

A Socialist ACTION

BUILDING AN ALLIANCE FOR SOCIALISM



**Thatcher's
racist
filth
P.3**

APARTHEID'S WAR ON MOZAMBIQUE



Just days before the plane crash which killed Samora Machel, president of Mozambique, the South African defence minister, Magnus Malan, made apartheid's intentions clear. 'Mozambique is on the brink of collapse' he said.

Malan's comment was no simple prediction. He threatened to 'take action' against Mozambique over alleged bases for the African National Congress (ANC) inside Mozambique territory.

Malan's warning came alongside a build up of South African troops along apartheid's borders with

Mozambique and Zimbabwe. It came in the wake of an 11 year campaign by South Africa against the Mozambique government. South Africa's war on Mozambique started on 25 June 1975 when Portugal finally surrendered its then colony to the liberation movement Frelimo. Samora Machel had led Frelimo to victory.

Portugal's African colonies had been staunch protectors of the apartheid regime. Victory of Frelimo in Mozambique, and the MPLA in Angola, was a huge blow to Pretoria.

In 1975, South African military forces invaded Angola. The defeat of the invasion by the combined forces

of the MPLA and the Cuban troops, was followed by South African backing to the UNITA forces of Savimbi.

In Mozambique, Pretoria finances and arms the so-called Mozambique National Resistance (MNR) — sometimes referred to as Renamo. When Mozambique forces overran the MNR headquarters earlier this year they found strong evidence of the South African regime's commitment to overthrowing Machel.

On 11 October a Mozambique government communique warned of the likelihood of South African air raids. Security minister, Sergio Vieira

said that an MNR commando group had infiltrated Maputo, the Mozambique capital. The ANC has immediately pointed the finger at South African responsibility for Machel's death. 'Either the South Africans have directly committed this heinous crime or their henchmen the MNR' charged ANC general secretary Alfred Nzo. 'We are saying it is a deliberately committed crime until it is proved otherwise.' Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda said 'I accuse them (the South African regime) openly of involvement in the death of President Machel until they are proven innocent.'

Machel's death is a serious blow to Mozambique. Killed alongside Machel were the country's transport minister, Alcantara Santos and deputy foreign minister, Jose Carlos Lopo. Frelimo's previous leader, Eduardo Mondlane was himself assassinated by a bomb in 1974. The struggle against apartheid was always going to spill over South Africa's borders. The death of Samora Machel, and the massing of South African troops on Mozambique's border, shows it is going to be a struggle which will engulf the whole of the Southern African region.

● Mozambique under attack p.10

Socialist ACTION

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Ireland's challenge to Labour

The last week has seen the most successful tour ever by Sinn Fein councillors to Britain. Sinn Fein councillors were officially received by Haringey, Hackney, Camden and Manchester councils and by the Inner London Education Authority. They met literally dozens of police committees, women's committees, and spoke at tens of public meetings.

This is a big step forward for what must now be one of the top priorities for Labour's left — to place British withdrawal from Ireland firmly on the agenda of discussion in Labour Party politics.

This year's Labour Party conference saw several issues move to centre stage. Opposition to US bases and British membership of NATO, the right of women's conference to elect the women's section of the NEC, the establishment of constitutionally recognised Black Sections are now firmly at the centre of debate within the party. But the policy of withdrawal from Ireland, while attracting major publicity, has achieved only just over 400,000 votes at party conference and only one major union, the NUM, voted for it. This calls for a determined push to build the Labour Committee on Ireland and to fight to ensure that Ireland gets the central attention it deserves from the labour movement.

Two developments make this still more urgent and possible. The first is the historic proposal, to be put to the Sinn Fein Ard Fheis, that Sinn Fein candidates should take their seats in the southern Irish parliament. This will help establish Sinn Fein as a truly 32 county Irish political force against both British rule in the North and those who support that rule in the South. It will still further undermine the British government's claim that Sinn Fein is a 'tiny handful' of terrorists.

The second development is this week's disgraceful decision by the Dutch courts to extradite Gerard Kelly and Brendan McFarlane to Britain. This is the first decision ever by a European court to extradite Republicans into British hands. It follows the introduction of the new extradition treaty with Britain by the United States. Both extradition decisions show the stepped up international repression which followed the signing of the Anglo-Irish Accord.

Sean MacBride from Amnesty International, Bernadette McAliskey, and Ken Livingstone all visited Holland to protest against the threat of deportation. Even the Dutch Supreme Court rejected that Kelly and McFarlane should complete the life sentences imposed by British justice. It also acknowledged that both would face 'harsh treatment' — or torture to call it by its proper name — by the British. Yet due to British government pressure, and collaboration by the southern Irish government, the Dutch Supreme Court still ordered the extradition.

Protests against the extradition of Kelly and McFarlane have to be stepped up, as well as strengthening Labour's links with Sinn Fein created through the tour by its councillors. Building the Labour Committee on Ireland is now a priority for the entire left.

Placing centrally British withdrawal from Ireland in the perspectives of the emerging 'campaign left' in the Labour Party is a top priority.

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Decisive step for Sinn Fein

THE MOST basic of all alliances the British working class has to make is with the struggle of the Irish people for self determination. This struggle for Irish freedom has, in the past fifteen years in the North of Ireland, passed through the most varied and rich experience of struggle experienced anywhere in Europe — legal and illegal struggle; electoral activity and guerilla warfare; rent and rate strikes; mass demonstrations; no-go areas and hunger strikes to the death; local government activity and international movements of solidarity and protest; underground military organisation and the creation of a mass based political party, Sinn Fein; activity restricted to the nationalist ghettos of the six counties and mass action on a 32-county basis; community-based activity and work in trade unions; struggle around the national question and its extension to activity around the social, economic and political problems facing the Irish people.

Out of this gigantic experience of class struggle Sinn Fein has emerged as the most advanced mass working class leadership in Western Europe today. Sinn Fein's Ard-Fheis (conference) at the beginning of November will be discussing a major extension of that organisation's tactics to take up the struggle against British imperialism, and the partition of Ireland, not only in the North, but on a 32 county basis. The form of that decision is to allow Sinn Fein candidates to take their seats in the southern Irish parliament.

The statement of the Irish Republican Army which we publish on this page is of historic significance. The removal of the ban on successful republican candidates taking seats in the 26 county Leinster House parliament will greatly increase the ability of the Republican Movement to conduct a political struggle on a 32 county basis. It will make the repression against the Republican Movement by the 26 county Free State government more difficult. It will provide a political focus for those opposing the Southern government's collaboration with British repression in the North through the Anglo-Irish Accord.

The reaffirmation of the IRA's prohibition on the offensive action against the administration of the 26 counties, or its armed forces, is both necessary to combat the slander of the southern Irish government and reaffirms this political orientation to a 32 county struggle by the Republican Movement.

Vanguard

The re-writing of the IRA's constitution in non-sexist language is also in line with the way the Republican Movement is becoming the vanguard fighter not only for the national liberation of Ireland, but also for support to the demands of women, and against clericalism in the whole of Ireland.

Sinn Fein's national council will be calling for the Sinn Fein Ard-Fheis to support Sinn Fein candidates taking up their seats where successful in elections to the Southern Irish parliament. This will require the two-thirds majority necessary to change Sinn Fein's constitution.

The debate at the Ard-Fheis follows a public discussion amongst Sinn Fein activists which has been conducted in a model manner in the pages of *An*

Phoblacht/Republican News — the weekly newspaper closely associated with Sinn Fein. The terms of the debate were clearly explained some time ago by Joe Austin, the Chairperson of Belfast Sinn Fein, in an interview he gave to *Socialist Action*.

By Redmond O'Neill

'There is a debate about our election tactics in the South. We stand in council elections North and South and take our seats. In Westminster, which is the English parliament, there is an oath of allegiance which MPs have to take. We don't take seats in Westminster. There is also an oath of allegiance for seats in the Free State parliament — Leinster House — and we don't take seats there either.'

'But the difference is that irrespective of how we see Leinster House, most southerners do not see it as a foreign parliament like Westminster. They see it as their parliament. They might not like it. They might disagree with its political philosophy, but even those who see themselves as republicans generally see Leinster House as their parliament. So the abstentionism we operate in the North will not work in the South.'

'The argument is therefore that if Sinn Fein is to play a part in replacing the collaborationist parties in the South it has to enter Leinster House. That's the platform they have to use.'

'I don't say I agree with the argument, but there's some point to it. For example the majority of the present coalition government is so small that one Sinn Fein TD would tip the parliamentary balance against the government. One Sinn Fein TD would result in stopping cross border collaboration and the extradition of republican prisoners tomorrow. That is the sort of discussion going on.'

The threat represented by the rise of Sinn Fein both to the 'constitutional nationalists' in the SDLP in the North, and potentially to the parties which defend British imperialism's domination of Ireland in the South, was the chief reason for the enthusiasm of the Dublin government for the Anglo-Irish Accord. It followed Sinn Fein's 11.8 per cent vote in the local government elections in the North. In addition the fact that two republican prisoners were able to win seats in the Southern

parliament during the 1981 Hunger Strike — alongside Bobby Sands' famous election to Westminster — demonstrated the political potential of Sinn Fein in the South.

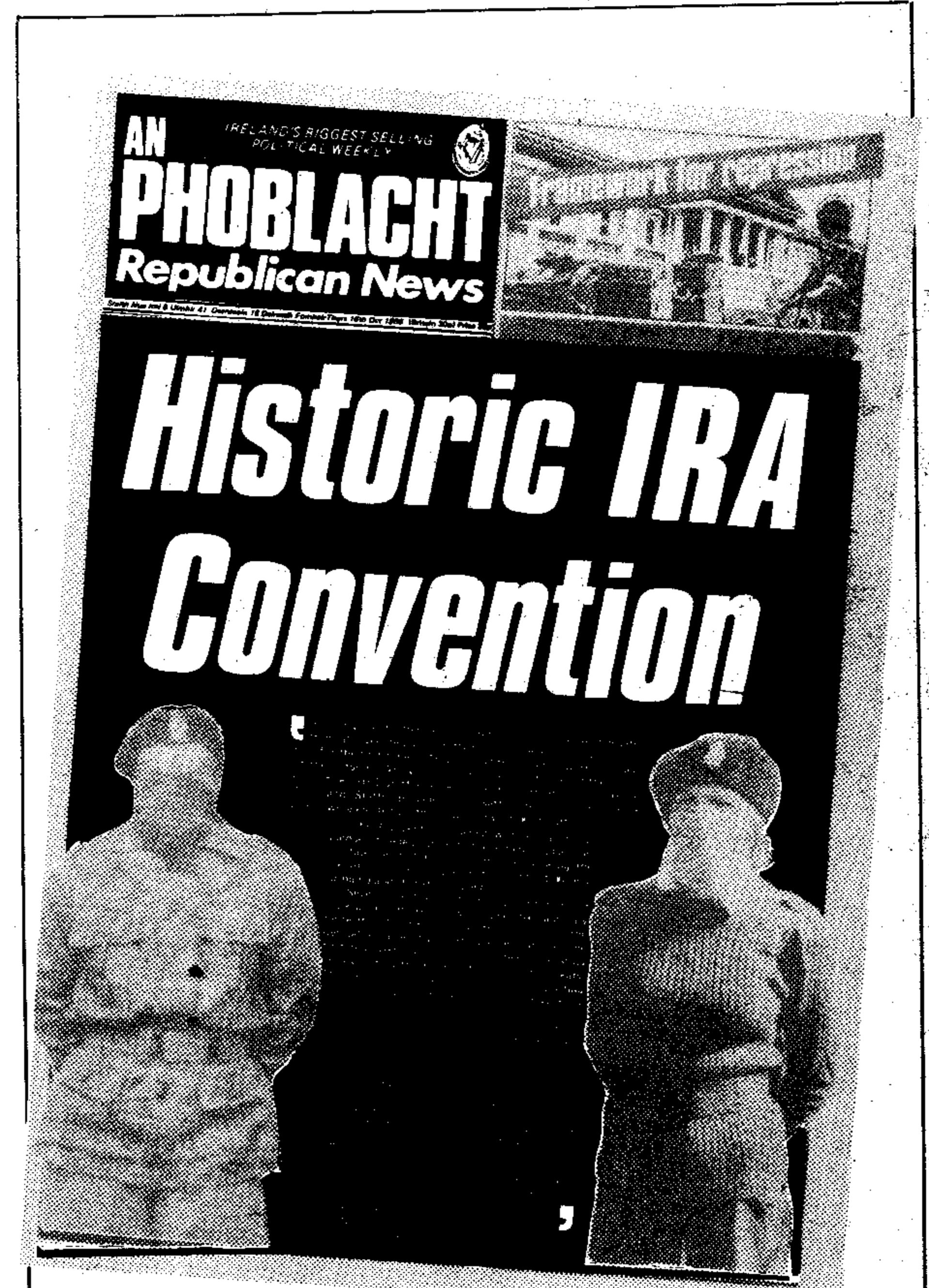
Arguing for taking seats in Leinster House, a correspondent in *Republican News* under the pen name 'Principled Tactician' writes: 'To see the effects of Sinn Fein's electoral involvement, we have only to look at local government, particularly in the six counties. Have Sinn Fein councillors been corrupted? Has the six county statelet been legitimised, stabilised? ... Surely the contrary is true: that the British loyalist system of local government is crumbling with more and more councils shutting down. Meanwhile Sinn Fein are exposing the bigotry and inherent injustices of the system, and are the only party relevant to the needs of ordinary people.'

'Comparable effects are possible in the Free State. Sinn Fein, by entering Leinster House, could: '1. Show up the hypocrisy and incompetence of Free State politicians; '2. Show how rotten the system is and how it exploits and represses people. '3. Eradicate the isolation of republicanism and make it more relevant through involvement in issues which daily affect ordinary people; '4. Give Sinn Fein a useful platform to explain republicanism and the necessity of armed struggle.'

'It could throw the Free State, especially Fine Gael, into the same confusion and panic as the loyalists are in at present; it would present a real nationalist alternative to Fianna Fail; it would destroy the myth that Labour and the Sticks (the Workers' Party) are socialists.'

Another correspondent, Paul Norney, writing from Hull prison, says: 'As republicans our aim is to establish a thirty-two county socialist republic. As a revolutionary nationalist force, we recognise the need to wage armed struggle to remove British imperialism. However, as socialists, we must recognise that to remove a neo-colonial elite of native Irish who are accepted by the majority of Irish people needs more than armed struggle.'

Hughie Doherty, writing from Wakefield prison says: 'As socialist republicans we must fight on all fronts if progress is to be made both militarily and politically. Any member of the Republican Movement elected to Leinster House would enter it with the intention of using it as a platform to expose the corrupt manner in which the system operates, exposing it not only to our own people but to people all over the world. They would highlight how the career politicians reveal the truth about what is happening in the occupied six counties, and publicise the damage that partition is doing to our country economically, socially and culturally.'



ON TUESDAY, 14th OCTOBER, the following statement was issued by the Irish Republican Army:

'Recently, and after much careful planning, IRA delegates from all over Ireland secretly met in a General Army Convention for the first time in 16 years. At this meeting were members of the outgoing Army Council and representatives of the Army Executive, GHQ Staff and Departments, Northern and Southern Command Staffs, Brigades and Battalions and Units, all of whom were elected by their own conventions to attend.'

The convention opened with a unanimous pledge of rededication to the armed struggle and confidence in the armed struggle as being the means of breaking the British connection and bringing about Irish independence.

Several sections of the Constitution of Ogligh na hEireann were amended and, by more than the required two-thirds majority, the delegates passed two particular resolutions. The first removed the ban on Volunteers discussing or advocating the taking of parliamentary seats. The second removed the ban on supporting successful republican candidates who take their seats in Leinster House.

Also reaffirmed was General Army Order No 8 which prohibits offensive action against the administration in the twenty-six counties or its forces.

The Constitution was modernised so that it reads in non-sexist language.

The objective of restoring the Irish language as the everyday language of the Irish people was reaffirmed.

The present strategy of the Irish Republican Army was discussed and endorsed, although the volume of resolutions made it impossible to deal with every issue.

By secret ballot, the delegates then elected a 12-person Army Executive, which in turn elected a new Army Council. The Army Council, the Chief of Staff it has appointed, and the Army Executive will study the outstanding resolutions which relate to how best to prosecute the struggle for freedom.

P. O'Neill
Irish Republican Publicity Bureau,
Dublin.

Absenteeism has historically symbolised the Republican Movement's rejection of the Free State parliament's ratification of the partition of Ireland in January 1922. Those who argue for maintaining it point to those like De Valera in 1926, and the 'Official' Sinn Fein (now the Workers' Party), whose rejection of abstentionism coincided with their abandonment of the national struggle for Irish unity and independence.

However, as the entire activity of today's Sinn Fein makes clear, taking up seats in Leinster House now will mean deepening the struggle for independence and a united Ireland by moving to politically challenge the capitalist parties in the South to whom Britain is again turning for help in maintaining partition. It will mean Sinn Fein challenging both the claims of the Labour and Workers' Parties to represent the Irish working class, and Fianna Fail's claims to 'republicanism'. It puts the political struggle firmly on a thirty two county basis — which is the only basis on which it can be successful. The proposal is an enormous step forward for Sinn Fein.

Thatcher's racist filth

THE LAST 10 days have seen the greatest campaign of racist filth that even this Tory government has ever managed. Thatcher decided to launch from Tory party conference a stream of backward attacks on every subject you can imagine — against sex education in schools, against gays and lesbians, and even against single parent families. But, as always, it was racism that was chosen as the key campaign.

The press responded at the call. '3,000 Asians flood Britain' was the headline in the *Sun* on 15 October. 'Asian flood swamps Britain' was the headline in the *Express*. Every racist button was pushed to bring out fear and intimidation throughout Britain.



Racist visas prompt sewer campaign

THE GUTTER PRESS descended into the sewer last week. Taking advantage of the plight of hundreds of black visitors at Heathrow they launched the most disgusting racist campaign in Britain for a decade.

Headlines about 'floods' and 'swamps' of 'Asians' at Britain's premier airport were a loud reminder of Thatcher's own racist jibe made in 1979 when she spoke of Britain being 'swamped by an alien culture'.

Can anyone imagine such a description of white holiday makers stranded to Britain for a short stay for whatever reason in Barcelona or Nice?

The official title is 'visitors' — people coming to Britain for a short stay for a holiday or to see their families. They had been forced to opt for an earlier flight than planned by the government's precipitate announcement that its new racist visa system would come into affect 15 October.

The visitors found themselves exploited by airlines who charged them as much as three times the normal cost of the flight.

Then when they arrived they and friends and relatives waiting to meet

them were herded around like animals. One man, Mr Acker Israel was quoted by Quentin Cowdry in the *Daily Telegraph*, 15 October, on his two day wait for his son-in-law arriving from Islamabad.

By Jon Silberman

'I arrived here on Sunday afternoon with my invalid daughter and two sons thinking it would be just a few hours before the passengers would be allowed through' he said, adding 'I've been sleeping with the kids in the airport car park at £14 a day'.

Before the latest restrictions all Commonwealth countries were exempt from visa controls. All, that is, with the excep-

tion of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka was put on the controls list last year allegedly because of an increase of political refugees from there. 'This was the start of the racist clamp down' Bobby Chan of the Camden Black Workers Group told us. 'There were no visa restrictions placed on white visitors when there was an influx of political refugees from Ian Smith's Rhodesia — nor should there have been.'

The new restrictions were announced on 1 September. They apply to Bangla Desh, India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Ghana. They were roundly denounced as racist.

The Indian delegation to the non-aligned conference in Harare, including prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, accused Britain of racism and said the measure would cause 'hardship and harassment' to black visitors.

The delegation's statement pointed to the hypocrisy that 'while restrictions are placed on

Indians and citizens of four other Asian and African countries, South Africans are freely allowed to enter. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this discriminating measure is motivated by considerations of race and colour'.

The TUC Congress in Brighton passed an emergency resolution condemning the new measure. And the Labour Party leadership announced that it would revoke the measure when coming into government.

Unfortunately, there was a deafening silence from the same quarters when the press machine was spewing out its racist scare-mongering about 'floods' and 'swamps' last week. No statement was forthcoming, defending Labour Party policy of a pledge to repeal the 1968 and 1972 immigration acts.

Insofar as statements were made they were simply to contest the figures produced by the Tories on



Black Section chair, Marc Wadsworth: 'It gives Black Section no pleasure to note that our prediction of the inhuman misery that these racist visa controls would cause has come true. The government must respond by immediately abandoning this divisive policy, uniting black families and compensating them for the severe hardship they've suffered at the hands of ruthless immigration officers.'

the number of visitors. But the numbers game plays into the racists' hands. Only by opposing all immigration controls can the 'alien culture' argument be countered effectively.

Labour's home affairs spokesperson, Gerald Kaufman, did rightly protest at government plans to limit the right of MPs to intervene to secure the temporary admission to Britain of passengers refused entry at air and sea ports.

Kaufman described the proposal to abolish the right of MPs to make representations to ministers in immigration cases as 'simply the latest in a saga of bad faith and bundling incompetence by this Home Secretary',

Douglas Hurd.

A recent case brought to our attention by Hafiz Urrahman of the Islington Muslim Association shows how denial of this right is yet a further strengthening of the racist controls.

On 14 October Awtad Hussein Chowdhury arrived at Heathrow. His sponsor, Ismail Ali, was told over the airport loud-speaker system not to wait at the airport but to await a phone call at home. Two days later the call arrived saying that Chowdhury's entry had been refused.

Labour MPs Peter Shore and Chris Smith were enlisted to assist. Shore's secretary confirmed to the Muslim Associa-

tion that Chowdhury could not be sent back to Bangla Desh pending Shore's intervention on Monday 20 October. Finally the Association discovered at noon on Tuesday from immigration officials that Chowdhury had in fact been put on a flight out of Britain the previous Friday!

● Plans are underway for a national conference in Birmingham on 30 November to organise action against the racist controls. The conference is sponsored by the Indian Workers Association and the Kashmiri and Bangladeshi Workers Associations and the Campaign Against Racist Laws.

Black Section gears up for immigration campaign

WHEN THATCHER announced new visa controls on visitors from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Ghana and Nigeria, Labour Party Black Section issued a statement condemning 'the most blatant act of racism yet seen from this Tory government'. Black Section reaffirmed its opposition to racist immigration laws and demanded the racist visas be stopped. SANJIV VEDI, a member of Black Section national committee and himself an immigration worker for a London law centre, explained the operation of the visas and Black Section's proposal for campaigning.

THE new visa controls show how blatantly racist this government is. The leak is that this government has preplanned the whole issue. It was hoping for the response it got at the ports of entry in order to show that the immigration services can't cope and thereby justify the new visas.

I work in immigration. The cases I've handled show just how unjustified these visa regulations are. They also support the idea that the issue was orchestrated by the Tory government.

For example, one case

is a person who requested entry to the UK for two weeks, to attend a function this weekend. Despite the fact that his documents were in order, that he had a return ticket and an income, he was refused entry.

He was held incommunicado from Tuesday until Saturday before he was interviewed. He arrived at Heathrow but was detained in Gloucester without his family knowing his whereabouts until the Friday evening.

I believe that this situation arises from the fact

that immigration appeals have met with a high degree of success. The only way that the government can make sure more appeals are turned down is by switching the visa system to the country of origin. Now someone is refused entry in their country of origin, but has a right of appeal in this country.

Of course, that means their representative in Britain can't get the full story. The representative never meets the client and doesn't know how the client has been treated during the interview in the country of origin. In other words, the government is deliberately creating a system which meets the racist demands of the immigration authorities to make it more difficult to win appeals.

This move is dictated by Tory ideology. It strengthens the hand of the right wing of the Conservative party who argue that it is black people in this country who cause

problems of race relations.

But if this is seen by Mrs Thatcher and her government as an election strategy, then it might well backfire. There are a large number of people in this country who are now aware that the immigration rules are fundamentally racist and unfair, thanks to the amount of work that immigration campaigns have done, especially in the black community. The way that the visa regulations have been imposed is seen by a lot of people to lack the sense of 'fair play' that Thatcher emphasises so much.

When the Labour Party Black Section national committee meets this coming weekend we will be discussing a policy paper on immigration. This targets immigration controls as a major campaigning area for us. It proposes that we deepen our links with the immigration campaigns and take up the issue of racist immigration legislation within the party.

Hackney Black Section launched

HACKNEY NORTH and South, in East London, became the latest CLPs to gain Black Sections with a launch meeting on 24 October entitled 'The Way Forward for the Black Community in Hackney — and Solidarity with Southern Africa'.

The impetus to set up Black Section in Hackney came from black activists campaigning for greater representation of Hackney's large black population on the Council. Now they are seeking to widen the scope of their activity, increase grass roots involvement, and recruit more black people to the Labour Party.

Steffanie Edward-Yarde of the Hackney Black Sections Steering Committee told *Socialist Action* 'A lot of black people think the Labour Party is nothing to do with them. We are planning a series of meetings on issues of particular concern to black people in Hackney. At present when black peo-

HACKNEY LABOUR PARTY BLACK SECTIONS PUBLIC MEETING

to Discuss

The Way Forward for the Black Community in Hackney Solidarity with Southern Africa

SPEAKERS:

Lester Lewis

North Hackney & Stoke Newington C.L.P.

Ngila Muendane

Pan African Congress of Azania (South Africa)

Linda Bellos

Leader — London Borough of Lambeth Council

Cllr. Lloyd King

London Borough of Hackney Council

Abdud Mohamed Babu

on African Solidarity

Chair: Steffanie Edward-Yarde

FRIDAY 24th OCTOBER 1986 - 7.30 pm

HACKNEY TOWN HALL

Mare Street, London, E8

PUBLISHED BY:

The Steering Committee, Hackney Labour Party Black Sections,

c/o 128 Rectory Road, London, N.16

ple see Labour Party on leaflet they say "Oh, forget that!" If people see the Black Section achieving

things we can change that.' The meeting is at 7.30 at Hackney Town Hall, Mare St, E8.

Youth in action

No alternative from SSIN

THE SOCIALIST Students in NOLS (SSIN) annual meeting last weekend attracted 60 people. All reports were made and all sessions chaired by supporters of *Socialist Organiser*. The only policy issue which was debated was that on the Middle East.

For a supposedly left alternative to the Kinnoquite Democratic Left leadership of NOLS,

By Polly Vittorini, SOAS Labour Club

SSIN adopted a remarkably backward position on the question of Palestine. This rejected as 'utopian' the PLO slogan for a democratic secular state in the Middle East and capitulated to the racism of the Zionist state, which does not even recognise citizenship for its Arab inhabitants. Instead SSIN called for a separate homeland to be created for the Palestinians: for two states, one Arab, one Israeli. The resolution put forward by *Socialist Organiser* supporters and adopted almost unanimously, reserved its condemnations not for the murderous policies of the state of Israel, but primarily for the bombings at Rome and Vienna airports.

That a grouping so insignificant in the wider labour movement can dominate SSIN so entirely is proof of the lack of democracy inside SSIN. 'Guest speaker' Tony Greenstein, from the Labour Movement Campaign for Palestine, was clearly invited to the AGM only to give the semblance of a debate. His speech was slotted into a debate the whole framework of which was organised to push *Socialist Organiser's* politics on the Middle East, with supporter Clive Bradley introducing and summarising.

South Africa was dealt with in a workshop which addressed the question of how SSIN could build direct links with South African trade unionists, rather than what could be done by the NUS, given its position in favour of sanctions. The key policy issues being fought for by the left in the labour movement at present — for black self-organisation, women's self-organisation, action to get Britain out of Ireland, and so on — were simply missing from the agenda of this self-styled left alternative in NOLS.

There is an urgent need for a current in NUS which fights for campaigning activity on all these issues in cooperation with the campaigning Labour left. The possibility of such a current organising in NOLS aroused much interest at the SSIN event itself. SSIN's position on Palestine, its lack of a campaigning and unifying strategy for British withdrawal from Ireland and against apartheid, and its exclusionary structure, all prevent it from leading and building this current.

Students who want NUS to be part of the fight for Campaign Forum's politics are increasingly organising in colleges through promoting the campaigns of Campaign Forum, organising campaign groups, and linking up nationally to produce a bulletin. They will be organising at December NUS conference.

**Youth
AND
IRELAND**

**DAY
SCHOOL**

**BIRMINGHAM November
UNIVERSITY 8th 11am**

..SINN FEIN..

**UNION OF STUDENTS IN
IRELAND, NUS, NOLS, NUR,
CHRISTINE CRAWLEY MEP,
LP BLACK SECTION, WOMEN
AGAINST PIT CLOSURES,
LCL & LWI....**

Broadwater Farm one year on

ON 6 OCTOBER 1985, police invaded the home of Cynthia Jarrett on the Broadwater Farm estate in Tottenham, London. She collapsed and died as a result. Within hours the entire estate had erupted. The black community was not prepared to take any more police harassment and intimidation lying down. Only two weeks before, police had invaded the Brixton home of Cherry Groce. They shot her, leaving her paralysed.

A year on, nothing has changed. Just last month 600 police saturated the predominantly black community in St Paul's, Bristol. Over 100 people have now been arrested for protesting at the police action. Meanwhile the Broadwater Farm trials at the Old Bailey continue. Over 60 people will pass through London's central criminal court charged with affray, riotous assembly and murder. On Monday 13 October Hassan Muller walked free from the court after a unanimous verdict cleared him of charges of throwing a petrol bomb, causing a n affray and burglary. Aged 18, Hassan had spent 11 months in custody awaiting trial!

LARRY HERMAN spoke to MILLARD SCOTT of the Broadwater Farm Youth Association and the Defence Campaign.

THE Broadwater Farm riot is something that just had to happen in the country. What made things so bad here was the hurt and the anger towards the British police.

Governments and all police forces in the country have to understand and heed what happened on Broadwater Farm. Not dismiss it as a freak, or as criminal activity; not dismiss us as hooligans, muggers, or drug pushers.

Learn

They must learn that if you alienate a section of your community, then you're in for a fight.

On 6 October, on Broadwater Farm, we couldn't lose. We were so right. It's sickening to see the strain we are under now.

The police are using their 'justice' on us now because we defeneded ourselves against them. They have to show they are in full control and that they are the law. It is as simple as that.

I don't like it when I hear a policeman saying 'what about PC Blake-lock's death?'. Blake-lock got his wages the week before. The guys he was fighting weren't fighting because they were told to fight, they were fighting because they had to fight.

Choice

The police surrounded the estate and left us no choice whatsoever. Mrs Jarrett didn't have any choice in the manner the police entered her house.

This is a 'civilised' country. In a civilised country a woman gets killed by police and the community gets 60 people up on charges, going to jail for 70 years.

A lot of people think Broadwater Farm is just a run-of-the-mill thing. But when it comes down to it, the whole idea is to smash us.

Defeat

There was a government conspiracy to defeat the miners. Not only economically, by taking away their funds and making sure they couldn't survive the strike, but also by using the police in a 100 per cent aggressive manner to beat down the pickets.

How many millions did it cost the government to keep the police patrolling those people? It was planned, the government orchestrated it. That is how Broadwater Farm is feeling now.

The Broadwater Farm defence Campaign (BWFDC) was set up on 8 October, two days after the fighting, to combat the problems we knew we would have to face. It gives support to families on legal and police matters, and we have funding to keep our staff going.

When the Campaign goes out and talks, people listen to what it has to say. It took a riot to give us so much credibility.

Strength

The real strength lies in the Youth Association. We decided that black people's voice must be heard and understood.

This estate is like a little country with its own population. It reflects society itself. To say our crime rate is abnormal is ridiculous.

The crime rate has been dropping for the last three years, since the Youth Association was established. Our record is better than the police's. The only time we come into conflict is with the police.

We don't have problems with drugs anymore. Everybody is getting down to protecting each other. We supply services that we know are essential for people to feel like human beings and that they live somewhere decent.

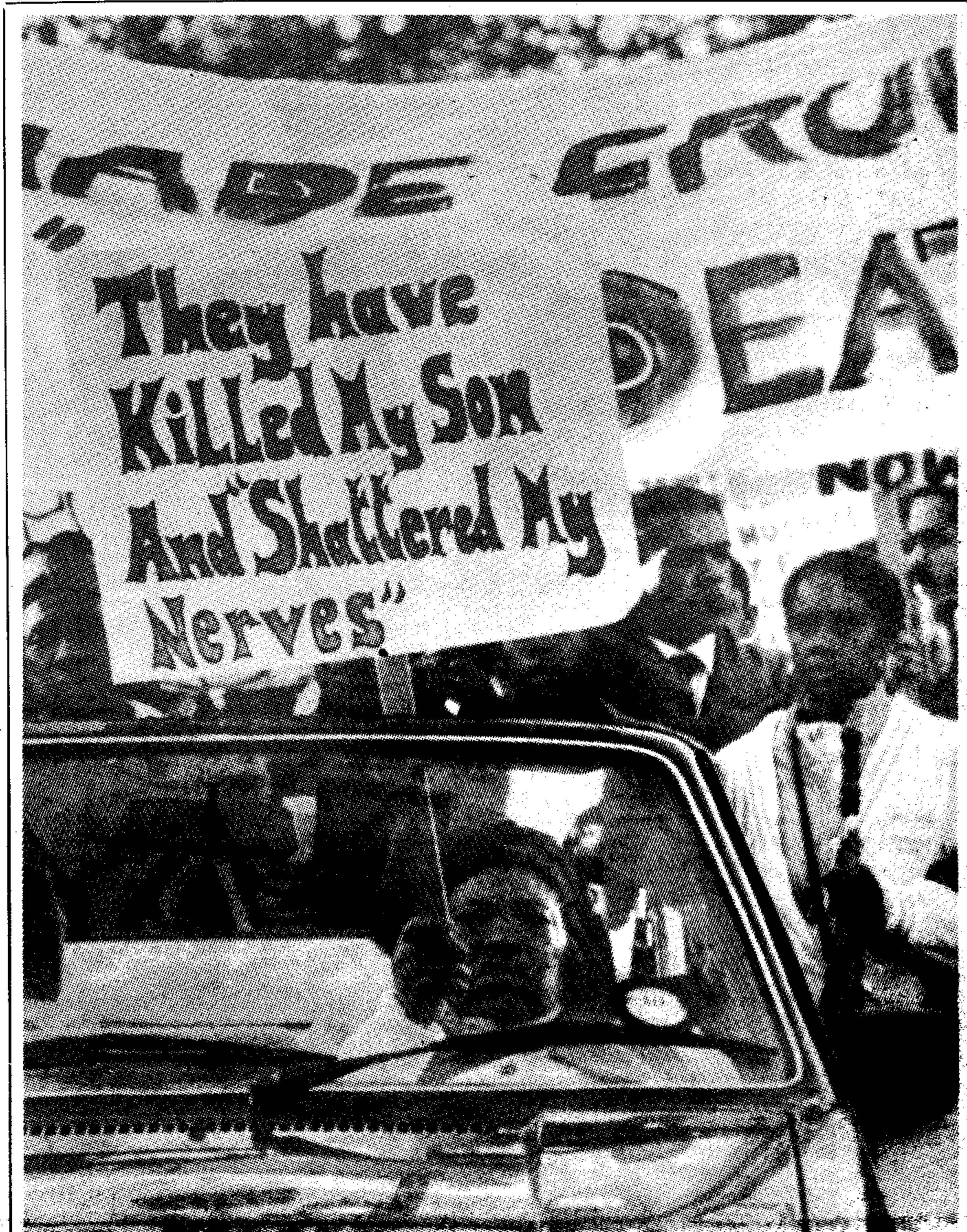
That means we supply meals for old-age pensioners every single day of the year. We don't worry about holidays. We are open all the time. Once somebody needs our help, we're there to help them.

Influence

The BWFDC has a great opportunity because of the black influence that drives it. I don't think there is another campaign that could frighten any government as much as we can — because we are right. We are a small voice with so much force it's unbelievable.

And it is a campaign that, now, cannot be intimidated by the police.

For instance, people were worried about picketing the Old Bailey



Earlier this month Anthony Lemard of Notting Hill died in police custody. Last Sunday, hundreds of people joined a demonstration which marched on Notting Hill police station, chanting 'police are murderers' and demanding the circumstances of Lemard's death be investigated. He died in police custody after being arrested on the eleventh floor of a block of flats. He is said to have choked on his own vomit. An inquest was adjourned when a post mortem found no signs of violence as being a cause of Lemard's death. But the black community is not satisfied. Further pickets of Notting Hill police station are planned.

because Irish people got picked up and nicked down there. But we did go down to the Old Bailey to picket. They see our banners there, they know we are there and they know what we stand for.

A lot of people class us as radicals. They label us as militants. But you don't need education to sit down and watch what's happening around you — It's common sense.

Better

If they came down here and said run the country, I know we'd make a better job of it. The country cannot improve with three million people unemployed. Industry is up the creek. What's halfway decent they want to give back to the private sector. They take money out of our wage packets to build up industries only to sell them off just at a time when they can make a contribution to the country.

The defence campaign has contact with various NUM branches, NALGO in different parts of the country, SOGAT and the NGA in the Wapping strike. But we don't talk to union bosses.

I'd rather talk to people on the ground floor. But eventually we will sit down and talk to them. The country would be in better shape if the trade unions were more positive in their attitude.

And the Labour Party,

at the moment, is creating its own problems: changing its image to try and get elected. But we need a lot more input than the Labour Party is providing for getting this country back on its feet.

Refuting Black Sections is very negative. Black people deserve to be able to create our own status in this country. We have to learn for ourselves and not be taught.

Broadwater Farm is a perfect example. If the Youth Association never existed, the estate wouldn't be in the condition it's in today. It would still be a dump. We have brought some order and purpose to Broadwater Farm.

Recently we've made some very positive contact with groups in South Africa. Until South Africa is truly a free nation and black and white people are equal in that country black people will always be second class citizens anywhere in the world.

Scheme

We've held discussions on exchange scheme to get some South African kids to come over here.

If I were in South Africa I would be a member of the ANC. I'd be ready to fight and die for my liberty, and I'd choose the ANC.

Me, I'm stuck in Broadwater Farm. But I'm worried for the whole

world. Jamaica is my parents homeland, right across from Cuba. Jamaica is a little country, but what America has done to it economically is pure outright oppression, to make sure the government does things America's way.

The United States is refusing to let countries govern themselves either by supplying arms and money to fuel fighting or by undermining their economies — claiming to liberate those countries, to 'save them from communism'. But people in South America, Central America and the West Indies want their independence.

Countries

They want to create their own countries as they see fit. Nobody should be able to tell them how to rule their own countries.

The Americans, and the British too, keep pumping money into arms while people are suffering on the streets — while places like Broadwater Farm are being built, while kids and old age pensioners are not getting proper meals.

How many men and women are cracking up because of stress like this, which is unnecessary in the first place? That's where money should go: into making sure that people have a chance of making a decent living with self-respect.

A Women's Conference of power, not protest

PROBABLY THE biggest issue the Labour Party is going to face in the next year is the position of women within the party. There are more than 28 million women in British society — the majority of the population. Women form the majority of the working class community. Women are well over forty per cent of the workforce. They are a third of all trade union members — and probably a higher proportion of Labour Party members. Without representing women the labour movement in this country is incapable of taking a serious step towards socialism.

Yet the situation of the women's organisation in the Labour party is a total disgrace. The National Conference of Labour Women, supposedly the highest organisation of women in the party, actually has less power than an individual Labour party branch which twenty people attend. The national women's conference cannot submit a single resolution to party conference. Its existence is not even formally recognised in the constitution of the party. The supposed 'representatives' of women on the National Executive Committee of the party are chosen by party conference as a whole — that is by an electorate whose majority are men.

Given this it is no surprise that the Labour Party historically has failed to attract the support of women to anything like the degree it has attracted men. It also continues to reproduce the most stereotyped and sexist images of women.

Investing

The latest example is the 'Investing in People' campaign launched by the party leadership — which might be retitled 'investing in men'. This pamphlet contains only three photographs of women in it — despite the fact there is a photograph on every other page. The two photos of white women are both connected with children. The sole photo of a black woman is of a hospital orderly!

With this type of sexist and racist stereotyping it is any wonder that Labour continues to be deeply unattractive to most women?

This year's Labour Party conference, by voting for a review of the entire structure of women's organisation within the party, recognised for the first time that the present situation facing women in the party is unacceptable. But there are now three policies coming forward in the party for what to do about the situation.

The first proposal, of the right wing, is simply that the party should try to batter women into submission.

Policy

The mechanism of this is simple. For years now the women's conference has voted against the party leadership on policy and on the demand that women should decide their representatives on the NEC. The proposal of a union such as APEX, which has a majority of women members but a totally male

dominated executive, is that a trade union block vote controlled by men should be introduced into women's conference. This will then be used to vote down all the proposals of women.

This policy is a total catastrophe not only for women but for the party as a whole. Women are no longer prepared to be kicked around by anybody. The net effect of this approach will be to drive women in large numbers away from the party — with disastrous results for everyone concerned.

The second proposal coming forward, closely identified with the practical proposals of the Labour Coordinating Committee (LCC), is to make purely cosmetic or tokenistic changes. This means that a fairer representation of women at women's conference might be decided upon. The right to submit resolutions from the women's conference to party conference would be recognised. In some versions the election of the national women's committee by the women's conference would be granted. But real power, the election of the women's places on the NEC, would not be granted to women's conference. It would remain under the control of men.

Cosmetic

This cosmetic approach would be in line with the general approach of the LCC. In the run up to this year's party conference the LCC claimed to support the right of women's conference to elect the women's section of the NEC. But constituencies the LCC decisively influenced failed to put forward the resolution for this. They also failed to vote in adequate number for the two women supposedly on the LCC slate.

This cosmetic approach would not work. Women do not want 'benign' men controlling their affairs as opposed to 'dictatorial' men. Women want to control their own affairs — because women know that only by controlling their own affairs will their needs be met.

The third approach is that women must control their own affairs. And this is the only way that women in large numbers will be attracted to vote for, and join, the party. It is also the only way the party will meet the needs of women. That means, as a crucial demand, that women's conference must elect the women's section of the NEC.

Up until now two positions, one right wing and the other ultra-left, have conspired to block a real fight for women to control



A shift to electing the NEC women's places by women's conference would represent a tremendous shift in power within the party, comparable in impact only to the reforms achieved by CLPD — it would also be, in today's conditions, the largest step forward ever taken by women in the party

the women's section of the NEC. The right wing position is simple — women shouldn't have the right to control their own organisations, men should. Changes in women's conference are simply to vote down women's demands. The ultra-left view, associated with *Labour Briefing*, is that it is possible for women's conference, without changes in its present structure, to gain the power to elect the five women's places on the NEC.

This latter proposal is simply not credible. A shift to electing the NEC women's places by women's conference represents a tremendous shift in power within the party. It would mean a shift comparable in impact only to the reforms achieved by the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy in the early 1980s. It would be the largest step forward, in today's conditions, ever taken by women in the party.

Power

Moreover the present women's conference is set up as a 'talking shop', a 'protest' organisation, not one that can wield real power in the party. That is because men decided it never would have real power. But no one is seriously going to accept that five places on the NEC are elected by a conference where unions such as GMBATU, with almost 300,000 women members, NUPE with over 400,000, or the TGWU with 250,000, are going to be outvoted by women's sections of a small number of constituencies with only a few thousand women members.

Certainly there is a tremendous fight to ensure that votes at women's conference are under the control of women in the unions — and not of men. But precisely establishing an authoritative women's con-

ference, and electing the women's places on the NEC by women's conference, is one of the most powerful ways to stimulate the struggle of women in the unions to determine how their votes are cast at Labour Party women's conference.

No one, of course, has to or should accept that a straight forward block vote should be introduced into women's conference. The Constituency Labour Parties are under-represented compared to their real weight in Labour Party conference. A proportionately greater weight for women's sections must be maintained in women's conference — the Women's Action Committee has put forward a proposal of parity between the women's sections and the unions as a basis for discussion.

Structure

These matters can be discussed out. After all there was nothing magical about the 30:30:40 proposal for the electoral college at Labour Party conference. It was the best concrete proposal. There is room, within reasonable limits, for discussion on the structure of women's conference.

But what is non-negotiable is that the women's conference must have power. And it does not have power without the right to elect the women's places on the NEC. This principle — that women, not men, elect their own representatives — is non-negotiable. No other system is acceptable to women or to anyone else interested in democracy in the party.

The Labour Party today faces a tremendous opportunity. Its implications would place it right at the head of the fight for women's rights. It is one

that is totally in the interests of women, and totally in the interests of the party. *This is that the party, and its leadership, must accept the principle that the women's conference elects the women's representatives on the NEC.* Once that principle is accepted then women in the party can sit down together, and also with the party leadership, to work out the best way to ensure that this right of women to elect their own representatives is exercised.

Principle

What should be decided is a simple principle. It has already been decided this year that women's conference will adopt a structure based on the number of women represented by delegates — which rules out any block vote based on counting the number of men in a union. The NEC should announce that on this basis it intends to introduce the principle that women's conference will elect the women's places on the NEC and invite proposals for the precise mechanism for this.

Opportunities

On that basis business like negotiation and discussion by women in the party and unions could commence. If that is not decided however the biggest opportunity for the party in its recent history to gain the support of women will have been wasted.

There is no issue which it is more important for the party to confront in the next months than this one.

Knowsley North: NEC's latest witch hunt

By Carol Turner

ON WEDNESDAY 22 October the Labour national executive will take a report on the enquiry into Knowsley North CLP heard earlier this month. This enquiry, including the 'allegations' which occasioned it, are shrouded in deepest secrecy. Not even Euro-MP Les Huckfield, likely to be its main victim has been able to find out the facts. What is known is that Les would almost certainly be the winner at the constituency's parliamentary selection meeting, delayed as a result of the enquiry.

Delegates supporting Huckfield and his Euro-constituency of Merseyside East, against which accusations of 'irregularities' have also been made, were turned away from the enquiry held by Walworth Road on 13 October. The officers of Merseyside East had twice written, without success, to general secretary Larry Whitty in attempt to find out what was going on.

What has occasioned this latest kangaroo court is a claim that Huckfield gave an undertaking at his Euro-selection meeting in January 1984 not to stand for parliamentary selection. As the Merseyside East officers point out, in response to a specific question about whether or not he would put himself forward for a by-election in St Helens South which was then widely anticipated, Huckfield indicated that he would not do so. Despite approaches, Huckfield didn't allow his name to go forward then.

Following the resignation of sitting Labour MP Kilroy Silk in Knowsley North, officers of the Euro-constituency encouraged Huckfield to allow his name to go forward as candidate. Subsequently, Wigan CLP, and others, who are part of the Euro-constituency, have 'complained' directly to Whitty and by writing to the local paper. No allegations have ever been raised with the Euro-constituency itself.

The three officers of Merseyside East, in response to the secret enquiry, had this to say: 'We fear that letters to the NEC from Wigan, Makersfield, Leigh and Knowsley South, since they contain accusations which are without foundation and which have never been brought to the Euro-CLP, are a carefully-orchestrated attempt to undermine the chances of Les Huckfield in the Knowsley selection. We do not accept that these allegations are sufficient, either for an NEC investigation — when we have never been contacted to ask if they are true — or for intervening in Knowsley's selection procedure.' Put bluntly the Labour leadership have cooked up a fake campaign so they can prevent Huckfield being adopted as candidate by Knowsley North.

This latest attack on the left is an extension of the witch hunt started by the vote to expell the Liverpool council members. It bears no relationship whatsoever to 'uniting' the party ready for the next general election, nor to defending democracy in the party. Far from it. In fact, as in other cases, this is yet another attack on the democracy within the party. It is a follow up to Neil Kinnock's decision to abolish the post of party 'chairman' so that Dennis Skinner could not fill it.

As a Euro-MP, Les Huckfield is a member of the Campaign Group of Labour MPs. His selection for the safe seat of Knowsley North would swell the Campaign Group's ranks in Westminster. In the face of a leadership which is leading a determined assault on the left wing of the party the attack on Knowsley North's selection represents a further extension of the witch hunt. What is now under attack is the elementary right of party members, who have nothing to do with *Militant*, to decide on their MP.

Protests must flood Walworth Road if Huckfield's selection is blocked.



Les Huckfield

Photo: DENNY FITZPATRICK

AFTER THE

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How do you see the outcome of party conference?

What happened at party conference is that the party is so keen to get rid of Mrs Thatcher that it demonstrated its unity in the presence of the media for that purpose. The reception accorded to the leadership of the party reflected that desire.

However, judging from the fringe meetings and some of the votes, it is clear that the party at the grass roots level is radicalised. The Labour party itself is wholly unchanged in character but feels that in the immediate pre-election period it is most important to give an impression of unity — a unity which is genuine in that it desperately wishes to remove this government.

But underneath all that there is a desire for a government to bring about certain crucial social changes — and disquiet about whether the policies put forward would be adequate to meet the challenge facing an incoming Labour government.

The way it was presented in the press was of the complete mastery of the leadership over the party — which the party was prepared to go along with for electoral purposes. But anyone who misread the conference in any other way than I have outlined would, I think, be misunderstanding what had happened.

As far as its impact on the public is concerned, for a variety of reasons it has not been as great as had been expected by many people. First the SDP-Liberal argument about defence has weakened the capacity of the SDP and Liberal Alliance to attract Tory voters. Therefore they are returning to Mrs Thatcher. The fact that we have not presented our defence arguments in a way that goes to the heart of the matter means that Mrs Thatcher may be planning a visit to Moscow which she will present as having been a success because Mr Gorbachev only talked to her because she had Trident, Cruise and Polaris. The Labour Party's defence policy may not make the impact that it would need on the validity of the alleged 'Soviet threat' — which is the central question and which is not addressed by Labour's defence policy at present.

For these reasons I think conference has to be read quite differently from the way that Fleet Street chose to read it. We have to rebuild the strength of the party, and address ourselves to the central issues that face the British people during and after the next election.

What do you think will be the effect of the break down of the summit at Reykjavik?

I think it will have a profound effect. Since Gorbachev came to power proposals from Moscow have acquired greater and greater credibility for the simple reason that people realise that disarmament would be in the interests of the Soviet union and the Soviet people — and therefore that Gorbachev is genuinely reflecting the aspirations and desires of the Russians.

In parallel with that it is becoming clear that the mythology of NATO as a world wide defender of human rights and democracy against dictatorship is false. The United States supports some of the most right wing dictatorships ever because those dictatorships defend American interests worldwide. The recognition that there is an American empire of which we are a part is gradually coming home.

Without stimulating anti-American feeling in a nationalist way, which would be a great mistake, people now see Reagan as a greater threat to peace than Gorbachev.

They don't think Reagan wants a war. But they think Reagan's strategy of stepping up the arms race makes war more likely. They also know that the arms are to be used for the protection of US economic and political interests, and they think that the Americans have in the back of their mind bankrupting the Soviet union. That is not only not possible, but it is not what people want. So there is a big opening now for the next stage of the non-alignment cam-

paign which was launched in the House of Commons in July.

I think that the capacity of the peace movement in Britain to move away from simply the nuclear weapons question to the whole issue of foreign and defence policy is greatly increased. I would see that as one of the major campaigns from now on — particularly as if the Labour government tries to get rid of the nuclear bases Weinberger has made it clear that this will not be acceptable.

The question of whether we could remain within NATO and discharge that conference obligation to get rid of the nuclear bases does involve and will involve a fundamental choice. Not for the first time the left are just ahead of their time in anticipating a choice that will have to be made — and making quite clear what choice should be reached when the moment comes.

I think that the event at Reykjavik have given a very big boost to the left's foreign policy.

Reagan staked his entire political reputation on an anti-communist, cold war, Star Wars position. When he got to Reykjavik he had to make a choice. Was he serious about disarmament in the face of absolutely sincere and verifiable proposals that the Russians put forward or not?

With the mid-term elections coming Reagan could not face a right wing domestic opposition that he'd helped to create. So he stuck his toes in and was manifestly responsible for the failure of the summit. The effect of that will be to stimulate the peace movement in Western Europe and in the United States.

It is a big crisis for the American administration. The fact that the European governments supported Reagan separates them more from their own people and opens up a great opportunity to explain the real situation.

One of the important developments that was announced just prior to party conference was Campaign Forum — An Alliance for Socialism. This involved a number of campaigns in the party and the Campaign Group of MPs. Could you explain the significance of this.

What Campaign Forum has done is to bring together in an effective form a group of different campaigns that have been going on in parallel with one another. What is important about it is that it was not a case of people meeting in a smoke filled room. It is that the parallelism of the campaigns has become apparent. There is a national recognition by each campaign that they need the others.

I think it's very important, for example that the Women's Action Committee have been explicit in saying they need the left to win their demands and the left has said the Women's Action Committee's campaign is right and asked what can we do to support it? It's the same with the Black Sections.

It is the principle of political solidarity which has developed. It hasn't been done by little private arrangements and manipulative coalitions. Not at all. The reason that the Campaign Group of Labour MPs has acquired any credibility is not because it represents a little group of people with a particular point of view — a parliamentary faction. It is because it has interpreted its function as being one of giving support inside and outside parliament to a whole range of movements. This was the case with the miners and the printworkers, the women's movement and the black movement, and the lesbian and gay movement, the movement for withdrawal from Ireland. It's given support on these issues and therefore has become a body that has earned the confidence of those engaged in these campaigns. That process of solidarity has got enormous potential.

I also think that Campaign Group News as a bulletin board of the left is enormously important. The national press don't report what is going on at all. But even the left press has tended to



THIS YEAR'S L for the party. It's Kinnock and his by the Tories rap the same time the reorganise the left Gorbachev summ British members conference. Social assessment of pa the likely impact

present things from one particular ideological viewpoint. And if things didn't fit neatly into their categories then they tended to be ignored or rejected or attacked.

People can open Campaign Group News and see within it their own campaign. They can see it developed, discussed and argued for. Then on other pages they can see what other people are saying. And they're attracted by that. This is a new left function of hard news and analysis, and reflecting aspirations, and set out in a way that people can see.

They can see that there is a parallel and common interest in success in all these different areas. I think Campaign Group News represents not only a significant new agency of the left in Britain, but a model for an awful lot of other press. I would also like it to include perhaps quotations from other press that shows Socialist Action this week, in Socialist Organiser this week, Militant this week, Socialist Worker this week, the Morning Star this week, there was a story which we think is important. This advertises the other papers, but also provides information that would make Campaign Group News the one paper, of all papers, that you can't afford not to read.

There are all sort of possibilities here. I regard it as an absolutely fundamental instrument for what we call the left, but which is really the rebuilding of the labour movement with socialist traditions, its trade union roots, and its new and more organic

connection with other movements that have been pushed to the margin by the fact the Labour Party is no longer organisationally representative of the constituency it seeks to serve.

I think it is important that we should, so to speak, turn on an electromagnet that attracts people. I don't think we should attack people. The problems that the labour movement has had in Britain are not due to individual villains and the aim is not to replace them with individual heroes. The aim is to draw people into the work of social transformation.

One of the most important decisions of party conference was to open up the biggest review of the position of women within it in the party's history. What do you think must be the outcome of this review?

I think the reason people are prepared to enter negotiation with the Women's Action Committee, is that the Women's Action Committee's campaign was so strong. It was only by mobilising through a whole range of activities, of which I think the shadow elections were the most dramatic in character, that people who are the powerbrokers in the old system realised they either had to take on the women's movement, and fight it to the death, or accommodate themselves to it.

I don't think that anything less than complete victory for the women's demands, in particular that the five places on the NEC are elected by the

women's conference, would be right.

You've got talk to everyone — because by talking to everyone you also drive those who are against the principle more onto the defensive. But you must keep the campaign moving forward. That is a perfectly clear strategy. What has been launched into is the right strategy for increasing the support of the campaign and requiring those who oppose it to rethink their position — which they will have to do as it is wholly insupportable.

I hope also that WAC will be able to continue with the shadow elections which I think were a wonderful innovation and should be extended into other areas of the party as well.

How do you see the question of Ireland at the present time? This was an area where the left got much publicity but still only 400,000 votes at party conference. How do we change this?

No Labour government really wants to have to think about Ireland. Therefore there has been a return to bipartisanship via the Anglo-Irish Accord. This is a bipartisanship from which a few years ago we thought we had completely

CONFERENCE

THE SUMMIT

Labour Party conference was a watershed
 a public display of unity around
 policies — and was immediately followed
 catching up in the opinion polls. At
 conference saw important steps to
 . It was followed rapidly by the Reagan-
 . The issues of US bases in Britain, and
 of NATO, figured centrally at party
 ist Action asked TONY BENN for his
 ty conference, the state of the left, and
 of the Reykjavik summit.



formed and was then expelled when it became the Communist Party. The Independent Labour Party left in the 1930s. The Socialist Labour League was expelled. Victory for Socialism was crushed. There were various campaigns to take over the party, by the electoral machinery open within the party.

None of these developments got to the core of the problem — which is that the party in the country has for many years been suffering from attempts to turn it into a fan club of the parliamentary leadership. In fact it is, and must remain, even from the point of view of winning elections, a strong, independent, broadly based labour and socialist party. That is what the Campaign Forum is about trying to create.

If you present the struggle as 'moderates' versus 'extremists' you miss the point. The party has always been divided between top and bottom. The top, with its parliamentary base and the general council of the TUC — with some of their ideas about how they should run things — have a natural alliance at the top. But down the line what is called the right of the party, sometimes, is actually more in touch with the left than might be realised. For example in the miners strike the left, right and centre in many constituencies worked completely together.

I think the recreation of the Labour Party is the task we have to achieve. But when you recreate it you've got to recreate it around certain clear political issues — peace, out of NATO, non-alignment, no US bases, the return to full employment — the idea that everyone is entitled to remunerated employment throughout their life, the restoration of the welfare services, the extension and entrenchment of democracy, the restoration of the welfare services, the entrenchment of democracy, the restoration of civil liberties, Ireland. All these objectives have to be restated in the goals of the Labour Party, and the party itself has got to expand its base in a much broader way than the 1918 base — which was a white, predominantly male, working class Labour Party with a few little socialist societies added on. Today we have got to be much more broadly based, and end the expulsions and reinstate all those who have been expelled.

I think that the Campaign Forum is the beginning of a broader base. I'd like to see a lot of other groups come in as well. If other groups join the Labour Left Liaison and work in the constituencies you could have a whole range of developments. For example I would like to see the pensioners brought in. Senior citizens have got special interests in our society. They are beginning to get organised and I believe this should be brought into the party, perhaps as a separate section like the LPYS or Women's Sections. The building of all this is really the building of a new party within the shell of an old party, whose structures no longer conform to the realities of our period.

Then this has got to have a perspective. I've always thought that the future of socialism lay in the deepening and development of democracy. This is what frightens the establishment much more than socialist rhetoric.

Finally, on immediate questions, the fact that the Campaign Group has decided to stop narrow bargaining for the NEC slate, possibly it will adopt the principle of the shadow slate like the women's conference, the fact that the Campaign Group is not going to 'vet' people who join it but it is open to anyone who is interested and who shares our objectives, are highly significant.

We have one advantage at the moment. The media story is that the left has been beaten and therefore what we're doing is not noticed — and if we were being noticed we'd be denounced. So we've got a space we can fill with work. Our immediate job is to see that the Labour Party, as a socialist party, is refounded on a broader basis — and is more democratic, to fight for that before, which I hope we will win, and to intervene politically on the central questions that face people.

Ireland.

Then, when a Labour government is elected, these demands will be sufficiently clearly articulated for them to be brought to bear on that government with speed and efficacy by the conference. I think that is what will happen.

Another issue which has aroused controversy is the Black and Asian Advisory Committee. What is your view of that in the light of your support for Black Sections?

I wouldn't touch the Black and Asian Advisory Committee with a barge pole. It is not a compromise. It is not anything it purports to be. It is the manager who says 'my door is always open', while he continues to run the show. That is totally different to recognising the right of people to run their own affairs.

What about the attack on reselection? Party conference passed a resolution instructing the party leadership not to reopen the matter. But it appears the NEC intends to hold the conference decision in contempt.

I believe that the gains from 1979-81, of which reselection and the election of the leader were the most important, still remain the prime anxiety of the leadership. Because they fear that when there is a Labour government, and if it doesn't deliver, MPs will be facing counter pressure from their own consti-

tuencies which may override the strident demands of the chief whip to conform. So they would like to get those gains reversed. That has to be stopped.

I think there is also a third question, which is the election of the cabinet by the electoral college. I know it's been argued that this is ahead of its time, and we should have a moratorium on constitutional change, but I think it is a central question. I think we could win that. We have to demand that the entire government, and parliamentary leadership, is elected by the electoral college. We will ignore that at our peril.

But that view is still a minority in the Campaign Group.

Finally the Campaign Group at its meeting in Chesterfield prior to party conference took a number of important decisions. Perhaps you could explain what those were? The Chesterfield meeting this year was extremely significant.

First on policy, it endorsed the pamphlet *Peace Through Non-Alignment*. The previous year it had endorsed *A Million Jobs a Year*. These are two major political interventions. Secondly it agreed to the establishment of Campaign Forum. It endorsed the demands of the Women's Action Committee, and the Black Section. In agreeing to Campaign Forum it established a new type of left, of a kind we haven't seen in the past.

When I look over history there was the British Socialist Party — which withdrew when the Labour Party was

broken.

There was a bipartisan policy on Ireland since Attlee sacked parliamentary private secretaries for voting against the Government of Ireland Act in 1949 — they voted against because they would not support the consolidation of partition.

The effect of that bipartisanship policy is to attempt to take the issue of Ireland off the British political agenda. But that is so manifestly unsatisfactory that, after 1979, the campaign for Irish unity and independence began to grow again in the Labour Party. In 1984 the party published a policy which was not perfect, but which was better than we'd had before — which said we would not accept a veto by the protestant leaders on Irish reunification. It wasn't an adequate statement, but it represented a move in the right direction.

Then you had the Anglo-Irish Accord — which has been seen in many ways. Paisley sees it as the beginning of the break up of Northern Ireland's place within the United Kingdom. But looked at more accurately Northern Ireland is so ungovernable from London that Mrs Thatcher thought it necessary to entrench support for the

policy of governing Northern Ireland from London in Dublin, in Washington, and in the Labour Party. The fact she sought the support of the Labour opposition, the Irish government, and the American administration for the Anglo-Irish Accord was an indication of the strength of the nationalist position — not a sign of its weakness.

If the next Labour government were to say 'we're fulfilling the conditions of the Anglo-Irish Accord, which is an international treaty' it would be an absolute disaster. The campaign has to be built between now and the election and then I think a Labour government would find it much harder to carry the support of the movement if it itself engaged in the degree of repression that is now taking place.

If a Labour government were to continue the supergrass trials, or the strip searching, or with the policy that Mrs Thatcher has adopted, then I think it would not be acceptable to the party. Our job in the meanwhile, between now and the election, is to alert people to what is happening and to make clear demands — which must include setting the date for withdrawal from Northern

Crisis in the LCC deepens

THE AGENDA for this year's AGM of the Labour Coordinating Committee (LCC), to be held in Sheffield on 15 November, shows a further development in the crisis facing that organisation.

The most sharply counterposed resolutions come out around relations with Labour Left Liaison (LLL) — the Labour left umbrella organisation which brings together the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (CLPD), the Labour Women's Action Committee (WAC), the Labour Party Black Section, Labour CND and other campaigns in the party.

A resolution moved to the AGM by Mike Hobday states: 'The LCC would welcome closer co-operation between the "soft-left" and the "hard-left" and, therefore, resolves to write to the Labour Left Liaison asking on what terms such possible. LCC resolves to report the results of such negotiations to its members within six months.'

Hard

A directly counterposed resolution by Rachel Brooks and Owen Tudor argues that: 'This AGM believes that Labour Left Liaison is a sectarian political project whose aim is to reverse the decline of the so-called hard left by hijacking the legitimate sectional demands of pressure groups and campaigns under an anti-leadership banner.'

'Any participation by LCC would, therefore, give credibility to this project and would depart from our view that the demands of WAC, the Black Sections and other groups should be independent of any particular political formation.'

'AGM therefore ... Accepts that LCC should not be involved in Labour Left Liaison and its associated structures.'

In a related resolution Nigel Stanley, of the Clause 4 grouping, states: 'This AGM notes the resolution on NEC strategy passed at the 1984 AGM — this was the resolution adopted by the LCC which in practice called for that organisation to try to remove Tony Benn, Dennis Skinner and other left figures from the NEC.'

These resolutions are crystal clear — and reflect the sharp divisions in the LCC which emerged prior to, and at, Labour Party conference.

Rachel Brooks and Owen Tudor's resolution attempts to argue that campaigns in the party should not be involved with the LLL. But both Labour Left Liaison and the different campaigns in the party — including WAC, CLPD, and the Black Section — have always worked with all currents in the party that fight for their objectives. Labour Left Liaison's position is that it will work with the LCC for commonly agreed objectives.

But what is not acceptable is the purely token support which the LCC gives to campaigns in the party. The resolutions and amendments for last party

conference showed almost no resolutions or amendments in support of the campaigns it formally claims to support coming from the LCC dominated constituencies. The LCC refused to support the slate adopted by the shadow elections at women's conference despite its verbal support for WAC. Only two constituencies decisively influenced by the LCC voted for Black Section candidate Russell Proffitt despite the fact he was formally on the LCC slate — and that compared to 42 'hard left' constituencies. Only 25 heavily LCC influenced constituencies voted for two women candidates for the NEC compared to 119 'hard left' constituencies. This, again, was despite the fact that Jo Richardson and Audrey Wise were both nominally on the LCC's slate.

In every case, therefore, the LCC gives cosmetic, tokenistic support but in reality does nothing to promote the campaign. The orientation proposed by Nigel Stanley and the Clause 4 grouping, which involved in practice a deepening alliance with the racist and sexist right wing, would strengthen that tokenistic course still further.

However within the LCC there are forces who have seriously taken up the issues of Black Section, WAC, party democracy and the demand for removal of all US bases.

The clash between these and the Clause 4 grouping came out clearly at Labour Party conference with Ken Livingstone advocating closer cooperation between the LCC and the LLL, and with Clause 4 violently opposing this. This contradiction is now clearly expressed in the completely contradictory resolutions on cooperation with the LLL put to the LCC AGM.

The most explosive policy debate, which will affect the position of the LCC in the party, is on Ireland. Here there are policy resolutions for adoption with every position ranging from British withdrawal from Ireland — moved by Conor Foley, to a series of positions which explicitly supports the Unionist veto on British withdrawal.

Faced with completely contradictory positions on relations with left currents in the party, and completely counterposed lines on Ireland, this LCC AGM represents a further deepening in the crisis of that organisation.

Why Britain is in NATO

DESPITE A Labour Party conference dominated by the leadership's concentration on unity for the next election the 1986 vote at Labour Party conference for withdrawal from NATO was 68,000 up on the previous year. In Blackpool this month 1,033,000 votes were cast to get out of NATO compared to 965,000 in 1985. Hardly an earth-shattering increase, but a further indication of the disquiet about Labour's 'firm commitment' to NATO membership which has been working its way through the constituency parties since the *Defence and Security for Britain* policy was adopted in 1984.

Ben Lowe's new pamphlet, *Peace Through Non-Alignment*, sponsored by the Campaign Group of Labour MPs, provides a short history of NATO involvement in post-war conflicts — from Suez in 1956 through to the US raid on Libya earlier this year — which substantially confirms those concerns. Lowe traces the real purpose of the North Atlantic alliance, as an instrument of US foreign policy and a means of keeping the European allies in line.

'Washington came close to using nuclear weapons on a number of occasions,' he points out, 'in Guatemala and Vietnam in 1954, in China, Lebanon and Jordan in 1958, in Berlin in 1959, and in Laos in 1960.' The change of NATO concept in 1967, from 'massive retaliation' to 'flexible response', hasn't altered the fundamentals.

'NATO's war-planning,' says Lowe, 'envisaged the use of nuclear weapons in less than four days after the outbreak of war — one of the reasons being that much of NATO's tactical weaponry is deployed very close to the Warsaw Pact borders. Moreover, the NATO commanders fear that the Russians might gain an edge by taking the nuclear initiative — a clear case of projecting one's own ambitions onto the "enemy" — has dominated military thinking throughout the nuclear era and fostered a "first use" mentality which is not mirrored in the Warsaw Pact.'

But, while Labour policy 'recognises the dangers of East-West confrontation and sets as its long-term goal the dissolution of the blocs', Lowe argues that the party will only be able to pursue that goal effectively if it tackles 'the task of dismantling the official mythology of the Russian menace that has sustained the cold war for 40 years and offers a more persuasive and realistic assessment of the dangers to world peace today'. This is undoubtedly the heart of the matter.

Labour's unilateral nuclear disarmament policies are rendered in-

By Carol Turner

coherent by the 'firm commitment' to NATO. Recent statements by Labour Party leaders, Lowe points out, lead to the view that they have 'only a rhetorical commitment to "breaking up the military blocs".'

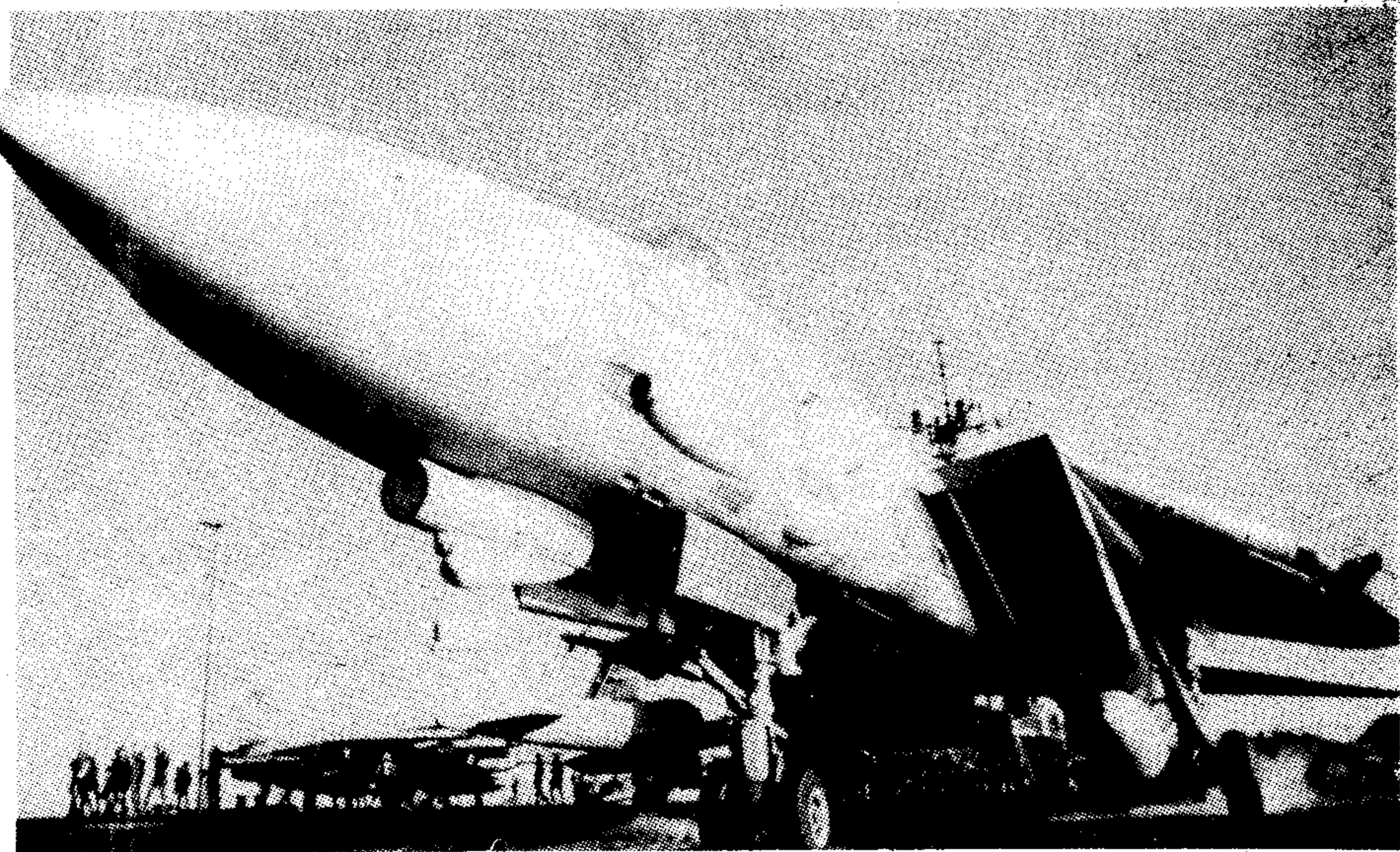
There are four main arguments in favour of retaining NATO membership, says Lowe: 'that NATO deters the threat from the East; that it is an alliance of our friends in the world; that it costs less than a self-reliant national defence system; and that it assures American protection in a major war.' But none of these arguments, he correctly points out, can command an overall majority in the labour movement.

From this Lowe concludes that the main concern of the Labour leadership is that 'withdrawal would have adverse electoral implications for Labour' (his emphasis). He goes on to point out, correctly, that recent opinion polls give cause for disputing the widely-held assumption that there is solid support for NATO among the electorate.

But it is in this part of Lowe's argumentation that the case he builds begins to break down. It would be totally false — and dangerously misleading — to conclude that the Labour leadership's commitment to NATO stems from crude electoral opportunism. Indeed, this is refuted by Lowe himself, earlier in his pamphlet.

Part One of the pamphlet begins: 'Britain played a key role in the creation of NATO ... Ernest Bevin, foreign secretary in the post-war Labour government, consciously followed the basic policy of his wartime colleague and Tory counterpart, Anthony Eden: namely, to solicit American aid in propping up its world position as an imperial power. In return, the United States would gain the use of military bases in the UK and share the benefits of many of Britain's overseas bases and colonies.'

And later: 'In 1951, two years after Britain



helped to form NATO, a Labour government which had enjoyed widespread popular support was replaced by a Tory government that would last 13 years. One of Labour's last measures, taken under US prompting, had been drastically to increase arms spending, even at the risk of undermining its proudest achievement, the still youthful National Health Service.'

Like other anti-NATO campaigners in Britain, Lowe fails to draw out the significance of bipartisan support on the question of NATO. Rather, he prefers the interpretation of Britain as a hapless victim of the North Atlantic alliance. But in reality Britain is part of NATO to defend its own imperialist interests.

Lowe's assumption is witnessed in statements such as: 'there is already a widespread perception that subservience to the United States is undermining the security of the British people.' But it is this very assumption which, if carried through, will actually undermine any campaign for NATO withdrawal that it is becoming increasingly possible to build in Britain.

The fight to commit the British labour movement to withdrawal from NATO, and thereby win such a policy at Labour Party conference, is not simply one of changing the leadership's perception of the popularity or otherwise of such a policy — although it is undoubtedly the case that any such campaign must begin to

change 'public opinion' on the question. Rather it is a matter of understanding that cold war ideology is a device whereby the United States and allies, the biggest imperialist powers in the world today, maintain and attempt to expand their economic and political influence in the world. All British governments — including all past Labour governments, and including the current Labour Party leadership — willingly concur with this.

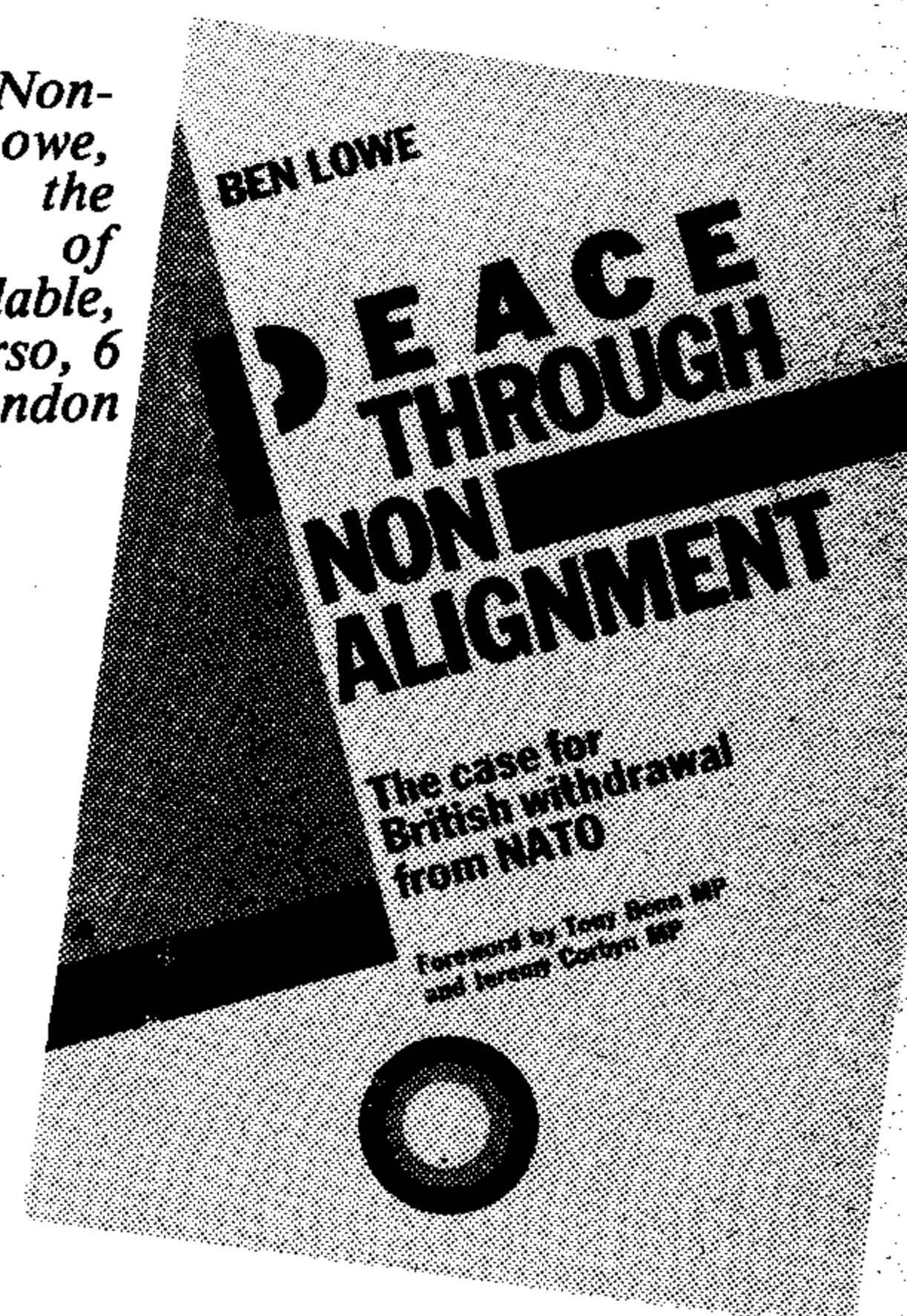
They know that allegiance to the United States and to the NATO alliance is far less of a threat to Britain's imperialist interests than any socialist foreign policy would be. Labour and Tory government alike choose to support the United States and NATO, they do not have this foisted on them against their will.

Understanding this

● *Peace Through Non-Alignment*, by Ben Lowe, and sponsored by the Campaign Group of Labour MPs, is available, price £1.50, from Verso, 6 Meard Street, London W1.

means understanding that any struggle to withdraw from NATO is a fundamental challenge to British capitalism. To be successful it must be understood, and posed, within the labour movement, not as a matter of tidying up the loose ends of an anti-nuclear policy, but as a threat to the very cornerstone of British imperialism.

Bipartisanship on NATO is undoubtedly suffering a few cracks in the 1980s. But it will be a long hard fight before the majority of the labour movement will be won to a socialist foreign policy and the commitment to withdraw from NATO that such a policy must entail. Lowe's pamphlet is a valuable contribution to building that support for withdrawal from NATO. But the arguments it puts for NATO withdrawal are flawed.



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Nicaraguans capture US 'advisor'

A US C-123 supply plane was shot down in Nicaragua by Sandinista troops 5 October. US 'advisor' Eugene Hasenfus who was captured by the Sandinistas the following day admitted being on the flight.

At a press briefing, 8 October, Lt. Col. Roberto Calderón of the Sandinista People's Army showed reporters a Salvadoran air force ID card with Hasenfus's name and photo, identifying him as from the 'USA' with the capacity of 'advisor'. The card admitted Hasenfus to restricted areas of El Salvador's Ilopango Airport.

Writing from Managua for the US socialist newsweekly, *The Militant*, Cindy Jaquith reports that Hasenfus admitted to participating in four flights from El Salvador to Nicaragua to drop weapons and other supplies to the CIA-paid terrorists. Quoting from Calderón's press briefing, Jaquith reports that 'Hasenfus's job was throwing the supplies out the plane door as it passed over the mercenary camps. He said there are five planes at Ilopango conducting these supply missions.'

'Hasenfus also offered information on two of three men killed when the plane crashed, said Calderón. The pilot was Capt. William Cooper, also a US citizen. Calderón held up an ID card identifying Cooper as working for Southern Air Transport, a Florida-based outfit with connections to the CIA.'

'The co-pilot, according to Hasenfus, was Wallace Blaine Sawyer, who also carried an ID card like Hasenfus's, listing him as a US advisor with special rights at the Ilopango airport.'

In the plane's wreckage, soldiers found more than 100,000 rifle cartridges; RPG-7 grenade

launchers; dozens of AK assault rifles; and military boots. All were destined for CIA-organised mercenaries.

By Jon Silberman

operating in the Río San Juan region of Nicaragua.

'In the US, denials by the White House, the State Department and the CIA of any connection with or knowledge of the operation are appealing increasingly hollow.'

Hasenfus reported that the man in charge of the supply-flight operations are Max Gomez and Ramón Medina whom he described as CIA employees. Only days after George Shultz was denying any CIA connection, vice President George Bush admitted knowing Gomez. 'He's a patriot' Bush explained. Bush was director of the CIA.

In a new and condemning revelation, Medina has now been identified as Luis Posada Carriles, jailed for his part in the bombing of a Cuban airliner in 1976 in which 73 people died. Posada Carriles/Medina escaped from his Venezuelan jail in dubious circumstances.

Both Gomez and Medina are Cuban-Americans. The US Cuban emigre community



Sandinista troops capture Hasenfus

is a well-known recruiting ground for terrorist mercenaries and CIA operatives. Nicaraguan deputy Minister of the Interior Luis Carrion has told reporters that 'Hasenfus declares that Medina, as well as Gomez, boasted of being friends with vice-President Bush.'

Nicaragua has formally protested against the direct intervention by CIA personnel in the US-financed contra war. Deputy foreign minister,

Victor Tinoco, said in making the protest that 'the fact that now the CIA participates more directly in the attacks against Nicaragua's territory reveals a decision to involve the American Army in operations against Nicaragua.'

The Nicaraguans have drawn a parallel between the use of 'advisors' in the contra-war to the first stage of direct US intervention in Vietnam. when the same description

was used for US personnel. The Sandinista daily, *Barricada*, carried a back-page headline 'Just like Vietnam'.

● *Building a Vietnam-type solidarity movement will be the theme of a Labour Movement Conference on Central America to be held in London at Congress House on 28 February next year. Leaflets are available from ELSSOC, 13-16 Borough Road, London SE1 (tel 01-928 3412).*

World in action

Earthquake in El Salvador: FMLN/FDR communique

The following communique was issued on 10 October by the general command of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front and the general command of the Revolutionary Democratic Front in response to the tragic earthquake in El Salvador.

THE SALVADOREAN people are facing a new ordeal, adding to fifty years of exploitation and misery, with an earthquake which has mainly affected the poor sectors of our country. It has added to the problems which state terrorism originated — 60,000 killed, 6000 disappeared and half a million displaced.

In this present situation, we witness once more the sub-human conditions in which millions of Salvadorean people live and see that the poor people who are suffering the most from this earthquake, are the same the target of the economic austerity package, forced recruitment and the repression.

This situation reaffirms the conviction of the FMLN combatants of the just struggle for the defence of the national interests, the interests of the 'campesino' majority who are affected by drought, bombing, army operations; and the interests of urban workers who face repression and are now affected by the earthquake. The Duarte officials and military have not been the ones affected by the earthquake.

Our message of solidarity goes, at this time, to the workers of our country who are experiencing pain at the loss of their loved ones and their humble homes. We are aware that at this time national attention is centred on helping victims to solve the problems of food and supplies and in the search for relatives. Included in this situation are also low-ranking military officers and ordinary soldiers who don't live in the security and comfortable surroundings of the higher ranks.

The FMLN General Command and FDR Executive Committee considering the national situation agreed to a temporary ceasefire in all the national territory and this will be enforced as soon as our military units learn about this communique.

The FMLN General Command calls on all its military units to comply with this decision, halting all activities; to engage in combat only in case of enemy attacks and where FMLN units and government forces come across each other by chance.

The ceasefire will remain as long as our Fronts consider it necessary, according to the situation. This unilateral ceasefire will be effected as long as the government and the armed forces show some will in respecting the suffering of the Salvadorean people. If there was a government willingness to join in to the ceasefire, the government should communicate to the intermediary Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas in order to reach a bi-lateral agreement on a ceasefire.

However, Mr. Duarte has announced some punitive measures for those who attempt anything against the so-called national security, which we interpret as more intimidation and repression against our people. Faced with the serious situation which the majority of the country is experiencing it is the government's duty to relieve our people of the economic austerity package.

In this sense, we call on all our people to organise to mobilise, to fight for our rights, for the repeal of the economic package and forced recruitment.

Above all the people must keep watch on all international aid to avoid what happens with the food for displaced persons and that all aid for the earthquake victims is not stolen by Salvadorean officials and military chiefs. 50 years of hurt and exploitation is enough. No more! We call on the international community and solidarity organisations to be aware of the possibility of Mr Duarte's request for North American troops using the catastrophe as an excuse to legitimise North American intervention.

● *An appeal for the victims of the earthquake has been launched by the El Salvador Solidarity Campaign. All monies received will go direct to the victims via the major trade union federation, UNTS. Cheques should be made out to El Salvador Earthquake Appeal and sent to ELSSOC, 13-16 Borough Road, London SE1.*

'Spam' strike tour success

STRIKING MEATPACKERS from the Spam-producing Hormel company in America's mid-west have just concluded a very successful tour of Britain. They spent one week in Blackpool at the Labour Party conference and a second week travelling to Durham, South Yorks, Derbyshire, Notts and London.

The strikers have been out for 14 months, defending their union organisation and resisting company attempts to erode wages and conditions.

The South Yorks leg of the tour was organised by Women Against Pit Closures activists, Ann Scargill and Betty Cook. They first came in contact with the Hormel strikers when they had attended, along with Gwen White and Betty Heathfield, a conference of the Coal Employment Project in Kentucky last July. (The CEP assists women get jobs in the American mines and organises around issues raised by women miners). One of the tour party, Barbara Collette of the strikers' United Support Group in Austin Minnesota, told Socialist Action how close she felt to the Women Against Pit Closures movement. 'Their story is my story' she said.

There are indeed many parallels between the year-long miners' strike and the 14-month struggle at Hormel. They have been faced by a vicious management, determined to break the power of the union. They have confronted the power of the state in the form of both the local police and the infamous

National Guard, who have tried to break the pickets.

Twenty-seven pickets were arrested near the factory gate in Austin on 6 February alone. A further 18 on 11 April. Ray Rogers, an advisor to the strikers was charged with 'criminal syndicalism'!

By Nick Adams

Another parallel with the miners has been the enormous wave of solidarity which has surrounded the strikers. A nation-wide campaign has emerged with strikers touring the four corners of the United States. Financial solidarity has poured in. Hormel products are being boycotted.

But unlike the miners, the national leadership of the strikers' union, the United Food and Commercial Workers has not only failed to give backing to the strikers, it has actively attempted to sabotage the strike.

In January UFCW boss Bill Wynn publicly demanded the strikers return to work and accept an offer they'd twice rejected. In March the strike

was declared unofficial, strike pay was stopped and the union leaders ordered an end to the boycott of Hormel products.

Finally in May the UFCW actually put the strikers branch, P-9, into trusteeship, suspending the branch officers and replacing them with an appointed trustee, Joseph T. Hansen. According to the terms of the trusteeship, Hansen need not call membership meetings and had full power to rule the branch as a dictator for 18 months.

When the branch officers refused to comply the union leadership took them to court. On 2 June, US District Judge Edward Devitt ruled the trusteeship valid and issued a court order requiring the branch officers to relinquish their posts, refrain from any strike activity and turn over to the trustee the branch's property, including offices, records and finances. They would be held to be in contempt if they failed to comply.

The strikers were determined to carry on despite the court ruling. Hundreds of them filed a petition with the National Labour Relations Board to recertify themselves as a new union. They called it 'Original P-9'. No sooner were the strikers ejected from their premises by court order than the Labour relations board rejected the 'Original P-9'

petition on the grounds that the name was too close to that of the trusted branch.

The name was changed to North American Meat Packers Union. NAMPU is now engaged in a fight for recognition. The strikers are also determined to win — and that means extending the struggle. That was why they came to Britain.

Their story won them tremendous backing wherever they spoke, and in their short stay they crammed in many meetings.

**The 1985-86
HORMEL
MEAT-PACKERS
STRIKE
in Austin, Minnesota**

by
Fred
Halstead

The full story of the Hormel strike is told in this pamphlet by US socialist Fred Halstead. It can be ordered from Other Books, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP, price 70p plus 13p postage (bulk orders on enquiry).

Mozambique — under apartheid's attack for 11 years

Recent reports in the western press have openly speculated on the possibility of the fall of the Frelimo government in the former Portuguese colony of Mozambique. PETE EVANS reports on a country that's been under attack for 11 years.

The war in that country has been presented as if it was purely an internal, civil war. In fact, behind the problems faced by the people of Mozambique lies the apartheid regime in South Africa.

In 1975 the Mozambican liberation movement, Frelimo, took power after a fifteen year struggle. They took power in a poor, underdeveloped country, heavily dependent on their powerful and hostile neighbour: South Africa. Immediately after the seizure of power the apartheid regime set in motion a plan to destabilise the country. The plan involved a combination of economic and military pressures.

At the economic level it included: restrictions on migrant labour (Mozambique has 45,000 workers in South Africa, who provide the biggest source of foreign currency); border closures or restrictions; regulating the exports of goods, especially food and oil; and cutting electricity supplies (South Africa provides 28% of Mozambique's electric power). The apartheid strategist, Deon Geldenhuys, explained that 'The objective is to cause serious hardship to the population, who would in turn direct their frustration and fury at the regime'.

To take advantage of the openings created by the economic pressure, a military intervention was required. There have been a number of direct military incursions by South African commandos, for example the bombing of ANC offices in the capital city, Maputo, in October

1983. But the main tool used by the South African racists has been the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR).

The MNR was initially set up by the Rhodesian government of Ian Smith. It was based on Portuguese commandos and Mozambicans who had worked for the colonialists and were afraid to go home as they were known as members of particularly brutal units. They also recruited some former Frelimo officials who had been cashiered for corruption.

After the defeat of the Smith government, the MNR collapsed, and the remnants fled to South Africa. In 1980 the MNR restarted its attacks, this time under the control of the South African authorities. It was the apartheid regime which chose the areas of attack, and provided the training and logistical support. They also provide 'advisors' to lead the attacks on the ground. The captured diary of an MNR officer explained: 'In the event of our friends (the South African 'advisors') being seen by the people, it will be the fighters' duty to inform the people that they are captured Russians'.

Under strong economic and military pressure, Frelimo agreed in 1984 to South Africa's main demand: the signing of the Nkomati accords.



Photo: LARRY HERMAN

Mozambique agreed to the expulsion of all ANC refugees from the country; in return South Africa promised to withdraw all support from the MNR.

Whilst Mozambique stuck rigidly to the terms of the agreement, South Africa refused to do the same. Instead of peace, the war escalated. The MNR became active near Maputo for the first time, with attacks on the road, railway and electricity line between the capital and South Africa.

In August 1985 a joint force of the Mozambican

and Zimbabwean armies captured the main internal base of the MNR. Amongst the documents seized were details of meetings which proved the continuing support of the South African government for the MNR, and which showed that it was the apartheid regime itself which was ordering the attacks on the capital.

The South Africans agreed to send 'material for urban guerilla warfare' including 'time bombs and timing devices' to the rebels. It is clear from the captured documents that

the target of apartheid is the Frelimo government itself.

LAST LONDON APTA APPROVED Labour Movement Conference Saturday November 1st 10am-5pm

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WA Build on ballot result for victory

THE increased majority returned by sacked News International Sogat '82 members, rejecting another of Murdoch's 'final offers' is a clear indication of the strength of feeling amongst the rank and file membership. The message is clear: jobs and union recognition not compensation.

The union's leadership must now get down to the job of winning the dispute instead of allowing the hard-won conditions of organised labour to disappear, writes JOHN LANG, deputy FOC, Times clerical SOGAT.

We must build for action within Fleet Street. In one way or another we're all affected by Murdoch-style attacks on jobs, conditions and organisation. By fighting back together we can all win.

The call must go out that all Murdoch's products are boycotted. The scab titles must not pass the threshold of any Fleet Street house. Advertising with News International should be stopped. The Press Association should not take any copy from or to News International. An instruction to the wholesale distribution nationally to boycott News International products must be given along with the boycotting of colour preprints from the Bemrose plant in Liverpool.

And we've got to immediately resume the picketing of Convoy's Wharf where the paper reels are transported from and the picketing of the TNT depots.

Part of escalating the dispute involves forging solidarity from the rest of the labour movement. Countless resolutions have been passed, including at the TUC Congress in Brighton, on the importance of this dispute for all workers. They must be turned into action. The TUC leaders must now

understand that this dispute will not go away and be forced to act. The issue of the EETPU has been fudged far too long. Those scabs must be instructed to stop doing the printers' jobs.

Confidence must be built not only amongst those on strike but also for those who are in work but running scared by the attacks of management.

This dispute has exposed some of the weakest types of leadership. Judging by the meeting held of SOGAT '82 FOCs/MOCs at Hadleigh directly after the ballot result, a new resolve by the SOGAT leadership still seems a long way off. There was a realisation the dispute must be taken forward but the fear of sequestration seemed to cloud any real positive steps.

The FOCs/MOCs have the confidence to take up the struggle ahead but need to get themselves organised into a proper strike committee to build on the strength of feeling and chart a course for victory.

The basis for victory is there if the right tactics are implemented. All trade unionists must heed the ballot result and help gain that victory not only for the printers but the labour movement in general.

Reviews

Namibia: a contract to kill

Not to have some semblance of an idea about the situation in South Africa, a person would have to be wilfully stupid. About neighbouring Namibia, the last colony in Africa, ignorance could be excused. Press silence about Namibia is deafening. Even the timid actions in relation to South Africa agreed by the EEC pointedly do not apply to Namibia.

This news boycott is not accidental. If the full, horrific truth of Namibia today is brought home to people the campaign for sanctions against apartheid would be enormously boosted.

By Phil Waterhouse

Namibia is occupied by 100,000 troops of the South African Defence Force, one soldier for every 15 Namibians. It is backed up by the locally drafted SWATF (South West African Territorial Force), various police units and the notorious Koevoet death squad. The occupation forces have established a dusk-to-dawn curfew in the north (Ovamboland), created 'protected villages' (as was done in Vietnam) and a security zone to practice their atrocities out of sight-and-sound of world opinion. Torture, rape and disappearances are common. Crops are destroyed and water poisoned.

The country is used as a convenient stepping-stone to attack neighbouring black-ruled states. Angola especially has been the target of repeated incursions over ten years, in alliance with South Africa's puppet mercenary army UNITA. Refugees from the war in Namibia have been attacked and numerous massacres killed many hundreds of

civilians, women and children. The overall aim of South Africa, wholeheartedly supported by USA and by Britain, is the overthrow of the Angolan government.

The pamphlet *Namibia: A contract to kill* produced by the Campaign against the Namibian Uranium contract will help to get out the truth about Namibia. It covers a tremendous amount of ground, starting with how the country was conquered and its economy turned into an appendage of imperialism, exporting beef to South Africa, karakul luxury furs, fish before the seas were depleted, and a plethora of minerals, including most importantly, uranium. British interest in this plunder is around 80 per cent control of the economy, and the fact that the country can be used to bypass sanctions applied against South Africa.

The heart of the pamphlet describes in detail how uranium extraction came under the domination of the British mining giant Rio Tinto Zinc (RTZ), with its interests in 44 countries, from Cornwall to Canada. RTZ has over the years stolen several hundreds of millions of pounds worth of Namibian uranium. Stolen in the legal sense as the United Nations has passed decrees since 1966 terminating South Africa's mandate to control the country and ruling continued occupation illegal. The decrees recognise SWAPO (South West Africa Peoples Organisation) as the sole authentic representative of the Namibian people, and ban further commercial mining, farming and fishing operations, allowing for the seizure of any natural resources thus taken from the country. Different British governments have either been duped about the source of the uranium in contracts made, or

quite blatantly ignored the UN decrees.

A little CANUC detection work has shown that the reason for government complicity in this theft is the need for large amounts of enriched uranium and plutonium for the nuclear warheads of the new Trident programme. This is an opinion shared by the ex-Minister of Technology Tony Benn in a letter reproduced in the pamphlet. Also some evidence is dug up about a secret military contract made in 1983 for 1,100 tonnes of uranium.

The final aim of CANUC is to help build a campaign to impose sanctions against the importation of this uranium, uniting the peace movement, the Anti-Apartheid movement, the Labour Party (despite the position of Nuclear-Jack Cunningham) and the NUM and Women Against Pit Closures. It is pointed out that many unions have contact somewhere along the line in this illicit traffic, the TGWU, NUS, NUR, ASLEF, SCPS, TSSA, and CPSA, so the scope for sanctions implemented by the labour movement is great. Together with an earlier CANUC pamphlet *The Rössing File* this is a useful tool for activists in all these areas.

The Anti-Apartheid Movement is sponsoring a conference on 25/26 October at City University, London. The conference will be addressed by SWAPO Secretary General Andimba Toivo Ja Toivo, followed by a week of action. In the next couple of weeks UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi is touring Europe, including Britain. Both the conference, and a warm welcome for South Africa's bandit-in-chief, will help throw a little light on exactly what is happening in Southern Africa, and lift the blanket of silence on Namibia.

NAMIBIA: A CONTRACT TO KILL

The Story of Stolen Uranium and the British Nuclear Programme



CANUC THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE NAMIBIAN URANIUM CONTRACTS

• *Namibia: A contract to kill* by CANUC can be obtained from the Namibia Support Committee, PO Box 16, London NW5 2LW.

PPPING



Labour movement must increase support

The magnificent stand of the News International printers is a beacon to all workers facing attacks. Their struggle, now in its tenth month, gives the lie to all those who argue it's impossible to fight back, writes BRIAN GROGAN.

Their overwhelming vote to reject Murdoch's 'final' final offer is a decisive reply to the likes of Neil Kinnock who argue that such struggles should be put into cold storage until after the election.

They deserve the support of the entire labour movement — including Kinnock — in their fight.

They have put out a new appeal for financial support. More than 4200 members of SOGAT '82, the main union involved, have had nothing but subsistence since last Christmas. They are losing their houses, their cars and facing dire financial hardship.

One in every six strikers have been arrested. Now they're facing

the courts.

Dave Payne, member of the machine branch and Southwark Labour councillor, has been handed down a six months prison sentence for supposedly causing actual bodily harm to a TNT scab. TNT is the transport company bought by Murdoch just prior to his sacking the printers, to by-pass solidarity action from railworkers.

Printers are putting up with this type of assault rather than face life on the dole. They are fighting for

Jaguar workers score victory

WORKERS AT Jaguar cars in Coventry have scored a lightning victory over the company. Just three days of strike action by the workforce at the Browns Lane plant forced management to back down on their planned speed-up.

The management had declared that they were 'determined to reap the full benefits of improved productivity offered by the new car.'

A large investment in engineering, design, and new technologies has greatly increased productivity already. This was not resisted by the workers.

What was bitterly resisted is management's attempt to increase work-rates by launching an unrestrained time-study exercise on the new car. Most clearly aiming to load the dice in their favour, management refused to allow workers to have the shop stewards take up their problem with time studies.

However, this is no game. In recent weeks it had become clear that management wanted to impose new times which could give them thousands of extra cars each year. This would mean much harder work for the present workforce. Moreover, such a speed-up would have wiped out job opportunities for thousands for years to come.

Since the summer, shop stewards representing assembly line workers had tried repeatedly to get

all of us. They have strengthened the resolve of everyone under attack from the government and employers. They deserve our unstinting support.

A call from SOGAT to the TUC General Council which meets on Wednesday 22 October is proposing they organise national solidarity action. At its Brighton Congress in September, the TUC voted to support the sacked printers and mandated the General Council to instruct the electricians to leave the Wapping fortress.

Norman Willis, TUC general secretary has steadfastly rejected proposals — which have flooded in from every corner of the labour movement — that the congress resolution be implemented. He is reported to have argued at the TUC's Finance and

agreements with management on time-study methods. Meanwhile the speed up offensive continued unchecked.

Last Wednesday afternoon 150 workers on line 1 refused to work unless time-study engineers were taken off the line. On Thursday morning a similar number on line 2 stopped work in support. Assembly shop stewards called a mass meeting of all 700 workers on lines 1 and 2. The stewards recommended a return to work to allow a scheduled meeting with management to take place. This was overwhelmingly rejected and workers decided to recall the mass meeting on Friday morning.

The recalled mass meeting heard that work-

General Purposes Committee on Monday 20 October that the next step should be talks with each of the unions involved in the dispute on new ways to seek a settlement.

So strong is the feeling within SOGAT that Brenda Dean has been forced to go beyond Willis's position. SOGAT is demanding that the general council organise a march and lobby of parliament. They are also demanding that the electricians be instructed to cease and desist from doing traditional printers' jobs — which would also mean that they would not be able to do printers' work on the projected new Murdoch evening paper, the *London Post*.

The formal reason for deciding to fight in the first place was the discovery that electricians had been given jobs at Wapping on the *Post*. It was only later that the printers realised that the electricians were to take all their jobs.

In the wake of the ballot victory, the demonstrations to Wapping on Wednesday and Saturday evening have been massively boosted. There is now serious discussion about organising the wives of the printers to deepen the solidarity. They are also discussing extending the action against other Murdoch titles at Odhams and Bemrose, and to printers of the *Sunday Times* colour supplement in Northampton.

The labour movement needs to show rapidly that it is boosting its support to this fight. Over the next six weeks, members of the largest print union, SOGAT, will be balloting on whether to institute a 58p per week levy to financially assist the sacked printers. It inevitably will be interpreted as a referendum with SOGAT on support for the dispute. Support from the rest of the labour movement will be vital in determining its outcome.

● *Demonstrate for the release of Dave Payne, imprisoned in Pentonville for six months. Tuesday 28 October.*

ers on line 3 had also stopped work. Meanwhile management remained adamant in refusing to meet union representatives while workers were involved in unconstitutional action.

The mass meeting voted with seven against to continue the stoppage and reconvene next Thursday. Within hours of the decision workers on all assembly lines, as well as other sections, voted to join the dispute and walked out.

But by the weekend the company's position started to weaken. On Monday they caved in. The lightning strike had taken them completely by surprise. They undertook to give a written undertaking acceding to the workers' demands.

Notts NUM under attack

Last month British Coal announced the closure of Hucknall colliery. At stake are 1500 jobs which would bring the total job losses in the Notts coalfield to 3000 in the current financial year alone.

Then on Friday 10 October they sacked Notts NUM vice-president Mick McGinty from his job at Ollerton colliery. JO O'BRIEN and ANDY BUCHANAN report from Nottingham on the escalating attacks and the fightback.

The attacks follow a period in which the national union has been steadily rebuilding its strength. Recruitment to the NUM has been continuing across the area.

In some pits the union is now within striking distance of having 50 per cent of the workforce in its ranks. This growing strength was dramatically demonstrated at the five thousand strong Notts Gala in September organised by the Justice for Mineworkers campaign.

McGinty was sacked for allegedly using threatening behaviour towards a NACODS official. The charge is completely trumped up. The incident itself took place a full six weeks before the sacking!

McGinty was reported to the pit management for raising the question of dangerous working practices. Two men on the coal face had already brought up the issue with the local Inspectorate. For Mick it was a sacking issue.

The miners responded. On Tuesday 14 October, a 350-strong meeting (involving 50 UDM members) voted for a 24-hour stoppage the following day. Sixty per cent of the day shift and 95 per cent of the afternoon and night shifts respected picket lines despite the fact that the NUM can claim just 350 members out of

the 1000 strong workforce.

Two full-time 'national' UDM officials stood at the pit head vainly urging men to cross the picket line and go to work.

Mick McGinty's case is now before the official appeals procedure. His victimisation, and the Hucknall closure threat, confirm Notts NUM president Ray Chadburn's warning made as long ago as April that 'the honeymoon with the board is over'.

Despite the featherbedding given to Notts miners during and immediately after the strike, the fact remains that only eight of the area's pits are profitable in the Board's terms. Area management, headed up by Albert Wheeler, is determined to eliminate the 'unprofitable' ones. The attack has been launched at Hucknall — which management claimed had at least twenty years life at the beginning of the year. If the closure of Hucknall goes through, deeper cuts will follow.

The response of the UDM to the closure has run true to form. Whilst publicly expressing disquiet at the closure, UDM leaders within the pit campaigned to ensure a large majority vote to accept the Board's terms.

The NUM has been campaigning against the closure. But the union is not recognised in Notts.

Left victory in Notts

MANSFIELD, Sunday 19 October. Today the general committee of Mansfield Labour Party took a decision that will change the face of politics in the Notts coalfield. By 45 votes to 39 it chose Alan Meale, secretary of the Campaign group of Labour MPs, to be its prospective parliamentary candidate. He will take over from Don Concannon, who is retiring from politics at the next election.

Concannon has long been the political lynchpin of the right wing within the Notts labour movement. He opposed the 1984-85 miners strike, and has supported the formation of the breakaway UDM.

He also earned notoriety for his slavish support of the British occupation of the Six Counties in Ireland. In particular, he gave full support to Thatcher at the time of the hunger strike in the H-block.

His decision to bail out of politics, and the selection of Meale, represents a profound change in the politics of the Notts coalfield. It marks the first fruits of the movement of

sufficient support had been mustered to win comfortably on the second ballot.

Alan Meale told Socialist Action that his victory represented: 'a triumph for democracy in Mansfield CLP. It shows the value of campaigning for socialism and the value of bold policies. More than anything it represents the campaigning future of socialism in the British labour movement.'

Local activists explain that when Concannon first announced his resignation, they thought that a strong left wing candidate would give the right 'a good run for their money'. But as the campaign around Meale unfolded it began to tap deep support, especially in the local unions.

The Notts NUM gave Meale their support, and his campaign was championed by leading NUM members such as Peter Heathfield. By the time of the selection conference,

At Hucknall the union organised just ten per cent of the miners. This not only undermines the NUM's ability to present the case against closure. It has also allowed the Board to create a climate in which some miners fear that by fighting the closure they are setting themselves up for victimisation.

Notts County Council and Ashfield District Council have stepped in as a counter. Through the Coalfield Communities Campaign they have organised to help the resistance, pointing to the impact of the pit closure on the local community, and seeking to mobilise the community against it.

Campaigns to mobilise the broader community have a place in the fight — as the successful resistance to closure at Darfield in South Yorks showed. But they can only play an auxiliary role to the mobilisation of the workers directly involved.

Moreover, the Communities Campaign downplays the fact that the majority of miners at Hucknall are represented by a bosses organisation.

Ray Chadburn warned at a large rally at Hucknall that the closure was just the thin end of the wedge. He went on to stress that only the NUM had the policy and strength to fight pit closures — so the fight to save Hucknall goes hand-in-hand with the struggle to defend the national union and its victimised members.

● *A Justice for Mineworkers meeting on Sunday 19 October decided to build a rally in Ollerton for 23 November. The theme of the rally will be against pit closures and victimisations.*

This victory is the first step in transforming Mansfield CLP into a campaigning party. As Alan Meale put it: 'The real hard work still lies ahead of us.'

● *Stop press: The UDM has responded to Alan Meale's selection. According to its Nottinghamshire secretary, David Prendergast, it will be putting up an alternative candidate at the next election. Labour's majority in 1983 was 2216.*

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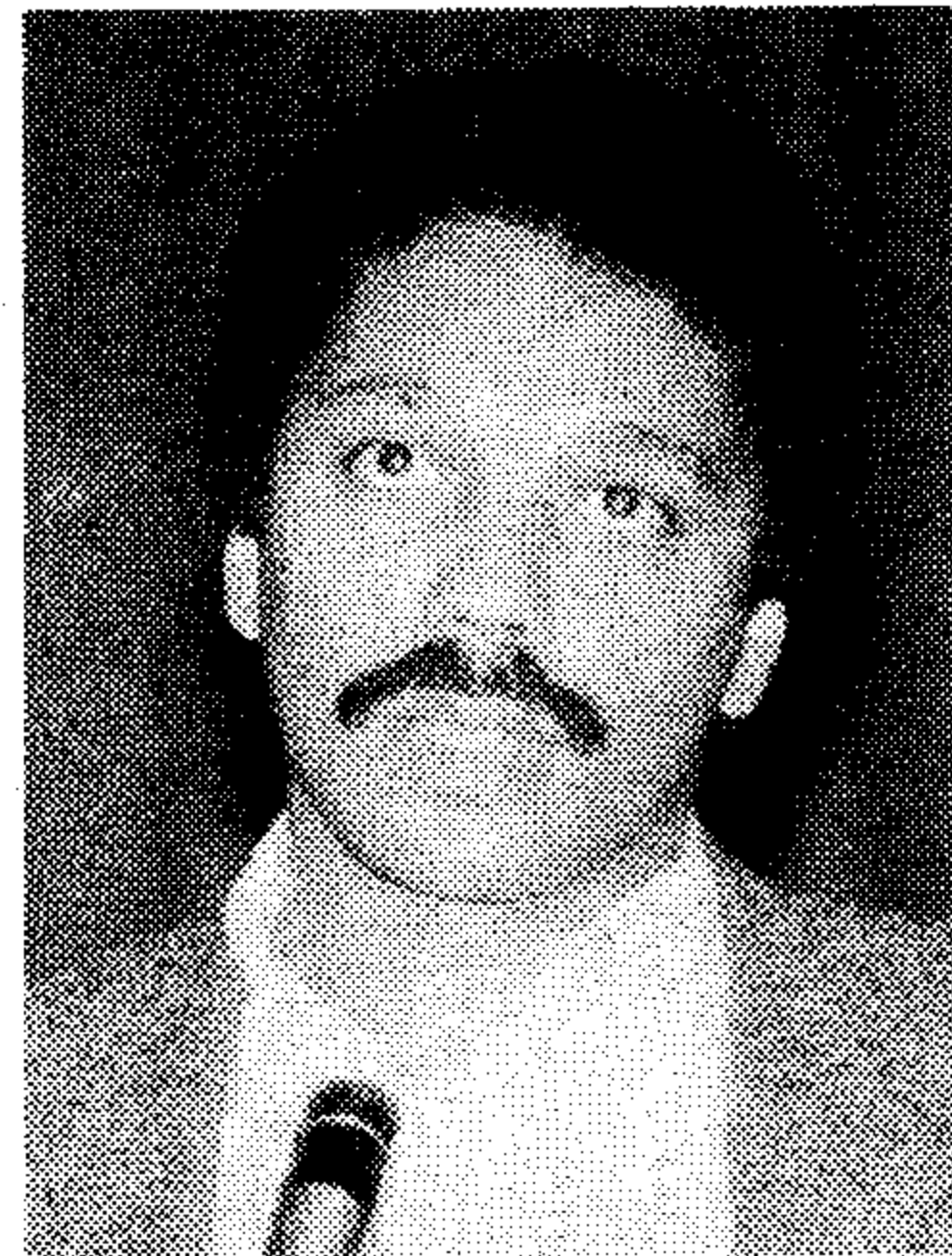
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