee on Palestine annual national conference** Sat 26 Nov, Lambeth Town Hall. Speakers from PLO and Lebanese National Movement. For details contact Penny 01-274 8775

● **London Lesbian & Gay Young Socialists** meet every four weeks on Sundays at 6pm, Marchmont Community Centre, Marchmont St, WC1. Next meeting 20 Nov showing 'Revenge of the teenage pervers' and other videos. Further details from Martin 01-263 9484.

● **Gay NUR group** just forming. For details of inaugural meeting write to Gay NUR c/o 119 Southwyck, Coldharbour Lane, London SW9.

● **Lesbians in the Labour Party and trade unions** next national meeting Sat 26 Nov, 2pm, A Woman's Place, Victoria Embankment, London WC1 (Embankment tube). Creche available. Further details from Sarah Roelofs c/o Gays the Word bookshop, Marchmont St, London WC1.

● **Race and Class special issue out now: 'British racism — the road to 1984'**. Includes articles by A. Sivanandan; Cecil Gutzmore; Lee Bridges and others. £2 from Institute of Race Relations, 247 Pentonville Rd, London N1 9NG. Cash with order.

● **Racism and Black Liberation:** Manchester Socialist Action day school, 10am, Sun 13 Nov, UMIST. Admission £2/£1 unwaged. Includes kit, lunch and film on Malcolm X. Ring 061-236 4905 for details.

● **London Labour Campaign for Gay Rights** Further details from Mike 01-659 2983 or Bob 01-341 0666.

● **Kill the Police Bill:** public meeting Tues 15 Nov, 7.30pm, Essex Rd Library, London N1. With Jasbir Singh (Newham 8 Defence Campaign); Chris Khamis (Campaign against the Police Bill); Herbie Wisdom (PACE); Rosemary Nicholson (Chair Islington Police Cttee). Organised by Islington Nth & Sth and Hornsey & Wood Green LPYSs.

● **Campaign against the Police Bill national conference**, Sat 19 Nov, Sir William Collins School, Charrington St, London NW1. **National march and rally** Sat 21 Jan, Brockwell Park, London. Details of these and other events from NCAPB, 50 Rectory Rd, London N16 01-249 8334.

● **Southall Campaign against the Police Bill** public meeting. Speakers: Paul Boateng (Chair GLC Police Cttee); Jim McAllister (Sinn Fein); Baldev Gill (Southall Campaign against the Police Bill). Sat 26 Nov, 7pm, Mangat Hall, Villiers Rd, Southall. Contact the campaign at 01-843 0343.

● **Labour Movement Conference on Ireland** — Peace through Democracy. Sat 26 Nov. Speakers include Tony Benn, Ken Livingstone, and Clive Soley.

● **Nottingham Labour Campaign for Gay Rights** meets monthly. Next meeting 16 Nov, 8pm, Salutation Inn, Maid Marion Way. Details: Chris Richardson, 21 Devonshire Promenade, Lenton 0602 780124.

● **Labour Campaign for Gay Rights national meeting** 12/13 Nov, Community Centre, The Arches Industrial Estate, Coventry. Details from Chris Richardson (see Nottm LCGR listing).

● **Nobody's Backyard** — week of action on Central America, 27 Nov to 3 Dec. For details write to Nobody's Backyard, 4 Replingham Rd, London SW18.

## NEW ABOUT & IRELAND

### LOYALIST VETO MUST GO!



- ABORTION REFERENDUM
- NEW INFORMERS CAMPAIGN
- TONY BENN INTERVIEW
- PARTY CONFERENCE
- CLIVE SOLEY SPEAKS OUT
- TUC CARTOONS & MUCH MORE

New issue of *Labour and Ireland*. 40p. Copies from LCI BM Box 5355. London WCI N3XX.

● **Films at work** — a series of films at Jacksons Lane Community Centre, 271 Archway Rd, London N6. 13 Nov Salt of the Earth; 20 Nov Finally got the News; 27 Nov The Filleting Machine; 4 Dec Borinage; 11 Dec WR — Mysteries of the Organism; 19 Dec Days of Hope. All start at 7.30pm, £1.50/80p UB40.

● **Labour CND West** meeting, Sat 12 Nov, 10am, Unity Hall, Dampel St, Bridgwater, Somerset. Election of officers am. Public meeting pm with Stuart Holland MP, Joy Hurcombe (Sec Labour CND), Alan Freeman (Socialist Action), John Cleave (SANA). 50p all day/£1 pm only, creche available. Details from Daf Lincoln, March Lane Bungalow, Galhampton, Nr Yeovil, Somerset 0963 40598.

● **Anti-Privatisation Newsletter** produced by Public Service Action. Fourth issue out now includes material on council house sales, failures by private contractors, and on privatisation of the NHS, British Rail, British Gas etc. 30p each from SCAT Publications, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1, 01-253 3627.

● **Sri Lankan Research & Information Group** will provide speakers on the current situation there for meetings. Write to 9 Grays Inn Buildings, London EC1.

● **Greenham Support Groups national meeting** 12/13 Nov in Manchester. Contact the national Greenham office for details: 01-251 3133.

● **Hounslow Socialist Forum** series of 3 meetings on the internationalisation of the world economy and of conflict: 13 Nov **The world economic crisis** introduced by John Harrison (author of *The British Economic Disaster*); 27 Nov **The crisis in Israel and its effects on the Middle East** introduced by Moshe Machover (member of *Khamsin* editorial board); 11 Dec **The orchestration of violence and repression** with speakers from Southern Africa, Latin America & Palestine. All meetings Sundays, 7.15pm, George IV pub, 185 Chiswick High Rd, W4 (Turnham Green tube).

● **National Association of Ethnic Minority Doctors** (NAEMD UK) workshop on the contribution of ethnic minority doctors to the NHS & obstacles to their recognition. Sun 13 Nov, Great Western Royal Hotel, Paddington Stn, London W2, 11am-4pm. £1 for non-members. For details contact NAEMD (UK), 28 Churchfield Rd, London W3 6EB 01-993 6119.

● **The Politics of Health in Zimbabwe** Hour long video available for meetings or functions. £10 (payable in advance). Send to Books for South Africa Fund, PO Box 50, London N1.

● **US Hands Off Grenada!** Southwark labour movement public meeting, Mon 14 Nov, 8pm, Dominica Centre, Peckham High St at junction with Rye Lane, London SE15. Speakers include Jeremy Corbyn MP, ELSSOC and New Jewel Movement Support Group (UK).

## The Other BOOKSHOP For Marxist books, posters, postcards, badges Feminist literature

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Thur, Fri, 11-7.  
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Open — Mon-Sat 10-6 Closed Wed.  
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# Road to unity?

**LAST WEEK** we printed the letter from the Labour Coordinating Committee on 'left unity'. This week John Ross replies on behalf of the editorial board of Socialist Action.

**THE LETTER FROM** the LCC *Turn the Party Outwards* raises three points.

The first is a call for the Labour Party and the Labour left, to turn outward to the fight against the Thatcher government and not make the framework of its activity the struggle within the Labour Party. This should be supported 101 per cent. Building the campaign to defend the NHS, defending the Metropolitan Councils and the GLC, opposing deployment of cruise, opposing the invasion of Grenada are the top priorities for the Labour Party today. They are also the way to build the base for victory in the Euro and local government elections and to win the vital votes on trade union political funds, as well as building the big increase in individual Labour Party membership which is needed.

The second point raised by the LCC is the question of the Labour Party leadership. It is *not*, in our opinion, a priority for the Labour Party, or the Labour left, today to have a re-run of the leadership election. The LCC's formula that, 'It does not mean giving the leadership a blank cheque. Rather it means giving a priority to other matters could be accepted', provided that it is clear what this means.

## Small

The first question is the witch hunt. This is not a small matter for it sets the tone of the whole debate in the Party. A dispute over policies, or even a leadership election, like last summer, is one thing and need not be damaging to the Party. A debate over policies which one side proposes to resolve in its favour by expulsions, bans on publications, and suspension of local parties is quite another. As it is a fight over survival it inevitably develops a most venomous tone and divides the party.

The attack on the *Militant*, for example, turned the Labour Party inwards and absorbed enormous energies that could and should have been directed to outward campaigning. Any serious judgement must be that Michael Foot's original attack on Peter Tatchell helped lose Labour the Bermondsey seat.

Furthermore significant aspects of the witch hunt are still going on and have not been stopped. The ban on the sales of *Militant* is an attack on free speech in the party that is unacceptable. Wythenshaw Labour Party is still suspended. Tariq Ali has been expelled. There are also local attacks on Party members.

It is not possible simply to avoid the real concrete issues of witch hunts by dissolving them in vague generalities. The formula of 'No future witch hunts' is only useful as a phrase if it includes *now* coming out



Photo: JOHN HARRIS

South Yorks Day of Action shows the way



Photo Montage: CATH TATE

Montage available as a poster from Cath Tate, 39 Kingswood Rd, London SW2, price, including postage 50p.

against the ban on *Militant*, against the suspension of Wythenshaw, and against the expulsion of Tariq Ali.

Nothing would more 'clear the air' in the Party and release its energies for outward campaigning, than ending all the remnants and new steps in witch hunts.

This also spills over into issues such as the leadership question. How can the left not fight for Tariq's reinstatement irrespective of Neil Kinnock and Roy Hattersley's views and even if it culminates in another damaging row for the Party?

Policies are the second crucial issue that will shape relations in the left and in the Labour Party. On some questions, notably for example proposals to extend women's rights in the Party and opposing John Silkin's legal attacks in *Tribune*, it should be possible for the left very rapidly to get

agreement. But on other policy questions the LCC rightly identifies the areas but doesn't give clear answers. We will therefore indicate very briefly what we think should be the answers.

● Neil Kinnock has gone out of his way to praise Eric Hobsbawm. But Hobsbawm's proposals for a coalition, or electoral agreement with the SDP/Liberal Alliance, would be a total catastrophe for the Labour Party. One of the most central planks of the left must be opposition to any such coalition.

A coalition line is precisely one of the most 'dramatic and unexpected circumstances' on which we believe it would be necessary for the Labour Party to divide. Even if this meant dividing from top to bottom. If the leadership supported coalition then they would have to be opposed.

● Unilateralism must mean exactly what it says it does — and as the

TGWU resolution passed at this year's conference put it. That means in the term of one parliament *all* nuclear weapons and bases must be off Britain's soil and its waters. This includes the scrapping of Polaris. Any other policy means the risk of nuclear annihilation for the British people.

● The Labour Party has to recognise that Britain has no progressive role whatever to play in Ireland and must withdraw from that country. This policy, incidentally, has potentially overwhelming support in the electorate.

● We think that a very progressive step, both economically and electorally, is being taken by the Party in adopting a position for a national minimum wage — although we want to see it go further than it does at present. But Roy Hattersley's proposal to link this with an incomes policy is

an utter disaster. Not merely is incomes policy economically wrong but it will drive millions of skilled and better-off workers into the hands of the Tories as it did in 1979.

Incomes policy has to be totally rejected. Apart from its economic consequences no British government has ever won an election after using an incomes policy.

● Someone is going to have to pay for the huge economic crisis left by Thatcher and the process of industrial reconstruction which is needed. There are only two candidates for this.

The first is Roy Hattersley's proposal — that better-off workers should be taxed and subjected to incomes policy to finance lower paid workers. That will lead to economic disaster — because it won't work practically. Politically it won't work because it will lead to a huge division of the working class and to a crushing Labour defeat.

The only other possibility is that capital must pay for the crisis. A programme of economic reconstruction must be financed and developed by economic attacks on capital and a major expansion of public ownership. This must start with measures such as the nationalisation of North Sea Oil to create funds for industrial investment, nationalisation of the banks for the same purpose and public ownership of the growing and profitable sections of manufacturing industry to expand the economy. Unless this is done a future Labour government will collapse amid an economic debacle and political defeat of a scale which would make even 1979 or 1983 appear mild.

## Debate

We believe it would be possible to get a framework for debate in the Party, and at least some measure of unity on the left, on the following basis

(a) Turning the party outwards to campaigning against the Thatcher government and defending the Labour Party against the financial and other attacks being organised by the Tories.

(b) Right now no one running against the leadership provided no qualitative steps are taken such as turning Labour to a coalition with the Alliance, dumping unilateralism, or starting a witch hunt.

(c) Reinstating those expelled and ending the suspension of parties, lifting the bans on publications and taking all the necessary steps to end the witch hunt.

(d) The official spokesmen of the Labour Party in Parliament must, of course, explain official Party policy but every member of the party, both right and left, must have the right to campaign within the party for the policies they think right.

In that framework a discussion can take place about policy differences, without damaging the Party.

But obviously all the points stand or fall together. If there is a purge and policies like unilateralism are junked then a fight will, and must take place. Then the left will have to take up the cudgels on behalf of the policies it believes in and for the right of socialists to put forward their views in the Labour Party.

It would mean wasting time and energy and resources in an internal dispute which would divide the party. That would be a tragedy not just for the left but for all the Labour Party because it would come at a time when Labour has a real chance of turning the tables on the Tories.

We look forward to your reply to the above points and look forward to discussing these questions with you.



NALGO dispute

# Bury Locks Out social workers

**BURY COUNCIL MANAGEMENT** has closed three children's homes and locked out twenty five residential social workers. It is part of the council's continuing campaign to break the NALGO residential social workers dispute. But the uproar that has resulted has turned into a major embarrassment for the Tory controlled council.

In line with national decisions 25 Bury NALGO residential workers took one day strike action on 17 October. Ten attended the lobby of the national negotiations in London.

By Mark Hackett

In most of Britain senior management provided emergency cover during the one day action. But in Bury the management replied by closing down three residential homes.

The children from the homes were met after school by senior management and given their clothes bundled into plastic dustbin bags. They were then sent off to North Wales, Liverpool or Southport without any notice being given to them, their parents or their social workers.

Most of the places the children were sent to were considered unsuitable by their social workers when they finally found out where the children were.

Some of the children were so disturbed by the management's action that they ran away from their new 'homes'. Some phoned up asking to return to Bury. Several were moved more than once. The whole operation didn't just hit the children but was designed to intimidate the residential workers who had been the strongest supporters of NALGO's official action.

Bury management's action however also brought out into the open a new angle on the Tory controlled council's growing 'privatisation' drive. Council management did not even bother to inform the councillors of what was going on. Tory councillors denied knowledge of the detailed events on radio and television.

Some of the children however were placed with Community Care — a profit-making private 'care' organisation. Community Care is nationally banned by NALGO. Rumours abound in Bury

that the council management have promised Community Care a contract — although the council still denies it.

## Action

In response to the council's action 50 NALGO residential workers are now on indefinite strike. Bury NALGO branch general meeting has asked for a ballot to call for all Bury NALGO members to mount a series of one day strikes. Bury North and Bury South CLPs have issued press releases in support of the residential workers action.

The depth of local hostility to the management's actions was shown by the fact that in only five days a petition of 6,000 signatures was collected demanding an independent inquiry into the council management's actions.

● NALGO members on the left in the North West are meeting on Sunday 13 November in Liverpool to start organising the fight back against the Tory attacks. The meeting will be in Liverpool NALGO social club, Alder St, Liverpool at 11.30 am.



Photo: JOHN HARRIS

Not Chapple's final word ... unfortunately

## EETPU Conference: the right goes on

**This week's EETPU conference starts the new 'after Chapple' regime in the union. Socialist Action asked IAN BROWN — craft convenor at the Shell Carrington works and left wing candidate for the National Secretary of the plumbing section in the last election — his view on the conference.**

**This conference will be Frank Chapple's last as General Secretary. Do you see any change in union policy after he has gone?**

When a leading and controversial figure departs, it can be said things will never be the same again.

However a number of years will pass before the EETPU changes direction. The right will consolidate its grip on the union after this conference for another six years.

Major changes will only come about by changing the rule book and the fullest participation of the rank and file is needed for that.

**What progress for rank and file EETPU members do you expect from this conference?**

The conference enables rank and file activists to participate in open democratic arguments.

It is this process, undertaken by the rank and file over the years, that has convinced them that change is necessary.

Open discussion at shopfloor and branch level is essential. It is only through collective discussion that we will win people over to the case for change.

**Most unions have failed to respond to the Tebbit laws. What action do you think should be taken, given your recent experience in the Shell dispute?**

The Shell dispute has shown the comic mess that can arise where there is a legal intervention in an industrial dispute.

The resolution I am putting to conference calls on the union to give maximum support to its members who carry out the democratically decided TUC policy, especially when the membership is engaged in industrial action.

The majority of resolutions on anti-union law call on the EETPU to support TUC policy.

Fears have arisen that the union is not fully committed to this policy over its handling of the case of Sean Geraghty during the health workers dispute.

**The extension of trade union reforms to attack the political levy and the unions' links with the Labour Party would plunge the Party into deep crisis. What should the EETPU be doing to resist this latest Act?**

To me this is probably the most important issue for the movement this decade.

We know the reasons for Labour setting up its voice in parliament. Without an effective political voice for ordinary working people, this country would move further to authoritarianism.

Our political opposition in parliament can only be sustained by the industrial wing being able to properly finance the movement.

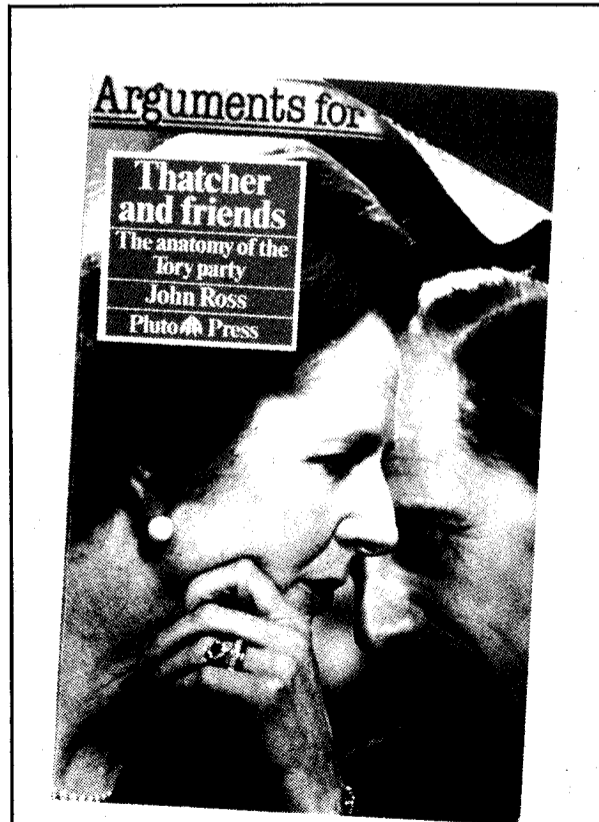
Cutting off funds would sever the main artery of our political voice. Mass unemployment is one way of cutting off finances to the Labour Party and the direct approach of this Act the other.

I believe that the union should be at the forefront of recruiting to the Labour Party and should be offering assistance and encouragement for the setting up of workplace branches.

These could be a vital part in politicising people at shopfloor level, to counter the lies of the media. We are in the process of building a Labour Party factory branch at Shell.

We feel that it is essential to end the position where many members of the shop stewards' committee are not members of a political party.

The declining membership of the Labour Party must be reversed.



Tony Benn said 'This is by far the best book that has been published by electoral politics for a very long time.' Available from the Other Bookshop — London and Birmingham.



Some advice to Bury council?



# Telecom union takes on the pirates

'NOT ONE member has crossed a picket line'. This was the report from the Telecom union Westminster branch secretary, Colin Talbot to a meeting of the Broad Left on the eve of the reconvened annual POEU conference.

The September special conference voted by two to one for a campaign of selective action against privatisation of British Telecom.

The signs are that the reconvened conference will increase this majority.

But a debate is opening up in the Broad Left about whether selective action is enough to defeat privatisation and resist the connection of the private firm Mercury into the public network.

are winning' he said. 'Mercury's evidence to the High Court shows that they have lost one million pounds so far and are having difficulty recruiting customers.'

He reported that the press were saying that the government would delay share sales until 1985. This is a definite sign of retreat. As the months tick by, he explained, potential investors will be deterred by the prospect of a Labour government pledged to renationalise the industry.

## By a POEU member

The Westminster branch has been in the forefront of the action and Colin Talbot argued his case for selective action to the Broad Left meeting.

Every tactic so far adopted by management to smash the action has failed he said. They had tried to suspend members who refused to do the work of those withdrawn by the union in selective action around key locations, like the Telecom Tower.

BT aimed to suspend between eight and nine thousand members in the week after 1400 engineers at the international exchanges were locked out.

By concentrating boycott action and picketing around selected targets, fewer members were suspended said Talbot: 'We are in control, not the management'. 'I honestly believe we

suspended'.

On the other hand, he explained, a national lock out by BT is a real possibility for which the membership should be prepared.

'The government may throw everything at us, including the Royal Signal Corps, mass sackings and picket line arrests. We haven't seen anything yet'. The call for all out national action does show a welcome change in mood he conceded.

## Token

A token national stoppage would be needed if members are dismissed. 'Such action may happen anyway whether the NEC calls it or not' he said.

Other speakers at the Broad Left meeting questioned if this selective action approach could lead to victory.

Ian Grant from London pointed out that management are quickly learning how to work on exchange equipment where members are withdrawn. 'I do not believe that such an important struggle can be won with 99 per cent of the membership not directly involved.'

Phil Lloyd, a former national executive member agreed and called for the NEC to organise a 24 hour national stoppage if any union members are dismissed by BT.

● **WITCH HUNTER**  
John Golding, the POEU sponsored MP got a rebuff



Colin Talbot

from union delegates.

A resolution condemning witch hunts, and calling for unity against the Tories, was passed by 74,515 votes to 58,410.

The resolution read:

'It is a matter of record that Conference believes the return of a Labour government is in the best and most fundamental interests of POEU members.'

'Conference therefore calls on members of the parliamentary panel to conduct themselves in

such a manner as to bring about the maximum Labour Party unity, by refraining from calls for the expulsion of socialists, which only gives the Tories and their media ammunition to play up normal policy divisions and to portray the party as being involved in civil war and incapable of government.'

'Conference believes all our energies should be devoted to unity, working together against the common enemy, the Tory government.'

# Defend the Newham Eight!

THE NEWHAM 8 trial will begin on 14 November at the Old Bailey, more than one year after the eight were first charged. They stand accused on a number of counts, ranging from assault to conspiracy. The issues raised by the case are the same as in the Bradford 12 trial.

Like the Bradford 12, the Newham 8 will show that self-defence is no offence. At stake are the futures of eight Asian youth who had the courage to defend the children of Little Ilford School against racial attacks. At risk is the right of the black community to defend itself, the struggle against police racism and against the racism of the education system in a London borough.

By a Newham NUT member

At the first hearings last year the accused were supported by 400 Asian and other school students who walked out of their classes to protest against the charges and against racist violence. In the past year the defence campaign has built up massive national support from the labour movement and the black community around the slogan 'self-defence is no offence'. This culminated in a very successful march that took place in Newham on the anniversary of the arrests.

The campaign is calling for a national picket of the trial on 14 November followed by a series of daily pickets supported by a number of different groups. Support has come from the local Asian community, from Asian political organisations, from black defence campaigns and from the Campaign Against the Police Bill.

The campaign is backed by Newham North East and North West Labour Parties and local MPs Ron Leighton and Tony Banks. NALGO has supported the campaign, but the NUT has been hamstrung by the refusal of its national leadership to allow anti-racist action.

Pickets outside the court played a major part in the victory of the Bradford 12 and all socialists should build for the action on 14 November and for the later pickets.

● For further details, and for the dates when particular groups are asked to picket phone the Newham 8 Defence campaign on 555 3331 (daytime) or 534 1640 (Evenings).

# CPSA Broad Left

THE ANNUAL CPSA Broad Left conference was held in London on 5/6 November. It was attended by nearly 350 CPSA members. The strengths and weaknesses of the conference were decided by its domination by supporters of Militant.

The big steps forward taken at the conference were resolutions adopted condemning the US invasion of Grenada, opposing political victimisation in the trade unions and Labour Party, affiliating to the National Abortion Campaign, and calling for the Broad Left Organising Committee to organise a spring conference of all Broad Left members in the trade union movement.

Steph Grant, one of the 13 workers dismissed by British Leyland at Cowley got an enthusiastic response when she spoke to the conference.

But the continuing problems caused by the Militant domination of the Broad Left also came up again. Resolutions calling for an annual delegate conference to decide on the CPSA wage claim, and opposing the introduction of the Youth Training Scheme into the civil service were passed. But no way of fighting for them was outlined.

A resolution calling for the withdrawal of troops

from the North of Ireland was only passed by a narrow majority because many Militant supporters had already left before it was discussed.

Militant voted down resolutions for a major campaign against sexual harassment at work and to re-establish women only schools in the CPSA.



# Black challenge to racist councillor

GRAHAM LING — a Tory councillor in Moseley, Birmingham — is at the centre of a storm over his racist propaganda.

At the Tory conference he supported resolutions calling for an end to all immigration, for voluntary repatriation and for the dismantling of all anti-racist legislation.

Returning to Birmingham Ling decided to mount an offensive

against the 'spoilt' black and Asian residents of near derelict, inner-city property.

He stated: 'There are plenty of large, damn good houses, and we have trouble with blacks and Asians who refuse them simply because of their distance from mosques and their communities.'

By Bob Smith

'If Asians are going to have large families, the onus is on them to provide their own accommoda-

tion. They are used to having large families in India, on the basis of only a few surviving. We have to educate them that large families are unsocial.'

## Response

'Far too much money is spent on these families. The more you do for these people the more they expect.'

This incredible racism brought a barrage of protests that even the ultra conservative local press couldn't ignore. Spurred on by the angry reaction of

many of their constituents three local councillors are leading the fightback.

A series of community meetings are being planned and local and labour movement and community groups being called on for support. The councillors are calling for a ban on further council house sales in the area and for the development of derelict land to provide new housing in the community.

● For further details and information contact Councillor Amir Khan, 56 Phipson Rd, Sparkhill, Birmingham 13.



# A Socialist ACTION

## Leyland renews attack on union



ON WEDNESDAY 3 November British Leyland management sacked TGWU shop steward Grant Keir from its Birmingham Longbridge plant.

Keir is also a branch delegate to the General Management Committee of Ladywood Constituency Labour Party and Birmingham Trades Council. The formal charge brought by the company was that when Keir started work at the factory three years ago he had given a false reference. The real reason for his sacking was shown by the fact that a month before the company suspended Keir and only backed off from his dismissal for fear of industrial action. This time the management was better prepared. Keir was moved from his section a week earlier and only then did management issue the dismissal notice.

The sacking took place despite protests from plant convenor Jack Adams and TGWU district official John Barker. TGWU appeals against the dismissal were turned down by the management on 3 November and 7 November. The company refusals were met with notice of official union action.

However the final resolution taken to the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee proposed only opposition to victimisations in general and failed to suggest a specific action in reply to the sacking of Grant Keir.

This position was opposed by a minority of the

stewards committee who pointed out that a general position of opposition to victimisations had to be backed up by fighting against the one actually taking place. A failure to defend one shop steward would only make further victimisations more likely.

In line with that an amendment was proposed to the works committee resolution to reconvene the Joint Stewards' the following day in working time. This was defeated by roughly 28 votes to 15.

It appears that after Leyland management had shifted its attention for a period to Cowley it is now turning back again to Longbridge. The general feeling at the stewards meeting was that this is only the first attack, and more are on the way.

## BL victimisations at Cowley

BL has now extended its witch hunt against political and trade union activists into its Oxford body plant, Pressed Steel Fisher. On Tuesday 1 November at 6.30am Bernie Kavanagh, a Transport Union 5/60 branch activist, was sacked. Kavanagh, a night worker, has been involved with co-workers in a number of disputes with

management, culminating in a company investigation of his background and subsequent dismissal. BL claim the sacking is due to false information on his application form, but the real reason was clear to his co-workers who refused to start work on Tuesday night for about one hour. They were finally persuaded to return to work, on the grounds that the appeal procedure was in pro-

gress and action was premature. Bernie Kavanagh's case is being taken by the union to an external plant conference this week, where he will be represented by T&GWU district secretary David Buckle. Resolutions and messages of support should be sent to David Buckle, District Secretary T&GWU Transport House, Cowley Road, Oxford.

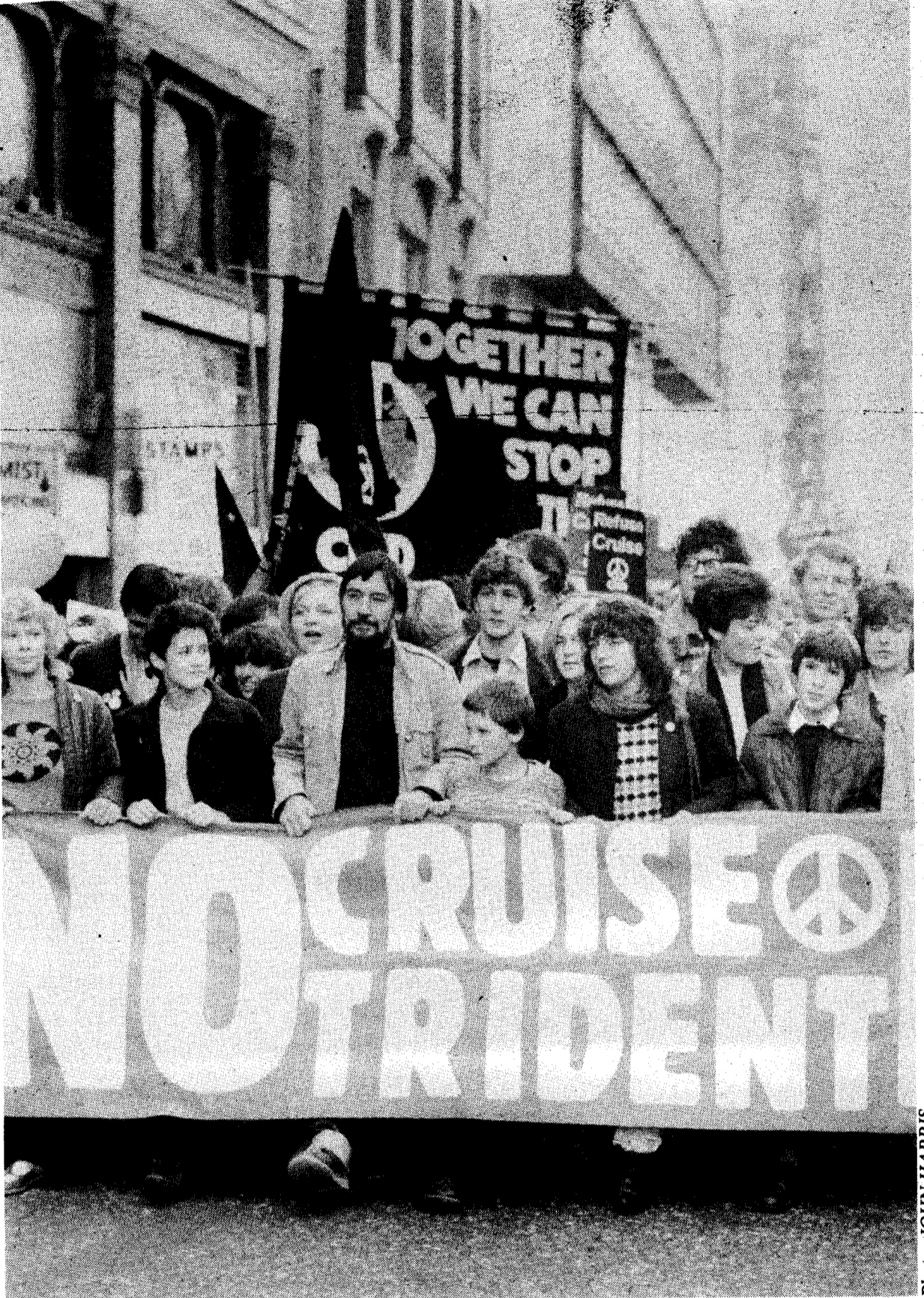


Photo: JOHN HARRIS

# Fight the ban on Labour CND

IN AN unprecedented attack on the democracy of the peace movement the CND National Executive has closed down the elected executive of Labour CND — the organisation of CND supporters inside the Labour Party. The decision was made at the executive meeting on Saturday 4 November.

The pretext for the decision was an article by Walter Wolfgang, Vice-Chair of Labour CND, in the *Labour Briefing Bulletin* at this year's Labour Party conference.

**By Dick Withecombe (Labour CND Executive, personal capacity)**

The article pointed out manoeuvres by Neil Kinnock to get the Transport and General Workers' Union's unilateralist resolution off the conference agenda. Instead the idea was the Labour Party should endorse the freeze demand. CND Ex-

ecutive members first tried to veto the article then, after it was published, gave an official apology to Kinnock. But the reasons for the ban on Labour CND go deeper. In reality the CND executive is moving to silence all opponents of their intention of abandoning CND's policy of unilateral disarmament in favour of the hope that a bilateral freeze may be agreed at disarmament talks. That's why Youth CND has already been closed down. Labour CND is a target because, as EP Thompson has put it: 'Labour left fundamentalists are vigorous

defenders of unilateralism'. The ban on Labour CND is a declaration of war on the left-wing of the peace movement. If the Executive of CND are allowed to continue along this road they will severely damage CND. This ban must be fought and reversed. Every Labour Party branch and GMC should pass a resolution demanding the ban is reversed, because it denies the right of CND supporters in the Labour Party to organise. Every CND branch should support the emergency resolution to CND conference against the ban.

**Emergency resolution for CND conference**

**'THIS conference supports the work Labour CND has done to build support in the Labour Party for resolutions passed at recent Labour Party conferences supporting unilateral nuclear disarmament.**

**'We deplore the actions of the CND Executive in superseding the elected Labour CND Committee and appointing an interim committee. The conference confirms the original committee elected by Labour CND's AGM as the Labour CND Committee.'**

*(Labour Party branches are also requested to pass resolutions critical of the closure of Labour CND and send them to the Labour NEC and the CND Executive).*

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