

Socialist Challenge

PAY THE NURSES!

PEANUTS! That's what Thatcher wants to give the nurses. While inflation is raging at 22 per cent, the Tories are offering nurses just 14 per cent — a wage cut of 8 per cent.

This scrooge attitude shows just what Thatcher's priorities are. Since the Tories were elected just over a year ago, Thatcher's friends have received huge wage increases; the police, the army, the bosses of public corporations, well-healed doctors — they're all in the money with the Tories.

But not so the nurses, teachers, and other public sector workers — they're on the rough end of Tory Britain.

Huge increases in taxes and prices have forced up the rate of inflation. But over the past year much of this has been grabbed back by pay increases.

Now the Tories are running scared. Their plans to make workers pay for the crisis are in trouble. So they intend to crack down on wages by making the public sector pay.

The first victims are the nurses and the Scottish teachers, who are already taking strike action. Next month it will be local government workers.

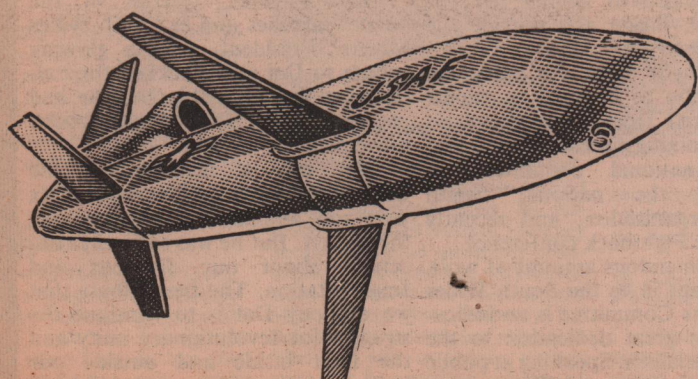
The nurses are on the brink of taking strike action. But many nurses are understandably reluctant to go that far. More than any other group of workers, the nurses need the solidarity of the rest of the labour movement.

In 1974 Yorkshire miners and other groups of workers went on strike to support the nurses. That's the kind of action that we need again. To support the nurses is not just to support a worthy cause, but to win the first battle on pay in the public sector — the first of many.



Thatcher's values —14% for them

52% for the cops



Socialist Challenge says:

**No Cruise missiles!
Britain out of NATO!
Demonstrate Saturday 22 June,
12.00**

Assemble Belvedere Road, South Bank
March to Hyde Park for 3pm rally.
Called by the Labour Party.



COMING SHORTLY: just the badge to wear and sell in the build-up to the 22 June demo. 20p plus 10p p&p. OR make money for your local campaign/organisation by ordering 20 or more at a bulk discount rate of 15p per badge post free. All orders must be pre-paid to Hackney Socialist Education Group, c/o PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

OUR POLICIES

Capitalism is in crisis. The leaders of the Labour Party and the trade unions offer solutions that are in the interests not of the workers but of the capitalist class.

Socialist Challenge believes that the two vital tasks confronting revolutionary socialists are:

- To build broad-based class struggle tendencies in opposition to class-collaborationism in the labour movement. These should be non-exclusive in character, grouping together militants holding a wide range of political views.

- To begin to fight for the creation of a unified and democratic revolutionary socialist organisation which can, through an application of united front tactics, begin to be seen as an alternative by thousands of workers engaged in struggles.

Such an organisation should be based on the understanding that:

1 The struggle for socialism seeks to unite the fight of workers against the bosses with that of other oppressed layers of society — women, black people, gays — struggling for their liberation. This socialism can only be achieved by creating new organs of power and defeating with all necessary means the power of the capitalist state.

2 Our socialism will be infinitely more democratic than what exists in Britain today, with full rights for all political parties and currents that do not take up arms against the socialist state. The Stalinist models of 'socialism' in the USSR and Eastern Europe have discredited socialism in the eyes of millions of workers throughout the world. We are opposed to them and will offer full support to all those fighting for socialist democracy.

3 The interests of workers and capitalists are irreconcilable on a world scale. Capitalism has not only created a world market, it has created world politics. Thus we fight for working class unity on an international scale. This unity will in the long run be decisive in defeating both the imperialist regimes in the West and the brutal dictatorships they sustain in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

In Britain it implies demanding the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland and letting the Irish people determine their own future.

4 The Communist parties in Europe are in crisis. Neither the 'Eurocommunist' nor the pro-Moscow wings have any meaningful strategy for the overthrow of the capitalist state. New revolutionary socialist parties are more necessary than ever before. Conditions today are more favourable than over the preceding three decades. But such parties can only be built by rejecting sectarianism and seeing internal democracy not as a luxury but as a vital necessity. This means the right to organise factions and tendencies.

If you agree with these principles and want to be involved in activities by Socialist Challenge supporters in your area, fill in the form below and send it to us.

- I am interested in more information about activities in my area
- I would like additional literature and enclose 50p to cover costs. (Delete if not applicable)

Name.....

Address.....

For unilateral nuclear disarmament

AT Labour's one-day conference James Callaghan went out of his way to attack the increasing number of party members calling for nuclear disarmament by Britain.

David Owen, Labour's former foreign secretary, devoted his speech to an all-out attack on those who wanted Britain to get rid of its nuclear arsenal. Owen's speech was couched in cold-war terms; for him, and for the party's right wing, the West has to be armed against 'Soviet aggression'. But the reality of the world situation is very different from the picture painted by Owen.

The danger of nuclear war stems from the increasingly aggressive posture of the United States. The US, with the construction of its new 'Rapid Deployment Force', is reorganising its forces to be able to make a rapid strike at any of the world's 'hot spots' where America's interests are threatened.

The lead in the frightening escalation of the arms race is being taken by the United States. It is the US, not the Soviet Union, which has deployed

Cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe. It is the US which is developing the neutron bomb and spending untold millions of dollars on the MX missile system. And it is the United States which has refused to ratify the Salt 2 agreement for arms reduction and which is generating the war frenzy against the Soviet Union.

Margaret Thatcher is Carter's most willing assistant in this missile-rattling operation. Her government is the most jingoistic and militaristic for decades. But there is an irony in discussion of nuclear disarmament by Britain.

A huge number of nuclear weapons in Britain, probably the majority, are controlled by the United States. They are not for the 'defence' of Britain, but to attack the Soviet Union if America's interests are threatened. The United States controls ten of the RAF's largest airfields. Both the nuclear weapons at these airfields and the Cruise missiles to be sited in Britain will be under direct US control. Britain is becoming one of the chief outposts of American militarism; the US's

'aircraft carrier' from which to attack the Soviet Union.

Working people have no interest in a nuclear war with the Soviet Union. To disarm means getting rid of US bases, the Cruise missiles, American bombers, Polaris bases — the lot. And that means getting out of the US war alliance — NATO. At Labour's conference Callaghan declared himself against nuclear weapons — but then who isn't? To fight the war danger means to be against the Cruise missiles and NATO as well.

The first steps towards re-establishing a massive campaign against imperialist militarism are being gradually taken. The next target must be a massive turnout for the Labour Party anti-nuclear demonstration in London on 22 June. Socialist Challenge urges all its readers to get their trade union branches, Labour Party branches or other political organisations to send delegations.

The demonstration assembles at noon, Belvedere Rd., South Bank, to march to Hyde Park for a 3pm rally.

Workers pay for Thatchers 'victory'

THE Tory press is waxing lyrical about Margaret Thatcher's 'victory' in re-negotiating Britain's annual payments to the Common Market. Under the terms of this agreement Britain will pay something like £900m less to EEC funds over the next year. The controversy over payments to the Market stems from the increasing conflict between member states in a period of economic crisis.

In order to get into the Common Market, British capitalism was forced to accept the Common Agricultural Policy in exchange for equal access to European markets for manufactured goods. But under the terms of the agricultural policy small, inefficient farmers are subsidised in

order to keep food prices at a reasonably even level throughout the market. Britain's efficient farming meant that British capitalism was effectively subsidising small farmers in Italy and France.

In a period of relative affluence, the British Treasury might have considered this a price worth paying. But today, with a massive deficit on public spending, this has become a nonsense. Britain is one of the poorest nations in the EEC — in the same league as bankrupt Italy, not the same league as West Germany and France. It seemed absurd, then, that Britain should be paying more than everyone except the West Germans.

But this conflict highlights one of the fun-

damental features of capitalist economic crisis — that each national capitalism will try to solve its problems at the expense of the others. It is this, rather than any political shortsightedness, which has sabotaged moves towards monetary and political unity in West Europe and left the ardent Europeans like Jenkins and Heath high and dry.

It is the European working class that will pay the bill for letting the British Treasury off the hook. Part of the package deal is that food prices will go up by 5 per cent throughout the Market. Every European worker will now have a material reason for hating Margaret Thatcher.

BOC Sackings Threat

By Tessa van Gelderen

NOT one person will go out the gate — that was the response of British Oxygen workers at Hackney depot to management's notice of 28 redundancies. The site meeting on Wednesday of last week voted unanimously to reject the company's proposal.

Bob Seers, Transport Union district official, was not prepared to discuss with management in any way until they withdrew the threat to close the acetylene department. A 'failure to agree' was noted and now the real battle begins.

British Oxygen claim that it is necessary to close the acetylene department for financial reasons. They produce all sorts of weird and wonderful figures to prove that Hackney depot is less 'cost-effective' than other depots. They say this is all part of the general 'streamlining' (management's nice word for getting the push) throughout British Oxygen and that it would cost too much to update equipment at Hackney.

The Hackney workers aren't really convinced by these arguments. There are already discussions taking place at a national level on BOC's 'streamlining' plans — so why announce this closure separately? There is no shortage of customers at Hackney (who supply local needs and also around the Greenwich area).

In fact, customers are being turned away every day at Hackney because there are not enough cylinders — the company won't invest in the depot. The acetylene would still be needed in the area, and it would have to come all the way from Cardiff; hardly a money-saving operation.

Hackney depot is going to fight these proposals. Around Hackney, jobs are fast disappearing, first at Lesneys, now at Ford. They know that the defence of jobs must be a united fight; that is why the Hackney TGWU branch is supporting a mass lobby of this year's TUC Congress in Brighton demanding 'No to unemployment — for a 35-hour week now', 'Fight to kick out the Tories'.

The threat of redundancies also lurked behind the proposal to divide installation engineers between 'industrial' and 'medical'.

If that had been allowed to go through, undoubtedly with weaker union organisation, a number of them would have been given their cards.

Last week Southern Region depots affected by the engineers dispute, in particular Wembley and Greenwich, won an important victory when management agreed to keep things as they were, and the workers' organisation was kept intact.

Installation engineers had been suspended, other workers were locked out, and others refused to cross the picket line forcing the whole place to shut down. Management caved in and has even agreed to pay them at least two days' wages lost during the dispute.

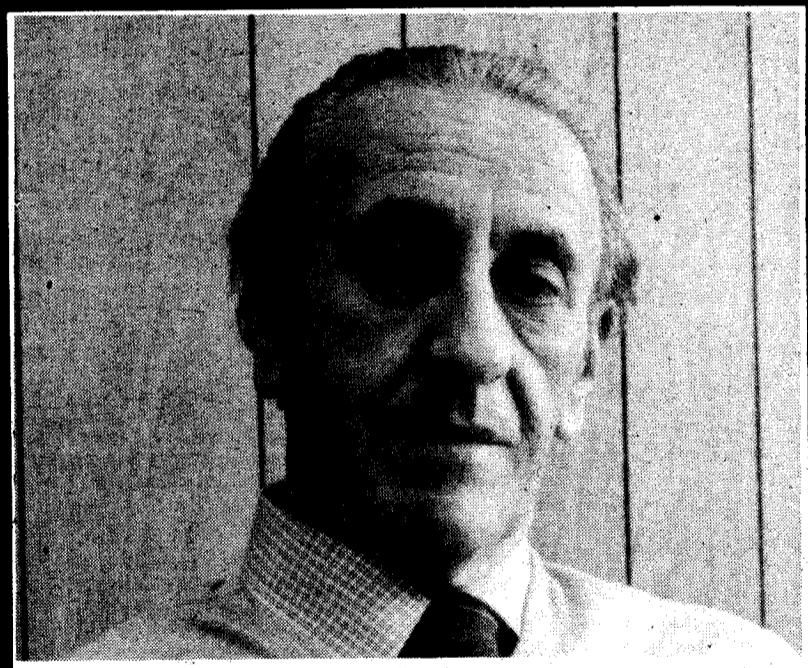
This Sunday, 8 June, shop stewards from the southern region are meeting to discuss both the closure threat at Hackney and the installation engineers' dispute. It is almost certain that they will support the Hackney workers' fight and take it up nationally throughout the whole BOC workforce.

This would be a major first step towards ensuring that these redundancies do not take place.

Failure to stop the Hackney management's redundancy plans would not only mean a defeat for Hackney workers but it would allow management to impose its national 'streamlining' proposals with a vengeance.

Some of these proposals make interesting reading: it is normal for a company to dangle a carrot of redundancy pay to entice workers to go, but BOC have gone a step further. They are proposing to give some of the money saved through sackings to those workers who would be doing the jobs of those made redundant — a one-off payment of £214 gross for selling your co-worker's job.

But Hackney workers will not be bought off. They intend to fight all the way and the whole of BOC must support them.



Dai Coity Davies

The labour movement in South Wales was shattered to learn of the sudden death on 14 May of Dai Coity Davies, aged 63, compensation secretary of the South Wales Miners. Many Socialist Challenge readers may remember him for his portrayal of Arthur Cook in the Ken Loach TV series about the 1920s, *Days of Hope*.

Dai spent his entire life in the mining industry, firstly as an underground worker then as a full-time official. He was elected to the Area Executive in 1955 and became compensation secretary, a post he held until his death. Dai was an expert on social security legislation (he recently helped organise a conference on the Tory measures), as well as the field of health both inside and outside the mining industry.

Dai fought hard for adequate compensation to be paid to miners who suffered from pneumoconiosis and other mining diseases; he was also on the national committee of Fightback, the national health workers organisation, and recently chaired the Fightback conference.

The tremendous amount of work which he put in to the South Wales Health Cuts Committee is an indication of his great dedication to the fight for socialism. Speaking at public meetings, on radio and TV, meeting

health authorities, writing reports and providing ideas, Dai was an inspiration to many.

He helped link the health cuts fight to the steel and coal closures, and said recently that the labour movement would only be defeated by its present leaderships. He was tremendously worried by the failure of the Welsh and British TUCs to organise the fight against redundancies in South Wales, and by the refusal of the right wing of the NUM to aid the South Wales miners. He was always willing to support initiatives such as the South Wales Youth Unemployment March which would help to organise the fightback.

Will Paynter, veteran of the hunger marches and ex-South Wales Miners' President, paid a glowing tribute to Dai at his packed funeral, stressing the leadership that he had provided in the South Wales labour movement for so long.

Dai was a member of the Communist Party until he resigned six years ago, and had a great respect for the far left. But he was seriously concerned about our divisions and fragmentation. The best tribute that we can pay Dai is to continue the struggle for revolutionary unity and the fight inside and outside our unions for revolutionary socialism.

Photo: PAUL HIGHFIELD (Socialist Challenge)

By Ray Varnes,
Vice chairperson, London
Divisional Council, NUPE

Opposition crystallises at NUPE conference

THE annual conference of the National Union of Public Employees last week saw the consolidation of a combative opposition to the do-little policies of the leadership.

The 1979 conference had been an extremely tame affair, a reflection of the bloody nose which the most militant shop stewards had received during the hard battles of the previous winter — the 'winter of discontent'.

This year's conference revealed that militancy is alive and kicking. In all the major debates NUPE general secretary Alan Fisher was opposed by a substantial minority, despite his left image.

Against the advice of the executive, delegates overwhelmingly backed a resolution against all forms of nuclear energy; they supported a resolution in defence of gays victimised in the workplace; and they gave loud applause to calls for safe legal abortion, although no specific resolution was taken on that issue.

The conference also endorsed the Rank and File Code of Practice against the Employment Bill.

These resolutions showed the impact on delegates of campaigns outside the

union. But it was on the three central debates that the polarisation in the union was most clearly demonstrated.

First, on economic policy. Confronting job loss and the cuts requires a response to the Tories' economic strategy.

A resolution from the ILEA schoolkeepers' branch argued in favour of a massive boost in public spending financed by the nationalisation of the banks, insurance companies and finance houses; and that this perspective was only feasible within the framework of an all-out fight leading to a general strike to kick out the Tories.

This resolution won the support of a considerable number of delegates, against the opposition of Fisher and the executive. The latter argued that a more realistic view was to fight for the Labour Party to adopt the Labour left's alternative economic strategy, and for public spending to be financed by increases in the rates.

The vote was around 400 to 100 in favour of the executive, but the

remarkable fact was that the idea of a general strike was seriously debated and not dismissed as a flight of fancy. A discussion is now to be organised throughout the membership on the Labour left's alternative economic strategy.

A clearer picture of the opposition to the policies pursued by the Fisher leadership emerged in the discussion on wages.

Delegates discussed a resolution from Camden general branch and others, moved by John Suddaby, calling for the union to fight for a fixed figure of an £85 minimum wage this autumn, together with the demand for 35 hours, and a recall conference if the claim was not achieved.

Despite being strongly opposed by Alan Fisher, this resolution was defeated by only 1,500 votes on a show of cards; around half the delegates present were opposed to the executive's view that these demands were 'unrealistic'. With the likelihood of a wages standstill in the public sector, the executive's opposition to setting firm targets can be taken as a

pre-emptive move to head off the possibility of a bitter fight against new pay norms.

The final major debate, on rules revision, dealt with a motion that the general secretary should be elected for a four-year period rather than appointed for an indefinite period by the executive, as is the situation now.

This debate was influenced by the long discussion at the conference on democracy in the Labour Party. The vote went 4-1 in favour of the executive's position of appointing the general secretary, and the only delegates who were prepared to vote for a more democratic structure were those who saw the need for different policies and a different leadership.

Just as in the Labour Party, the fight for democracy is not an abstract issue, but is intimately related to the fight for class struggle policies.

One conclusion that has to be drawn from the conference is that in the context of the economic crisis every demand for increased spending and better wages in the

public sector is *political*.

There is no solution to the problems of public sector workers which doesn't begin to adopt a view on the running of the whole economy. Simple wages militancy or opposition to the cuts which doesn't propose how social expenditure is to be financed is a non-starter.

The NUPE executive's document, 'Prospects for Britain', puts forward proposals on how to solve the economic crisis, repeating the Labour left's arguments for more public expenditure, import controls, planning agreements, and the like.

Unless socialists argue for an overall political alternative, of the kind proposed in the ILEA schoolkeepers' resolution, militants will begin to see Labour's alternative strategy as the only answer, while the NUPE leadership wants to keep a low profile until a new Labour government is elected.

During the last Labour government a militant opposition led by younger stewards began to emerge in NUPE. To effectively lead forward the fight for class struggle policies this opposition needs to be armed with socialist policies and the means of struggle to put them into effect — a general strike to bring down the Tories.

Peace, Jobs, Freedom... BUT WHAT ABOUT THE SOCIALISM?

'WE must mobilise to bring this government down before its term of office is up', proclaimed Labour Party chairman Eric Heffer winding up the morning session of Labour's special one-day conference at Wembley last Saturday.

Heffer was clearly responding to the complaints of Lambeth council leader Ted Knight and other delegates that the National Executive Committee's conference statement *Peace, Jobs and Freedom* gave 'no clear call to end this Tory Government before its natural period of office'.

In fact Heffer admitted, in a side swipe at the media, 'far from the NEC being too left, we are accused by most speakers including trade union leaders of being too moderate'.

And this was indeed the tone of the Conference. Speaker after speaker — although often ritually endorsing the NEC statement — went on to criticise its deficiencies: on disarmament, on race, on Ireland, and on the need to act now to get rid of the Tory Government.

Socialism

'We need an extra word — Socialism', said Ron Hill from Monmouth CLP pointing at the platform banner, 'Peace Jobs and Freedom'. 'South Wales steelworkers have been attacked by the policies of successive governments.... I won't stamp the streets for a Labour government like the last one. We are being sold out right now over redundancies at Llanwern and Port Talbot', he said; as he did so a group of steelworkers stood outside in the rain lobbying for action to save their jobs.

Callaghan's opening speech was received quietly and politely enough, as, amid demagogic attacks on the Tories, he tried to breathe life into the corpse of pay policy and pleaded for the Tories to be allowed their full term by attacking those who believed 'that what cannot be won in Parliament can be secured by overthrowing the rule of law'.

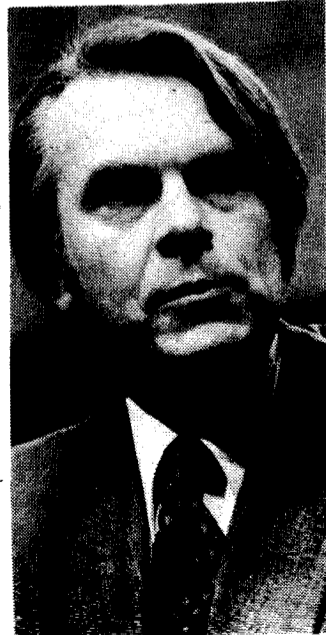
Rougher

But Dennis Healey and David Owen got a rougher ride. Healey came to the rostrum to cries of 'Out, Out', and his attempt to revive the witch-hunt against the Militant tendency met with widespread derision.

Conference chair Lena Jaeger had to call for order several times as delegates furiously shouted down David Owen's attack on the NEC's call for the removal of Cruise missiles from Britain. The only way to get 'peace' was to 'negotiate with the Soviet Union from a position of strength', claimed Owen.

Theme

This theme was taken up by several delegates. Sue Reeves of Hertford CLP attacked both Tory and Labour governments for being



David Owen attacked the NEC's call for the removal of Cruise missiles from Britain.

'the fall guys for an American battle', and demanded that we 'get rid of the American bases on this island'. Mike Davis of Hackney South demanded unilateral disarmament and complete withdrawal from the NATO war machine, and Mick Martin from Fulham CLP ridiculed Owen's absurd argument 'that the way to reduce nuclear arms was by spending millions of pounds on buying more of them'.



It was Davis and Martin who also highlighted another glaring omission from the NEC statement. Despite the statement's pious opposition to 'Soviet intervention in Afghanistan' and 'universal respect for the rights of all peoples and nations to self determination', there was not a word about Ireland — artificially divided and militarily occupied by Britain.

Ireland

'What is our policy on Ireland. In fact when are we even going to discuss it', demanded Davis. The television news was forced to admit that Martin received the loudest applause for any speaker from the floor when he called for an end to the Labour Party's bi-partisan policy with the Tories on Ireland, for military withdrawal, and for the reunification of Ireland.

But the warmest reception of all was given to a woman councillor from Edinburgh who passionately explained that 'if the Tories were allowed to last their full term then in four years there could be nothing left to fight for'.

But despite the standing ovation for Tony Benn's summary at the end of the day — in a speech pitched well to the left he argued that it was not longer an option to 'revitalise capitalism', and demanded full democratic party control over a future Labour Government — delegates went away empty-handed, with nothing planned, nothing organised, and the Party committed to nothing.

Action

What could have been an opportunity to begin to organise united trade union and Labour Party action against the Tories was

simply a talking shop used by the left on the NEC as part of its internal party manoeuvres against Callaghan and the right wing.

Worded

No amendments or alternatives to the NEC statement were allowed. And the statement was worded so generally that even Callaghan had been able to endorse it in the build-up to the conference.

There was clearly a mood among delegates that a fight against the Tories was needed now. The left leadership's cosy scenario of the Tories doing their recruiting for them while it captures control of the party and polishes up its alternative programme needs to be openly rejected.

If the Tories are able to run their full term until 1984 then the scale of the defeat that the labour movement could have suffered from mass unemployment, the destruction of the welfare state, and attacks on trade union rights, could well sow such deep divisions and demoralisation in the working class that Labour would have no guarantee of being elected.

Out

All the well laid plans of the left for party democracy and alternative policies would come to nothing.

The fight must continue inside the Labour Party and throughout the trade unions to ensure the Labour Party is playing an active role now with the rest of the labour movement in throwing back the Tories' offensive and organising to drive them from office at the earliest opportunity.

Major campaign launched on Labour Party democracy

IN an important move to organise mass support for the left's proposals to democratise the Labour Party, a 'Rank and File Mobilising Committee' supported by 7 campaigning bodies in the Labour Party was launched at a packed lunchtime fringe meeting at the special one-day conference.

In an effort to 'defend and extend' the democratic gains won at last year's Labour Party conference in Brighton, the Mobilising Committee is planning a series of meetings throughout the country in the lead up to this year's conference in Blackpool in October. It has produced thousands of copies of a 16-page pamphlet whose contributors include: Tony Benn, Vladimir Derer, Rachel Lever, Ken Livingstone, Frances Morrell, Reg Race, Brian Sedgemore, Audrey Wise, and Bob Wright.

Initiated by the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory, the Mobilising Committee is supported by the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, Clause IV, Independent Labour Publications, Institute for Workers' Control, Labour Co-ordinating Committee, and the National Organisation of Labour Students, and invitations to affiliate have been sent to other groups such as the Militant tendency.

The Mobilising Committee is united around 5 basic policies: 1 mandatory reelection of MPs; 2 NEC must decide the manifesto; 3 no change in the structure of the NEC; 4 the Party must elect the Leader; 5 make the PLP accountable.

Despite the limitations of some of these proposals we would urge Labour Party members and all trade unionists to support the Committee's campaign and to order copies of the Committee's pamphlet to sell in their Labour Parties, trade union branches, campaigns, and workplaces.

The coming together of all these groups could represent a major step in building a united left wing in the Labour Party. Socialist Challenge believes that this unity should not stop on the issue of Party structure or end at Party conference in October.

There is an urgent need for the left to show what it could do with Party democracy, and to build an ongoing united left wing committed to campaigning socialist politics, aiming to turn the Labour Party out through the unions at grass roots level and fighting to support their struggles against the attacks of the Tory Government.

This would forge a movement that can defeat both the Tories and the right wing in the Party.

Ford bosses plan big job cuts

FORD UK can hardly be called 'un-productive' as car companies go — last year it made record profits of £387m. Despite this it has just announced that one in five jobs are to go in the foundry plant and in excess of 800 jobs are threatened in the engine plant at Dagenham.

Despite high profits in Britain, Ford, as a multinational company, still needs massive investment in new machinery to keep abreast of the cut-throat competition in today's falling international car market.

The Erika, Ford's first world car, has meant millions of pounds have been spent re-equipping River Rouge in Detroit. Two new plants are being built in Portugal and West Germany.

In America, Ford has lost \$1,045 billion in the last nine months and hopes to recoup its losses by boosting its sales in Asia-Pacific markets.

But above all Ford wants to drive down manning (sic) levels in order to cut costs and gain the widest possible markets for its goods.

Trade union leaders in Ford, who have called for import controls on foreign cars to 'protect' the British car industry, have fallen flat on their face.

In Dagenham, assembly plant stewards led a campaign against a reduction of overtime on the basis that Cortinas being built in Genk, Belgium, could be built in Britain. When Genk production ceased in May so did overtime in the Dagenham assembly plant!

Stan Williams, director of manufacturing for Ford UK, has not minced his words about sackings in the foundry plant. He has three clear alternatives: massive reinvestment to maintain production levels; reduction to minor operations; or total closure.

In Dagenham, the largest car plant in Britain, with the new Bridgend engine plant coming into production and the loss of the North American market for Fiesta, this means the engine plant will be left producing only one car engine, the Cortina.

Natural wastage and redeployment of workers will not be enough to tide Ford UK over the slump.

Supervisory and office staff unions have warned that Ford Detroit could reduce the role of Dagenham to 'assembly work and related marginal activities'. Paul Rootes, head of Ford UK, has refused to give guarantees of the future of the engine plant — a total workforce of 6,000 is at stake!

Only one meeting has been held to discuss the future of the engine plant — that was two years ago.

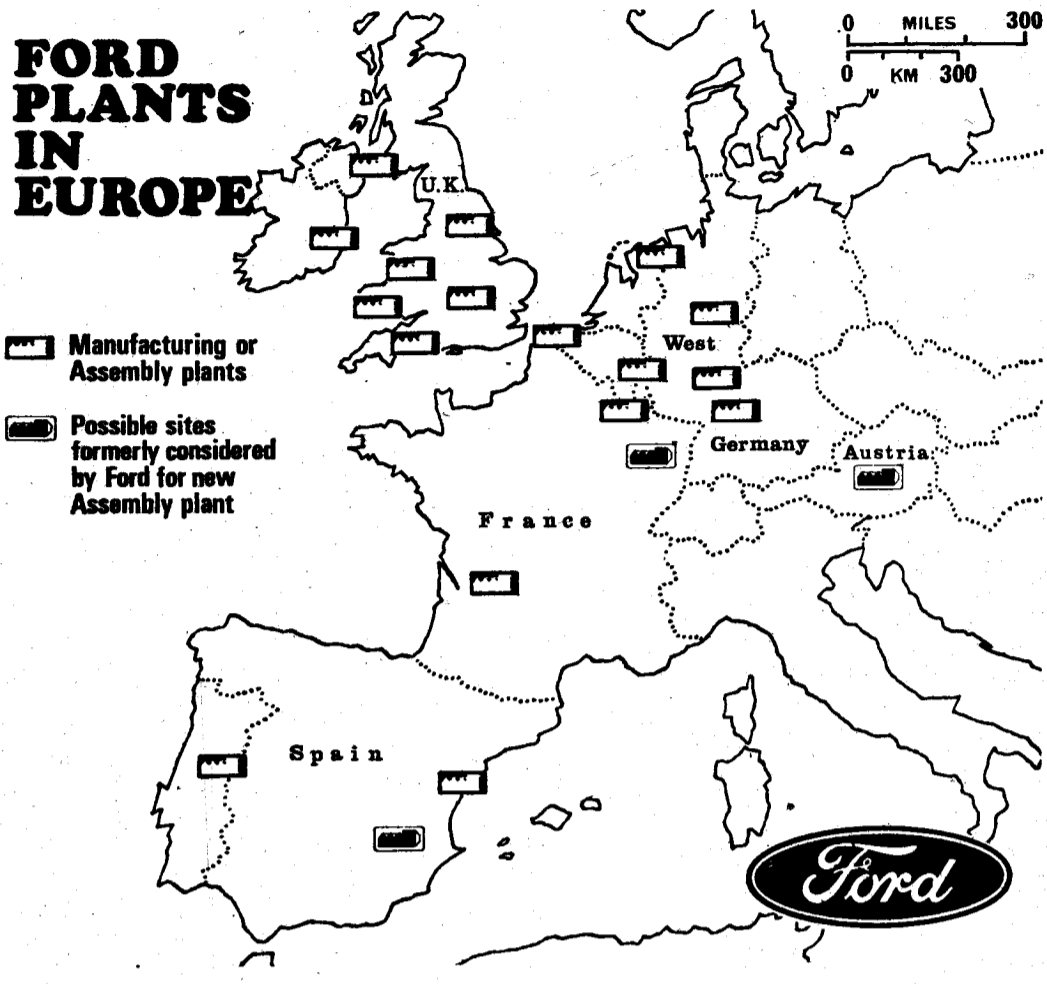
The Ford Workers Group (the Combine), an organisation of shop-floor militants, including Big Flame, Socialist Challenge and Socialist Worker supporters, is campaigning to protect jobs by calling for the available work to be shared with wages made up from the 80 per cent lay off agreement.

The combine wants talks between unions and management over their proposals for a supposedly shorter working week to end. The company wants to remove night production and introduce bell to bell working without shortening the hours worked at all.

This will do nothing to alleviate the effects of unemployment. Its aim is to increase the work load.

Ford is a multinational company. Managers of each national company work together to play off Ford UK against workers in other European and American plants. Co-operation in the face of an international recession is vital. The European Ford Workers' Combine meets in June to build such co-operation.

FORD PLANTS IN EUROPE



By Colin Talbot, POEU (Westminster Branch)

THE Post Office Engineering Union is run by a right-wing clique known as the Bloc. This was founded in 1948 as a fighting organisation of the right to combat a strong challenge from the Communist Party and its supporters for control of the union.

After defeating the CP, the Bloc consolidated its position by constitutional changes which made it easier for its electoral machine to maintain its grip, and since 1948 it has met secretly to determine who should go on to the national executive council and to circulate anti-communist rumours and gossip.

In 1978 the Bloc was still firmly in control of the union apparatus, but its members were divorced from the feelings and moods of the rank and file and completely misestimated the strong sentiment behind the demand for a reduced working week.

Reg

Every engineer knew that the modernisation programme that was in the offing would mean a reduction in the number of jobs; they also knew that Post Office Telecommunications was a highly profitable concern.

This awareness produced a determination to fight for the 35-hour week which took management and union leaders completely by surprise.

The campaign of industrial action, limited though it was, demonstrated the power of the engineers; so much so that the City of London organised a delegation of bankers and stock-brokers to persuade the government to settle to avoid the growing paralysis of telecommunications.

The executive was not happy with this sort of action and did nothing to build it. In fact it appears that it never even started negotiations for the demand of 35 hours, and the 37½



BUZBY'S BROAD LEFT

TED Heath, Tory Prime Minister from 1970-74, lost the fight with the British trade union movement and was forced out by the miners' strike of 1974.

Margaret Thatcher, the present Tory Prime Minister, is waging a new battle to 'curb' union power — but with trade union leaders like Frank Chapple and Terry Duffy to help her.

The Tory press is also very much on her side and, with unemployment rising and five years of 'hard Labour' fresh in people's minds, militants in the trade unions are beginning to realise that the battle will be much harder

hour deal that was finally accepted was based on a 'nil-cost' (speed-up) basis.

To make matters worse, the executive agreed to local bargaining over the implementation of the working week with the result that engineers are now working every conceivable combination of 7½-hour days, 9-day fortnights, and 14-day three weeks.

The real leadership in the dispute was a new generation of militants that has emerged in the branches. Together with some long-standing activists they formed a core which organised the day-to-day running of the dispute, especially in the inner city areas.

The POEU has a unique

structure among industrial unions. Its geographical branches actually correspond to 'work-places, the management-structured telephone areas. The POEU's equivalent of shop stewards, branch reps, are linked into this structure in what is potentially a very powerful system of organisation.

The activists in the branches were able to show just what could be done through a variety of tactics that would have been impossible in most other industries, and even without all-out strike action, management was on the run. The executive's sell-out outraged the rank and file and convinced a layer of militants that the union had to be changed.

this time around.

Organising in the Unions is a new column that will be looking at the kind of alliances that are needed in the unions today to ensure that Thatcher goes the way of Ted Heath.

Below, COLIN TALBOT, a member of the Post Office Engineering Union, describes the background to the formation of a new, united rank-and-file organisation in his union and describes some of the problems that will have to be tackled in transforming his union into an effective weapon against the Tories.

The Broad Left (BL) held its founding conference in October 1978 and adopted a six-point programme. This included: free collective bargaining; 35-hour week with worksharing and no loss of pay; nationalisation of the private sector of the telecommunications industry, and defence of the Post Office monopoly; opening of the books; greater state investment in telecommunications; union democracy, including mandated delegates, and elected officers.

The political tendencies at the conference included left-wing Labour Party members, supporters of the *Militant*, members of the Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party, and the International Marxist

Group. Many non-aligned militants attended and a genuine consensus was formed about the need for a united, active movement against the right in the union.

One of the first steps of the Broad Left was to 'go public' through the publication of a journal, *Spark*. This was greeted with enthusiasm by activists — it has a circulation of 5,000 — and alarm by the union leadership. Supporters of the Bloc were forced to respond to the open policy of the Broad Left, and delegates arriving for the 1979 union conference were handed leaflets from *Mainstream — The Voice of the Silent Majority*.

Silent was the operative word, as the BL firmly established itself at the conference winning seven out of the 23 places on the executive. At the rules revision conference in November 1979 further gains were chalked up and the left pushed through some important constitutional changes which at least started to democratise the union.

But there are still problems for the Broad Left. Despite *Spark's* promising reception, the BL has a long way to go to gain a mass base within the union, and functioning BL groups are few and far between.

Loser

The BL does not have a clear enough policy on a number of important issues facing the union and the process of clarification is made more difficult by the BL's tendency to work exclusively by consensus. While this spirit of give-and-take is vital for a group that embraces many shades of opinion, it can paralyse decision making.

There are clear differences of opinion within the BL. Some are reluctant to see it go beyond being a left version of the Bloc's election machine, based mainly on branch and regional officers.

Others, including the SWP and Socialist Challenge supporters, are arguing for a consistent approach to building a mass left wing in the union, firmly rooted in the rank and file. That means building up BL groups with open and democratic structures and above all BL groups which give a lead in their areas.

The potential is certainly there. The 35-hour campaign showed that it takes workers to keep Buzby on the air and that keeping him flying is vital to British capitalism. The POEU can carry on being a puppet of the management or it can show that loveable old Buzby has got claws after all.

* Next week Kathy Underwood writes on the history of the left in the main teachers union, the NUT.

Steel jobs: 'Now is the time to fight'

'THE negotiations were nothing short of a farce. The union side should have walked out and refused to take part.

But the die was cast last year when the management offered the trade union committees in Llanwern and Port Talbot four options including a 'slimline' agreement. The officials saw this as a softer option and took it. We should have said 'we don't accept any of your options'.

Although the workers at Llanwern have accepted redundancy they feel they have been sold out by the trade unions. The pot of gold they have taken is only accepted to soften the blow.

The lack of democracy in Llanwern has been diabolical. We now have to create a division

THIS week, union leaders in Llanwern follow their Port Talbot counter-parts in selling 3,800 jobs. Only the Llanwern NUB is left to sign the BSC 'slimline' agreement, but this is only a formality.

Supporters of the Llanwern bulletin *Steel Sheet* are determined to oppose this sell-out and lay plans for future resistance. Beginning with a lobby of the special one-day Labour conference on 31 May, they will pull this opposition together at a meeting called

against the present union officials who are responsible for what has happened.

To do this we have to have

organisation. I'm not just talking of organising on long term issues, but the fight now. If we don't fight slimline, then we have lost the next

for 4 June. From this meeting they hope to oppose slimline and job loss, and to campaign for national trade union and Labour Party action to save jobs in Wales.

Here RAY HILL, TASS representative on the Llanwern strike committee and secretary of the Monmouth Labour Party, tells Socialist Challenge why the 4 June meeting has been called.

battle on jobs before it starts. Now is the time to fight. I'm not pessimistic because I have great faith in the minority. The

mood can change quickly. The majority can be swung back the other way again. What matters is that people are seen to be fighting back

and prepared to lead a battle. A minority has to organise itself — what I'm talking about is an alternative leadership. The people will look to us when their need is great and they need a lead. That is what we are trying to do with the 4 June meeting.

Some of us have been trying to isolate the right inside the Labour Party — if you like, we are organising a minority there too. Trade unions must become political as well — they are too shallow at the moment.

We must also thrash out the realignment of the left. There is too much fragmentation at the moment and the only ones who will gain are those who are getting fat off our corpses.

We have to get together to strengthen our organisation and preparation.

THE WOUNDED DRAGON

By Paul Highfield

IT'S over 50 years since economists discovered that Wales had a 'regional problem'. King Coal and the metal industries were rapidly declining and not being replaced by new industry. Unemployment was very high.

There have been attempts to remedy the situation. The Treforest Industrial Estate near Pontypridd was built in the 1930s with small light engineering factories and textiles.

But has anything really changed in those 50 years? Or have the needs of capitalism and government inaction created a totally distorted economy and a vulnerable working class?

The people of Ebbw Vale, for instance, could have no reason to be thankful for their almost total dependence on steel for employment.

Table 1
Employment in the Ebbw Vale Employment Exchange Area — June 1973

	No.	Percentage
Primary sector	700	5
Manufacturing of which BSC	9,200	69
	8,747	65
Construction	600	4
Services	3,000	22
Total	13,500	100

Source: Dept. of Employment, BSC (Industries) Ltd.

Compared with a UK average of 3.5 in every 10 people working in all manufacturing, and 5.5 in 10 working in services (health, education, local and central government, banking and insurance and so on), in Ebbw Vale in 1973 a staggering 6.5 in 10 workers worked directly for the British Steel Corporation and only 2 in 10 in services. Only 1 in 4 workers were women.

In this situation it was no surprise that male unemployment in Ebbw Vale rose by 209 per cent between March 1974 and March 1976 during the rundown of the steelworks. Now, three years after the closure of the heavy end of the steel works, 1500 steelworkers are still on the dole; and still only 3 in 10 work in services.

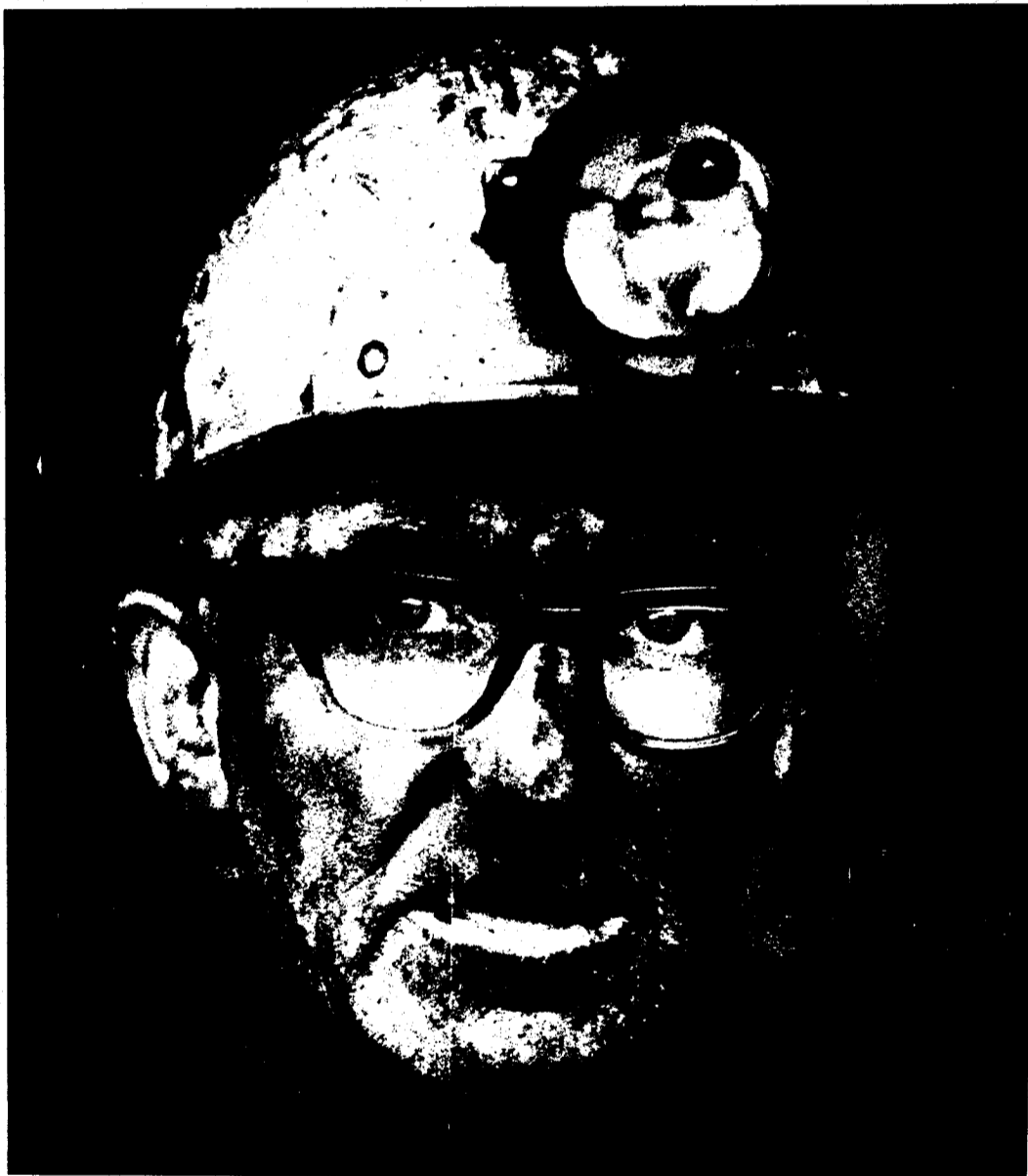
Ebbw Vale — with terrible health facilities, appalling housing, no rail station (there are freight lines, but then they make a profit — at the moment) and poor roads — is not unique in Wales. The whole of Gwent, plus Mid Glamorgan, West Glamorgan and Clywd are over-dependent on metal manufacturing and coal.

Bleeding

Powys and Dyfed are greatly dependent on agriculture (over 15 per cent of Powys' workers are on the land — the British average is less than 3 per cent). South Glamorgan is over-dependent on services — Cardiff, for example, was deliberately built up as the financial, commercial, educational, administrative and so on centre of Wales. Hence it is not surprising to learn that 7 in every 10 people working in South Glamorgan work in these fields — and many have to commute up to 40 miles a day from the Merthyr, Rhymney and Rhondda valleys in search of a job. The jobs disappeared from those valleys long since.

These figures on jobs mask the slow disintegration of many tightly-knit valley communities, bleeding to death in the most painful way.

Hand in hand with industrial decay and high unemployment go a higher death rate, a housing stock that is the worst in Britain, low



spending on school buildings, books and so on, a far higher use of inadequate NHS facilities and a very great dependence on terrible public transport.

Table 2
Selected Causes of Death 1975 (Rates per 100,000 population)

Infective and parasitic diseases	5	6
Cancer	251	248
Diseases of the circulatory system	700	607
Respiratory diseases	167	165
Complications of pregnancy etc	16	16
Accidents and other violent death	47	38
All other causes	102	100
All causes	1288	1181

Source: Welsh Office

Table 3
Unfit houses per 1,000 population, 1976

	Population (000s)	Unfit houses (000s)	Unfit houses per 1000
Wales	2767	100	36.14
North-west	6554	180	27.46
Northern	3122	79	25.3
Yorks and Humbs	4892	122	24.94
Greater London	7026	118	16.79
South-west	4254	49	11.52
South-east excl. London	3865	77	7.8

Table 4
Proportion of dwellings with exclusive use of three basic amenities (hot water, fixed bath, indoor toilet)

	Percentage
Great Britain	82.1
Wales	77.5
Valleys area	69.1

The two big industrial estates at Bridgend, with Ford, Sony, light engineering and electronics factories, have created no new jobs overall to cope with this rapid decline. And again, workers have to travel many miles from their valley ghettos. The Rhondda, which once had dozens of pits, now has only two left — Maerdy and Ty-Mawr — and Ty-Mawr is under threat of closure.

The £48 million chicken feed that the Tories are giving us will only go to benefit small capitalist enterprise, as the Tories seek to protect their support in Wales.

There is new investment by the big companies, but as Table 5 shows, that is for the benefit of profits, not for jobs.

Table 5
Industrial job creation in Wales, 1977-1980, big projects

Total cost, millions	Permanent jobs produced
BSC, Port Talbot (projected, never actually materialised)	835 —1,000
BP Chemicals, Barry	33 Nil
Texaco and Gulf, Milford Haven	350 200
Ford, Bridgend	180 2,500
Dow Corning, Barry	18 —600
DuPort, Llanelli	20 Nil
Alphastad, Newport	70 850
Total	£1,506 1,900

It is rather sick that only two years ago BSC was planning to spend a staggering £835m at Port Talbot steelworks — this huge sum would have doubled steel production, but cut the workforce!

Ford was given a £70m donation to 'help' it set up its operation at Bridgend — not cheap for only 2,500 jobs!

The latest round of job cuts in steel, according to a Bangor University study, will push unemployment on Deeside up to well over 20 per cent, in Port Talbot to over 12 per cent, in Wales as a whole to a massive 150,000 plus by 1982. This is assuming there are no further spending cuts and that the recession doesn't get any worse.

The Wales TUC and the Labour Party have done precisely nothing to fight for the policies Wales needs, and have betrayed our interests. George Wright, general secretary of the Wales TUC, was being somewhat hypocritical when he announced that Port Talbot steelworkers have no right to sell the jobs of their community. Wright did precisely zero to give support to the steelworkers during the strike. Moreover, he's said time and again that we must accept a change and that some redundancies are inevitable. His strategy is to lose jobs slowly, rather than quickly.

Failure

Port Talbot and Llanwern steel unions have now given in on the fight for jobs — they were left isolated without broad labour movement support.

The Labour Party has certainly not put up a fight. We are still suffering from the failure of those leaders to fight for real socialist policies.

There are no magic solutions to the problems of Wales. But for a start we could fight for control over the economy, hand in hand with the international workers' movement. Nationalisation is no use without workers' control, as we've discovered.

A reduction in the working week to 35 hours, with no loss of pay, and massive public spending increases on housing, health and education, would instantly create thousands of jobs. New investment in steel, coal and other manufacturing would then be for our benefit. Welsh coal and steel should be subsidised, as in Germany and Australia.

The call for import controls plays straight into the capitalists' hands — it just doesn't tackle the question of who controls production. Until workers control production themselves BSC will continue to sack Welsh steelworkers, the French government will continue to sack French steelworkers, women textile workers will still get the sack, all to pay for capitalism's present problems. Import controls will not make one bit of difference.

Strategy

It's time that the TUC acted for our benefit and committed itself to the fight against job loss. It could win the support of rail, dock and steelworkers throughout Britain to this struggle. But the TUC will have to be forced to fight — past experience shows that it will not move into action without a violent push.

A conference to discuss how to fight for jobs in South Wales was suggested by the South Wales Youth Campaign Against Unemployment. There is a crying need for such a conference to work out what strategy to adopt.

One thing is certain: if the miners are left to fight pit closures on their own, just like the steelworkers they will lose. We can't afford to let this happen again. Welsh youth, women, unemployed, must give notice to George Wright, Len Murray, Bill Sirs and the rest that we simply will not allow it to happen again.

LICENSED

AMANDA Leon first met Blair Peach through Rank and File Teacher, a grouping of left-wing teachers in the NUT.

'Blair was active in the East London teachers' association, and was President of the association in 1978,' Amanda says. 'He was also involved in anti-racist organisations in East London. He saw the need for trade unionists to link up with the wider issues that affected the community in which he taught.'

Blair decided to join the Socialist Workers Party in 1976 and he was a very active socialist.

Amanda was with Blair on 23 April last year, the day the National Front decided to spread its racist propaganda in the predominantly Asian community in Southall. Blair, Amanda, and others were leaving the counter-demonstration called by the Anti Nazi League when they were attacked by the police.

'If you kill me that's murder. If I kill you, it's simply a matter of preserving law and order.'

Special Constable to demonstrator at the Chartist rally on Kensington Common in 1848

'The group of demonstrators in which Blair had been standing was cordoned off at both ends. When the police removed their back cordon we decided to leave the demo and we turned up a side street called Beechcroft Avenue.'

'As we were walking along this road the police charged from behind. The first charge was policemen on foot with riot shields and truncheons. The second charge was two police Transit vans moving very fast through the demonstrators, followed by policemen on foot with shields and truncheons.'

'Blair received his fatal injury when SPG men from the Transit vans got out at the corner of Orchard and Beechcroft Avenues and started attacking demonstrators who were only trying to go home.'

'... the worst of all crimes is the furtherance of political or industrial aims by violence'

Sir Robert Mark, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, 1972-77

The inquest into Blair's death, which took place in a tiny room at Hammersmith coroners' court, produced a verdict last week of 'death by misadventure'. Amanda explains how the jury in the inquest came to this conclusion.

'An inquest is not like an ordinary trial. It is designed to establish the circumstances of death rather than whether a person is guilty or innocent, or the identity of the person who killed another.'



How Blair was murdered

The coroner has a great deal of power in an inquest. The lawyers are not allowed to sum up but the coroner is. 'Juries at a coroners' court are selected by the Coroners Officer, who doesn't have to be, but usually is a police officer, seconded from the local police force.'

The jury in Blair Peach's inquest did not come from the Southall area. They were all white. The coroner had access to information that was not available to Blair's lawyers.

'Both the police and the coroner had access to the Cass report, which took the police

31,000 person hours to compile. The jury was also prevented from seeing this report,' Amanda explains.

Yet the coroner, Dr John Burton, compiled his list of witnesses after reading this report. 'Had we known who the people mentioned in the report were, our lawyers might have decided to ask the coroner to call them. Instead, unless we knew through a third party that someone had given evidence to Inspector Cass, we had no way of using their evidence.'

'In one case, where we did find out that someone had

given evidence to Cass, we persuaded the coroner to call them and they gave evidence, saying how they had been assaulted by policemen who had hit them on the head.'

Burton's summary made no bones about the police's responsibility for Blair Peach's death. But he steered the jury towards concluding that their actions were justified.

'Most of his summing up was devoted to explaining the implications of a 'death by misadventure' verdict, paying only little attention to an open verdict and unlawful killing.

What was PC Raymond White up to in Southall?

ITV's *London Programme* last Friday reconstructed dialogue from the Blair Peach inquest. It revealed an interesting and unexplained discrepancy in the evidence of the SPG.

After driving through the crowd, the van carrying SPG Unit 1, led by Inspector Alan Murray, parked on the corner of Beechcroft Avenue and Orchard Avenue — marked by the number '1' on the map.

This is exactly where Blair received the fatal blow. Evidence was given to the Coroners' Court that a man had been arrested and placed in the back of the van. But PC Raymond White, the SPG driver, had another story.

According to White the van had turned right at the bottom of Beechcroft Avenue into the cul-de-sac end of Orchard Avenue. White had no recollection of a prisoner being put in the

back of his van and he was unable to explain why every other officer claimed that the van was in Beechcroft Avenue.

White is the only SPG officer who has been suspended. Was White sitting in his van as he claimed, or did he get out of his van to strike a demonstrator on the corner of Beechcroft and Orchard avenues?

There is no doubt that the jury, despite the way their verdict was presented in the press, believed that Blair was killed by a member of the SPG.

The coroner told them that the killing of Blair Peach was lawful if he was struck by a policeman who reasonably believed him to be a rioter. In such circumstances, the coroner declared, the jury would have to bring in a verdict of 'death by misadventure'.

'He told the jury that they had to be satisfied that the police had used "reasonable force"; that they believed a riot had been going on and that Blair Peach was one of the rioters.'

But Amanda points out that at no point in the inquest had it been established that a riot was occurring. 'There was a limited amount of evidence to suggest that a few objects had been thrown.'

'What will be the matter of greatest concern to me (in the next 10 to 15 years) will be the covert and ultimately overt attempts to overthrow democracy, to subvert the authority of the state, and, in fact, to involve themselves in acts of sedition designed to destroy our parliamentary system and the democratic government in this country.'

James Anderton, Chief Constable of Greater Manchester, 16.10.79

'I was with Blair at the time he received his injuries and there definitely wasn't a riot going on, although the police were attacking everybody in sight. The police's evidence at the inquest did not point towards a riot having occurred.'

'Except in two cases, the police insisted that they had hit no one and they all agreed that they had seen no other policeman hit anybody.'

Despite the outcome of the inquest, which clearly has not got to the bottom of the police's role in the killing of Blair Peach, Amanda believes that the verdict will not have completely satisfied the police.

The jury added two riders to its death by misadventure verdict. First that there should be more liaison between the ordinary police and the Special Patrol Group and that they should be more under the control of their officers. Secondly that no unlawful weapons should be kept in police stations.

'I think the police would have preferred an open verdict,' Amanda says. 'This would have implied that it could not be decided who killed Blair Peach. The day following the verdict every newspaper expressed disquiet over the role of the police, even though many of them thought the police may have been justified in employing the tactics which led to Blair's death.'

The Friends of Blair Peach are not daunted by the verdict of the inquest. Scotland Yard, the so-called upholders of the law, cannot be allowed to get away with harbouring murderers in its ranks.

Amanda says that the committee will be continuing to call for a public inquiry, while their

THE Metropolitan Police is certainly not hearing Blair Peach. The 'death by misadventure' verdict of the coroners' court has satisfied the police who are the killers while the truth is still to be discerned is still to be seen.

The revelation in the *Sunday Times* by Alan Murray, who resigned his position, confirmed the truth and the Southall area went to great lengths to protect those in 6 Park Road. April were made of truncheons.

VALERIE C
Amanda Leon
Blair Peach,
and GEOFF
plumbs the
third force.

lawyers look into the legal implications of the verdict. 'I want Cass's report published and we also believe that the SPG which is an elite squad answerable to no one and out of control, should be disbanded.'

There is still no answer: Who killed Blair Peach?

Legal costs so far are likely to exceed £15,000 and the cost of running the campaign is very high. Donations are urgently required. Send them to: Friends of Blair Peach Committee, PO Box 353, London NW5.

'...if industrial policy follows this course the next instrument of the Cabinet will be the Special Patrol Group as the problems created by de-industrialisation cannot be presented to the public in terms of law and order ... This policy will lead to an inevitable attack on our democratic freedoms.'

Tony Benn, during the second reading of the Tories' Industry Bill, 6.11.79

TO KILL

Police has cer-
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ULTAS spoke to
the Friends of
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It is now 15 years since SPG units were formed in the Metropolitan Police force, and there are now six units totalling 204 officers. Apart from Southall, their exploits have included the Red Lion Square anti-fascist demonstration in '74, where Kevin Gately was killed by the cops, and the Grunwick picket in September '77, where they weighed in with truncheons and boots, and saturation policing in Lambeth, which involved imposing a virtual curfew on black people.

In addition to the Metropolitan Police, a total of 23 regional forces now have SPG-type units, drawn from the uniformed branch and then especially equipped and trained and under an independent chain of command — if you can call it that.

But there is more to the 'third force' structure than meets the eye. Phil Kelly of *State Research* points to the plan for each of the 284 police divisions in England and Wales to have what are known as PSUs — police support units. These are made up of cops who receive similar training to the SPG, but remain part of their division as regular officers.

Uprising

In the black uprising in Bristol in April, only SPGs and PSUs were called on to put down the disturbance. Ordinary police officers were told not to turn up for duty.

Then there is a further tier of anti-riot police which has just come to light — STUs, shield trained units. A third of the Metropolitan Police force has so far received this training. Phil Kelly argues that Britain's third force is being carefully grafted into the ranks of your friendly neighbourhood filth.

In the Britain of declining living standards, normal service won't ever be resumed — this side of the revolution. And the models the police have to go on?

PC Bint, one of the witnesses at the Blair Peach inquest, told the coroners' court that he had Nazi regalia at home and a night stick given to him by an American cop. The latter had made a present of his long truncheon because it was worn out from repeated use.

The United States, heartland of imperialism, has the distinction of the worst record of police violence in the West. Every year in the 1950s and '60s, more than two hundred citizens were killed by the police. A recent study by James Wilson of Harvard found that 5 per cent of blacks (representing 1m people) and 2 per cent of whites (4m people) claimed to have been unjustifiably beaten by police at least once.

Squads

Many US police forces now have paramilitary squads, the prototype of which is the Los Angeles Special Weapons and Tactics unit (SWAT). The philosophy of these units was expressed by one SWAT instructor: 'Those people out there — the radicals, the revolutionaries, and the cop-haters — are damned good at using shotguns, bombs, or setting up ambushes, so we've got to be better at what we do.'

West Germany's riot section is known as the Bereitschaftspolizei. You've probably seen them in action on the TV news lately, thumping anti-nuclear demonstrators over the head.

Italy's *Guardia di Pubblica Sicurezza* plays a similar role, although the ordinary cops who throw anarchists out of windows (see Dario Fo's *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* at the Wyndham Theatre, London) do a pretty good job.

Top of the poll for brutal third-force policing is the French CRS, the *Compagnies Républicaines de Sécurité*. The students who chanted 'CRS — SS' in May '68 were scarcely exaggerating.

At least in France, the policemen's union has repeatedly criticised the government for using police repression as a substitute for political negotiation. In Britain, the only complaint by the Police Federation has been over the level of injuries sustained by cops during training sessions, and the need for more effective protection.

In the immortal words of Sir David McNee in his first annual report as Commissioner of the Met: 'Libertarians should proceed with caution.'

Close encounters with the third force

WORDS are weapons. Take the case of rubber bullets, the name of which suggests they are hardly more lethal than marshmallows — although the British Army in the North of Ireland uses them to maim and kill.

The same goes for 'public order', which sounds like a reasonable objective until you've witnessed the keepers of it in action in a black community, on a picket line, or when they've decided to keep demonstrators in line.

Similarly the term 'Special Patrol Group' does less than justice to the units set up as Britain's riot control squads, patterned on the third force para-military squads available to defend other Western democracies against the mass of their inhabitants.

The forgers of law and order in this country have paid a great deal of attention to appearances, and this helps to explain the role allocated to the police and how they are being toolled up for the Britain of the 1980s.

The British ruling class learnt early on that using the army to deal with civil disturbances at home — as opposed to the Empire — needed to be a measure of last resort. The Peterloo massacre of 1819, for example, when 20 demonstrators demanding parliamentary reforms were gunned down by troops, still wrangles in working class memories.

Strike

In the 20th century, the army has rarely been seen in action on the streets of Britain. Troops took over during the 1919 police strike, and they have played a scab role in several strikes since, including, of course, the 1926 General Strike.

But while army units receive training to take over power stations, water works, and the like, and they are prepared for nation-wide deployment in the event of anything approximating to a general strike, their profile is kept deliberately low.

Yet between the automatic rifle-bearing Tommy, presently battle hardened in Belfast and Derry to regard almost anyone with an Irish accent as a terrorist, and the Bobby who helps elderly people across the road (and with Thatcher's policies they no doubt need all the help they can get), a third force has been subtly implanted in the constabulary.

The image of well-helmeted cops riding shotgun in trucks with their windows draped in wire wares ready to crack skulls on a demonstration is somehow foreign. It doesn't happen here, we're led to believe.

In fact it does, but the cosmetic differences indicate the strategy that is being employed to maintain the illusion of normality.

Shields

The shields used by police in what they deem to be riot situations, for example, are pleasantly transparent, so that they don't quite look like what they are. The reinforced helmets worn by the SPG are as effective as the steel variety, but only the double chinstrap and the clip-on visor externally distinguish it from the familiar blue dome. And after the experience of Lewisham, when several SPG Transit vans were burnt out, these carriers now have double glazing, with plastic sheets behind the windows to ward off bricks and such like.

Not that the camouflage will hold out for long; as the *Police Review* booklet 'Public Order and the Police' puts it: 'Riot shields, strengthened helmets, and goggles are only the beginning; the question of staves and firearms must soon be considered'. It goes on to quote one anonymous officer's solution to riots: 'All you have to do is spray them — spray them with machine guns.'

The exposure of the SPG following the murder of Blair Peach has shown that with official approval or otherwise, these 'elite units' have already equipped themselves with the instruments of murder.



THE shape of things to come? West Germany's riot police

HERE COMES THE CAVALRY

By Geoff Bell

REMEMBER Barry Goldwater? He was the US presidential candidate in 1964 who wanted to drop nuclear bombs on North Vietnam.

Well, Barry Goldwater has criticised Ronald Reagan for being 'trigger-happy'. Reagan is now favourite to be the next president of America. Last week he was assured the nomination of the Republican Party when George Bush, the ex-boss of the CIA, announced he was withdrawing from the race.

Here's more information about Ronald, or 'Dutch' as he is known to his friends.

When asked, he didn't know the name of the president of France; he favours the death penalty; he thinks nuclear waste disposal should be left to private enterprise; he has said that abortion is 'murder' and that he wants it banned completely; he is against school bussing for desegregation; and he demanded that the US 'intervene' to save the Shah in Iran and Somoza in Nicaragua.

All of which suggests that if Reagan really believes what he says then he is a right-wing extremist.

Good

But now for the good news. Reagan is a well known liar. Journalist Simon Winchester has related this story: 'He (Reagan) told me how he first became a member of the Republican Party, how he had undergone a metamorphosis from a small-town democrat into a freewheeling laissez-faire Conservative...

'He arrived at Southampton Docks in 1949, a fully paid up member of the Democratic Party. But "a winter in Mr Attlee's England" convinced him of the "utter wrongheadedness" of socialist policies. "I saw what was happening as a dreadful warning to us all back home", he declared. A good story and, as it later turned out, quite untrue.'

The real story is that Reagan remained a member of the Democratic Party until 1960; he told Winchester that tale because he thought it might get him some good publicity in Britain.

Or there is Reagan's statement: 'In California, the size of the government had grown 75 per cent in eight years (before he took office). During the eight years of our administration, there was virtually no growth at all.'



The real figures are a growth of 130 per cent in the previous eight years and 122 per cent during Reagan's eight-year term of office.

Reagan has claimed: 'I was elected governor by a million votes and re-elected by nearly as many.' In fact although elected by a majority of 993,739 he was re-elected by only 501,057.

There is nothing new in politicians lying through their teeth, but the difference with Reagan is that he does it so badly.

His contempt for facts was also shown when he announced his energy policy: 'There is more oil in this country yet to be found than we have so far used. All we have to do to solve the energy crisis is for the government to get out of the energy industry and turn it loose in the market place.'

Even the oil companies said that Reagan was talking a load of rubbish, but that didn't worry him. He insists: 'For many years now we

have been told there are no simple answers. Well, the truth is that there are simple answers.'

Therein lies Reagan's appeal; the reason he is leading the opinion polls. He has cultivated the image of the simple man, with simple, old-fashioned American values. This, it is believed, could prove a popular image with American voters in an election year of crashed helicopters, Iranian upstarts, and Russians in Afghanistan.

Ronald Reagan, like the cavalry in the last reel of one of his old movies, will arrive in the nick of time and save White Anglo-Saxon America.

How much of this is just image and rhetoric? Certainly, when he was governor of California, Reagan was not nearly as right-wing in office as he had promised he would be.

But the United States in 1980 is not the California of 1966; it is much more crisis ridden at home and abroad, and the fact that Reagan has behind him a vast array of backers from the financial, academic, and defence establishments suggests that this time his words cannot be dismissed as so much election talk.

Recession

The economic recession does not leave the American ruling class with a large number of options. But Reagan's policy — massive cuts in social spending, reduction of company taxation, especially that of the oil companies — is one of those options, summed up in the view that the American working class will have to be made to pay and pay again.

In convincing the working class that such a sacrifice is necessary, Reagan's 'patriotism' is a convenient weapon. In return for wage cuts and cuts in welfare, Reagan promises the pride of being American.

'We intend to be so strong that no country will dare lift a finger against us,' he has said. And even more scary: 'We have it in our power to begin the world again.'

Reagan needs to be taken seriously just as the growth of US militarism needs to be taken seriously, and Reagan's rise in popularity is a product of that militarism.

The American ruling class is faced with rebellions abroad and economic slump at home. Many of the capitalists believe desperate measures are necessary if their system is to survive. In that context it is not beyond Ronald Reagan to start the last shoot-out.

US Nukes with a built-in fault

By Davy Jones

THE mushroom cloud from the eruption of Mount St Helens in Washington state may not be the last to envelop the west coast of America if the NUS nuclear power industry remains in business.

Less than 50 miles from the gigantic volcanic eruption stands the largest operating nuclear power plant in the United States, with an output of 1,300 megawatts.

After extensive campaigns against the Trojan nuclear plant, it was shut down for several months in 1978 because its control building did not meet earthquake standards.

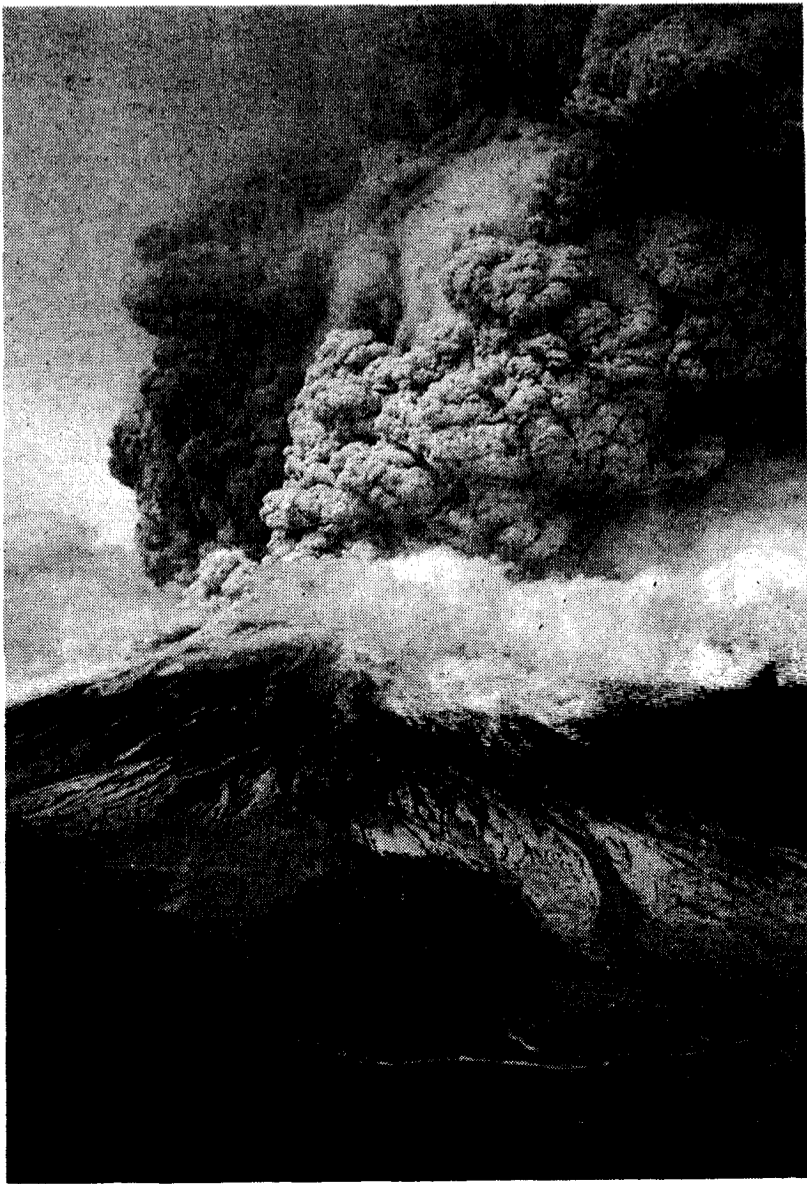
A combination of the volcanic eruption and a series of minor earthquakes further south in California has renewed fears of a major nuclear disaster in the area.

The whole west coast of North America is notorious for the interlinking series of geological faults which make it a dangerous earthquake zone.

Famous

The most famous is the San Andreas fault, which caused the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and which scientists predict will strike again in a major way before the end of this century.

Under public pressure, some nuclear operators have adjusted their plant designs to allow for an earthquake factor. But no plant has yet been built to withstand the major shifting of ground beneath the reactor vessel likely to result from an earthquake or a volcanic eruption. Other plants have had to be cancelled or shut down when anti-nuke campaigns



have obliged the authorities to recognise the danger.

The Pacific, Gas and Electric Company applied in 1958 to build a 340 megawatt plant in Bodega Bay on a site just a few thousand feet away from the San Andreas fault. Public opposition forced the company to withdraw from this location as well as from its Mendocino site, which is on the same fault line.

More recently, Pacific has completed the construction of two 1,000 megawatt units at Diablo Canyon.

The company's boast that these units would withstand a massive quake on the San Andreas fault some 40 miles away was deflated when two further active faults — Hosgri and San Miguelito — were found within a few miles of the site.

Earthquakes and volcanoes are not the only reason for alarm at the US nuclear plants. The American Energy Department is now examining the possibility of using rockets to dump nuclear waste in the outer reaches of the galaxy or in orbit around the sun. The risks of rocket failure seem smaller than the existing problems with storage dumps.

Dump

The main such dump, at Hanford, Washington — a hundred miles from Mount St Helens, holds 80 million gallons of high level wastes which are so hot that they boil spontaneously and continuously. More than half a million gallons of waste have leaked from the dump since 1961, threatening the earth's water table.

Ronald Reagan has a simple solution to the problems of nuclear waste disposal. He says private enterprise should be given the job rather than the public utilities!

The sooner the workers throw out Carter, Reagan, and the rest of the American bosses, and shut down the whole nuclear industry, the safer it will be for humanity.

Socialist Challenge says NO CRUISE MISSILES!



BRITAIN OUT OF NATO!

NEW Socialist Challenge poster to mobilise for the Labour Party's 22 June demonstration against nuclear weapons. Available from Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1, or ring Alan on 01-359 8288.

Demonstration leaves Belvedere Road, London SE1 at 12 noon. All IMG branches and Socialist Challenge supporters should support with banners.



The battle of Miami: the real story

What really happened in Miami, Florida, from 17-21 May? The British press have tried to portray the black rebellion as a racist outbreak, with blacks intent on killing whites, and then killing each other in bizarre rituals. As usual, the media version is far from the truth. Harry Ring of the US socialist paper *The Militant* gives a graphic account of the Miami rebellion, sparked off by a court decision to acquit four white cops of killing a black.

ABOUT 3,600 National Guard troops and an equal number of cops have occupied this city's black community.

Some sixteen people, almost all black, have been killed.

About 300 have been wounded, about 1,000 have been arrested.

The only confirmed death of a white in the area of the rebellion is a cop who dropped dead of a heart attack. Six cops were reportedly wounded by gunfire, none critically. One white was dragged from his car, beaten, and then reportedly run over.

People in the area told a black reporter that the man's car was stopped after he and a passenger had fired at people.

Officials confirm thirteen deaths of blacks. They died at the hands of cops and racist killers in civilian garb who sped by the edges of black areas.

Cops killed two black men as suspected 'looters'. They gunned down a Haitian man they asserted had tried to run over a cop.

Two cops snatched a man who approached a National Guard checkpoint on a bicycle and supposedly voiced his opinion of the occupiers. The cops approached him and, they say, he lunged at one with a knife. They pumped a half dozen pistol and rifle shells into his body. Witnesses insist they saw no knife.

The Miami authorities ruled within twenty-four hours that the cops had acted within department 'deadly force' guidelines. They were returned to the street.

A private security guard killed a man allegedly trying to loot a food market.

A fourteen-year-old black was killed when a white-driven pickup sped by and the driver put two bullets in his head.

A thirty-four-year-old man died when another pickup went by a group of blacks and fired into the crowd.

Two other black men were seriously wounded when four whites in a pickup raced by and fired at them.

Many people in the community are convinced that these shootings have been by out-of-uniform cops.

Savagery

The savagery of the police occupiers was indicated Sunday night when city cops assigned to guard a shopping center in the black community systematically vandalized fourteen cars parked there. They slashed tires and upholstery and smashed in wind-shields. Then they spray painted 'looter' and 'thief' on the sides of the cars.

The rebellion began on Saturday 17 May after an all-white Tampa jury freed the cops who murdered Arthur McDuffie. The verdict came in at 2.36pm. Youth poured into the streets immediately.

At eight o'clock that night some 7,000 people gathered at the County 'Justice' Building for a protest demonstration.

The outraged crowd carried placards that declared 'Justice in America is a Damn Lie' and 'Where is Justice for the Black Man in America?' From the 'Justice' Building people marched to the nearby Dade County Public Safety Building. It had been Dade County cops who murdered McDuffie and many others.

Police in the area seemed intent on provoking the crowd.

Rose Ogden, Socialist Workers Party candidate for US Senate, says she saw several squad cars deliberately drive through the crowd. Later it was reported that a black girl had her foot run over by a squad car that witnesses said came through 'like a bat out of hell'.

People smashed in the plate glass window of the police building.

Squads of SWAT cops appeared from behind. They charged in with clubs, tear gas, and attack dogs.

Rebellion

Miami's rebellion was on.

Fires raged through the sprawling black community for three nights. On Sunday night alone, officials reported 42 major fires.

Residents responded to police gunfire.

The fires were clearly aimed at white-owned businesses. Community businesspeople say that the only black businesses that suffered were adjacent to white-owned ones.

All of Miami was affected. At its peak, the curfew area covered half the city of Miami.

The bus service was suspended.

Schools were shut down for three days.

Many businesses had to shut down early so their black employees could get home before the curfew.

Officials — local, state, and federal — suddenly changed their tune about this city's quarter of a million blacks, who suffer grinding poverty in the midst of the gaudiest opulence.

The governor went on TV to assert that he had marched during the civil rights demonstrations of the '60s.

Justice

Mayor Maurice Ferre suddenly discovered there is a shortage of justice, jobs, and housing in the black community. He also confided to reporters: 'We've got Vietnam veterans out there. Ten thousand guardsmen may not be enough.'

At the Dade County Jail in nearby Florida City, prisoners refused to work and staged a protest after officials tried to deny them the right to watch TV coverage of the rebellion. One prisoner displayed a placard that read 'Let us support our people outside and improve our conditions inside.'

Brutality

Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti flew to Miami from Washington on Monday. He went on the air to assure, 'All serious allegations involving civil rights and brutality will be investigated.'

A federal grand jury was scheduled to convene on the 21 May. It will consider indicting the killer-cops under the federal Civil Rights Act. Such a process will take weeks, officials say.

Meanwhile, they hope the promise of a possible indictment will help cool things down. What they will then do about the killer-cops remains to be seen. The same is true, of course, about the various pledges of new-found concern for the problems of the black community.

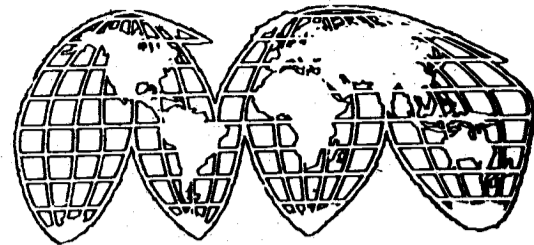
Major national figures of the civil rights movement also converged here. Former United Nations envoy Andrew Young was shouted down at the community rally when he started advising the victims of cop brutality that 'violence is not productive'.

Root

Southern Christian Leadership Conference President, Joseph Lowery, got at some of the root of the matter when he declared: 'President Carter should come to Miami. I think the crisis is in America, not in Afghanistan.' Instead of worrying about Afghanistan and Iran and trying to boycott the Olympics, he added, 'we should be boycotting the Klan, racism, and unemployment.'

When the rulers of this area decided to exonerate the killer cops, they apparently thought they were going to teach the black community a hard lesson.

As of now, it's turning out the other way around.



AROUND THE WORLD

France

AN estimated 100,000 people joined an anti-nuclear protest in the Breton Atlantic coastal village of Plogoff on 25 May. Since last January Plogoff has been the scene of almost daily demonstrations. A 5,200 megawatt nuclear power station is being built there.

Seventeen nuclear power stations are now in operation in France and 35 others are in the planning or construction stage. But the mass demonstration was a strong indication of the growing resistance in France to the official nuclear energy programme.

USA

DARIO Fo and Franca Rame, the Italian actor-writers, were last week denied entry visas to the United States. Fo's *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* is currently being performed in London's West End.

The trip to the US by Fo and Rame was 'not opportune', according to the American Consul in Milan. The US immigration authorities had originally approved their applications for visas, but this was countermanded by the State Department. Fo and Rame were due to appear in New York at the first festival of Italian theatre.

Germany

WITHIN the last two weeks the Soviet Union has completed the withdrawal of an armed division of about 10,000 soldiers and 350 tanks from East Germany. This was the view of Western intelligence officials who announced the withdrawal at a press conference in Berlin on Saturday.

The next day Jimmy Carter said in an interview on American television that he would never propose any reduction of US troops strength in Europe.

Said Carter: 'We've got about 300,000 American service people in Europe... I would not advocate the cutting of those troops at all.'

USA

A personal diary kept by President Harry S Truman during World War II has just been discovered in Indiana. Notable are remarks Truman made about the atomic bomb dropped on Japan.

In one diary entry, Truman seemed to think the bomb was the fulfilment of some biblical prophecy. He wrote: 'We have discovered the most terrible bomb in the history of the world. It may be the fire destruction prophesied in the Euphrates Valley era, after Noah and his fabulous ark.'

In another entry Truman declared: 'Even if the Japs are savages, ruthless, merciless and fanatic, we as the leader of the world for the common welfare cannot drop this terrible bomb on the old capital (Kyoto) or the new (Tokyo).'

So instead he dropped it on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. At least 160,000 people died in the two explosions.

Germany

IN A report issued last week, Amnesty International attacked the treatment of 'terrorists' in West German prisons.

The human rights organisation said that many of the prisoners were held in solitary or near-solitary confinement or under close observation in special 'silent wings'.

In 'silent wings' lights are on constantly and almost all noise is blotted out. The West German government declared that it 'rejected' Amnesty's criticism.

China

THE Youth Federation of the People's Republic of China has just completed a week-long visit to Britain. During the trip the eight member delegation visited a Chinese restaurant, a dairy farm, a Gloucester printing factory, a brewery, a North Sea oil rig and Boots the chemists.

Oh yes, Karl Marx's grave in Highgate cemetery was also visited. Accompanying these young 'red guards' throughout the wanderings were their hosts — the Federation of Conservative Students.

By Martin Meteyard

A SURPRISE victory for right-wing candidate Belaunde Terry was the outcome of the presidential election in Peru last month.

With the left divided into five separate currents, Belaunde obviously appeared as the only effective alternative to the military-backed candidate Villanueva, a leader of the old bourgeois populist party APRA. It was Belaunde who was deposed as president by the military in 1968.

The left's vote declined dramatically to only 13-15 per cent from its high score in the 1978 elections for the Constituent Assembly. This followed the collapse of an attempt by the Trotskyists of the PRT (Revolutionary Workers Party)

Peru - the price of the divided left

to win agreement for a joint slate of workers' parties opposed to any coalition with representatives of the capitalist class.

The confusion on this question among other sections of the left was shown by the fact that many votes for the two main Maoist organisations in the accompanying parliamentary elections were combined with a vote for Belaunde as president!

By contrast the votes for the

PRT slate, totalling around 4 per cent nationally were absolutely solid in combining a vote for Hugo Blanco with votes for its parliamentary candidates. Four of the latter were elected — one deputy and one senator from the PRT itself, and one deputy and one senator from its Trotskyist allies of the PST and POMR respectively.

Furthermore, the PRT slate's vote was significantly higher than the national average in those areas where

the class struggle has been hottest. In the working class areas and shantytowns of the capital, Lima, it won 7-8 per cent, for instance. It was here that Blanco was elected as a deputy.

In the seven southern departments of the country, which includes its second city, Arequipa, the PRT slate averaged 7 per cent. In Puno province its vote was 10 per cent, rising to 15 per cent in Tacna and 18 per cent in Moquegua. In the department

of Ayacucho, where there have been many important peasant struggles, the PRT won 13 per cent.

Even in the north of Peru, where its score was weakest, the PRT slate gained 8 per cent in the main working class centre of Chimbote.

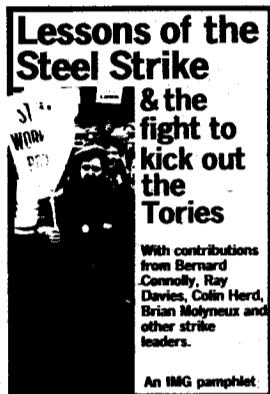
Perhaps most important, the PRT used the election to begin to organise its supporters and thus lay the basis for building a mass revolutionary party. Big public meetings

featuring Blanco culminated in a mass rally of 50,000 people in Lima.

The main emphasis everywhere was to establish support committees in which sympathisers could work alongside PRT militants to build the campaign. These committees, meeting weekly, organised their own system of dues-paying membership and took in charge such things as the holding of regular education classes.

In Lima no less than 2,000 sympathisers were organised in this way. Despite the overall setback that the election represents, therefore, there are good prospects for the emergence of a strong Trotskyist organisation in Peru which can help to develop a united response to the attacks of the new regime.

Lessons of the steel strike



By John Shaw, ISTC branch secretary, Rotherham

The steel strike was a political strike, insofar as it was the Tories' clear intention to inflict a major defeat on a key section of the working class. But as the 13-week strike demonstrated, they were not successful in achieving this objective.

Learn

The strike highlighted deficiencies and weaknesses we must strive to learn from. The crunch week was that of the Denning ruling. The ISTC executive should not have agreed to accept it. This would have forced the other unions to respond in our defence (and in their own interest), and the dispute could have been won. Not doing this was a major tactical error.

In fact, as the authors of this pamphlet make clear, quite a few tactical errors were committed. When the ISTC and NUB presented their claim to management they conceded 90 per cent of what management wanted. This laid down the parameters of any decision that might be taken at arbitration. It destroyed our case.

We gave too much advance notice to BSC of our intention to strike, and then compounded that by allowing the employers to increase their shift levels to build up stocks of steel. At the very least, instructions should have been given by the trade unions to keep production at the shift levels that were being operated prior to the decision to take strike action.

Error

Another major error was the decision of the NCCC, T&G, and G&M executives to accept the 14.4 per cent deal — an agreement that was subsequently overturned at delegate conferences. This highlighted the total inadequacy of the national officials of these organisations. The call for 20 per cent and no strings was a relatively moderate claim from the rank and file, compared to the growing rate of inflation.

Indeed the 'moderate' West German steel workers settled their pay claim for what was in effect 50 per cent above their rate of infla-

membership. But like most organisations, change very rarely occurs overnight, and, given the critical nature of the problems facing steel workers, all avenues should be used — officially and if necessary unofficially — to defend and improve the best interests of the members.

An important part of this process should have been this year's ISTC conference, but this has been cancelled by the executive. In my opinion it was imperative that we had a conference this year, more so than any other, so that a full debate could have taken place and our mistakes learnt from.

Given the critical situation that steel workers continue to face, the membership would have been better served by having a less lavish conference this year, and if there are financial difficulties, cancelling next year's conference instead!

I believe people should try and learn the lessons of the steel strike because workers will increasingly have to resort to the strike weapon to counter the ever more aggressive attacks of both the employers and the Tory government.

This pamphlet makes a welcome contribution to this task.

'Lessons of the Steel Strike and the fight to Kick out the Tories.' Authors include Bernard Connolly, Crafts Convenor, Rotherham; Colin Herd, ISTC Convenor, Warrington; Brian Molyneux ISTC, South Yorkshire divisional strike committee; Ray Davies and Roger Tovey, Llanwern strike committee. IMG pamphlet, price 40p, available from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper Street, London, N1.

£6,000

By Judy Watson

THE International Marxist Group needs £6,000 rapidly if the organisation is to continue its present level of political activity.

The Tories' aims have suffered a number of rebuffs, but their only outright defeat has been over the attack on women's abortion rights.

The present breadth of support for women's rights in Britain is unprecedented. The 50,000-strong demonstration in defence of abortion rights last October, for example, was called by the TUC. The labour movement has been obliged to recognise that abortion is not a 'personal' issue, but a political one which it has to take up.

This did not happen by some spiritual conversion. Without the National Abortion Campaign, women would not have had the cutting edge that was needed to slice into the male-dominated labour movement and win the support required to defeat the Corrie Bill.

NAC was launched several years ago through the initiative of the IMG. It is a broad movement aimed at bringing together all those willing to fight for a woman's right to choose.

The IMG has been the backbone of the campaign. We see abortion as the key issue for women's rights and women's liberation at the present time.

But the kind of systematic work that goes into building campaigns like NAC has to have resources. Organisers, leaflets, demonstrations don't come like manna from heaven. Help us to keep up the good work. Give generously.

Send to IMG, PO Box 50, London N1.

IMG 1980 CADRE SCHOOL

The school will take place between the 12th and 18th July 1980. A deposit of £10 will secure you a place, but the full £47.50 has to be paid in advance by the 31st of June, 1980. This will cover your accommodation, all meals, morning and afternoon coffee and the full programme of events. Detailed programme, reading lists and information regarding the venue will be received on registration.

MAIN SESSIONS

The main sessions are grouped into three parts: The Colonial Revolution, Workers States, and Europe.

1) Permanent Revolution and Strategy in the Third World. Stalinist Global Policy from Yalta to Afghanistan. The Cuban Revolution. Revolution in Nicaragua.

2) Political Revolution in the Workers States — Hungary and Czechoslovakia (Debate on Afghanistan)

3) The German Revolution 1918/19. Revolution and Counterrevolution in Spain, 1936. Revolution in Portugal 1974/5. The nature of the Coming British Revolution.

(debates on the Trades Unions in Late Capitalism, and State Capitalism)

OPTIONAL COURSES

As well as the main lecture course there will be a series of optional three part courses.

Two introductory courses are planned: 1) An Introduction to Revolutionary politics.

2) An Introduction to Marxist economics.

There will be two other subsidiary courses on:

3) Marxism and the Family.

4) Aspects of the history of the British Labour Movement.

I am interested in coming to the summer school. I am a member of the IMG/Revolution / I am a sympathiser of IMG/Revolution from

.....(Town)

Name/Address.....

I enclose a cheque/PO for..... towards the £47.50 cost of the school.

Please indicate which options you wish to take.

Note: It is only possible to take two options.

1).....

2).....

It would be very helpful if comrades would state their first preference on the application form provided. It will not be possible for comrades to attend more than two optional courses.



VOICES FOR WITHDRAWAL

Saturday 14th June
Conway Hall,
Red Lion Square,
London WC1
(tube: Holborn)

Speakers include: Ernie Roberts MP, Clive Soley MP, Bernadette Devlin-McAlisney, Peter Hain, Desmond Greaves (historian, editor *Irish Democrat*), Ruth Addison (Young Liberals).

Plus: exclusive filmed interview with former blanket prisoner.

From 10am. Social in evening from 7.30pm.

Delegates £2, Observers £1.

Organised by the Committee for Withdrawal from Ireland, c/o Youth Office, National Liberal Club, 1 Whitehall Place, London SW1.

LETTERS

WHAT'S LEFT

RATES for ads to appear in What's Left, 5p per word or £4 per col. each. Deadline: noon Sat. prior to publication. Payment in advance. **SOCIALISTS!** Break the Routine — Show a Film! Discover the best in left films in Britain from the new Socialist Film Services Handbook, *Films for Socialists*, £1, including postage from Ken Hulme, Room 427, The Wool Exchange, Brushfield St, London E1. **FULL-time worker** wanted by the Troops Out Movement for one month to find national office. Expenses and subsistence allowance paid. For further details phone Brid on 01-446 4221. Or apply in writing to: 2a St Paul's Rd, London N1.

CHARTER

STOP THE ROT KICK OUT THE RIGHT

Conference for Rank and File Engineering Workers
Holborn Library Hall, London
Saturday 28 June 11am-4.30pm
Credentials from Jack Robertson, 265a Seven Sisters Rd, Finsbury Park, London N4

GET DELEGATED!

IMG NOTICES

The Tory Press & How to Fight It

Now in its second edition, this **Socialist Challenge** pamphlet arms activists with the facts that lie behind the media's assault on the TUC's Day of Action, and how the working class can fight for its own voice to be heard

Single copies 10p (plus p&p), bulk orders 8p a copy (pre-paid, sale or return) to: Socialist Challenge, 328 Upper St, London N1. Rush your order now!

LEYLAND National fraction. B'ham centre, 137 Digbeth. B'ham. Sun 8 June, noon till 4pm.

TGWU fraction. National centre Sun 6 July. RAIL National fraction. Sat 5 July noon till 4pm. National centre.

AUEW fraction. Sat 21 June. Note change of date. Further details later.

FRACTION LEADERSHIPS aggregate. Sun 22 June national centre.

NALGO London members meeting. Fri 27 June 7.30pm national centre; national secretariat, Sat 28 June, 11am to 3pm, national centre; national fraction, Sat 13 Sept, 11am till 4pm national centre.

SCEVENTS

Socialism in the Eighties Tour

Speakers invited from Labour Party, Communist Party, and Socialist Workers Party

6 June
Liverpool
Phil Hearse (IMG)

10 June
East London
Phil Hearse (IMG), Ernie Roberts (Labour MP), Simon Tendeter (Communist Party)
Northworld Primary School, Northwold Rd, E5. 7.30pm

11 June
Leicester
Stephen Marks (IMG)

16 June
Valerie Coultas (IMG), Stuart Holland (Labour MP)
Brixton Town Hall 7.30pm

17 June
Wolverhampton
Steve Potter (IMG)

20 June
Cardiff
Tariq Ali (IMG)

Phone Socialist Challenge on 01-359 8180 with details of venue and other speakers if not included in this list

SC SPONSORED DRY OUT:
John May has found a novel way to raise money for Socialist Challenge. Last year he raised £25 by giving up booze. Now he intends to repeat his performance and double his target — he hopes to go two months without booze this time rather than just one. His dry-out started on 31 May. Rush sponsorship to him at 113 Kingswood Avenue, Park North, Swindon, Wilts.

Socialist Challenge
Bar-b-cue
Dancing, games, music
8pm, Saturday 7 June
5 St Mary's Rd, London NW10
£1 (75p unwaged)

WOLVERHAMPTON: SC public meeting. 16 June 8pm. 'Benn's Road to Socialism', Coach and Horses, Cannonock Rd. Speaker: Martin Tolman.
LONDON SC jumble sale. Ring Tessa on 01-359 8371 if you have any clothes, books, records or toys you no longer require.
LONDON SC jumble sale, Sat 14 June, Essex Rd Library, N1, 2pm

HKS comrade safe

TWO weeks ago an article appeared in Socialist Challenge under my name which stated that a comrade of the HKS (Iranian section of the Fourth International) had been executed after attacks by Khomeini's revolutionary guards on the University of Ahwaz.

Since then checks with comrades in Iran have revealed that one of the people executed in Ahwaz had a very similar name to that of a member of the HKS.

Two people were executed in Ahwaz after the attacks on the university but neither were HKS members.

I would like to apologise for any confusion caused by this error.

FIROOZ SHOOSHARI,
London



FREE
NELSON MANDELA

AS PART of the 'Free Nelson Mandela Campaign', launched recently by the Anti-Apartheid Movement, we have produced a new badge (see above).

This campaign has been developed following the massive response to the call for the release of Mandela launched by the *Sunday Post* newspaper after Robert Mugabe's election victory in Zimbabwe.

We also have available leaflets, posters, stickers, and post cards, as well as a Nelson Mandela Declaration for endorsement by organisations and individuals. We are planning a picket outside South Africa House on 11 June from 1-2pm.

In the light of the much appreciated support you have shown for the aims of our Movement, and the growing significance of the call for the release of Mandela and all political prisoners in South Africa, we are writing to ask you to kindly publicise the attached badge (price 20p, available from AAM, 89 Charlotte Street, London W1), as well as our forthcoming event as outlined above, as part of the launching of the Nelson Mandela Campaign by the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

MIKE TERRY, Anti Apartheid Movement

USA and USSR: take no sides?

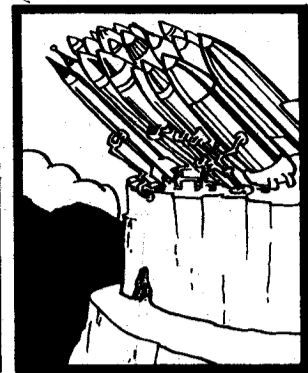
WHILE agreeing wholeheartedly with your paper's call for a mass movement in this country and in the imperialist West against war and against the deployment of the Cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe, I have to take issue with some of your arguments, and particularly with Sylvia Bliss (22 May).

Can it be argued that if imperialism were to be overthrown tomorrow, the Soviet Union and the other Warsaw Pact bureaucracies would calmly set about dismantling the repressive apparatuses of the Red Armies — described unbelievably by Sylvia as one of the 'gains' of the Russian Revolution?

Surely it is more probable that, in the event of widespread revolutionary upsurges in the capitalist West, the Soviet Union would be more likely to step up the level of its preparedness to use the Red Army to thwart any parallel developments of the political revolution in Eastern Europe.

The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan flies in the face of the 'spheres of influence' argument consistently pushed by Trotskyists since World War Two, and given the ammunition this has given the West to 'up the stakes' so dramatically, places the question of 'solidarity with the Soviet Union' in a highly invidious position.

I would argue that it also places a major question over the concept 'workers' state', for we are forced to ask ourselves what



workers' state, however degenerated or deformed, could base the preservation of its existence on the unprovoked violation of the rights to self-determination of a neighbouring (capitalist) country?

In addition, I would question the oft-repeated assertion that profit is not the name of the game as far as the Soviet Union is concerned. OK, so the Soviet Union is a planned economy; that does not prevent the Stalinist apparatus from the overt exploitation of overseas markets to feather its own nest.

In view of this, it would seem that socialists have no alternative but to argue for disarmament from a neutralist position. Neutralism in this sense does not mean class neutralism, but implies the refusal to take sides between the USA and USSR, and in this context I would suggest that we build the peace campaign on the basis provided by E P Thompson's pamphlet, *Protest and Survive*.

JOHN WICKES
Secretary, Cabot Labour Party, Bristol West CLP (in a personal capacity)

For or against the workers' states?

SO Martin Shaw, the patron saint of regroupment (22 May), has finally decided to publicly defrock himself over Socialist Challenge's 'accommodation to Soviet militarism'. Like a latter-day William Morris or Proudhon, he fulminates against oppression, tyranny, and nuclear proliferation the world over. But unfortunately Martin has been watching too much 'News at Ten' and bows his head to Thatcher's vulgar anti-Sovietism.

I thought one of the things Marxism was about was understanding the dynamics of different systems of production. From this basis we are supposed to give the right answers to big historic questions; for example for or against the re-absorption of anti-capitalist states back into capitalism?

Today history poses this problem defensively, and giving the right answer is a pre-condition for the future destruction of the Soviet bureaucracy and the creation of healthy workers' states.

But if Martin is right, and the fifteen revolutions this century have simply resulted in another form of capitalism, state capitalism, then Marxism is utopianism pure and simple and millions have died for a chimera.

After all, if after 150 years of wars and revolutions there is not even one mutated anti-capitalist state anywhere in the world, what hope is there?

Logically, the working class must be congenitally incapable of becoming the new ruling class, and to keep exhorting it to historic tasks it cannot achieve, as Martin seems to do, must surely be criminally irresponsible.

Finally, as for the call for a focus for an anti-imperialist campaign, well, last month 25,000 UK troops left Humber ports on a NATO reinforcement exercise. They are going again in September. Hull CND could really start here.

NOEL HIBBERT, Hull
Correction

SEVERAL weeks ago we published a letter from Tony Greenstein on the proposal for a West Bank state for the Palestinians. Inadvertently, he was described as being a supporter of the British Zionist Organisation. In fact he is a member of the British Anti-Zionist Organisation — Palestinian Solidarity.

Steelworkers: why we left the SWP

DURING the steel strike, thousands of steelworkers had to picket outside their own areas. Very often it was only due to the national networks of the Socialist Workers Party and the International Marxist Group that we were found accommodation, contacts in workplaces, unions to help us with solidarity and finance, and assistance with the targets we were picketing.

We personally will never forget the friendship and generosity shown to us in areas such as East London, where we were based for nearly three weeks.

While at Skegness we decided to join the SWP to combat this Tory government and the capitalist system. However over that weekend we were invited to attend a discussion chaired by Tony Cliff, which was to be taped for *Socialist Worker*. Other steelworkers from Sheffield and Scunthorpe also attended, but unfortunately we had never met them before.

The theme of the discussion was the lack of organisation at local and national level. We said this was wrong. Within a week of the strike starting, joint strike committees had been organised in at least Warrington, Rotherham, Stocksbridge, Scunthorpe, Port

Talbot, Llanwern, Shotton and Corby.

By the second week, divisional strike committees had been set up in Divisions 1, 3 and 7. A national network started to emerge whereby flying pickets could be despatched to all areas.

In the opinion of many militants, the main problem we faced was one of leadership, not just organisation. For example, Warrington, Rotherham and Stocksbridge gave no dispensations; but Port Talbot, Scunthorpe, and the Midlands, where there wasn't the same determination, spent weeks giving dispensation after dispensation.

It was this need for leadership, nationally and locally, based on the local and divisional strike committees, that made a national strike committee necessary. Everyone knew this would not be an easy task. On 25 February, the first meeting of the unofficial national strike committee took place, attended by 17 delegates. This built up through the weekly meetings to 80 delegates attending in the last week of the strike.

At the first national meeting we decided to invite the divisional and national officials of all the unions in steel, so that they could be held accountable to the strike committees for their actions. Perhaps if *Real Steel News* had concentrated its efforts on building the national strike committee, we could have had a greater impact on Bill Sirs and the 14 executive council members who sold us out.

On returning from Skegness, we found that our views had been censored from the discussion published in *Socialist Worker*.

We have come to the conclusion that, due to the differences between what we experienced during the strike and what the SWP leadership considers to have happened, we cannot remain in the SWP. We can't join anything without having complete faith in the way it deals with the membership.

We leave with a great deal of respect and gratitude to SWP members, and will always be prepared to work with them in any way in the future.

We have decided to join the IMG for many of the same reasons we joined the SWP; but also because the IMG recognised from the beginning the need for leadership from a national strike committee, and sought to build it. We share a common view of the strike.

Joining the IMG is also joining an international party, the Fourth International. This was brought home to us during the strike, when it was clear that steel workers in France, Belgium, Germany, Japan and the United States, are all facing the same problems, and the same enemy. This is why international links were built during the strike, with visits since.

COLIN HERD, ISTC
Convenor, Warrington
STEVE TRELOAR, HDEU
Rotherham

ALEXANDRA PALACE 11AM-11PM

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The Au Pairs
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with
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with
Humphrey Lyttelton
Big Chief with
Dick Heckstall Smith
Modern jazz from Poland

THEATRE

With the political comedy-cabaret of Threepenny theatre plus Theatre against sexism.

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Day long programme of films, including 'Comming home', with Jane Fonda, and Horace Ove's 'Pressure'.

KIDS FESTIVAL & CRECHE

with inflatables, films, punch & judy, puppet theatre,

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with stands and displays from the trade union movement.

MORNING STAR

50

YEARS

beat the tory blues

Socialist Challenge

ISRAELIS OUT OF WEST BANK

ULTRA-right Jewish gangs have extended their attacks on the Arab population of the West Bank.

On Monday, bombs planted in the cars of two prominent Palestinians seriously mutilated Karim Khalef, the mayor of Ramallah, and Bassam Sharak, mayor of Nalus. An Israeli-made hand grenade hurled at shoppers in Hebron seriously injured several Arabs.

These attacks come at a time of heightening tension on the West Bank, which has been occupied by Israel since the war in June 1967. Since then the Zionists have pressed ahead with their aim of establishing Jewish settlements in the occupied area and of forcibly taking over Arab land.

To date, 15,000 colonists have established 92 settlements on the West Bank and almost a third of its 2,200 square miles have been expropriated by the Israeli government.

This expansionist policy has met with fierce resistance from the local Arab population. Street demonstrations, strikes, and boycotts have been a regular feature of this campaign.

The Israeli government's response has been one of brutal repression, including the imposition of massive fines, forced evacuation, random detention, torture, the shooting of unarmed demonstrators, and the demolition of Arab homes and stores.

Not satisfied with the progress made by the Israeli authorities, ultra-right groups like Rabbi Kahane's Kach movement, which is associated with the ultra-nationalists' movement, Gush Emunim, have taken to the streets.

Rampage

Their proclaimed aim is simple — to drive the 950,000 Palestinian Arabs out of the West Bank and to reclaim for Israel the areas of Judea and Samaria referred to as 'Biblical Israel'.

Members of existing settlements on the West Bank have taken to organising armed mobs who rampage through Arab towns in the area. It was an attack of this kind in Ramallah in April which led to the latest upsurge in the struggle.

Six young Jews in Hebron were shot on 2 May while they were '...walking to Sabbath prayers in Hebron', according to the *Sunday Times*. In fact there are no synagogues in Hebron and it has since been established that among the group was Eli Hazeev, a supporter of Kach and a former United States army sniper in Vietnam. He tells his friends the 'only good Arab is a dead one'.

The violent rampages of these gangs is only an extension of the violence of the Israeli state itself. Israeli troops stationed on the West Bank have failed to intervene when notified of these attacks. Two soldiers were recently detained in Jerusalem when it was discovered that they had amassed a private cache of arms.

Muhammed Milhelm, the mayor of Halhoul who was arbitrarily expelled from the West Bank after the 2 May events, says that the Israeli extremists 'have all the sympathy and support of the Israeli government'.

Socialists have to support the just struggle of the Palestinian masses against the forceful occupation of their homelands. We should demand the immediate revocation of the expulsions of the mayor of Halhoul and the mayor and Qade of Hebron.

Protest messages and demands for their right to return to their homes should be sent to Mr Menachem Begin, Prime Minister, Tel-Aviv, Israel. Copies to the National Association of Palestinian Groups, c/o 5 Caledonian Road, London N1.

White South Africa BURN BABY, BURN



WHITE racist South Africa was on fire over the weekend. Bombs planted by guerillas of the African National Congress blew up three top-secret oil plants in different parts of the country.

Millions of gallons of petrol, diesel, aviation fuel and chemicals were destroyed in fires which raged throughout Monday.

Two of the explosions were at SASOL plants south-west of Johannesburg; the other bomb went off in the centre of an oil complex at Secunda, east of Johannesburg. At least £5m worth of damage was caused.

Elsewhere in South Africa the struggle against the apartheid regime has taken other forms. At least 100,000 black and 'coloured' school and university students are involved in the six week campaign against the racist education system.

Schools are being boycotted and youth are taking to the streets in protest. In the schools which remain open, white cops and soldiers have been drafted in as 'teachers'.

Education in South Africa is a brutal example of the racist nature of the apartheid regime. The *Rand Daily Mail* has published figures showing that during the last school year the government

spent \$677 for each white youth's education at school, \$227 for each 'coloured' (mixed race) student, and \$66 for each black student.

In schools for whites there is, on average, one teacher for 23 students; each teacher in coloured schools has 50 students.

Another difference is that whites are required to attend school, which thereby ensures that they receive a full education, but for coloured and black youth attendance is voluntary. Non-whites also pay for their own books and other school items.

But the racists in the South African regime are now finding that they can no longer get away with such blatant discrimination. Some of their friends — like Britain's Tory government — have tried to help them.

On Monday the Tories again refused to publish the names of the British-owned firms operating in South Africa which pay below poverty-line wages. Such co-operation will do little in the long run to save either these companies or the racist regime with which they work hand and glove with.

The fires of freedom are now burning in South Africa with increasing heat. As black militants in the USA once put it — burn, baby, burn!

NF threatens Tameside Irish conference

By Chris Murray

THE National Front is planning to break up a conference on Ireland called by Tameside Trades Council for this Saturday.

It is understood that the fascists are planning to stage a demonstration against the conference and then send in a ten-person 'hit squad', made up of ex-British Army soldiers, to wreck the event.

The organisers of the conference have also had to face the

threats of the TUC.

Nearly three months ago Tameside was removed from Congress House's list of recognised trades councils because of its intention to hold the conference on Ireland.

The TUC objected to some of the speakers invited and to some of the publicity material distributed to publicise the event.

But Tameside has pressed ahead with the conference, which will be held at Manchester Poly Students' Union. The new threat from the fascists makes it more urgent than ever that the conference is well attended — not just by people interested in Ireland but by trade union activists and the anti-fascist movement.

It will start at 10.30am on 7 June. A demonstration to defend the conference from the fascists will assemble at noon, Manchester Poly Students' Union, Cavendish House, All Saints, Manchester.