

Socialist Challenge



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100,000 expected at Liverpool demo

29 NOV FIGHT FOR JOBS

EVERYONE who opposes the Tories' anti-working class policies should be on the 29 November jobs march in Liverpool called by the Labour Party and supported by the TUC.

A huge turnout for this demonstration can be a tremendous springboard for launching an all-out attack on the government's deliberate unemployment policies.

But one demonstration does not make an organised fightback. The TUC has called

several demonstrations demanding that the government has to 'change course'.

But only a *struggle* against unemployment, the cuts, and the government's pay norms will throw back the Tory offensive.

The occupation at the Gardner's factory in Manchester is a shining example of how redundancies can be fought.

If this tactic were adopted in other threatened plants a mighty movement could be

built to share the work, with no loss of pay, instead of timidly accepting the sack and the dole queue.

The Gardner's workers should be allowed to lead the 29 November march.

The firefighters are now making plans for industrial action against the Tories' 6 per cent public sector pay norm. But the TUC has again failed to unite the fight of public service workers. The decision of the TUC's public services com-

mittee last week was merely to 'monitor' each claim as it was submitted.

It is no secret now that fighting issue by issue, section by section, against the Tories is useless.

The TUC should be recalled to organise class-wide action to bring down Thatcher's government. That action has to start with all-out support for the firefighters and for the occupation by Gardner's workers.

Recall the TUC now!

Why have the employers decided to break your agreement?

After the last strike there was an agreement between the employers and the union based on an agreed formula to take firemen out of the pay bargaining arena. Over the last two years this formula has resulted in approximately 20 per cent pay rises.

This year it was worked out at 18.83 per cent. The employers have balked at this and now the government have given them a weapon to use to renege on the deal.

The government has come out with the 6 per cent rate support grant which is to cover from April next year till April 1982. The local authorities have already budgeted for increases this year between 15 and 20 per cent. We know this from friendly local authorities, predominantly Labour, up and down the country.

Changes

So, the Fire Brigades Union's position is that we have a pay formula to get us out of the pay arena every year, and the employers are reneging on it.

The employers said we'd have to accept less than 18.83 per cent. Allied to that were conditions including 3,500-4,000 redundancies. They also want changes in the shift system which operates in the rural areas.

One system is called the 'Retained System', where people have other jobs, and when required they down tools and go to put out fires on a part-time basis. This system lacks the professionalism required in a large city like London.

The union's position is that the executive council has been recommending industrial action ever since the Tories started to suggest a single figure pay increase for the public sector, some three months ago. The recommendation from the executive is for lightning strikes on a one-shift basis, probably one per week, each shift in rotation taking a day off. Unfortunately, the executive do not think they could pull a national all-out strike.

Firefighters take on the Tories

DURING the last Fire Brigades Union strike, the Battersea station was among the most militant in the country. Socialist Challenge talked to Jim Fitzpatrick, the local union secretary about the present dispute.



Jim Fitzpatrick, during the 1977-78 strike

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

The whole future of the service is at stake — it's not just a case of the pay rise, because also in the background we have the Government Green Paper on the Fire Service which contains many of the strings attached to this deal.

Lightning strike action could be escalated to national all-out strike action if the employers force a lock-out by refusing to allow us to return to work after the one-shift strike.

We will obviously be looking to the rest of the public sector and we welcome the statements of the TUC general council, from Len Murray and the public services commit-

tee last Wednesday, that strike support will be forthcoming should the FBU be forced to take action themselves. This was neglected last time because we were fighting a Labour government.

This time I believe that the 6 per cent will encourage the whole public sector to go together, and that the officials will be pushed into leading this action. The FBU can be the catalyst which can bring about another 'winter of discontent'. We realise that we've got to fight, because we've got no alternative.

Have you established links with other

public sector workers, the water workers for instance?

Until the conference our hands are tied, but obviously we should be approaching trades councils, joint shop stewards committees etc, and posing the question: what is the feeling among the rank and file?

The last time the FBU went on strike we looked to the rest of the labour movement and we got massive moral and financial support, but very little solidarity action. Given that situation, the members returned to the isolation of the fire stations and did not maintain those links with trades councils and so on.

Solidarity

Three years later firefighters are again looking to the trade union movement to save their necks.

I think they will learn that things won't be that easy, but the movement is magnanimous. The Tory government have been getting away with murder for the last 18 months. There may well be a response against the 6 per cent. Whether a general strike situation or a combined public sector strike will happen is crystal ball gazing, but one would hope it would happen.

What do you expect of the rest of the labour movement? What should we do now that we didn't do last time?

I think the calls have to be made again I think the difference is that where last time the TUC campaigned to get us back to work, this time the general secretaries of the public sector unions, the general council and Len Murray himself have all made statements in support of us.

Given that situation I think it will be much easier to get solidarity action off the ground in local areas, and if there is no lead from above, then we, the local FBU reps, should be approaching other sectors and saying: 'You should be supporting us and pushing to get your union to come out with us! We should be building the links just now, getting to know each other again.'

Will NUPE lead another winter of discontent?

By Ray Varnes, Vice-chairperson, London divisional council, NUPE

THE Tories' six per cent pay policy shouldn't come as a surprise to anyone. Many militants at the last National Union of Public Employees conference in May pointed out the likelihood of the government imposing pay norms.

Delegates argued that unless NUPE organised a national campaign to win an index-linked national minimum wage, our members would be facing a massive cut in their living standards. The conference decided to wait and see what happened. As a result of this position argued for by Alan Fisher, the general secretary, we find ourselves facing a 12 per cent cut in real wages.

Leaders

The six per cent cash limit represents just one part of the Tory government's attack; the other is direct cuts. There is now a real prospect of 3 million unemployed, and NUPE's membership being cut through redundancies over the next two years.

Given the inability of the NUPE leaders to prepare for the present Tory attacks, the tasks facing militants are enormous, but not hopeless. When the delegates from the union's London division opposed the NUPE executive's resolution at the recent Lambeth anti-cut's conference, and supported the militant resolutions from Lambeth Trades Council, all

the 33 NUPE delegations supported our position.

At the Lambeth conference, the NUPE executive simply wanted to make the government change course. This type of talk is a waste of time and energy. We've got to get rid of the Tories as soon as possible.

Steps

The first step is to organise for united action now against the six per cent. During the 1978-79 'winter of discontent', the NUPE leaders brought forward all the various claims for one united fight on wages. This should be done again, but alongside the firefighters, not after they've had to come out alone.

The London division is now urging all branch and stewards committees to meet now to plan opposition to the six per cent. At these meetings, members of the divisional council will be arguing for action on cuts and wages.

Response

We want to restore the links between the various sectors that were established during the last strike.

We need a national response to fight the Tories effectively, so we are also demanding a recall conference to decide on the type of action needed. We want a united public sector fight against the Tories.



'Wanted for arson and murder' — Merlyn Rees, Home Secretary, in the last Labour government

THE nine-week long Fire Brigades Union strike stunned the labour movement in the winter of 1977-78. It was the first national union to challenge the then 10 per cent pay policy of the Callaghan government.

On 7 November 1977 an emergency recall FBU conference voted for militant strike action and rejected the executive's recommendation to accept the 10 per cent offer.

Three days later the Labour cabinet met to discuss its response to the new militancy of the firefighters. At the table sat Michael Foot, deputy leader of the Labour Party, and Tony Benn, Minister for Energy.

The FBU claim was for a modest increase in pay to bring them into line with average earnings, plus the ten per cent pay norm.

The firefighters were also demanding a reduction in their average 48-hour week. Under the Labour government the average earnings of firefighters had fallen by 12.5 per cent.

The government

responded by rejecting the claim outright. It mobilised the military services in 'Operation Digest' to break the strike. To defend its pay policy, Labour's cabinet became the country's most efficient strike-breakers.

The strike began on 14 November and the media could only find a handful of scabs throughout the country. That evening, Prime Minister James Callaghan appealed for moderation — from the high table at the Lord Mayor's banquet!

Support for the FBU from ordinary workers was overwhelming. Thousands attended FBU demonstrations all over the country and the money from solidarity collections rolled in.

NUPE's executive donated £10,000 and pledged its full support. But it refused to take strike action

Firefighters against the government — this time they must win

By Pat Kane

along with the FBU and against the 10 per cent, even though NUPE's members were affected.

Despite the militancy of the rank and file, the strike remained firmly under the control of the FBU executive, and in particular the union's general secretary, Terry Parry.

Parry had never supported the strike, and he had argued against it at the special conference. Support from other unions was vital, but Parry never troubled to raise the strike on the TUC General Council when it met on 23 November.

It wasn't raised until the next meeting on 21 December, and the strike

was then into its seventh week. The General Council decided not to support the FBU, by 20 votes to 17. Outside, 2,500 angry firefighters demanded that the TUC should support them. The leaders of the labour movement, both in Parliament and in the unions, acted together to break the strike.

The rank and file firefighters, with their own internal problems given the hostility of Parry, could not continue alone. The strike was defeated, and they returned to work on 16 January 1978.

The final settlement was a compromise to let Parry get the FBU back to work. Now the Tories want to tear

up the agreement made by the Labour government and the FBU, which the Tory front bench at the time happened to agree with.

The FBU were before their time. A year later was the 'winter of discontent', when the five per cent pay policy — successor to the 10 per cent — was smashed by the public sector unions and the government collapsed.

But the leaders of those same unions allowed the FBU to fight alone. They all refused to organise united action with the firefighters against Labour's pay policy.

We have to make sure that the same doesn't happen this time.

Photo: MARTIN GLAVIN

Ireland rallies to hunger strikers

Despite British propaganda

By Geoff Bell

IF THERE was only the British media to go by, it would be easy to have the impression that the H Block hunger strikers are universally condemned.

The press, radio and TV here chose to highlight last week three developments which back up such a notion.

These were: a condemnation of the hunger strike from West Belfast independent MP Gerry Fitt; a plea by Cardinal Hume, Catholic Archbishop of Westminster for the hunger strikers to call off their action; and a call by Garret Fitzgerald, leader of the opposition in the Irish parliament, for the British government not to give in to the hunger strikers' demands.

But a few facts show that in promoting these statements the British propaganda machine is clutching at straws.

Revolt

Take the case of Garret Fitzgerald. The Fine Gael party which he leads is the most right wing of the three major political parties in the south of Ireland.

Its popularity reached a new low earlier this month when in a by-election in Donegal its vote fell by ten per cent compared with the recent general election.

Even more striking, there is evidence of a growing revolt within the ranks of Fine Gael against the Fitzgerald line. This is shown by the response of Fine Gael local councillors to a directive sent out by Fitzgerald in July which instructed all his party councillors to vote against motions backing the H Block protest.

So far, not one councillor has followed this instruction. And in only three cases have Fine Gael councillors even abstained. As a consequence all ten councils in which an H Block motion has been proposed have passed such motions; seven of them unanimously.

This is over a third of all local councils in the south of Ireland, which indicates that even within his own party Fitzgerald has precious little support for his attitude on the H Blocks and the hunger strikers.

Then there is the case of Cardinal Hume. In a pastoral letter, read out at masses in his diocese on Sunday, Hume said: 'A hunger strike... is itself a form of violence... We must pray therefore that the hunger strikers call off their action.'

But this was not all Hume said. His letter also included a hefty sideswipe at the British government.

'We remember,' said Hume, 'how Pope John Paul II urged all political leaders both at home and in Northern Ireland to find a just and peaceful solution to what, in our history, has always been a shameful episode.'

Hume ended his letter with a plea for mutual understanding and respect between the British government and the hunger strikers. 'The British government should also make concessions in a spirit of mutual understanding'.

The call for Britain to compromise has not only come from the Catholic

Church in England. For months now the Catholic Church in Ireland, under the leadership of Cardinal O Fiaich, has had meeting after meeting with British government officials at which Britain has been urged to accept the demands of the hunger strikers.

Most recently a new call, from another religious organisation in Ireland, endorsed such a view.

In a statement last week the Methodist Church, while opposing political status for the H Block prisoners, went on to 'urge Her Majesty's government not to allow the issue to drift and (we) urge it to consider again what ways and means may be to hand of defusing this dangerous situation'.

Finally there is Gerry Fitt, the gin-and-tonic MP for West Belfast.

Fitt claimed he had received much support after he had called upon the British government not to give in to the hunger strikers. The truth of the matter is summed up in a quote from a supporter of Fitt, reported in the *Irish Times* on 15 November. 'He has lost thousands of votes,' was the apposite remark.

And indeed the evidence grows daily that the hunger strike has evoked wave after wave of popular support in Ireland for the demands of the prisoners in H Block and Armagh.

On Sunday, in the County Tyrone town of Coalisland, another massive demonstration took place in support of the prisoners. The official police estimate was 6,000 and even if that figure is accepted it was still a very large demonstration for a small town like Coalisland.

The organisers of the protest put the attendance at an incredible 20,000.

Speech

Throughout Ireland as a whole there are now 129 local H Block 'action groups', with six such bodies in Dublin alone.

In the south of Ireland the importance of the H Block issue in Irish politics was shown most graphically in the Donegal by-election in which Fine Gael did so badly. The highlight of this election was a speech by Sile De Valera of Fianna Fail, in which she fiercely attacked the Thatcher government and its policy on the H Blocks and Armagh.

Fianna Fail later disassociated itself from De Valera's remarks, but only in a half-hearted manner.

The significance of her speech was summed up this way in an editorial in the *Irish Times*: 'In a way, Miss Sile De Valera won the by-election. It was not quite a set-up, but near enough, everyone knew that internally the young women's network would be Fianna Fail to death.'

The H Block issue has become a major political issue in Ireland. It is abundantly clear that a majority of the people in Ireland are for the prisoners and against the British government.

That feeling can only grow and become more intense in the weeks ahead.



After 15 November — all out for 7 December

By Tom Marlow

BETWEEN 4,000 and 5,000 people demonstrated in London on Saturday in support of British withdrawal from Ireland.

The H Block hunger strike, with the slogan 'Don't let the Irish Prisoners die', was a major theme of the march and at the rally held later in Camden town hall.

The turnout for the demonstration, on a rainy, windswept day, was somewhat disappointing, but the real test for the supporters of the demands of the hunger strikers will come on 7 December, when another demonstration, this time specifically on the issue of the hunger strikers, takes place in London.

Saturday's march was called by the Committee for Withdrawal from Ireland,

but the overwhelming majority of those who marched were shouting 'Troops Out Now' slogans.

One unfortunate aspect of the rally after the march was the instant booing which greeted Chris Myant of the *Morning Star* when he rose to speak.

It was obvious from Saturday that a lot of work will need to be done if 7 December is to be the success it has to be. Such work will not be helped by the type of sectarian barracking which Myant received.

The 7 December protest must now be to the fore in the activities of all those who support the hunger strikers' cause. Special attention should be given to those organisations and areas which had a low turnout on Saturday, such as the Labour Party and the Irish community.

The lesson of Saturday's demonstration is 'all out on 7 December', and this time make sure it is all out.

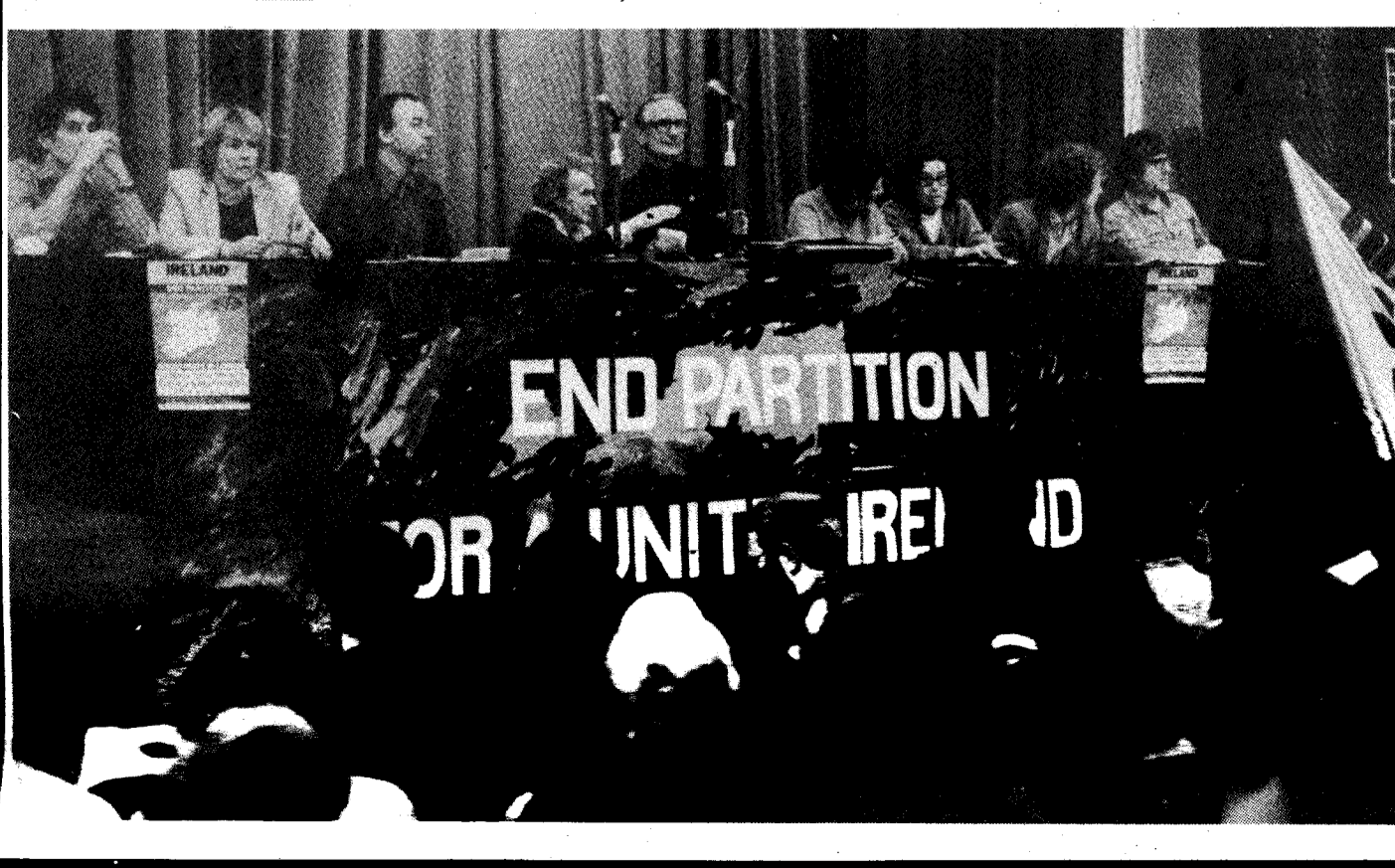
Photo: JOANNE O'BRIEN



Sinn Fein and IRSP members outside Westminster Cathedral on 16 November



Speakers at London Rally



All other photos: PETE GRANT (Socialist Challenge)

Gardner's struggle at a turning point...

The Gardner's occupation has received a boost from the decision of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions in the Manchester area to recommend a levy of £1 a week on engineering workers.

Among those at the Confed meeting was Sammy Gilmore, convenor of the Govan

shippyard on the Upper Clyde, who brought £1000. This indicates the solidarity throughout the labour movement.

But the occupation is at a watershed. If solidarity is not mobilised during the next week, Gardner's management will be able to win back the initiative. BRIAN GROGAN reports.

Talks between the Confed leaders, led by John Tocher, and management went on for several days last week. The breakdown of these negotiations paves the way for management to launch its secret ballot aimed at ending the occupation.

Barrier

The lack of involvement of the majority of Gardner's workers and the lack of real information, even among the active strikers, is a big barrier to effectively responding to the bosses' manoeuvre.

The approach of the Confed leadership is to undermine the confidence of the active strikers in the possibility of victory. The negotiations with management last week took place without the participation of the plant convenor, Tom Macafee, or other direct representatives of the strikers, who were given no information about the purpose or progress of the negotiations. Rumours were rife. It turned out that what was being mooted was the postponement for three months of the redundancy notices to the 590 workers affected. That talks took place on such a slender concession hardly suggests inspiring leadership on the part of the Confed.

Inside the plant there is still a good deal of active involvement in the occupation. A round-the-clock picket is organised, and a large number of the strikers joined delegations to other plants and areas.

Militant

But there is no regular strike bulletin, no general meetings are held, and even the shop stewards committee has only met twice in the seven weeks of occupation.

This contrasts with the situation before the strike, when there were regular shop meetings and report backs by shop stewards.

As Tom Macafee explained: 'Gardner's workers are no different than anyone else. But what brought such support for militant action was communication. This is what is now needed more than ever.'

The active strikers need to draw in the majority who are staying at home. Everyone knows that behind the 590 redundancies lie attacks on conditions and wages and further sackings.

With unemployment nationally at 2.5m and rising, no one's job is safe. This is why the overwhelming majority of the Gardner's workers voted for a fight in the first place. This message has to be repeated and



argued for among all the strikers, especially those at home.

Coupled with a determined lead, substantial backing could be maintained.

Many other firms in Manchester face the same situation as Gardner's. Edbro's, Bolton Engineering, International Computers, Chloride batteries, 2,500

bus workers and many others are faced with similar levels of redundancy.

This is the basis for translating the passive support that exists for the occupation into active solidarity.

What is needed is a common focus for the whole Manchester labour movement. Rita

Mitchel, from the ASTMS coordinating committee in ICL Gorton, raised the need for a day of action, including strike action. The Confed leadership counterposed the raising of money to this proposal.

Resist

But a lead from the Confed will be a major factor in determining whether these other plants decide to fight back. Workers at ICL in Winsford have held a 24-hour lightning occupation to show management that they will resist the 1,500 redundancies proposed for the Winsford site alone.

The impression is that the Confed leadership is looking for a way to end the Gardner's dispute. This is why we need a red alert.



...as support floods in

By Pete Clifford

TO GET to see Dave Marsden, treasurer of the Gardner's occupation, is no easy task. When I talked to him in his office, several delegations were waiting to bring support.

There was a delegation from Stone Platt, the textile machinery factory in Oldham occupied earlier this year against redundancies. The deputy convenor, Harold Robinson, brought along a £500 donation for them.

Money

Further down the corridor there were six stewards from the Talbot plant in Coventry. They hadn't got a lot of money to donate since their place is on a one-day week. The purpose of their visit, one of the stewards explained, was that they expected closure by Christmas and they had come to Gardner's to see how to organise an occupation.

Also in the building was John Taylor, who led a successful strike against victimisation at Adamsons Containers in Stockport last year. He was collecting a hundred 'Enough is Enough' badges for his members.

Stories

In Dave Marsden's office were a group of pensioners from Eccles handing over a donation. They'd written a message of support saying: 'More and more people are seeing the need to join with you against the government.'

Some of them had been involved in the 1973 sit-in at Gardner's and they were encouraging today's strikers with stories of how they won in '73.

Having got to see Dave, he first insisted on explaining to me his principles: 'I'm not fighting for my job — it's safe, but I've got members who'll be sacked and our kids'll need jobs too.'

He believes that it is this view, of fighting on behalf of other workers, which has won the occupation support up and down the country. Over 700 labour movement organisations have made donations so far, from as far away as Nigg Bay in the north of Scotland to the Isle of Wight.

Letters

Dave says he's 'flabbergasted' at the support. He showed me one of the 40 or so letters he'd received that day and read it out. 'Telford TASS and Dawley Labour Party offer full support. We'll be delivering a 2-ton truck load of food on 29 November'.

In the Manchester area there are five workplaces on regular weekly collections — Chloride, GEC, Massey Fergusons, Shell Carr-

ington, and the Agecroft pit. At Shell the construction workers are collecting £1 a week from each worker and sending it on to Gardner's.

Dave considers that

there should be weekly collections in all the local fac-

ories, together with official levies in the AUEW across the country. The Manchester North and Sheffield

districts are already organis-

ing for this. Before the strike, as treasurer of the joint stewards committee, Dave Marsden would handle as much money in a year as he's now starting to receive in a week. Donations have built up as news gets out round the country.

Reaction

Delegations have been touring major workplaces and union meetings in all the main industrial centres. The response has been tremendous. That day news had come from a delegation in Glasgow that stewards would be down the next week from UCS with a four-figure cheque.

A group of four Gardner's workers had just returned from Birmingham where stewards and union activists have formed a support committee which had raised several hundred pounds.

One of the Gardner's stewards who had been in London, Kevin Coen, mentioned the reaction there. Whenever he'd spoken to

people he would explain not only what happened at Gardner's, but that in his view other workers should follow their example.

Kevin explained how 'factories in London are going through the same set pattern as Gardner's had leading up to the redundancies'. In this situation they'd received a good response as many saw Gardner's as their fight too.

Another steward, Bob Lancashire, explained about the trip to Sheffield. Only a handful of the 112 factories they'd visited weren't on short time or suffering redundancies. Again the support was massive — over £5,000 was pledged to the occupation. Bob thought they were giving money 'because they want Thatcher out'.

Further

Steelworkers in Yorkshire had gone one step further. They've paid to send a Gardner's worker to West Germany armed with collection sheets to meet up with German workers who gave a lot of support during the steel strike.

The response to Gardner's really comes as no surprise when you read the appeal sheet: 'The solidarity which trades unionists and unemployed workers show for the Gardner's workers in all parts of the country will be the single most important element in ensuring that Gardner's is successful.'

'A victory for the Gardner's workforce would be an inspiration to all workers who detest this government's politics.'

That support must go on. As Dave Marsden put it: 'With 2,500 workers at Gardner's we need a massive amount of money — we need food for the canteen and expenses to sustain us too. About £15,000 is needed each week.'

If you or your organisation have not already contributed then do so now.

Donations and messages of support to: Dave Marsden, Treasurer, CSEU Strike Committee, 187 Bolton Lane, Eccles, Manchester M30 0HN.



Warm reception in London

By Tessa Van Gelderen

THREE pounds a head — that's what shop stewards at a London power station building site are recommending that each of the 2,000 workers there should give for the Gardner's occupation. This followed a visit to the site by Gardner's workers last week.

With the exception of the *Daily Mirror*, the mass media have kept quiet about Gardner's. So have the union leaders. They prefer to make fiery speeches but don't give any real support to workers in struggle.

When we took a delegation of Gardner's workers round factories,

union branches and workplaces last week, many workers had not heard of their struggle, but once given the facts, most were prepared to offer their support.

Visits to fire stations evoked a particularly sympathetic response. Camden council workers, at their founding joint shop stewards' meeting collected £100 for the Gardner's occupation.

As at Camden, redundancies are threatened at many of the workplaces visited, and workers regarded the outcome of the occupation as important to their fight. This was particularly the case with public sector workers; those in the private sector seemed more complacent.

Generally the Gardner's strikers found a warm and generous welcome in London. As well as workplaces they spoke at Labour party meetings, trade union branch meetings, and public

meetings.

The week was exhausting — it's hard work collecting and counting money! The biggest success was when Dave Jones, one of the Gardner's workers went with Dale, a Socialist Challenge supporter, to Littlebrook 'D' power station site. There will be upwards of £5,000 coming to the occupation from there.

There is a possibility that another delegation will be coming to London; if you work in London and want a Gardner's speaker contact the strike committee at the address on this page.

As Dave Jones kept saying last week: 'This occupation isn't just about saving jobs at Gardner's. What happens with us will affect all those facing redundancy'.

Let's make sure that what happens to Gardner's workers is a body blow to this vicious Tory government.

CND conference: towards a demo of 250,000

By Redmond O'Neill and
Jude Woodward

'MILLIONS of people in this country oppose Cruise and Trident. This CND conference faces a challenge — to make sure that this opposition is channelled into effective action.

'We had 80,000 in the streets on 26 October. Now we must name the day for a demonstration in 1981 that aims for three, four or five times this number.'

This is how Phil Waterhouse, a delegate from Wolverhampton CND and a supporter of Socialist Challenge, summed up motion 15 at the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament conference last weekend.

The motion called for CND to prioritise the campaign to stop Cruise and Trident, and for that campaign to be based on mass action of the labour movement and youth. It also included support for the call from Manchester against the Missiles for a national labour movement conference against Cruise and Trident.

Motion 15 was overwhelmingly carried by the conference.

The passing of that motion was the high point of this year's conference, attended by 300 delegates. It summed up a debate which ran through all the sessions: How should CND respond to the mass movement against Trident and Cruise?

The clearest answer to that question came in the workshop on priorities, which called for a May 1981 demo of a quarter of a million.

For many delegates, a campaign focusing on mass action to stop Cruise



and Trident, and based on the labour movement and youth, was the last thing they thought necessary for CND.

Some speakers, especially members of the Communist Party, stressed the need to influence bishops, write to MPs, befriend journalists, and generally avoid controversial action on the streets.

Ken Spores, a delegate from the CP, explained: 'We want a people's movement, not concentrating on any par-

ticular section of society.'

Yet a strategy for CND has to start from the need to convince millions of working people that through their collective action they can force MPs, newspapers, and governments into line. This question of strategy ran through all the major debates at the conference.

A third of those who attended were individual members of CND, who had the same voting and speaking rights as delegates from trade unions and CND

Jobs Not Bombs tour

Wolverhampton, Tue 25 Nov, 7.30pm, Posada pub, Lichfield St. Speakers include: Caven Foster ('E' div sec, FBU), Jack Collinwood (AUEW convenor, Cannon industries), Pat Hickey (Rover Solihull, and IMG).

North London, Thur 27 Nov, 7.30pm, Islington North Library, Manor Gardens, N7. Speakers include: Val Graham, president Haringey NUT, personal capacity). CND and Gardner's speakers invited.

Liverpool, 26 Nov: contact SC sellers for details.

Portsmouth, 23 Nov: contact SC sellers for details.

Coming soon: **Wandsworth, 2 Dec.**

groups. This undemocratic structure can and should be transformed.

The conference was an advance for CND. But there is still a major debate to be had about aims, strategy and tactics of the movement, which can only be had inside CND. Despite the passing of resolution 15, the mass action, labour movement orientation is by no means finally won. The call for the May demonstration will have to be ratified by CND national council.

On 14 December Young CND holds its conference. The labour movement conference against the missiles is in March 1981 — and CND will hold a recall conference by April next year. These dates should be in the diary of every socialist.

Arguments for Socialism



What's wrong with parliamentary democracy?

By Brian Grogan

LAST Thursday some 25 Labour MPs did something useful in the House of Commons.

Through a 'mass picket' they prevented the entry of someone called 'Black Rod', forcing environment minister Michael Heseltine to retreat, at least temporarily, on his proposed 30 per cent rise in council house rents. A small protest, but one that will be welcomed by working people.

The Tories have flown into a rage. Norman St. John Stevas, Tory leader of the House of Commons, said this action 'was nothing less than an attack on parliamentary democracy itself'.

Heseltine agreed: 'The most menacing abuse of parliamentary procedure I have ever seen,' he declared. It is appropriate that Thatcher's gang should identify 'parliamentary democracy' with the ancient rituals of Black Rod.

The Tories are worried. They know they cannot get acceptance of their anti-working class policies except on the grounds of their parliamentary mandate. With the economy in such a mess, parliamentary rituals become even more important.

Even the 'democratic' part of parliamentary democracy is being progressively eliminated. Council house rents being

raised by ministerial decree is a typical example of parliament's rubber-stamp role.

Most decisions are taken outside of any control by MPs. Many decisions affecting the lives of millions of people are taken in the board rooms of the big monopolies, without the pretence of parliamentary control.

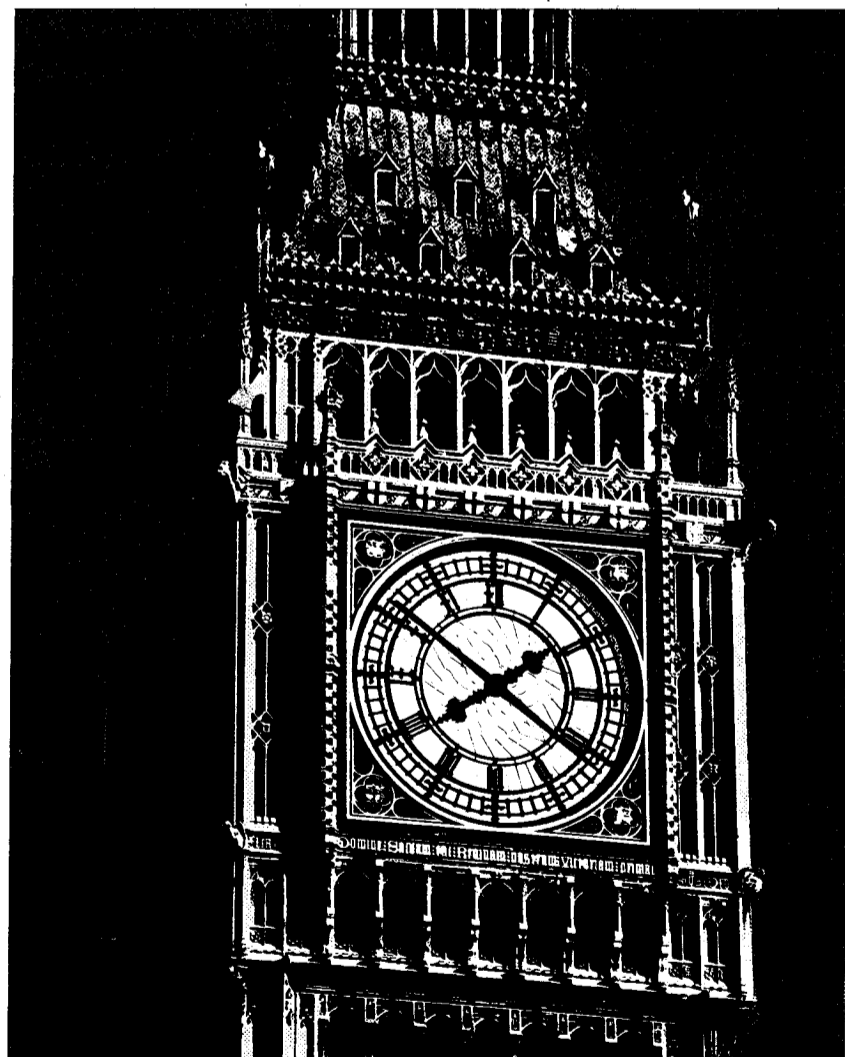
Many decisions are made behind the backs of the Cabinet, never mind MPs. A small committee of three ministers under Callaghan took the decision to replace Polaris with Trident, despite the colossal expense involved.

Most important decisions are taken by totally unelected civil servants.

Socialists have always pointed to the hollowness of the claims of parliamentary democracy. 'Freedom of the press' formally exists, but the ability to exercise it effectively depends on having enough money to own a mass daily paper or TV company.

'One person, one vote' gives only formal control over those we elect. The inequalities of wealth and power between those who own nothing but their ability to work and those who own industry means that the majority of people have no real say over decision-making.

MPs are not recallable so there is no way of keeping them to their electoral promises. The last Labour government was elected on the basis of making 'an irreversible shift in wealth



and power', yet it jumped to the tune of the International Monetary Fund and totally ignored Labour Party conference decisions.

The decisions on the constitution at the last Labour Party conference strike a blow at this situation.

Mandatory reselection of MPs increases democratic control. Widening the franchise for electing the party leader hits at parliamentary democracy

by extending real democracy. These moves towards democratisation lie behind the fury at the direct action of the Labour MPs last week. The defenders of parliamentary rituals are the opponents of real democracy.

And behind parliamentary democracy lies the repressive power of the state.

Three million people are now registered on police computers. The army is being trained in Ireland for

future use in Britain. More paramilitary police units are being set up like the Special Patrol Group. And laws like the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the 1971 Immigration Act drastically curb civil liberties.

Today the real defender of democracy is the labour movement. When socialists attack 'parliamentary democracy' it is not an attack on democratic rights. Democracy has to be defended against parliamentary and its mystical rituals.

Ford waves the big stick and dangles a small carrot

By Mick Drake

AS 57,000 Ford workers clocked in at the start of this week they were faced with a new, draconian disciplinary code.

And at the end of the week management is expected to offer a cool response to the unions' substantial wage claim. It's a case of a big stick and a small carrot.

Under the disciplinary code any worker who stops work, for whatever reason, including safety, now faces immediate suspension for the rest of the shift and the following one.

Other workers who refuse to 're-man the job' normally done by the suspended worker — in other words refuses to scab — will get the same treatment.

And if the production lines aren't running again within half an hour of the stoppage the whole department, even the plant, could receive the two-shift disciplinary penalty.

Management claims that this code is in response to 254 'unconstitutional' stoppages, which it says have taken place this year.

It maintains that its aim is to get workers to abide by a procedural agreement under which, says Ford, 'everyone must work normally until the problem is solved'.

Under the terms of this agreement 'the problem' can take up to two weeks to be 'solved'.

In attempting to implement the new code, management is itself going back on past agreements, specifically that which followed the strike, riots, and an occupation at the Dagenham plant

in the mid-1970s.

On the wages front the company will be replying to the unions' 1980 wages and conditions claim.

The unions calculate that increases of between £25 and £27 a week across the grades would be needed to re-tore wages to their October 1974 value, or £15 to £17.50 a week to the November 1979 value.

Threshold payments as protection against inflation, better holidays, full sick pay, better pensions, equal status with staff on job security, and a special payment for line workers are also claimed. There has been a retreat on the demand for a 35-hour week, which the unions are now proposing will not operate until 1985.

The shopfloor-based Ford Workers Group expressed concern when the group met in Liverpool on 8 November.

This was over the initial reaction of Ron Todd, chairperson of the trade union side of the Ford National Joint Negotiating Committee, which amounted to agreeing with the company's aims, and disagreeing only with its methods.

The Ford Workers Group is arguing for a different response; that any line 'problems' would have to be solved on the spot, in the department concerned, without involving personnel departments, senior stewards or union officials; for shop stewards committees to adopt a policy of refusing to 're-man' areas in dispute; for workers and stewards to refuse to sign any 'good behaviour' letter.

On wages the Workers Group distributed a leaflet last week which argued that nothing less than a £15 to £17.50 a week rise should be accepted.

Labour Party

THESE days it seems that everyone in the Labour Party is a democrat. First we have had right wingers like David Owen who at the Labour Party conference was threatening to 'fight, fight, and fight again' to defend the sole right of Labour MPs to elect the leader.

Then Owen and his co-gangsters were suddenly promoting schemes involving a postal ballot of all party members in which MPs as a group would get no special votes at all!

Now the Parliamentary Labour Party is advocating a hotch-potch proposal involving a postal ballot of individual Labour Party members; a postal ballot of affiliated trade unionists who are also individual party members; and a vote among MPs.

Ditched

These votes for the leader are to be aggregated in an electoral college in the ratio of a half to MPs, a quarter to party members, and the other quarter to Labour Party trade unionists.

The defence of MPs only having a vote may have been ditched, but would any of these schemes really amount

Why the Labour right isn't more democratic than thou

By Mick Sullivan, North Islington CLP

to more effective Labour Party democracy?

The conversion of the PLP is suspiciously sudden. The Campaign for Labour Party Democracy has been fighting for greater party democracy since 1973, yet only now when victory is on the horizon has the right wing discovered that the party conference and local general committees (GCs) are not democratic enough.

Never mind that the MPs now making these discoveries were themselves selected by GCs and have never complained about that. Quite simply, the right wing now recognises that there is no future in simply defending the status quo.

A new illusion of 'full party democracy' is needed while ensuring the continued independence of the PLP to do as it pleases.

Strength

The power of the labour movement derives from its collective strength; members coming together in regular meetings to discuss, decide, and act. Lacking the power of

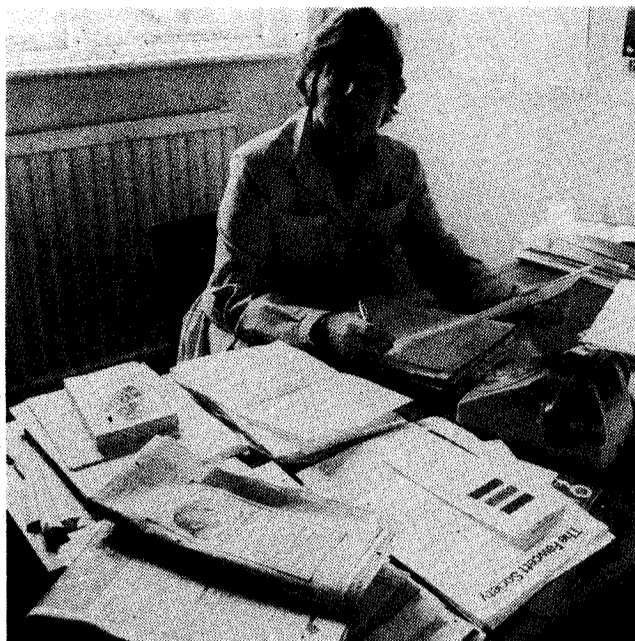
wealth, organisation is the only weapon working people have. A postal ballot would by-pass party and trade union structures and isolate members as individuals.

The only influence on those voting in the isolation of their home would be that of the mass media campaigning on behalf of right-wing candidates. No similar resources could be commanded by the left to put over their ideas.

Control

In such a situation the Labour right feels fairly confident that it would win. The PLP would remain floating above this mass of individual members with no organised party control over Labour MPs.

A vote by individual party members alone would also mean by-passing the organised link with the trade unions. This link is one of Labour's greatest strengths, and its breach could be the first step towards the creation of a right-wing social democratic party like the West German SPD, much loved by the



GANG of Three-er Shirley Williams, who lost her seat in the last General Election

Labour right.

The Labour Party conference, which brings together constituency delegates, trade union delegations, and

representatives of affiliated socialist societies, is potentially the most democratic way to take all decisions.

There has to be a fight to

ensure that trade union block votes really represent democratic decisions taken in the unions, and to open party affiliation to all working class organisations, but the principle of elected delegates debating and deciding policy in a collective framework is far more democratic than a referendum of isolated individuals.

Elected

The same is true for reselection of MPs by local GCs. A delegate monthly meeting of representatives of ward parties and trade union branches can have far more effective control of its MP, and a far better informed judgment of his or her performance, than individual party members called together for a reselection jamboree once every five years.

Unlike MPs, delegates to the general committees are elected each year by meetings of individual party and trade union members. And again unlike MPs, GC delegates can be withdrawn and replaced any time the ward or trade union branch no longer has confidence in them.

The aim of the right wing is to dissolve this potentially democratic and accountable structure into an occasional mass meeting with no effective means of maintaining control over its representatives.

Trade union block votes

How Clive Jenkins fell out with ASTMS delegates

By Geoffrey Sheridan

IT WAS by the narrowest of margins that the proposals for extending the Labour leadership franchise were defeated by delegates at the party conference last month. The result of these defeats is the special conference to be held in January.

One person in particular can be held responsible for this delay in stripping the PLP of its monopoly of the leadership franchise; a delay by which the Labour right hoped — with reason — to send adrift the moves to place Tony Benn at the party's helm.

That person is Clive Jenkins, the exuberant general secretary of the white-collar union ASTMS. Within minutes of the election of Michael Foot as party leader, Jenkins was on television to say what a wonderful thing that was.

Foot could well owe his election to Jenkins, since if

the latter had voted at the party conference as the majority of the ASTMS delegation asked him to, there would have been a majority for one of the franchise proposals put forward from the platform.

The arithmetic is quite simple. Joan Maynard of the party NEC proposed an electoral college with half the votes going to affiliated organisations, a quarter to the MPs, and a quarter to the CLPs.

Incensed

Clive Jenkins held in his hand the ASTMS card which counted for 447,000 votes. He cast them against the Maynard proposal, which was defeated by just 50,000 votes. Had he abstained on the vote, as the majority of the union's delegation wished him to, the proposal would have been carried.

Of ASTMS's 28-strong delegation, 16 of the delegates had been directly elected by the union's divisions. These delegates were incensed at Jenkins' action.

They had decided on abstention because the union's 1980 conference call-



DELEGATES at ASTMS's annual conference. This year they ruled that a meeting of the union's delegation at the Labour Party conference or the TUC had to be held if a majority requested one.



Clive Jenkins

ed for the widest possible franchise in the leadership election. The Maynard plan, in the view of the majority of the delegates, did not quite fit that bill, but they were certainly not against it as a fallback position.

Censure

Their view is summed up in a statement signed by all the union's directly-elected delegates at the conference, which has since been circulated to the union's 16 divisions.

They stated: 'We call on the union executive to censure our general secretary for casting our union card vote against the Maynard amendment when the delegation had been given an assurance by the president (former Labour MP Doug Hoyle) that ASTMS would abstain, and when a very clear majority of the delegation was objecting to his casting his vote in the way he did.'

Anger

'...It is obvious that the way ASTMS voted proved to

be a vital factor' (in the defeat of the proposal).

Their anger was in part due to a row which followed Jenkins' voting behaviour at the 1979 TUC.

A proposal from the furniture trades union for the General Council to organise mass actions against the Tory government was narrowly defeated at the Congress. Again, the Jenkins' vote — against the proposal — had been the deciding factor.

A majority of the ASTMS delegates at the TUC were in favour of the proposition, but president Hoyle refused to hold a delegation meeting which could mandate the general secretary.

The ASTMS conference this year plugged that loophole by voting that a delegation meeting at both the TUC and the Labour Party conference had to be held if a majority of the delegates requested one. Then came Jenkins' defiance at the 1980 Labour Party conference.

At least four of the divisions, including the two London divisions, have supported the statement from the delegates calling for Clive Jenkins to be censured. One

London division, No. 8, passed it unanimously.

But the ASTMS executive has decided to back the general secretary. At its meeting earlier this month, the executive supported Jenkins' position — put forward in a three-page statement — that the delegation wasn't for abstention. Only one executive member, Arthur Sier, representing No. 8 division, voted against Jenkins.

Urgent

These details are not related simply to put a spotlight on dubious practices in ASTMS.

In a number of respects — the fact that a majority of the delegates are directly elected, and that procedures have been laid down by union conferences for the conduct of delegations — ASTMS is a good deal more democratic than most unions.

The circumstances of the Jenkins' vote are recounted in order to emphasise what is an urgent matter in the battle over Labour Party democracy — accountability of the trade union block vote.

Photo: John Sturrock (Report)

YOUR front page report of the bomb explosion outside a Paris synagogue (9 October) was very disturbing. The total absence of analysis was combined with a plainly opportunistic reference to Pierre Goldman.

While Goldman may have been sympathetic to the Fourth International, he was extremely sympathetic and sensitive to Jewish aspirations, to the lessons of Jewish history, and was committed to the national rights and self-determination of the Israeli Jewish and Palestinian Arab peoples — in common left usage that is 'Zionist'.

Inadequate analysis of anti-Semitic attacks

Your article reported incidents of organised anti-Semitism and explained how anti-Semitism is exploited by 'Zionists' who are 'unfortunately associating anti-Semitism with anti-Zionism'. For Marxists the motive force in history is not fortune.

We are further treated to the proud declaration that the French section of the Fourth International

was quick to respond to the Nazi threat. What was necessary was:

1. A categorical condemnation of anti-Semitic attacks without raising the diversionary 'Zionist' bogey.
2. An analysis of anti-Semitism in France and in Western Europe generally that focuses on anti-Semitism as a daily reality; that sees it as being central rather than

peripheral to current West European racism; that recognises the fears and vulnerabilities of Jewish communities; and that sees organised fascist attacks as symptoms not causes. 'After the event' responses are plainly inadequate.

significant degree by the crudeness of current left Middle East analysis and compounded by the left's suspicion of and anti-path towards open and conscious Jewish participation in the left as potentially 'Zionist'.

4. A commitment to a vigorous campaign against all anti-Semitism. This entails giving practical support and building real solidarity with Jewish communities and developing and expressing in practice the sympathetic awareness and understanding of Jewish issues that Pierre Goldman held to in

his life.

DAVE ROSENBERG,
member of the Jewish
Socialists' Group

**Watch out,
there's a red
pencil about**

All the letters on this page have been edited...so, please try to keep letters to 300 words.

Defend free speech

WE have been regularly holding street meetings in North London during which we sell socialist literature. On 21 June the police attacked a meeting we were holding in conjunction with the Earlington Family Defence Committee and arrested four of its supporters.

These comrades have already appeared before Highbury magistrates court when the case was adjourned. They are to appear again on 19 November.

Socialist Challenge supported the Earlington Family Defence Committee, and we ask readers of the paper to support the defence of the street meeting. The right to openly conduct agitation and propaganda against the racism of the British state is coming under an intensified attack and defence of such rights is a necessity for all socialists.

We therefore urge you to support the Holloway 4 when they next appear at the notorious Highbury Corner magistrates court. We will be holding a picket of the court at 1.30pm on November 19.

We also need money to help fight the case; please made cheques and postal orders payable to: FRFI/HOI DEFENCE CAMPAIGN.

**M PETERS, Holloway
4 Defence Campaign**

What's Left

RATES for what's Left: 5p per word or £4 per col. inch. Deadline: noon Sat. prior to publication. Payment in advance.

NO Cruise Missiles! No to NATO! London CND Public Meeting. Bob Cryer MP, Prof Mike Pentz. Wed 26 Nov, 7.30pm, Friends House, Euston Rd, NW1. Details 01-242 0362/3.

UNEMPLOYMENT and decline: What we must do now. Tyneside Socialist Centre and Newcastle Trades Council. Speakers: Tony Benn, Phil Asquith (Lucas Aerospace), Jane Barker (CAITS), Chris Edwards (Newcastle Centre for the Unemployed). Sat 22 Nov, 10-4pm, Nixon Hall, Ellison Place, Newcastle. Tickets from Newcastle Socialist Centre, 115 Westgate Rd, Newcastle 1.

BLACK People in Britain: Hackney Campaign against Racism. Sat 22 Nov, 2.30pm, Trades Hall, 96 Dalston Lane, London E8. Benefit disco with food at 8pm. Funds to Richard Campbell campaign and Newham Youth Movement. Adm £1 (50p wageless).

FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

Public meetings: Victory to the H-Block Hunger Strikers — Political Status Now.

Speakers from the RCG — others invited.

Leeds: Fri 28 Nov 7.30pm, Trades Council Club.

Bradford: Wed 26 Nov 12.45pm, Room B, Queens Hall.

Glasgow: Mon 24 Nov 7.30pm, McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall St.

London: Fri 28 Nov 7.30pm, Caxton House, St John's Way, London N19. Adm 30p.

Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! No 7 Out Now. Exclusive interview with the IRA: the H-Block hunger strike — Victory to the Blanketmen! Political Status Now! Marx and Engels on Ireland — the Communist Tradition. Also anti-racist, overseas, and other news.

20p plus p&post from RCG Publications Ltd (SC), 49 Raiton Rd, London SE24.

THE Jewish Socialist Group is holding an open afternoon for those interested in finding out about our activities in continuing the radical socialist Jewish tradition. 23 Nov, 3pm. Current members and speakers from the national committee will be present. Details from Michael 01-455 2332 or Neil 01-904 8483.

EAST London Workers Against Racism. Fascism — What it is and How to Fight It. Public meeting. Speaker: Judy Harrison (ELWAR). Fri 21 Nov, 7pm, Fairholt House, City of London Poly Students Union, Whitechapel High St. (near Aldgate East tube).

BIG Flame/Socialist Students Alliance benefit. Sat 22 Nov, 7.30pm, South Bank Poly, Rotary St, London SE1. £2 NUS members and guests. ISAAG Deutscher Memorial Lecture. GA Cohen will speak on Freedom, Justice and Capitalism. John Saville in the chair. Mon 24 Nov, 7.30pm, London School of Economics, New Theatre.

ROCK against Racism Gig, Fri 21 Nov, 8pm, Paddington College, Paddington Green, London W2 — with The Distractions and Arawaks. Slides, disco. Adm £1.50. Unwaged £1.

'There are no workers' bombs'

DOES Phil Hearse really believe that Russian missiles defended Cuba in 1962? If so, then shouldn't they still be there now? And how on earth did the Cubans manage to defend themselves against the US invasion of the Bay of Pigs without them in 1961? Shouldn't Russian missiles be based in Nicaragua today?

The answer, of course, is no — the only real defence of any revolution is the mass mobilisation of the working people.

Yes, the USSR is a workers' state and the USA imperialist. This does not mean, though, that Russian missiles could defend Cuba, any more than US Cruise missiles would defend Britain. Or does Phil perhaps agree with those like Professor Michael Howard who argue against EP Thompson that we would be safer with them after all?

The founding statement of END does not, as Phil states, blame 'both Russia and the United States equally' for the threat of nuclear war, but the rulers of these countries.

If Phil does not defend the Soviet bureaucrats, as he claims not to, how can he disagree with that position?

There are no workers' bombs. The Russian bomb is the bureaucrats', and it is aimed at us and other workers. We must demand that workers, 'East' and 'West', disarm both the bosses and the bureaucrats.

JOHN STRAUTHER,
Liverpool

The Bomb: cut out the insults

THE debate among revolutionaries on the Soviet bomb is too important to be put in the slogan and insult swapping category.

I feel one useful contribution Socialist Challenge could make is to reprint the late Joseph Hansen's last article on this subject which appeared as a debate in the *US Militant*.

Also, just to ask someone other than Brian Grogan the questions from this page, I would like to ask George Kerevan what he thinks stopped Lyndon Johnson 'bombing Vietnam back into the Stone Age'.

I fear that the Soviet deterrent was a very real aid for that revolution. Also, how would George now advise the Fourth International to have responded to the Cuban missile crisis?

Howard De Selby,
London



EQUAL rights demonstrators in Trafalgar Square. This picture originally appeared in the Nov-Dec 1970 edition of Socialist Woman.

Photo: PETER JOHNS

Lessons for the women's movement

LEONORA Lloyd's article on the history of the British women's movement (6 Nov) was very useful. As a former member of the National Joint Action Campaign Committee for Women's Equal Rights general committee I feel there is much to learn from the campaign's brief but vital role in the struggle for women's rights.

From 1963 the Labour Party undertook research on equal pay; a report was prepared in 1965 but was never published. Two years later a committee was formed in Scotland to fight for equal pay, and local groups sprang up around the country culminating in the formation of NJACCWER.

Active

In 1968 the TUC broke with 100 years of inactivity and voted to give active support to any union taking industrial action in support of equal pay.

The following year Barbara Castle, the Labour minister for employment and productivity, introduced her 'Equal Pay Bill' which had the desired effect of heading off the impatience of

women workers and letting their 'leaders' off the hook.

Despite the drawbacks of this legislation there were those who pretended that the main aim of NJACCWER had been achieved and by 1970 the campaign had folded.

Why did it collapse after only 18 months?

The one and only democratic, decision-making meeting of the campaign was the inaugural meeting in the House of Commons. The 40-person council consisted of very experienced male and female trade union officials, very inexperienced but militant rank and file women trades unionists, one or two political women with no union experience, and a couple of women from the older women's organisations.

Because the fight was on so many different levels — on the shopfloor, in the trades union branches, in the political parties, against town councils or the government — it could only grow by thoroughgoing discussion and democratic decision-making.

The campaign should have organised financial, moral, and

physical support for actions taken in furtherance of its aims, with mass national demonstrations and support for legislation to provide an understandable and concrete goal for people to mobilise around.

Finally the main people responsible for this campaign had to be women — it is almost a truism to state that only the oppressed have the will to carry through the struggle against their oppression.

Reliance

A group of people within NJACCWER's committee had an entirely different view. They feared the militancy which had been shown in the preceding period; they wanted no interference by 'outsiders' in the trade unions; they wanted to restrict this movement to the traditional methods of the labour movement — reliance on the PLP and the trade union bureaucracy.

In a year of existence, NJACCWER did not set out any rules, and no new delegates were allowed to participate in decision-making, despite the hard work their organisations were doing for the campaign.

The women's liberation groups and action-based NJACCWER branches were disenfranchised.

Militancy or the right ideas could not defeat the misleadership of the Communist and Labour Party trade union bureaucracy, and those members of the GC who fought for a mass action perspective lacked a real base in the labour movement and were therefore powerless.

Over 10 years later, the ideas of feminism have gone into the labour movement, and feminists have become members of trades unions and the LP. We have the possibility of a class-struggle tendency, active on questions of women's liberation.

The focus of the fight has undoubtedly changed from equal pay to affirmative action, but the essential problems remain of a capitalist society that depends on female oppression and a labour bureaucracy that will not mobilise women in action.

Our task is to build a movement that combines the ideas of the autonomous WLM with the power of the labour movement — not a small job.

ANTONIA GORTON, London



First Anniversary of Revolution Celebration in Grenada, 13 March 1980

'Let those who hold the reins

ON 13 March 1979 the people of the Caribbean island of Grenada overthrew the brutal colonial regime of Eric Gairy.

The revolution sent shock waves throughout the Caribbean; for the first time a black, English-speaking island had decided

to reject the road of colonialism offered by the British and American governments. Instead they are following the revolutionary road of Cuba and Nicaragua.

The uprising was led by the New Jewel Movement, a revolutionary organisation

What was life like in Grenada under the regime of Eric Gairy?

When Gairy came to power in 1951 he captured the imagination of the workers; they expected him to eliminate the old administrative system. It turned out that Gairy had no such intention. He saw himself as taking over the position of the old colonial master.

He surrounded himself with a vicious group of people known as the 'Mongoose Men' and developed the Grenada Defence Force (GDF) as a vigilante group to protect private property. He became very close to Chile with General Pinochet as his military advisor.

On the economic front there had been no development. In '78 only three people received scholarships for higher education, and they happened to be children of government ministers.

Although the Tourist Board existed, there was no planned development and we had to import most of the food to feed the tourists.

Decisions were taken on a very ad-hoc basis. Those people who were supporters of the regime were able to get away with literally anything. Opponents of the regime sometimes paid for their opposition with their blood.

The health service was so run down that the general hospital was considered a national disgrace. If you were a patient and you wanted a simple thing like an aspirin, you had to go out and buy it yourself.

So it became clear that Gairy had to go. We formed the New Jewel Movement in 1973, and in '76 Gairy called an election. The NJM made an alliance with the Grenada National Party and the United Peoples Party, but the election was so badly rigged that it resulted in a 9-6 win for Gairy.

It became clear that a change of government by the procedure established by the constitution was not possible. Other means had to be found to remove him from power, and that's what happened on 13 March, 1979.

Could you describe the revolution itself?

Every time that Gairy decided to leave the island there would be all sorts of searches of the leadership of the NJM. In March '79, Gairy decided that he was going to attend the United Nations.

We received information that the NJM leaders were to be assassinated. Their homes were searched by officers of the GDF and police, but the NJM leaders had gone into hiding. It was clear that either there would have to be a move to change the government or the entire leadership of the NJM would be murdered.

Having taken the decision to change the government, our leadership mobilised the NJM. The first place attacked was the headquarters of the GDF. One person died in the revolution, a police inspector who had been trained in Chile.

Then we seized the radio station and the leadership called the people to arms. All the police stations on the island surrendered when they found that they had no support.



Participants in trade union seminar sponsored by Grenada's Bank and General Workers Union and Co Industrial Workers Union

Bomb attacks

ON 19 June bombs exploded at Queens Park, St Georges, at a mass rally which was to be addressed by leaders of the New Jewel Movement. Two young women were killed and 38 people injured. The bomb was timed to explode when the NJM leaders were speaking.

Another incident involving explosives occurred a week later when a bomb exploded at midnight in St Patricks, killing the person who was carrying it.

From the Free West Indian, 20 June '80.

Gairy's politicians were then picked up and placed in detention. We arrested the Mongoose Men, and they have since been tried and given sentences of up to 12

years. The revolution was so greatly welcomed that the people came forward in their droves. They carried ineffective weapons — stones or bits of stick — because everyone wanted to make sure of victory.

When a nation of people moves in that way, even at the expense of losing their lives, it is the highest form of the democratic process.

How has the revolution unfolded since 13 March?

The Provisional Revolutionary Government has made our position clear. It was said that the revolution was a revolution for jobs. It's a revolution for houses; it's a revolution to restore freedom, to organise legality in the country, to establish a free and just society.

Having lived over 300 years under colonialism, with an imperialist development, it was felt that the only way in which we can build

Now it's free health care

DOCTORS in Grenada have agreed jointly with the Provisional Revolutionary Government to stop all private practice in hospitals and other public health centres.

From the beginning of October thousands of poor Grenadians no longer had to pay for basic care or for medical certificates, prescriptions, or injections at a government hospital, visiting station, health centre, or other public clinic.

An average Grenadian family of seven makes approximately three visits a month to a doctor, so the saving amounts to \$40-50 a month.

The number of doctors working in the country has almost doubled, from 19 to 35. The number of specialists has also doubled.

From the Free West Indian, published in Grenada, 27 September '80.

our society is in a socialist direction.

Since 13 March we have moved decisively in that direction, on the basis that in building a sovereign country we do not wish to interfere in any other coun-

try's internal affairs; and we expect that they will not interfere in the internal affairs of Grenada.

Can you outline some of the measures taken by the PRG?

Since the revolution the PRG has declared that agriculture will be its first priority and that Grenada must be able to feed itself.

We have opened a sugar factory, and that will revive our sugar cane industry. We're tackling a disease that was creating havoc with the banana industry. This is important since the industry employs a large number of people.

With the assistance of the Cubans, we are developing a modern fishing industry. We now process fish, and can supply salt and smoked fish. But the factory is unable to produce enough to even meet local needs.

We now have a programme called Youth for Reconstruction and youngsters are being trained in scientific methods of farming. After training they either return to the land as agricultural officers or take up posts in the new co-operatives.

We have started a land reform — under Gairy 40

per cent of unattended will go to

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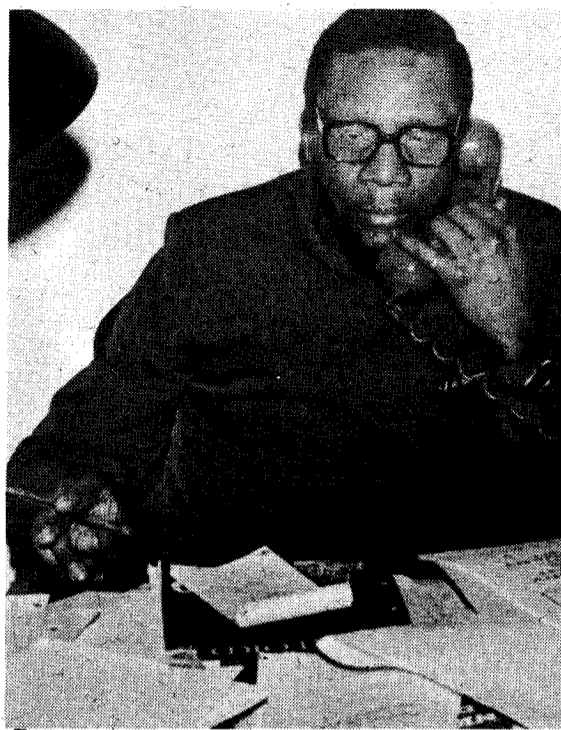
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The th the island Gairy's h

Who's Labour

...had worked to build opposition to Gairy since its foundation in 1973.

Clive Turnbull talked to FENNIS AUGUSTINE, Grenadian High Commissioner in London, about life under Gairy, the revolution, and the measures taken by the new government.



Fennis Augustine, Grenadian High Commissioner



'Spice' island

GRENADA is a small 'spice' island, part of the Windward group of islands. It is 344 sq km, with a population of 110,110. Its main agricultural crops are bananas, nutmeg, and cocoa.

The main industry is tourism. During 1970-77, under Eric Gairy, the average gross national product per head of the population fell by 3.2 per cent each year.



only treated 20 to 30 per cent of the people. We have now reversed that and have moved to develop local community health centres.

When I was in Nicaragua last year, the Sandinistas stressed how important it was to have a literate and educated people so that they could decide how to best use the scarce resources.

That way people knew who was responsible for shortages; not the 'greedy people in the next town', or the Sandinistas, but the legacy of the old regime and the sabotage of the imperialists.

This is what we are also thinking. If we are to develop democratic institutions it is important that the people should be able to take informed decisions, not decisions based on misinformation, which is the enemy of the world revolution.

Already we have started at the level of the parish councils. Representatives of the local areas meet once a month to discuss what's happening locally, to question government ministers, and to get the answers back to the community. This is based on the experiences of Cuba and Nicaragua.

The one major project that we think will make a big impact on unemployment and the community is the international airport. We are the only country in the English-speaking Caribbean

which has had to take on this type of project. All the other airports were built by the colonial masters.

How would you describe your revolution, and what do you mean by the slogan 'Let those who labour hold the reins'?

Right from the very first day we declared that Grenada will be moving towards becoming a socialist society. We have met with opposition, especially from the USA; Gairy, who is now based in San Diego, has attempted to recruit mercenaries.

We also know that the National Security Council under Brzezinski discussed the possibility of blockading Grenada. We know that they have planned to deal with Grenada through effective propaganda, destabilisation, and then assassination of the leaders.

We realise that the revolution will not be popular with some governments because if we succeed it will be a blow against imperialism. The peoples of the Caribbean will see for themselves that it is possible to develop a society that works and acts in the interests of the majority of the population.

That's what we mean by 'Let those who labour hold the reins'; that's what the revolution is intending to do. In fact that's why the revolution was made, and we will follow it through determinedly.

Therefore, the people who do not share that point of view, who always feel that only a minority, an elite, should have the right to make decisions for the rest of the community see the process taking place in Grenada as damaging to their position and want to change it.

We do not believe that what we are attempting will be passively accepted by the enemies of the revolution.

One of the most striking things about the revolution is its internationalism. Can you explain this, and the special relationship you have with the revolutionary governments of Nicaragua and Cuba.

We unashamedly say that we are on the side of the international working class. From our experience and from our own position it cannot be any other way.

Society has been created precisely to keep the working class in its place, doing all the work. We think that it's time that the working class obtained its rightful place, and we are on that side. I suspect that that does not endear us to a number of governments, but that's how we see things.

We have developed close relationships with Nicaragua and Cuba. So far as Cuba is concerned, they came to our assistance after the revolution in a very principled way.

When we heard that Gairy was recruiting mercenaries, we asked Britain, Canada, and America for arms to defend the revolution; they refused. So we asked Cuba, and they gave them to us.

To help us reorganise our health service, Cuba sent 12 doctors. We said we wanted to develop a fishing industry and Cuba sent experts and gave us fishing boats.

When we said we wanted to build an international airport, Cuba came forward with assistance. They have no money or oil, but they have sent us experts and machinery.

At no time can it be said that the Cubans have asked for anything in return. In fact it could be said that Cuba, with its massive fishing industry, could have exploited Grenada if they wanted. They could have said: 'We will supply you with tons of fish each year.' They didn't do that; instead they came and said: 'We will help you develop your own fishing industry.'

We have discovered that we have many problems in common with the people of Nicaragua, because both our peoples have suffered from imperialism and colonialism. We have developed a close working relationship. I don't think that was an accident; we have given priorities to the same things as Nicaragua.

Can you say something about the organisations that have been formed in Grenada since the revolution?

All the different institutions — the parish councils and in health and education — are seen as democratic ones whereby the people can take decisions and make recommendations to the PRG on what they want.

There is a massive campaign to organise women into the New Jewel Women's Committee. This is very successful because Grenadian women are taking the view that they are a substantial proportion of the population, and they are mobilising to deal with matters that they see as particularly affecting them. The PRG has

passed a law to give women the right to maternity leave.

There is also a law to give every worker the right to join a union. Once a ballot is taken in a plant, factory, or estate and there is a majority for joining a particular union, no manager can resist that.

We have within the NJM a trade union committee, publishing its own newspaper that covers developments in the union movement, work conditions and practices, and so on.

Arming the people

OVER two thousand people have joined the militia since the government began its recruitment drive. A large number of women together with young and old people are involved in training sessions.

All registration centres have reported a daily increase in the number of people who are willing to receive training to defend the country against any form of imperialist aggression and reaction.

The target set by the PRG for the militia is 20,000 members. From the Grenada Newsletter, July 1980.

We are now busy looking at the internal organisation of the NJM itself. We are holding lots of internal meetings and study classes so that the members can be better informed and therefore take informed decisions about matters affecting the nation.

We now have a NJM youth organisation with 3,000 members and 78 branches.

The old Grenada defence force was completely disbanded, but the police, who used to carry arms, were disarmed and are now being re-educated to accept a different role in the community, that of a service rather than a force.

A militia is now being trained, and we would like to see the entire population armed, as that is the only

way for us to defend our revolution.

What are the main priorities for aid and reconstruction, and what would you like to see coming from countries such as Britain?

We would like assistance in the area of agriculture to establish farming projects so that we can feed ourselves and then develop exports. We then need capital projects to develop a super-structure; things like roads and so on which are essential if we are to exploit our products.

We need other capital projects so that we can develop industries based on local products. For example, we are thinking in terms of an agro-industrial complex to can and bottle local fruits and foodstuffs.

There is a deposit of lime in the island which we want to develop; we would like to extend and improve the harbour facilities so that more ships can come and go more easily.

We are not too keen on the kind of industrial development where a firm comes in with components which we put together for them to sell again. It's not based on anything we have naturally. We feel it would be a disadvantage, and it would be exposing our people to exploitation as cheap labour. It would militate against proper trade union practice.

What would you say to British workers, particularly black workers, about the revolution in Grenada?

I think it is of interest to publicise and inform the working people and progressive people generally of what the developments in Grenada have been; to give them some indications of the positions of the government.

We want them to defend the revolution whenever it is being attacked by people who are misinformed, to argue the case for the revolution.

We see what is happening in Grenada, not in isolation, but as part of a developing world situation.

Grenada responds to Jamaican elections

The following are extracts from an editorial entitled 'Imperialism's latest victim', which appeared after the Jamaican election in the 1 November issue of *Free West Indian*, published weekly in St. George's, Grenada.

'On 30 October, Michael Manley became the latest victim of a well orchestrated, systematic imperialist plan of destabilisation. Over the last few years, international

reaction carefully sowed the seeds of Manley's defeat...

'The destabilisation techniques of imperialism paid off; the people became fearful, intimidated, confused. Finally they lost confidence in Manley and the Peoples National Party and voted him out...

'Our people are concerned that with Manley's defeat, imperialism will step up its aggression against the Grenada revolution. However, we state unequivocally

that regardless of threats, intimidation, or pressures, the Grenada revolution will be forever grateful to Michael Manley for his government's material aid, and to the progressive forces of Jamaica for their unbending solidarity.

'They can count on the friendship of the Grenada revolution.

'No matter what happens as a result of the changes in the region, the Grenada revolution will remain committed to its policies...

'Grenadians were

the first to have a revolution in the English-speaking Caribbean. And we will remain firmly dedicated to our revolutionary principles...

'We feel that we have a fundamental responsibility to our sisters and brothers in the region to consolidate our revolutionary process in spite of the new dangers that we may face. We must ensure that our revolution moves forward and grows stronger.'

Socialist Challenge News

SC Sales

ABERDEEN: SC sold Saturdays outside C&As — for more info ring Colin, 574060.
BATH: SC on sale at 1985 Books, London Road, and Saturdays 2pm-3pm outside the Roman Baths. Phone 20298 for more details.
BIRMINGHAM: SC on sale at The Ramp, Fri 4.30-5.40, Sat 10-4. For more info phone 643-0669.
BRADFORD: SC available from Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate.
BRIGHTON: SC sales regularly every Sat outside Open Market, London Road, from 11am-1pm.
BRISTOL: SC on sale 11-1, 'Hole in Ground', Haymarket. For more info contact Box 2, c/o Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Montpellier, Bristol 6.
BURNLEY: SC on sale every Sat morning 11.30-1pm St James St.
CARDIFF: SC sales Newport Town Centre outside Woolworths 11-12.30; Cardiff British Home Stores 11-12.30. Also available from 108 Books, Salisbury Road, Cardiff.

CHESTERFIELD: SC supporters sell outside Boots, Marketplace, Saturdays 11.30am-12.30pm.
COVENTRY: SC available from Wedge Bookshop. For more info about local activities phone 461138.
DUNDEE: SC available from Dundee City Square outside Boots, every Thursday 4-5.30pm, Friday 4-5.30pm, Saturday 11-4pm.
EDINBURGH: SC sales every Thursday 4.15-5.15pm Bus Station, St. Andrews Square; Saturday 11.30-2pm East End, Princes St. Also available from 1st May Books, or Better Books, Forrest Rd. For more info on local activity write to SC c/o Box 6, 1st May Bookshop, Candlemaker Row.
ENFIELD: SC available from Nelsons newsgents, London Rd, Enfield Town.
HACKNEY: supporters sell SC every Saturday morning at Ridley Road market E8.
HAMILTON: SC on sale 8-11 every Sat. outside County Bar Almada Street, every Sat outside Safeway 1.30-5. For more info contact Paul, 17 Clyde View or John at 54 Elliot St, Hamilton.

Huddersfield: SC supporters sell papers every Saturday 11am-1pm. The Piazza. SC also available at Peaceworks.
KILBURN: SC sales every Sat, 10am in Kilburn Square.
LAMBETH: SC available from Village Books, Streatham; Tetric Books, Clapham; Paperback Centre, Brixton; Oval tube kiosk. Also sold Thur and Fri evenings and Thur mornings outside Brixton tube.
MANCHESTER: SC supporters sell 11-1pm Sat at OLDHAM outside the Yorkshire Bank, High St; at BURY in the shopping precinct and at Metro Books; at BOLTON in the town centre; and in MANCHESTER outside the central reference library in St Peter's Square and at Grassroots and Percival's Bookshop. Tel: 061-236 4905 for further info.
NEWHAM: SC sale every Saturday, 11am to noon, Queen's Rd Market, Upton Park.
OLDHAM: SC sold every Saturday outside Yorkshire Bank, High Street. For more information about local activities. Tel: 061-682 5151.
OXFORD: SC supporters sell every Fri 12-2pm outside Kings Arms and

every Sat 10.30-12.30pm in Cornmarket.
STOCKPORT: SC sold every Saturday, 1pm, Mersey Way. Can be delivered weekly: phone 483 8909 (evening), 236 4905 (day).
SWINDON: SC on sale 11-1 every Sat., Regent St (Brunel Centre).
TEESSIDE: SC on sale Sat lunchtime in the Cleveland Centre, and in Newsfare, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, and outside Woolworths on Stockton High Street.
WOLVERHAMPTON: SC sales on Thur/Fri at Poly Students Union from noon-2pm and British Rail 4.30-6pm; an Saturday near Beatties, town centre from 11am-2pm.
 Is your town or city mentioned above? If not, why not send in details to the Socialist Challenge sales column.

Dec in Leeds. Agenda: perspectives; Labour Party; women's liberation. Details of venue later.
CPSA FRACTION: Sat 22 Nov, 12.30-5pm National Centre. Agenda: the turn; perspectives; Cruise; women's liberation.
RAIL FRACTION: Sat 13 Dec, 1-5pm at national centre.
IRISH FRACTION: Not on 30 November, now postponed to New Year.
WOMEN'S LIBERATION FRACTION: 22 Nov, 11am. North Kensington Amenity Trust, 1 Thorpe Close, London W10.
WOMEN & TURN: Day school on Sun 23 Nov, Waterloo Action centre, Bayliss Rd, Waterloo. 11am.
IMG WOMEN'S LIBERATION NOTES: Is your branch receiving them every week? If not write to women's organiser at the centre. And why not send in a report for inclusion in the bulletin? All contributions in by Monday each week. Ring Judith on 01-359 8371 to discuss a visit from the IMG women's organiser this autumn.
IMG MEMBERS: We urgently need you to fill vacancies in a variety of

technical posts in National Centre. Any cdes interested ring Penny on 01-359 8371.
Socialist Challenge Events
ISLINGTON: 'Jobs not Bombs' meeting on Thur 27 Nov at Islington Nth Library, Manor Gardens, N7, 7.30pm. Gardner's and CND speakers.
MANCHESTER: Socialist Challenge public meeting on Thur 20 Nov, 7.30pm. 'Revolution in the Caribbean', Star and Garter pub, Fairfield St, nr Piccadilly Station.
MANCHESTER: Socialist Challenge public meeting on Thur 4 Dec, 7.30pm. 'Why is there a slump?', Star and Garter pub, Fairfield St, nr Piccadilly Station.
NATIONAL STUDENT FRACTION: Sun 30 Nov in the North West — exact venue to be decided. For all student comrades.
COLLEGE MEETINGS: Cruise missiles and Charter '80 meetings should be arranged as soon as possible. Speakers and dates arranged by Ann (01-359 8371) or Stephanie

REVOLUTION

FOR A UNITED REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH ORGANISATION

(021-359 5921).
GAY LIBERATION FRACTION: Sat 6 Dec at National Centre 11am. Write for details to Paul, c/o PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.
FUNDRAISING: All Revo branches to organise Xmas parties and other fundraising events.

'I've been fighting the capitalist system for thirty years'

JUDD ALLSOP is a miner in Bolsover, North Derbyshire. He is also a revolutionary. He told **Bill Alder** about life in a pit community, the army, and the labour leadership.

My dad worked down the pit, among other things. When I was a kid I had five brothers and two sisters. And there was always one of us 'at college' — in nick, I mean. It's the old story — give a dog a bad name... That was our family: pit, army or nick.

I went down the pit when I was 15, and joined the army when I was 22. I left soon after, and went to nick for defending myself against a copper.

I've been inside seven times since, always for fighting, never thieving. You see, I had a reputation like Billy the Kid in Bolsover and local 'hard men' from all over Derbyshire came to fight me. I almost trained to be a professional boxer but that never worked out.

Fight

I've always wanted to fight. First it was other workers, which was wrong. Then I tried to fight the capitalist system on my own. Now I want to fight the system organised with all other workers.

My involvement in trade union work only really came in later years, after the miners' strike and the experience of how a Labour government — supposedly our

government — was attacking workers.

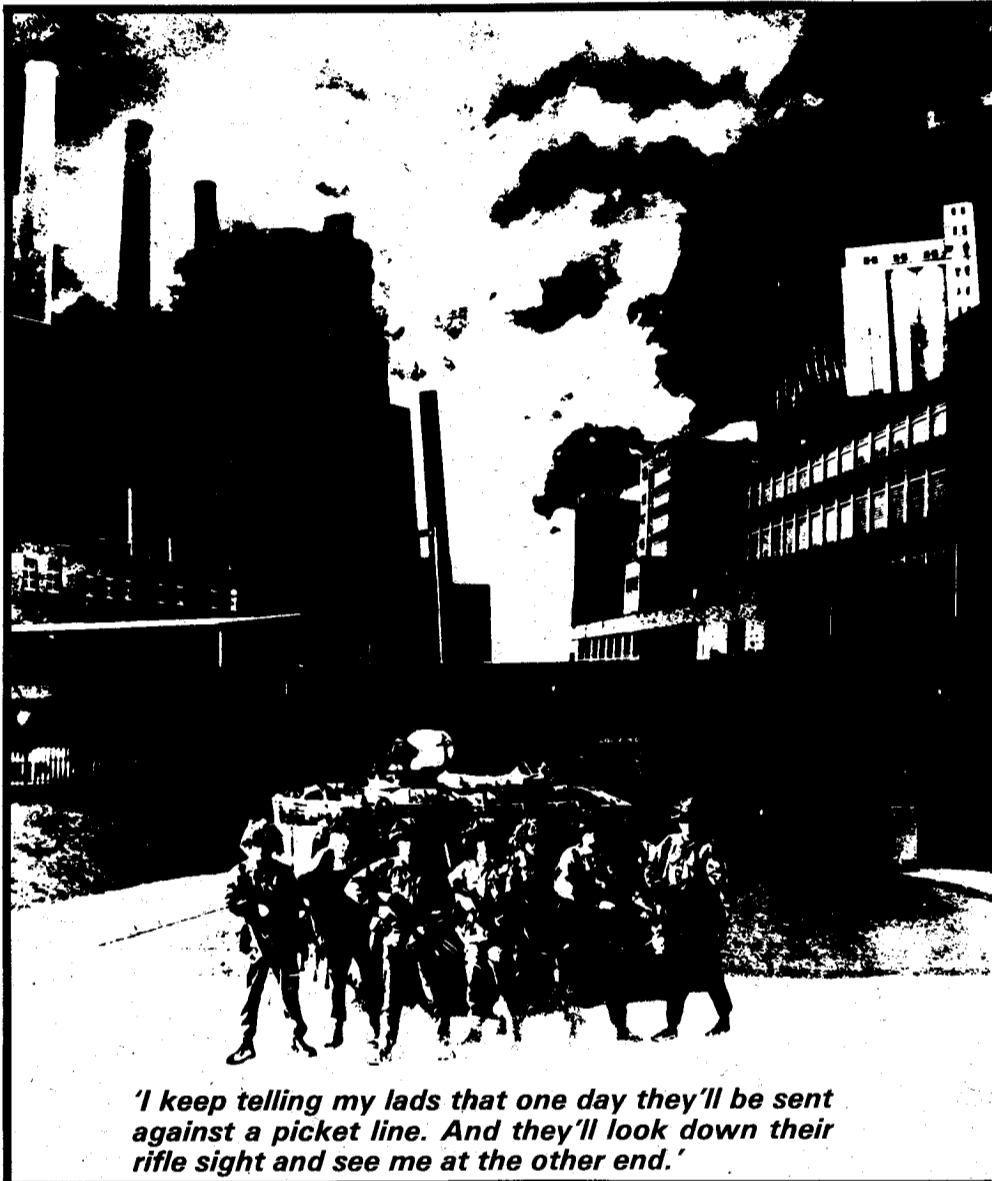
They were never very happy with me in the Labour Party. In fact it took 18 months for them to allow me to join. And when I did get in, all the Labour councillors wanted to do was to talk about dustbin allocation and that sort of thing.

Society

As for today, the unions should be fighting on jobs as well as wages. That's what the steel strike should have been about. It's not just about those who are unemployed but about unemployment — and that threatens us all. We must fight now for the right to work.

I've been fighting the capitalist system for 30 years. But I always tried to fight it on my own. I came into contact with Marxist ideas in 1977, when I started having political discussions with a friend in the International Marxist Group in Nottingham.

It took a good two years or so for me to be fully won over. I must have told revolutionaries to piss off dozens of times, but



'I keep telling my lads that one day they'll be sent against a picket line. And they'll look down their rifle sight and see me at the other end.'

finally I came to see that what they said about organising to change society made sense.

Then in 1979 we decided to build a branch of the IMG in Bolsover, starting with me and two other miners.

My three sons have joined the army. It was their choice — if you can call it a choice, since the only alternative was the pit or the dole

queue. I talked to them for hours, explaining exactly what the army

did and how it was a tool of the ruling class, controlled by the officers and used against workers.

But I wouldn't force them to go down the pit or on to the dole queue.

As for Ireland, I believe that the troops should be withdrawn -

they're only there to suppress the Catholics, not to keep the peace. Ireland should be a united country ruled by its own government of the workers.

Choose

I keep telling my lads that one day they'll be sent against a picket line. And they'll look down their rifle sights and see me at the other end. I've told them that then they'll have to make a choice — shoot me or turn their guns on the officers. And I'm sure they'll choose rightly.

I watched the TUC and Labour Party conference on TV. In five days our so-called leaders didn't make one inch of real progress.

The TUC leaders have no business making deals with future Labour governments at this stage. It's up to the rank and file workers to control the TUC and the Labour Party now and if we get another Labour Government.

Revolutionaries must get deeply involved in their local communities. In the past Socialist Challenge has often looked like the paper of a small, mainly academic group. It has followed working class struggle when it moved — like in the steel strike — but it has not been sufficiently deep in the working class to give leadership.

Lobby

So in Bolsover we're organising on all these questions. We're campaigning for the unions to fight unemployment and we took a coach to lobby the Labour Party conference on the nuclear weapons question.

We want to fight against council house rent increases in Bolsover — the second lot in not many more months.

I'm hopeful. All workers are frustrated by this system. You can try working, stealing or even dropping out — but capitalism won't go away. That's why we need to organise in the unions, build a revolutionary party — to smash capitalism and replace it with a workers' government with total recall.

Other

THE BOOKSHOP

Boris Komarov

The Destruction of Nature in the Soviet Union

Pluto Press, £2.95

Smuggled out of Moscow by the author, this book reveals the extent to which industrial pollution has become a problem of crisis proportions threatening the existence of the Soviet Union.

Göran Therborn

The Ideology of Power and the Power of Ideology

Verso Editions, £2.50

Therborn makes an important contribution to the debate on ideology which will establish new bearings for the discussion in the '80s.

Peter Fuller

Seeing Berger — A Re-evaluation

Writers and Readers, £1

In this book Fuller underlines what is most valuable in Berger's art criticism and argues the case for a materialist understanding of art.

Available from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP. Tel: 01-226 0671. Please add 15% if ordering by post.

Money rolls in

LAST month saw a big boost to our fund drive. An anonymous donation of £800 and the £120 profit from our national Cruise missiles rally brought our quarterly total so far to £1442.49.

Boost

With the opening of our £100,000 Fund Drive '81 we will be closing down the normal quarterly appeal till May '81. But we still need your money for Fund Drive '81 which will allocate money to boost the paper over the coming months.

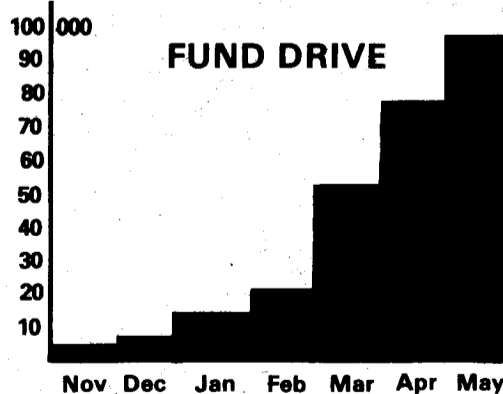
Why not take out a standing order to help us? Pledge us £10 a month between now and May and you're giving us £50 towards our building. If every reader did this, we'd reach our £100,000 target by January!

Our thanks this week to:

G Tomlinson	£5.00
Bob Purdie	2.50
E Gartner	2.50
J Irvine	1.50
IMG Teachers	75.00
M Whyte	2.00
P Purton	50.00
J Nolan	1.50
Anon	5.00
Anon	800.00
MB	20.00
October standing orders	48.00
Cruise rally	120.00
IMG Media workers	15.00
Anon	2.50
Winmarie	15.00
A Agnew	5.00
Morag & Charlie	5.00
N Young	1.00
E Mahood	10.00
R Sorotkin	10.00
Leamington IMG	5.00
E Oldham	10.00
T Khamis	10.00
November standing orders	105.00

Total this week £1252.00

Cumulative total £1442.49



November 29 Sales Drive

THE massive Labour Party demonstration against unemployment on 29 November is an excellent opportunity for us to sell more papers. Every IMG branch and Socialist Challenge supporter is urged to contact our distribution department and order extra copies. Sale or return facilities are available for bulk extra orders.

Who in the Labour Party wants to read about Trotsky?

FIRST people to take advantage of our new subscriptions drive were the Labour Party and the Welsh Labour Party! They have been sent free copies of *Trotsky for Beginners* and we hope to see the effects over the coming months!

But we'll need more than that to reach our target of 1,000 subscriptions by January. We'll be looking for an average of 100 new subscriptions a week. As we explained last week we're looking to our regular sellers to start the ball rolling. So get those subs in!

Fascists to march for import controls

SWASTIKAS have been scrawled on numerous walls in Preston and Asians have been threatened.

Some 20,000 jobs in the town are dependent on the truck industry, which has been sharply hit in the recession. About 19,000 workers are on part-time.

The New National Front, led by John Tyndall,

regards this as fertile ground. Calling for import controls, it is holding a march in Chorley, just south of Preston, next Sunday, 23 November.

A counter-demo on that day is being supported by the trades council, Anti Nazi League, and local anti-racist organisations. John Parkinson, secretary of Preston Trades Council, says that the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, which favours import controls, will be asked to support the counter-demo.

Details tel. 0772 731089 or 0772 791618.

Pete Middleton adds: A march by the fascist National Front in Bolton, Lan-

cashire, is also due to take place on 23 November.

The planned route of the march will take the Front through immigrant areas in Bolton and is due to finish with a Nazi-style rally in the town centre.

The NF is protesting against plans by the local council to allocate funds to immigrant centres.

Anti-fascists and anti-

racists in Bolton are insisting that the march should not be allowed to take place. The Anti Nazi League has been street-leafleting and a public meeting has been held.

A counter-mobilisation against the Front will assemble at Bolton Institute of Technology car park at noon on Sunday.

Nazis beware!

By Davy Jones

THE Anti Nazi League is back in business. That was the message from its press conference held last week, almost exactly three years after the ANL was launched.

There is a wave of fascist violence including attacks on black and Jewish people, gays and trades unionists. National Front demos have

been held in recent months in 13 towns, from Glasgow to Tonbridge Wells.

The openly Nazi British Movement has become the leading activist fascist group, which has chosen football terraces as its main recruiting area.

At Chelsea's Stamford Bridge ground there are regular chants of 'Seig Heil' from hundreds of youth at the Shed end.

The Anti Nazi League has big plans to counter this new threat.

*A mass rally against fascism in Europe on 8

December. Speakers at the rally, to be held at the Friends Meeting House in London, will be: Tony Benn; Renato Zangheri, the mayor of Bologna; and a representative of the FASP autonomous police union in France.

*A Youth against the Nazis conference on 28 February at Conway Hall.

*A relaunch of Footballers Against the Nazis to counter Nazi infiltration of the terraces.

The ANL can be contacted at: PO Box 353, London NW5 4NH. Tel. 01-485 2872.

British fascism: the monster stirs again

By Roy Kirk

THE fascist groupings in Britain are starting to move again.

The British Movement has gained an influence among skinhead gangs in a number of areas of the country.

The National Front is selling its paper to football crowds. The monster is stirring itself.

The hopelessness of the dole queue and the failure of the labour movement to stop Thatcher have given a new opportunity to what was last year a debris of split and demoralised fascist groups.

The 1979 election was the catalyst for the explosive disintegration of the National Front. The political tensions were evident before the election, in the disputes between NF leader Webster and Tyndall.

Martin Webster saw the big weakness of previous fascist groups as their capitulation to become creatures of capitalism. This failure, he considered, was due to their lack of ideology. The National Front had failed to work out its ideas and needed a free debate on the subject.

This line led Webster to a related point. The NF could not be based on the middle class, but rather the 'desperate and dispossessed among the white working class'.

Some of the NF wanted to relate to developments at the extreme right of the Conservative Party, but according to Webster it was only when the Front was far bigger and the crisis more intense that the middle class could be won. 'The NF must not get middle class support by adopting and promoting policies which are... attacks on the working class.'

Tyndall responded immediately. He saw no need to evolve an ideology. 'The Front possesses an ideology which has long ago been constructed,' Tyndall argued.

In other words Tyndall was a straight down the line Hitlerite. The need was not for a debate between factions, but rather to control political power and to produce a political machine with a press, organisation, money to rule the streets and factories as a counter to the red revolutionary machine.

This was a long-term project. The National Front had to become a cadre party of educated and trained leaders. Talent had to be

recruited from the middle class, since, 'it is by the sustained work and dedication of political élites that parties are built'.

The '79 election results were a disaster for the fascists. The proportion of votes won by NF candidates slumped from an average of 3.3 per cent in February '74 to 1.3 per cent in '79. This brought into the open the Constitutional Movement, which launched an attack on Webster but also on Tyndall.

Fountaine, Kavanagh, Beauclaire and the other supporters of this 'movement' are firm Nazis, but they saw no prospect for any advance by advertising this fact.

Tyndall and Webster had to go, and a more respectable image adopted for the purpose of doing a job on the Freedom Association and the rest of the 'respectable' right who would be disenchanted by Thatcher.

As well as pulling behind them the county set and ex-military officers, the Constitutional Movement also got the contacts with big money. They pulled off one of the slickest political operations in recent times by achieving a majority on NF Properties and walking off with the assets.

When the dust had settled it was found that the NF had split into four

Demo to counter British Movement march through Notting Hill
Called by ANL
Sunday, 23 November 11.30am
Assemble at Ladbroke Grove, Notting Hill



Skinhead supporters of the Nazi British Movement

fragments. In addition to those already mentioned, the British Democratic Party — formed by Anthony Reed Herbert — ended up with a majority of the NF's activists in the Midlands.

Politically this faction is close to the Constitutional Movement and there are rumours that a fusion will take place after December, when the 'movement' re-occupies the national NF headquarters and Webster and friends are forced out.

The 'movement' produces a magazine *Excalibur*, and a paper called *Frontline News*. The magazine reads like a racist version of *Country Life* and is strong on respectability.

'It is important that we

represent ourselves to the wider community as informed, responsible and politically conscious people,' the magazine has declared.

As part of the process of building links, writers such as Robert Moss and Sir Robert Thompson from the orthodox extreme right have been featured. But hard-line Nazis also write.

Membership of the Constitutional Movement is claimed to be nearly 700. The British Democratic Party claims, rather optimistically, to have 800 members. If the fusion comes off, and given that money appears to be no object to the 'movement', a strong organisation will

have been formed with the likelihood of further regroupment.

Meanwhile Tyndall and his supporters have formed the New National Front, which took the whole of the NF in the West of England. This was a big growth area in 1978-80, but the NNF has done badly in London.

The political thrust of this faction is for a hard-line, disciplined, and centralised party.

The issue of Martin Webster's life-style has been raised repeatedly, and now Verrall will probably get the same treatment. Tyndall brands the NF as pursuing a youth cult, arguing that its leadership only feels happy with the very young: 'Some scoutmasters and choir-

masters belong to this type; buffoons in the adult world, they can become little kings in the juvenile one.'

The NF has managed to stabilise itself and even show some dynamism. It has lost a lot of members, however.

The Front's crisis has given a big opportunity to the openly Nazi British Movement, which is probably the largest of the fascist groups. It has produced material aimed at schools and has many skinhead recruits.

This success has brought its own problems and a section of the BM membership has launched an attack on the youth policy since it is impossible to control or consistently direct the

violence of the youngsters.

Another important factor is that the BM has direct links with West European fascist groups which have made a turn to terrorism. It is not impossible that they will try the same tack here.

Despite the apparent chaos of British fascism, there is undeniable evidence of regrowth. Behind the splits can also be seen co-operation. The League of St George and the NNF held a united demonstration at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday, with an invitation extended to Flemish fascists.

If they are allowed to, the fascists will regroup and overcome the defeats they suffered at the hands of the Anti Nazi League.

The fascist who's who

National Front: Now led by Martin Webster, the NF stresses links with the white working class. It is strong on youth work.

New National Front: Led by John Tyndall, as hard-line Hitlerite, it aims at middle class support.

Constitutional Movement: Led by landowner Andrew Fountaine, it seeks 'respectable' links with the Tory far right.

British Democratic Party: Strong in the Midlands, the BDP is led by lawyer Anthony Reed-Herbert. There are rumours of a pending fusion with the Constitutional Movement.

British Movement: Openly Nazi and notorious for its racial mythology and illiterate 'propaganda', this is now the biggest fascist group. It has infiltrated the skinhead gangs and breeds a cult of violence.



'Buffoons in the adult world...' National Front leader Martin Webster.



Old fascist friends fallen out — Tyndall (left) and Fountaine in happier days.

Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)



Abortion rights under attack again

By Joan Twelves

WOMEN'S abortion rights are under attack again. Since the defeat of John Corrie's bill the anti-abortionists have been seeking other ways to implement his restrictive proposals.

Lord Denning's Appeal Court ruling preventing nurses from taking part in prostaglandin abortions is the first such attack. The next may well be a government-backed lowering of the abortion time limits from 28 to 24 weeks.

Prostaglandin is used in 'late' abortions — those after 16 weeks of pregnancy. They only constitute some two per cent of all abortions, but this small number includes those who most desperately need abortion facilities: the middle-aged woman who mistakes pregnancy for her 'change of life', the young woman who is too frightened to tell anyone, or women needing abor-

tions for medical reasons (for example tests for spina bifida babies are not completed till the twentieth week of pregnancy).

Punish

Prostaglandin abortions can be very distressing for women, often resulting in the inducement of 18 hours' labour and the birth of a dead foetus. Professor Peter Huntingford, a leading pro-abortion figure, commented, 'I can only assume that doctors use this method in order to punish women, and make the experience as unpleasant as they can.'

But the undesirability of prostaglandin abortions should not be used to welcome the Denning ruling. It is still an attack on a woman's right to choose whether and how to have an abortion, even a 'late' abortion.

Safe

As the National Abortion Campaign Declaration of Aims this year said,

WOMEN RULE OK!

Women Rule OK!

A NEW seven-part series by women, about women and for women begins on Monday 24 November at 12.30pm on ITV.

The programmes, *Women Rule OK!*, will look at women in the professions, women as trade unionists and MPs, women at work, women's clinics and self-help groups and women coping with dependent relatives or children on their own.

The series seems well worth viewing for all those who can find a TV at lunch time.

'NAC wants women to be able to have safe, early, abortions, but there are women who, for important medical and personal reasons, need to have late abortions. These women are not criminals. Restrictions in the law do not help

them. The only way to reduce the number of late abortions is to make abortions freely available on the NHS — with no legal or medical restrictions.'

Anti-abortionists think the best way to restrict abortion rights is to reduce

the time limits, hence their concentration on 'late' abortions. But with inadequate facilities there will always be a need for 'late' abortions. That's why there is a need for positive legislation to guarantee a woman's right to choose.

Britain before the Abortion Act

By Ann Potter

'THERE'LL be no more murdering little babies in Birmingham,' stated the notorious Professor McLaren after the passing of the '67 Abortion Act. But Birmingham was a centre for cheap, illegal abortions before then as a brief but useful new pamphlet by Madeline Simms points out. Her pamphlet refutes the idea that abortion has only appeared in Britain on any major scale since the passing of the '67 Act.

Simms provides a disturbing survey of abortion techniques used between and after the World Wars. These range from crochet hooks, meat skewers, lead-based drugs (which poisoned many women), to the terrifying hairpin attached to an electric battery and a five-inch piece of elm bark.

Abortion drugs were openly advertised, even in the religious press, and the pamphlet tells of a certain Vicar of All Saints in Spitalfields who sold varieties of abortion treatments.

Abortion led to great hardship for many women and their families. Treatments costing no more than a shilling or two to make were sold for up to five guineas, more than a poor family's weekly food budget.

Wealthy women had less trouble and risks to face. If a woman had money and information she could have an abortion by a recognised doctor as a debate in Parliament in 1936 made clear.

However the back street abortionists were held in high regard by their grateful patients. The pamphlet records that in 1938 at the

funeral of Dr Daniel Powell of Tooting, 'Women from all parts of the country journeyed to London to see him to rest', and prior to that when two patients accidentally died £1,700 was collected for his defence.

This situation carried on right up to the passing of the '67 Act. In a survey in 1965, 31 out of a random 40 chemist and rubber goods shops sold preparations to induce abortion.

According to the pamphlet 463 women died in abortions in 1933 whereas in 1978 this had been reduced to 5. In 1949 there were about 250,000 abortions each year or one for every four live births. All the evidence shows that throughout the 20th century abortion on a massive scale has been a common experience of English life, and that women will always get abortions no matter what the law says.

Abortion in Britain before the Abortion Act — A survey of the historical evidence by Madeline Simms, published by the Birth Control Trust. Available from 27-35 Mortimer Street, London W1N 7RJ. Price 15p.

The Labour Party question and the SWP

By Bob Pennington

THE conflict between left and right inside the Labour Party is more intense than at any time since the defection of MacDonald and company in 1931. Nor is that conflict likely to die down. Growing unemployment, declining social services, falling living standards, and the menace of the imperialist war drive, all fuel the battles inside the LP.

Ironically, as the lines are being drawn even more sharply between the left and right, the Socialist Workers Party is arguing that the struggles inside the LP are of little importance.

After the Labour conference this year, Paul Foot wrote in *Socialist Worker*: 'What matters, then, is not how strong the Left is in the Labour Party machine, how many members it has on the executive, how it controls the electing of the Party leader and so on. What matters is how strong is the confidence of the masses, and how deeply have socialist ideas penetrated into the offices, factories and pits.'

In a front page headline *SW* asked: 'Can we wait for Labour?'

and went on to argue that: 'We can't wait for socialists to take over the Labour Party...' explaining that: 'Organising among the rank and file workers in the here and now is the real test...'

This one-sided approach ignores the fact that political developments inside the LP have a big effect on millions of workers. This does not mean that the majority of workers play an active part in the wards and constituencies. What it does mean, is that in times of crisis, working people start to seek solutions and they look towards the LP for such solutions.

During the 1950s, and most of the '60s, the working class made its most significant gains by

Socialist Worker

What's all this Labour 'leader' business about?

THE obvious question about the present Labour Party leadership election is the

union organisation at the workplace, and in general showed little real interest in the internal arguments and discussions inside the Labour Party. The Bevanites never really got a base inside the trade unions.

But things are changing. People are beginning to recognise that to fight mass unemployment, solutions like nationalisa-

tion are needed, and the working week has to be cut. If the social services are to be saved, a massive cash injection is needed in the public sector. Besides industrial action against the siting of nuclear weapons in Britain, the disruption of the war drive means getting Britain out of NATO.

Nationalisation, a universal cutting of the working week, a

programme of public works and withdrawal from NATO all require action by a government and that is the reason why the debates inside the Labour Party are of much greater importance than Paul Foot thinks.

Impact

The ruling class and its media do understand a fact that escapes the SWP, namely that all these debates about democracy and policy have an impact on the thinking and the action of masses of working people. The size of the 26 October CND demonstration was partly due to the fact that the Labour conference had voted for unilateralism. This gave a credibility to the campaign against nuclear weapons that had not existed since the Labour conference voted in 1960 in favour of unilateralism.

That is one reason why socialists have a vested interest in the debates now raging inside the Labour Party.

Furthermore the intensification of the fight inside the LP is a response to the growing polarisation between the working class and its allies, and the ruling class and their spokespersons in the labour movement.

We take sides in this division and reject the sectarian abstentionism of the SWP. We have to make sure that this battle is taken right to its limits. Struggle will

determine the outcome of the class struggle not propaganda alone.

Reformism can only be defeated in Britain, and replaced by a Marxist revolutionary party by combining work both inside and outside the LP. It would have been wrong to wait until the LP had launched a campaign against the Corrie Bill, had organised action against unemployment, or built a wide based movement against Cruise missiles. The IMG has always supported, and often has been in the forefront of launching such initiatives.

This is why we reject 'entrism' which in practice means only taking part in those activities inspired by, or supported by the LP. Supporters of Socialist Challenge fight inside the Labour Party for action and support for those types of campaigns, just as they fight for more socialist policies and an extension of democratic rights inside the LP. This is the best way to build a fighting and organised left wing inside the LP.

The attitude of the SWP towards the struggle inside the Labour Party leaves the mass reformist party in the hands of its bureaucratic misleaders. If the SWP continues on its present abstentionist line then it will become marginalised by the future struggles which will rock the Labour Party to its very foundations.

Where Crossroads is under women's control

NEXT Tuesday *Man Alive* on BBC2 will be showing 'South Africa Belongs To Us'. NICK ROBIN reviews this and another new South African film.

TWENTY thousand black South Africans live illegally in the Crossroads squatter camp, a 'shanty-town' outside Cape Town. It is illegal because black women, men and children live together at Crossroads.

The leadership of the squatter camp is the women's committee. Women are banished to the reserves in South Africa so that the wages of male workers in the mines and urban areas

can be kept as low as possible.

The Crossroads community organises its own health, education and welfare; its own system of justice, and its own defence against the South African police.

The camp is a testimony to the tremendous resourcefulness, determination, and creativity of the universal black resistance to apartheid rule.

Interviews with the women of Crossroads are included in two new

excellent films about South Africa — *South Africa belongs To Us* and *Abaphuciwé* (The Dispossessed) — which expose the nature of South Africa's racist capitalism.

In both films the richness of black resistance is forcefully conveyed by the technique of having black South Africans speak their experience directly to the camera. The effects of the systematic oppression of the apartheid state come across

with a minimum of the usual voice-over 'interpretation'.

Abaphuciwé records the experience of victims of the 'homeland' policy — the forced removal of the black population (six million people so far) from the cities and the countryside into the tiny fragmented bantustans assigned by the state on supposedly 'liberal' lines.

South Africa Belongs To Us concentrates on the struggle of the black women of South Africa. Winnie Mandela and

Fatima Meer broke banning orders prohibiting them to be quoted or to appear in the film. They predict increasing violence against the hated white regime, in which 'the black woman will have to play her part, fully, in an armed struggle'.

* Both films are available for hire from: *The Other Cinema*, 79 Wardour St, London W1V 3TH. Tel. 01-734 8508. *Abaphuciwé* is £20 and *South Africa Belongs To Us* is £25. Use them!

A Soviet scientist recalled a visit to an experimental collective farm in the far north of Russia.

"...What I saw was much worse than before.... Both the people and nature. It was horrible."

"Well, then, did you do something?" one of his audience asked.

"I cried."

In 1977 Moscow's Progress Publishers issued a collection of essays by leading Soviet scientists entitled *Society and the Environment: a Soviet View*. Its argument was summed up by Dr Ilya Novik and Academician Yevgeny Fyodorov:

'In the Soviet Union, as in other socialist countries, prevention of environmental pollution and rational (in the long term) use of natural resources follow naturally from the essence of the socialist system.'

Disaster

Although sceptics have pointed out that, with Japan, the Soviet Union is one of the nations threatening the existence of the whale through overfishing, lack of other information has made it difficult to question the Soviet claim.

The publication of Boris Komarov's book changes all that. Komarov is a high Soviet official in close touch with the scientific and political establishment, and he reveals that the Soviet Union is in the grip of an ecological disaster.

*One tenth of the entire habitable area of the Soviet Union — 1.45m square kilometers — is now unusable. 'If bourgeois Europe had treated its environment as we have,' writes Komarov, 'all the inhabitants of England, France, Italy, West Germany, Switzerland and the Benelux countries would long ago have found themselves in a sterile desert.'

Unchecked

*The level of noxious gases in the atmosphere of ten Soviet cities is one hundred times the maximum permitted concentration.

*Pollution of lakes and seas has reached frightening levels. 'Actually,' one top official said privately, 'we have already lost the Azov, the Aral and probably the Caspian as well.'

*Lake Baikal, the oldest and deepest lake in the world, is threatened with irreversible damage.

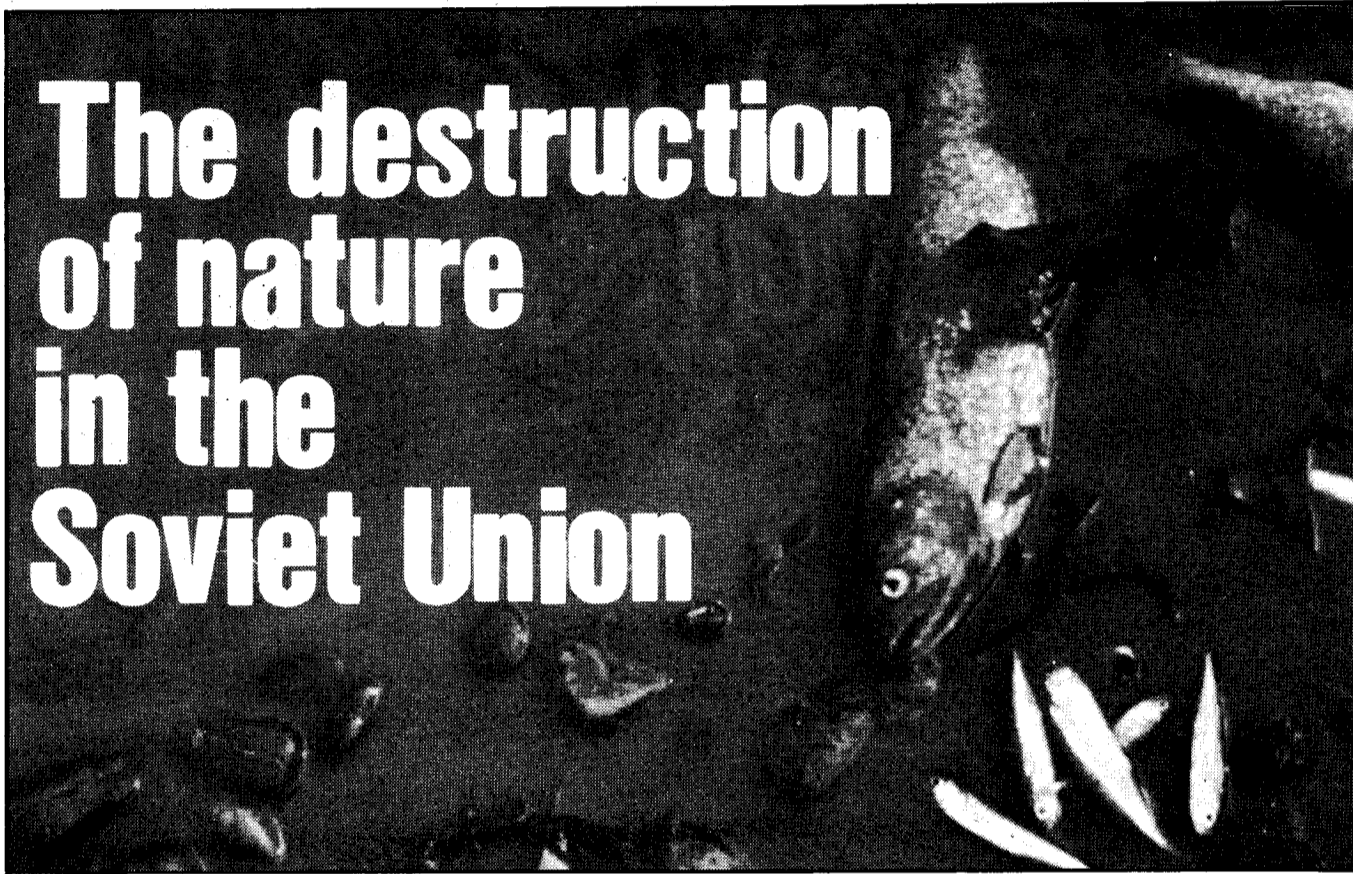
*In the last decade, cases of lung cancer in the USSR have doubled. Each year 5-6 per cent more children are born with genetic defects than in the previous year.

*Moscow's air is more polluted than London's.

*Poaching of wild animals by people short of meat goes virtually unchecked. Army helicopters use rare birds for firing practice, and infantrymen are trained to use rockets using wild boar and deer as targets.

The importance of Komarov's book does not lie solely in its disclosures. The book also unearths the reasons for the disaster.

In an indictment that could easily be added as an appendix to Trotsky's *The Revolution Betrayed*, Komarov is not afraid to point the finger.



The destruction of nature in the Soviet Union

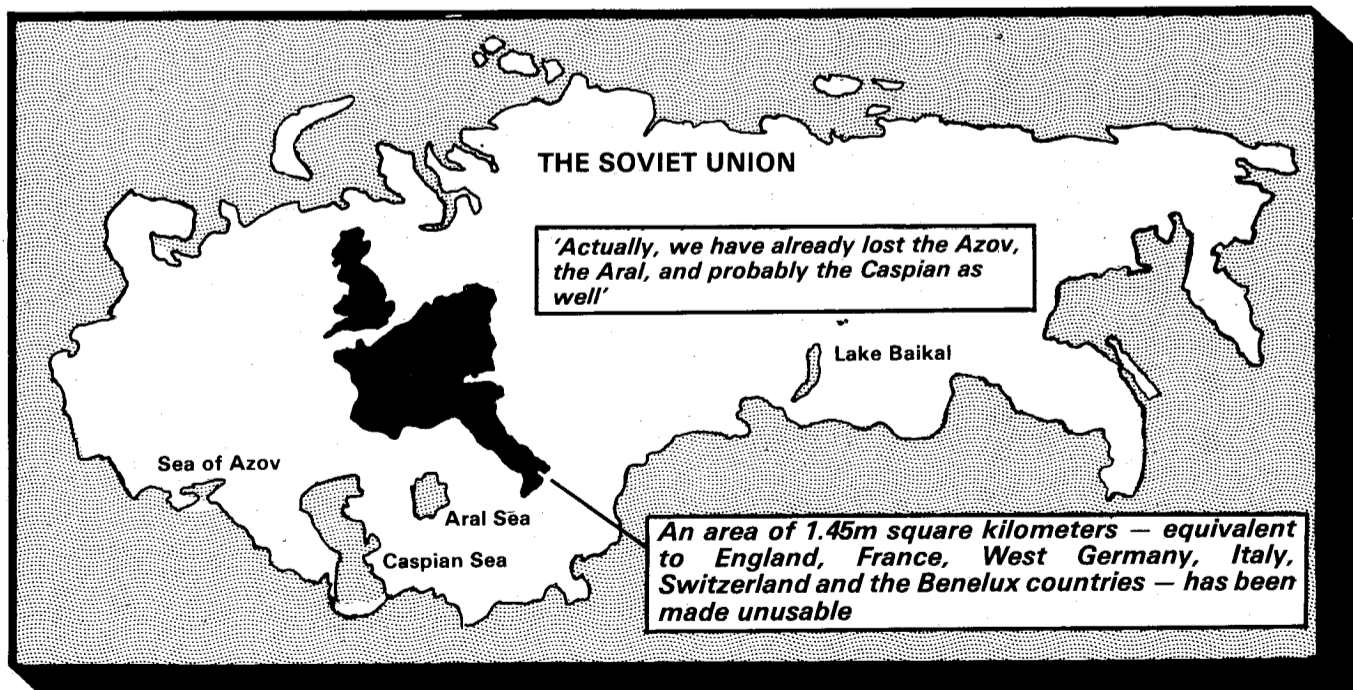
DURING the American election campaign Ronald Reagan shocked the world by claiming that plants and animals cause 80 per cent of the world's pollution.

His ignorance seemed to sum up capitalism's disregard for nature; to express big business' contempt for the natural environment that has left North America's Lake Erie, in the words of American writer Barry Commoner, 'the appearance and consistency of pea soup'.

Socialists consoled themselves with the belief that the workers' states — Russia, China, and in Eastern Europe — take ecological questions much more seriously.

A new book from Pluto Press, Boris Komarov's *The Destruction of Nature in the Soviet Union*, shatters that claim. ADRIAN YEELES reviews the book.

A new book from Pluto Press, Boris Komarov's *The Destruction of Nature in the Soviet Union*, shatters that claim. ADRIAN YEELES reviews the book.



'We all breathe roughly the same air and walk the same earth, but with that, equality in our society ends.... Regardless of the achievements of our agriculture and industry, 12 to 15 million of the top party and government leadership and members of their families have access to the goods of the 20th century. These include the best, the "cleanest" environment.'

Unwilling to allow the majority to participate in decision-

making, the bureaucracy rules through the undemocratic 'plan'. Unable to admit to the dire consequences and inefficiency of this form of planning, a veil of secrecy is maintained:

*A factory was built on Lake Baikal to produce cord for heavy bomber tyres, despite scientific advice that the lake would suffer severe pollution. Before the factory was finished, a method was

discovered for making the cord from petroleum.

The factory went into production, however, because that was what the plan prescribed. The 'radiant orb of Siberia', twenty-five million years old, was polluted.

*When Byelorussian swamps were drained they were turned into plowland, which quickly eroded. Meadow and pasture would have been the right choice, but the plan stipulated arable land and that was that.

*The hay harvested from the area flooded by the Dniepr hydroelectric plant, if used as fuel, would yield as much energy as the plant itself.

*At Krasnoyarsk a huge pile of logs accumulated owing to a shortage of freight cars. The loggers continued to fulfill their quotas, felling more and more trees (leaving semi-desert in their wake). But because the logs couldn't be used in time the state received only rotten wood.

*In Siberia, more fish are caught than the fish factories can handle. The plan compels the fishermen to do so.

Secret

These things take place because the Soviet people and the world at large are kept in ignorance. 'The composition of the air, of our drinking water and sea water is a state secret', writes Komarov.

Those who protest about the crisis 'are accused of anti-Soviet tendencies or "Sakharovism", which for the censors are the same thing.'

The tentacles of the bureaucratized state reach into every area of Soviet life. The Hydrological Planning Agency (HPA) is responsible for hydroelectric power plants. It started life as the Main Hydrological Construction Agency of the NKVD, a section of the GPU, the secret police.

Its managers were major generals and its projects — the White Sea Canal, the Moscow-Volga canal, the Rybinsk Hydroelectric Power Plant — have been immortalised in Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago*.

Today the director of the HPA's civil institute is still called commander and its projects are prepared in secret.

Power

What can be done? For Komarov the problem cannot be tackled so long as the present political situation remains unchanged: 'The position taken by the country's leaders is one of observing the development of the ecological crisis.'

'They have neither the desire nor the means to take any serious steps against the crisis, since those steps could lead to major changes in the economy and, moreover, in the management of production and the system of power....'

'For society the situation can not be useful when decisions about a major ecological project are made by two or three "leading" comrades, while the "strategic" reasons that guided their selection of the project remain unknown to millions whose lives will be substantially affected by it....'

'If those governing the country fully unleashed the citizen's personal initiative, if they slackened the reins of centralised planning, it could be possible to solve...many acute problems of ecology....'

'However, people are not given full rein either creatively or legally....'

Truth

'It is not political motives, not the dictates of reason — it is the very air we breathe that forces us to understand: if we want to survive we must know the truth. And tell it to others.'

Forty years ago Trotsky in his own struggle for the truth accused Stalin of being the gravedigger of the revolution. Boris Komarov has shown how deep Stalin's successors have dug that grave.

The Destruction of Nature in the Soviet Union by Boris Komarov is published by Pluto Press at £2.95. It is available from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper Street, London N1, plus 15% p&p. Extracts from the book have appeared in the *New Scientist*.

INSIDE EL SALVADOR

A FEW hundred yards from the main road we encounter our first barricade, immense stones piled across the path. The barricade is, in effect, a border marker. Beyond it the authority of the governing junta does not hold.

Several other journalists and I have just entered a 'liberated zone' in central El Salvador controlled by the Farabundo Martí People's Liberation Forces (FPL).

As we travel deeper into the zone, passing more barricades across roads and paths, we realise that the area is quite different than we had imagined. I had pictured a remote, inaccessible, hidden guerrilla camp.

Salute

But from where we stand we can see the whole southern slope of the volcano. We see big fields of corn and other crops, and several villages with thousands of inhabitants. This is not an isolated guerrilla camp. Rather it is a living community, where people work or go to school, living their family lives.

From the look of things this could be anywhere in El Salvador, but here the people are in charge and are beginning to build a new kind of society.

As we move deeper into the liberated zone, the tensions we have felt since leaving San Salvador begin to dissipate. We are greeted by the armed detachment that will guard us. They are peasants and rural workers, young and old, armed with rifles and pistols. Some raise their fists in salute, broad smiles breaking across their faces.

After hiking for several hours along almost hidden roads and paths, we come to the central village. There is a crowd of children waiting. Laughing, they run around us. Some of the braver ones come up to touch our cameras.

But aside from the children, life goes on as usual. Women are grinding corn for tortillas in front of their houses. Men are working in the fields. It looks like any of a thousand Salvadoran villages, except for the fact that we can see weapons everywhere.

The village church has been turned into a field hospital. It is run by an older worker who has had no formal medical education, although he has had some experience with traditional medicine. The wounded are in hammocks inside the church, and a medical dispensary stands where the altar used to be.

One of the wounded suffered burns on his face and arms when he tried to set fire to an army vehicle in Zacatecoluca yesterday. The others, the youngest only twelve, suffer from gunshot wounds.

Nervous

'Thank god, no one is really hurt badly,' the hospital chief tells us with a concerned tone. 'We have very few facilities for treating the seriously wounded, and there is almost no way we can evacuate them to some place where they could get better care.'

Down the road a little way is the school, which is now being used as a training camp. On the soccer field about eighty new recruits, men and women, are listening to a veteran explain how to use an FAL rifle. The veteran guerrilla and the recruits are dressed in street clothes — T-shirts, shorts, running shoes. They share the field with three grazing horses and playing children.

From the soccer field we can see the valley spread out like a green carpet. It looks so peaceful that you almost forget that there is a civil war going on in El Salvador. But the mood is broken by the sound of an airplane. I look up, but am unable to see it. 'Don't worry,' says Juan, one of the guerrillas, reassuringly.

An eye-witness report from a 'Liberated Zone'

As reports of government troops massacring guerilla fighters increase daily, Lars Palmgren reports from inside El Salvador.



hacienda, is now worked communally. As part of the government's cosmetic 'land reform,' the Salvadoran Institute for Agrarian Transformation (ISTA) bought the hacienda from its owner. So formally it belongs to the state.

'But in practice,' Juan says, 'we own it. We have managed to force ISTA to deal with us about prices and terms of credit.' He adds, however, that because of the war they have not been able to plant to the extent they would like.

Later in the evening we attend a dance. After travelling along a small path through the forest and crossing two small rivers we reach the house where the dance is to be held. It is guarded by several compañeros with rifles.

There are 200 to 300 people inside the house. In a corner there is a small band — a bass, two guitars, and a drum. Dancing couples fill the area.

Proud

On the wall a weekly schedule for the guerrilla recruits is posted. The schedule contains a full list of activities from 5am to 10pm.

At one point the music stops and an older man stands on a stool to address the crowd. 'Long live proletarian internationalism,' he begins. The crowd responds with 'Viva!'

'Long live international solidarity!'

'Viva!'

The speaker explains that the struggle is international in scope. The enemy is not only here in El Salvador, but all over the world. 'We are, therefore proud,' he says, 'to welcome fighters from other countries to our community. We are proud that they have come here to learn about our struggle so they can inform the comrades fighting in their own countries.'

The crowd turns to look at us and begins applauding. We are asked to say a few words. Each of us gets up on the stool in turn and introduces himself, saying a few words about our resolve to strengthen international solidarity with their struggle.

The faces on the dance floor are filled with hope. These poor peasants and workers in this small liberated area of El Salvador recognise the importance of international solidarity and know that if we can make the slogan about proletarian internationalism come alive in a concrete way, that can directly aid their struggle. It can even mean victory rather than defeat, life rather than death.

Looking out at those faces I think each of us more concretely recognises how important it is to build international solidarity for the Salvadoran people.

Then another veteran gets up on the stool and explains the purpose of the dance. 'Of course,' he said, 'it is good for us to get together and have a good time. But this dance has another very special purpose. It is to collect money for our revolutionary army, for food for our soldiers.'

Recruits

The veteran passes around a hat. People drop coins into it. The music and laughter begin again. A dance for the revolution!

On the way home we are all silent, filled with our own impressions. Five hours later we arise with the sun. The guerrilla recruits are already training on the soccer field. Another day of preparation for the decisive confrontations has begun.

Looking over the scene I realise that while I have been in the liberated zone I feel as though I were in Nicaragua, where the victory has already been won, but seeing the training going on jolts me back to the realisation that here the decisive battles are still to come, and that the outcome is not yet certain.

International solidarity work can help tip the balance in favour of these Salvadoran revolutionaries.



'The militia is a self-defence structure, and almost everyone here belongs to it'

'They frequently fly over us at a very high altitude, but they never dare to come too close unless they are launching a full-scale invasion of the zone.'

Seeing the nervous looks on our faces he explains that although the government troops 'know we are here, they don't attack unless they have several thousand soldiers, backed up by planes and helicopters. And if that was happening, we would already know about it.'

The last time government troops entered the zone was on 30 August. Helicopters landed on the soccer field and troops marched in from the valley. A guerrilla explains that 'most of the population had already hidden before the first troops arrived, but a few had not. Some of the women were raped and two were murdered.'

The troops, who had dogs with them, set fire to about thirty houses, mined the area, and poisoned some of the water supply.

ly. But they were driven out after staying in the village for five days.

According to Juan, 'the revolutionary army attacked their camp and killed about thirty of the soldiers. Our constant attacks forced them to withdraw, and they have not been back since then.'

Juan, who is about 22, is a member of the revolutionary army, whose base camp is further up the side of the volcano. In addition to the revolutionary army, which is made up of full-time fighters and is the best equipped fighting force, the revolutionaries are organised militarily on two other levels — the militia and the guerrilla units. Juan explains, 'is a self-defence structure, and almost everyone here belongs to it.'

The guerrilla units are also made up of part-time fighters, but in contrast to the militia, they carry out offensive actions, such as ambushing military vehicles or convoys.

As night begins to fall, the new recruits are still on the soccer field. They have broken down into three groups for political discussion. A group of women, returning from the river with loads of laundry, crosses the soccer field. They exchange jokes and comments with the guerrilla recruits.

I am continually struck by the contrast between the daily bombings in San Salvador and the open warfare in the department of Morazán, which the military had prevented me from entering a few days earlier, and the peacefulness of daily life here in this liberated zone.

The first attempts to organise the peasants here took place in 1972, and for eight years the work of organising has continued. As Juan explains, 'We have fought constantly since then. We have fought the army, the informers, and the paramilitary gangs organised in ORDEN. We have fought for our right to the land.'

Today ORDEN has been eliminated from the area. 'We have our own army, our own militia, our own guerrilla units — and we have taken over the land,' Juan says.

There are several villages in the liberated zone. Each of them is run by a five-person steering committee elected by a village assembly. Within the steering committee there is a division of labour among the members, one of whom serves as general secretary.

The general secretaries of each village committee, in turn, are members of a special council which runs the whole area.

Regular assemblies are held in each village and for the whole area. In these assemblies there are discussions of the conditions in the area as well as political education by the revolutionaries.

I ask Juan how production is organised in the zone. He says that some of the people work their own plots, although most of the land, which used to be a single

State racism on the rise

IN the first six months of this year 509 people have been deported from Britain. That's almost double last year's figure, when 585 people were removed during the whole year.

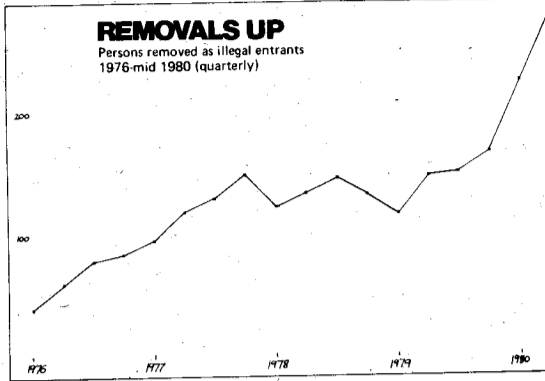
There is also an increase in the number of persons held in detention centres under the 1971 Immigration Act. On 18 July this year there were 211 people imprisoned, compared to a daily average in 1979 of 166.

The open racism of the immigration laws can be seen from the fate of passengers arriving at Heathrow airport.

It was 230 times more likely that an Algerian passenger would be refused entry at Heathrow during 1979 than an Australian or Canadian; 90 times more likely for a Ghanaian; 60 times for a Pakistani or Sri Lankan, and 50 times for a Cypriot or Bangladeshi.

Algerians, Ghanaians, Pakistanis, and Sri Lankans just happened not to be white.

All these useful facts and more are in the annual report of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, available from the JCWI at 44 Theobalds Road, London WC1X 8SP.



Unions reject the 'Brown rice and sandals brigade'

By Carol Russell

OVER a hundred union delegates from the South-east region of the TUC attended a conference on energy on Saturday at Congress House, London. Nuclear power was the main point of contention, if not the only one.

Arthur Scargill, speaking for the National Union of Mineworkers, said it was hypocritical to pretend to be dispassionate about the dangers of nuclear power.

He pointed out that leaked Tory government minutes showed that the nuclear programme was being considered as a way of avoiding the effect of strikes by miners and transport workers.

Like the other speakers, Scargill rejected the primitive lifestyle solution put forward by 'the brown rice and sandals brigade'.

Instead, maintained Scargill, the NUM wanted an integrated national energy plan, without competition between gas and electricity suppliers. He said that Britain has enough indigenous coal,

oil, and renewable energy to meet the 'energy gap' without importing fuel.

Backing up his support for nuclear power, John Lyons, of the Engineers' and Managers' Association, quoted from a CIA report which claimed that in the 1980s it was 'not prudent for the non-Communist world to count on oil'.

The leaders of unions like the EMA are intent on keeping a small number of experts in control of energy supplies.

However, if Arthur Scargill and others opposed to Nukes do not take their arguments beyond import controls then, on a world scale, the NUM's energy plans for Britain don't look all that different from 'national' plans such as that put forward by Jimmy Carter in the USA.

How not to fight for jobs

By Paul Winston

AN example of how not to fight unemployment was given in Leicester on 12 November.

The occasion was a jobs march called by the National Hosiery Union. The main slogan was: 'Workers and firms unite'.

The knitwear bosses gave their workers the day off for what was described by the local newspaper, the *Leicester Mercury*, as 'a patriotic march'.

As many as 2,000 turned up to sing specially written 'Buy British' songs and to carry red, white, and blue umbrellas.

Alec Kilsby, the union's district secretary, called for an early reduction in interest rates, and a short-term employment subsidy to solve unemployment in the industry.

Such appeals to patriotism and help from the self-styled super patriots of the Tory government are hardly likely to save jobs. A more viable alternative was offered by Right to Work campaigners who chanted 'Kick out the Tories' and collected money for the Gardner's strikers.

Women's Fightback distributed a leaflet to the women on the demonstration, who made up 75 per cent of the marchers.

Women for clubs

SUPPORTERS of the campaign for equal rights for women in 'working men's clubs' are gathering for their first national conference — in a working men's club.

The half-day event, planned for Saturday 6 December, at Belle Vue Liberal Working Men's Club in Wakefield, is being organised by the Equal Rights in Clubs Campaign for Action (ERICCA).

The campaign was set up more than a year ago when Sheila Capstick was banned from playing snooker in her local club.

Since then members have organised three pickets of Yorkshire clubs practising sex discrimination. A lobby of the 1980 Blackpool clubs' conference was attended by over two hundred ERICCA supporters.

The organisers of the coming conference believe that its most important task will be to plan ahead for the coming year.

Details of the conference from: Sheila Capstick, 26 South Street, Wakefield. Send a stamp addressed envelope.



'Free Namibia — Britain's Nuclear Colony' was one of the slogans of a 300-strong march from central Preston to the British Nuclear Fuels Springfield's plant on Saturday 8 November.

The marchers from anti-racist, anti-nuclear, political and anti-imperialist groups, were calling for a halt to imports of Namibian uranium, the illegal source of half Britain's uranium supply — essential for British nuclear weapons — which comes to the government courtesy of South Africa's brutal military occupation of Namibia. There is a benefit meeting for Namibia solidarity at 5pm at the Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Rd, Finsbury Park. SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma will be speaking in Britain on 10 December. Further details form Namibia support committee on 388 5539.

Women's centre burgled

By Harriet Wordsworth

BRISTOL Women's Centre has been burgled six times over the past year. But a break-in last week was the most sinister so far. Whoever the thieves were, they were after much

more than the petty cash.

Files including details of abortion facilities in Bristol, sympathetic doctors — and some unsympathetic ones as well — the names and addresses of hundreds of feminists, have been removed.

So, too, were the day books containing strictly confidential information on the refugees for battered women, and details of in-

dividual women who visit the centre.

Whoever wanted such information did so badly enough to break in through the roof, and climb out again the same way with all the bulky and cumbersome files. The burglars were also familiar enough with the lay-out of the centre to avoid an alarm system.

Bristol Women's Centre members are concerned that their and similar offices may now be targets for fascist attacks. There is believed to

be a British Movement training centre in the area.

Women who have been in contact with the centre should be aware that their address and phone number may now be in the possession of individuals and organisations who are hostile to the women's movement.

The Women's Centre has launched an appeal for funds to improve security. Donations should be sent to: Bristol Women's Centre, 44 The Grove, Bristol 1.



A couple of hundred people demonstrated outside Downing Street last Friday evening in support of the Armagh prisoner Pauline McLaughlin.

Pauline is near death because of the non-treatment by prison authorities of her severe stomach disorder.

National rally for victimised teacher

By Roger Tanner, Secretary, Nottingham NUT (personal capacity)

THE executive of the National Union of Teachers is calling a national rally to highlight the case of Eileen Crosbie, a teacher sacked by her local authority for fighting the cuts.

Eileen was dismissed in January by Nottingham's local education authority when, following union advice, she refused to teach a nursery class which had a ratio of one adult to 20 children.

Central government has recommended a ratio of one to 13, but Notts County Council has proved unwilling to accept such a recommendation, and instead has cut 130 nursery jobs.

Since she was sacked, the campaign for Eileen's reinstatement has included strikes and protest meetings by thousands of local teachers. But teachers in Nottingham have argued that the fight needs to be taken up nationally because an important issue is at

stake — the defence of union members who fight the cuts.

Now the NUT executive has responded to such calls and the national rally will take place in Nottingham on Saturday, 22 November.

All NUT members, and others fighting against education cuts should make every effort to attend. Support is needed for the demand that the union executive should back whatever extended strike action is necessary to win back Eileen's job.

A march before the rally will assemble at 2pm at Forest Recreation Ground. The rally will be held at 3pm in the market square. Further details from: Notts NUT, tel. Nottingham 622588.

Joe McGrogan, 1949-80

JANE LEMOIR writes: SWINDON IMG regrets to announce the death of Socialist Joe McGrogan. We were shocked and saddened to learn of his death on 7 November, at the age of 31.

Joe was born in Northern Ireland and helped found the Swindon Troops Out Movement.

He will be missed for his Irish solidarity work, and many of us will remember the valuable work he did educating us about the history of Ireland and the current struggle. Joe was one the first

members of Swindon ANL, and aided street sellers of Socialist Challenge and Socialist Worker, following an attack by the fascists. He was a member of Swindon Trades Council and recently joined the Labour Party.

At the time of his death Joe was involved through the Right to Work Campaign in co-ordinating solidarity with the Gardner's struggle.

Joe would have been on the withdrawal from Ireland demonstration last Saturday. It was a tribute to his work that the Swindon bus was fully booked.

Socialist Challenge

Officials complete BL sell-out

By a BL shop steward

East European dissidents denounce H Blocks

EAST European dissidents Rudolf Bahro and Zhores Medvedev have slammed the British government's treatment of the Irish political prisoners in the H Blocks of Long Kesh and the women's prison in Armagh.

Seven prisoners are now on the fourth week of a hunger strike, and more — this time in Armagh — are expected to join them shortly.

Rudolf Bahro's comments are particularly outspoken. Branding the treatment of the prisoners as 'the methods of the concentration camp', he has sent a letter to the Tory minister responsible for the prisons, Michael Allison.

Bahro states: 'The methods used by the British government in Northern Ireland against its political opponents are qualitatively worse, as far as brutality and injustice are concerned, than those adopted by any other state in Europe against its own opposition'.

Bahro, an East German dissident, and Medvedev, who was exiled from the Soviet Union, issued their statements in response to an appeal by Monica Culbert, the wife of an H Block prisoner.

Help

Michael Culbert is a former shop steward in the National Union of Public Employees and was savagely 'interrogated' by members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary in November 1977 and May 1978.

Medvedev says that Michael 'must be released' and, in a letter to Monica, says: 'I hope

that I will be able to help you and your husband'.

The statements from the dissidents are timely. The decision of the Armagh women prisoners to join the hunger strike, taken against the advice of the leadership of the Provo Republican movement will further emphasise the life or death nature of the struggle now taking place over the H Blocks and Armagh.

Two prisoners have already reached the verge of death.

One, Pauline, McLaughlin, is dying of malnutrition in Armagh prison. Weighing only four-and-a-half stone, Pauline is suffering from an undiagnosed and untreated stomach complaint which makes her incapable of holding down food.

The British prison authorities have refused to transfer her to a civilian hospital.

The other prisoner near death is Seamus Mallon who has now been on a hunger strike of his own for over 50 days. Seamus is on strike to highlight his frame-up, by the RUC, on a blackmail charge.

Such are the 'methods of the concentration camp' condemned by Rudolf Bahro. People in Britain who share the views of Bahro and Medvedev will have the opportunity to express their concern on 7 December when a 'Don't Let the Irish Prisoners Die' demonstration takes place in London.



Rudolf Bahro

Photo: GM COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

THE decision by BL workers to accept the 6.8 per cent offer, and reverse the strike vote of 10 days ago, gave Michael Edwardes another victory.

But unlike the situation over the past two years, BL workers have given a clear demonstration that threats of closure and accusations of living off tax payers' money no longer carry the weight they did.

The decision to accept the pay offer was forced on the workforce by the weakness, treachery and cowardice of the trade union officials, acting in conjunction with a majority of senior stewards who have no intention of ever fighting BL bosses.



The 2-1 majority for strike action put these seasoned veterans of sell-out operations in a position of having to lead a fight.

Such a fight would have been first and foremost a political one against the Tory government and would have meant mobilising workers inside and outside BL against the threat of closure and massive job loss.

The trade union leaders would have had to put action in place of anti-Tory rhetoric — and this they were clearly not prepared to do.

The officials and management have used every dirty trick in the book to get the offer accepted. They promised further investment if there was no strike, but concealed details of the 1981 plan, which includes closures and hiving off.

They have subjected any opposition to massive pressure. At Cowley, TGWU convenor Bob Fryer was told by the managing director of Austin Morris, Brian Fox, that the company considered him to be primarily responsible for the strike call.

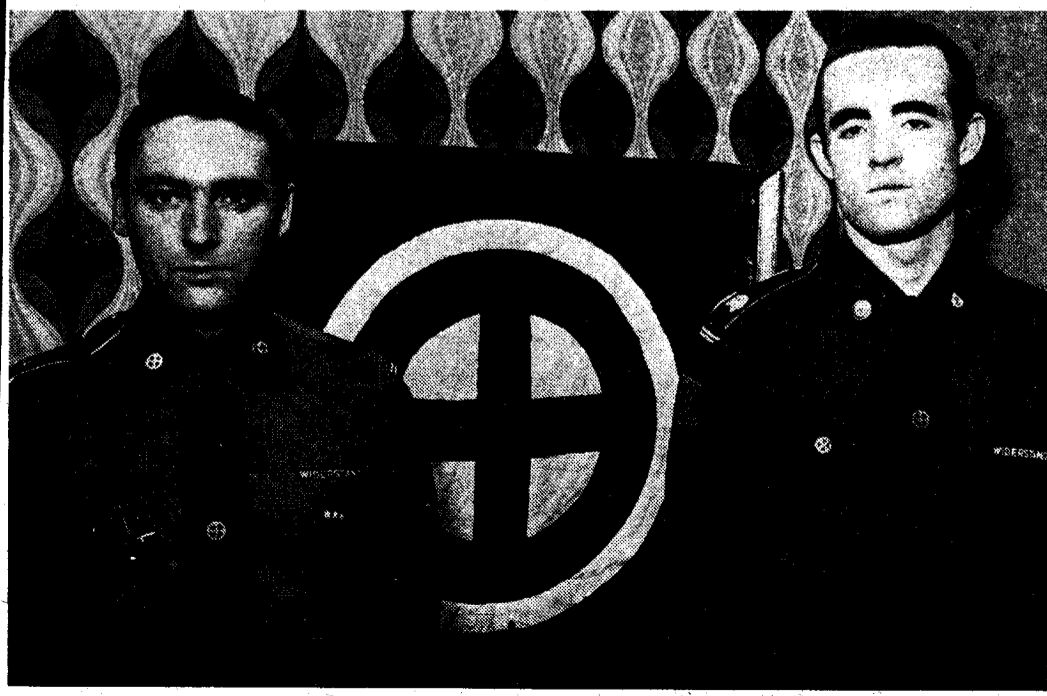


Management threatened the withdrawal of the new LC-10 model, scheduled for Cowley, if Fryer did not change his position. This assessment of Fryer's stand must have come from within the Leyland Cars Joint Negotiating Committee.

The union officials used the senior stewards conference to hide their sell-out. This body is entirely undemocratic, has no status in BL, and was used to defy the mandate of the membership.

Even with the Longbridge decision to accept the 6.8 per cent, the aggregate vote was only narrowly in favour of the pay offer.

The whole affair shows that a new leadership is necessary in BL and that BL workers are ready for such a leadership. Militants in BL need to set about the task of building such a leadership now.



Stop the British Movement Nazis

GLEN Bennet (left) and John Barton are members of the fascist British Movement in Newham, East London.

On Sunday 23 November, the British Movement plans to march through Notting Hill in West London, where there is a large West Indian community.

The British Movement is openly racist and it is well-known for its violent attacks on Britain's black population.

Many people in West London, including Notting Hill, will be supporting the counter-demo called by the Anti Nazi League. See page 11 for details and an analysis of the crisis of Britain's fascist organisations.